



Central Madagascar

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ La Rizière (p67)
- ➔ Chez Jenny (p55)
- ➔ Café Mirana (p54)
- ➔ Sharon (p63)
- ➔ Le Rendez-Vous des Pêcheurs (p50)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Lac Hôtel (p63)
- ➔ Camp Catta (p72)
- ➔ Chambres des Voyageurs (p53)
- ➔ Chez Billy (p53)
- ➔ Hôtel Anjara (p56)

Why Go?

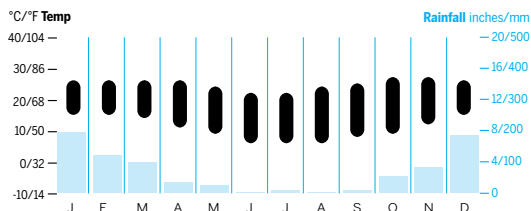
The classic tourist route from Antananarivo (Tana) takes you south along the RN7 through central Madagascar, a high plateau stretching all the way to Fianarantsoa. You'll twist and turn through these highlands, a region of scenic hills and rice paddies that resists generalisation.

Here you'll find a potpourri of travellers' delights: bustling market towns clogged with colourful pousse-pousse (rickshaws), a famous railway line, a distinctive architecture of two-storey mud-brick homes, 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 hiking Madagascar has to offer.

For many people this is their introduction to the country, and it's a good one, with almost all attractions accessible by paved road.

When to Go

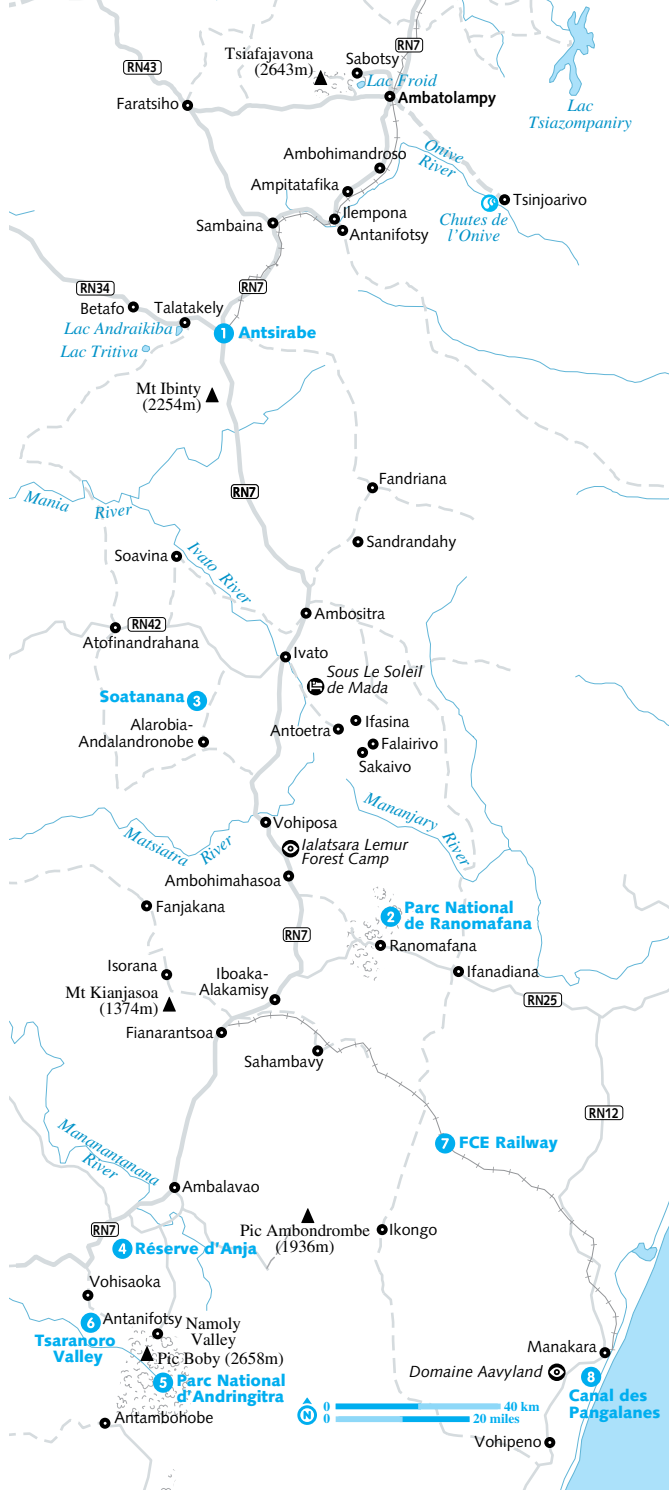
Antsirabe



Jul-Sep *Famadihana* (exhumation and reburial) ceremonies take place across the region.

Apr & May The countryside is at its greenest following the end of the rainy season.

Sep & Oct Best weather of the year; animals are active, and lemurs have babies.



Central Madagascar Highlights

- 1 Hit the trails around **Antsirabe** (p52), by foot or mountain bike
- 2 See how many species of lemurs you can tot up during your time in **Parc National de Ranomafana** (p58)
- 3 Watch Madagascar wild silk being made in **Soatanana** (p54)
- 4 Commune with ring-tailed lemurs in **Réserve d'Anja** (p68)
- 5 Scale Madagascar's second-highest mountain, Pic Boby, in spectacular **Parc National d'Andringitra** (p70)
- 6 Sit by the village well in the paradisiacal **Tsaranoro Valley** (p71)
- 7 Ride the colourful **FCE railway** (p66) from Fianarantsoa to Manakara
- 8 Paddle a pirogue down the **Canal des Pangalanes** (p61)