

# Madagascar

*Island of Endemics*

April 23 to May 15, 2025



Ring-tailed Lemur

## SAFARI OVERVIEW

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Starting in Antananarivo's historic old town with the Queen's Palace, journey through Madagascar's cultural and natural gems. Explore the Tsarasaotra Bird Parc, Madagascar's inaugural Ramsar site, to see unique bird species. Venture north to Amber Mountain, Ankarana National Park, Anjahakely Forest, and Black Lemur Camp encountering diverse wildlife, including the endangered Perrier's sifaka. The Black Lemur Camp, a 2019 award-winning project, preserves rare lemurs like the Tattersalli's sifaka and offers night walks with the elusive aye-aye lemur. Head east to Andasibe-Mantadia for the world's largest lemur, the indri. Travel further south where Berenty Private Reserve, near Fort Dauphin, offers a haven for lemur photography amidst the unique spiny forest and blends nature with Antandroy culture for an immersive experience.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience engaging urban and rural cultures as well as vast and varying landscapes.
- Encounter one of the world's 25 most endangered mammals – Perrier's black lemur.
- Find Madagascar's critically endangered white lemur on a night walk.
- Count all six species of leaf-tailed geckos.
- Share the rainforest with a plethora of reptiles, amphibians, birds, and, of course, more lemurs!

**LEADERS:** Scott Davis and Lytah Razafimahefa.

**DAYS:** 23, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 10.

**COST:** \$12,750 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for four internal flights), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 10.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
April 23 – 24	Travel to Antananarivo, Madagascar.		
April 25	Arrive in Antananarivo and enjoy a warm Malagasy welcome.	Nosy Manga, Antananarivo	
April 26	Spend a day sightseeing in Antananarivo.	Nosy Manga, Antananarivo	B, L, D
April 27 – 28	Fly to Diego Suarez to experience rare and fascinating wildlife.	Black Lemur Camp, Diego Suarez	B, L, D
April 29 – 30	Head to the Tsingy Kingdom of Ankarana National Park.	Iharana Bush Camp, Ankarana National Park	B, L, D
May 1 – 2	Continue to the verdant mountains, waterfalls, and wildlife of Montagne D'Ambre National Park.	Nature Lodge, Montagne D'Ambre National Park	B, L, D
May 3	Return to Antananarivo.	Nosy Manga, Antananarivo	B, L, D
May 4 – 6	Enjoy Berenty Private Reserve's spiny forest.	Berenty Lodge, Berenty Private Reserve	B, L, D
May 7 – 8	Explore Lake Anony, Andohahela National Park, and Fort Dauphin.	Talinjoo Hotel, Fort Dauphin	B, L, D
May 9 – 12	Spend four days in the Andasibe Rain Forest.	Mantadia, Andasibe National Park	B, L, D
May 13	Return to Antananarivo	Relais des Plateaux, Antananarivo	B, L, D
May 14	Depart for home.		B
May 15	Arrive home.		

## LEADERS

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### **Tojo "Lytah" Razafimahefa**

Lytah, born and raised in Antananarivo, Madagascar, has over 18 years of experience in tourism and ecotourism. He began his career in 2005 organizing tours for Americans, later becoming a freelance tour guide and establishing his consultancy business in 2009. Specializing in tourism product development, ecotourism, and mentoring, he has led tours worldwide, including for high-profile groups like US and European zoo groups and universities. He is a Special Advisor to the Association of the National Guides of Madagascar and the National Federation of Tour Guides of Madagascar, as well as the president of the Tour Guides Federation of Madagascar and a founding member of the Confederation of Tourism in Madagascar. Co-founding Wildlife Madagascar, he promotes conservation and improves the lives of Madagascar's people.



### **Scott Davis**

Scott is a professional photographer specializing in wildlife, nature, and travel. Originally trained as a wildlife and marine biologist, his research and photo assignments have taken him to the far corners of the globe and all seven continents. National Geographic, BBC, Animal Planet, NY Times, and renowned magazines have used his photography. His patience for teaching and love of capturing the essence of his subjects make him one of our most popular tour leaders. He has extensive experience working in the polar regions having led expeditions and guided in both Antarctica and Svalbard for 15 seasons. His great fondness for these remote polar regions is evident in every expedition he leads and he loves sharing this enthusiasm with all his guests.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

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### **April 23 – 24 ~ Travel to Antananarivo, Madagascar,**

#### **April 25 ~ Arrive in Antananarivo**

Meet your local team and proceed to the hotel for an overnight stay.

