

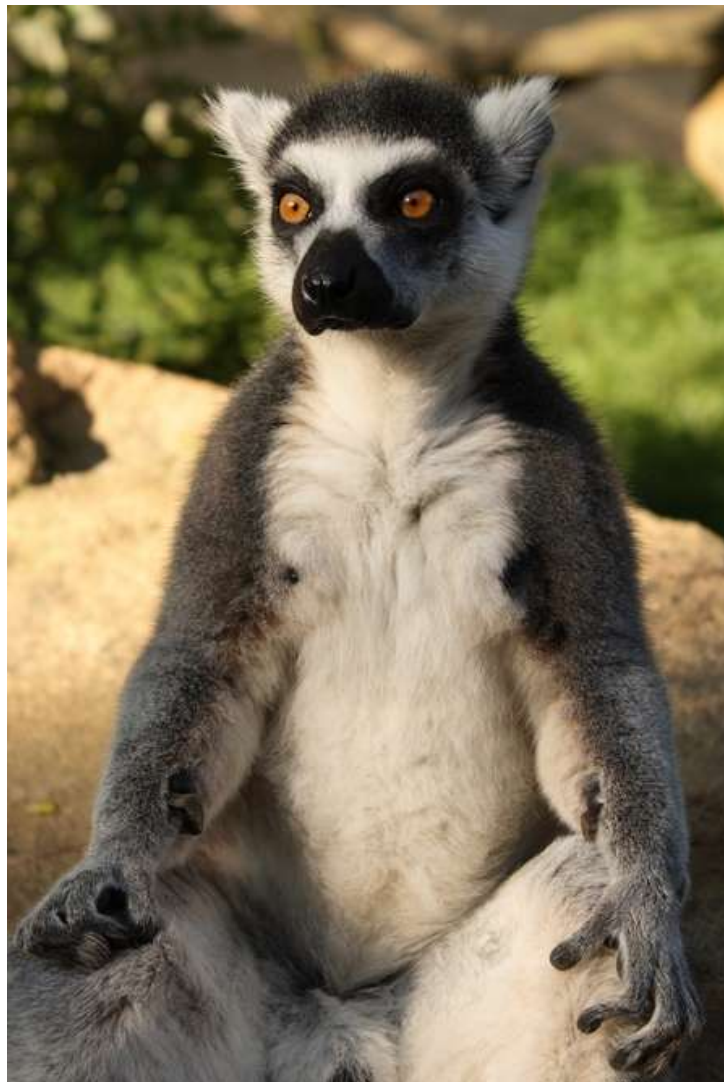
# TRACKS SAFARIS

## WE GET YOU CLOSER



Due to its isolation many stories are not written, many aspects of the country are incomplete. This fourth biggest island of the world is the “Galapagos of the African Continent” and the farthest gateway to Asia. A mixture of 18 cultures, a variety of landscapes, and a nature with still many secrets to unveil are the highlights that only few countries boast to have. Madagascar began its slow separation from Africa during the age of dinosaurs. At that time, only very distant primate ancestors existed on earth. Over the millennia, the lineage that includes apes, monkeys and humans evolved on the African mainland, while lemur-like ancestors evolved in Madagascar. These lemurs lived in a gentle world, with no competition from monkeys and with none of the predators of Africa.

We agree, no wildlife safari as in Africa, but the contrasts, the cultures, the many endemic (80%) animals and plants that you will see, is part of the mysteries of this unique destination. A waiting call rings out through the forest. The Indri lemur is singing. The song has given rise to numerous legends about its origin.



## HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

**Andasibe Special Reserve:** a huge rainy forest. Fauna includes “Indri Indri”, the largest lemurs, 9 endemic species of lemurs, 28 species of reptiles and 109 species of birds. Flora: hundred species of orchids.

**Highland:** Antsirabe, Fianarantsoa characterized by its green landscape with rice fields on terrace, rickshaws

**Ranomafana National park:** a huge rainforest. Fauna includes “the golden bamboo lemurs”, 29 species of mammals, 12 species of lemurs, 5 species of viverridsring tailed mongoose, reptiles and about 98 species of birds.

**Ambalavao:** vineyards and wine production, “Anteimoro paper”, cattle market

**Isalo National Park:** Eroded sandstone mountain, containing many canyons, natural swimming pool. Fauna includes 3 species of lemurs, 55 species of birds, geckos, chameleons. Flora includes succulent plants like pachypodium, tapia, aloes, pandanus...

**Ilakaka:** village of sapphires, “Madagascar Texas” and the spectacular Mahafaly tombs

**Sainte Marie –** beach protected by coral reef and whale viewing from June to October

## THE ITINERARY

### DAY 1: CDG - TANA:

International flight via Paris to Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar. On arrival in Tana you are met and greeted and then transferred to IC HOTEL.

