

# Mysterious

## MADAGASCAR



**TRAVEL CLUB**  
*travel without judgement*

**15 DAYS | 14 NIGHTS**  
**7 - 21 JUNE 2025**

HI THERE  CLUBBERS!

## MYSTERIOUS MADAGASCAR - UNLIKE ANY OTHER PLACE ON THE PLANET

Madagascar, the fourth largest Island in the world broke away from India some 90 million years ago and is accredited to being one of the world's top destinations to see large numbers of endemic plants and animals, due to its continuous isolation. It is known as one of the world's 17 megadiverse countries, with over 90% of wildlife being endemic. This isolation is also accredited to the rich spiritual history that still holds strong in the locals lives today.

This fascinating country has a unique biodiversity with many awesome National Parks protecting both the extraordinary wildlife and their natural habitats. The kaleidoscope of people and culture in this country is evident with the 20 different ethnic groups that call the island home.

Madagascar is the only place in the world where you can see the famous Lemur, Fossa, and Tenrec in the wild. There are over 100 species of Lemur, all different and captivating in their own unique way. They can be described as cute, graceful, loud, and weird. There are 346 reptile species in Madagascar including most of the worlds chameleons, ranging from the largest – Parson's Chameleon (60cm) to the smallest – Dwarf Brookesia (which fits on your thumbnail). Wait until you see just how great they are at camouflage with their many technicolour skills. On top of this the birdlife here is also truly striking.

It is not just the animals but also the 10,000 or more plant species that have been documented on the island, and more than 90% of those are believed to be endemic. Of this there are approximately 850 orchids considered endemic as well.

The Malagasy people enjoy a fantastic fusion style cuisine with influences from several different countries. The freshness is evident in all their traditional dishes. The tropical twist along with their main staple of Zebu meat and rice is also unique to this amazing country. Vegetables are in abundance and the colour and aroma certainly creates a healthy appetite.



G&T's 'Mysterious Madagascar' 15-day tour has been designed with much thought put into all that this fabulous country has to offer. This country has so many different aspects including the people, the fascinating landform, the unique wildlife, and amazing birdlife all sharing several unique eco systems that blend to make a destination like no other.

Madagascar is renowned for some very poor road conditions that can suck up a lot of your precious travel time. There is still a lack of modern world infrastructure, and daily processes are far different to what we are used to. However, we believe that this is why us 'adventurous types' do travel. For these reasons we have been very careful to choose the right flow to our itinerary to create a cloverleaf design that has this tour branching off in different directions to get the best experiences without having to smash along those very rough and unfinished roads. We are basing ourselves in Antananarivo (the Capital also known as 'Tana' for short).

From here our first adventure heads East where we are introduced to the famous endemic furry Lemurs and a great selection of small and intimate National Parks that we are able walk within and enjoy the landscape. We will then return to 'Tana' for 1 night to prepare for adventure number 2 which takes us by flight off to the West Coast where we get to meet the beautiful people and explore a truly different region with new and exciting elements to enjoy. Once we have explored this region, we take a short flight back to 'Tana' and regroup before flying to the South where we immerse ourselves into the 'Jurassic' Isalo National Park and discover more about this mystical country.

By design this will give you the complete experience including the best of the people, the culture, the history, the stories, the flora, the fauna along with the spectacular and very diverse landform. June is a great time to visit as the weather is comfortable and not extreme.

This is the perfect tour for those who like to be active, who love photography, who enjoy nature, and the outdoors. There will be a different adventure every day where we will be able to see 'in the wild' some wildlife that lives nowhere else in the world.



## HOW WE DIFFER

The following are some of the considerations we made, while developing this Madagascan programme.



