



**EAST COAST -
TREKKING AND RAFTING**

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



ITINERARY

East Coast Madagascar • Trekking & Rafting Adventure

11 DAYS • 10 NIGHTS

**Antananarivo – Perinet Rainforest Reserve – Analamazaotra Park –
Andasifahadimy – Lohariandava – Sahatandra River – Anivorano**
This itinerary can be tailored to suit your exact requirements

HIGHLIGHTS

- Rafting descent of the little explored Sahatandra river, riding rapids through dense rainforest and mangroves.
- Fully supported trekking and camping in non touristy areas – you only carry your day pack
- Observing from boats and on foot, the unique endemic flora and fauna of Eastern Madagascar
- An optional beach extension on the Indian Ocean in the quaint coastal town of Mahambo for a surf & swim.

TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Trekking and Rafting Adventure
Tour Start	Antananarivo
Tour End	Antananarivo
Accommodation	Hotel, Camping
Included Meals	10 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 9 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium/Difficult
Group Size	Max. 8 people (No Single Supplement*)

RAINFOREST ROAMING & RIVER RAFTING



This is a unique expedition explores a little visited region in the North East of Madagascar. It combines trekking & camping in forests and rice paddies before rafting down a remote river towards the coast. You can extend your trip by spending time enjoying the undiscovered Indian Ocean resort of Mahambo, where you can relax on the beautiful white sandy beaches or ride the waves in this uncrowded surf spot.

MADAGASCAR *an overview*

Madagascar is a truly remarkable destination; there is no other place like it. Its landscapes, animals and plants are simply incredible and the Malagasy people like no other people you will meet in the world. Near the equator with an astonishing array of habitats, ranging from rainforests to deserts and from mountain tops to mangrove swamps, it is one of the most important countries for biodiversity on the planet. The tropical climate is a perfect host to the process of nature and, like nowhere else, the variety and richness of life has flourished.

Expedition members do not need previous rafting experience as full training will be given. There are a few days trekking over undulating terrain so a moderate level of fitness is required.

WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

We really are one of the few specialists that really “do” off the beaten track and unique adventures in MADAGASCAR. We are driven by a passion for adventure travel and wildlife and Madagascar is one of our main specialities. We know it inside-out, and continuously collaborate with our local partners and tour guides to ensure that you have the best experiences on your dream Madagascan adventure – this focus is reflected in our uniquely wonderful itineraries. Our experts are on hand whether you are looking for a small group trip or a bespoke holiday.

Even better, our small group tours have a maximum of 8 people, making it a much more personal experience. Furthermore, we don't expect you to pay a single supplement, perfect for solo travellers! (*nb. no ss charged as long as you are happy to share a room)

Pioneer work in some of the world's most spectacular, remote and extraordinary places worldwide.

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DAY 1: Tongasoa eto Antananarivo!

After arriving in Antananarivo (or Tana, as it is known by the locals), you will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

Antananarivo is the capital and largest city in Madagascar. It is buzzing with activity and full of people flooding the streets, selling everything you could imagine! Tana (as the locals call it) resembles a Mediterranean hill town and exploring its rich cultural and architectural sites on foot is relatively easy (as long as you are willing to climb hundreds of ancient stone steps) It is a hectic city though and we would recommend a driver / guide if you want to explore this city.



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
N/A



Approx. Distance:
Airport Transfer



Activity:
Personal Preference

Day 2: Heading to Andasibe National Park to experience our first encounter with lemurs!



After breakfast, and introductory briefing from your tour leader, we will set off for Andasibe National Park. En-route we will stop at a farm specialising in Madagascan reptiles and butterflies, before arriving at our lodge.

This afternoon you will get a chance to stroll around the private reserve – lemur island with the opportunity to get close to lemurs as they are known to jump on your shoulder to get a closer look!



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, D



Approx. Distance:
150km (4hrs 30 min Driving)



Activity:
Wildlife Encounters

DAY 3: Discovering Analamazaotra Park & Trekking in Mantadia National Park

After visiting Analamazaotra Park, we will drive along a scenic road to Andasifahadimy (Around half an hour drive).

