



Craig
travel

EXPERIENCE MADAGASCAR

BOOK BY MAY 31
SAVE \$200 PP

MAXIMUM

18

SMALL GROUP

LEMURS, LIZARDS & LEECHES

OCT 15 - NOV 2, 2024 | 19 DAYS | 48 MEALS

JOURNEY LEADERS: JON AND SUE GURR

Madagascar is world-famous for its lemurs

By virtue of its island location, rugged terrain, and limited foreign influences, Madagascar has remained a world apart. It is a land that can truly be called extraordinary, containing wildlife and vegetation that have developed completely outside the influences of the rest of the world. Our journey was planned to explore the many facets of this land, from its deserts to its rainforests, from its magnificent beaches to its mountain peaks. But mostly, we are going to see its unique wildlife, including the magnificent little lemurs that have developed exclusively on this island nation.

This will be an exciting in-depth journey, planned to cover the depth and breadth of the island. We have carefully selected the best that Madagascar has to offer, both in accommodations and in transportation, including a number of internal flights to avoid long uncomfortable drives over difficult roads. We have secured the best available hotels, some of which will be truly memorable. Virtually everything is included while we travel, so you can simply sit back and absorb the surroundings.

However, this will not be your usual escorted tour - Madagascar is a relatively new destination and conditions in the countryside will be basic and at times may be primitive. As Madagascar is a developing nation, we must be prepared for unscheduled adjustments to the program. You can expect a fascinating adventure - you should not expect a pampered travel itinerary. Members do need to be fit and active to enjoy this journey.

LIMITED TO JUST 18 MEMBERS

This **SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE** will be popular so enrol early to avoid disappointment!

Inclusive Features

- Return economic group airfare from Canada to Madagascar plus internal flights within Madagascar
- First class and best available hotels and lodges as indicated or similar
- Travel by AC mini coach bus with bottled water daily
- All meals included as noted in the itinerary (B - 16 breakfasts, L - 16 lunches, D - 16 dinners)
- Services of your Canadian journey leader plus professional guides in Madagascar
- Visa fees for Madagascar for Canadian passport holders
- All gratuities, taxes, and fees for included services
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

Highlights

- Visit the sacred hill of Ambohimanga, a UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Visit the national parks of Isalo and Ranomafana
- See many of the unique species of lemurs
- Hike into the imposing Canyon of the Makis
- Explore the eastern rainforest on an evening walk
- Explore Tana, Madagascar's capital city, including a visit to the Queen's Palace
- Enjoy three nights on the 'perfumed isle' of Nosy Be at a seaside resort



Journey Leaders

We are delighted to have award-winning photographer **Jon Gurr** and his wife **Susan** as our leaders for this thrilling adventure to Madagascar. With over 40 years of experience, they have explored the globe, capturing stunning photographs along the way. Their journeys have taken them to more than 80 countries across all seven continents. As a certified professional photographer, Jon looks forward to sharing some tips during the tour, while both Jon and Sue are excited to share their passion for travel throughout this remarkable journey.



OCT 15, Tuesday

DEPART CANADA

Tour members from across Canada gather in Toronto for the overnight flights to Madagascar.

OCT 16, Wednesday

ANTANANARIVO (TANA)

After a quick connection, we continue to Madagascar, arriving in the capital Antananarivo (Tana for short) late this afternoon. On arrival, we are transferred to **Radisson Waterfront** or similar (2 nights).

OCT 17, Thursday

ANTANANARIVO (TANA)

Enjoy a leisurely start to the day followed by a brief orientation tour of the capital, visiting both the upper and lower towns as well as the Queen's Palace. This afternoon, we visit the countryside to see the sacred hill of Ambohimanga, a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to the former Royal Palace. BLD

OCT 18, Friday

TANA / ANDASIBE

We venture to the eastern rainforest (145 km - 3 hrs), with a short visit to the Peiryeras Reserve en route, noted for a variety of native animal species, including chameleons, lemurs, and geckos. Andasibe (Perinet) is noted for its lush

rainforests and variety of wildlife. Later this evening, we shall walk in the forest in search of lemurs.

Relais de Mantadia (2 nights) BLD

OCT 19, Saturday ANDASIBE

This morning we will walk in the Analamazaotra Reserve in search of the Indri Indri (babakoto), the world's largest lemur, and visit a small orchid farm. After lunch, we will explore the small island reserve on the premises of the lodge, which contains several rare species of lemur. BLD

OCT 20, Sunday ANDASIBE / TOLIARA / IFATY

This morning, we drive back to Tana (145 km - 4 hours) then fly to the southern end of the country to Toliara, a coastal city set on the Tropic of Capricorn. A drive along the coast to Ifaty Beach allows us to enjoy the scenery as we reach our resort overlooking the Madagascar Channel.

Les Dunes d'Ifaty (2 nights) BLD

OCT 21, Monday IFATY

This morning we visit the Reniala Reserve to experience the local birds and see the fascinating Baobab trees that appear to be upside down. Balance of day at leisure to relax by the beach and to enjoy the sunset. BLD

OCT 22, Tuesday TOLIARA / ISALO

Early this morning we begin our drive into the arid interior (260 km - 6+ hours). We visit Antsokay Arboretum, with some 900 local plant species, with emphasis on local flora and the spiny forest before travelling through Mahafaly with its striking baobabs, ornate hillside tombs, and the sapphire town of Ilakaka, a frontier town vaguely reminiscent of the Wild West. If time permits we will make a brief stop to explore Zombitse National Park with its wonderful Baobab trees. Later this afternoon, we reach Isalo National Park.

