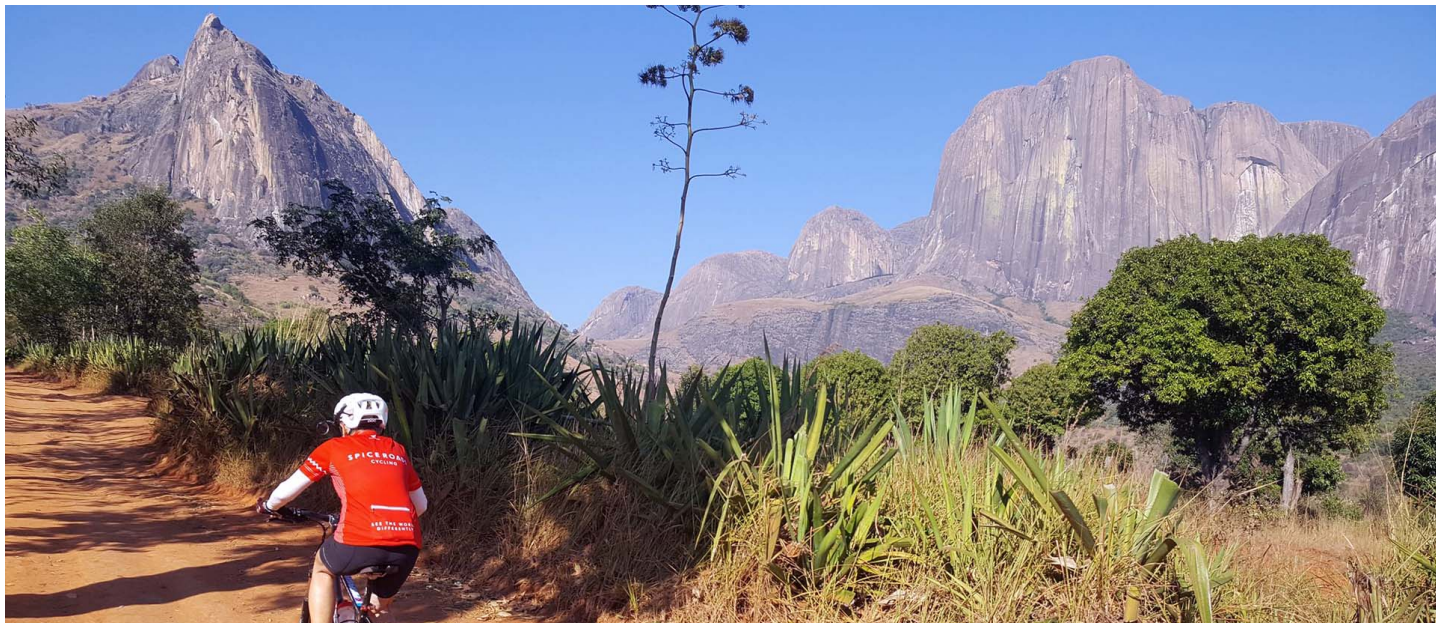


# SPICE ROADS

## CYCLING



## BIKE AND HIKE WILD MADAGASCAR

Tour Code  
**MDR-MWM**

**15** DAYS  
**14** NIGHTS

	Destinations	Madagascar
	Tour Meets	Antananarivo, Madagascar
	Tour Ends	Toliara, Madagascar
	Fly in to	Ivato International Airport (TNR)
	Fly out of	Toliara Airport (TLE)
	Group Size	2-16 riders
	Minimum Age	18 (on scheduled departures)

## ACTIVITY PROFILE



<b>9</b> Cycling days	<b>497</b> km Total cycling distance
<b>55</b> km Avg distance / day	<b>610</b> m Avg climbing / day

## PRICING



Price  
Bike Hire (Mountain Bike)  
Single Supplement

US\$ 3,700  
US\$ 260  
US\$ 490

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Airport drop off
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

## DEPARTURES



09 June - 23 June 2024  
21 July - 04 August 2024  
18 August - 01 September 2024  
22 September - 06 October 2024  
13 October - 27 October 2024  
04 May - 18 May 2025  
08 June - 22 June 2025  
20 July - 03 August 2025  
17 August - 31 August 2025  
21 September - 05 October 2025

See website for later departures

## TRIP PROFILE

This journey is a multi-activity tour consisting of 500 km of riding and up to 50 km of hiking. This trip is recommended for confident and physically fit riders looking for a challenging experience with a variety of off-road activities.

