



Reef & Rainforest



Special Itinerary:

A Magical Overland Journey through Madagascar

14 - Day Small Group Tour - Led by Fano Rajaonarisoa

15 – 28 October 2019



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ITINERARY IN BRIEF

- 15 Oct Arrive **ANTANANARIVO (TANA)**. Met on arrival and transferred to hotel. O/n RELAIS DES PLATEAUX HOTEL.
- 16 Oct Morning transfer to the airport to take domestic flight to Tulear. On arrival transfer (45 mins) to **IFATY SPINY FOREST**. Afternoon and evening to explore the unique spiny forest. O/n LES DUNES D'IFATY, B, L, D.
- 17 Oct A morning excursion in the **IFATY** Spiny Forest, followed by some time at leisure in the afternoon. Snorkelling is available for those interested. Night walk in the spiny Forest. O/n LES DUNES D'IFATY, B, L, D.
- 18 Oct Early departure (2 hours) to **ZOMBITSE NATIONAL PARK** for a guided walk. Continue (1.5 hours) to ISALO NATIONAL PARK. O/n JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D.
- 19 Oct Day to walk in **ISALO NATIONAL PARK**. O/n JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D.
- 20 Oct Drive (8 hours in total but with many stops) north to **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK** with stops of interest en route. Stop for a visit to **ANJA PARK** to see ring tailed lemurs. O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.
- 21 Oct Full day excursion to **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK**. Night walk in the evening. O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.
- 22 Oct Drive (1.5 hours) to the **KIANJAVATO RESERVE** in search of its special lemurs and aye aye in the evening. Return to the lodge. O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.
- 23 Oct Another day of morning and afternoon excursions in **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK** in search of its special wildlife. Return to Kianjavato for aye aye if missed the day before. O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.
- 24 Oct Transfer (7 hours) north to **ANTSIRABE** with various stops en route. O/n ROYAL PALACE HOTEL, B, L, D.
- 25 Oct Transfer (4 hours) north to Tana for lunch. Continue a further 4 hours by road in the afternoon to **ANDASIBE**. O/n VAKONA LODGE, B, D.
- 26 Oct Morning excursion to the primary rainforests of **MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK** in search of rainforest species. Afternoon to explore Perinet. Night walk for nocturnal wildlife O/n VAKONA LODGE, B, L, D.
- 27 Oct Morning excursion in the **ANALAMAZAOTRA NATIONAL PARK**. Afternoon to explore the community managed **VOIMMA** reserve. O/n VAKONA LODGE, B, L, D.
- 28 Oct Morning to explore another rainforest reserve such as **MITSinJO**, **VOIMMA** or **PERINET** or perhaps visit Antavalobe Reserve. In the afternoon return (4 hours) to Tana. Day use of a room at the RELAIS DES PLATEAUX HOTEL and later transfer to the airport for departing flights. B.
- 29 Oct Depart Tana on flight home.



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Led by one of Madagascar's best local guides, this wildlife filled small group tour is ideal for those looking to experience Madagascar most contrasting environments on an ever-changing overland journey. Beginning with the bizarre spiny forests of Ifaty in the far south, we then move north through the transitional and baobab forests of Zombitse to the rocky canyon lands of Isalo. Heading north again we can enjoy close encounters with ring-tailed lemurs



at Anja Park to a backdrop of impressive granite mountains, before we reach the lush rainforests of Ranomafana and Kianjavato. After some memorable sightings of the rare wildlife here we make our way back to Tana and to the wonderful species rich rainforests of Andasibe-Mantadia. Here we can enjoy a different cast of rainforest species with one of the highlights, being the largest lemur of all, the magical tail-less indri.

Accommodation is mostly of a surprisingly good standard as you visit some of the island's most highly rewarding and popular national parks. One of the highlights will be a visit to the Kianjavato Forest Reserve, away from the beaten track where we can enjoy some intimate encounters with many lemurs being studied by the Lemur Conservation Network. Here radio-collared agile black-and-white ruffed lemurs and highly endangered greater bamboo lemurs can be observed, usually at close quarters in their natural habitat. While in the evening we have excellent opportunities to find the mysterious nocturnal aye aye on a more strenuous nocturnal walk deep in the forest. Thanks to the research being done by the Kianjavato Project staff at least eight aye ayes are known to be thriving in the forest here and our visit helps support their important work.

