



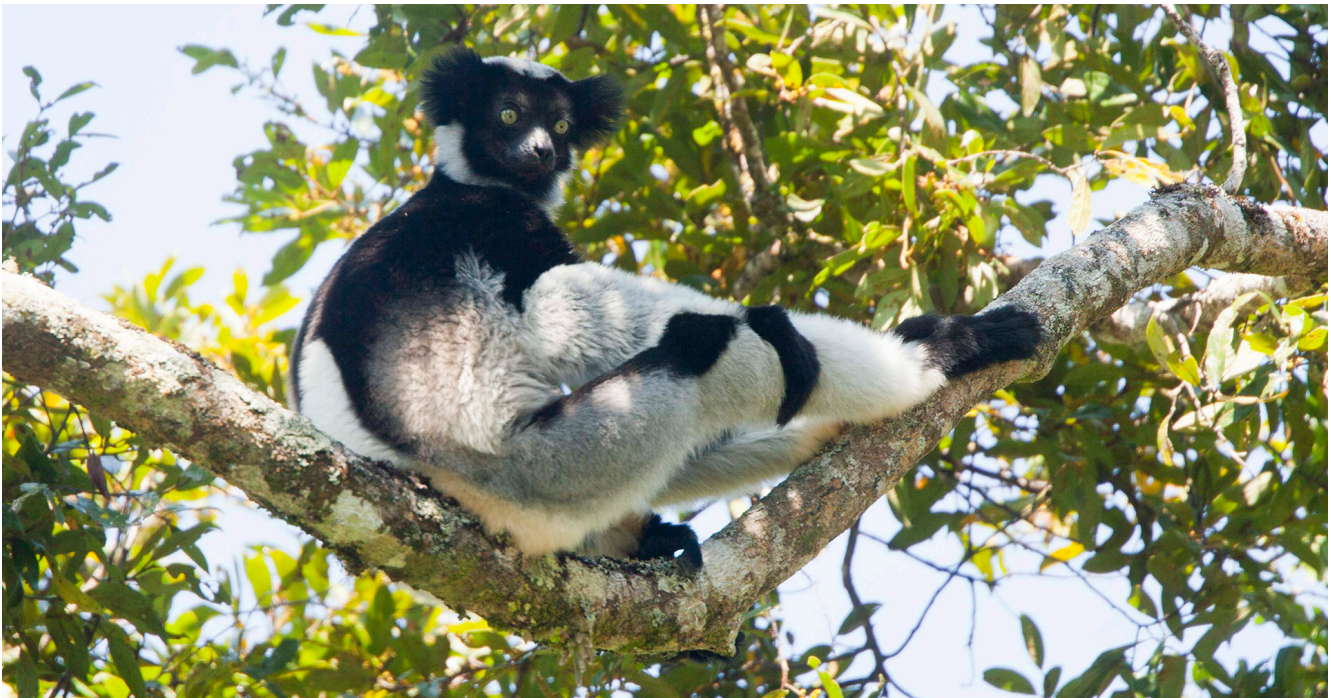
CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Madagascar

Quest for Island Endemics

September 17 to October 10, 2022



Indri Lemur

© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Focus on endemics such as charismatic lemurs, chameleons, and birds in this hotspot of diverse ecosystems. Madagascar is well known as one of the greatest destinations in the world with over 90% of its wildlife considered endemic. Our 24-day tour provides the perfect opportunity to get to know this island's unique species well. This special itinerary caters to the pace of nature lovers and photographers offering several days in each special habitat to enjoy these incredible landscapes and their animals.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Leaping lemurs! Experience the sights and sounds of over a dozen species of lemurs such as the dancing sifakas, the curious ring-tailed lemurs, and the beautiful black-and-white ruffed lemurs.
- And leaping lizards! Madagascar is home to half the world's chameleons, as well as unique species of geckos and iguanids.
- Discover an astounding array of endemic birds, including couas, mesites, ground-rollers, and vangas.
- Seek out the things that go bump in the night! We'll have many opportunities to go night-spotting in search of nocturnal lemurs, birds, frogs, and other creatures.

