

# Reef & Rainforest



## **Madagascar Overland Encounters**

Escorted Group Tour - Led by Local Naturalist Guide

27 July – 11 August 2012

14 – 29 September 2012

02 – 17 October 2012

19 October – 03 November 2012



## **Madagascar Overland Encounters Escorted Group Tour**

This is an overland trip of exceptional variety and scope, with a price that will suit many budgets.

The adventure begins with walks in the famous rainforest reserve of Perinet for our first special lemur encounters. Perinet is home to the largest lemur, the tail-less Indri whose eerie territorial cry can be heard throughout the forest. Nearby wildlife-rich Mantadia National Park will also be explored before following the country's main highway through the cultivated Hauts Plateaux. Reach the rainforested hills and abundant wildlife of Ranomafana National Park, home of the recently discovered golden bamboo lemur, we then cross the vast Horombe plain, stopping at the scenic sandstone Isalo massif for rewarding walks in this strange landscape.

We will continue southwards to Ambola and experience the remote and unique Tsimanampetsotsa National Park. Here, amongst this area of spiny forest, we have a good chance to see flamingos, ring-tailed lemurs, vasa parrots, radiated tortoises and blind cave fish.

Finally take time out to relax on the beautiful beach at Anakao and visit a red-tailed tropic bird colony, before we head back north and homewards.

Throughout the programme, we will visit some superb reserves and landscapes containing an abundance of varied wildlife and unique plants which inhabit the different altitude and habitat zones. With an extremely attractive price tag and the chance to learn more about Malagasy culture, this itinerary has rightly become one of our most popular group tours suiting those of reasonable fitness, and fills up quickly each year. We wholeheartedly commend it to you, and strongly advise early booking to secure the limited spaces available.



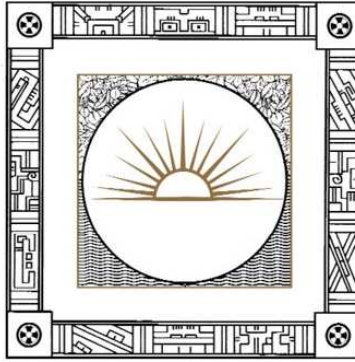


## MADAGASCAR OVERLAND ENCOUNTERS GROUP

16 DAYS – LED BY LOCAL NATURALIST GUIDE

### ITINERARY IN BRIEF

- Day 01 Depart **LONDON**. Arrive ANTANANARIVO (TANA). Met at airport. O/n RELAIS DES PLATEAUX, BB.
- Day 02 Drive to **PERINET RESERVE**. Evening walk for nocturnal wildlife. O/n VAKONA LODGE, FB.
- Day 03 Drive to **MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK**. Morning to explore the forest. Afternoon visit to **ANDASIBE** village. Evening wildlife walk. O/n VAKONA LODGE, FB.
- Day 04 Morning visit to **ANALAMAZAOTRA** (Perinet) Reserve. Drive to **ANTSIRABE**. O/n COULEUR CAFE, FB.
- Day 05 Drive through wonderful scenery to **RANOMAFANA RESERVE**, with stops of interest en route. Transfer to the lodge. O/n SETAM LODGE, FB.
- Day 06 Morning and afternoon to explore **RANOMAFANA RESERVE** in search of wildlife. O/n SETAM LODGE, FB.
- Day 07 Morning to explore **RANOMAFANA RESERVE**. Afternoon visit to the village. Night wildlife walk. O/n SETAM LODGE, FB.
- Day 08 Drive through changing landscapes to **ISALO**, with various stops en route. Arrive ISALO late in the afternoon. O/n HOTEL RELAIS DE LA REINE, FB.
- Day 09 Morning exploration of **ISALO NATIONAL PARK**. Visit Canyon des Makis / Rats or hike the Crêtes trail. O/n HOTEL RELAIS DE LA REINE, FB.
- Day 10 Morning hike in **ISALO NATIONAL PARK** to the **PISCINE NATURELLE**. Picnic lunch. Return to the hotel. Rest of the day to relax. O/n HOTEL RELAIS DE LA REINE, FB.
- Day 11 Early morning drive to **TULEAR**. Continue by boat / road to the beautiful beach at **ANAKAO**. Then continue to AMBOLA. O/n DOMAINE D'AMBOLA, FB.
- Day 12 Morning guided excursion to **TSIMANAMPETSOTSA NATIONAL PARK** - its flamingo lake, spiny forest and blind cave fish and wild ring-tailed lemurs. Picnic lunch then transfer to ANAKAO. O/n ANAKAO OCEAN LODGE, FB.
- Day 13 Morning excursion to the tropical island of **NOSY VE**, a rookery for the red-tailed tropic bird and opportunities for snorkelling / scuba diving. Rest of the day to enjoy **ANAKAO**. O/n ANAKAO OCEAN LODGE, FB.
- Day 14 Day at leisure in **ANAKAO** with OPTIONAL activities e.g. Vezo fishing village visit, kayaking, excursion by traditional pirogue, snorkelling, scuba diving, look for Elephant Bird (*Aepyornis*) egg remains. O/n ANAKAO OCEAN LODGE, FB.
- Day 15 Transfer to Tulear. Fly to TANA. Day use of a room at RELAIS DES PLATEAUX. Transfer to airport.
- Day 16 Catch flight to LONDON via PARIS. Arrive **LONDON**.