Although for some riders the journey may at first seem overwhelming, the rewards for your effort are priceless. It will also have lasting memories once you have made up your mind to get in the saddle, and those adventurous minds are sure to make the most of their time on this one-of-a-lifetime expedition.

Your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of water and refreshments along the way. A support vehicle accompanies us for the whole trip and weary cyclists can take a rest anytime (though the vehicle won't always be directly following us when we are off-roading).

**Suitability:** A large portion of this trip takes place off-road, so we recommend that participants be physically fit and confident riding on rough terrain. In addition, as this cycling adventure is complimented by two days of hiking through rugged terrain, a moderate level of physical fitness will be an asset.

**Biking Conditions:** The off-road portions of this trip are offset by flat tarmac and hard-packed roads. Overall on this tour about 60% off the road surfaces are paved/hard-packed and 40% are off-road. While the trails are generally smooth, some sections have loose gravel and sandy patches that could prove hazardous to riders. Additionally, as some of the descents can be rocky, extra caution is recommended.



### Day 1 Arrive in Antananarivo

We meet at the hotel in Antananarivo, Madagascar's capital, known locally as Tana. Madagascar's capital takes its name from an episode in Malagasy history in which King Andrianjaka, who had his royal palace and stronghold constructed called One Thousand Warriors, named this city Antananarivo. If you arrive early, explore the rich cultural, historical, and architectural sites, but be warned there are hundreds of ancient stone steps to climb in this hillside city. We gather in the early evening for a trip briefing and welcome dinner.



Combava Hotel



Dinner

## Day 2 Antananarivo – Antsirabe

We transfer four hours to Antsirabe, 170 km south of Antananarivo, and on the way, stop to visit an aluminium pot making factory in Ambatolampy. The drive takes us along a gravel road in the highlands past rice paddies and fruit plantations, with smiling and friendly locals on bikes waving to us. Due to its geographical setting, Antsirabe and nearby thermal springs, at 1,370 m (4,500 ft) above sea level, has been a popular retreat since the late 1800s. Upon arrival in Antsirabe, we meet our bikes and go for a short ride at a leisurely pace with a variety of road conditions ranging from tarmac to back roads, along with some climbs and descents before we truly start exploring wild Madagascar.



Chambres du Voyageur



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 15km

## Day 3 Antsirabe Loop

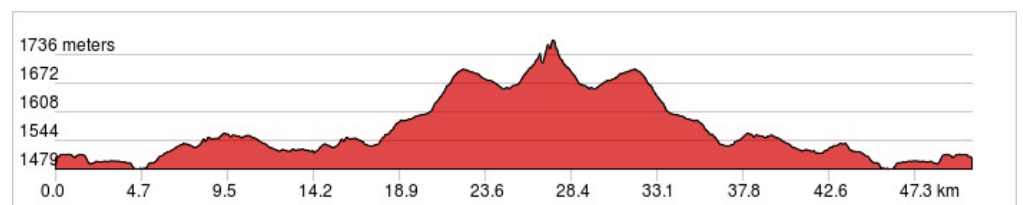
We spend the day exploring the region around Antsirabe with the highlight being the crater lakes of Andraikiba and Tritriva. Riding on paved and dirt roads with gentle undulations, we explore the first caldera located just 7 km west of the city. This former centre of water sports activities is believed to be haunted by a pregnant woman after she drowned herself many years back, and legend has it that she rests on a rock by the lakeside! We then continue by climbing through terraced rice paddies and on a single-track trail to Lake Tritriva, a glassy, 160-m deep body of water bordered by lush greenery. Nestled at 1880 m at the top of the towering Mount Tritriva, which gives the lake its name, the lake has an interesting and even strange character as the water drops during the monsoon season yet overflows during the dry months. This caldera is also teeming with myths and legends with the most prominent one being a love story about a couple named Rabbinically and Ravolahanta, who jumped off the cliff into the lake and drowned themselves, so they could be together forever. We have a picnic lunch by this spectacular yet mysterious place before hopping onto the bikes and enjoying a long downhill back to our accommodation.