- Journey through the island’s varied landscapes encompassing coast, desert, farm, wetland, and forests, including the quintessential towering baobabs with their majestic crowns.

LEADERS: Walt Anderson and Solohery Rasamison.

DAYS: 24, including estimated travel time.

GROUP SIZE: 10.

COST: \$13,850 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for four internal flights), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 6.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Sep 17–18	Travel to Antananarivo, Madagascar from our Tsingy extension.		
Sep 19	Arrive in Antananarivo (Tana). If joining from our trip extension, you will fly to Tana to meet the group today.	Relais des Plateaux, Antananarivo	D
Sep 20–21	Fly to Mahajunga then drive to Ampijoroa Forest Station for chameleons, sifakas, and other specialties of Ankarafantsika National Park.	Gite d’Ampijoroa, Ankarafantsika	B, L, D
Sep 22	Morning of wildlife watching, return to Mahajunga to fly back to Antananarivo.	Relais des Plateaux, Antananarivo	B, L, D
Sep 23–25	Fly to Fort Dauphin and explore the Berenty Lemur Reserve for endemic birds and mammals.	Berenty Lodge, Amboasary	B, L, D
Sep 26–27	Fly to Tulear and drive to Ifaty for two days in spiny forest habitat with endemic lemurs, birds, and chameleons.	Les Dunes d’Ifaty, Ifaty	B, L, D
Sep 28–29	Drive southeast to Zombitse on your way to Isalo National Park.	Hotel Le Jardin du Roy, Isalo	B, L, D
Sep 30–Oct 2	Continue to Ranomafana National Park to experience new species and landscapes.	Centrest Hotel, Ranomafana	B, L, D
Oct 3	Visit Antsirabe for an overnight en route to Perinet Reserve and Mantadia National Park.	Hotel des Thermes, Antsirabe	B, L, D
Oct 4–7	Explore Perinet and Mantadia for full days with endemic birds, amphibians, and lemurs.	Andasibe Hotel, Andasibe	B, L, D
Oct 8	Drive to Antananarivo.	Relais des Plateaux, Antananarivo	B, L, D
Oct 9	Fly homeward.		B
Oct 10	Arrive home.		

OPTIONS

- Begin your journey early on our Tsingy extension from September 10 to 19, 2022. You'll experience the impressive geologic Tsingys, Avenue of the Baobabs, and the unique species that reside within the beautiful Kirindy Forest. Observe endemics such as Madagascar's largest predator, the fossa, the world's smallest primate, Madame Berthe's mouse lemur, and an abundance of endemic birds. See full itinerary at <https://cheesemans.com/extension/madagascar-ext-sep2022>.

LEADERS



Walt Anderson

Walt is one of the pioneers of ecotourism, having led expeditions in Africa, North and South America, and Australia for many years. He led the first World Wildlife Fund trips to Madagascar and the first ecotours from the US to the national parks of Brazil; his deepest international experience is in East Africa. Walt is an author, photographer, wildlife artist, and lecturer whose love for the natural world is conveyed with humor and enthusiasm. He was Professor of Environmental Studies at Prescott College in Arizona for 27 years and is the author of two books on California's Sutter Buttes and a major chapter on ecotourism in *International Wildlife: Contemporary Challenges in a Changing World*.

Solohery Rasamison

Solohery has been doing bird surveys and monitoring programs around Madagascar since 2003 and has published four scientific articles on birdcalls. After earning a Master's degree in Conservation Biology, Solohery began guiding natural history trips across the island. Being one of the most experienced and respected resident Malagasy guides, he knows the local biodiversity well and greatly enjoys guiding wildlife group. He is enthusiastic, extremely well-versed on Malagasy history and culture, speaks fluent English and French, and has a great sense of humor.



