



Tour operator Travel agency

PHOTO TOUR MADAGASCAR 2023

EAST, WEST AND SOUTH

Dates - Tour: May 12-27, 2023

Photography Type: Landscape, Wildlife & Culture Photography

Leader: David Van Driessche and local naturalist guides

Group Size: Max. 14 people

Level: All Photography Levels

Welcome to the “laboratory of evolution” another name for the Island of Madagascar. This Island is home to 160 endemic mammals, including 99 lemur species. 110 endemic bird species, 260 endemic reptiles, 60 endemic snakes (thankfully none of which are venomous) and 290 endemic amphibians, not to mention countless endemic insects and plants, and more chameleons than anywhere else on earth! Truly stunning, amazingly diverse, and largely unspoiled. It’s also endlessly photogenic and a wonderful setting for a photography workshop.

Throughout the trip, you’ll be guided by David Van Driessche, who will provide tutoring along the way. The photographic guidance will be tailored to your level, making the photo tour suitable for photographers of all levels. Whether you’re a beginner or a seasoned photographer, you can expect to sharpen your skills and come home with an incredible portfolio.

Photographic Highlights

- Look for the Fosa, Madagascar’s unique and largest carnivore, dancing Verreaux’s Sifakas and Giant Jumping Rats at Kirindy Reserve
- The iconic Baobab’s at Morondava – Milky way Photography and How to create awe-inspiring astrophotography
- Photographing the Indri, as well as Black-and-white Ruffed Lemur and Diademed Sifaka in the Andasibe area, through rice paddies, waterfalls and tropical rainforest.
- The five endemic bird families (the Ground Rollers, Cuckoo Roller, Mesites, Malagasy Warblers and Vangas)
- The extraordinary, endangered Aye-aye, a long-fingered lemur and primate native to Madagascar with rodent-like teeth that perpetually grow and a special thin middle finger. It is the world’s largest nocturnal primate.
- Following Ring-tailed Lemurs at the Isalo National Park
- A wide range of colorful and large chameleons: Furcifer Oustalet’s, Parson’s and Panther
- Other photogenic wildlife including tomato frogs, leaf-tailed geckos, snakes and the Comet moth in Ranomafana National Park, Madagascar

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Day 01: ANTANANARIVO

Fri 12th of May 2023

Meeting at Ivato international airport and transfer to the hotel. Overnight at the hotel.

Small briefing and welcome word by David.

Accommodation: Residence Lapasoa or similar

Day 02: ANTANANARIVO - ANDASIBE

Sat 13th of May 2023

(142 km, about 4 hours driving time, on a mostly good tarred road)

Drive to Andasibe through a landscape composed of rice paddies, waterfalls, and scarce forest stations. In Marozevo, stop at the exotic park in order to photograph a variety of chameleons, leaf tailed geckos, tomato frog, a variety of small Chameleons and lizards.

Continuation to Andasibe and check-in at the hotel. Before dinner, we do a night walk at the VOIMMA reserve, a treat for reptiles and amphibian lovers. The reserve offers countless frogs along its crystal clear river (among them *Boophis Pyrrhus*, *Boophis viridis* and *madagascariensis*) and several amazing chameleons like the *Furcifer wilsii*, *Calumma parsonil cristifer*, *Calumma nasuta* and *brevicornis*). This is also a place to find the unique satanic leaf-tailed gecko (*Uroplatus phantasticus*) if we are lucky. Bizarre insects like the famous giraffe necked weevil (*Trachelophorus giraffae*) can sometimes be spotted here.

(Flash and Marco lens recommended). Overnight at the hotel.

Accommodation: Sahatandra River Hotel or similar

Day 03: ANDASIBE

Sun 14th of May 2023

After breakfast, you will have a visit of the Mantadia National Park which shelters an astonishing number of animals and many species of plants. This morning excursion with a small walk we will need a tele-lens (200mm or up) in the afternoon, you will visit the private reserve of Vakona, an island surrounded by fresh water and home to a great variety of lemur species: The common brown lemurs, bamboo lemurs, ruffed lemurs, diademed sifakas. As a photographer this will be a rare opportunity to get up close and get some stunning close-ups and head shots of the lemurs of Madagascar.

