

# Reef & Rainforest



Special Group Itinerary:

## **A Magical Overland Journey through Madagascar**

15 - Day Small Group Tour - Led by Daniel  
Razafimandimby

06 – 20 October 2020



## ITINERARY IN BRIEF

- 06 Oct Arrive **ANTANANARIVO (TANA)**. Met on arrival at the airport and transferred to your hotel. O/n RELAIS DES PLATEAUX HOTEL.
- 07 Oct Morning transfer back to the airport to take domestic flight to Tulear. On arrival in Tulear we transfer (45 minutes) to our hotel in Ifaty to rest. In the late afternoon and evening we explore the unique spiny forest. O/n LES DUNES D'IFATY, B, L, D.
- 08 Oct A morning excursion in the **IFATY SPINY FOREST**, followed by some time at leisure. Snorkelling is available for those interested. In the afternoon we will visit the nearby **IFATY SALT PANS** and **HONKO MANGROVE PROJECT**. Night walk in the spiny Forest. O/n LES DUNES D'IFATY, B, L, D.
- 09 Oct Early departure (3 hours' drive) to **ZOMBITSE NATIONAL PARK** for a guided walk. Continue (1.5 hours) to **ISALO NATIONAL PARK**. Late afternoon at leisure. O/n JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D.
- 10 Oct Day to explore **ISALO NATIONAL PARK**. O/n JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D.
- 11 Oct Today we take a very scenic drive north to **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK** with stops of interest en route. A highlight will be a stop for a visit to **ANJA PARK** to see ring tailed lemurs. O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.
- 12 Oct Morning and afternoon excursions in **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK**. Night walk in the evening. O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.
- 13 Oct Morning excursion to **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK** on the Vohipara Trail. Late morning drive (1.5 hours) to the **KIANJAVATO FOREST RESERVE** to see the critically endangered greater bamboo and black-and-white ruffed lemurs and the reforestation project. Return to the lodge. O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.
- 14 Oct Another day of morning and afternoon guided excursions in **RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK** in search of its special wildlife. O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.
- 15 Oct Today we transfer (7-8 hours) north on a scenic drive to **ANTSIRABE** with various stops en route. We can visit many interesting handicraft workshops if of interest. O/n ROYAL PALACE HOTEL, B, L, D.
- 16 Oct Transfer (4 hours) north to Tana for lunch. Continue a further 4.5 hours by road in the afternoon to **ANDASIBE**. O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, D.
- 17 Oct Morning wildlife watching in the **ANALAMAZAOTRA (ANDASIBE) RESERVE**. Afternoon and evening to explore the community managed **VOIMMA RESERVE**. O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, L, D.
- 18 Oct Morning excursion to the primary rainforests of **MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK** in search of more exciting wildlife. Evening night walk for nocturnal wildlife. O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, L, D.
- 19 Oct Morning visit to the community managed **VOIMMA RESERVE**. (OPTIONAL alternative today for those interested is to visit the **ANTAVALOBE RESERVE** to search for the dazzling helmet vanga and other rare birdlife).
- 20 Oct Morning to explore the **MITSINJO RESERVE** for some very special and close sightings of indri and other wildlife. 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. (Overnights in Tana can be arranged)



## Reef & Rainforest

Led by one of Madagascar's most experienced local guides, this wildlife filled small group tour is ideal for those looking to experience Madagascar's most contrasting environments and spectacular species on an ever-changing overland journey. Beginning with the bizarre spiny forests and mangroves 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. After time to explore this dramatic landscape, we head north again where we can enjoy close encounters with iconic ring-tailed lemurs at the wonderful Anja Community Park against a backdrop of impressive granite mountains. We then reach the lush cloud forests of Ranomafana National Park and the little visited Kianjavato Forest Reserve. The wildlife viewing here is fantastic with some very rare lemurs, birds and frogs and we can also enjoy learning about and supporting lemur research and reforestation at Kianjavato.



After some memorable sightings of the rare wildlife here, we make our way back to Tana before finishing at the wonderful species rich forests 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 which we can usually get very close to. There is also the chance to see the wonderfully colourful helmet vanga.