1. G&T always develop an **exciting itinerary** with natural flow to maximise our time and experience. We choose our tour dates with regard for the best possible weather and less crowds. Importance for Madagascar was given to the size of the island. **We have decided to take advantage of some domestic internal flights** this time, because some of the roads are extremely rough and waste a lot of our precious adventure time.
2. **In typical 'G&T' style we have discovered some fantastic hotels, lodges and resorts that will be an additional highlight within the itinerary.** The location, style, and proximity to the action will be evident. We are using 2 different hotels in 'Tana' which works great with our sightseeing and free time given. Our lodges and resorts are all excellent boutique style and are located either beach front, mountain facing or right within the forest. All places have great facilities that add to the tour as you can either relax and enjoy during your free time or easily wander around the local area.
3. **The food** has evolved through some very interesting influences throughout the eras. We will be able to sample the local cuisine along with a blend of European and Asian fusion. Where the food is best where we stay, we have included it as full board. Where we want to break out and experience the local options, we have left it to decide on the day.
4. **G&T always host every Club Tour.** This gives you something no one else can match. We will be with you the entire time, assisting with your needs and looking after you personally. On top of that we will always employ our own National Tour Guides along with localised city guides to better understand the local areas.
5. G&T most importantly make sure that the product is '**Great Value**'. Not necessarily the cheapest but well worth the few extra dollars to ensure an amazing experience!
6. G&T always design a tour program with the Clubbers in mind. The concept of the Club remains the same and that is, our Club is **invite only and not open to the general public.** Clubbers are always encouraged to bring along their immediate family and or friends as we feel that they too will be a good fit for the G&T Travel Club.

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## Day 1 ARRIVAL AT THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT OF ANTANANARIVO - IVATO.

**After the formalities of getting your visa, collecting your bags, passing through customs etc.** (this can take about 30 minutes to one hour), you will be met by the local guide. The guide will help you to change money to the local currency – Ariary (MGA) to use during your stay (MGA is not available outside of the country). **You will then be transferred to our hotel which is situated in the centre of Antananarivo** (the transfer can take 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on the traffic).

**NB:** G&T will be flying with Air Mauritius ex Perth and will be taking advantage of the 3 night stopover that is required to get the best connections. Mauritius is a great destination in itself and a 3 night stop is perfect. These flights arrive on Day 1 and depart on Day 15 with a great connection on the return.

**NB :** A Pre-departure meeting will be held this afternoon at the hotel at approximately 6.00pm.

**Meals Included:** None

**Overnight:** Radisson Blu Waterfront (or similar)

## Day 2 CITY SIGHTSEEING IN ANTANANARIVO

Today after a delicious breakfast we will **discover the fascinating city of Antananarivo 'Tana'**. We will first visit the **Musee de la Photo**. It was only opened in 2018 and it is proving to be an excellent addition to Madagascar's developing cultural scene. Afterwards we will head up to the **Rova of Antananarivo, Tana's fortified Palace also known as Manjakamiadana** (a fine place to rule). This royal complex served as the home of the sovereigns of the Kingdom of Imerina in the 17th and 18th century, and again for the rulers of the Kingdom of Madagascar in the 19th Century. **The Rova occupies the highest point surrounding the city** and offers great views of the sprawling city below. This is also the resting place of some of the country's greatest monarchs. We will also see the **Queens Palace and her church**.

After lunch you may wish to check out the **local market scene or relax back at the hotel**. Tonight, you may wish to join G&T for dinner at a great local restaurant or simply dine 'in house'.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

**Overnight:** Radisson Blu Waterfront (or similar)



## Day 3 ANTANANARIVO – ANDASIBE

After breakfast, our adventure begins. We will leave the city behind and **drive to the eastern part of Madagascar, to reach the region of Andasibe** where several small and spectacular National Parks and Private Forest Reserves meet.

**NB:** Some larger National Parks require an extra 3 days to be added to the itinerary and with the added size of these parks the wildlife is harder to spot.

**We have chosen our National Parks because they are smaller, and therefore it makes the wildlife more concentrated for the area.**

With stops along the scenic way the beauty, the diversity, and the surprising resistance to change will be very evident today with the lush rice paddy fields and local Merina villages. As many **Malagasy people primarily inhabit the central plateau of Madagascar, we will be able to witness village life along the way.**

**Our beautiful Lodge for the next 2 nights is where luxury meets nature,** a perfect way to start our wildlife adventure. Once checked in we will enjoy lunch at the lodge then we will **prepare for our afternoon wildlife expedition.**



We'll head to **Lemur Island in Vakona Private Reserve** first, where we can expect to **see at least 5 different species of the curious Lemur.** The Lemur here have been introduced therefore this is a great way to recognise and learn about all the different species. Amongst them are the **Diademed Sifaka, Red Ruffed, Black & White Ruffed Lemurs, Eastern Grey, and Common Brown.** Be ready for some great photo opportunities as there are **many unusual bird species** as well as the entertaining Lemurs.