The group has been kept deliberately small in order to maximise wildlife viewing and access to your tour leader and local guides, who really know how and where to find the unique wildlife in their localities.

The Group will be led by **Fano Rajaonarisoa**.

With a degree in British literature from the University of Antananarivo and at least 12 years of experience guiding tours all over Madagascar, Fano is a very popular choice to lead this tour. Fano's excellent knowledge and never-ending enthusiasm about Madagascar's wildlife and culture as well as his humour and excellent spoken English has meant Fano has proved very popular with our clients over the years.





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A MAGICAL OVERLAND JOURNEY THROUGH MADAGASCAR WITH FANO RAJAONARISOA,

Tue 15 Oct Arrive at ANTANANARIVO (TANA) IVATO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. Met on arrival at the airport and transfer (15 minutes) to the hotel.

O/n RELAIS DES PLATEAUX, BB. Situated about 10 minutes' drive from the airport, this comfortable three-star hotel set in exotic gardens offers well equipped, en suite rooms including air conditioning, satellite TV and mini-bar, decorated in Malagasy design using local materials. Other



facilities in the hotel include a local handicraft shop, restaurant serving French cuisine and local delicacies, bar and swimming pool (heated in the cooler months).

Wed 16 Oct After breakfast we transfer 15 minutes back to Tana airport to catch our TSARADIA domestic flight (previously called AIR MADAGASCAR) to TULEAR. **(Please note that the exact timing of this flight may be subject to change depending on the schedule nearer the time of departure)**. On arrival in Tulear we will transfer (45 mins) along a sandy track to the small village of IFATY, on the coast of the Mozambique Channel. Swamps en-route harbour birds such as little bittern, purple swamphen and greater-painted snipe amongst herons, ducks and some waders.



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After some time to settle in to our hotel close to the beach, we will head into the nearby spiny forest fragment for a night walk in search of nocturnal species.

The region is especially dry as it falls within a rain shadow produced by the eastern mountain range and only receives around 500 mm of rainfall annually which has created a unique vegetation dominated by the cacti like *Didiereaceae*, or octopus, trees.

The highly localised and only recently described black-shouldered sportive lemur and both grey and grey-brown mouse lemurs can be found here.

Other nocturnal species that may be encountered include the Madagascar scops owl and nightjar, both common and hedgehog tenrecs and range of reptiles and

insects including sleeping warty chameleons, Dumeril's ground boa and more. **(All meals are included today)**



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O/n DUNES HOTEL, B, L, D. (accommodation in a Villa Room)
One of the best hotels in Ifaty, newly refurbished, comfortable and well positioned near the spiny forest and good beaches. Ifaty has a number of diving operations where diving and snorkelling trips may be arranged (OPTIONAL – please consult the hotel staff) e.g. there is an excellent shark dive at 31 metres on the GRAND RECIFE and snorkelling at the ROSE GARDEN. The beach may not always be suitable for swimming except at high tide. At low tide it is good for observing rock pool life.



Thu 17 Oct

This morning we transfer early back into the local SPINY FOREST habitat to search for its diurnal wildlife. Birds are highlight here with a number of locally endemic spiny forest speciality species to see such as sub-desert mesite, Lafresnaye's vanga, Archbold's newtonia, Madagascar nightjar, banded kestrel, littoral rockthrush and the fantastic long-tailed ground roller all possible to see.



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The forest is also home to many reptiles restricted to this region such as the warty chameleon, three-eyed lizard, various skinks and the rare radiated tortoise.



In the afternoon, swim and relax, or take OPTIONAL activities offered by the hotel such as a boat for snorkelling or diving on the nearby coral reef. In the evening we will return to the spiny forest for another night walk. O/n DUNES HOTEL, B, L, D.

Fri 18 Oct

Today we will depart early for the transfer (approx. 2.5 - 3 hours) to ZOMBITSE NATIONAL PARK. Zombitse-Vohibasia acts as a transition zone between the dry and the humid forests of Madagascar. The flora is especially rich within the protected area with bottle baobabs and several orchids particularly common. The park is home to eight lemur species, such as the Verreaux's sifaka, red-fronted brown lemur, ring-tailed lemur and the Hubbard's (Zombitse) sportive lemur.



