

15 Day Madagascar Magic



Madagascar lies 400 kilometres off the east coast of Africa and offers diverse and spectacular scenery: mountains, deserts, rainforests, dazzling beaches fringing the Indian Ocean and island archipelagos linked by coral reefs and clear turquoise waters. Madagascar is legendary for its profusion of wildlife and flora, 80% of which is found nowhere else on earth. Isolated from the continents 160 million years ago, Madagascar followed a unique evolutionary path into enormous tortoises, elephant birds, and lemurs. Lemurs were the highest primate form on the island until the Malagasy people, of Afro-Polynesian ancestry, arrived a mere 2000 years ago.

Madagascar is a new and unique destination that offers fantastic tropical holidays as well as inland excursions for those that want a more adventurous holiday. If you just want to spend your holiday on a deserted tropical beach with powder white sand then there is no destination like Madagascar. Far superior to Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives and Zanzibar, Madagascar is the most cost effective, easy to reach destination in the world. It's undiscovered locations and it's rich history make it a great alternative to over crowded, commercialised destinations such as Mauritius.

Day 1: International Flight

Depending on where in the world you are entering from will decide your connecting flight – Europe and the Americas tend to Fly into France and then into Antananarivo. Those from the Pacific Rim and New Zealand would prefer to come in via Johannesburg. These details your consultant will go through with you.

Day 2: Connecting Flight to Antananarivo, Madagascar - Hotel Colbert

Arrive in the capital city of Madagascar, affectionately known as "Tana". Upon arrival, clear customs and meet the private transfer to the Hotel Colbert.

Depart: N/A

Stops: Antananarivo

Activities: Transfer from Airport to your hotel – en route you will be orientated to this city.

Breakfast: Included for duration of tour.

Lunch: N/A

Dinner: N/A

Day 3: Antananarivo to Andasibe-Mantadia National Park - Vakona Lodge

This morning you may visit the Tsimbazaza Zoo and Cultural Museum for an introduction to early Madagascar life as well as to the special birds, lemurs and botanical wonders endemic to the island. Early in the afternoon, depart in 4X4 vehicles for the Andasibe Mantadia National Park, an important area of protected rainforest, and home to the largest of the lemur species - the Indri. The destination is the luxurious Vakona Lodge, in a lovely setting at the edge of the forest.

Depart: Early PM

Stops: Andasibe

Activities: Tsimbazaza Zoo, Cultural Museum

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 4: Perinet Reserve, Andasibe-Mantadia National Park - Vakona Lodge

You have a full day to visit one of Madagascar's most celebrated reserves, with an early start to see the Indri and hear their haunting calls. Each animal sings with its own unique voice, so the echoes and re-echoes tell each group where every indri is located in the forest. Track Indri through the forest, and moderate walking provides a good opportunity to experience the abundant flora and fauna of the eastern rain forest. The world's largest chameleon can be found here, together with a wonderful array of tree frogs and geckos, plus numerous colorful tropical birds. Return to the Vakona Forest Lodge for dinner and overnight. This evening you may take a walk to look for nocturnal lemurs - if lucky you may catch the eyeshine of the diminutive brown mouse lemur, greater dwarf lemur, or even the avahi (or eastern woolly lemur).

Depart: Sunrise

Stops: N/A

Activities: Full Day in National Park under Guidance

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 5: Mantadia National Park - Vakona Lodge

This morning you may venture a short distance to Mantadia National Park. This is primary rainforest and home to many species not found at Perinet including the beautiful golden-colored diademed sifaka, black-and-white ruffed lemurs as well as the gray bamboo, and red-fronted brown lemur. The trails here are a little more rugged, with greater variations in altitude and consequently a greater diversity of habitats and species. The birding in this area is also spectacular with Pitta-like Ground-roller, Short-legged Ground-roller, Forest Rock-thrush - among many others. In the afternoon, spend some time photographing lemurs at a private reserve located on a small island near Vakona Lodge. Several lemur species are easily approached and photographed here. Another nocturnal walk this evening may turn up new animals, with a chance to encounter the elusive Aye-aye.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: N/A

Activities: Mantadia National Park under Guidance, Nocturnal Walk

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 6: Perinet to Antananarivo - Hotel Colbert

After an optional last visit to the Indri this morning, return to Antananarivo, stopping at the incredible La Mandraka Nature Farm en route. This private zoo has an excellent collection of native reptiles and amphibians and offers wonderful opportunities for close-up photography. Dinner is at the Hotel, or you could of course choose to eat elsewhere in the capital this evening.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: N/A

Activities: La Mandraka

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 7: Ankarafantskia National Park (Ampijoroa) - Gite d'Ampijoroa

This morning, fly to Mahajanga on Madagascar's western coast, and then continue for two hours on level roads to Ampijoroa. Along the way, pass through swamps and wetlands that are home to a number of endemic birds, including the extremely rare Madagascar fish eagle, as well as the Madagascar crested ibis, and Madagascar pygmy kingfisher. Stay three nights at a simple lodge immediately adjacent to the park.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: Ampijoroa

Activities: La Mandraka

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 8: Ampijoroa - Gite d'Ampijoroa

You have the whole day to explore this tropical dry, deciduous forest. Wildlife is easy to find here, especially the stunning Coquerel's sifaka, with its white soft fur and chestnut brown arms and thighs - one group is regularly seen right at the park entrance! This is also the only place in the world where you may find the recently discovered golden-brown mouse lemur. There are numerous trails here: some easier, some more rigorous. Choose your level of comfort / adventure.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: N/A

Activities: At leisure in forest.