Accommodation is of a good standard as you visit some of the island's most highly rewarding and diverse National Parks and Reserves. 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 some very rare and endangered greater bamboo lemur and black-and-white ruffed lemurs. Our visit here also helps support the reforestation and conservation work of the Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership. The Project have just planted their 3 millionth tree!

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

### Tour Leader: **Daniel Razafimandimby**

With a degree in English from the University of Antananarivo and well over a decade's worth of experience in Madagascar tourism and guiding, Daniel has always been highly regarded by our clients. He is an exceptionally popular choice to lead the group. Daniel's profound knowledge of Madagascar's wildlife and Malagasy culture combined with his natural charm and excellent spoken English will greatly enhance your knowledge of your surroundings and enjoyment of the tour. Always cheerful, patient and attentive, Daniel is bound to be a firm favourite with all the group members, as always.







# Reef & Rainforest

## A MAGICAL OVERLAND JOURNEY THROUGH MADAGASCAR WITH DANIEL RAZAFIMANDIMBY

Tue 06 Oct Arrive at ANTANANARIVO (TANA) IVATO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. You will be met on arrival at the airport and transferred (15 minutes) to the hotel for the evening or day depending on the time of your international flight.

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 07 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)**. 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 into our hotel close to the beach and rest after the flights, we will later head into the nearby spiny forest fragment in the late afternoon.

This 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 here dominated by the cacti like *Didiereaceae*, or octopus, trees.

We will take a late afternoon wildlife walk here which will eventually turn to a night walk once dark. We are very likely to see the highly localised Petter's sportive lemur and grey-brown mouse lemur, two nocturnal lemur species only found in the spiny forest.



Other nocturnal species that may be encountered include the tiny lesser hedgehog tenrec, the Madagascar scops owl and Madagascar nightjar plus reptiles such as the warty chameleon, Dumeril's ground boa, big headed (ocelot) gecko and fascinating



insects like the Kung Fu cricket. (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, comfortable and well positioned near the spiny forest and right on a beach. There is a swimming pool close to the beach as well as a restaurant serving



European dishes and a beach bar for lunches. Wi-Fi is only available in the reception area and is quite weak. Please also note that mobile reception is also very poor.

Ifaty has a number of diving operations where diving and snorkelling trips may be arranged (OPTIONAL – please consult the tour leader and hotel staff) snorkelling at the ROSE GARDEN is a good option. The beach may not always be suitable for swimming, except at high tide and is not the most picturesque. At low tide it is good for observing rock pool life, but please note that there can often be locals trying to sell souvenirs nearby.



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Thu 08 Oct

Very early this morning (around 0500) we will visit the local SPINY FOREST habitat at either Reniala or Mosa Reserve. Here we will search for the diurnal wildlife of the spiny forest. Birds are highlight with



several locally endemic spiny forest speciality species to look for. These include the fantastic long-tailed ground roller, sub-desert mesite, Lafresnaye's, red-tailed and sickle-billed vangas, Archbold's newtonia and banded kestrel.

The forest is also home to many reptiles such as the three-eyed iguanid (*Chalarodon madagascariensis*), the Merrem's Madagascar swift (*Oplurus cyclurus*) some beautiful plated lizards (*Tracheloptychus*



*petersi*) and the blonde hognose snake and Dumeril's ground boa constrictor.

The enormous Madagascar giant swallowtail butterfly can also often spotted feeding from the flowering bushes in the forest.

We will return to the hotel for breakfast and some time to rest. Later in the day (depending on the temperatures) we will visit the nearby IFATY SALT PANS to look for wading birds including the highly endangered and fast declining Madagascar plover



alongside the more numerous Kittlitz's plovers, turnstones, greenshanks and herons and egrets.



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We then continue up the road to visit the HONKO MANGROVE PROJECT. In 2007 two marine scientists set up the Honko Mangrove Conservation and Education charity to preserve, restore and sustainably manage the mangrove ecosystem of the Bay of Ranobe.