Chambres du Voyageur



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 54km



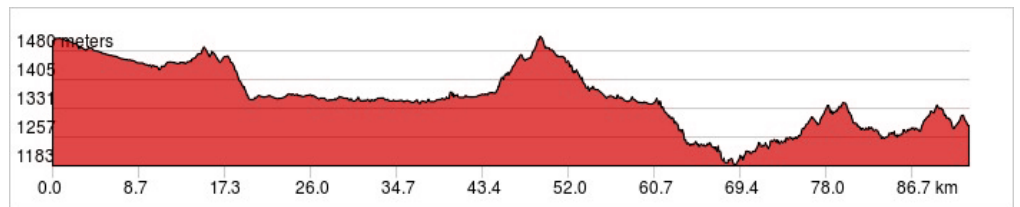
+569m

## Day 4 Antsirabe – Ambositra

After breakfast, we cycle south on a hilly road to Ambositra in central Madagascar. Although today's ride is one of the longest of the journey, 95 km, the all-paved road makes the trip extremely pleasant as we pass many terraced rice paddies that harvested up to three times a year. Ambositra is home to the Zafimaniry, an ethnic people who live in the forested mountains southeast of the city and are famous for their wood carvings, listed as part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage. We visit a Zafimaniry carpenter who will impress us first-hand with his carving skills that have been handed down for generations.



 Artisan Hotel  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

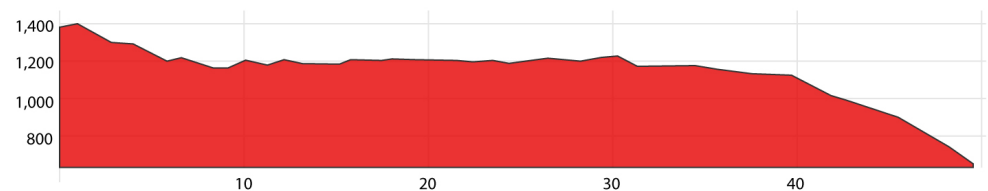


 Ride 95km  +819m

## Day 5 Ambositra - Ranomafana National Park

A three-hour van transfer takes us to our starting point where we ride through fields and end at a lush rainforest. On a rural road, we pedal through a spectacular valley with towering granite boulders all the way to Ambohimahaso, a small district with a quiltwork of fields and terraced rice paddies. After two climbs on a short tar section, we ride 20 km off road through more villages and eucalyptus forests until we reach the dense rainforest of Ranomafana National Park, with the last 10 km being a downhill to our lodge on the river.

 Le Grenat  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



 Ride 58km  +336m

## Day 6 Ranomafana National Park Hike

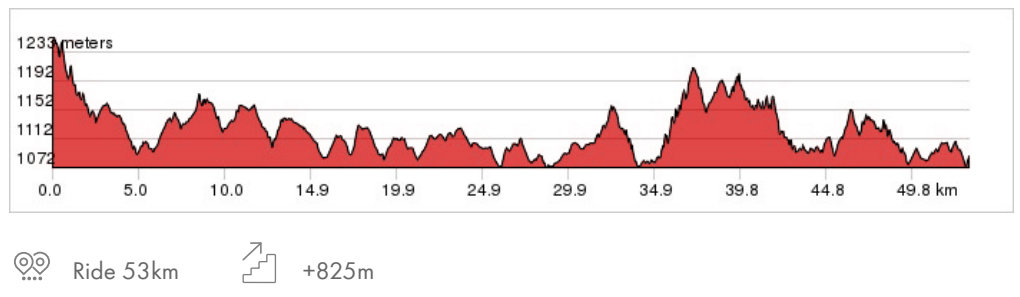
We switch modes from biking to hiking and explore Madagascar's most spectacular natural treasure, Ranomafana National Park, which is home to the golden bamboo lemur and more than 100 bird species, 30 of which alone are endemic to the country. Trekking through the dense rainforest, we will come across interesting, bizarre animals and plants found nowhere else in the world. We will also be drawn by rare birds and many species of lemur, and if lucky, we might spot one or two golden bamboo lemurs, now threatened with extinction. Depending on where the lemurs are, our hike will vary from 4 to 6 hours and between 10-12 km. We stop for lunch at a local restaurant, and then the afternoon is free for you to visit the peaceful village of Ranomafana or relax your muscles in the nearby thermal springs. In the evening, we take an easy night walk in the park to spot nocturnal animals, such as the mouse lemur and the striped civet.