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The park also supports a wide variety of interesting bird species, many of them endemic, with Zombitse's special attraction the rare Appert's tetraka which only lives in this forest and a remote montane evergreen forest at Analavelona. Other species include the white-browed owl, red-tailed and Chabert's vanga, Madagascar cuckoo roller and more. After our guided walk, we continue the drive to Isalo National Park passing the sapphire mining shantytown of Ilakaka.



Isalo National Park is a runiforme limestone massif, that contains wonderful scenery and unusual plants like the endemic 'elephant's foot' *Pachypodium rosalatum*, and is a sacred burial ground for the Bara tribe. Perhaps visit the window of Isalo in the evening.



O/n LE JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D. The hotel, on the edge of ISALO NATIONAL PARK, blends in wonderfully with its surroundings. Luxurious for Madagascar – this is one of the best hotels in the country, using beautiful stonework throughout. There is a large swimming pool in a lovely natural setting and a wonderful restaurant offering beautifully presented European influenced food and service. Free Wi-Fi is available in the rooms but is best in the main building.



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Sat 19 Oct

Day to explore the spectacular ISALO NATIONAL PARK. The Park, a runiforme limestone massif, contains wonderful scenery and unusual plants like the endemic 'elephant's foot' *Pachypodium rosalatum*, and is a sacred burial ground for the Bara tribe.



Trail choice to be discussed with your guide, according to your interests/fitness (the trails can be reasonably strenuous due to the terrain and climate). e.g. Take the 4km CRÊTES (CRESTS) TRAIL, with fascinating geological formations such as the Queen of the Isalo, the Wolf, the Boot, and the Tsingy of Isalo.

Or walk to the PISCINE NATURELLE (natural swimming pool) a beautiful lush oasis fringed by pandanus trees, where one may swim in a clear freshwater pool under a waterfall. After the refreshing dip, continue the walk-through wonderful canyon-land scenery to the forest of NAMAZAHA, a good place for bird watching



and lemur-spotting where ring-tailed lemurs and red fronted brown lemurs may be seen. Reward yourself with swims in the PISCINE BLEUE and PISCINE NOIRE (blue and black) natural pools before walking to your vehicle. Or drive 17km (1 hour) on a rough road and take a relatively short walk, negotiating rice paddy fields into the CANYON DES MAKIS and CANYON DES RATS to learn more about the culture and history of Isalo. Other options may be possible, and your guide will discuss these with you.



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Wildlife that may be seen includes reptiles such as the jewel, white-lined (or carpet) and Oustalets's chameleon, iguanids such as the Duméril's Madagascar swift (*Oplurus quadrimaculatus*) and skinks such as the (*Zonosaurus ornatus*) and (*Trachylepis gravenhorstii*). There are also ring-tailed and red-fronted brown lemurs and birds such as greater and lesser vasa parrots, Madagascar harrier hawk, Madagascar kestrels, buzzards, hoopoes, bee-eaters, and the localised Benson's rock thrush. O/n LE JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D.

Sun 20 Oct After breakfast we will drive north (4.5 hours) through vast open plains that are mostly quiet, but open country bird such as Madagascar marsh harrier and Madagascar partridge, bush lark and cisticola could be spotted along the way. The scenery soon becomes impressive and more mountainous as we pass the edge of the Andringitra Massif.

We will make a stop at the community-managed ANJA PARK to see groups of habituated ring-tailed lemurs, which offer good photographic opportunities.



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After some lunch at Anja Park, we continue the drive north (c. 3 hrs) through ever-changing scenery to arrive at our lodge just outside of Ranomafana National Park in the early evening.

O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D. Located close to the entrance of Ranomafana National Park, this lodge offers good views to the forest. There are 20 bungalows each with a small sitting area and private bathroom with hot water showers. The restaurant has good views to the forest and serves European and Malagasy dishes. Please note that there is only Wi-Fi in the restaurant, and it is not very fast.



Mon 21 Oct Today we can explore RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK on morning and afternoon walks in search of its wonderful rainforest wildlife. Ranomafana is an exceptionally rich high-altitude rainforest reserve where the very rare golden bamboo lemur and eleven other lemur species exist.



These include the critically endangered greater bamboo lemur and beautiful Milne Edwards's sifaka and red-bellied lemur. Please be aware that the trails can be steep and tough but generally the going is moderate. A staggering 120 endemic frog species have also been recorded within the park.



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Over 100 bird species have been recorded in the National Park with specialities including the attractive pitta-like, short-legged and rufous-headed ground rollers, yellow-browed oxylabes, velvet and yellow-bellied sunbird asities and brown emutail. Many of these are elusive though and best seen on the high altitude Vohipara Trail.