DETAILED ITINERARY

Sep 17–18 ~ Travel from our Tsingy extension depart home

Travel to Antananarivo, Madagascar from our Tsingy extension (<https://cheesemans.com/extension/madagascar-ext-sep2022>) or from home.

Sep 19 ~ Arrive in Antananarivo (Tana)

Arrive in Antananarivo (also known as Tana). If you are joining from our Tsingy extension, you will fly to Tana today and meet the rest of the group. In the afternoon, join an optional visit to Lac Alarobia for birding.

Sep 20–21 ~ Ampijoroa Forest Station in Ankarafantsika National Park

Meet our resident guide, Solohery Rasamison, and fly to Mahajanga, and then drive two hours to Ampijoroa, situated in the extensive tropical deciduous forests of Ankarafantsika National Park. On the way, pass by the extremely picturesque rice paddy scenery, and stop to scan water bodies for herons perhaps doing their umbrella-feeding performance.



Coquerel's Sifaka with Young
© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

While in Ampijoroa, enjoy early morning and nocturnal wildlife walks from your cabin and exploring the network of trails in Ankarafantsika National Park. The park comprises 135,000 hectares where the local Sakalava people still live. With luck, you may encounter the fossa, a very shy endemic mammalian predator that is closely related to mongoose. You can find eight species of lemurs near camp, and if you are lucky, you may find the golden-brown mouse lemur, one of the world's smallest primates. Coquerel's sifakas live in family groups that thrive and are extremely active throughout the forests. You will also encounter some of the region's endemic reptiles such as Cuvier's Madagascar swift, Oustalet's chameleon, and the rhinoceros chameleon.

Sep 22 ~ Drive to Mahajanga and fly to Antananarivo

In the morning, enjoy wildlife action in camp and the adjacent woodlands, watching and photographing sifakas and birds, then drive back to the coastal town of Mahajanga for a flight back to Tana for an overnight.

Sep 23–25 ~ Berenty Lemur Reserve

Fly to Fort Dauphin and drive to Berenty Lemur Reserve, a privately-owned sanctuary near the southern tip of the island. The three-hour drive to Berenty starts from the windy, picturesque town of Fort Dauphin on the coast, down roads bordered by rice paddies, and into the rain-shadow of the Andohahela Mountains. *Didierea* trees resembling octopus are the signal that you have arrived in the spiny desert habitat of Madagascar. The reserve belongs to the De Haulme family who have set aside sections of gallery forest along the Mandrare River to conserve its wildlife population, including lemurs. Several species of lemurs are quite relaxed with people nearby because of human exposure during research, so expect great opportunities to get close to these unique animals.

Experience close encounters with endearing ring-tailed lemurs and hopefully watch Verreaux's sifakas hopping across the trails and sometimes down the dirt road outside the lodge. Giant couas, Madagascar cuckoo-hawk, and other forest birds will be among the many highlights. Go out at night to see nocturnal creatures such as the greater hedgehog tenrec, several geckos, white-footed sportive lemur, and gray mouse lemurs. The nighttime skies may also be clear enough to see the Southern Cross, Milky Way, and other diversions, making your experience even more enchanting. See one of the few complete giant elephant bird eggs in the world at a local museum.

Sep 26–27 ~ Ifaty spiny forest and surroundings

After some early morning photography of the approachable wildlife in Berenty, return to Fort Dauphin to fly across the island to Tulear. Then, drive to Ifaty by four-wheel vehicle, stopping en route to look for the uncommon Madagascar plover, greater flamingo, black-winged stilt, and Malagasy harrier.

The famous spiny forest around Ifaty has fascinating succulents in many shapes and sizes, known as *Didierea* woodland. The biggest is the baobab tree, which is a succulent! Start exploring at dawn when the birds are most active, and stroll amongst the many succulents and thorny scrubs. Many avian endemics live in this arid land, such as sub-desert mesite and the noisy sickle-billed vanga. As the day warms up and reptiles get active, search for Madagascar iguana and Dumeril's boa.