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 9: Ampijoroa - Gite d'Ampijoroa

You have another day to explore the reserve, perhaps take the longer walk through forest and savannah to a dramatic canyon, an amazing multi-hued slice through the landscape. Later today, visit the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust's Project Angonoka, set up to help protect the ploughshare tortoise, the world's rarest. A long-running captive breeding program has now seen the re-introduction of these tortoises to the Baly bay area. Plan for a unique behind-the-scenes tour here, with chances to photograph some of the captive-bred wildlife.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: N/A

Activities: At leisure in forest.

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 10: Ampijoroa to Antananarivo - Hotel Colbert.

This morning, depart Ampijoroa for the journey back to Mahajanga and a return flight to Tana, stopping along the way for photography, or to see wildlife. Arriving in Tana in the early afternoon, you may visit the Tsimbazaza Zoo and Cultural Museum if you did not have time on the first day. Certainly you will enjoy a return to the comfort of the delightful Hotel Colbert.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: N/A

Activities: Transfer

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 11: Antananarivo / Ft. Dauphin / Berenty Reserve - Gite d'Etape

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before a transfer for the flight to Ft. Dauphin, at the southern end of the island. Upon arrival, take a two-hour drive to the Berenty Reserve, passing through the unique "spiny forest" whose strange thorn-covered plants are found only in Madagascar. At Berenty, stay at a comfortable lodge in the middle of a remarkable private reserve, where animals are quite literally all around you. This evening, take a walk in search of nocturnal animals, including white-footed sportive lemurs and white-browed owls.

Depart: 10:00

Stops: Berenty Reserve

Activities: At leisure in forest.

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 12: Berenty - Gite d'Etape

You have a full day to explore the reserve on easy walks along the many wide, well-swept paths. The star attractions here are the large troops of wild ring-tailed lemurs, which are completely accustomed to people and seem delighted to pose for photographs. Also common are brown lemurs and Verreaux's sifaka - one of Madagascar's most appealing and photogenic animals. In the afternoon, you will be on hand as these desert lemurs "dance" across the path as they return to their roosts in the treetops. Berenty contains many birds and reptiles found only in this region, among them the giant coua and endangered radiated tortoise. The

photographic opportunities here are exceptional, as the wildlife is diverse and easy to see.

Depart: 10:00

Stops: Berenty Reserve

Activities: At leisure in forest.

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 13: Berenty - Gite d'Etape

In the early morning, ring-tailed lemurs descend from the trees, often sitting all around you as you enjoy coffee. There is time today for a longer walk through the reserve, and to photograph desert plants in the reserve's extensive botanical garden. Make time to visit a nearby sisal factory. Sisal production is controversial in Madagascar for although it is a "natural" product, plantations often require clearing large areas of endangered native forest. In the late afternoon, once again follow sifakas and other lemurs, photographing their extraordinary leaps through the forest canopy.

Depart: 10:00

Stops: Berenty Reserve

Activities: At leisure in forest.

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 14: Berenty / Antananarivo / Home

This morning, make your way back to Fort Dauphin for a flight to Tana. This evening, enjoy a delicious farewell dinner at Ville Vanille with local entertainment before a transfer to the airport for return flight to connecting airport.

Depart: 09:00

Stops: Tana

Activities: Final Sight seeing

Lunch: Incl

Dinner: Incl

Day 15: Connecting Airport to Home

Price includes

Package Includes

Round Trip Airfare from Paris / Johannesburg to Madagascar

Accommodations

Meals as per Itinerary

Domestic Flights on Air Madagascar

Airport Transfers and Taxes with Madagascar

Services of English-Speaking Guide Within Madagascar

Services of Vehicle and Driver as Needed Throughout

Excursions, Entrance Fees, and Local Guides in Parks and Reserves

Gratuities to Madagascar Ground Staff

Bottled Water and Soft Drinks

English-speaking guide, Mr Lalaina Ramaroson or similar

Not included

Gratuities, items of a personal nature, travel insurance, Madagascar entry visa.

Please note that Madagascar is a poor country new to tourism and with an undeveloped tourism infrastructure. This itinerary has been arranged in good faith and based on the best local information available. However, things change in Madagascar and flight schedules can be altered, sometimes at short notice. We reserve the right to alter the accommodation specified and the order of this itinerary in what we consider to be the best interests of the participants.