This evening we will take a night walk along the nearby road in search of sleeping chameleons, tree boas, colourful boophis frogs and if lucky a satanic leaf-tailed gecko or the huge Madagascar comet moth. (Please bring a powerful torch). O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.



Tue 22 Oct

Today we transfer (1.5 hours) to the east to explore the KIANJAVATO FOREST RESERVE.

The Kianjavato Reserve and Field Station is managed by the Madagascar Biodiversity Project and Lemur Conservation



Network and was set up to research lemur ecology and their threats within fragmented areas of forests. Its other aim is to directly reforest the surrounding region and create habitat corridors for wildlife to move between its fragmented areas of forest. It is also promoting conservation in the surrounding local communities and educating schoolchildren on the value of rainforest and wildlife.

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This morning we will explore the rainforest in search of two critically endangered species of lemur; the greater bamboo lemur and the southern black-and-white ruffed lemur.

Researchers have fitted some GPS transmitters to some of these lemurs to better understand their behaviour and this also helps us in locating them.

The greater bamboo lemur is the largest of the bamboo lemurs and sadly one of the 25 most endangered primates in the world with a wild population of only around 500 individuals from currently 11 separate populations. The species was once widespread but became so rare in the 20th century that it was even thought to be extinct, until it was rediscovered in 1972 around Ranomafana. These gentle lemurs feed almost exclusively on giant bamboo (*Cephalostachium madagascariensis*) plus some fruits in dense primary rainforests. They now have a very restricted range making them particularly vulnerable to effects of deforestation and habitat fragmentation, which is why the project is studying their ecology to better understand how they can be protected.



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We will also track the agile and sometimes very vocal black-and-white ruffed lemur. The droppings of these large fruit eating lemurs are being used to help grow trees from seed. Thus, helping to reforest the surrounding cleared hillsides and connect isolated areas of forest. This also benefits the local communities by providing fruit bearing and timber trees close to the villages that can be sustainably harvested.



Eastern grey bamboo lemurs, red-bellied lemurs and red-fronted brown lemurs are also present in this forest and other rainforest wildlife could be seen too. Around lunchtime we will visit the project's tree nursery and we can perhaps help plant a few trees.

In the late afternoon we will return to the forest with a local guide to search for the elusive aye aye. Our local guide will take us to the nest site of an aye aye fitted with a GPS collar.

The extraordinary aye aye was described by Gerald Durrell as resembling a Walt Disney witch's black cat with a touch of ET thrown in for good measure. The nocturnal aye aye is one of the most extraordinary of all lemurs. Believed by many Malagasy to be an ill omen and harbinger of death, the aye-aye is persecuted and often killed in many areas of the country and has sadly become very rare.



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With the increase in tourism and education, it is hoped that fewer of these exceptional and harmless lemurs, which occupy their own one-species family, will suffer such a fate. Little is still known about aye aye ecology and its requirements and movements in the wild due to its secretive nature. For this reason, the research staff have fitted eight individuals with GPS collars.

To reach the nearest aye aye nest it will take roughly an hour's walk (though could be longer) through dense vegetation on uneven and sometimes very steep or slippery terrain. It can also take up to an hour for an aye aye to wake from its nest and become active after night fall.



Please also note that the sightings of aye ayes tend to be high in the canopy, so a powerful torch (camera flash only to be used very sensitively) and binoculars are recommended for viewing and photography. In addition to the aye aye, the tiny Jolly's mouse lemur and Peyrieras woolly lemur could also be seen on the night walk as well other nocturnal wildlife. **(Please note that this night excursion is not suitable for those with mobility issues as there can be some steep and slippery slopes)** Return to the car and drive back (1.5 hours) to SETAM Lodge for a late dinner. O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.

Wed 23 Oct Today we can enjoy some more exploration of RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK in search of its special wildlife. There are different trails within the park that offer different wildlife and scenery. For example, this morning we could perhaps explore the high-altitude forest on the Vohiparara circuit, which is the best location to find the beautiful red-bellied lemur and special birds such as the endangered yellow-bellied sunbird asity, common sunbird and velvet asity and elusive cryptic warbler.