 Le Grenat  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 7 Ranomafana – Sahambavy

Rise early and after breakfast, we have short drive back up the hill to have an easier start to our day. During today's ride, we'll be off road for 22 km and due to bridges being out, our support vehicle cannot follow. Once we meet up again, we have a picnic lunch amongst the tea plants the Sahambavy Tea Estate, the only tea plantation in Madagascar. Set in a stunning valley beside Lake Sahambavy, the estate was created in 1970 and produces large quantities of tea both for export to Mombasa in Kenya and for local consumption. We overnight in charming bungalows set amidst a lovely garden and overlooking a glassy lake.

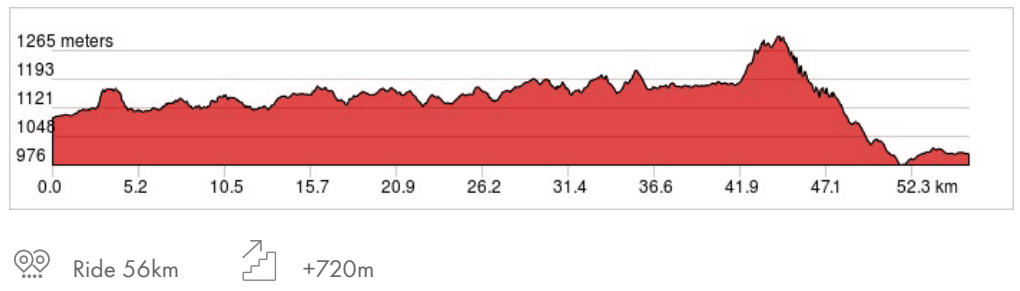
 Lac Hotel  Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



## Day 8 Sahambavy – Ambalavao

Following a delightful breakfast, we take a short transfer to the city of Fianarantsoa, where you have time for a bit of shopping before we continue southward to Ambalavao by bike. Fianarantsoa is the capital of the Betsileo ethnic group who inhabits the highlands of Madagascar. The landscape is again captivating with undulations and breath-taking views of vineyards, terraced rice paddies, and rocky outcrops. We then pedal further with a 10-km downhill to compensate for the climb up to Ambalavao, the wine region of Madagascar and a beautiful town with brightly painted buildings. Upon arrival, if time allows, we may visit a craft shop which produces the well-known Antaimoro paper, hand-crafted papyrus.

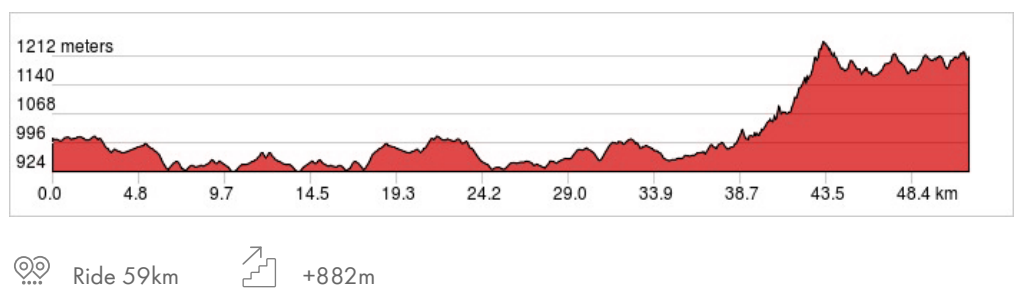
Espace Zongo   Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



## Day 9 Ambalavao - Anja Park – Andringitra

We leave the market town of Ambalavao and get in the saddle for another day of riding further south. While cruising, you will notice the landscape gradually changing into open grassland savannah dotted with enormous granite mountains. Bizarre formations of towering cliffs await us in the small natural reserve of Anja, along with superb scenery, exotic plants, caves, tombs, and ring-tailed lemurs. We take an hour walk into the park before we leave the road cutting through the Tsaranoro Valley of the Andringitra Range. Our 20 km off-road effort is rewarded with our delightful accommodation.

Camp Catta   Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



## Day 10 Andringitra Massif Hike

We start our hiking day at the edge of the granite Andringitra Massif, a rugged range that has over the years become a hiking paradise. It was formed by an abrupt volcanic event that took place millions of years ago. The range is well-known not only for the world-famous ring-tailed lemur, but also for its bizarre yet stunning rugged landscape, charming pastoral culture, and variety of native animals and plants. Due to its rich biodiversity, Andringitra was declared a nature reserve in 1927 and, 60 years later, a national park. Once we reach Chameleon Peak,



we can appreciate panoramic views over this rocky highland with a stunning landscape of prairies and alpine patches. Our hike will take 4-6 hours, and we have the afternoon free for a swim and to try and catch sight of ring-tail lemurs as they pass through camp.