Isalo Rock Lodge (2 nights) BLD

OCT 23, Wednesday ISALO NATIONAL PARK

The combination of abstract eroded sandstone rocks, rare endemic plants, and the absolute silence, make this park particularly rewarding. Verreaux's sifakas, brown lemurs, and ring-tailed lemurs may be seen during our strenuous hike into the imposing Canyon of the Makis. Later (weather permitting), we will watch the sunset through the Window of Isalo. *(This hike will be tailored to the needs of the group but allow 4 – 6 hours over very rough trails. Alternate arrangements will be available for those unable to handle this excursion.)* BLD

OCT 24, Thursday ISALO / FIANARANTSOA

As the day unfolds, our journey takes us onto the desolate Horombe plateau, where the volcanic summits of the Andringitra massif dominate the skyline. Visit a community on the Anja Reserve on our way to see troops of ring-tailed lemurs close up. After lunch, we continue on to Fianarantsoa, the cultural capital of the Central Highlands where we will overnight (282 km - 6 hours).

Pietra Hotel (1 night) BLD

OCT 25, Friday FIANARANTSOA / RANOMAFANA

In Ambalavao we visit a traditional "Antemoro" papermaking workshop. Continue to Ranomafana National Park, a high-altitude rainforest reserve where the golden



Bishops Hat, credit Robert Craig



Chameleon, credit Robert Craig



'Say cheeeese!' Credit David Craig



Madagascar mangroves, credit Robert Craig

bamboo lemur was discovered in 1986. The forest is home to eleven other lemur species, endemic chameleons, leaf-tailed geckoes, *Mantella* frogs, and a myriad of birds. Enjoy an evening walk in the park to spot active nocturnal animals.

Setam Lodge (2 nights) BLD

OCT 26, Saturday RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK

Enjoy a full day to explore the rainforest. By day we will search for lemurs, rare birds, and reptiles such as the Madagascar tree boa and Parson's chameleon. On an evening visit, we may see the rufous mouse lemur, greater dwarf lemur, and other nocturnal mammals. This day includes strenuous walks in the rainforest. BLD

OCT 27, Sunday RANOMAFANA / ANTSIRABE

Today we continue north to Ambositra, a centre of woodworking and gateway to Zafimaniry country, home to people skilled at weaving the "landikely" and "landibe" silks. Following lunch and an opportunity to visit some workshops, we continue to Antsirabe, an attractive spa town founded by Norwegian missionaries (224km - 5 hours). Explore the surroundings: the volcanic lake and a semi-precious gem workshop. This evening we will have a presentation of traditional music at dinner.

Arotel (1 night) BLD

OCT 28, Monday ANTSIRABE / TANA

Driving through the captivating scenery of the Central Highlands early this morning (162 km - 4 hours), we witness terraced rice paddies, quaint villages, and the brick homes of the Merina tribe. We return to Tana this evening.

Radisson Waterfront (1 night) BLD

OCT 29, Tuesday TANA / NOSY BE

Visiting the Croc Farm this morning will allow us to see hundreds of these much-aligned beasts on display and the Lemurs park with many of the varieties native to the island. This afternoon we fly to the delightful island of Nosy Be, the "perfumed isle" with its aromas of ylang-ylang, plumeria, and assorted spices. Our delightful seaside resort awaits.

Royal Andilana or Palm Beach Hotel (4 nights) BLD

OCT 30, Wednesday NOSY BE

Indulge in three completely free days at our resort - take a refreshing swim at the private beach and unwind beneath the shade of a tree. You may opt to take an optional excursion around Nosy Be or to another nearby island, or perhaps venture to the island's capital, Hell-Ville, with its local market and French colonial buildings. BLD

OCT 31, Thursday NOSY BE

Enjoy a completely free day at our resort. BLD

NOV 1, Friday NOSY BE

Make the most of our last free day at the resort. BLD

NOV 2, Saturday NOSY BE / ADDIS ABABA / CANADA

We transfer to the airport for our return flights to our homes across Canada.

CT Rating 4.5/5 - Moderately Challenging: Members must be aware that travel conditions in Madagascar are relatively primitive with rough roads and limited facilities. Some hotels are relatively basic but comfortable, and the food is good. **This tour includes walks over extremely difficult terrain.** All members need to be in excellent physical health, willing to accept the destination as it is, or be prepared to forego some activities.

 **Book by May 31, 2024**
and save \$200 per person 

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Land-only* (Join/Leave at hotel)..... | \$7,495 |
| Toronto | \$9,995 |
| Montreal / Ottawa | \$10,095 |
| Halifax..... | \$10,295 |
| St. John's..... | \$10,495 |
| Winnipeg..... | \$10,395 |
| Regina / Saskatoon / Victoria | \$10,595 |
| Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver | \$10,535 |
| Single Supplement | \$1,595 |

***Land-only price includes internal flights.** Land-only join at the Tana Hotel / leave at the Nosy Be Resort. Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features for details. Tour price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room. Prices are based on a group of 16 travellers plus journey leaders and on rates, taxes, and fees effective October 2023. Prices and itinerary are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted with a minimum of 10 travellers.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment is due on July 10, 2024
Deposit is \$900 per person

To reserve your spot, complete the enclosed enrollment form, indicating the tour you wish to join and your home city, and forward it with your deposit to:



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