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The skulking brown mesite, rufous-headed ground roller, Pollen's vanga and white-throated and yellow-browed oxylabes can all also be found in this area. A nearby marsh holds Madagascar snipe and grey emutail and has been previously supported a population of Madagascar flufftail.

Or perhaps explore another trail within the National Park depending on the group's interests.

Enjoy another night walk in the evening, perhaps to watch rufous mouse lemurs at a nearby site where they are attracted bananas smeared on the tree branches. If unlucky



with the aye aye the night before, we have an opportunity to return to Kianjavato this evening for a second try for this wonderful lemur. O/n SETAM LODGE, B, L, D.

Thu 24 Oct

Today we depart for a drive north (6-7 hours) to Antsirabe stopping at points of interest along the way such as the woodcarving centre of AMBOSITRA, the origin of the intricate inlaid wood designs that are found throughout Madagascar. Later in the day, we will arrive at the handicraft market of Antsirabe; an attractive Hauts Plateaux spa town founded by Norwegian missionaries and noted for its rickshaws and thermal baths.

O/n LE ROYAL PALACE HOTEL, FB. A smart hotel with outdoor swimming pool, large restaurant and 38 simple but clean and comfortable rooms. The rooms are relatively spacious and feature mini bars, satellite TV, safety deposit box and en suite bathrooms with shower only. There is Wi-Fi



throughout the hotel and outside a pool bar and seating area plus outside showers. The restaurant serves buffet breakfasts and a wide range of French, Malagasy, Indian and international cuisine.

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Fri 25 Oct

Today we will make the journey (3.5 – 4 hours) from Antsirabe to Tana for lunch. In the afternoon we will continue to drive (3.5 – 4 hours) to ANDASIBE and the PERINET RESERVE (also known as ANALAMAZAOTRA), passing through many villages and rice paddies. Perinet Reserve contains the largest lemur, the indri and seven other diurnal species, as well as many chameleons, brightly coloured day geckos and frogs.



The reserves of Andasibe are an excellent example of the eastern rainforest habitat with many nature trails. Temperatures may become quite cool, especially in the evening and early mornings. In the evening, we could explore the community-managed MITSINJO FOREST, part of Analamazaotra that receives fewer visitors than surrounding forest areas.

An evening walk may reveal the nocturnal Goodman's mouse lemur, the eastern woolly lemur and furry-eared dwarf lemur and other wildlife that may be encountered includes pygmy (*Brookesia superciliaris*) chameleons, some endemic *Boophis* tree frogs, Madagascar tree boas, stick insects and possibly an incredibly well camouflaged leaf-tailed gecko. Please be aware that some of the trails here can be steep in places and slippery after rainfall.



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O/n VAKONA LODGE, B, D. Located 7kms from the Perinet reserve, this is one of the best hotels in Andasibe. It has a peaceful and attractive lakeside location and is three-starred with an excellent restaurant, bar and small swimming pool. Wi-Fi is available in the restaurant and the rooms are comfortable if quite simple.



Sat 26 Oct

Today we will drive 1.5 hours to the north on a bumpy track deeper into the rainforest to MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK. During the morning we will explore the park in search of the stunning diademed sifaka and the particularly agile and often very vocal black-and-white ruffed lemur. Other rainforest species we hope to encounter include the indri, red-bellied lemur, some extraordinary leaf-tail geckos, colourful day geckos and painted mantella frogs.



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The birdlife may include the beautiful but elusive scaly, short-legged and pitta-like ground rollers, velvet asity, blue, red-fronted and red-breasted couas, Madagascar starling, Madagascar blue pigeon and Madagascar grebe to name just a few.



The walking here is a little harder than at Perinet and sometimes involves some steeper slopes but should be fine if one is fit with no mobility problems.

We will return to the hotel for lunch. In the afternoon we can explore more forest areas, or you may prefer some time at leisure. In the evening we will take another night walk along a nearby forest road before dinner. O/n VAKONA LODGE, B, L, D.

Sun 27 Oct Morning walk in a community managed part of ANALAMAZAOTRA (Perinet) Reserve such as the VOIMMA RESERVE to hopefully enjoy some very close sightings of indri. The indris here are habituated and often allow a close approach and a very intimate and memorable sighting.



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Other diurnal species such as the common brown lemur, eastern bamboo lemur, diademed sifaka can also be found.

