

Natural Wonders of Madagascar

Trip style: Worldwide holidays

Destination: 📍 Madagascar

Trip code: MCR14-WHW10

Grades: 1, 2

Carbon Footprint: 🌳 3504kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The world's fourth largest island, Madagascar is a largely unspoilt paradise complete with ancient and unique flora and fauna, dense rainforests, highland rice fields, stunning beaches, and rich wildlife (resident animals include more than 70 species of lemur and over half the world's chameleons). Holiday highlights include trekking through canyons and sandstone cliffs that jut upwards across Isalo National Park, exploring the lush rainforests of Ranomafana National Park, and learning more about a culture steeped in rituals and tradition.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the national parks of this enigmatic island
- Discovering beautiful beaches and clear waters
- Visiting Isalo, the Tsaranoro Valley and Ranomafana
- Spotting a variety of flora, fauna, and wildlife
- Waking through dense rainforests
- Spending time in traditional villages

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Full programme of guided walks led by local HF Holidays Leaders
- Comfortable accommodation
- Full-board, from breakfast on day 2
- All sightseeing and national park entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- Air-conditioned transport
- Internal flight
- Return flights from the UK including hold baggage and airport transfers

TRIP SUITABILITY

This holiday is at the upper end of our level 2 walks. Trails are rough and rocky underfoot. Walks are 3-6½ miles (5-10km) with up to 1,850 feet (570m) of ascent. There is quite a lot of travelling on this tour, on some poorly made roads. You'll need plenty of stamina for this trip. Some National Parks have more walking than others, and because of the wildlife element of this holiday, some of the walks do turn into nature walks.

ITINERARY

Day 1-3: Antananarivo & Tulear

Arrival in the Madagascan capital, and transfer to our accommodation. The next day we fly to Tulear, in the south of the island (1 night) for an introduction to the island's endemic flora at the Antsokay Arboretum, before we begin our tour of the national parks. Journey to Reniala forest for an early morning birdwatching for the second day.

Day 4-6: Isalo National Park

Journey to Isalo National Park (3 nights). Isalo is home to some of the most stunning scenery on the island, and affords you a fantastic chance of being able to observe the endearing ring-tailed lemurs. Walks explore a rocky plateau overlooking the canyons and sandstone cliffs of magnificent Isalo National Park. Its mountains are home to over 400 species of flora. There are some amazing natural pools and waterfalls on the walk. We'll also visit one of the sapphire mines on the island.

Day 7-8: Andringitra National Park

To our camp (2 nights) in the majestic valley of Tsaranoro. The park is a sacred place for many cultures, and home to many mysteries and legends. Its scenery is superb, with vistas of dramatic peaks and waterfalls accompanying our walks as we visit the surrounding villages. Andringitra is also home to the highest peak on the island - Boby Peak, known locally as the Roof of Madagascar.

Day 9-10: Fianarantsoa

En route to Fianarantsoa (2 nights), we stop to explore the community reserve of Anja and see ring-tailed lemurs up close, before village walks introduce us to the Betsileo culture and their traditions. We share a typical Malagasy lunch at the home of one of the families.

Day 11-12: Ranomafana National Park

The lush rainforests of Ranomafana National Park (2 nights) afford us excellent opportunities to discover a vast diversity of flora and fauna. We enjoy a night walk here too, introducing us to a host of different animal species. If we're lucky we may see the park's famous resident, the golden bamboo lemur. Walks will be scheduled in the early morning and the late afternoon to give us the best chance of spotting wildlife.

Day 13-14: Around Antsirabe

A city tour of Antsirabe (2 nights). Our stay here is a guesthouse run by the charity Residence Madalief, which supports projects in the local community. Our stay here gives us a fantastic opportunity to support this worthwhile charity. Walks in the area discover the surrounding villages and the beautiful Lac Andraikiba.

Royal Palissandre Hotel & Spa, Antananarivo - Madagascar

Palissandre Hotel & Spa is 4-star hotel located in the centre of Antananarivo overlooking the famous Avenue of Independence. The hotel has 49 rooms designed to highlight local materials: rosewood furniture, mohair carpet & traditional, authentic decor. The restaurant terrace offers panoramic city views and serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The hotel also includes a craft shop, outdoor pool, hammam, spa and gym.

Le Paradisier, Tulear - Madagascar

Le Paradisier provides the perfect place for relaxation, located on the lagoon of Ifaty. The rooms take full advantage of the surroundings with each freestanding bungalow overlooking the ocean. Facilities also include an infinity pool, timber patio and on-site restaurant.

Le Relais De La Reine, Isalo National Park - Madagascar

This is a fabulous hotel. The location of Le Relais de la Reine is superb, in the Isalo National Park. The comfortable chalets are all en-suite with their own veranda and are arranged around a shaded garden next to the pool.

Ambalakely Hotel, Fianarantsoa - Madagascar

Ambalakely means 'in the small countryside' and this hotel certainly lives up to its name with its beautiful lush surroundings. Rooms are modern, and all have private bathrooms, but are designed with comfort and quiet in mind.

Residence Madalief, Antsirabe - Madagascar

Residence Madalief is a charitable organisation which operates community projects in and around Antsirabe. The guest house was opened to generate funds to support the charity. Our stay there is in en-suite rooms which look out onto a well-kept garden, the ideal place to relax. Watch out for the bird of prey that has made its home above the kitchen door!

Au Bois Vert, Antananarivo - Madagascar

Au Bois Vert is located a short transfer, only 5 minutes, from the airport. The lodge has been built in the heart of a 3 hectare forest and its setting, along with its pool, makes it the ideal place for you to rest after your flight. Rooms are air-conditioned and facilities include TV, safe and free internet connection.

Centrest Sejour Hotel - Madagascar

Situated just outside the town of Ranomafana in Eastern Madagascar, the Centrest Sejour is ideally positioned both for exploring the town and the nearby Ranomafana National Park.

Betsileo Country Lodge, Ambalavao - Madagascar

Enjoy the panoramic views of the granite rock formations that dominate this area with the mountain chains of the Andringitra National Park in the distance. Rooms are simply decorated but light with a swimming pool, terrace and on-site dining.

Les Dunes d'Ifaty - Madagascar

Les Dunes d'Ifaty provides the perfect place for relaxation, located on the lagoon of Ifaty. The rooms take full advantage of the surroundings with direct access to the beach from wide, wooden steps in the main building. Facilities also include a swimming pool, terrace, beach bar and on-site restaurant.