In addition to your woodland walks, the tropical ocean off Ifaty is fairly good for snorkeling. Masks and snorkels are available to swim in a coral reef or relax in the warm shallows in front of your hotel. Join an afternoon excursion to the beautiful wetlands south of Ifaty in search of waterbirds and other wildlife.

Sep 28–29 ~ Drive southeast to Zombitse and on to Isalo National Park

After an early morning search for Ifaty's diverse birds, make your way down to Isalo National Park via Zombitse Forest. In this forest, you will have a chance to see Appert's tetraka, a species listed Vulnerable by Birdlife International, which you can only find within two small regions of southwest Madagascar. Other highlights you may encounter include Madagascar ibis, Madagascar harrier-hawk, Madagascar cuckooshrike, Malagasy paradise flycatcher, and Madagascar spinetail. With a little luck and patience, you may find the shy fossa.

In the afternoon, navigate your way to Madagascar's highlands to reach Isalo National Park. In this highland region, you will witness many magnificent geological formations carved by small waterways, which attract diverse wildlife. Spend a full day and a half exploring this bizarre and picturesque landscape. Within this dry region, birds are diverse and omnipresent, so it's likely you will spot new species. Many reptile and amphibian species live here, including Dumeril's boa, white-lipped bright-eyed frog, and Malagasy rainbow frog. You will also take day and night walks in the hope of finding all six lemur species which reside in the region, half of them are nocturnal and the other half are diurnal.



Malagasy Paradise Flycatcher
© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Sep 30–Oct 2 ~ Ranomafana National Park

Today, you will embark on a full-day drive from Isalo to Ranomafana National Park. The drive will take you through winding grassland interspersed with granite hills. Stay on the lookout for the rare and elegant Malagasy harrier gliding above the grasslands in search of prey. Once you reach the eastern slopes of Madagascar's mountainous center, you will enter the Ranomafana National Park. Unlike the previous parks you will have visited, Ranomafana includes a large range of elevations, encompassing many different forest types. At higher altitudes, you will find many new species that are impossible to see anywhere else in the world. Watch for the endangered yellow-bellied sunbird-asiaty making their way from branch to branch, rejoicing as they come upon fresh nectar. These birds will mesmerize you with their iridescent blue and yellow feathers, complimented by green speckles. At the ridgetop forests encounter beautiful vistas as well as Madagascar yellowbrow, the elusive Pollen's vanga, and many other new species!

Ranomafana is also an especially rewarding place for night walks due to the high number of amphibians and reptiles. You will have a chance to observe some of the 100 species of frogs that have been recorded in this park. You will explore one of the island's last highland marshes which has many unique species including one of Madagascar's most elusive birds, the slender-billed flufftail. Of course, you will have plenty of encounters with lemurs in this forest, including the highly localized golden bamboo lemur. Other mammals to lookout for include the adorable streaked tenrec and the elegant ring-tailed mongoose, two small, but incredibly charismatic species. Ranomafana National Park will keep you on your toes as you will continuously move from one habitat to the next, with endlessly surprises of the diversity and beauty of Madagascar's wildlife and natural heritage.



Malagasy Kingfisher
© Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Oct 3 ~ Scenic drive to Antsirabe

You'll have a scenic four-hour drive north from Ranomafana to Antsirabe that allows time for plenty of stops. You'll overnight in a picturesque town before heading toward the famous Perinet Special Reserve.