**Overnight at ICHOTEL on bed and breakfast**

### DAY 2: TANA – TULEAR:

Flight connection to Tulear

**Overnight at PAILLE EN QUEUE on bed and breakfast**

### DAY 3: TULEAR – ISALO National park Zombitse Vohibasia

Early in the morning, drive to the National park of Zombitse which 145 km in the north of Tulear.

The complex forest Zombitse Vohibasia is composed of the forest of Zombitse and the biological sites of interest of Vohibasia and Isoky. Zombitse Vohibasia shelters 47% of the endemic birds of Madagascar and a local endemic species: the *Appert's Greenbul Bernieria*. It also counts 8 species of lemurs of which some are almost threatened as the case of the *Phaner furcifer pallescens*.

**Overnight at SATRANA LODGE on bed and breakfast**

### DAY 4: ISALO NATIONAL PARK

Day excursion in the National Park of Isalo and the famous «Natural swimming pool». This park is very famous for its strange geological formation. Composed with sandstone and eroded by the rain and the wind, this mountain offers the most spectacular scenery of the country. This is also a place where the BARA tribes used to bury their dead until they have enough money to buy a silver coffin. If we are lucky, we will see the lemur catta during this walk. In the afternoon, we can go to the village of Ranohira, and then drive to the museum of the national park. Around 16.30, we'll drive to the “The Natural window “where we see the beautiful sunset between rocks which looks like window.

**Overnight at SATRANA LODGE on bed and breakfast**

### DAY 5: ISALO – AMBALAVAO

Drive northward to Ambalavao. Today we enter the rocky mountain chain of Andringitra which is very picturesque remaining of Arabian civilisation. Then the landscape changes when we enter the highland, we cross the “Gate of South” which serves as a transition between the south and the fresh and green highland. Arriving in Ambalavao, we visit the « Papier Anteimoro » workshop; this is also the region of grapes plantation and wine industry.

**Overnight at AUX BOUGAINVILLEES on bed and breakfast**

### DAY 6: AMBALAVAO – RANOMAFANA

Morning after breakfast there is a visit to the **private park of Anja**, well known for its lemur Catta, caves and reptiles. After the visit, continuation to Ranomafana

## **Overnight at DOMAINE NATURE on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 7- DAY 8: RANOMAFANA**

2 days expedition in the forest with special guide to see 12 species lemurs, Ranomafana is the most important site of lemurs in Madagascar; it is the only confirmed site for the two rarest species the greater bamboo lemur *Hapalemur simus* and the golden bamboo lemur *Hapalemur aureus*. Different species like *Fulvus Rufus*, *Varieca Variegata*, *Hapalemur griseus*, *Avahi lanigreur*, *Lepilemur mustelinus*, *Propithecus diadema edwardsi*, *Cheirogaleus major* and *Daubentonia madagascariensis* are also seen there. More than 100 birds, five species of viverrids, reptiles, lizards, butterflies and other insects have been recorded in this park. The area is covered with forest, in the higher areas, the trees are festooned with mosses and lichens, much of this secondary forest is dominated by the introduced tree *Psidium cattlejarum*, also giant bamboo *Cephalostacyum viguieri*, particularly various orchids such as *Bblophyllum* and *Eulophiella*, steep mountains, dramatic waterfalls and natural hot springs make this endangered and exotic forest charming and unusual. Apart from its huge tropical forest, the name Ranomafana means "hot water" so it is a thermal city where visitors can relax in the hot spring water.

**Night at DOMAINE NATURE on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 9: RANOMAFANA – AMBOSITRA – ANTOETRA**

Continuation to Ambositra, the centre of Madagascar's wood carving industry. We are still in the highland with the green landscape which is dominated by rice fields on slopes forest of pine and eucalyptus. One thing which marks the highland is its architecture. Almost all of the houses are constructed with ornately carved wooden balconies and shutters and very colourful. In the village of Ivato, we take a track to go to Antoetra, the Zafimaniry village

**Overnight at SOUS LE SOLEIL DE MADA on half board**

### **DAY 10: ANTOETRA – FALIARIVO**

Morning after breakfast we enjoy a walk (around 3 hours) to join the village of Faliarivo. This is the opportunity to you to have a close contact with the local people.

**Dinner and night at "family homestay"**

### **DAY 11: FALIARIVO - ANTOETRA**

The people are famous for their wood carving, and you can admire their work on the doors and shutters of the houses as well as the many local handicrafts. In the afternoon travel back to Antoetra.

**Overnight at SOUS LE SOLEIL DE MADA on half board**

### **DAY 12: ANTOETRA – ANTSIRABE - TANA**

Drive back to Tana via Antsirabe. On the journey we come across the highland which is characterised by rice fields, a chilly climate and the population which has the features of Asian people. On arrival enjoy a tour of Antsirabe and in the afternoon continue on to Tana.

