

Madagascar Divemaster Internship

Achieve your professional PADI diving qualification and gain work experience in marine conservation whilst diving the pristine waters of Madagascar.

Escape to Madagascar – the “8th Continent” - that is home to some of the world's most spectacular and least explored dive sites. The crystal clear waters host a dazzling array of pristine marine habitats and support a huge diversity and abundance of marine creatures.

The vivid multi-coloured corals and luxuriant sea grass beds provide rich feeding grounds for an extraordinary array of colourful reef fish, rays, sea urchins, anemones, octopus and even sea turtles. Whilst barracuda, sharks, dolphins, migrating whales and shoals of pelagics cruise the deep blue waters offshore. You can explore this exquisite, untarnished underwater world as you work on the island of Nosy Be. Meaning ‘Big Island’ in Malagasy this location certainly lives up to its name.

The PADI Divemaster is the first step in becoming a scuba diving professional. At this stage Divemasters are allowed to conduct scuba reviews, lead dives, perform the second dive of discover scuba diving course and assist instructors. The Divemaster course takes an average of 3 months to complete, although an intensive rapid 2 month course is possible. With a 3-month internship students have the opportunity to take on their own personal project collecting data from the Marine Conservation survey sites. Additionally, three months affords students the time to build up dive numbers and confidence in the water.

Learn to become a PADI professional with the stunning backdrop of Madagascar. This will be your first step into a diving career. It will give you extensive hands on experience of training, equipment maintenance, leading dives and handling a variety of diving situations. You will become a revered member of the project, managing dive timetables and supervising daily boat expeditions. On completing your Divemaster you will have the ability to deal with issues whilst diving, making you more visually aware of the divers around you and potential hazards.

Whilst completing your Divemaster qualification you will discover and chart extensive coastal areas, record healthy populations of fish and coral cover, and learn to identify a wide range of intertidal creatures from tiny Hermit Crabs to sparkling sea anemones. You will discover lush mangrove forests; the unique ecosystem which straddles the land and the ocean. You'll learn how artisanal fishing communities live and utilise the rich marine resources. You will discover which groups of marine organisms are being harvested sustainably and which are being over exploited or hunted to extinction.

Your days will be eventful; the work will be challenging, rewarding and fun. Your discoveries will be of huge benefit to the conservation of these fabulous coral reefs and you will gain immense satisfaction from knowing that you have helped protect these precious natural resources for future generations whilst gaining a professional qualification.

The results from your investigations will supply vital information on the Malagasy coastline to enable the sustainable management of natural resources in the region and the protection of the marine wildlife.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Helping to preserve Madagascar's marine and coastal biodiversity
- Collect data from some of the world's best dive sites
- Obtain your Divemaster qualification whilst assisting the project Dive Officer
- Make lifelong friends and return with incredible stories, photos and memories
- Extend your experience of tropical marine and coastal zone conservation field work

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- CV required
- Minimum 3 month placement
- Relevant academic qualifications
- Some experience of coastal zone or marine field work

DIVEMASTER REQUIREMENTS

18 years of age

40 dives logged and PADI Rescue Diver qualification. It is possible for novice divers to be an Intern, who can amount dives during their time on the project. This will include completion of Open Water, Advanced Open Water, Emergency First Responder and the Rescue Diver course (extra costs apply).

Physician sign off – medical health check

FAST FACTS

Location	Madagascar	
Activities	<p>Diving regularly (weather permitting)</p> <p>Locating, mapping and studying the coral reefs</p> <p>Underwater visual censuses of reef and commercial fish</p> <p>Assessment of algal and coral cover</p> <p>Line intercept transects for benthic life and indicator invertebrate species</p> <p>Record observations of the feeding habits and behaviour patterns of a range of marine life</p> <p>Study the impact of potentially destructive fishing methods on the corals reefs</p> <p>Study the effects of global warming on marine communities</p> <p>Assist with diving courses, Open water, Advanced and Rescue Diver.</p> <p>Learn how to lead dives including briefings, kit set up and responsibility of the dive group</p> <p>Basic knowledge of scuba equipment maintenance</p> <p>Use and maintenance of compressors</p>	
Transport	Airport pickup each Monday of the month. Alternative start dates possible, additional £50	Transfer to town

	applies for pickup, please speak to an adviser	centre and beach camp from Nosy Be Airport each Monday of the month
Accommodation	Communal beach camp	

WHAT DOES THE PROJECT DO?

An Exotic Island Paradise

165 million years of isolation have created a globally important biodiversity treasure with over 80% of species endemic to this island paradise. But an increasing population is having a devastating impact, causing deforestation and erosion; the red soil running into the seas has led to the sadly evocative name of "the bleeding island". The Malagasy government is now working with international conservation and aid agencies to halt this destruction and save the island's invaluable biodiversity and Frontier volunteers are an integral part of this effort record marine biodiversity.

Record Marine Biodiversity

Through marine SCUBA and snorkel surveys you will map coral, identify reef fish and invertebrates, study the behaviour of fish and possibly sight whale sharks. Diving under the supervision of a professional dive officer, you will become confident and comfortable underwater. Your results will determine the biodiversity of these waters and help formulate future management plans.

Other activities include surveying mangroves, a vital buffer against storm surges caused by cyclones and an important part of the coastal ecosystem.

Malagasy Culture & Communities

Working alongside the Malagasy people will give you an insight into their extraordinary culture. You may even be invited to some of their ceremonies as such as local weddings or the Donia street festival. Community work includes environmental education in local schools to explain Frontier's work, and interviewing local fishermen on their catches and opinions on the subject of reef health. The data from your investigations will supply vital information on the coastline for the Madagascan national programme.