Overnight at the hotel

Accommodation: Sahatandra River Hotel or similar

Day 04: ANDASIBE – MANAMBATO - AKANIN' NY NOFY

Mon 15th of May 2023

(around 3,5h on good road, then 7 km on dirt track, then some 1,5 hours on the boat on the canal)

After breakfast, an early morning visit to the 810 hectare reserve of Analamazaotra (930 to 1000 meters altitude), the realm of the mysterious Indri lemurs with their distinctive calls heard for miles around, and 13 other species of lemurs. You can also find various species of birds, chameleons etc. This hike on the Trail "Indri II" takes about three hours and leads on paths first in an upward gradient, and is then mostly flat.

Afterwards you drive on the national road 2 about 113 km into the sugar cane and fruit growing area around Brickaville. After a few kilometres, the road turns right onto a 7 km long dirt road to the formerly busy holiday resort of Manambato. There we board a covered motorboat and transfer on the Pangalanes Canal (about 20 km) to the hotel in the middle of beautiful nature in Akanin'ny Nofy at Lake Ampitabe.

Overnight stay there.

By the way, the Pangalanes Canal is considered to be the second longest canal in the world. It is a continuous waterway of about 645 km in length, which leads from Tamatave, the northernmost end point, to the village of Farafangana in the south, running parallel to the Indian Ocean. The distance to the sea is sometimes only a few meters, at some points it also touches the sea, and therefore the water is slightly salty. During the colonial period, eight years of construction work created artificial connections between the naturally formed lakes and river courses, which are fed with water from wooded elevations. Artificially constructed branch canals were used to create connections to the nearest standing or flowing water sources.

Accommodation: Palmarium Hotel or similar

Day 05: AKANIN' NY NOFY

Tue 16th of May 2023

A full day to discover this beautiful area at the clear and calm waters of the Ampitabe lake and the private Palmarium park with a big variety of lemurs on one spot. We have the chance to see 10 different lemurs species living in complete freedom, the Indri, Sifaka, Coronatus, Varecia Variegata, Propithecus to name a few. The park covers some special flora (orchids, carnivorous plant, granadilla wood, mahoganies, voyager trees...) and the most beautiful and rarest Madagascar palm trees (Dypsis, Ravenea, Orania and also Voanioala and Lemurophoenix) You can do a walk of several hours, on small trails, a little bit up and down, but not steep. When night falls, excursion by boat to spot the Aye Aye lemur, with its long middle finger (*Daubentonia madagascariensis*). With some extra light we will have the opportunity to make some great photos of this night creature. Overnight at the hotel

Accommodation: Palmarium Hotel or similar

Day 06: AKANIN'NY NOFY – MANAMBATO – ANTANANARIVO

Wed 17th of May 2023

(about 1,5 h by boat on the canal, then around 272 km 7,5 to 10 h by car)

Today, you will have a transfer back to Manambato by motorboat. On arrival, you will have a road trip back to the Capital City. Overnight at the hotel

Accommodation: Au Bois Vert or similar

Day 07: ANTANANARIVO – MORONDAVA

Thu 18th of May 2023

Transfer to the airport for flight to Morondava. Meeting at the airport and transfer to the city. Free afternoon and transfer at sunset for the evening and night shoot at the Avenue de Baobab. This famous stretch of dirt road, bordered by gigantic, secular baobabs on both sides, has been portrayed by countless photographers. We will try to shoot the Milky Way with the tree line up as a subject. A wide angle lens for night photography with 2.8 aperture or less + a good tripod is needed.

Overnight at the hotel

Accommodation: Renala au Sable d'or or similar





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Day 08: MORONDAVA – KIRINDY RESERVE – MORONDAVA

Fri 19th of May 2023

(around 90 km return, 4h)

Early morning drive through the Baobab avenue, we will catch the morning light at avenue de Baobab with people and ox carts walking by. After our shoot we head to Kirindy, and visit of the Kirindy dry forest reserve on a walk of about 1,5 to 3 hours, on mostly flat trails, to see its lemurs, snakes, fossa etc. On the way back stop to admire the beauty of the famous Baobab Avenue during sunset.