Here we can take a leisurely and interpretative walk through the mangroves along the boardwalks observing the wildlife and learning about the different species of mangrove and their importance to the local communities. We may see several species of mudskippers, crabs, dragonflies and birds such as swamp warblers and herons.



Five local villages are dependent on the mangroves and the project has enabled these local communities to develop sustainable ways of living off this natural resource. Since its foundation the project has helped to restore a



large area of mangrove forest and each year expands with more planting. We will return to the lodge for the afternoon for some time to rest, swim or for those interested take an OPTIONAL snorkelling or scuba diving excursion.



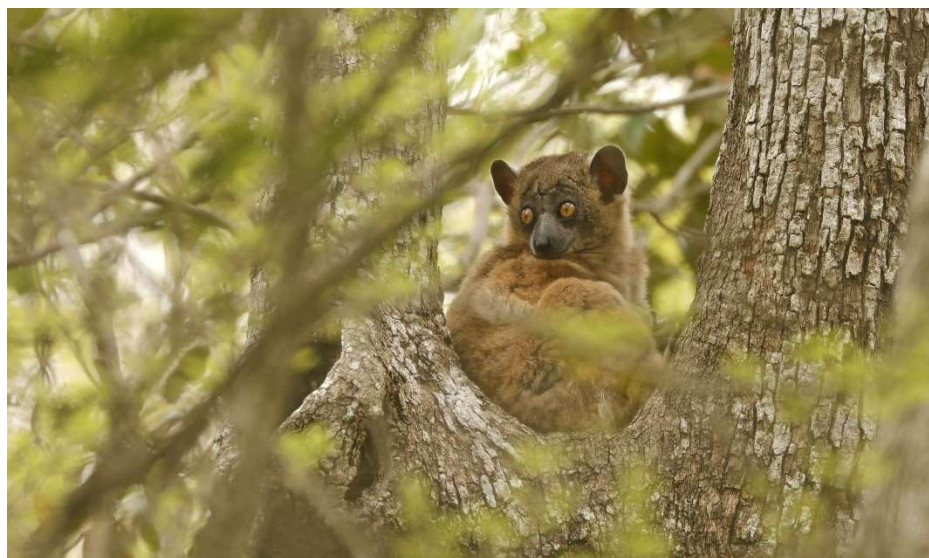
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In the evening we will return to the spiny forest for another night walk. (All meals are included today) O/n DUNES HOTEL, B, L, D.



Fri 09 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, including the acrobatic Verreaux's sifaka, which we often see leaping between trees at great length. We will also hope to spot the locally endemic Hubbard's (Zombitse) sportive lemur and the striking Standing's day gecko.



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Zombitse-Vohibasia also supports a wide variety of interesting bird species, many of them endemic, with Zombitse's special attraction being the rare Appert's tetraka which only lives in this forest and a remote montane evergreen forest at Analavelona. Other bird species include the white-browed owl, red-tailed, blue, rufous and Chabert's vangas, Madagascar cuckoo roller and impressive giant coua. After our guided walk, we continue the drive (1.5 hours) to our next lodge in 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 rosulatum* and is a sacred burial ground for the Bara tribe. Depending on our timing, we could 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 10 Oct

Today we have the morning and afternoon 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. In the morning we will likely walk through wonderful shaded canyon-land scenery to the forest of NAMAHAHA. This is a good place for bird watching and lemur-spotting where ring-tailed lemurs and red fronted brown lemurs can be seen up close around the campsite.



After the lemur watching we could take a refreshing dip, with swims in the PISCINE BLEUE and PISCINE NOIRE (blue and black) natural pools before walking back to the vehicle.



Or we could walk to the PISCINE NATURELLE (natural swimming pool) a beautiful lush oasis fringed by pandanus trees, where we could swim in a clear freshwater pool under a waterfall.

The timings for the day and the trail choices will be discussed with the group and the tour leader, according to interests/fitness (some trails can be reasonably strenuous).



Other options may be possible, and the guide will discuss these with the group.



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Wildlife that may be seen besides the lemurs includes the jewel, white-lined and Oustalets's chameleons, Duméril's Madagascar swift (*Oplurus quadrimaculatus*) and skinks such as the (*Zonosaurus ornatus*).

