



# Central Madagascar

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## Best Places to Stay

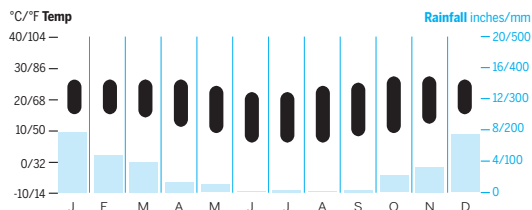
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## Why Go?

The classic tourist route from Antananarivo (Tana) takes you south along the RN7 through Central Madagascar, a high plateau stretching all the way to Fianarantsoa. You'll twist and turn through these highlands, a region of scenic hills and rice paddies that resists generalisation. Here you'll find a potpourri of traveller's delights: bustling market towns clogged with colourful *pousse-pousse* (rickshaws), a famous railway line, small villages of distinctive two-storey mudbrick homes with porches and thatched roofs, a mountain stronghold of lemurs, the legacy of French colonialism, national parks with landscapes ranging from thick jungle to wide-open grandeur, and some of the best trekking Madagascar has to offer. For many people this is their introduction to the country, and it's a good one, with a variety of attractions linked by a gentle road as well as friendly residents.

## When to Go

### Antsirabe



**Jul-Sep** *Famadihana* ceremonies take place in the Antsirabe area; visitors may be invited to attend.

**Apr-May** Countryside is greenest following the end of the rainy season.

**Sep-Oct** Best weather of the year, animals active, lemurs have babies.



## Central Madagascar Highlights

- 1 Kick back on a *pousse-pousse* tour of **Antsirabe** (p51)
- 2 Search out chameleons on a night walk in **Parc National de Ranomafana** (p57)
- 3 Stroll through the eerie main street of **Ambalavao** (p67)
- 4 Commune with ring-tailed lemurs in **Réserve d'Anja** (p67)
- 5 Scale Madagascar's second-highest mountain, Pic Bobby, in spectacular **Parc National d'Andringitra** (p68)
- 6 Sit by the village well in the paradisiacal **Tsaranoro Valley** (p68)
- 7 Ride the colourful **FCE railway** (p63) from Fianarantsoa to Manakara
- 8 Paddle a pirogue down the **Canal des Pangalanes** (p65)