NOTE: In case we did not get the Milky Way due to heavy clouds yesterday, we will have a second opportunity to try it. If we got it the first night we will go back to the hotel after the Sunset.

Overnight at the hotel.

Accommodation: Renala au Sable d’or or similar

Day 09: MORONDAVA – ANTSIRABE

Sat 20th of May 2023

(555 Km about 10 hour-drive)

After an early breakfast, you will be driven to Antsirabe - the "Town of Water": so called because of its numerous thermal springs and the existence of two crater lakes. Overnight at the hotel

Accommodation: Chambres du Voyageur or similar

Day 10: ANTSIRABE – RANOMAFANA

Sun 21st of May 2023

(240 Km about 6 hour-drive)

After breakfast departure to Ranomafana. A good 20 kilometres before the first stop in Ambositra we cross the new Fatihita Bridge and have a good view (right side) of the stone bridge over the river, which was blown up by supporters of the ex-dictator Didier Ratsiraka during political unrest in 2002 to separate the capital from the surrounding area. A short break in Ambositra to visit some of the studios and boutiques of the wood carvers of the local Zafimaniry tribe. They are specialists in marquetry work, wooden sculptures and figures of all kinds. You can also buy beautiful silk scarves from Soatanana and the surrounding area. Trading is common. The eye-catcher in the centre is a mighty Benedictine monastery opposite the cathedral. On Saturdays there is a big weekly market. Also the farmers from the surrounding area offer their goods here, mostly agricultural or from the village blacksmith. Here you can stroll peacefully without being disturbed. Drive on to Ranomafana (another 150 km, the name means “hot water”), then check into the hotel. Before dinner possibility for a walk with flashlights along the road to look for nocturnal animals. With a bit of luck you will discover fast moving brown mouse lemurs, sleeping chameleon species in all sizes, lively frogs etc. Back to the hotel.

Accommodation: Centrest Séjour or similar

Day 11: RANOMAFANA – AMBALAVAO

Mon 22nd of May 2023

(141 Km about 3 hour-drive)

After breakfast, visit of the some 40’000 hectares big National park with its lemurs, chameleons, spiders, frogs, varieties of orchids and medicinal plants. Only in 1986 was discovered the golden Bamboo lemurs here, and there are more than 100 species of birds. This walk takes around 3 to 4 hours, and goes mostly on



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trails, sometimes a bit steep up and down, and sometimes you'll go off the paths and into the forest to spot the lemurs, it's a bit exhausting and requires endurance and agility. After lunch, off to Ambalavao – the commercial center of the southern Betsileo region, renowned for its folks, arts and crafts – to visit the “Antemoro Paper” factory. Overnight at the hotel.

Accommodation: Tsienimparihy Lodge or similar

Day 12: AMBALAVAO – RANOHIRA

Tue 23rd of May 2023

(240 Km about 4, 5 hour-drive)

Visit of the Antemoro paper workshop. This paper is a delicate, handmade, flower-decorated paper made of the fibers of the tree called “Avoha”. Another stop 12km south of Ambalavao to visit the Anja park, where you can photograph on a walk of around two hours on a little bumpy track, but not steep, some families of ring-tailed Katta lemurs in their natural surroundings. (Tele lens of 200mm recommended) Continuation to Ranohira. Overnight at the hotel.

Accommodation: Isalo Ranch or similar

Day 13: RANOHIRA

Wed 24th of May 2023

Morning hike of about 3 to 5 hours (on mostly rocky paths, sometimes a bit steep) with a local guide in the 81,540 hectare Isalo National Park: rugged sandstone rock massifs, an exceptional flora and fauna, including Pachypodium – which translates as elephant paw, gorges, various endemic plants, but also lemurs (kattas, sifakas, brown lemurs) are among the attractions. Visit of the “natural swimming pool”, where you can cool down and refresh yourself, if it is not filled with sand after heavy rainfalls. There are numerous hiking and trekking possibilities in the valley of the monkeys and rats and around it. In a part of the park there are also trails that are also passable by mountain bike, and camping is possible, but the infrastructure is very simple. The office of Madagascar National Parks for tour registration and ticket purchase is in the centre of Ranohira next to the police. Also a side trip to the “Window of Isalo (la fenêtre)” at sunset, when the last light makes everything look golden, should not be missed. The rock face with the opening in the centre is a popular photo motif. Not far away is a geological museum with information on the evolution of the entire region. Back to the hotel and overnight.