## MADAGASCAR OVERLAND ENCOUNTERS GROUP 2012

### DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 01 Depart LONDON and fly to PARIS. Connect with flight to ANTANANARIVO (TANA) IVATO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. Met on arrival at the airport and taken to a nearby hotel. O/n RELAIS DES PLATEAUX, BB. Situated about 10 minutes' drive from the airport, this comfortable three-star hotel set in exotic gardens offers well equipped, en suite rooms including air conditioning, satellite TV and mini-bar, decorated in Malagasy design using local materials. Other facilities in the hotel include a local handicraft shop, restaurant serving French cuisine and local delicacies, bar and swimming pool (heated in the cooler months).

Day 02 After a leisurely breakfast, drive (c. 3 – 4 hours) to PERINET RESERVE (also known as ANALAMAZAOTRA or ANDASIBE), passing through many villages and rice paddies. Perinet Reserve contains the largest lemur, the indri and seven other diurnal species, as well as chameleons, amphibians and the elusive Aye Aye (evidence of its presence much more easily seen than the animal itself!). The reserve is an excellent example of eastern rainforest habitat with many nature trails. Temperatures may become quite cool, especially in the evening and early mornings. Evening walk to spot mouse lemurs as well as pygmy chameleons and other nocturnal species. O/n VAKONA LODGE, FB. Located 7kms from the reserve, this is one of the best hotels in Perinet. It has a peaceful and attractive location and is three starred.



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Day 03

Drive c. 30 minutes to MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK, 25km to the north. Morning to explore the NATIONAL PARK in search of the diademmed sifaka and the black and white ruffed lemur, and other wildlife such as the extraordinary leaf-tail gecko. The walking here is a little harder than Perinet, but should be fine if one is fit with no mobility problems. Return to the hotel for lunch before visiting the village of ANDASIBE in the afternoon. Evening walk for those who wish to spot more nocturnal species. O/n VAKONA LODGE, FB.



Day 04

Morning visit to ANALAMAZAOTRA (Perinet) Reserve to look for the indri and the other diurnal species, as well as chameleons and odd insects like the giraffe-neck weevil.

Drive back towards TANA, then continue (c. 3.5 hrs) through Merina villages and mosaics of rice fields to ANTSIRABE, an attractive Hauts Plateaux spa town founded by Norwegian missionaries and noted for its rickshaws and thermal baths. O/n COULEUR CAFÉ, FB. A relatively new hotel, perhaps the best in Antsirabe. There are five comfortable bungalows with private bathroom, surrounded by beautiful gardens. There is a small restaurant serving traditional Malagasy cuisine.



Day 05

Drive through Bestileo country to RANOMAFANA, en route stopping at the woodcarving centre of AMBOSITRA, the origin of the intricate inlaid wood designs that are found throughout Madagascar (c. 5 hrs travel time, picnic lunch included). Arrive RANOMAFANA in the afternoon and transfer to the lodge. O/n SETAM LODGE, FB. This relatively new lodge is located close to the entrance of Ranomafana National Park, it offers good views to the forest. There are 20 bungalows, each with a small lounge and private bathroom.



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Day 06 Morning and afternoon walks in RANOMAFANA RESERVE in search of wildlife. Ranomafana is an exceptionally rich high-altitude rainforest reserve where the very rare golden bamboo lemur and eleven other lemur species exist. The trails can be steep and tough but generally the going is moderate. O/n SETAM LODGE, FB.



Day 07 Morning expedition in RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK. Return to the hotel for lunch. Afternoon visit to Ranomafana Village, before a night walk to spot dwarf lemur, lepilemur and other nocturnal species including perhaps the striped civet (bring torches). O/n SETAM LODGE, FB.