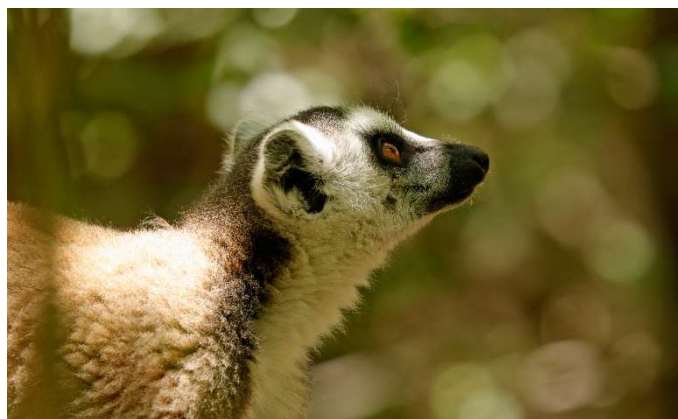


Birds such as greater and lesser vasa parrots, Madagascar harrier hawk, Madagascar kestrel, buzzards, hoopoe and the localised Benson's rock thrush are all possible to see. O/n LE JARDIN DU ROY, B, L, D.

Sun 11 Oct After breakfast we will depart on one of the most scenic drives in Madagascar as we travel north through vast open plains of golden grass and impressive mountainous landscapes with some dramatic granite peaks. This highland landscape is mostly quiet for wildlife but open a few open country birds such as the Madagascar partridge, bush lark and cisticola may be spotted. The scenery soon becomes more impressive as we pass the edge of the Andringitra Massif. The first half of the journey takes around 4 hours' drive.



We will then make a stop at the community-managed ANJA PARK where we can enjoy close encounters with groups of ring-tailed lemurs as they go about their day.



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This beautiful park was set up by the local community over 20 years ago when most of the local forest had been cut and burnt and only 70 ring-tailed lemurs survived. Thanks to the reforestation efforts of the local community, the area of forest has now greatly increased, and the population of ring-tailed lemurs has grown to over 360. The lemurs here are well protected and used to people affording exceptionally good views and excellent photographic opportunities. During our walk we will also hope to see the large Oustalets's chameleon and tiny *Brookesia bruno*i chameleons and the stunning painted locust.



After our visit to Anja Park, we will have lunch at a local restaurant in the town of Ambalavao and perhaps visit the paper making factory. In the afternoon we will continue the drive north (3.5 hrs) through ever-changing scenery to arrive at our lodge just outside of Ranomafana National Park in the early evening. Today involves lots of driving, but it takes us through many climatic zones and is broken up with very interesting and rewarding stops. (All meals are included today)

O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D. The Centrest Sejour has been recently renovated to offer simple but comfortable accommodation just outside Ranomafana National Park. The hotel is located on the outskirts of the Ranomafana village and a short drive from the National Park entrance. The 34 standard bedrooms include 4 triples, 20 doubles and 10 twins and all feature fans and safety deposit boxes. The rooms are very simple but clean and comfortable and the service is friendly. There is Wi-Fi in the restaurant and reception and the lodge offers a laundry and massage service on request. The newly renovated restaurant serves tasty European and Malagasy cuisine and there is a well-stocked bar.



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Mon 12 Oct Today we will explore RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK on morning and afternoon walks in search of its wonderful rainforest wildlife. Ranomafana is an exceptionally rich high-altitude rainforest where the very rare golden bamboo lemur and eleven other lemur species exist.



With the help of experienced local guides and spotters we will hopefully find the rare golden bamboo lemur for which the Park was created for. We will also search for the beautiful Milne Edwards's sifaka, red-fronted brown lemur and the only two remaining greater bamboo lemurs in the Park.



Please be aware that the trails in Ranomafana especially the Talatakely trails can be steep and slippery, but generally the going is moderate. A staggering 120 endemic frog species have also been recorded within the National Park.

