

Trip Dossier for Madagascar – Leaping Lemurs!

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Escape to this unique and special island with its lemurs found only here. Children and adults alike will be entranced by these friendly animals. Madagascar is a magical place, the stunning beauty of the scenery, the wildlife and birdlife as well as friendly welcoming people. The rainforests and national parks are still unspoilt and when you reach the Ile Sainte Marie you will find yourself in a heaven with its endless deserted beaches fringed by coconut palms and bays protected by coral reefs.

Day 1 Fly to Antananarivo

Leave London on an overnight flight to Antananarivo, changing in Nairobi.

Day 2 Arrive Antananarivo (Tana)

You will arrive in Antananarivo at about noon local time, and immediately be entranced by the brightly coloured houses and steeped churches hugging the hillsides, all awash with jacaranda and bougainvillea, encircled by rice paddy fields. Known by everyone as Tana, Antananarivo means 'City of the Thousand' referring to the thousand warriors that protected it when it was first established. Our representative will meet you at the airport and drive you to your hotel set in a wooded park. The rest of the day is at leisure to relax and enjoy your comfortable hotel. **Hotel with swimming pool (breakfast)**

Day 3 Drive to Andasibe; stop at butterfly park en route

Leave Tana this morning, we drive for a total of four hours (150 kms) through luxuriant green primary jungle, past paddy fields and lakes to your first stop at Marozevo to visit the Butterfly Farm and see the largest butterfly in the world, as well as Madagascan chameleons. Continue on to Andasibe to arrive at your lodge set in its own private reserve. If you haven't yet encountered the delightful lemur, there will be plenty of opportunity here. Replaced by the monkey in the evolutionary race, the lemur was destined for extinction except for the fact that a few managed to survive in just one forest in Madagascar, and what you see today is the result of 35 million years of isolated evolution. Now there are about 50 varieties, with the ring-tail being the most entertaining and the aye-aye the most strange and rare. Former pet lemurs live in relative freedom on this reserve. This evening there is a night walk to learn more about this entrancing creature.

2 nights - Lodge (breakfast)

Day 4 Visit Perinet Special Reserve

Also known as Andasibe National Park, this reserve is characterized by low hills covered by forest and dotted with lakes. Orchids hang from the canopy. The reserve was created to protect the largest of the lemurs, the Indri Indri, the one that looks like a surprised teddy bear. Listen out for them because unlike their cousins, the indri sings and the sound can carry for up to 3 kms. Also, look out for the tenrec, a hedgehog lookalike that is also unique to Madagascar, chameleons, and stunning bird-life. In the afternoon, visit the island of lemurs. Lemur Island is a charming island accessible by canoe, where you can meet habituated lemurs saved from captivity. Feed them a banana, and the lemur may perch on your shoulder!

Day 5 Fly to Fort Dauphin

After breakfast, you will be driven back to Tana (4 hours) for your flight to Fort Dauphin in the south of the island. Surrounded on three sides by the sea with a backdrop of mountains, Fort Dauphin is beautifully positioned to enjoy the beaches. You will be met and driven to your hotel. **Hotel (breakfast and dinner)**

Day 6 Drive to Berenty

This morning your drive to Berenty (4 hours – 86km) will take you through mountainous tropical forests, past rice paddies, to the extraordinary Spiny Forest. Unlike any other forest on earth, plant life here has adapted to the extreme desert conditions in this part of Madagascar with reduced leaves and large trunks to conserve water. Interspersed with the Alluandia are the bulbous trunks of the baobab tree and the many fingered octopus tree. Along the way you'll see charcoal sellers and markets selling local woodcarvings. **2 nights Lodge (breakfast and dinner)**

Day 7 Visit to Berenty Private Reserve

With its proximity to the River Mandrare, and situated in a huge sisal plantation, Berenty provides a habitat to a large variety of animals. It is home to the Ring-tailed and Brown lemurs and also to the Sifaka, a close relative to the Indri lemur seen in Perinet; you will also find fruit bats, chameleons, the peaceful Dumeril's boa and nearly

100 species of bird life. One of Berenty's joys is the myriad broad forest trails that allow you to wander at will. Don't forget a torch for night excursions to shine in abandoned tree trunks and startle all the insect life.

Day 8 Return to Fort Dauphin and flight back to Antananarivo

Drive back to Fort Dauphin (4 hours – 86km) in time for your flight back to Tana. Depending on the time of arrival in Tana, you will have the rest of the day at leisure. Tana is the capital of Madagascar and is the city where the first King unified the different kingdoms of the island. It was built in stages: the high city was the first area to be occupied during the royal period and is where the old queen's palace is situated; the mid-city is where all the chic boutiques of the capital are found; and then the low city is the commercial area of the town. **Hotel with swimming pool (breakfast)**

Day 9 Fly to Sainte Marie

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Ile Sainte Marie. As you circle the island on your approach you will realise that you are about to arrive in paradise in this typical tropical island with its deserted beaches fringed by coconut palms, verdant hills and reef protected bays. You will be met and taken to your lodge, possibly by zebu cart! Nestled in a large palm tree grove right on the beach, you will find each villa has its own terrace with a hammock in which to utterly relax.

2 nights Lodge with swimming pool (breakfast and dinner)

Days 10 – 11 Relax on beach; optional visits

The days are free for you to wander on the beaches, lounge by the pool, bicycle round the island or do water sports such as snorkelling, kayaking, waterskiing, or scuba diving. Optional excursions can be arranged to a fishing village, the Pirates' Cemetery, a lagoon that looks almost like a swimming pool, or the nearby island Ile aux Nattes (Nosy Nato) which is even more beautiful and peaceful (being car-free). From July to September, you can take a whale watching boat trip, but you may even be able to see them from the beach.