Day 08 Morning pick up from the hotel and drive (c. 3 hrs) south to ANJA PARK, with various stops en route including FIANARANTSOA and AMBALAVAO and a visit to the paper factory in ANTEMORO which involves important traditional skills for the tribe in this area. Visit the community-managed ANJA PARK to see habituated ring-tailed lemurs, offering good photographic opportunities. Continue the drive south (c. 3.5 hrs) through ever-changing scenery. Arrive ISALO late in the



afternoon and transfer to the hotel. O/n HOTEL RELAIS DE LA REINE, FB. The hotel, on the edge of ISALO NATIONAL PARK, blends in wonderfully with its surroundings. Very comfortable, with a swimming pool, solar power and large rooms. Just behind the hotel, across the small stream lined with pandanus, is a pocket of small hills and canyons where *Pachypodium* and *Aloe* plants may be found.

Day 09 Morning exploration of spectacular ISALO NATIONAL PARK. The Park, a runiforme limestone massif, contains wonderful scenery and unusual plants like the endemic 'elephant's foot' *Pachypodium rosalatum*, and is a sacred burial ground for the Bara tribe. Walk in the National Park (trail to be decided at the time, depending on the group's interests/fitness) e.g. take a short walk in the CANYON DES MAKIS and/or RATS where three species of lemur may be found (including the ring-tailed lemur and 'dancing' Verreaux's sifaka). Or take the 4km CRÊTES (CRESTS) TRAIL, with fascinating geological formations such as the Queen of the Isalo, the Wolf, the Boot, and the Tsingy of Isalo. Return to the hotel for lunch. Afternoon at leisure. O/n HOTEL RELAIS DE LA REINE, FB.

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Day 10

Another morning to explore ISALO NATIONAL PARK e.g. Visit NAMAHAHA, a good place for bird watching, then continue the walk through wonderful scenery to the PISCINE NATURELLE (natural swimming pool) a beautiful lush oasis fringed by pandanus trees, where one may swim in a clear freshwater pool under a waterfall. Picnic lunch, then return to the hotel. O/n HOTEL RELAIS DE LA REINE, FB.



Day 11

Early morning transfer (3-4hrs) to TULEAR passing sapphire mines and Zombitse National Park en route. Continue by boat / road (depending on tides) to AMBOLA (c.3-4hrs). Arrive at the hotel. O/n DOMAINE D'AMBOLA, FB. Built in a Mediterranean style, the small hotel has simple, clean rooms, a small bar and a restaurant serving rather good food for such a remote location.



Water for showering is warmed by the sun (tepid) and electricity may be limited. The hotel enjoys a perfect setting on a deserted white-sand beach with a fringing reef a little way offshore, suitable for snorkelling.

Day 12

Early departure for an excursion with packed lunch to the weird and wonderful TSIMANAMPETSOTSA NATIONAL PARK, in the isolated far south west of Madagascar. This extra-special reserve is one of the most unusual in Madagascar. It contains a spring-fed, 15 km long



salt lake, shimmering blue and populated by flamingos, spoonbills and other wading birds. There is also a limestone escarpment with a wonderful pachypodium dominated forest containing endemic spiny bush flora, and some wonderful, two thousand year old baobabs, one of seven species of that tree found in Madagascar. (Contd.../)

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(Contd.../.) There is a small cave with blind pink fish swimming in crystal clear water, and a cenote (collapsed cave open to the sky) with a huge ficus tree grove growing around it, sending down roots to obtain water from the subterranean river system. Many rare and endemic bird species can be found in the park, including vasa parrot and coua, and the endangered ring-tailed lemur inhabits the spiny forest: much wilder specimens than those found in locations like Berenty.



NB: Please note this excursion involves driving on bumpy, sandy tracks and possibly travel by zebu-chariot (depending on conditions - c.1hr each way) which can be hot and uncomfortable – take a sunhat, sunscreen and something cushioned to sit on!



Then transfer (c. 1 hr) to ANAKAO, a picturesque and authentic Vezo fishing village set on a sandy beach with outrigger boats lining the shore and friendly Vezo inhabitants. Transfer to the lodge and rest of the day at leisure. O/n ANAKAO OCEAN LODGE, FB. This beautifully positioned new hotel is situated at the southern end of the village, with charming bungalows constructed from local materials, each with private modern bathroom, and French doors opening onto a private veranda overlooking the sea. All bungalows have air conditioning, mini bar and mosquito nets.



with charming bungalows constructed from local materials, each with private modern bathroom, and French doors opening onto a private veranda overlooking the sea. All bungalows have air conditioning, mini bar and mosquito nets.