Over 100 bird species have also been recorded in Ranomafana with specialities including the attractive pitta-like and rufous-headed ground rollers, yellow-browed oxylabes, velvet and yellow-bellied sunbird asitys and brown emutail. Many of these species are elusive and skulking and are best seen on the high altitude Vohipara Trail, which will visit on the other days. The inquisitive ring-tailed vontsira (previously known as a mongoose) is another mammal we will likely encounter during the day.





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This evening we will take a night walk along the nearby road in search of sleeping chameleons such as the huge O'Shaughnessy's chameleon and beautiful elephant ear's chameleon, Madagascar tree boa, colourful boophis tree frogs and if lucky a satanic leaf-tailed gecko or the huge Madagascar comet moth. (Please bring a powerful torch, waterproofs and an umbrella in case of occasional rain showers). Please note that some of the trails in Ranomafana are mostly on steep terrain, but all walks will be taken at a gentle pace. (All meals are included today). O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.



Tue 13 Oct

This morning we will make short walk on the gentle and flatter Vohipara Trail. This quieter section of the Park takes us through stunted high-altitude forest and is very rich in birdlife, frogs, mosses and pandaus plants.



This is also the best area of the park to see the beautiful red-bellied lemur.

Later in the morning we will transfer (1.5 hours) to the east to explore the KIANJAVATO FOREST RESERVE. The Kianjavato Forest Reserve and Field Station is managed by the Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership in central Eastern Madagascar. The organization identified the Kianjavato area as a location in vital need for conservation action due to its series of highly fragmented forests that support important populations of some of Madagascar's most threatened lemur species.

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The Madagascar Biodiversity Partnership applies research, education and conservation in its efforts to create a sustainable future. The organisation is providing a sustainable conservation solution for some of Madagascar's most threatened species while at the same time providing the community with the opportunity to improve their livelihoods. Kianjavato is the base for ongoing field research into the lemurs of the eastern Rainforests and their threats.

The organisation also provides educational opportunities that directly involve the locals in the process of conservation and encourage them to be advocates for their natural environment. It currently supports 100+ full-time Malagasy employees as field assistants, project supervisors, office employees, horticulturists and supporting field personnel.

In addition to its important research and educational work, MBP also plants millions (3 million as of December 2019) of native tree species to reverse the decline in rainforest acreage in the east of Madagascar. This practical work is of the utmost importance and will help conserve the endangered endemic species which inhabit these rich rainforests.



This afternoon we will explore the rainforest reserve with two local field researchers each studying two critically endangered species, the wonderful greater bamboo lemur and the agile black-and-white ruffed lemur.



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. 100 individuals can be found in the Kianjavato Forest Reserve which is why this site is so important.



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The species was once widespread but because of deforestation became so rare in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that it was once thought to be extinct, until it was rediscovered in 1972 near to Ranomafana. These gentle lemurs feed almost exclusively on the Malagasy giant bamboo (*Cephalostachium madagascariensis*) and we can usually observe them at close range feeding in the bamboo thickets.

We will also look for the charismatic black-and-white ruffed lemur. The droppings of these large fruit eating lemurs are being used to help grow tree saplings from the germinated seeds for the reforestation project. This also benefits the local communities by providing fruit bearing and timber trees close to their 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 we may see a tiny Brookesia leaf chameleon during the walk. After our lemur viewing, we will make a short visit the project's tree nursery, which we support through donations and we can perhaps help plant some trees.

**(An OPTIONAL and very challenging night walk is also available at Kianjavato to look for radio collared aye ayes for those interested.)**



**Please Note:** The walk to look for the black-and-white ruffed lemurs may involve some steeper sections of path and walking through undergrowth. All walks will be done at a gentle pace though.

We will then return to the car and drive back (1.5 hours) to our lodge for an evening night walk and dinner. (All meals are included today). O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.

Wed 14 Oct Today we can enjoy more exploration of RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK in search of its very special wildlife. There are different trails within the park that offer different wildlife and scenery.



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For example, this morning we could perhaps explore the higher-altitude stunted forest on the Vohiparara circuit, which is the best location to find the beautiful red-bellied lemur and special birds.



