

## 8 Day Madagascar Xplorer



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 01 – Antananarivo – Hilton Hotel

Arrive Antananarivo International Airport. Upon clearing Customs and Immigration, you are met and transferred to your hotel for check-in and overnight. The Hilton Madagascar provides a privileged location in the heart of the administrative district, ideally situated in the city center with shopping facilities only minutes away.

Antananarivo. The island's capital city (pop. 2,000,000) sits at 4,500 ft in a twisting valley near the center of the island. "Tana, as the city is often called, has unusual French and Asian inspired architecture and winding cobblestone streets and staircases that create a medieval impression.

**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 02 – Antananarivo - Fort Dauphin – Berenty Reserve or Andohahela National Park

Transfer to the Antananarivo airport for flight to Fort Dauphin. You are met and transferred to Berenty Reserve (90 km) enjoy stops en route for local flora, an Antanosy graveyard and Antandroy villages in the spiny desert of the Berenty Reserve. With its large populations of Ringtails, Brownlemurs and Verreaux' Sifakas there is little doubt that Berenty is probably the most famous Malagasy reserve. Birding is rewarding. The reserve protects both spiny bush and dry tamarind woodland, along the Mandrare River bank which adds to the diversity of the area.

Berenty Lodge features spacious wooden chalets with en-suite bathrooms, and a lovely tea garden where one can relax amongst the lemurs, in beautiful surroundings.

*Extending along the Mandrare river, the Berenty Reserve is a 240 hectare private reserve that was created by the De Haulme family in 1936. There are a number of species of lemurs here, as well as many other types of local flora and fauna, including birds, reptiles and butterflies. Situated inside the reserve is a museum which houses a number of local artifacts and musical instruments. The reserve is especially popular with eco-tourists*

**Depart: 09:00 – 09:30**

**Stops: Local Antanosy cultural stops**

**Activities: Informal guided drive to Lodge.**

**Lunch: Incl**

**Dinner: Incl**

### **Day 03 – Berenty Reserve or Andohahela National Park**

Enjoy a full day of exploration of Berenty with your guide. Berenty Reserve features many Baobabs and similar species of trees in the gallery and spiny forests. Large populations of Ringtails, Brown lemurs and Sifaka live here, along with birds and reptiles found only in this region. Two of these unique species are the giant coua and white-browed owl. There are also chameleons, snakes and butterflies. During your stay, you may visit the museum of the Antandroy ethnic group, people of the dry climate. You may also visit a sisal factory, and take a night walk at the Spiny Forest.

**Depart: TBC**

**Stops: Reserve Guided Tour**

**Activities: Reserve Guided Tour**

**Lunch: Incl**

**Dinner: Incl**

### **Day 04 – Fort Dauphin – Hotel La Croix de Sud**

This morning you will have a return land transfer to Fort-Dauphin. Here you will enjoy a guided city tour and visit to Saiadi Botanical Gardens. Fort Dauphin is located in the southeast of Madagascar, and practically at the end of the world. Fort-Dauphin is the "Cote d'Azur" of Madagascar. With beautiful beaches, historical vestiges (mainly Portuguese), the nearby lemur reserve at Berenty, Mahafaly tombs, and special flora such as baobabs. In a radius of 50km, you pass from one climate to another; to the west stretches a vast cactus forest with unique types of baobab; to the east the humid vegetation of the tropics retakes command. After your city tour, transfer to the hotel for check-in, dinner and an evening at leisure.

**Depart: 09:00**

**Stops: Fort Dauphin, Hotel**

**Activities: Botanical gardens, City tour, buildings and areas of interest – Flexible.**

**Lunch: Incl**

**Dinner: Incl**

### **Day 05 – Fort Dauphin – Antananarivo – Perinet Nature Reserve - Vakona Lodge**

Transfer to the Fort Dauphin airport for flight to Antananarivo. Upon arrival, you are met and transferred to Perinet Nature Reserve. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant en route. Drive (3-hrs) east through the lovely villages and scenery of the highlands to the Perinet Nature Reserve. Perinet is Madagascar's most visited reserve, because of its relative proximity to Tana and large variety of rare rainforest animals, notably the baboon-sized Indri, largest of the Lemurs. Vakona Lodge is located minutes from the main entrance to the Perinet Nature Reserve. Accommodation consists of bungalows with en suite bathroom with hot water. A magnificent lounge and restaurant are built around a warm and welcoming fireplace.

**Depart: 08:30 - 09:00**

**Stops: Local: Antanavario, Perinet Nature Reserve.**

**Activities: Scenic Drive day.**

**Lunch: Incl**

**Dinner: Incl**

### **Day 06 – Perinet Nature Reserve Vakona Lodge**

Enjoy a guided morning walk in Perinet Reserve and afternoon visit to Vakona Private Reserve. Hike through the rain forests in search of indigenous plants and animals including the largest known lemur, the indri indri. Many other lemur species inhabit the forest, including the woolly, greater dwarf, brown mouse, grey bamboo, common brown, rd fronted brown, black and white ruffed, crowned lemurs and the aye aye. More than a hundred species of birds occur in this special reserve, as well as chameleons, geckos and bats. The reserve also holds a world record for numbers of frog species among rainforests of comparable size. Nocturnal walks, early morning and afternoon hikes in the reserve are included. Trails are easy to walk, but slippery when wet.

**Depart: 09:00 – 09:30**

**Stops: N/A**

**Activities: Guided Walk, Vakona Private Reserve.**

**Lunch: Incl**

**Dinner: Incl**

#### **Day 06 –Day 07 – Perinet Nature Reserve – Antananarivo - Hilton Hotel**

Enjoy a guided morning walk in Mantadia Reserve. Mantadia is primary rain forest and home to many species not found at Perinet. Star mammal attractions include the Diadem Sifaka and Ruffed Lemur, while sought-after birds include Pitta-like Ground-roller, Shortlegged Ground-roller, Forest Rock-thrush – among others. This afternoon, return Antananarivo with visit Mr Peyrieras' insect & reptile farm en route. Arrive in Tana, transfer to your hotel for check-in and evening at leisure.

**Depart: 09:00**

**Stops: N/A**

**Activities: Guided Walk in Mantadia Reserve, insect and reptile farm.**

**Lunch: Incl**

**Dinner: Incl**

#### **Day 08 – Antannarivo - Home**

Transfer by private vehicle to the Antananarivo airport.

- **INCLUSIONS:**

- Accommodation as indicated in standard twin rooms with private facilities
- Land transportation by 4x4, petrol, driver
- Domestic air: Antananarivo-Fort Dauphin-Antananarivo ( Airport Taxes may vary price )
- Services of an English-speaking tour escort throughout
- Services of English-speaking local guides, for excursions/activities as outlined in the itinerary
- All visit and entrance fees described in the itinerary, unless specified as extras

- **EXCLUSIONS:**

- International airfare/departure tax
- Mineral water and drinks
- All expenses of a personal nature (such as telephone, fax, e -mail, laundry)
- Tips and gratuities for your driver/guide hotel/camp staff etc.
- Visa fess (if required)
- Travel Insurance