Day 13

Morning excursion by boat to NOSY VE, a lovely small tropical isle with white sand beaches, a rookery for the red-tailed tropicbird and a fringing reef for OPTIONAL snorkelling / diving. Whales may be seen between August and October. Afternoon at leisure. O/n ANAKAO OCEAN LODGE, FB.



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Day 14

A well-deserved day to relax and enjoy the lodge and beautiful beach. OPTIONAL tours available may include a visit to the local Vezo Village, trip to the nearby island of Nosy Satrana on traditional pirogue, kayak hire, snorkelling, scuba diving, fishing, quad bike excursions to explore the local area or exploring the spiny scrub behind the beach for remnants of the now-extinct Elephant Bird's (Aepyornis) eggshell. O/n ANAKAO OCEAN LODGE, FB.



Day 15

Morning pick up from the hotel and transfer by boat / road to TULEAR. Transfer to the airport and catch AIR MADAGASCAR flight to TANA. Check in to RELAIS DES PLATEAUX HOTEL for day use of a room to freshen up before transferring to the airport for check in to your departing flight.

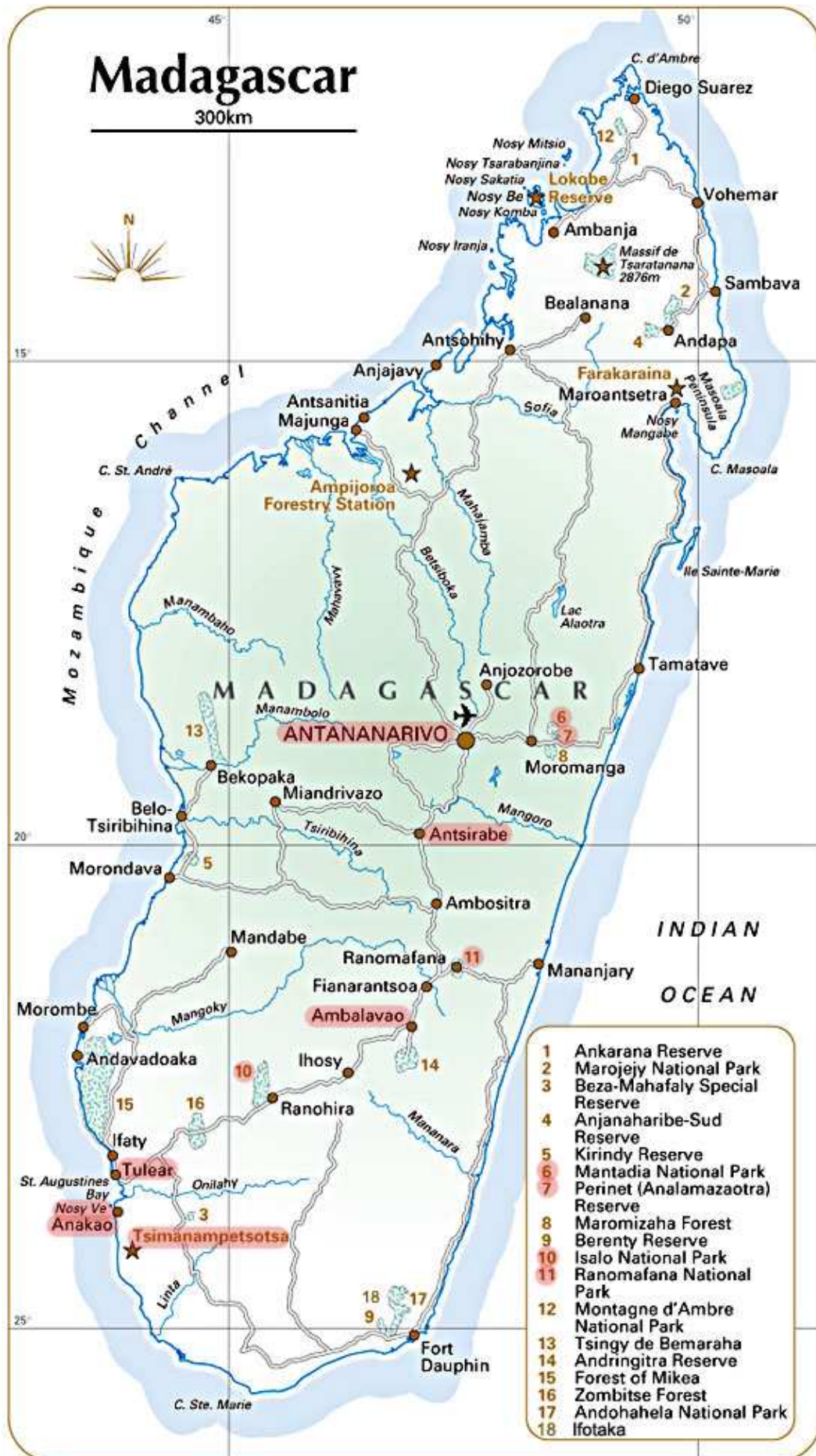
Day 16

Catch flight to PARIS. On arrival, connect with a flight to LONDON.

