

Aldabra Atoll, Outer Islands, Seychelles

One of the most remote and protected ecosystems on Earth, Aldabra Atoll rewards the few expedition cruisers who make it here with 100,000+ free-roaming giant tortoises, a flightless rail found nowhere else, and reefs that have barely seen a human shadow.

Zodiac tender (no pier or jetty)

Typical call: 4–6 hrs

Currency: Seychellois Rupee (SCR) — no shops on-island

Language: English / French

UNESCO World Heritage Site

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: Arrive: All aboard:

Excursion: Notes:

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Zodiac tender to shore — expedition vessels anchor offshore; no pier or jetty exists

Best For: Wildlife encounters: giant tortoises, flightless Aldabra Rail, frigatebirds, green turtles, reef sharks

Walk to Center: Research station on Picard (West) Island is the only inhabited point; access via SIF guides only

Don't Miss: Walking among free-roaming Aldabra Giant Tortoises — 100,000+ live here, the world's largest wild population

Getting around:

TOP THINGS TO DO

- Giant Tortoise Encounter on Picard Island** — Walk the limestone scrub of Picard Island alongside free-roaming Aldabra Giant Tortoises — over 100,000 live on the atoll.
- Aldabra Rail & Endemic Birdwatching** — Search for the Aldabra Rail — the Indian Ocean's last flightless bird — along with the Aldabra Drongo, frigatebird colonies (the Indian Ocean's...
- Zodiac Lagoon Cruise & Snorkelling** — Explore the vast tidal lagoon and channel passages by inflatable boat.
- Turtle Nesting & Nesting Beach Walk** — Seasonally (primarily November–February), green sea turtles nest on Aldabra's beaches in numbers rare across the Indian Ocean.
- Champignon Limestone Trail** — Pick your way across Aldabra's extraordinary eroded limestone 'champignon' formations — a moonscape riddled with tide pools, land crabs, coconut...

BEST WALKS

- Picard Island Tortoise Trail** 1.5–3 km | 1–2 hrs | Guided only | Rough limestone terrain — The main guided walk from the SIF research station into the scrub interior of Picard Island, weaving past giant tortoises and endemic birds on the atoll's signature...
- Lagoon Channel Shore Walk** 1–2 km | 45–90 min | Guided | Flat sand/coral — A gentler shoreline walk along the lagoon-side of Picard Island, passing mangrove edges and shallow tidal flats where flamingos and herons feed, with constant tortoise...

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)

	Mon	High	Low	Rain
Apr		84°	81°	18d
Jun		81°	79°	18d
Aug		79°	77°	13d
Sep		80°	78°	18d
Oct		81°	79°	17d

DAYLIGHT & MONEY

Apr 6:57AM–6:51PM · Jun 7:08AM–6:42PM · Aug 7:05AM–6:52PM · Sep 6:48AM–6:51PM · Oct 6:31AM–6:49PM