Day 12 Transfer to airport; return flight via Tana and Nairobi

An early morning transfer back to the airport for the flight to Tana where you will board a flight to Nairobi and onward connection to London.

Day 13 Arrive London

This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start or end of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets.

Each itinerary is planned many months in advance and although it is our intention to operate the itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed here, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors which are beyond our control. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined but we will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes. Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary.

Climate Madagascar has a tropical climate. The dry season is from April to October (winter) and the rainy season from November to March. It can get quite cold at night in winter and so if you are travelling in July or August, take a jacket or sleeveless puffer to put on in the evening. It will be hot during the day however and in low-lying areas.

Average monthly temperatures are given below for Antananarivo

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Max °C	26	26	26	24	23	21	20	21	23	27	27	27
Min °C	16	16	16	14	12	10	9	9	11	12	14	16
Rainfall (mm)	300	279	178	53	18	8	8	10	18	61	135	287

Is this right for your family? You'll stay in a variety of hotels and lodges. Transfers around the island are by minibus and light aircraft. This trip combines nature reserves, which will enchant the children, and time to relax at the end of the trip of the island of Sainte Marie with lots of water sports to choose from.

Lone Parents Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries, including the UK, require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the relevant country embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.



These details can be found on the Foreign & Commonwealth Website under the appropriate country www.fco.gov.uk/travel

Accommodation You will stay in a mixture of hotels and lodges. All will have private facilities. The indication of a swimming pool at a hotel should not be taken as a guarantee but rather an indication. You should also be aware that swimming pools at the hotels are often unheated and so can be cold in the winter months or even closed.

Food Food in Madagascar naturally has a French bias and is generally excellent. On the coast you will find all sorts of seafood and the national dish is 'romazava', a meat and vegetable stew flavoured with ginger. Zebu steak will keep most meat lovers happy! Most dishes will be accompanied by rice. If you have any dietary requirements please advise Families Worldwide before travelling and remember to drink plenty of bottled water each day.

Currency The unit of currency is the Madagascar Ariary (MGA). At the time of writing UK£1 = 3145 MGA and US\$1 = 1971 (Dec 2009) Euro €1 = 2814 MGA. Euro or US dollar Travellers' Cheques maybe accepted in banks, but are increasingly difficult to cash elsewhere, and sterling travellers' cheques are impossible to change. US dollars (though not \$100 notes) are more readily exchangeable. We recommend that you change money at the airport. Credit cards are accepted in larger hotels and you can draw cash on them in a bank or bureaux de change. However, please note that you cannot change the local currency back into hard currency so try not to have too much towards the end of the trip.

Tipping A service charge is usually added to restaurant and hotel bills, but waiters in tourist hotels might expect another 10%, likewise taxi drivers. It should be remembered that over-generosity could lead to jealousy in poor countries. However, a modest tip may be offered for personal service. Please remember that all tips should be a way for individuals to thank staff for good service. We recommend £1-£2 per person per day to distribute amongst your tour leader, guide/driver.

Language The official language in Madagascar is Malagasy. Nearly everyone also speaks French, except in the more remote rural areas; some English is spoken.

Security Whilst the vast majority of travellers never experience anything untoward it is worth taking precautions particularly in urban areas. You should take sensible precautions in crowded areas such as street markets and airports, where pick-pocketing is common, and keep clear of any street disturbances. Don't wear expensive jewellery, never leave your bags unattended, keep large amounts of money, cameras and mobile phones out of sight when walking in town centres, and avoid walking in city centres after dark. Keep copies of important documents, including passports, in a separate place to the documents themselves, together with details of credit cards. Leave copies at home with a friend too. Safeguard valuables, important documents and cash and deposit them in hotel safes, where practicable.

Time Madagascar is GMT + 3 hours

Packing List Please refer to our separate "packing list"



Clothing & Equipment List for Madagascar – Leaping Lemurs!

The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive and experienced travellers may well take a good deal less luggage than we recommend. We have also included a few extras that are meant to increase your comfort and are entirely optional.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking Shoes/trainers	1 pair - all purpose wear		Soft-sided bag 50 – 80 litres	
Strong Sandals	1 pair		Lightweight Daypack – 25 litres	
Waterproof Jacket	1 lightweight		Sunglasses	
T-Shirts	3+		Personal First Aid Kit	
Long Trousers or Skirt	2		Camera, Memory cards	
Short Trousers / shorts	2+		Torch and Batteries	
Long Sleeve Shirt	2+		Insect Repellent (with high DEET content)	
Sunhat / Baseball cap	Essential (styled to shade face, ears and neck)		Sunscreen	
Warm jacket	1		Binoculars – optional	
Thin Fleece or Sweatshirt	1		Washing Kit	
Swim Wear	1		Wet wipes & dry anti-bacterial hand wash are useful in your day pack	
			Towel or Sarong	

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport/ Visa		Small Sewing Kit & Safety Pins	
Air Tickets		Universal travelling adapter	
Money / Travellers Cheques		Guide Book & map	
Credit Cards		Small Calculator	
Insurance Documents			
Trip Information and Itinerary		Notebook/Diary/Pen	
Money Security Belt/Pouch			

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions**, please visit www.baa.com for details