

***Frequented Asked Question Sheet of Ramartour
Madagascar (version jan 2018)***

This file is issued for you to respond general questions and get general understanding on how ramartour works, but might not give details about your tour. For other questions please contact us directly on info@ramartour.com or by +261 20 22 487 23 (08am-06pm local time)

About us

We are a Travel Agency- Tour Operator - Car Rental - Lodge based in the capital of Madagascar called Antananarivo. We are, composed of 40 people from Administration range till field team (driver, guide, pistor, trainees, speaking English, a part of the local language Malagasy and French)

Our 16 years experiences and the will of improvements on our services are the guarantee that you will get an unforgettable trip with us (of course each visitor has their own experiences and we cannot satisfy all type of demands)

Ramartour is a professional and legal company registered at the **Ministry of Tourism**, Member of the **Tourism Board (ONTM)**, active member of the **Professional Tour Operator Association (TOP Madagascar)**. Internationally, we are under of the **CBI, Travelife** (sustainability development) and Member of **ATTA** (Adventure Travel Trade Association)

As a legal and professional organization, RAMARTOUR Madagascar is under the " Responsabilite civile d'exploitation insurance " **ARO** (www.aro.mg). In spite of this we strongly encourage and recommend all our customers traveling to Madagascar with a good health and travel insurance. We promise you that many great surprises Madagascar will wait for you, but we can never exclude the possibility of a negative one occurring.

If you need to apply on extra insurance such as the www.sgr.nl or www.calamiteitenfonds.nl or **ATOL** please let us know and our

partners in Europe can organize these with us for you, of course some fees will be applied

Health

It depends on your past vaccinations which ones are still required for your visit to Madagascar. Check your yellow little vaccine book and ask advice from your doctor as you don't want to catch any tropical diseases.

Passport, Arrival and Visa

Make sure that you still have valid passport more 6 months before coming, have sufficient pages on it and do not forget to bring a pen in your handbag. Before you touch ground in Madagascar you need to fill in a small form (*Entry form should be given by the flight attendants*). This form will grant you a VISA on cost of 27 Eur for stay less than 30 days, In case you stay longer a Visa fee can be paid on the spot, costs starting from 50 Euro.

Upon arrival at the Airport, you will be in charge of your own belongings. you are advised not to hand your baggage to anyone else until you meet RAMARTOUR Madagascar's team. We (guide or driver) will be waiting for you but sometimes other guys will run towards you with a lot of enthusiasm to guide you out of the airport for money of course. remember it is not necessary to hire a porter at the airport.

Please help us to fight other **corruption** so whoever might say to you that he can help you on some cases on strange way never get on it easily. Having us as Traveler's assistant will help you to solve issues on normal procedures and you will be informed if extra fees must be done.

Exchange

As soon as you meet our team at the arrival hall, ask him/her to accompany you to the official office changes to get your local currency.

Our currency **Ariary** is only valid in Madagascar and won't buy you anything elsewhere in the world. Apart from the few banknotes or coins you wish to keep as souvenirs, you can change your excess Ariary back into Euro or Dollars at change offices at the airport against a good rate before you check-in for your flight back home

Depending on the fluctuations in the exchange rate: 1 Euro equals to 3500 Ariary, 1 USD equals to 3200 Ariary, The maximum amount you can draw at once is most of the time 400.000 Ariary. Late August 2017, Malagasy government issued new bank notes including the biggest bank note of 20 000 Ariary, so be sure to have the small ones in order to do your purchasing.

Visa Charge, Maestro and Master Card

Maestro works only with local bank called MCB and this bank is located only in the capital.

Traveler Checks is rarely used in Madagascar even some office/bank accept this method, it might take you all day to change.

American Express does not work in Madagascar. As for **Master Card**, only it works to draw cash at the ATM of BNI/CA. The Visa Charge card has now been recognized as the quick solution in most restaurants and hotels. In very local restaurants, you will have to count on cash.

Pocket Money

If you book a tour package with us everything is already included apart from tips, lunch, dinner drinks and personal spending. For this, you can basically count for approximately 40 euro per day per person, depending on your preference for champagne, imported wine and your appetite for local Malagasy meals.

