

## Voyage to the East Coast & St Marie

This tour takes you from the highlands of Antananarivo down through the forested Perinet region and on to the flat coastal plains of Eastern Madagascar and the Pangalanes Canal. You will certainly spot a good variety of Lemur and other Fauna and Flora species and also be able to see how both the landscape and people vary between the inland highland region and the coastal belt.

Flights to Madagascar are via Paris with either Air France or Air Madagascar. Naturally the price depends on season and availability, but fares tend to start from around £850pp.

### Itinerary

#### **Day 1: Antananarivo**

Meet and greet on arrival at the airport and transfer to la Varangue or Palissandre Hotel

**Dinner and Overnight La Varangue or Palissandre Hotel**

#### **Day 2: Antananarivo – Périnet/Andasibe Reserve**

After breakfast depart to the Périnet/Andasibe Reserve. After lunch there will be a visit the Special Reserve of the Indri, Madagascar's largest Lemur. In the evening before dinner enjoy a night walk looking for the many nocturnal creatures present in the Vakona Reserve.

**Dinner and Overnight Vakona Forest Lodge.** Set in a forest of eucalyptus trees and Agapanthus, Vakona Forest Lodge is about 9km uphill from the village of Andasibe. The individual bungalows are situated throughout the gardens and have big bathrooms, terrace and available in either twin or double. The main building which houses the reception, bar and restaurant is a glass round building with a central fire place and comfortable sofa's and chairs.

Vakona is the ideal spot for exploring both Mantadia National Park and Reserve Speciale d'Analamazaotra. Within the hotel grounds there is an equestrian centre and a Lemur sanctuary where the lemur's will jump onto your head and take food from your hands. You can only visit the lemur sanctuary with a guide.

#### ***Perinet/Andasibe (East)***

*Situated in the province of Toamasina between 930m and 1040m of altitude the reserve is a complex of protected areas that can be visited by everyone: **La Réserve Spéciale d'Indri** is a reserve especially for the Indri Indri Lemur and also contains other species as well as great Flora. **The Vakona Reserve** is a private reserve owned by Vakona Forest Lodge and also contains Lemur Island which is a great opportunity to get up close to Lemurs in a natural setting.*

#### **Day 3: Périnet/Andasibe Reserve**

In the morning you will visit the Special Reserve of the Indri or Mantadia National Park (depending on road conditions). In the afternoon there will be a visit to Lemur Island, this is a small sanctuary where rescued and no longer wanted pet lemurs live in a semi wild state (the ones that were former pets are quite tame). An optional night walk is available.

**Dinner and Overnight Vakona Forest Lodge**

### ***The National park of Mantadia (East)***

*The National Park of Mantadia is a mass of rainforest and has a damp tropical climate. Its flora is rich with ferns, mosses, orchids and it also has medicinal plants. Its fauna represents no less than 11 endemic species of lemurs such as Daubentonia Madagascariensis, Indri-Indris or the biggest lemurs in Madagascar, Aye-Ayes, Fulvous lemurs and many diurnal and nocturnal species. You also might discover the smallest chameleon, and other reptiles in the park as well as the very colorful Mantella frog which is easily spotted.*

### **Day 4: Périnet – Manambato - Akanin'ny Nofy**

An early departure takes you to Manambato, a village in the edge of the Lake Rasoabe; on the Canal des Pangalanes where you will embark by boat, after an hour you enter Lake Ampitabe where the Bushhouse Hotel is located. You will have lunch at the hotel and there are a wide range of excursions available from the hotel.

**Dinner and Overnight Bushhouse Hotel.** This hotel is situated in an idyllic spot on the shores of Lac Ampitabe. Fantastic views and charming staff all go towards a great atmosphere. Meals are all taken together in the evening and the food is excellent. The rooms at Bush House are both simple and rustic but all have views across the lake and en-suite facilities.

Walks, canoes and boats trips can all be arranged from here.

Close to the hotel is a reserve that sees many lemurs including the Sifaka and the black and white ruffed lemurs and the guide there will be able to show you many of the medicinal plants found on the reserve.

### ***The Pangalanes (East)***

*The Pangalanes Canals were built to link all the lakes stretching from Brickaville to Tamatav. This enabled the transfer of both freight and passengers along the east coast of Madagascar without having to sail on the treacherous Indian Ocean.*

*Originally the French used Malagasy labour to build the canal but to proved too hard for these gentle fishermen. Therefore a huge number of Chinese were brought in to finish the job. The scenery on the canal is stunning. Not just from the wildlife, flora and fauna but for the procession of boats of all shapes and sizes carrying any number of goods or passengers going about their business.*

### **Day 5: Akanin'ny Nofy**

Optional excursions either on foot or by boat; such as the private reserve of Ansirakaloty 'The Palmarium'- an escorted visit of several species of lemurs and also stunning flora, the typical Betsimisaraka's village, a school under the care of the Bushhouse Hotel, or the fishermen's village.

### **Dinner and Overnight Bushhouse Hotel**

#### ***The private reserve of Antsirakaloty 'Le Palmarium' (East)***

*A peninsula which gives a unique look to the endemic fauna and flora of Madagascar. A Nature lover has collected a considerable number of rare floras such as palm trees, xerophyte plants and orchids. There are also many reptiles and endemic batrachians are gathered in a several species of lemurs live freely in trees however are tame enough to let people come and touch them.*

**Day 6: Akanin'ny Nofy – Tamatave**

Transfer by boat to Tamatave by crossing the Pangalanes canal (about 2 hours). After disembarkation in Tamatave you will transfer to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

**Overnight at Neptune Hotel, Tamatave****Day 7: Tamatave – St Marie**

Domestic flight to St Marie.

Sainte Marie was used by pirates 200 years ago as a hiding/resting place and they'd lay in wait for the cargo ships travelling from the far east loaded with silks and spices. There is a wonderful coral reef in Sainte Marie and several wrecks that can be explored.

**7 nights Princess Bora Lodge, St Marie**

The short transfer from the airport to Princess Bora Lodge is made by Zebu (a cross between a cow and ox) and cart.

The hotel is situated directly on the beach front with the only thing separating the hotel from the beach is an infinity pool. The round bungalows are dotted throughout the grounds and each one has a fan, mossie net, safe, suspended wooden bed and terrace and balcony. The luxury rooms have air conditioning and twin sinks in the bathroom.

The beach has comfortable sun loungers and an outdoor shower. In addition, at the end of the jetty, there are large comfortable double beds with water proof mattresses and sun shade after you have completed your snorkelling on the nearby reef.

The restaurant offers a good choice of excellent food.

The hotel organises conservation friendly whale watching trips during August – September.

**Day 13: St Marie – Tana**

Domestic flight back to the capital where I will organise a day room for your use whilst you wait for your international flight home.