Accommodation: Isalo Ranch or similar

Day 14: RANOHIRA – TULEAR

Thu 25th of May of May 2023

(240 Km about 4, 5 hour-drive)

After breakfast, off to Tuléar along a straight road. The landscape is composed of high bushes, thick gallery forests and some proudly decorated Mahafaly tombs.

Today we will visit the local communities to make portraits, indoor cultural scenes and village life.

Depending on how long we take in the villages we can also visit of the Arboretum with many species of endemic plants when we arrive in Tulear. Overnight at the hotel.

Accommodation: Victory Hotel or similar

Day 15: TULEAR – ANTANANARIVO

Fri 26th of May 2023

According to the flight, transfer to the airport for the flight back to the capital. Meeting at the airport and transfer to the city. Overnight at the hotel.

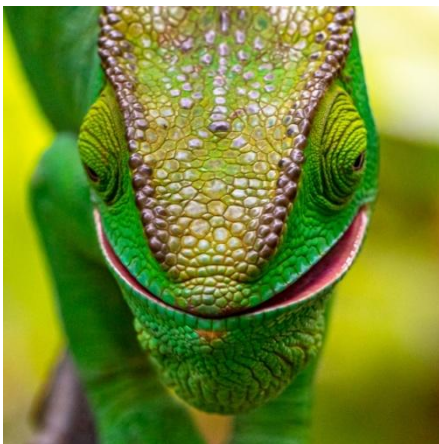
Accommodation: Residence Lapasoa or simila

Day 16: DEPART

Sat 27th of May 2023

Visit of a handicraft market then transfer to the airport for the flight to your destination.

END OF SERVICE



Tariffs:

In double/twin sharing: **€ 4350 per person**

Single supplement: **€ 700**

Supplement for half board basis: € 280 per person

Supplement for full board basis: € 565 per person

Included:

- All airport transfers
- Accommodation based on bed and breakfast
- Parks and reserve fees
- Service of local guides in parks and reserves
- Car or bus rental with a driver for the road trip (02 vehicles from 12 pax)
- Road transfers Morondava – Kirindy – Morondava in 4 WD cars (3 Pax in one car)
- Fuel and driver's indemnities
- Tourist levy and VAT
- Service of an English Speaking Guide during the whole trip

Excluded:

- Domestic flights with airport taxes: Antananarivo – Morondava, Tuléar – Antananarivo:
- Visa fees
- International flights and their taxes
- All other meals and drinks
- Personal expenditures
- Personal insurance for eventualities like accidents, theft or damage to luggage, cancellation etc.



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- Service of police officers on day 08 (Baobab Avenue)
- Photographic Guidance and teaching by David Van Driessche

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT

A digital SLR camera. (Crop-sensor DSLRs, Mirrorless, Full Frame or Micro Four Thirds)

A good sturdy quality tripod.

A wide angle lens, 16-35mm range is ideal for landscape photography and a 12mm 2.8 (if you like to shoot the Milky Way)

A telephoto zoom lens, such as a 70-200 or 70-300 with extender if you have one

A good portrait lens

A camera remote (cable release) or interval meter.

A laptop with Light room and Photoshop

A lightweight telephoto lens such as a 100-400mm or 300mm f4

A backup hard-drive and enough memory sticks

Enough batteries to last you two days, Electricity supplies in Madagascar are not always completely reliable.

Attention!

Tariffs are subject to changes, especially if heavy fluctuation in exchange rate and/or fuel prices. All tours and tariffs are subject to changes in case of cancellations or overbooking of flights, changes in timetable, bad weather and road conditions, strike, political troubles, problems with fuel supply, tribal and other war, closing of sites, natural disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones, floods and other acts of God.