Plugs, mobile and connection

Our typical French plugs supply 220 Volt. In big towns and cities, electricity functions 24/7 but in remote hotels they work in the morning before 7.30 am, lunch time and from 5.00 pm to 10.30 pm only. Take this into account when you need to charge camera batteries & mobile phones etc...

As for the **Wi-Fi connection**, this is something you shouldn't count on too much in Madagascar but it is improving. Most 2 stars hotels have Wi-Fi now, although a consistent strong connection is still lacking everywhere.

SIM Card

As soon as you arrive at the airport you can buy local SIM card with few local networks provider such as TELMA, AIRTEL, ORANGE... they have different offers from just allow you to make a phone call or getting internet connection from your devices, to top up your credit you can get the vouchers from small shops, station, supermarket

Luggage and suitcase

If you decided to go on the life-changing river trip with a traditional wooden pirogue, make sure you bring your backpack as it can be convenient to lean against but also to be flexible, for example with a night of camping. Same counts for daytrips, a backpack with a few necessary items (such as sun block lotion, camera, water, and raincoat) is indispensable. Apart from this you are free to choose any type of suitcases for your main luggage. For every extra kg you pay 3 500 Ariary (1€)

Pack list

- Valid Passport more that 6 months with more than 2 pages available
- Light clothing if you travel from September till May
- Light sweater when you travel between June till August
- Rain coat if you are sure to go to the rain area (east part of the Island)
- Walking boots if you will opt hike such as in Andringitra, Ranomafana, Tsingy

- Binoculars
- Sun`s cream
- Sleeping bag (if you need your own)
- Tents (if it is not supplied)
- Mosquito spray
- Hat or cap
- Personal belonging and necessities

Packages

On your arrival we reserve always time to make a final briefing and also we hand to you on package the following documents in original versions:

Final program, vouchers, park`s tickets and entrance permits, feed-back file, car evaluation report if you opt self-driving car rental, Madagascar Map and some small gift from the company

Visits

Whenever your guide or driver takes you to visit local workshops along the road, you have the free choices whether to purchase items or not. Do not feel obliged to buy the products they make although it will be highly appreciated, you are already supporting the locals by simply visiting the workshop.

There are national parks or reserve which are managed by the national parks and as well local community reserves, in all these places the entrance fees are different but all require local guide that you can have upon arrival at the entrance

Beggars and general safety

Just to be realistic, Madagascar is a poor country so to not make a big difference with the locals and yourself kindly leave your expensive and precious jewelry behind. Ranging from old beggars to children, pick pocketing happens very fast and in clever ways. Likewise, it is prohibited to give something to children in an open place. The number of children running towards you begging for that same item you just gave to 1 child will make you dizzy.

Whenever you feel like giving common goods or gifts to children, it is always a wise decision to hand them over to the adults around and your responsibility will end there.

Whenever you would like to go out to enjoy night life be sure to be accompanied by your guide, driver or take a taxi back to your hotel. Never walk on your own in strange places even during the day time.

Airport check-in:

International: 3 hours in advance

Regional flights: 2 hours in advance

Domestic flights: 2 hours in advance. For these flights your luggage allowance is 20 kg.

Gratuities, tipping

Tips refer to well-executed services. Apart from the financial benefit such confirmation of your satisfaction is important for the Malagasy society. Nevertheless, tips are never compulsory. There is no official chart for tipping, you can think of 10 % as a reference but in general just calculate according to your happiness.

The porter kindly carrying your luggage can be given 3 000 Ariary (more or less an 1 Euro). If your restaurant bill comes to 48 000 you can just pay 50 000 Ariary and leave the change. In the national parks or reserves, after the hike with your local guide you can leave a tip around of 25 000 to 40 000 Ariary and if at the small reserves 10 000 to 15 000 Ariary. Your driver will be with you during your whole holiday and when you are generally satisfied with him you can calculate 20.000 - 30.000 Ariary a day.