**Overnight at HOTEL DU LOUVRE on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 13: TANA – ANDASIBE**

After breakfast drive to Andasibe on the RN 2, through the green landscape of the east. This journey brings us to the humid part of the country with many primary forest and lakes. You arrive into Andasibe at the end of the afternoon.

**Overnight at FEON'NY ALA HOTEL on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 14: ANDASIBE**

07.30 departure to the National Park of Andasibe. In the morning visit the Special Reserve of Andasibe to see the Indri Indri - the biggest lemurs of the island. This 810 ha reserve is very unique with endemic fauna and flora. It contains a wide variety of orchids, canopy, endemic animals such as chameleons, tenrecs, and many birds. After the visit we walk into the Orchidea Park. In the afternoon you visit an Andasibe village, a typical Betsimisaraka (The-Many-inseparable) village, the second largest tribe of the island; they cultivate rice and plantations. This small visit helps us to have a close contact with local people, to see how they live, what they eat, then we visit the private park of Vakona "l'Îlot lémurien" where we can find 3 species of lemurs: "Sifaka, brown lemurs and *variecia variegata*".

**Overnight at HOTEL FEON'NY ALA on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 15: ANDASIBE**

#### **Visit of the Mantadia National park**

This recently created park boasts almost all of the eastern rainforest endemics, and is located 20km to the north of Périnet. This is 10,000 hectares of untouched primary forest, where exciting botanizing awaits including many species of orchids. It has become an essential destination on the birding circuit

**Overnight at FEON'NY ALA on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 16: ANDASIBE – ANKANIN'NY NOFY**

Drive to Ankanin'ny nofy after breakfast, stopping in Brickaville, and then continuing on to Manambato where we take a boat for the transfer to Ankanin'ny nofy. We cross the Rasoabe Lake then the Pangalanes Channel built during the colonisation day for commercial use where we can admire many birds and the luxuriant vegetation of the east. Arrival in the afternoon.

## **Overnight at Hotel PALMARIUM on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 17: ANKANIN'NY NOFY**

Day at leisure. Ankanin'ny Nofy means 'nest of the dreams'. Surrounded by a huge and blue lake, this is the ideal place for rest and to be in contact direct with nature. Visit of the Palmarium a private park about 46 ha where we can see many lemurs like propithecus verreauxi, eulemur coronatus, and macaco.

#### **Overnight at the same hotel**

### **DAY 18: ANKANIN'NY NOFY – TAMATAVE – SAINTE MARIE**

Journey by boat along the Pangalanes Channel. During this mini-cruise we can enjoy the life of the people living along the channel with their Bamboo pirogues. Arrival in Tamatave and transfer to the airport to fly to Sainte Marie.

Sainte Marie is an island situated in the on the east of Tamatave. It is used to be the home of pirates during the 16th century and the queen of the island was married to one of them. Sainte Marie has beautiful beaches and creeks along the coast. It is ideal for a tranquil beach break at the end of a tiring adventure with the added bonus of whale watching, or 'the dancing of whales' from July to October.

#### **Overnight at VANIVOLA on bed and breakfast**

### **DAY 19-21: SAINTE MARIE**

Day at leisure.

Many excursions can be organized in Sainte Marie. A tropical isle with luxuriant vegetation, Sainte Marie is also a good place for walking, cycling, snorkeling and diving. There are interesting sights around Ambodifotatra and the Baie des Forbans and in the town there is a Catholic church built in 1837 and the Pirates' Cemetery which marked the European passage in the island. The population is admired for their kindness and hospitality.

#### **Night at the same hotel**

### **DAY 22: SAINTE MARIE – TANA – CDG**

Transfer to the airport and flight to Tana. On arrival into Tana you will be met and transferred to the IC HOTEL where you will have use of a day room whilst waiting for your international flight back to the UK via Paris.

#### **INCLUDED IN THE PRICE**

- Accommodation in double room based on bed and breakfast during the trip according to the program above
- Transports by private car with fuel and driver
- Entrance fees and special guide for the parks mentioned in the program
- All Transfers by car airport / hotel / airport for the whole trip

#### **NOT INCLUDED**

- All Optional and free excursions
- Lunch and dinner, visa
- All personal expenses, insurance for luggage, tips, drinks, laundry

## **THE ITINERARY**

Is written on a 'mora mora' basis (malagasy for 'relax, no hurry') To enjoy the full day we will depart early (07.30h) and arrive at our destination between 16.00h.-17.00h. This means that we can provide enough walking and photo stops. Our aim is that you can enjoy the landscapes and villages along the way.

Your driver and/or guide will see to it that the tour runs smoothly. Their main task is to fulfill your expectations of this unique destination.