With luck we will hopefully also find some chameleons including the huge Parson's and a snuffling lowland streaked tenrec. There are also many fascinating and very odd insects to be seen such as such as the bizarre giraffe-necked weevil and birds such as the Madagascar starling and blue pigeon. O/n VAKONA LODGE, B, L, D.



Mon 28 Oct

Today we have a final morning to explore one of the local rainforest reserves. The choice of which reserve to visit can be decided locally depending on local conditions, sightings and the group's interests.

For example, we could visit the main ANALAMAZAOTRA (Perinet) Reserve or return to the larger MANTADIA. We could perhaps focus our search on shyer lemurs such as the eastern grey bamboo lemur or rare red-bellied lemur.



Another option could to be perhaps visit the old growth rainforest of ANTAVALOBE where the spectacular helmet vanga can now sometimes be found. This unmistakable species has only very recently been discovered at this site and can prove elusive to locate. However,



with the help of local spotters there is now a reasonable chance of finding, watching and photographing one of these spectacular birds here. The rare Bernier's vanga is also present in the forest at this site as well.

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In the afternoon we will transfer (4 hours) back to TANA with perhaps stops at points of interest en route. On arrival back in Tana we will check in to our hotel for day use of a room and the facilities at RELAIS DES PLATEAUX for a rest and final dinner. Later in the evening transfer (15 mins) to TANA airport to check in for the flight home.

Tue 29 Oct Take your international flight home. Examples include Air France via Paris and Kenya Airways via Nairobi.

Minimum group size is 5 maximum 8 plus the tour leader.

<i>Start Date in Madagascar</i>	<i>Adult Price</i>	<i>Single Supplement</i>
Tuesday 15 October 2019	£3,240	£720

Included in the above; Domestic (economy class) flight from Tana to Tulear; all ground transportation in an air-conditioned minibus vehicle; all accommodation in double/twin rooms; all meals as described; (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner), all entrance fees; and private guided activities with the tour leader and local naturalist guides in each National Park/Reserve and protection through ATOL.

Not included; International flights (these can be quoted for); tips; meals unless indicated; drinks; items of a personal nature; activities marked as OPTIONAL; visa (35 Euros per person on arrival or online) and travel insurance.

*Prices subject to possible revision. Please call **01803 866965** if you have any queries, would like to secure your place on the tour, and/or if you would like to extend the tour to include other locations in Madagascar or another destination.

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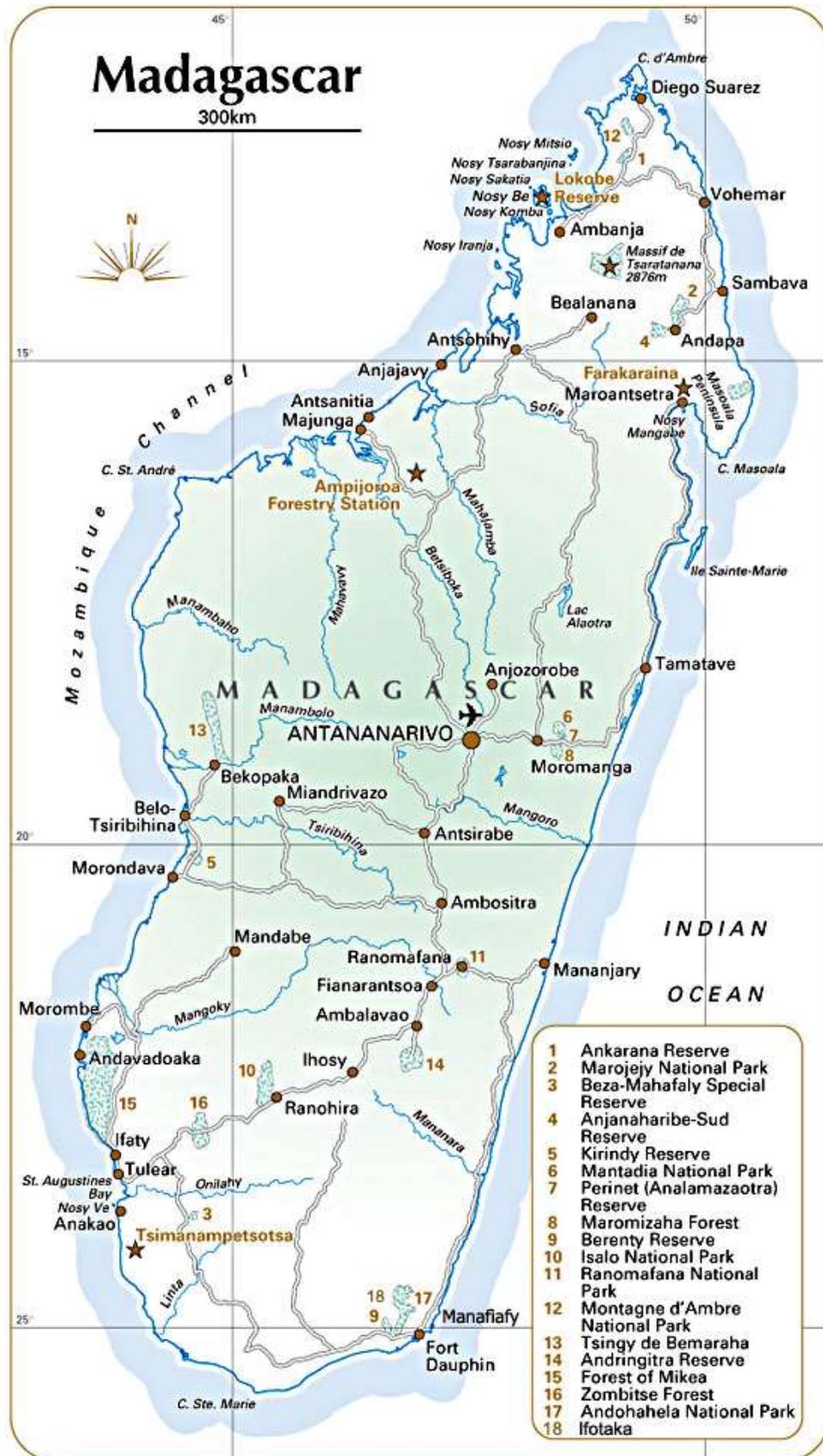
Please note: The aye aye watching in KIANJAVATO will involve walking over uneven terrain away from a path at night. However, if this excursion does not appeal then alternative arrangements can be made.