The lower canopy habitat here provides habitat for bird species such as the yellow-bellied and common sunbird asity, the skulking brown mesite and elusive rufous-headed and short-legged ground rollers, the rare Pollen's vanga and white-throated and yellow-browed oxylabes.

This area of forest is home to many frogs, and we will look for the for the colourful Tsarafidy Madagascar Frog (*Guibemantis pulcher*) in the Pandanus plants and the striking Baron's mantella frog (*Mantella baroni*).



In the evening we can enjoy another night walk, perhaps to watch rufous mouse lemurs at a nearby site where they are attracted bananas smeared on the tree branches. (All meals are included today). O/n CENTREST SEJOUR, B, L, D.



Thu 15 Oct

Today we depart for a drive north (7-8 hours depending on local conditions) to Antsirabe stopping at points of interest along the way such as the woodcarving centre of AMBOSITRA, the origin of the intricate inlayed 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. (All meals are included today)



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O/n LE ROYAL PALACE HOTEL, B, L, D. 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.

Fri 16 Oct

Today we will make the journey (4 hours) from Antsirabe to Tana for lunch. After a few stops we will continue to drive (4.5 hours) to ANDASIBE passing through many villages and rice paddies. We will stop for a picnic lunch at a nice spot by the river at Mandraka Park on the journey. The rainforests of Andasibe are home to 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 to explore. Temperatures may become quite cool, especially in the evening and early mornings. In the evening, we could explore the community managed VOIMMA FOREST RESERVE, part of Analamazaoatra that receives fewer visitors than surrounding forest areas.

This walk may reveal the nocturnal Goodman's mouse lemur, the Eastern woolly lemur and furry-eared dwarf lemur. Other wildlife that may be encountered includes pygmy (Brookesia superciliaris) chameleons, Boophis tree frogs, stick insects and possibly an incredibly well camouflaged mossy leaf-tailed gecko. (All meals are included today)





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O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, L, D. Located close to the Analamazaotra and VOIMMA reserves and the friendly Andasibe village, the hotel offers accommodation in 12 comfortable and spacious bungalows with private bathrooms, satellite TV, safe, mini bar and heating for the cooler months. Each room also has a small private terrace. Facilities at the hotel include a restaurant, bar and small swimming pool and there is Wi-Fi in the restaurant.



Sat 17 Oct

Today we will take a morning walk in the ANALAMAZAOTRA (Perinet) Reserve to enjoy some close sightings of the magnificent tail less indri. This section of forest is also the best location to see the stunningly beautiful diademed sifaka. At this time of the year they are often feeding closer to the ground and providing excellent views. Other



diurnal (day active) lemur species we will hope to see here include the common brown lemur and Eastern grey bamboo lemur.

We will also hopefully encounter some chameleons which could include the huge Parson's chameleon (*Calumma parsonii*) and side-striped chameleon (*Calumma gastrotaenia*). The insect life is also fascinating, and highlights will surely include the bizarre giraffe-necked weevil.

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We will then have some time at leisure during the middle of the day before we take another walk in the late afternoon perhaps again in the VOIMMA Reserve.

This quieter section can also be excellent for seeing the indri up close and for spotting the snuffling lowland streaked tenrec. This late afternoon walk will again turn into a night walk, once dark where we can hope to see a range of frogs and reptiles maybe including a



camouflaged leaf-tailed gecko or a sleeping Parson's chameleon. (All meals are included today). O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, L, D.

Sun 18 Oct Today we rise early to drive 1 hour 30 minutes north on a bumpy track to MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK. Here we can enjoy spending the morning and early afternoon exploring the wonderful primary rainforest of this vast protected area with its special wildlife.

The old growth rainforest in Mantadia is another good location to spot the beautiful diademed sifaka and also the agile black-and-white ruffed lemur, which is often found on the higher ridgelines. With some help from our local park guide we can hopefully encounter some of these acrobatic and very characterful lemurs leaping through the canopy. The indri is also found here as is an impressive range of other fauna and flora.



Extraordinary mossy leaf-tail geckos and colourful painted mantella (*Mantella madagascariensis*) frogs may be seen as well as interesting insects.