WHAT WILL I BE DOING?

Combining the PADI divemaster internship with the Frontier Madagascar marine conservation

project offers the opportunity to gain in situ knowledge of marine systems and processes and conservation issues and experience of scientific surveying. Trainees receive lectures on the different elements of coral reef communities under the supervision of trained scientists. These lectures incorporate a range of tropical marine biology topics, including the benthic make up of reefs, fish and invertebrate identification and a variety of marine methodologies. Once qualified to PADI Advanced Open Water diver, trainees will take part in Frontier's long-term monitoring surveys researching coral reef community health in northwest Madagascar whilst assisting with training and the skill progression of new volunteers. The skills and experience gained during this course are valuable for trainees wishing to pursue a career in marine science and conservation, professional diving or a combination of the two.

You'll find your team to be a fun, dynamic mix of ages and experiences, with members who all share a passion about travelling in developing countries and conserving nature. Your staff will be a friendly and welcoming group who are highly experienced in their research field and many of whom will have been Frontier volunteers at an earlier stage in their career.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

Volunteers arriving weekly on a Monday will be welcomed by a Frontier representative at Nosy Be airport. From here it's a short taxi or minibus ride from the airport to the centre of the vibrant town of Hellville. If you arrive before noon, you will transfer to your project site and be introduced to the Frontier-Madagascar programme on the same day. If you arrive later in the day, you will stay overnight at the Frontier volunteer house in town and transfer to your project site the following day.

You will meet the staff, receive some initial briefings, including an introduction to the science programme and techniques used, as well as health and safety lectures, so make sure your medical kit is complete and start reading your safety and medical briefs. All dive trainees will complete their dive theory during their time on camp. The transfer from Nosy Be to the Frontier camp is by small, wooden boat and depending on the weather both you and your kit will get wet, so make sure you have sufficient dry bags to waterproof all your belongings and something to waterproof yourself!

At the end of your stay we will transfer you back to Nosy Be from the camp in time for you to head back home or continue on your independent travels.

Independent travellers arriving on dates other than weekly on a Monday can arrange a separate airport collection at an extra cost of 68 EUR by contacting your volunteer coordinator.

WHERE WILL I BE STAYING?

During the project you'll live on the beach camp in the village of Ambalahonko on the island of Nosy Be alongside other Frontier volunteers and staff. We aim to provide you with a unique and memorable living experience. The Frontier camp was constructed by Frontier volunteers working with local craftsmen, using traditional building techniques and locally sourced environment friendly, building materials. The camp which is situated in a clearing on the beach has been designed to blend harmoniously with the surrounding landscape. Camp life is very simple, unsophisticated and fun.

You will be staying in simple communal bandas, which are local style dwellings, your "shower" will be a jug or a bucket of water and you cook over an open campfire, so prepare for the basic, virtually footprint less, unencumbered lifestyle! On occasions you may have to journey further to reach a remote dive site, when you will stay on a "satellite camp"; basically a mosquito net pitched on a

distant beach.

FRONTIER CAMP LIFE

Check out our video on [Frontier Gap Year TV](#) from Frontier-Madagascar, showing you volunteer life on this beautiful island.

WHAT WILL I BE EATING?

Food on camp is simple and nutritious and consists largely of locally sourced fresh vegetables and fruit, rice, beans and noodles, all of which are purchased from nearby communities, thereby helping to support the local economy. Luxuries such as chocolate, peanut butter and drinking chocolate are only available in the main town, so make sure you stock up before heading to your field camp.

Part of your role on camp will be to help with the cooking. Creating spectacular meals over an open campfire or baking bread in the campfire oven will become second nature, so get your cookbooks out now and start thinking up recipes! The local villagers sell homemade delicacies every day just outside camp, including banana macari, fresh bread, meat and veggie sambos. The locals also put on dinners once a week to allow you to integrate with the village and sample their food.

COSTS

12 weeks	€ 4.495
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PADI Open Water and Advanced Open Water training 918 EUR PADI Advanced Open Water training 446 EUR (at least PADI Advanced Open Water training necessary for marine surveying)

DEPARTURE DATES

Every Monday of the month.

Ideally flights to Madagascar and connections to Nosy Be (Fascene) should be arranged for this arrival date.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support & documentation
- Travel & medical advice & documentation
- Equipment advice
- Discounted medical kit
- Free Frontier t-shirt
- UK residential briefing weekend including food, accommodation and training (extra cost applies)

In-country

- Food
- Accommodation
- Airport pickup (for first Monday of the month arrivals). Alternative start dates possible, additional 68 EUR applies for pickup, please speak to an adviser
- Transfer to town centre and beach camp from Nosy Be Airport on first Monday of the month. Alternative start dates available
- Local orientation and training
- Dive training PADI Open Water(2 week +) available at extra cost 473 EUR
- Dive training PADI Advanced Open Water (4 weeks+) available at extra cost 446 EUR
- In-country emergency support
- 24-hour international HQ back-up
- Dive training courses run monthly starting on the first Monday of the month. Dive training to PADI Open Water or PADI Advanced Open Water (depending on the duration of your stay) price includes PIC cards, PADI membership and use of Frontier project equipment and diving equipment, including tanks, regs, BCDs, weights, compressor etc
- Discounted further dive courses: PADI Emergency First Response (176 EUR), PADI Rescue Diver (473 EUR), and PADI Divemaster (1.013 EUR) qualifications

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.