Please Note: This itinerary involves some long overland transfers, some of which will be over rough bumpy and unsurfaced roads. The overland transfers however will add to your experience of Madagascar and enable you to see much more of the country and its different landscapes and culture.

Please Note: This itinerary involves walking along rainforest trails which can be steep and slippery (especially in Ranomafana and Kianjavatio) in places as well as some walks in hot conditions in Isalo National Park. Although all walks within the parks and reserves will be taken at a leisurely pace, the tour is not suitable for those with mobility problems.



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IMPORTANT NOTES TO ACCOMPANY THE ABOVE ITINERARY

NB: This itinerary involves some long overland transfers. The overland transfers however will add to your experience of Madagascar and enable you to see much more of the country and its different landscapes and culture.

NB: The above itinerary and its quoted price are based on specific hotels and lodges. Should there be insufficient availability at the time of booking, or if the lodges over-book their rooms (Madagascar hotels/lodges are notorious for this) alternative hotels and lodges of a similar standard may have to be booked instead, in which case the itinerary and/or price may change.

NB: Prices are based on specific airlines and specific seating classes. The price may change if those are not available at the time of booking. We strongly advise booking early to secure the prices quoted, particularly as the seating classes quoted for are usually the first to be filled.

NB: Your itinerary involves domestic flights with Air Madagascar, an airline which frequently changes its schedules both before and after departure. Flights may be delayed, postponed, cancelled and/or changed to other dates at short (or even no) notice. Reef & Rainforest and our in-country representatives will do all we can to re-organise your tour to mitigate the effects of such schedule changes caused by Air Madagascar (which are entirely out of our control) including organising private charter flights subject to the client agreeing to cover the full cost of such charters. Equally, if new hotel rooms need to be booked due to Air Madagascar schedule changes after departure, the costs for those rooms will be borne by the client or the client's insurers. That is because the hotel rooms already booked for the itinerary will have been paid for by us prior to departure and refunds are not normally forthcoming from hotels for last-minute cancellations or "no-shows". Most other costs arising from such schedule changes by Air Madagascar (such as extra transfers, extra hours of work by our staff, and some replacement excursions) will not normally be passed on to the client.

NB: The quoted price for the above itinerary is based on current airline fares (both international and domestic), fuel surcharges and flight taxes. These (and other tour costs) may be subject to unanticipated increases beyond our control at short notice, either before or after you have booked the tour, in which case the price would need to be revised accordingly.