We will head back to our lodge and freshen up for dinner and then once it is dark we will **discover the nocturnal animals on our fun evening walk.** We may see the **Goodman Mouse Lemur or the cute Dwarf Lemur.** Make sure you have your head torch handy; we may also spot one of the **smallest chameleons, or the nocturnal Scop's Owl.**

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Mantadia Lodge (or similar)



## Day 4 MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK

This morning after breakfast we will **take a picnic lunch with us and head across to Mantadia National Park**. From the hotel we drive on a 4WD track through a picturesque region to reach the park gate (1.5hrs). The access to the park then is **on foot as we will be following the walking trail in search of the native wildlife, (this time in the wild)**. It is necessary to get off the trail here with 'a little up and a little down' to find the wildlife. Since Lemur Island yesterday you should know exactly what to look for. We'll have the chance to spot some species such as the **Diademed Sifaka, Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemur and the Black and White Ruffed Lemur**.

Mantadia NP is also home to some spectacular ground dwelling birds such as the **Pitta-like Ground Roller, Short Legged Ground Roller, Blue Coua, Paradise Fly Catcher** just to name a few. This will be a nature lover and birdwatchers treat. The plant life in Madagascar is also varied and many endemic species are truly amazing.

As lunchtime approaches, we will be nearby **a lovely natural waterhole where we will take a break** and enjoy our packed picnic lunch.



After this expedition we will drive back to the lodge with a **small detour through the village to see the people's daily life**. Arriving back at our lodge you can **chill out and relax or utilise the Herbal Spa facility or enjoy the infinity swimming pool**.

Because the night walks are so much fun, we have time to head out again for an **evening walk**. This time you may be lucky to see the **Brookesia (the smallest Chameleon), Parson's Chameleon or the Leaf tailed Gecko or even the small toothed sportive Lemur**. **The Scops Owl** should be active tonight as well.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Mantadia Lodge (or similar)



## Day 5 ANALAMAZAOTRA NATIONAL PARK – ANTANANARIVO

This morning after breakfast we will take a very short drive to the **Analamazaotra National Park** gate. Here we embark on an enjoyable 3-4hr walking loop at a very gentle pace in search for the **Eastern Woolly and Red Bellied Lemurs, and the Common Brown Lemurs.**

This Park is also the home of the **Indri, the largest living Lemur**, famous for its haunting call. You will be amazed at their large and strong primate-like hands. Be sure to have your cameras handy.

This National Park is home to many **endemic birds and is a great place for birdwatching too.** If there are birdwatchers in the group, you will be very happy with the number of different species. The park also is a shelter for more than **100 species of orchids, and different endemic medicinal herbs,** and a good place for botanical interest.

After this expedition, we head back to the lodge for a well earned lunch. **After lunch we drive back to Antananarivo** to regroup before heading off in a completely different direction the next day.

We should be checked into our hotel in 'Tana' by late afternoon and once again you can choose to dine in or join Gools and Thommo at a local restaurant.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Novotel (or similar)



## Day 6 FLIGHT: ANTANANARIVO – MORONDAVA

Today after a leisurely breakfast there is a little free time before we **fly west to the unique and very different west coast where we enjoy a 3-night stop in the township of Morondava.** This little laid back seaside town is a real charmer. You'll witness the local life in true **Malagasy style on the coast.**

We will check in to our traditional Bungalows and have a **free afternoon at leisure.** Lunch will be at the hotel. After lunch you may wish to take a **stroll along the beach or if you prefer, take a dip in the pool.** It is possible to grab a tuk tuk (local transportation) and head to the centre of town to immerse yourself in the local culture. **We do suggest taking a local guide.**

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Palissandre Cote Ouest (or similar)



## Day 7 KIRINDY EXCURSION

After breakfast, this morning we drive about 60km north of Morondava where we can access and explore the special **Kirindy Reserve**. We will pass through the '**Avenue of Baobabs**' where the Baobab trees stand proud as if to salute the traffic on the road. This privately managed reserve is one of the **most outstanding and highly threatened wildlife habitats in Madagascar**. This dry deciduous forest has sadly been reduced to just 3 percent of its original size. However, we can still expect to see the **giant jumping rat along with several endemic reptiles**.

**The flora here is equally unusual and several unique species are only found here in Kirindy.**

Dominated by majestic Baobab trees and the fine forest canopy, this reserve is a magical experience.

Here we can expect to see the **Verreaux's Sifaka, Red Fronted Brown and Red-Tailed Sportive Lemurs**. Make sure you keep your eye out for the amazing tortoises and the **elusive Fossa** (a long tailed, cat like mammal).



