

Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world and unlike anywhere else. With approximately 90 percent of animals and plants being endemic, Madagascar is regarded as one of the world's very best destinations for wildlife photography. Whether it be the amazing lemurs, colourful chameleons, rare birds, geckos or frogs, you're guaranteed to be amazed by the extraordinary natural diversity on offer.

Madagascar's landscapes is however equally varied and impressive. From pristine white sand beaches to mangrove forests, endless jungles, incredible karst formations and the iconic Avenue of Baobabs, those keen on landscapes won't be disappointed. Untouched by mass tourism, the colonial towns, remote coastal villages and lively local markets are also uniquely interesting, whilst the welcoming locals will always greet you with a smile. Come and join us on what will surely be an endlessly photogenic journey.



Details

- Duration: **13 days**, including arrival and departure
- Departure date: **4th – 16th May 2024**
- Price: **Early-bird discounted price of US \$8,295*** per person twin share for land only content until **8 December 2023. Full price is US \$8,795***. A single supplement of US \$1,000* will apply for single travellers.
- There will be a **minimum of 5 people** and **maximum of 8 people** on this tour.

Included

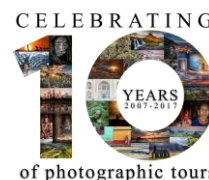
The complete tour as per itinerary, meet and greet service at the airport, hotel/airport transfers if with main group, three domestic flights within Madagascar, accommodation on a twin share basis, meals as specified (B/L/D), transport in airconditioned 4WD vehicles with driver, boat transfers, English speaking local guide/guides where required, bottled water in the vehicle, park fees, tourist taxes and experienced photographic tour leader.

Not included

Return international flights, visa fees (US \$35) if required, travel insurance, hotel/airport transfers if not with the main group, expenses of a personal nature (laundry, phone calls, personal tipping etc), any meals other than those specified, any drinks (alcoholic or non-alcoholic), optional activities, excess baggage fee, tips and gratuities.

Highlights

- The laid-back coastal town of **Morondava** and nearby iconic **Avenue of Baobabs**.
- **Kirindy Forest** and Madagascar's most sought-after predator, the Fossa.
- **Antananarivo**, the lively capital of Madagascar, commonly known by its colonial shortened name Tana.
- **Réserve Peyrieras**, where we have the opportunity to photograph more of Madagascar's unique animals.
- The amazing fauna and flora of **Andasibe-Mantadia National Park**.
- Exploring the **Pangalanes Canal** by boat, with white sand beaches and lush forests and mangroves.
- Colonial towns, coastal villages, lively markets and the welcoming Madagascan people.
- **3 domestic flights**, avoiding long drives on challenging roads and maximising our time for photography.



Tour Itinerary



Day 1: ARRIVE IN ANTANANARIVO (D)

After arrival in Antananarivo, the capital city of Madagascar, we will be transferred by road to the city for our overnight stay.

The capital of Madagascar has grown rapidly in the past few years, yet the history of the nation is still found in older buildings from pre-colonial times, while the French influence is everywhere, from shops and signs, to colonnade architecture. Tana is a cross-section of the culture and history of the nation and its people. Our journey from the airport to the city will pass through rice filled paddy's, sprawling urban areas and into the hills that form the centre of the city.

Overnight at **Le Louvre Hotel, Antananarivo.**

Day 2: ANTANANARIVO – MORONDAVA (B/L/D)

This morning we will be transferred to the airport for our flight to Morondava. Upon arrival we transfer to our hotel for lunch.

This afternoon we have time to explore and photograph the main street of the town and local market before heading back to the hotel where we can visit the nearby beach and peninsula. Depending upon the winds and the weather we may find many local families enjoying their afternoon at the beachfront – a true Malagasy tradition in these coastal locations.