Our driver/guides are not biologists. For this we use the official local guides in the National Parks. These walks are focused on the fauna and flora and on the search of lemurs.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

We overnight in \*\*\*/ \*\* hotels/bungalows. We have selected these hotels based on the comfort of the rooms, the friendly service, and the restaurant. We have chosen accommodation with small capacity and beautiful setting, because these elements influence the charm of your stay.

## **MEALS**

Only breakfast is included in the itinerary. One of the charms of Madagascar is to eat 'à la carte'. Besides there is no obligation to eat every time in the accommodation where you are staying. Your guide (or 'road book') knows the specialties and the places where you can find a local (and hygienically safe) restaurant where the food is good. In some places you might compare it with 'la haute cuisine Française'.

Mostly we make use of a light picnic lunch at noon. In the evening you can let yourself go...

## USEFUL INFORMATION

**Local currency:** Ariary which has replaced the Malagasy franc (the former currency 1 Ariary is 5 Malagasy Francs). 1 EURO is about 2500 Ariary. Malagasy Ariary can be changed back in foreign currency at any banks and money changers.

**Credit card:** Visa Card is the most generally accepted credit card. Others, such as Master Card, Diner's and American Express, are not impossible. Travellers' cheques and Euro Cash are of better use in tourism. ATM machine are available in big cities. (only with VISA)

**Opening hours:** Local banks and all offices open from 08.00 to 15.30. Closed on week-end and public holidays

**Payment:** Cash: Ariary, €, US\$ - Traveller's cheque: €, US\$ - Credit card: VISA only

**Time zone:** GMT + 3 hours.

**Official languages:** Malagasy and French.

**Visa :** is mandatory and the passport must be valid for a minimum of 6 months, visas can be obtained at the airport upon arrival in Madagascar. Visa fees: FREE . No photo needed, only return ticket and valid passport

**Health:** no vaccination is compulsory, however, an anti-malarial Treatment is recommended.

**Country code:** + 261

**Electricity:** 220 V. Some places have no electric network. Take battery powered appliances and take care not to leave them in nature once they are worn out.

**Luggage allowance:** 30 kg for international flight and 20 kg for domestic flight.

### **Recommendations to travelers**

Travel with light luggage, if possible; backpacks are very handy, light trousers, long sleeved shirts or T-shirts, pairs of tennis or sandals;

- Hikers must have good walking shoes;
- Mosquito repellent sprays and/or creams; Sun block cream and swimsuits;
- For bivouac lovers: swiss knives, first aid kit, flasks, water purifying tablets, sleeping bags (camping), torches,
- Cameras and/or video cameras to immortalize the highlights of your trip.

### **Seasons and weather**

There are 5 climatic zones, which follow the varied physical geography of the island: there are the mild Highlands, the hot and dry western regions, the rainy and the eastern coastal regions under the influence of trade winds, the hot and wet North, and the semi-arid South. Rainfalls decreases progressively from the North-East (over 300 m) to the South-West (less than 400 m) with several variants between these two extremes. The dry season or the southern winter is from April to October, and summer is from November to March. If, at sea level, temperatures range from 27°C and 32°C in summer and 22°C in winter, on the Highlands, they may go down to 4°C or even less in winter nights.

## SPECIFIC PURCHASES

### ▪ **ARE PROHIBITED:**

Endangered animal and plant species listed in annex I of CITES (Convention on International Trade of Fauna and Flora Species).

Are particularly included in this category (Convention on International Trade of Fauna and Flora Species)

- lemurs – dugong - radiated tortoise - spur tortoise - sea tortoise – boa - Antongil red frog etc...
- Orchids - Euphorb, didieraceous, apocynaceous species (pachypodium)
- Authentic objects classified as national heritage (aloalo, Zafimaniry) - shutters, ancient object and documents...).

### ▪ **ARE CONSIDERED AS PROTECTED:**

- vertebrate, fish and plant fossils
- dinosaur bones
- aepyornis eggs

### ▪ **THE TRAVELLER IS FREE TO TAKE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY**

- 250 g: hallmarked jewels (subject to justifying entry with foreign currencies, the traveller may be allowed to take as much as 1 kg)
- 2 kg of vanilla exempted from tax and duties.

### ▪ **Etiquette, taboos (fady) and prohibitions**

The Malagasy population is known for being pacifist and tolerant. They are strongly attached to their customs and practices, namely in villages and rural communities. Therefore, be attentive to be respectful of traditions, and in particular of elderly people, or of those who are considered as people of high rank in society, and respect local "fady", taboos and prohibitions scrupulously. It is advised to get information about them in advance and respect them scrupulously. For example, there are communities who do not like their children's heads to be caressed. Before taking photographs of a person or a group of people, please ask for their permission first. Lastly, nudism is not allowed on beaches. In town, a lamba or a pareo covering one's monokini or bikini will be sufficient not to shock Malagasy sense of decency.





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