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The bird diversity at Mantadia is also exceptional and highlights we could to see include (with some luck and patience) the secretive scaly-ground roller, beautiful pitta-like ground roller, shy red-fronted and blue couas, Madagascar blue pigeon and the red-tailed, hook-billed and nuthatch vangas to name just a few.



The walking in Mantadia is a little more strenuous than it is in the other areas of forest, but it should be fine if one is fit with no mobility problems and easier trails can also be taken if necessary. This evening we can take another night walk in the Orchidee Park. (All meals are included today) O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, L, D.

Mon 19 Oct Today we will visit the community managed VOIMMA Reserve where we can enjoy some close sightings of the indri and other lemurs. This quieter section of the reserve is also excellent for spotting the Parson's chameleon, giraffe-necked weevil and the snuffling lowland streaked tenrec.



An ALTERNATIVE OPTION today is to rise early to drive (1 hour, 30 minutes) again on a very bumpy track in a separate 4WD to the remote and little visited Antavolobe Forest Reserve. This is a large and little visited area of primary and secondary rainforest managed by the Association of Guides that supports an exceptional biodiversity.

The main interest here is the small population of helmet vanga, one of Madagascar's most beautiful and iconic bird species. This striking rainforest species is mostly found in the remote north east corner of Madagascar, but in recent years the local guides have discovered and monitored several pairs in this forest.



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Between September and November one or two helmet vanga nests are often sensitively monitored by the local guides and with their help we have a good chance to see this wonderful denizen of the rainforest. Please note that the



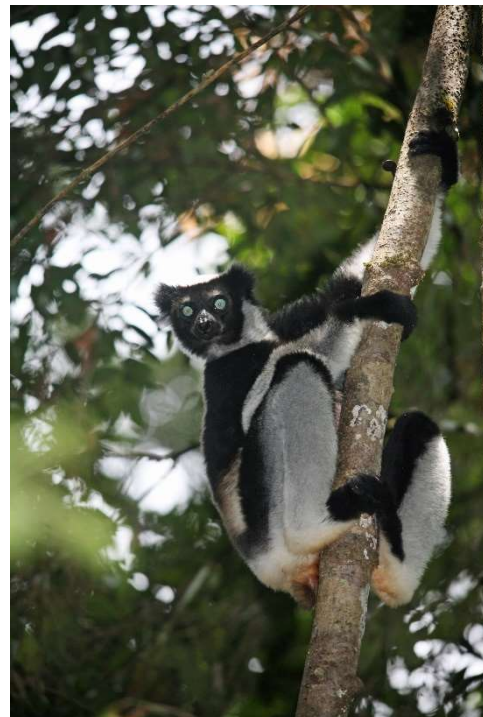
walking to reach the helmet vanga nest will usually take around two hours from where we leave the vehicles. The first half of the walk is along a well-marked and mostly level trail, while the second part is through more dense undergrowth with some short but steep inclines and a few shallow streams to cross. The walking is in general moderate if one is fit and there is plenty of wildlife to see here.

A few pairs of the rare Bernier's vanga are also found here and other birdlife we may encounter includes the red-capped and blue coua, red-tailed vanga, spectacled tetraka and unique Madagascar cuckoo roller. Indri are often heard singing and there is a great range of other wildlife, but more limited trails to explore than in other reserves.

Please note that the walking conditions here can vary (depending on where a helmet vanga nest is found) and can require walking up some steep trails on uneven terrain. Also, the track to reach the reserve is in a very poor condition and involves a very bumpy ride. The visit to Antavalobe will require a very early start and a packed lunch and take most of the day. (All meals are included today) O/n ANDASIBE HOTEL, B, L, D.

Tue 20 Oct

Today we have a final morning to explore one the local rainforest reserves. We could perhaps visit the community managed MITSINJO Reserve where we have an excellent opportunity to see the indri up close. The local guides at Mitsinjo have habituated several groups of indris which often come lower in the trees to take a closer look at us. This makes for an unforgettable sighting and photographic opportunity and will be a fitting finale to our journey through Madagascar.