Overnight at **Palissandre Côte Ouest Hotel, Morondava.**



Day 3: MORONDAVA – KIRINDY (B/L/D)

Today we rise early to photograph the Avenue of Baobabs during sunrise. Of the nine baobab species in the world, six are endemic to Madagascar; two are found in Africa and another in Australia. The best place to see one of these species, the “*Adansonia granddieri*”, is the Avenue des Baobabs. This is a large region with the majestic tree in abundance, and a sacred baobab with offerings around it showing the significance of the trees. There are also two that have become intertwined, and are known as “Les Baobabs Amoureux”.

After breakfast we commence our journey north to Kirindy, passing the amazing Avenue of Baobabs again. Kirindy (also known as the Swiss Forest) is arguably the best place to see some of Madagascar's nocturnal inhabitants such as the fossa, Madagascar's largest carnivore, and the endangered giant jumping rat, endemic to this area.

The forest also has a good cross-section of lemur species (Fork-marked lemur, Coquerel's dwarf lemur, fat-tailed dwarf lemur, Milne Edward's sportive lemur, grey mouse lemur and the very rare pygmy mouse lemur). Bird life here is very diverse and numerous reptiles (like chameleons) abound. We will arrive late afternoon to do a night walk in the reserve.

Overnight at **Le Relais du Kirindy, Kirindy.**

Day 4: KIRINDY (B/L/D)

This morning we return to Kirindy for our second guided walk, seeking out and photographing more of the unique wildlife that resides in the area. We then return to our hotel for lunch followed by a short break.

Later in the afternoon we head out to photograph sunset with a group of baobab trees, returning to the hotel for dinner. After dinner we return again to the baobab trees to do an astrophotography shoot.

Overnight at **Le Relais du Kirindy, Kirindy.**





Day 5: KIRINDY – MORONDAVA (B/L/D)

Today we visit a different area of the reserve seeking out more wildlife photography opportunities, as well as seeing the Lovers Baobab. We then return to the hotel for lunch before commencing our return drive to Morondava.

On the way back stops will be provided to see and photograph more unusual baobabs and the local village life. Our drive will be timed to arrive at the Avenue of Baobabs for sunset.

Overnight at **Palissandre Côte Ouest Hotel, Morondava.**

Day 6: MORONDAVA – ANTANANARIVO (B/L/D)

This morning depending upon the tides and our flight time, we set out across the nearby river and pay a visit to the village of Betania. This is a fishing village of around 1,000 people and has very basic facilities. It is inhabited by the Vezo tribal group (part of the Sakalava group). Fishing is practiced with net fishing from dug-out canoes and line fishing from outrigger canoes. We will have the opportunity to photograph some of the locals.

After lunch at our hotel, we transfer for our flight to Antananarivo. On arrival in Antananarivo, we transfer to our hotel for the night.

Overnight at **Le Louvre Hotel, Antananarivo.**



Day 7: ANTANANARIVO (B/L/D)

Today we enjoy a guided tour of the city. This will include historic and cultural areas, plus some of the major markets which are so crucial to the daily life of the city.

Overnight at **Le Louvre Hotel, Antananarivo.**

Day 8: ANTANANARIVO – ANDASIBE NATIONAL PARK (B/L/D)

This morning we depart for Andasibe, a journey of 145kms on quite good roads (about three hours duration). We will stop at Réserve Peyrieras, a private reserve created by Mr. Peyrieras. Almost all species of Madagascar's insects and butterflies are represented here. Visitors can observe them at all stages of their development at the large aviaries adapted to their natural environment. Mr. Peyrieras also has a large collection of chameleons, plus various amphibians, snakes, lizards and crocodiles. The nearby forests are home to a group of the colourful Coquerel Sifaka, and if they are nearby, we will visit them for some close-up photos.

After our visit we transfer to our lodge for the night. This evening there will be the opportunity to undertake a night-walk through the forests that surround the hotel. This will show us a totally different world from that seen during daylight hours.

Overnight at **Eulophiella Hotel, Andasibe.**





Day 9: ANDASIBE NATIONAL PARK - LAKE AMPITABE (B/L/D)

Today we visit the Analamazaotra Reserve. The Andasibe-Mantadia National Park with its 154 km² encompasses two distinct areas: the small Réserve Spéciale d'Analamazaotra (popularly known by the old French name of the nearby town and railway station, "Périnet") in the south next to Andasibe village; and the much larger Parc National de Mantadia to the north. Both parts belonged to the same humid forest, but because of human activities are now divided in two. The park was created in 1989.