Also, if lucky you may find the **Mme Berthe' mouse Lemur**, named after the conservationist and primatologist Berthe Rasamimanana. **It is the most endangered and smallest Lemur in this habitat**. We may have a picnic lunch today or we may choose to eat at a local restaurant in the Reserve.

In the afternoon we will drive back to Morondava passing through the famous '**Avenue of Baobabs**'. **This time stopping to enjoy the incredible sunset**. For many this is the first image that pops up when people talk about visiting Madagascar.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Palissandre Cote Ouest (or similar)



## Day 8 MORONDAVA DAY AT LEISURE

**This beautiful little village is a photographers' dream** with many palm trees and Baobabs shading the local fisherman and their fishing nets. The simple lifestyle here is refreshing and the smiles on people's faces are ones to be remembered. **A relaxed day today will allow you time to wander and interact with the locals as they go about their daily lives.**

You can visit the **CEM centre** where local craftsmen and women are performing their daily works of art. Some are disabled and have been given the opportunity to be helped and trained to develop their skills. **You may wish to buy some of the handicraft direct from the artists.**

It is also possible to organize a short visit to the **Betania village**. Betania is a fishing village where you can see the fishermen and their families living their daily life.

### **Lunch today is organized for the Baobab Café**

(a short walk from the hotel) as it has a nice view of the nearby lagoon and overlooking the mangroves.

**Dinner tonight is included at our resort**, however if you wish, you may want to go independent and choose one of the many small local restaurants nearby and enjoy a lovely sunset dinner in the village.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Palissandre Cote Ouest (or similar)



## Day 9 MORONDAVA – ANTANANARIVO FLIGHT (13:50-15:00)

This morning you may wish to rise early and enjoy a stroll before breakfast as **breakfast today can be leisurely**. You can even enjoy a swim in the pool before our **11.00am transfer to the airport** (schedules subject to change).

We will take a packed lunch today as we **fly back to Antananarivo** to again regroup before heading off in a different direction again and this time to the south. **This afternoon you'll have time to relax** at the hotel in 'Tana'.

Tonight, you may wish to join G&T for dinner at Le Marais, one of the famous restaurants in the city.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast and Lunch

**Overnight:** Novotel (or similar)



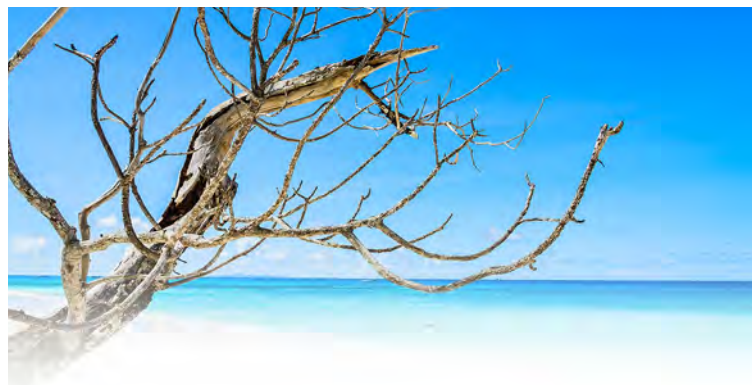
## Day 10 ANTANANARIVO – TULEAR FLIGHT (12:10-14:05) THEN DRIVE TO IFATY

This morning after a little lay in and breakfast we will **transfer to the airport, then fly to the southern part of the island** where our adventure takes yet another twist. **We fly into the main city of Tulear** (Toliara), where the first thing you notice is the variety of local transport. There will be a mixture of cycle rickshaws, oxcarts, tuk tuks and the many rural farm utes.

Upon arrival, we head into the centre of town and have **lunch at Etoile de Mer restaurant** then we will visit the local shell market before **transferring to the coastal village of Ifaty**. Once checked to our seaside villas for the night **the afternoon is yours to decide what and where to explore**.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Les Dunes d'Ifaty (or similar)



## Day 11 IFATY - ISALO

Today we will have an early breakfast before our **morning expedition into the Reniala Spiny Forest**.

The nearby forest is full of many different tree species including the **spectacular Baobab trees**.

They will be seen along the main trail, as we walk and learn about the local flora and fauna. This forest is a great spot to locate the **Long-tailed Ground Roller** and other interesting bird species such as the **Green Capped Coua**. **Geckos and Warty Chameleons** can also be spotted in the forest. Afterwards we will head back to the hotel, check out and collect our packed lunch and **continue our drive onto Tulear**.