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Minimum group size is 4, maximum 10 plus the tour leader.

**MADAGASCAR OVERLAND ENCOUNTERS 2012**

<i>Departure Dates from London</i>	<i>Adult Price</i>	<i>Single Supplement</i>
27 July 2012	£3,955	£660
14 September 2012	£3,540	£660
02 October 2012	£3,540	£660
19 October 2012	£3,540	£660

Please call 01803 866965 if you have any queries, would like to secure your place on the tour, and/or if you would like to extend the tour to include other locations in Madagascar or perhaps add safari in South Africa for large African wildlife.

NB: If you would prefer your flights to depart from a regional airport in the UK e.g. Manchester, Birmingham, or from Paris or any other airport please let us know as we will be pleased to look into the options for you.





## IMPORTANT NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE ABOVE ITINERARIES

NB: All itineraries are subject to change without notice to take into account possible airline flight schedule changes which can take place before departure date or during the tour, and other operational factors.

NB: The quoted price for the above itinerary is based on current exchange rates, airline fares (both international and domestic), fuel surcharges and taxes. These (and other tour costs) may be subject to unanticipated increases beyond our control at short notice, either before or after you have booked the tour, in which case the price would need to be revised accordingly.

NB: This tour involves some travel in remote areas. This adds to the adventure and increases the opportunity to enjoy a true wildlife experience. However, due to terrain, weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control, some elements of the tour may have to be altered. Times of some activities may need to be changed or even cancelled due to the conditions. If an activity is cancelled it will usually be replaced with an alternative activity that is more appropriate for the conditions. Advance notice will be given for any changes where possible, although at times changes may need to be made whilst the tour is in progress.

NB: With any trip involving wildlife it is impossible to guarantee a sighting, but each trip is designed around known habitats. Every effort will be made to ensure a sighting, but cannot be held responsible if no sighting is made due to the wildlife itself, weather, or any other elements beyond our control.

NB: Prices are based on a specific airlines and specific economy seating classes. Flights are booked on an ad hoc basis and so early booking is recommended to take advantage of the cheapest fare availability. Prices may rise if a more expensive seat class needs to be booked. Please call for information on price variations for using alternative airlines or for seat upgrades.

NB: Adequate insurance cover is mandatory. Please supply us with details of your cover.

NB: Should for any reason the specified tour leader be unable to accompany the group, a suitable substitute will be provided.

NB: All international flights should be re-confirmed at least 72 hours before departure.

NB: The above itinerary and its quoted price are based on specific hotels and lodges. Should there be insufficient availability at the time of booking, alternative hotels and lodges of a similar standard may have to be booked instead, in which case the itinerary and/or price may change.

NB: Inclusive tours and excursions as stated in the itinerary will have been pre-paid. Once full payment has been made and/or clients are actually at their destination, should clients be disinclined to partake of any inclusive tour or excursion, no refunds will be possible.

NB: Excursions marked as 'Optional' are not included in the price.

NB: Despite recent improvements, Madagascar still has some accommodation of a lower standards than that normally expected by western travelers, and a precarious infrastructure including unreliable domestic flights, poor telecommunications and bad roads. Many of our tours visit areas well off the beaten track, and therefore far from medical and other services. Trails can often be arduous and slippery, and campsites are usually very basic. Bookings will only be accepted on the understanding that the client accepts Reef and Rainforest Tours has done everything in its power to ensure there are no difficulties, but has no control over standards of some equipment, available accommodation and services, airline reservation policies, flight schedule changes or possible breakdowns in communication in Madagascar.

NB: Some service providers may require that guests sign an indemnity waiver form and may refuse services if these forms are not signed. Reef and Rainforest Tours cannot give refunds for services not provided due to a refusal to sign such forms.

NB: Visas are now easily obtainable on arrival for EU residents (free at time of writing but subject to change without notice). PLEASE CHECK THE LATEST INFORMATION WITH YOUR LOCAL EMBASSY/CONSULATE.

NB: Tips/ gratuities are payable locally.

NB: In some hotels, English will be spoken either badly or not at all.

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## Reef and Rainforest Tours Ltd.

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