The Analamazaotra Park, within the Andasibe / Mantadia NP is known for its rare orchids that bloom in the forest as well as the largest lemur species in Madagascar – the Indri, which can be observed all year round here. It is a heavily forested park with waterfalls and over 108 species of birds. You can also find 14 other species of lemurs (including the rarest and almost impossible to spot aye aye)



Here the adventure really starts, when we set out towards Lohariandava, reaching the rainforest after a 1 mile of trekking.



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Today we will hike for around 3 – 4 hrs, crossing the Sahatandra river – the pace is not too fast and the hiking path is good. Tonight we will set up camp next to a small village.



Overnight:
Camping



Meals:
B, L, D



Approx. Distance:
Trek (3-4 hrs)



Activity:
Trekking and Wildlife

DAY 4: Trekking in the forest

After breakfast, we will break up camp and head off on the next part of the adventure. All morning we walk through the forest, the path is pretty good, but with some hills. On our way out of the first part of the forest we should get a fantastic view of the surrounding area. This afternoon we walk alongside the forest and we setup camp near the small Satronima River.



Overnight:
Camping



Meals:
B, L, D



Approx. Distance:
Varies (5-6 hour hike)



Activity:
Trekking

DAY 5: Trekking into the depths of the forest

We will spend most of the day under the forest canopy, the path gets more complicated with branches and muddy passes. Tonight we will camp at the end of the forest.



Overnight:
Camping



Meals:
B, L, D



Approx. Distance:
N/A



Activity:
Trekking

DAY 6: Exchanging forest for river, with a trek from Andekaleka to Lohariandava



We have a steep ½ hour climb before leaving the forest behind us. From here you can observe how the forest is disappearing because deforestation and farming methods used by locals. The locals are always welcoming and friendly towards us. We cross the Sahatandra/Vohitra River again and head to Andekaleka train station - here we take the train to the next step of our adventure. At Lohariandava village our rafts and river gear will be waiting for us and we will go through some basic safety and training checks before a relaxing evening at our riverside camp.



Overnight:
Camping



Meals:
B, L, D



Approx. Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Trekking



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DAY 7 - 9: Chapter 2 – Rafting down the Sahatandra River

After breakfast, we will set off on the next part of our adventure - the rafting descent of the Sahatandra River.

The Sahatandra river flows through beautiful narrow passages and snakes its way through either dense rainforest or bamboo groves. You can sometimes spot bamboo lemurs on the shore and an active bird life on the river. This little rafted river provides us with a fantastic range of Grade II/III/IV rapids, and you will be able to practice your skills on the first few gentle rapids.



As the river descends and we are confident of our rafting skills we will navigate the numerous stretches of white water. At night we will pitch our tents on the riverside and enjoy campfires, good food and immense Madagascan skies.



Overnight:
Camping



Meals:
B, L, D



Approx. Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Rafting

DAY 10: A final paddle + back to Antananarivo



We set off this morning to paddle the last section of our Sahatandra descent. Upon arrival in Anivorano, we transfer by road to Antananarivo. Or for those opting for our popular East Coast Adventure beach extension, to Mahambo!



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B, L, D



Approx. Distance:
265km (5-6hr Drive)



Activity:
Rafting and Drive

DAY 11: End of Trip

Your day can be spent at leisure before transferring to the airport in time for your flight home. Optional Extension.



Overnight:
N/A



Meals:
B



Approx. Distance:
Airport Transfer



Activity:
Flight Home/ Optional Extension

NB: This itinerary is subject to change – arrangements, routes and facilities are subject to variation depending on local conditions. Please note times given are approximate driving times and do not include stops, the journey times are therefore longer. When driving times are given, this is only an indication. It aims to reflect the actual driving time (and doesn't include stops, lunch, and traffic). The road journeys, while often long, are one of the great ways to experience Madagascar. There is so much life on the road and many photographic opportunities along the way from a natural and people perspective.



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If this trip isn't quite what you are looking for, we can **tailor itineraries** to suit your exact requirements.