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We could then perhaps focus on the smaller wildlife including the many chameleons, day geckos' frogs, insects and plant life. The forest here is rich in epiphytic plants, pandanus, palms and towering hardwood trees.

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 a final farewell dinner. (Breakfast only is included today) This afternoon and evening you will have use of a room at the RELAIS DES PLATEAUX hotel.



Later in the night pick up from the hotel and transfer (10 minutes) to the airport to check in for your onward international flight.

**(Overnight at RELAIS DES PLATEAUX is also possible depending on your flight schedule.)**

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Minimum group size is 4, maximum 10 plus the tour leader.

Start Date in Madagascar	Adult Price	Single Supplement
<b>Tuesday 06 October 2020</b>	£2,987	£720

Included in the above; Domestic (economy class) flight from Tana to Tulear; all ground transportation; 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.

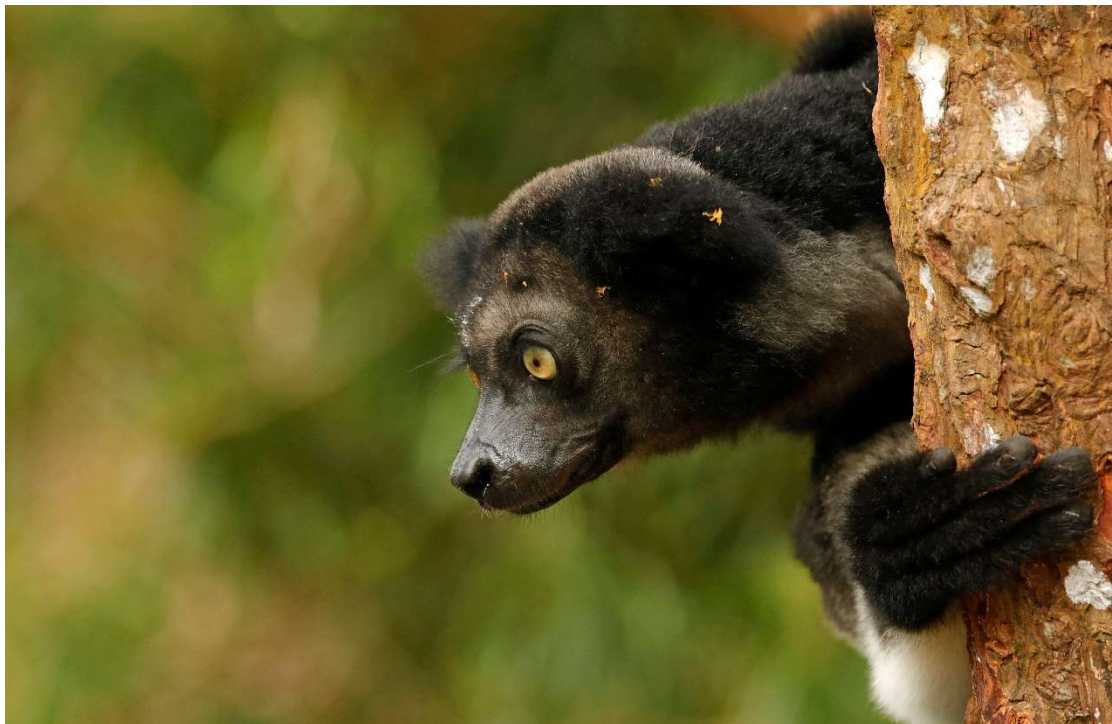
\*Prices subject to possible revision. Please call **01803 866965** if you have any queries, would like to secure your place on the tour, and/or if you would like to extend the tour to include other locations in Madagascar or another destination.

**Please Note:** The checked luggage allowance on the domestic flight is 20 kg per person with 1 piece of hand luggage weighing 5 kg per person, plus one small extra item. Excess luggage can be stored in Tana and collected before your time in Andasibe if necessary.

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**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, Kianjavatio and Antavalobve) 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 Tsaradia, 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 Tsaradia (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 Tsaradia 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 Tsaradia (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. Tsaradia 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.

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