#### **April 26 ~ Explore Antananarivo**

Enjoy a relaxed morning with a coffee talk led by your Malagasy tour leader for a general introduction and information briefing. Subsequently, take a leisurely sightseeing tour of the old town, exploring the Queen's Palace perched atop the hill. This stroll provides insights into Madagascar's colonial history, blending past and present. By midday, visit the Musée de la Photo and indulge in the

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Antananarivo  
Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

exquisite cuisine of the Café du Musée Restaurant. This sightseeing adventure continues as you gradually drive back to your hotel for a well-deserved and restful night.



Black Lemur

#### **April 27 – 28 ~ Black Lemur Camp, Diego Suarez**

Hop on an early morning flight to Diégo Suarez, the far northern city of the island. Upon arrival, board a 4WD vehicle for a direct journey to the Andrafiarana/Andavakoera region and the secluded Anjahakely protected area. Along the scenic drive, witness captivating landscapes—limestone rocks adorned with dry deciduous vegetation, volcanic ash cones, mountain rainforests, and picturesque rice paddies.

Diverge from the main road, traversing grassy hills until reaching the Anjahakely forest, home to the well-nested Black Lemur Camp. Begin with a general briefing, then relax for a bit before for a night walk featuring nocturnal mouse lemurs, captivating chameleons, intriguing leaf-tailed

geckos, birds, and more.

The next day, explore the habitat of the critically endangered black sifaka lemur, a strictly endemic species and one of the world's 25 most endangered mammals. Two-thirds of Perrier's sifaka are exclusive to the Andrafiarana/Andavakoera area. Discover various attractions, including vanga birds, hawks, and Petter's chameleon with its distinctive nose-horns and the striking red patch on mature females' heads. Another nightwalk awaits the adventurous. By staying at Black Lemur Camp, you contribute to the protection of this unique area and support the local community, including the lodge staff.

#### **April 29 – April 30 ~ Ankarana National Park**

Leaving the game reserve, you venture into the distinctive landscape of the Tsingy kingdom within Ankarana National Park. Explore the enchanting east side of Ankarana discovering its hidden wildlife amidst limestone forests, grottos, and deciduous dry forests. Witness lemurs in the treetops, nesting birds, and camouflaged reptiles. Highlights include the Ankarana sportive lemur, northern sportive lemur, northern bamboo lemur, crowned lemur, and Sanford brown lemur. Marvel at exceptional reptile species like Paroedura geckos, the giant green-day gecko, golden hog-nosed snake, and other colubrid snakes. In the mid-afternoon, travel to the west side of Ankarana, where the Iharana Bush Camp lies in the cultural cradle of the Antakarana ethnic group. Enjoy captivating sunsets and rejuvenating sunrise moments in this spectacular haven.



Ankarana National Park  
Tim Eppley

You will choose from various on-site activities or embark on a captivating 2-hour drive to Daraina. Special day  
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and night walks offer a unique encounter with Madagascar's critically endangered lemur, the white Tattersal's sifaka, and the fascinating aye-aye, the most peculiar of all lemurs. Daraina's dry forest hosts other locally or regionally restricted species, making it a must-visit for nature enthusiasts.

### May 1 – 2 ~ Montagne D'Ambre National Park

As you reminisce about the enchanting moments of the past few days, you journey back along the RN6, leaving the arid landscapes behind and ascending to the lush green mountains of Joffreville, a vital water source for the region. Along the way, encounter another masterpiece of nature: the breathtaking red tsingy, where Madagascar Buzzards and Yellow-Billed Kites gracefully soar above, and Olive Bee-eaters add a vibrant contrast to the delicate red eroded soil.

Continuing your drive, you reach the Montagne d'Ambre National Park, a haven where rainforest blankets the entire area. This verdant and evergreen protected forest, one of the country's most humid, fosters an opulent evolution of wildlife. Witness an extraordinary array of leaf-tailed geckos (including 6 different species), the diminutive brookesia tuberculata chameleon, native carnivores, and an array of Madagascar's iconic lemurs, each ready to showcase their beauty.