Camp Catta



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 11 Andringitra – Horombe Plateau – Ranohira

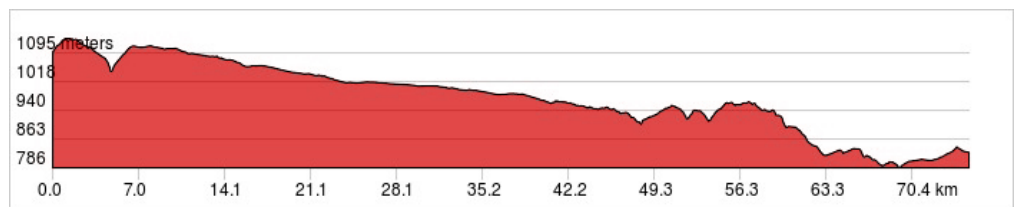
We transfer (4 hours) back to the paved road to Ankaramena. This place is well-known for its sweet and juicy mangoes and papayas, and after a short fruit break, we continue the drive to lunch shortly after we pass Ihosy. Here we start our ride downhill across the vast Horombe Plateau towards Ranohira. You will notice the landscape slowly transforming into a wide-open savannah. Dry grass glows in the beaming sun, and the distances between villages become longer. In this region, there is mostly the ethnic group of Barra people who live and breed Zebu cattle. The first 50 km of today's ride are flat and then the hills begin 25 km before we reach the town of Ranohira. Our lodge is located at the base of Isalo National Park and have a perfect view for sunset.



Hotel H1



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 75km



+332m

## Day 12 L'Isalo Massif

L'Isalo is a vast region of wind-polished and water-scoured rock towers, deep canyons, gorges, and oases. This huge mountain range is spectacular with its ventifacts, eroded sandstone boulders caused by wind. Our adventure begins with a short vehicle transfer to the starting point of our hike in L'Isalo National Park. In this exotic park, we trek through its captivating Jurassic-era landscapes formed by millions of years of erosion. On the way, we visit canyons, looking for the ring-tailed lemur, as well as other lemurs that epitomise Madagascar. We can refresh ourselves on the way at a waterfall or take a dip in a natural pool. A catered picnic lunch will give us enough energy to carry on up the canyon to see the blue and black natural pools. After the walk of 4-6 hours, we transfer back to the hotel.



Hotel H1



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 13 Ranohira – Ilkaka – Toliara

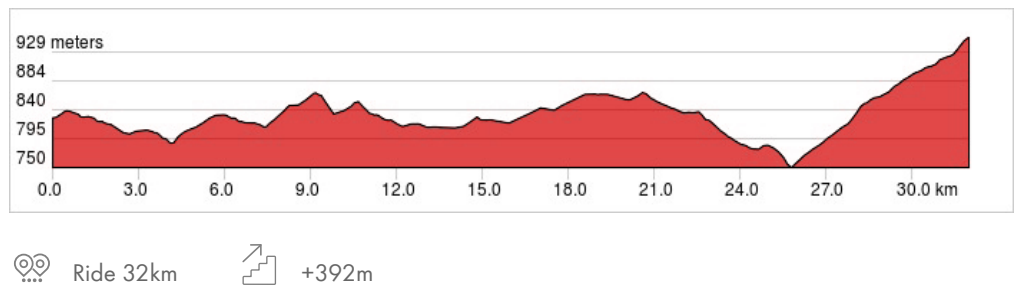
After breakfast, we continue cycling through the national park with a view on sandstone formations, rugged canyons, and grasslands to the town of Ilakaka, famous globally for its world-class alluvial sapphire deposits. After our morning cycle, we load the bikes for a transfer of approximately 5 hours by van, with a stop for a picnic lunch, to reach the coastal town of Toliara in the afternoon. Home to the Vezo, a well-known maritime people, Toliara is also a most important trade centre in southern Madagascar. We overnight at a charming hotel elegantly located on the Bay of Ifaty and just steps away from the deep blue sea.



