



Remote River Expeditions



Madagascar Escape to Western Madagascar

Manambolo River / Tsingy de Bemaraha / Kirindy Forest

14 Days

Detailed Itinerary

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Day 1 Arrive **Antananarivo**. You will be met upon arrival to Ivato Airport and transfer together to the Mahavelo Hotel for welcome dinner and overnight. (D)

Day 2 Early morning drive to **Andasibe (Perinet) Reserve**, crossing the famous cliff of La Mandraka with a panoramic view of the Anjiro plain. This is the domain of the Indri Indri, the tallest living lemur, smaller Fulvus, and Rubriventer lemurs can also be seen. We enjoy an afternoon walking safari in the primary forest of the large Mantadia National Park. After dinner we take a night walk for nocturnal lemurs and birds (nightjars & owls). Accommodation at the Hotel Feon'ny Ala. (B,L,D)

Day 3 Overland passing back across La Mandraka we travel through typical landscape from Antananarivo to the Ampefy lakes situated in the mid-west of Madagascar. After lunch we continue west to **Tsiroanomandidy**. The landscape is dominated by eroded hills that serve as pasture land to the numerous cattle of the west. This typical Malagasy landscape also offers a variety of endemic water birds along our way. We overnight in Tsiroanomandidy at a basic local hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 4 After breakfast we transfer to the airstrip and take a short (25 mins) flight over the Bongolava mountain range from **Tsiroanomandidy to Akavandra**. On arrival we meet our team of river guides and following lunch begin our journey on the tranquil **Manambolo River**. This is an isolated area of Madagascar that is only accessible by canoe or by foot. Camping. (B,L,D)

Day 5 – 7 **Canoeing on the Manambolo River**. On the river we'll use 14ft canoes, paddling each day from camp to camp. No previous experience is needed as there are no rapids and the river remains calm throughout the journey. Local Malagasy river guides will be along as assist as needed. Camping. (B,L,D)

Day 8 **Gorge Camp**. The landscape changes abruptly as we go deeper into unspoiled parts of Madagascar passing into the spectacular "Gorges of Manambolo River". Spending of the day in a canyon where a small river with clear blue-green water meets the brown water of the Manambolo, creating a striking contrast. This is really a fascinating place and we enjoy bathing and exploration the tropical deciduous forest harboring a great variety of wildlife. The vertical rock cliffs on both sides of the river create an astonishing silent and wonderful evening campsite. Camping. (B,L,D)

Day 9 After breakfast we continue downstream through the imposing gorge, between limestone walls and overhangs on which we can see peculiar vegetation, much birdlife, and the shrill cries of black parrots resound against the cliffs. This is our last day of canoeing. At midday, we come out to **Andadonay (near Bekopaka)** and an opportunity to enjoy a cold drink. Camping. (B,L,D)

In the afternoon visit to the '**Petite**' **Tsingy de Bemaraha**. This is Madagascar's largest reserve, classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, certain fascinating raised limestone plateaus decorated

with chaotic razor sharp pinnacles with the underground cave systems and many succulents growing in the crevices. Croco Camp. (B,L,D)

Day 10 After the breakfast, we enjoy a full day visit to the ‘**Grand’ Tsingy** before returning to Bekopaka and our overnight camp. (B,L,D)

Day 11 Following an early breakfast we travel overland from **Bekopaka**, enjoy lunch in Belo Tsiribihina and cross the Tsiribihina River by local ferry boat. We continue south through the deciduous forestland to the **Kirindy Forest** also known as the ‘Swiss Forest’. After dinner we take an evening walk in the forest. Overnight camping or in the rustic bungalows in the forest. (B,L,D)

Day 12 Early morning and afternoon walks in the **Kirindy Forest**. This is the most rewarding natural area for seeing Madagascar’s endemic western dry forest species. The 25,000-acre forest has the greatest density and diversity of primates in the world. Dominated by majestic baobab trees, the forest is home to the world’s smallest known primate as well as dozens of amphibian and reptile species (and no poisonous snakes).

The Kirindy boasts more than 60 species of birds. Possible sighting include: White-headed Vanga, Rufous Vanga, White-breasted Mesite, Coquerel's Coua, Crested Coua, Sickle-billed Vanga, Chabert's Vanga, Cuckoo Roller, Grey-headed Lovebird, Madagascar Nightjar, Henst Goshawk and Banded Kestrel. Along with a stunning variety of unique flora the forest is home to 8 lemur species.

In the late afternoon we continue south and enjoy a romantic sunset visit at the world famous Ave of the Baobabs before reaching the costal town **Morondava**. Overnight at the Chez Maggie Hotel. (B,L,D)

Day 13 Largely an undiscovered gem we enjoy a relaxing day in the tranquil coastal town of **Morondava**. Our home base is the Chez Maggie Hotel, a romantic hide-away in a comfortable garden setting. The hotel features: air-conditioned 2-story chalets and bungalows; superb cuisine; swimming pool and a full service bar. Lunch is on your own but included optional activities are available: paddling in the mangrove swamps or dowha sailing on the Mozambique Channel.

The choice is yours: stroll along the beach, swim in the warm water of the Mozambique Channel, lounge by the pool, or take a walk through town for local flavor and shopping. After enjoying the setting sun over the channel we sample the excellent cuisine of Le Masoandro Restaurant at the Chez Maggie. Two discotheques near the hotel are also open for evening entertainment. Chez Maggie Hotel. (B,D)

Day 14 Following breakfast we transfer to the airport for our flight from **Morondava to Antananarivo**. After transferring downtown to the Hotel du Louvre (our hotel for the night) we enjoy a sunset farewell dinner and celebration at the Grill du Rova overlooking the capital. Connect to outbound flights or overnight at the Hotel du Louvre. (B,D) **End of services.**

Pre & Post Trip Options

For those with more time there are a variety of pre & post trip options including snorkeling and diving in **Belo su Mer** and trekking in **Isalo National Park**. Or just relaxing on the beach at the Chez Maggie Hotel in Morondava.

Tour Notes

ITINERARY: *Although we will do our very best to adhere to the itinerary schedule as listed, it is subject to change for numerous reasons beyond our control. If the trip is delayed because of bad weather, cancelled or delayed flights or delays on other modern transportation, sickness, or other situation for which Remote River Expeditions or its agents cannot make provisions, the cost of delays is not included. Please read the Limitations of Liability paragraph in our Booking Information.*

Includes: Expert leadership and excellent naturalist guides, airport transfers, all hotels and meals outside Tana (except some lunches as noted above), river trip, camp and cook staff, camping and commissary equipment, National Park entrance fees, room occupancy taxes, all ground transportation and domestic flights: Tsiroanomandidy / Akavandra and Morondava / Antananarivo.

Excludes: International flights, visas, airport taxes, lunches and dinners in Tana, insurance of any kind, tips, laundry, excess baggage, cost of immunizations, drinks ((sodas, alcoholic drinks) and item of a personal nature.