GETTING AROUND

- Transport will consist of 4x4, to give you the most authentic, off-the-beaten track experience. These vehicles are best at tackling the challenging roads that Madagascar primarily consists of.
- Madagascar is notorious for the unreliability of its domestic flights in terms of time. The flights schedules are always subject to change at anytime and can experience cancellations, which are not ideal when following a schedule! ; For this reason we tend to travel by road for the most part.
- Distances and times will of course be lengthy due to the vastness of the island and lack of good-quality road systems throughout the country. However, this all adds to the adventurousness of any Madagascar trip; but is definitely something to be aware of whilst travelling around Madagascar.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Included	Not Included
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ All meals as described (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner)■ Water, tea, coffee, etc whilst camping■ English speaking guide from day 2 – day 10■ Rafting Team and Porters■ All camping and canoe equipment■ All transfers■ All entrance fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ International flights➤ Meals other than mentioned➤ Tips➤ Personal expenses➤ Alcoholic and soft drinks -drinks in restaurants➤ Sleeping Bag

ACCOMMODATION *at a glance*

	Location	Accommodation	Example
Night 1	Antananarivo	Hotel	Relais des Plateaux
Night 2	Andasibe	Hotel	Andasibe Hotel
Night 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9	Forest/Sahatandra River	Camping	N/A
Night 10	Antananarivo	Hotel	Palissandre Hotel



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WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE SAID...

"Thank you for such a great holiday! I really enjoyed it and didn't want to come home. I was really impressed with the organisation of the trip, all the logistics that must go into it and transporting all the equipment and us. The tents were comfortable and I wasn't expecting beds and pillows! Max and the porters were brilliant, they made sure we were always well looked after. He even gave us piggy back lifts over some of the river crossings! They all worked so hard and didn't complain. Nothing was too much for them. The lovely Max is such an excellent cook, I don't think we had the same meal twice while he was cooking which is very unusual for a vegetarian abroad. I am missing his cooking. I loved the lemurs! They were fantastic and we got to witness the Indri calling, I feel very privileged to have seen that. The reptile/butterfly place was amazing too, a great way to start the holiday. I really think Madagascar needs to be promoted so much more as a holiday destination, it's such a beautiful country and the people are so friendly and helpful. I shall certainly be encouraging people to go there. You do such great work, I didn't realise the company was involved in reforestation! Everyone was great out there and you can tell they are passionate about the environment and their country. I loved Madagascar and would definitely consider going back there, there is so much more to see. I felt I saw the real Madagascar too, not just the tourist bits but by walking through the villages and rafting the river you could get a real feel for the place and that's the kind of travel I prefer. I really hope you are able to get more tourists going there, they are missing out if they don't go. Thanks once again for an amazing adventure"

-K. Abbiss

East Coast Trekking & Rafting EXTENSION EXAMPLE

Feel free to **contact us** for more information on all of our Madagascar Extensions. Alternatively, browse through our extension document, available from our website.

Our most popular extension for this trip:
A paradise ending with our **Beach Extension in Mahambo**



Adding a beach extension to this trip is the best way to unwind after such an action-packed trekking and rafting adventure. A trip to the Eastern Madagascan hidden gem and tranquil coastal town – Mahambo, can offer plenty of relaxation looking out onto the azure blue seas of the Indian Ocean. For the more adventurous who just want to keep going, there is a wide variety of sea activities such as surfing and sea kayaking. This destination is becoming increasingly popular with surfers, so it's the ideal place to visit if you fancy learning!

(Email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com for costings and more information on this extension, as well as even more extension ideas)



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WHEN TO GO...

The majority of our Madagascar trips take place March to December, this is when Madagascar is at its best. The weather and climate can change a lot throughout the year and when you go to experience this remarkable country, depends on your preferences.

Madagascar Autumn: **March - May** (Dry and Warm)

- After the rains have passed. Everything is lush and green and fertile
- March is great in the South West, but some roads in the North and West can still be recovering from the monsoon season.
- April and May is the perfect time to visit. Great wildlife, great weather and not too many tourists.

Madagascar Winter: **June - August** (Dry)

- This ideal season for trekking / activities as is the coolest time in Madagascar. Temperature vary in the different areas but typically around 20 degree C
- Evenings (especially in the highlands) can get very cool at night (10 degrees C)
- Good time for seeing lemurs, but due to the cooler weather smaller mammals and reptile will be less active
- July and August can be busier in the national parks due to school holidays.
- August and September are ideal for keen birdwatchers to visit Madagascar.