Your accompanying guide who will share his time long of your trip can be tipped 30.000 - 40.000 Ariary

Please remember again that tipping is not compulsory and those tourism guys are not working every day.

Helping Hands

Dear travelers, please consider all the simple things you can do to help some of the Malagasy people through easy gestures such as donating old clothes. But also think twice before you send other useful materials to the bin the period prior to your trip to Madagascar. Shoes, baby tools, kitchen tools, school materials, technology; anything will be very much appreciated by local organizations we work with. Or maybe you would like to hand over such gifts yourself to a school or orphanage? We encourage such gifts much rather than giving money and candy to people. You often have the right to carry more kilos of luggage on your international flight than you might need. Check with your airline company.

How we work

On moment you send your request by e-mail you should receive an answer within 24 hours at last, in case you don't please kindly check the e-mail address and resend it.

If you are already in Madagascar you can use one of the phone number (cf: contact) to make an appointment with one of our sales agent.

As we are specialized tailor-made tour operator, we build together with you your trip plan until you are satisfied on it. On your confirmation, we send you a general information file to subscribe on our tour, a bill states the amount you have to pay if the tour is booked less than a month before arrival, 50% deposit is required if your arrival time is still more than a month.

Payment upon arrival (Cash, VISA & Master credit or debit card) can be made in specific condition and we don't guarantee the service quality for last minute booking.

Booking and Payment Conditions

We always give fair prices to our clients whether they are direct travelers or via our collaborator agencies from overseas. We have a very simple booking policy: after having found an agreement on

your respective tour with our sales agents, you will be send some documents including the final itinerary, a form to fill out with all necessary info such as insurance, and you will receive a contract/invoice needing your signature. These forms should be signed, scanned and returned back to us by email to confirm your booking.

After the booking we will ask a front payment of 50% of the total amount as deposit. The other 50% can be either paid cash upon arrival or once again transferred a few weeks before your arrival. Credit card payment will be free of charge. Fees for any transfer that are made by your bank remain at your charge. We take care of ours.

Cancellation conditions

Should there be any unexpected incidents that force you to cancel your trip; we always try to be as comprehensive as possible. Refund will be fairly calculated between the departure and the cancelling time. There is a 20% tax rate of our total cost, Air ticket taxes, hotel & tourist taxes are non-refundable. Also some extra charges as cancellation fees, bank transfer fees will be deducted on the amount to be refunded.

Booked excursion and not consumed services because of your own decision are not refundable

Even you buy domestic flight with ramartour we don't guarantee any schedule, the cancellation

Refund might take some time and don't forget to supply to us your bank information in order to transfer the amount

Car rental conditions

Our car rental divides in two Options:

1st option is Car rental includes a driver mostly bilingual (En & Fr) a daily briefing with the driver is recommended to make your trip much more comfortable, Our driver represents our company

and all problems should be solved locally with him before you judge office's assistance is required

We keep to a daily distance of a maximum of approximately 450 km a day (06 am till 6.00 pm when it becomes dark). When renting a car, don't forget to calculate the costs for fuel for the car to get back mostly in the capital

Unless agreed upon other requirements. Self-driving is not recommended considering the challenging roads and (lack of) traffic 'rules'. The type of car is chosen according to the type of road accessed on your specific itinerary. Only authorized passengers can come with the car from the start of the trip.

Car evaluation report file has to be filled in with our agent before you start your trip.

Should there be other people hitchhiking who you would like to join the trip, you need to ask for the agency's permission first, we are not in charge of the matters might the other passenger produce during your joined trip

Camping places

There are few camping places where you can take overnight close by some parks or reserve please consult the website of the Madagascar National Park to learn more about those places.

Wherever you would like to spend some time or overnight in village, please get in touch with the village chief or elder person before installing your tent

Never stay in national park or reserves without permission and accompanied by local guide or your driver/guide or path finder.

After your trip

You are invited to report via the last staff of the company in whom you will meet about your trip, feel free to write an e-mail to

report some issues or getting further explanation. A feedback form is on your package list to feel in your remarks.

Ramartour Madagascar is always available for your trip so never hesitate to contact us

Contacts

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...let us guide you!