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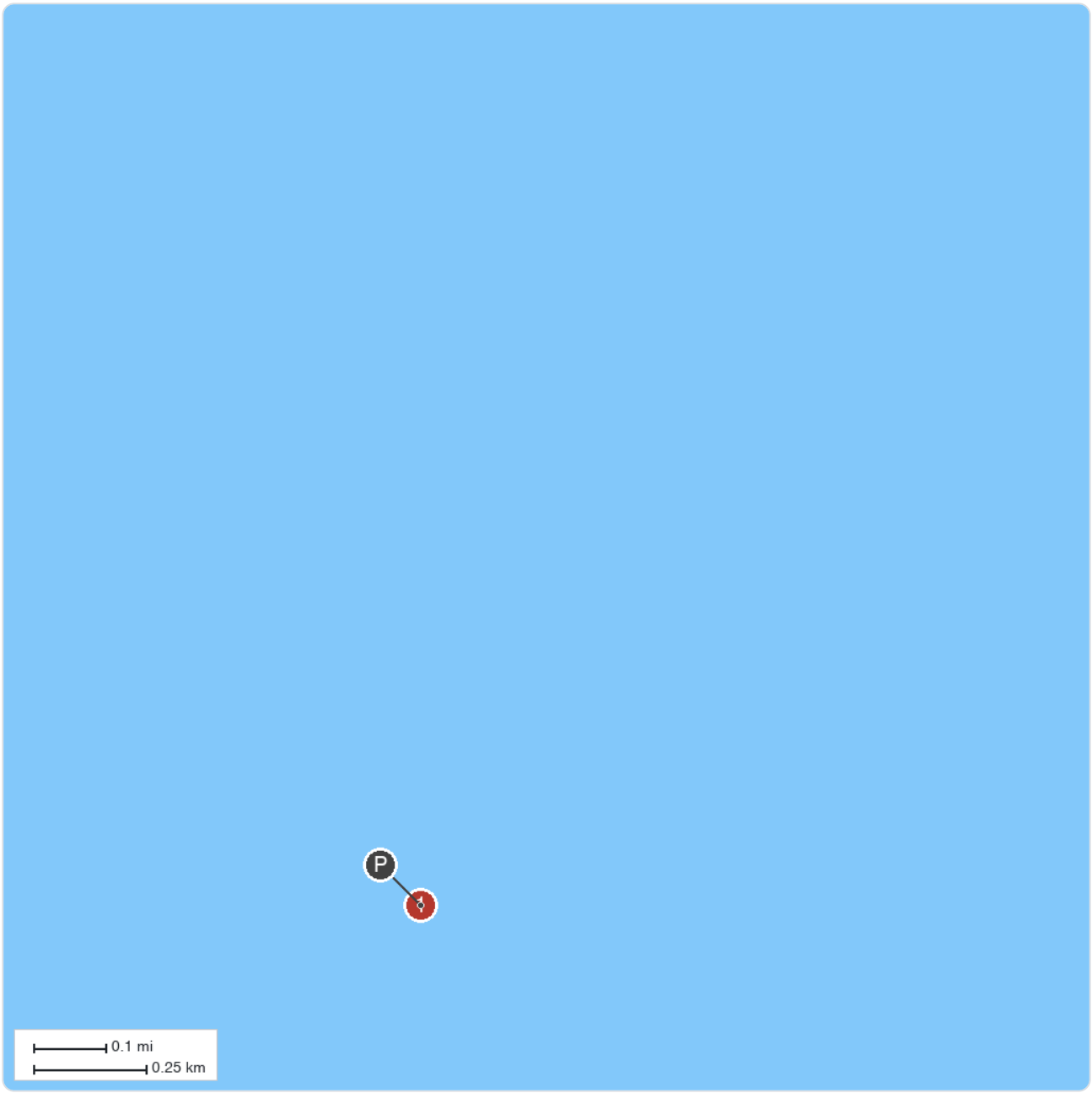
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Shoes make or break your day. The champignon limestone is sharp, irregular, and unforgiving. Pack sturdy closed-toe shoes or trail sandals — flip-flops are unsafe and likely to be turned back by guides.
- Permits are non-negotiable. SIF requires advance written authorisation for every vessel. Your operator handles this, but confirm in writing before departure — vessels without permits are turned away.
- Bring everything you need. There are no shops, cafes, restaurants, or ATMs on Aldabra. Stock up on water, sunscreen, and snacks before tendering ashore.
- Insects are fierce. Aldabra's mangroves and scrub harbour biting midges and mosquitoes. Long sleeves, pants, and strong repellent are worthwhile even in warm weather.
- Don't touch the tortoises. SIF rules prohibit handling or disturbing wildlife. Tortoises are curious and will approach you — let them come to you and keep hands to yourself.
- Leave nothing behind.

Aldabra Atoll, Outer Islands, Seychelles — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



1 Aldabra Giant Tortoises UNESCO World Heritage atoll home to over 100,000 giant tortoises.

P Cruise port / terminal