Madagascar is called the “Red Island” for its ochre-colored soil, but it could easily be “blue” for its coastal waters, “green” for its lush forests, and any color of the rainbow for the unique flora and fauna that exist only here. You’ll discover all this as well as the traditions of the Malagasy, the world’s only Afro-Asian culture. Our adventure takes us to national parks, arboretums and forest stations where lemurs, chameleons, and flying foxes inhabit one of the world’s most fascinating biodiversity hotspots! Join Cal Discoveries Travel as we discover the “8th continent” together.

Why Madagascar? 70% of its 200,000 species are found nowhere else on the planet. Unique to the island are more than 50 types of lemurs, 99% of its frog species, and 36 genera of birds.
What to expect: This tour features longer touring days and many full-day excursions, plus full, active itineraries that move at a faster pace to cover longer distances. Travelers are required to stand and walk over uneven terrain for extended periods of time, and should be comfortable at higher altitudes with steep ascents and descents. Outings last more than 6 hours each day. This program is suitable for travelers who are able to comfortably walk six to eight miles, or 9,200–11,500 steps, each day.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit Lemur Island, a sanctuary for rescued lemurs with opportunities to interact with and photograph these playful creatures.
- Go for a hike amid the sandstone canyons and waterfalls of Isalo National Park.
- Embark on a glass-bottom boat to the Massif des Roses reef, with the chance to go snorkeling amid the coral.
- Explore a diversity of ecosystems to get a glimpse of Madagascar’s unique flora and fauna, like lemurs, tree frogs, flying foxes, chameleons, corals, baobabs, spiny forest, and more.
- Discover the sacred royal village of Ambohimanga, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
DAY 1, AUG. 4 – DEPART U.S.
Depart the U.S. for Madagascar.

DAY 2, AUG. 5 – ANTANANARIVO
Arrive in Antananarivo, Madagascar on a late-night flight. After clearing immigration and customs, and exchanging money at the airport, meet your local guide and transfer to the hotel. Check in and rest after the long flight. * We recommend considering a stopover in Paris en route to rest or coming in a day early to rest. Overnight at Royal Palissandre & Spa. (BLD)

DAY 3, AUG. 6 – ANTANANARIVO
This morning is at leisure to rest. This afternoon, enjoy a welcome lunch and program orientation. In the evening, have dinner at a local restaurant, then attend a lecture titled “An Introduction to Madagascar.” Overnight at Royal Palissandre & Spa. (BLD)

DAY 4, AUG. 7 – ANDASIBE
This morning have a leisurely breakfast and then depart to Andasibe. Upon arrival at the hotel, check in and have lunch. After lunch visit Lemur Island. Lemur Island, established by Vakona Lodge, was created to provide sanctuary for displaced lemurs that were former pets and not suited for reintroduction into the wild. The lemurs are isolated on the island and accustomed to human visitors, which offers guests the unique opportunity to interact and be photographed with them. This evening, enjoy dinner overlooking the Madagascan rainforest. Overnight at Vakona Forest Lodge. (BLD)

DAY 5, AUG. 8 – ANDASIBE
Rise early for breakfast and a full-day exploration of the Analamazaotra Reserve in Andasibe-Mantadia National Park. The primary forests of Andasibe-Mantadia contain a dense humid forest covered with lianas, moss, fern
trees, and more than 100 orchid species. Conservation of the forest is a critical challenge in this region due to the graphite mines inside the park; we will discuss conservation initiatives as they relate to natural resources. Later today, take an evening walk in the Mitsinjo Analamazaotra Forest Station, a community-managed protected area, to look for nocturnal species of lemurs and tree frogs such as the locally endemic Goodman’s mouse lemur, furry-eared dwarf lemur, hairy-eared dwarf lemur, leaf-tailed geckos, as well as tree frogs *Boophis viridis* and *Boophis pyrrhus*. Overnight at Vakona Forest Lodge. (BLD)

**DAY 6, AUG. 9 – ANDASIBE**
This morning, have breakfast while listening to the peculiar call of the endangered Indri, the largest living lemur—some reach up to three feet tall! Andasibe-Mantadia National Park is an ideal place to observe the Indri, as there are some Indri families there that have been habituated to humans. Considered a sacred animal in Madagascar, the Indri is the focus of several myths. In addition to the Indri, 13 lemur species can also be seen at Andasibe-Mantadia, including the woody lemur, grey bamboo lemur, diademed sifaka, brown lemur, red mouse lemur, red-bellied lemur, black-and-white ruffed lemur, and aye-aye. These forests are also home to 15 other mammal species, more than 100 types of birds, 50 species of reptiles, and 80 amphibian species. Overnight at Vakona Forest Lodge. (BLD)

**DAY 7, AUG. 10 – ANTANANARIVO**
After breakfast, check out of the hotel, transfer to the central part of Antananarivo and have dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Relais des Plateaux. (BLD)