Spiney Forest  
Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Over the next two days, take day and night walks, enhancing our opportunities to capture the untamed beauty of this natural masterpiece through our lenses and eyes.



Malagasy Paradise Flycatcher  
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### May 3 ~ Return to Tana

Following an early breakfast, drive back to the city of Diego Suarez. Depending on your flight schedule, you may explore the surroundings of Antsiranana and the commanding Montagne des Français overseeing the expansive Bay of Diego and its iconic loaf-shaped rock. This mountain is adorned with remarkable plant life, featuring the strictly endemic Suarez's baobab and the region's native aloe. After the flight back to Tana, check into the hotel, and then explore the oasis garden Ramsar site of Tsarasaotra Bird Park. This 27-hectare haven of peace nestled amidst the bustling city of Tana continues to offer high-class birdwatching opportunities.

### May 4 – 6 ~ Berenty Reserve

With another an early morning departure, board a flight to Fort-Dauphin, and upon arrival, your journey takes you directly towards the remarkable Berenty Reserve. The drive unfolds unbelievable life and nature scenery with 60 miles of ever-changing vegetation. As you approach the mighty Mandrare River and its expansive sisal plantation, the varying landscape guides you to Berenty, the distinctive home of the dancing lemur.

Lemurs abound here; their curious eyes follow your every move. The Berenty Lodge boasts an unparalleled location at the heart of the lemurs' habitat. The reserve encompasses two primary forest habitats: one

featuring one of the country's few remaining tamarind gallery forests and the other showcasing the native spiny forest. Home to five different lemur species, including the energetic dancing sifaka and the globally renowned ring-tailed lemur, Berenty provides the ideal setting for spectacular lemur photography.

Imagine day walks within the gallery forest and night excursions through the spiny forest where lemurs skillfully navigate from tree to tree. Renowned for its diverse birdlife, yet the richness extends beyond animals and plants; the local Antandroy people, inhabitants of the spiny bushes, hold incredible life stories and traditions they are eager to share. Their presence is a testament to the harmonious coexistence of nature and humanity, illustrating a perfect balance between socio-economic survival and nature conservation.



Dancing Sifaka Lemur  
Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

### **May 7 – 8 ~ Andohahela National Park and Taolagnaro**

Embarking on an early morning departure, you will savor the sunrise by the Mandrare River bridge. The progressing sunlight paints a mesmerizing scene as life unfolds along the riverbanks. Continuing off-road, your journey takes you to Anony Lake, surrounded by spectacular sand dunes hosting groups of pink flamingos and various water birds, creating a picturesque landscape.

The region between the Anosy (seashore) and the Androy (land of spikes) unfolds a dramatic panorama, featuring cliff-ranged rainforest mountains, dense spiny bushes, spiny forest, and transitional forests. Your exploration continues with a walk within the Andohahela National Park, where you will encounter

the Ankazofotsy forest and its blooming pachypodium, towering triangle palms, and nocturnal lemurs nestled in their tree holes.

Driving back to the beautiful city of Fort-Dauphin, you should arrive by sunset. The discovery of Taolagnaro and its historical remnants proves fascinating with the port city preserving volumes of books reflecting Madagascar's precolonial life. A visit to the Anosy Museum in the military camp offers a delightful contrast to a half-day nature retreat at Nahampoana Private Reserve. Nahampoana warmly embraces visitors in a haven of healthy lemurs thriving in their natural habitat presenting an opportunity to expand our wildlife list on this journey, encountering the elusive collared-brown lemur and the southeastern bamboo lemur.

### **May 9 – 12 ~ Andasibe Rain Forest**

You depart the southeastern part of Madagascar and its awe-inspiring Anosy cliff-range mountains and fly back to Antananarivo to proceed directly towards the lush eastern forest. The drive along winding hilly roads is not just scenic, it unveils the absorbing livelihoods of the central highlanders, showcasing their agricultural plots and livestock. It's also an opportunity to witness the ongoing challenges faced by Madagascar's biodiversity in the face of anthropic actions. Depending on the domestic flight schedule and road



Antimena Chameleon

conditions, you may make a high-interest stop at the captivating reptile park of Peyreiras. This sanctuary offers a close-up encounter with species that are challenging to find in the wild. Reptile and amphibian enthusiasts will discover a paradise with the world's largest chameleon and the world's largest moth.