La Mira



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



## Day 14 Toliara Rest Day

After the long journey, it's time for us to rest our legs and enjoy our well-deserved reward for our determination, the beach! Soaking up the warm sun and balmy sky, you can lie on the beach while sipping your favourite drink or get in the turquoise water of the Indian Ocean for a swim to refresh yourself and drive off the heat. At the coral reef right before your eyes, discover colourful marine life while snorkelling. If you would like to learn more about unique plant life, don't forget to take a walk through the nearby natural reserve known for its variety of didieraceae, adasonia, euphorbia, and baobab trees. We have a farewell dinner tonight to celebrate all that we have discovered together.



La Mira



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 15 Departure

Our tour ends after breakfast, but we can assist you in extending your holiday on the beach or help to arrange a transfer to the airport for your onward flight.



Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

## NUTS & BOLTS

### Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we do not provide them as part of this tour. However, you can hire bikes locally for the price listed in the tour pricing section.

If you bring your own bike, please make sure it is a mountain bike, preferably with front suspension in good mechanical order.

### Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

### Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

## Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

## THE NITTY GRITTY

### Passports and Visas

Visa requirements for Madagascar are straight forward depending on your total length of stay in the country:

- **A stay less than 15 days:** No visa is required. However, you must pay an administrative fee of \$10 USD upon arrival at Ivato International Airport.
- **15 - 30 days:** Visa-On-Arrival obtainable for \$37 USD.
- **30 - 60 days:** Visa-On-Arrival obtainable for \$45 USD.
- For visas covering a longer period of stay please contact the Madagascar embassy closest to you as you will need to procure a visa in advance.

Make sure you have the exact amount in cash ready to pay.

**Important:** Your passport must be valid for 6 months from the date you arrive, and with at least 2 blank visa pages. You must be able to show confirmation of your travel dates (i.e. have a return flight confirmation).

For more information please visit [here](#).

### Health

No vaccinations are required. However, it is encouraged to consult your physician if you need any preventive medication before you travel.

### Weather

Dominated by the southern trade winds from the Indian Ocean Madagascar has two seasons, a warm, wet season (November – April); and a dry, cool season (May – October). However, due to its geographic setting this island country has a variety of climatic patterns – tropical in the north, temperate in the central, and arid in the south. Although the western and southwestern parts are hot in the summer, the weather is warm, with blue skies and a lot of sunshine during the winter months. Also note that in the central highlands the weather can get fairly chilly in the day and cold at night, so **warm clothing is highly recommended**.

### Food

Meals are included as per the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner. Malagasy cuisine incorporates many ingredients and culinary techniques in its dishes that reflect Southeast Asian, African and European influences. With rice as the main staple most meals consist of local dishes that include curries, soups, and salads, and we will make sure you sample as much variety as possible. Be sure to try Akoho Sy Voanio, a chicken dish made juicy and aromatic with coconut, tomato, onion, garlic and ginger. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

### Drink

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. Beer is freely available everywhere in Madagascar, but is NOT included in the price.

### Solo Travelers

SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single



supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

### Extra Expenses

We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars, perhaps US\$20, for incidentals. It is customary to tip local tour guides and drivers, however, the amount you give should be dependent on the level of service you receive.

### Money

Madagascar's currency is the Malagasy ariary (AR) and is used throughout the country. Euros are also widely accepted, with US dollars occasionally accepted in the capital, major cities and tourist attractions. However, while ATMs are available in Antananarivo and other major towns, you are allowed to draw only around €150 per transaction. In addition, as credit cards are not widely accepted except at a few luxury hotels, upscale restaurants, Air Madagascar offices and travel agencies, it is recommended you have enough cash on hand. The most useful card is Visa, with MasterCard welcomed only in some stores. Visa and MasterCard can also be used to get cash advances (in ariary) at the banks which also change travellers cheques and cash in major currencies. Ivato Airport also has a foreign-exchange counter offering exchange rates as good as those at the banks, and is quite convenient for tourists upon their arrival to the country, but be sure to count your money immediately so that you haven't been short changed as there have been a number of reports of fraud committed by its staff.

## GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

### FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

### CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our [Booking Conditions](#) in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please [email us](#) or call our office.

### TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please [email us](#) or call our office.

### BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into [Manage My Trip](#) (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems [please send us an email](#), or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

### BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

## DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

## FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our [cancellation policy](#).

## Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

## International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your [travel insurance](#) that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

## Newsletter

Our adventure travel [e-newsletter](#) is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Please note that the itinerary is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, however, we will always do our best to adhere to this original itinerary

## CONTACT US

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