The Reserve is famous for the Indri which is the largest of all lemurs and whose calls can be heard widely during the mornings. There are 13 other lemur species found here. The extraordinary animal diversity is completed with another 15 mammal species, more than 100 of birds (many of them endemic, like the Madagascar yellowbrow, Madagascar baza, Madagascar wagtail or the Madagascar serpent-eagle), 50 species of reptiles, among them the biggest chameleon of the island - the boa manditra, many leaf-tailed geckos and more than 80 species of amphibians

After lunch we depart Andasibe and travel east, down the escarpments to the coastal plains, where after winding our way through coastal villages we end up at the town of Manambato. We leave our vehicles here and start our journey through the waters of the Pangalanes.

This section of canals was constructed under the governance of General Joseph Gallieni during the early French colonial years of 1896-1904. It was designed to facilitate transportation of goods to the main trading port of Toamasina (Tamatave), because shipping along the Indian Ocean coast was too dangerous. The canal still dominates daily life in this region as it provides the main source of trade, transport and travel. Many traditional Betsimisaraka villages can be seen along the banks, as well as pirogues (traditional dugout canoes), local fishermen, over-crowded ferries and rafts with straw huts carrying timber en-route to Toamasina.

We travel about 25kms on the water to reach "Le Palmarium" (also known as Ankanin'ny Nofy) which is set on the banks of Lake Ampitabe. The lodge is found on a small private reserve set up to preserve some of the area's unique flora and fauna. Palm trees, orchids and even carnivorous plants can be found growing in the gardens, and lemurs are easily spotted all year round. The lodge has eleven bungalows with ensuite bathrooms. The bungalows are simple inside, but with all of the essentials. They have a very natural feel, with thatched roofs, polished stone floors and white washed walls.

This evening before dinner we have the opportunity of visiting a small island which is home to some extremely rare "Aye-Aye" lemur. Palmarium has exclusive access to this location and their staff accompany us to find some of the Aye-Aye.

Overnight Palmarium Lodge, Lake Ampitabe.

Day 10: LAKE AMPITABE (B/L/D)

This morning we undertake a guided walk through the private reserve of Palmarium. There are 10 different lemur species living here and although wild, some are very confident and it is a great chance to get close to these creatures, endemic to Madagascar.

You're then free to discovery the reserve and the areas surrounding the lodge, or take a wander along the shores of the lake. Later in the afternoon we visit Andranonkoditra, a small fishing village overlooking the Indian Ocean.

Overnight Palmarium Lodge, Lake Ampitabe.



Day 11: LAKE AMPITABE – TOAMASINA (B/L/D)



This morning we have time to further explore the area surrounding our lodge and continue to enjoy and photograph the resident lemurs.

After lunch it's back onto the water as we continue our journey through the Pangalanes, witnessing more of the local people going about their daily lives. We continue north through the canals and lakes and end up at Toamasina (commonly known as Tamatave). It is Madagascar's second largest city and with the presence of the main regional seaport has a growing potential for economic activities.

We leave our boat here and transferred to the Calypso Hotel for the night.

Overnight at **Calypso Hotel, Antananarivo.**

Day 12: TOAMASINA – ANTANANARIVO (B/L/D)

Today we explore the city of Toamasina whilst doing some street photography. Wide avenues, palm trees, French colonial buildings and one of the most modern daily markets in the whole of the country will be ours to explore. Later in the afternoon we transfer to the airport for our flight back to Antananarivo, where we will be met and transferred to Le Louvre Hotel.

Overnight at **Le Louvre Hotel, Antananarivo.**



Day 13: ANTANANARIVO – DEPARTURE (B/L)

Depending on our departure time, we may have some time to explore the streets surrounding our hotel, otherwise you can casually set about preparing for your departing flight.

If you are interested in joining me on this fantastic photographic tour or require additional information, please contact:



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