Continuing the road drive, you head towards the Andasibe Forest and settle into the hotel. What better way to conclude this Madagascar nature adventure than in its most renowned rainforest? You spend four days and four nights enjoying the symphony of the rainforest.

Andasibe is an award-winning rainforest teeming with natural wonders for passionate wildlife enthusiasts, captivating with its diverse fauna and flora, offering a variety of hikes. Renowned for its special reserve of indri, the star inhabitant with its large white and black body and haunting call that resonates through the entire forest. Over these four days, you explore at least four different parks and reserves in the area, adding layers to your wildlife curiosity.

Mantadia National Park features diverse wild and pristine lodges, allowing you to observe the same species of lemurs in different habitats. This exploration also provides opportunities to discover more species of reptiles, amphibians, birds, and beyond. With the VOI community-based park offering an intriguing forest nightwalk, and the Vakona private reserve with its "Lemur Island," you'll be thoroughly immersed in the field of biodiversity.

#### May 13 ~ Back to Antananarivo

After a final morning listening to the rainforest, return to Antananarivo.

#### May 14 ~ Depart for home

#### May 15 ~ Arrive home

### COSTS (all costs are in US Dollars)

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#### Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$12,750
Single Supplement	\$1,452

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 try to find a roommate for you, but if we cannot pair you with 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	\$1000
Final	October 23, 2024	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**

- Carbon offsets for the duration of this trip.
- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Four internal flights.
- Accommodations (double occupancy) for the nights of April 25 through May 13.
- Meals from breakfast on April 26 through breakfast on May 13.
- Transfers on April 25 and May 13 between your lodging and the Antananarivo airport.
- Gratuities for hotels, restaurants, park and reserves, and local guides
- Trip Planning Materials – information about entry requirements, flights, packing, gratuities, etc.

### **Not Included**

- Carbon offsets for your flights to/from this trip.
- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Round-trip airfare is approximately \$1500 to \$2000 between the US and Antananarivo .
- Passport and visa fees.
- COVID tests.
- Divergent airport transfers (arranged by us) and extra hotel nights.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$25 to \$30 per participant per day for 19 days for your main Malagasy tour leader (about \$475 to \$570 total per participant) plus \$15 to \$20 per day for 19 days for your driver (about \$285 to \$380).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Traveler Form.

## **SIGN UP**

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

[Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris](#)

Email: [info@cheesemans.com](mailto:info@cheesemans.com)

WhatsApp: (408) 741-5330 | Skype: CheesemansEcologySafaris

Phone: (800) 527-5330 or (408) 741-5330



## OTHER DETAILS

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### Climate

Late April/May marks the beginning of the dryer season. Afternoons are pleasant with temperatures reaching reaching 24°C/75°F, but evenings and early mornings are cooler with temperatures around 13°C/55°F.

### 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; locating 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 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.

### Flights

Detailed logistical information is included in the Trip Planning Materials we will send you.

#### Flights you book

- Arrive in Antananarivo, Madagascar (TNR) by 11:59pm on April 25.
- Depart from Antananarivo, Madagascar (TNR) after 10:00am on May 14.

#### Flights we book

- Four internal flights are included in the trip cost.

### Terms and Conditions

Read our current [Terms and Conditions](#).

### Conservation

Our company ethos has always regarded conservation as inseparable from responsible tourism. We struggle with the dilemma that traveling worldwide expends climate-changing carbon. However, we wholeheartedly believe that traveling with us will cultivate your passion for conserving our beautiful world while stimulating each destination's local economy. We encourage you to explore the various ways in which Cheesemans' operates within this context:

- **Ecotourism and Conservation [Madagascar](#).**
- **Cheesemans' Trips are [Carbon Neutral](#).**
- **Offsetting your Travel to/from our Trip:** We ask you to pledge to offset the carbon emissions for your travel to and from our trips. You can purchase offsets with most airlines (Delta includes them automatically), use our handy [carbon calculator](#) and donate to Sustainable Travel International or to an organization of your choice.