

# Natural Wonders of Madagascar

**Tour Style:** Worldwide Multi-Centre

**Destination:** Madagascar

**Trip code:** MCWHW

**Trip Walking Grade:** 2



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

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Immerse yourself in the culture and unique biodiversity of this incredible island. Trek through the impressive canyons and sheer sandstone cliffs that jut upwards across Isalo National Park and marvel at the cascading waterfalls of Andringitra National Park. Wander through gorgeous landscapes and the lush, dense rainforests of Ranomafana National Park. Nature lovers can discover the unique wildlife of one of the world's most diverse ecosystems, including endearing lemur species, colourful chameleons and beautiful orchid blooms.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

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- 12 nights' accommodation in en-suite rooms, 2 nights in a tented camp
- Full board, from breakfast on day 2 to dinner on day 15
- Full holiday programme with a specialist local guide
- Internal flight, national park entrance fees and travel by air-conditioned minibus or coach
- Tips

## HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the national parks of this enigmatic island. Visit Isalo, Andringitra and Ranomafana
- Snap shots of Madagascar's many endemic species
- Enjoy walks through rainforests, traditional villages and magnificent mountains
- Discover magical Malagasy culture
- Option to extend the tour to visit Andasibe National Park

## 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 - 2: Depart UK To Antananarivo

Overnight flight to Antananarivo via Johannesburg. Arrive day 2 in the Madagascan capital and transfer to our accommodation (1 night)

### Day 3: Tulear

Transfer to the airport for our flight 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.

### Day 4 - 6: Isalo National Park

Journey to Ranohira and 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: Ambalavao**

Drive to Ambalavao with an afternoon at leisure to take advantage of the hotels facilities. The following morning we drive to Tsaranoro for a full day Iharavaratra walk including a picnic lunch.

### **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 shall visit the Valbio Research center and the school funded by the center. Walks will be scheduled in the early morning and the late afternoon to give us the best chance of spotting wildlife. If we're lucky we may see the park's famous resident, the golden bamboo lemur.

### **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.

### **Day 15: Antananarivo**

We head back to the capital stopping on the way to visit the Aluminium pot workshop. Following lunch at the hotel we explore the capital city and it's surroundings with a local historian guide for a heritage walk in the old city of Tana before visiting the Photography Museum.

### **Day 16: Departure Day**

Transfer to the airport for our return flight.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

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### **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.

## **Tsara Camp, Tsaranoro - Madagascar**

Our camp is located in the Tsaranoro Valley with the Tsaranoro Mountain on one side and the huge mountain chains of Andringitra National Park on the other. The camp is basic. Each tent is large with two simple beds, bedside-table and space to hang up clothes. There is a basic en-suite bathroom attached to each tent. Chairs on the veranda of each tented area provide the perfect place to watch the changing light on the backdrop of the Andringitra mountains.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **Mantadia Lodge, Andasibe - Madagascar Extension**

Mantadia Lodge is in a great location on a hill with panoramic views over the forest. Your stay will be enhanced by a calm living room with a reading area and a bar. The lodge also features an infinity pool.

## **USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION**

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### **Weather & Seasonality**

Because of its geography, Madagascar's climate is highly variable. Generally, the climate is hot and sub-tropical; it is colder in the mountains, while the south and west regions are particularly dry. Monsoons bring storms and cyclones to the east and north from December to March. The rainy season is November to March, and the dry season is April to October. The mountains, including Antananarivo, are warm and thundery from November to April and dry, cool and windy the rest of the year. Temperatures can be up to and over 30 degrees, and it is essential that you drink plenty of water, at least 2-3 litres per day.

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## Joining Instructions (With Flights)

On arrival, please proceed to the arrivals hall once you have passed through passport control, customs and baggage reclaim. Your local leader will assemble the group in or near the arrivals hall – look out for the HF Holidays' sign

## Joining Instructions (Without Flights)

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives.

If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

If your flight arrives before the group flight and you would like to join the transfer to the first hotel, please contact our Abroad Administration team on (0)20 8732 1261 to enquire about availability and make arrangements.

## Essential Information

### Suggested Kit List

As you'll be carrying your own luggage at airports and between your transport and hotels we recommend you try to keep your luggage to a minimum. These items are a general suggestion of what to pack for an active outdoor and walking holiday; depending on your destination, you may need more of some things and less – or none! – of others. You'll know best what you prefer to wear when out walking or while taking part in other outdoor activities.

- Walking boots (worn in), with good ankle support and spare bootlaces
- Walking socks
- Walking sandals
- Lightweight fleece, waterproof trousers and jacket
- Shorts and short-sleeved t-shirts
- Long trousers and long-sleeved lightcoloured shirts with collars to protect from the sun

Your clothing should ideally be pre-treated with insect repellent and in-built sun protection (available from specialist clothing stores such as Rohan, Cotswold Outdoor)

- Warm fleece, scarf/buff hat and gloves
- Torch
- Comfortable clothes and shoes for evenings and sightseeing
- Sun protection – sun hat, sunglasses, high factor sunscreen and lip protection
- Water bottle – at least 2-litre capacity
- Lightweight survival bag
- Small/medium rucksack (30 litre) and a liner or cover to keep contents dry
- Insect repellent
- Personal first aid kit including: personal medication, tissues, plasters, blister kit, painkillers, antiseptic wipes, Imodium, rehydration sachets

## Essential Equipment

- Passport (and copies)
- booking confirmation
- insurance cover note
- HF Holidays' registration form.