Oct 4-7 ~ Perinet Special Reserve and Mantadia National Park

Depart early to drive east to the Perinet Special Reserve across the Highland Plateau immersed in tropical wet forests on Madagascar's eastern escarpment. You'll stay at a lodge located between Perinet Special Reserve and Mantadia National Park. You will undoubtedly meet some of the lodge's resident wildlife including geckos, chameleons, Madagascar wagtails, and indri lemurs. Indri, the largest living lemur, is only found in the habitat of

Perinet and Mantadia. With three full days, you should have many opportunities to watch, hear, and photograph indri. You will also see many other species of lemurs here, including gray bamboo, furry-eared dwarf, wooly, and black-and-white ruffed lemur as well as diademed sifaka.

Each evening, join optional night walks to explore the area's nocturnal inhabitants. Geckos, chameleons, and colorful frogs are often heard during the day, but are more easily seen at night. Thankfully none of the snakes found on Madagascar are venomous!

Special birds at Perinet and Mantadia include five families endemic to the Malagasy region: mesites, ground-rollers, the cuckoo-roller, Malagasy warblers, and vangas. You will see many of these birds directly from the roads which crisscross the reserve, but resident guides may spontaneously take you up trails into the rainforest to find one just located.

Oct 8 ~ Scenic drive to Antananarivo

You'll have a scenic drive west that allows time for plenty of stops from Perinet Special Reserve back to the Antananarivo.

Oct 9 ~ Fly homeward

Depart Antananarivo either very early in the morning.

Oct 10 ~ Arrive home

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$13,850
Single Supplement	\$1,665

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for four internal flights), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$500
Second	July 1, 2021	\$2,500
Final	April 15, 2022	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another trip if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Four internal flights.
- Accommodations for the nights of September 19 through October 8.
- Meals from dinner on September 19 through breakfast on October 9.
- Transfers between Relais des Plateaux and Antananarivo Airport on September 19 and October 9.
- Bottled drinking water, juice, or soft drinks with lunches and dinners.
- Snorkeling gear on loan in Ifaty.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- All airfare, airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Round-trip airfare is approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000 between the US and Antananarivo, depending on origin.
- Passport and visa fees.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$20 to \$22 per participant per day for September 19 to October 8 with our main local guide, plus local drivers, local guides, and hotel/camp staff (about \$400 to \$440 total per participant).
- Mandatory emergency medical and evacuation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Optional trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- All drinks except those listed as included.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them

on your Reservation Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

You are visiting during Madagascar's cooler dry season; however, the places you'll travel to are quite warm during the day but cool off at night. Temperatures range from 52 to 90°F (11 to 32°C). Plan for early starts in the morning to maximize the most pleasurable time in nature when the wildlife is the most active too. Expect variable weather conditions and bring layers.

Fitness Level

This Madagascar tour requires a reasonable level of fitness and you should be in good general health. Most of the wildlife viewing and birding is done on foot and may require walking for several hours; to locate some of the endemic species may require a few longer walks. A few forest trails can be steep and slippery, especially after rain. We strive to spend maximum time in nature and days are long and fairly demanding, though you have some flexibility to opt out of certain activities. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Accommodations

Although lodging choices are quite limited in Madagascar, we select the best available options. Your lodges all have private bathrooms and are nice and comfortable, though you stay in one rustic lodge in Ampijoroa.

Transportation

Travel is by bus, four-wheel drive vehicle, and flights. Paved or dirt roads can be dusty and bumpy. Internal flight delays and last-minute flight schedule alterations are an inherent risk in any trip to Madagascar and we may have to re-arrange the itinerary around the internal flight schedule. However, you will still visit all the scheduled sites and we will take all reasonable precautions and actions to ensure the trip follows the advertised itinerary as closely as possible.

Flights

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed flight information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Antananarivo, Madagascar (TNR) by September 19. **If you are arriving from our Tsingy extension**, see the *Flights* section in its itinerary for arrival information (<https://cheesemans.com/extension/madagascar-ext-sep2022>). Depart from Antananarivo, Madagascar (TNR) on October 9.

Flights we book for you: Four internal flights are included in the tour cost.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project (www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/).