Madagascar Spring: **Sept - November** (Dry and Hot)

- September to November is highly popular, as even North Eastern Madagascar is dry now.
- August and September are ideal for keen birdwatchers to visit Madagascar.
- It is hotter with very little rain, great for spotting chameleons and lizards, but quite hot for trekking / activities – in November temperatures start to rise rapidly.
- October is particularly perfect for witnessing baby lemurs.
- Main downside with this time of year is that it is the peak season so national parks are busier with more tourists

Madagascar Summer: **December – March** (Hot and Rainy Season)

- The rains start to come. The North East is still relatively dry in December and we offer many Christmas trips.
- January/February should definitely be avoided as it becomes monsoon season - due to the heavy rainfall causing the already difficult roads to become muddy and impassable. The RN7 is still drivable so the 'classic' Madagascar route is still possible for those who can only travel in this season
- This is the best time of year for orchid lovers



*"My favourite time of year is **May** because the rains have finished so everything is lush and green. You don't see many other tourists as they tend to go in September and October, but everything is just beautiful – it's pretty perfect."*

- **Laurenne Mansbridge**
Pioneer Director



MEET THE GUIDES *of Madagascar*

Our guides are at the forefront of your trip, so it's important you know who will be looking after you and showing you the wonders of this extraordinary country. We pride ourselves on having talented, trustworthy, knowledgeable and caring local guides. We have both Naturalist guides and Adventurist guides who will make your trip even more special. Nobody knows Madagascar quite like them!



MAMY
NATURALIST GUIDE

- Mamy is highly experienced and has been working as a guide since 1996.
- His main interests as a guide are fauna and flora, nature and landscapes, forestry, villages and cultures.
- His specialties are Birdwatching and Wildlife!



HERY
NATURALIST GUIDE

- Hery has worked as a guide since 2006, where he trained in the Ranomafana National Park.
- He has a passion for amphibians and reptiles as well as botany. Hery has a particular interest in Orchids!
- His specialties are in Plants and of course, Wildlife.



TOKY
NATURALIST GUIDE

- Toky has been working a guide since 2014, having previously studied Tourism in Antsirabe.
- His main passions as a guide are: Flora and Fauna, Cultures, Geography and History.
- His specialties lie in Madagascan Culture and Geology as well as Wildlife.



JOE
ADVENTURIST GUIDE

- Following a considerably tough childhood, Joe has been happily and successfully working as a guide since 2005.
- His main passions as an adventurer guide are: rafting, kayaking, sea-kayaking as well as trekking.
- Following many years of experience, Joe's specialty lies in river-based activities and adventures.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Activity Duration	5-7 hours per day
Season	September through to December
Group Size	2-8 people
Responsibility	As part of our commitment to responsible travel and in conjunction with Woodstock.org we finance a tree nursery and orchard in Italavina – which is a long term reforestation project.
Group Departures	This region is best explored between September and December. We have a monthly group departure during this time, please see website or contact us for exact dates.
Difficulty Level	Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'difficult level' (5 – 7 hours of activities per day). This means you will need more than a basic level of fitness and some specific training may be required.

THE PIONEER BOOKING PROCESS

Where do you go from here? Well, you can feel free to email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com if you're interested in this trip, or any of our other expeditions from around the world. Visit our website www.pioneerexpeditions.com to unearth all of our other equally amazing trips and destinations.

1. Contact us -

We will be happy to answer any questions or enquiries you may have. From here we will begin to plan and put together your dream adventure holiday! Alternatively, on our website you will find our booking and enquiry forms; once filled in, we will be notified of your enquiry and will get back to you ASAP.

2. Leave everything to us -

Everything will be arranged and booked by us, but we will make sure to keep you updated every step of the way. In addition, we can arrange your international flights if needed, as we have access to competitive airfares. We can also arrange any additional tours or additional night's accommodation.

3. Wait for your adventure to begin -

Sit back and count down the days until your trip of a lifetime with Pioneer Expeditions. We'll handle all of the last minute preparations and provide you with everything you need. All practical information will be sent out to you, prior to your trip.

If you feel like altering this itinerary to suit your personal preferences, we can arrange all of that and more – just get in contact with us and let us know your requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