NB: Prices are based on standard rooms unless otherwise stated in the itinerary. Should you wish to upgrade please let us know.

NB: All itineraries are subject to change without notice to take into account possible airline flight schedule changes which can take place before the departure date or during the tour, and other operational factors.

NB: Once the tour has been booked and a deposit paid, any further changes initiated by the client may be subject to additional charges.

NB: Inclusive tours and excursions as stated in the itinerary will have been pre-paid. Once full payment has been made and/or clients are actually at their destination, should clients be disinclined to partake of any inclusive tour or excursion, no refunds will be possible.

NB: Some service providers may require that guests sign an indemnity waiver form and may refuse services if these forms are not signed. Reef and Rainforest Tours cannot give refunds for services not provided due to a refusal to sign such forms.

NB: Excursions marked as 'Optional' are not included in the price.

NB: This tour involves some travel in remote areas. This adds to the adventure and increases the opportunity to enjoy a true wildlife experience. However, due to terrain, weather, road conditions, and other factors beyond our control, some elements of the tour may have to be altered. Times of some activities may need to be changed or even cancelled due to the conditions. If an activity is cancelled it will usually be replaced with an alternative activity that is more appropriate for the conditions. Advance notice will be given for any changes where possible, although at times changes may need to be made whilst the tour is in progress.

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NB: With any trip involving wildlife it is impossible to guarantee a sighting, but each trip is designed around known habitats. Every effort will be made to ensure a sighting, but cannot be held responsible if no sighting is made due to the wildlife itself, weather, or any other elements beyond our control.

NB: Despite recent improvements, Madagascar still has some accommodation of a lower standard than that normally expected by western travelers, and a precarious infrastructure including unreliable domestic flights, poor telecommunications and bad roads. Many of our tours visit areas well off the beaten track, and therefore far from medical and other services. Trails can often be arduous and slippery, and campsites are usually very basic. Bookings will only be accepted on the understanding that the client accepts Reef and Rainforest Tours has done everything in its power to ensure there are no difficulties, but has no control over standards of some equipment, available accommodation and services, airline reservation policies, flight schedule changes or possible breakdowns in communication in Madagascar.

NB: Before and after booking, clients must familiarise themselves with current UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) travel advisories so as to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the destination(s) to be visited in this itinerary. All decisions relating to the tour will be based on UK FCO advisories, and not those of any other countries' governments. In the event of any emergency or other problem encountered in the destination, it is advisable if appropriate to contact the local UK Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for assistance. The FCO in London also has dedicated telephone call centres: Crisis Management Dept - 0207 008 5335 (during UK office hours), and Global Response Centre - 0207 008 1500 (out of UK office hours).

NB: Adequate insurance cover is mandatory. Please supply us with details of your cover.

NB: It is a condition of booking that full travel insurance including Emergency Medical Repatriation is taken out by each person travelling. Your insurance cover must also include Missed Departure and/or Missed Flight Connection for both outbound and return flight sectors (such cover might be subject to a small additional premium – please confirm with your insurers). We ask that you send us a photo/fax/electronic copy of your policy document together with the 24hr medical assistance telephone number issued by your insurer.

NB: Flight timings are subject to change. Air Madagascar schedules are particularly unreliable and can affect itineraries and connections. Please do not rely on the timings in this itinerary. Check 24hrs before flying (your guide/hotel should be happy to assist).

NB: Visas are now easily obtainable on arrival for EU residents (35 Euros per person at time of writing but subject to change without notice). PLEASE CHECK THE LATEST INFORMATION WITH YOUR LOCAL EMBASSY/CONSULATE.

NB: Tips/gratuities are payable locally.

NB: In some hotels, English will be spoken either badly or not at all.

NB: This itinerary involves walking along rainforest trails which can be steep and slippery (especially in Ranomafana National Park and Kianjavato Forest Reserve) in places as well as some walks in hot conditions in Isalo National Park. Although all walks within the parks and reserves will be taken at a leisurely pace, the tour is not suitable for those with mobility problems.

Reef and Rainforest Tours Ltd.

A7 Dart Marine Park, Steamer Quay, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5AL, UK

Tel: ++ 44 (0)1803 866965 Fax: ++ 44 (0)1803 865916

Websites: www.reefandrainforest.co.uk

E-mail: mail@reefandrainforest.co.uk