**DAY 8, AUG. 11 – TOLIARA**
Transfer to the airport for flight to Toliara, situated near the Tropic of Capricorn. Upon arrival, visit the Arboretum of Antsokay for a look at its more than 900 plant species, 90% of which are endemic to Madagascar. Enjoy lunch at the arboretum. This afternoon have a lecture on Madagascar’s unique spiny forest, a highly endemic ecoregion that surrounds Toliara, only in the southwestern part of the country. Transfer to hotel and enjoy time to relax before dinner. Overnight at Moringa Hotel. (BLD)

**DAY 9, AUG. 12 – ISALO**
After breakfast, head to Madagascar’s most-visited park: Isalo. En route, make a stop at Zombitse National Park and enjoy a picnic lunch. Zombitse is notable for its location in a transition zone between spiny forest and dry woodland regions. It is also classified as an Important Bird Area, with 38 endemic species known to the park. Arrive at the hotel in Isalo, check in and have dinner, then relax in anticipation of the national park’s beautiful sandstone landscapes. Overnight at Le Relais de la Reine. (BLD)

**DAY 10, AUG. 13 – ISALO**
Spend the day exploring Isalo National Park, a continental sandstone plateau dating to Jurassic times. This trek is across varied landscapes with different forms of sandstones, dotted with the famous dwarf baobab. After an hour walk with short climbs, stop to rest in a spectacular valley with beautiful views. The overlook shows miles of azure sky, rocky desert, and winding greenery. Trek to a white-sand natural pool. Go for a swim, then hike back to the starting point. Transfer back to the hotel for a sundowner, then dinner. Overnight at Le Relais de la Reine. (BLD)

**DAY 11, AUG. 14 – IFATY**
Early this morning, return to Isalo National Park for a half-day exploration before lunch. After lunch, check out of the hotel and drive to the seaside town of Ifaty. After check-in, have time to relax, followed by dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Le Paradisier. (BLD)
DAY 12, AUG. 15 – IFATY
This morning, embark on a glass-bottom boat to the Massif des Roses (“Rose Garden”) snorkeling site. Rose Garden is a patch reef approximately 1.8 miles from shore. Just 20 feet to a sandy bottom and six feet to the top of the reef, Rose Garden takes its name from the rose-shaped coral (Montipora), the primary inhabitant of the reef. Other prominent coral colonies include mushroom-shaped coral (Fungia) and table corals (Acropora); the reef is also home to over 100 species of fish, as well as lobsters, shrimp, rays, and octopus. After returning to shore, have the remainder of the day at leisure to enjoy the beach. Overnight at Le Paradisier. (BLD)

DAY 13, AUG. 16 – IFATY
Rise early for a special sunrise walk in Reniala Private Reserve, managed by a local environmental association working to develop ecotourism in the area. Hike some of the trails to explore the spiny forest, a unique ecosystem which only occurs in the southwest Madagascar. The reserve contains more than 2,000 plant species, as well as impressively old baobabs—including one that is 41 feet in diameter. There are also 65 species of birds; rare endemics such as the Red-capped Coua and the Blue Vanga can easily be seen. Return to the hotel for a late breakfast, and explore the beach or hotel amenities. This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner under the baobab trees. Overnight at Le Paradisier. (BLD)

DAY 14, AUG. 17 – ANTANANARIVO
This morning after breakfast transfer back to Toliara for flight to Antananarivo. Upon arrival, drive to Ambohimanga Royal Hill, a hilltop fortress and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore the palace dwellings and learn about the heritage of Madagascar. Have a typical, family-style lunch at an open-air restaurant where the meal will be accompanied by the singing and dancing of a local dance troupe. Overnight at Relais Des Plateaux. (BLD)

DAY 15, AUG. 18 – DEPART
Today is a departure day. For those interested, visit Lemurs Park, a rescue and rehabilitation center for lemurs. Return to hotel to pack. Dinner included at the hotel. This evening, transfer to the airport for flights back to the U.S. Day room at Relais Des Plateaux. (BD)

DAY 16, AUG. 19 – ARRIVE U.S.
Arrive home in the U.S.

PRICING

$7,695 per person

Price is based on double occupancy with 10 participants. Single occupancy offered at additional cost of $995 per person.

Your price includes:

• Internal airfare (roundtrip Antananarivo - Toliara)
• 13 nights’ accommodations + 1 day room
• 38 meals (13 breakfasts, 12 lunches, 13 dinners)
• Non-alcoholic beverages with meals; exempt one wine or beer at welcome and farewell meals
• Sightseeing and activities as described, including entrance fees
• Full time guide for duration of program
• All tips and gratuities
• Private vehicle transportation throughout program
• Luggage handling, one bag per person
• Bottled water on the bus
• Carbon offset
• Departure tax

Price does not include: international airfare, passport or visa fees, trip cancellation insurance, gratuities for hotel housekeeping staff, drinks purchased on own, or items of a personal nature.

Holbrook Travel can assist with making your flight arrangements upon request. Trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended and will be sent to you by Cal Discoveries Travel with your reservation confirmation. To research further please visit travelinsurance.com/calalumni