## Optional Equipment

Please ensure you have access to emergency funds should you need them; carrying a credit card is probably the most convenient method.

- trekking poles, if you find these useful
- camera
- umbrella
- binoculars

Please note that your HF Holidays' leader reserves the right to refuse to take any guest on a walk should they consider that a lack of suitable clothing/footwear may affect safety

## Trip Information

### Passport

Passports must be valid for a minimum of 6 months on date of entry and you must have 2 spare pages for the visa stamp. You should carry your passport with you at all times (there are sometimes random police checks, but less so when part of a group). Always keep a photocopy of your passport, visa and insurance details somewhere safe, and leave further copies with family or friends in the UK.

### Visas

Visas are required for UK, Australian, Canadian & USA passport holders. Return or onward tickets are required. You can get a 30-day tourist visa at the airport on arrival, payable by cash either in Euros (€35) or US Dollars (\$37). Best value currently is the Euro payment. This amount also covers a tourist tax.

You can also apply for an e-visa on the [official Malagasy e-visa website](#) before you travel.

If you are getting a visa at the airport, make sure an entry stamp is recorded in your passport. There is no Embassy of Madagascar in London. For further information about entry requirements, contact the Embassy of Madagascar in Paris, which offers a visa service (Telephone +33145 04 6211; email: [info@ambassade-madagascar.fr](mailto:info@ambassade-madagascar.fr)).

Other nationals should check with their nearest embassy or consulate for details of entry requirements.

This is subject to change. We highly recommend that you consult your doctor before travelling, both for up to date details and for information on what is appropriate to your situation

As a rule, travellers should be up to date with their routine vaccinations and boosters are recommended in the UK – including, for example, the MMR and diphtheria, tetanus, polio vaccines.

It is recommended for most travellers to have:

Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Typhoid & Tetanus vaccinations.

Malaria prevention may be recommended too. Some GPs recommend Malarone for the anti-malarial tablets, some guests in the past have experienced some side effects when taking these, so this may not be the best type for you.

Malaria prevention may be recommended too. Some GPs recommend Malarone for the anti-malarial tablets, but some guests have experienced side effects when taking these, so this may not be the best type for you. Speak to your GP for specific advice.

If you are coming to Madagascar from a yellow fever infected country, you will be asked for a yellow fever vaccination certificate.

Please note: the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is banned in some countries.

If you will be carrying medication, please check with the country's embassy/consulate prior to travel. As an extra precaution, it is recommended to:

- Keep medication in its original packet
- Take a copy of your prescription
- If possible, ask your chemist to write the name of your medication in the language of the country you're visiting

Requirements can change, and we recommend you check in good time ahead of your holiday.

For further information on country specific advice, visit

[www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) or [www.traveldoctor.co.uk](http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk)

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements; we will do our best to accommodate you.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

## Useful Information

### Luggage Allowance

1 piece checked-in luggage (max 20kg).

Please check details of your airline's baggage allowance, as shown on your e-ticket. Remember to also check any connecting flights you may have booked.

### Lost Or Damaged Luggage

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may decide to settle your claim immediately.

You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport

220V, round 2 pin plugs

GMT/UTC +3 hours; no daylight savings

Ariary (Ar). Major credit cards are accepted at top-end hotels in Tana and the provincial capitals. However, outside of the main cities cash will be required. ATMs can be found in and around the capital and in some of the larger towns. Travellers cheques are not advised. If you change your money at the airport on arrival, please count your money immediately.

French is the official national language, but many also speak the native Malagasy language

Once you have made your booking, you will receive a pre-holiday questionnaire where we 14 | Call 0345 470 7558 or visit [hfholidays.co.uk](http://hfholidays.co.uk) ask for details of next of kin and insurance details. You must complete and return this to us - we need to have this from you at least 10 weeks before travel.

Please also inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services on 124 (ambulance), 118 (fire) or 117 (police). Please then call our emergency number (sent in your final dispatch) and let us know there is a problem

## Tipping

Tips have been included in your holiday price for key services such as local guides/ driver/restaurants. Any additional tips are at your own discretion.

We have not included tips in the cost for the extension to Andasibe National Park; all tips are at your own discretion.

## HOW TO BOOK

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When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 5.30pm, Saturday: 9am – 1pm, Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

### PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

### NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £30 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit [hfholidays.co.uk/membership](http://hfholidays.co.uk/membership) for details.

### BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: National Westminster Bank, Account Name: HF Holidays Limited, Account Number: 48904805, Sort Code: 60-00-01, IBAN: GB90NWBK60000148904805

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.



## MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the [Manage My Booking](#) function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

## YOUR FINAL BALANCE

Your final balance payment is due 6 weeks before departure if you are staying in an HF Holidays UK country house, 8 weeks before departure if you are travelling on one of our holidays in Europe and 10 weeks before departure if you are on a Guided Trail staying in one of our partner hotels or are travelling on a Worldwide holiday. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on [01702 427 236](tel:01702427236) or visit [hfholidays.co.uk/insurance](http://hfholidays.co.uk/insurance)

## PEACE OF MIND

### ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website [atol.org.uk](http://atol.org.uk)

### MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

## TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

## PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any

subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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