We will stop at the **Tsinjorieake Reserve** where we'll find a nice spot for lunch. We will see the **Mahafaly tombs** on the way and may be able to see the **local Malagasy Rum making process** as we pass through some small local villages. Later on, we will make our way to the **mining town of Ilakaka**, a true little boom town and home to one of the world's largest known **alluvial Sapphire deposits**. It feels like Madagascar's wild west. Later in the afternoon, we will arrive at Isalo.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Isalo Rock Lodge (or similar)



## Day 12 ISALO NATIONAL PARK

**Isalo National Park** is the country's most popular nature destination. **This 'Grand Canyon' of Madagascar is breathtaking!** It lies amidst the Jurassic-era highlands of the country's southwest and **protects over 190,000 acres of land** dominated by a dramatic sandstone massif that has been eroded by time and weather into another worldly collection of **plateaus, canyons, gorges, and pinnacles**. Iron and mineral deposits stain the rock formations in a rainbow of colours. It does resemble the Kimberley Bungle Bungles a bit! The dense forests and grassland plains that surround the massif are teeming with unique flora and fauna. **Today you will have a full day exploration in the Isalo National Park.**

After a hearty breakfast we will drive to the village of **Ranohira** where we will meet up with our local walking guide. From here we will drive to the park and start our walk inside the park gate. We head off on a gentle slope for about 3kms to the 'tombs' then the trail flattens out as we approach the **beautiful natural 'Pool of Namazaha'**.

**After a refreshing swim in the crystal-clear water,** we will continue along the trail with a 'little up and a little down' to where we will rest and enjoy our lunch. It is a medium level walk today that can be as slow as you need it to be. Who knows, we could even share the trail with some **inquisitive dancing Lemurs!**

Apart from Lemurs there are up to **80 bird species of which 27 are endemic to Madagascar**. **Isalo's plant life is equally unique** and therefore there is something for everyone.

**Lunch today is a fantastic 3 course meal with a starter, main and dessert.** A great way to finish off our walk. With our tummies full we will make our way back to the Lodge with some time to relax and enjoy the vista from the terrace. Later in the afternoon we will take the short drive to the **'Window of Isalo' for the perfect postcard sunset experience** to complete the day.

**Sundowner anybody?** Here, we will bring some local soft drinks, local rum etc and enjoy a cocktail or mocktail as the sun sets for the day.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Isalo Rock Lodge (or similar)



## Day 13 ISALO - TULEAR - IFATY

Today, after breakfast, **we return to Ifaty** where we will have lunch at the hotel on arrival. After lunch we will **meet the Vezo people and enjoy an afternoon excursion by canoe to one of their local villages.**

The Vezo people are semi-nomadic and mostly fishermen. They still manufacture their own canoes to ensure they keep their ancestors' technique alive.

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

**Overnight:** Les Dunes d'ifaty (or similar)

## Day 14 TULEAR – ANTANANARIVO FLIGHT (14:40- 16:30)

Enjoy a sleep in and a morning at leisure then lunch at the hotel before our **transfer to Tulear airport.**

**We then fly back to Antananarivo.**

On arrival there will be time for you to relax before we head out to our **G&T Farewell Gala Dinner.**

**Meals Included:** Breakfast and Lunch

**Overnight:** Radisson Blu Waterfront (or similar)

## Day 15 DEPART ANTANANARIVO

Most flights depart in the afternoon. **So, after breakfast we have time for one last adventure.**

We will start with a short drive to the historical **Royal Hill of Ambohimanga** (blue hill or beautiful hill). The Royal Hill of Ambohimanga, also called the 'Rova of Ambohimanga' is an exceptional insight into the civilization's past. The Central Highlands of Madagascar between the 15th and 19th Centuries practiced many interesting cultural and spiritual traditions. We will learn about the cult of the Kings and the Queens and their ancestors.

**This Royal Hill and the Queens's summer palace is UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE listed.** Seven stone gates were built to protect the defensive wall then another seven gates were built to protect the main Royal village. The palaces and royal tombs combine both Malagasy and European architectural styles. **Even today it is still a place of pilgrimage for the local population who still worship their Kings and their ancestors.** They come to seek the protection and good fortune from the royal spirits.

The hill is also home to the sacred groves, a sacred lake, and all are surrounded by stunning agricultural terraces. After we have explored the Royal Blue Hill, we will drive back down the hill and head to the **Relais des Plateaux restaurant** where we can have some lunch (at own expense) **before heading to the airport for your flight home.**

**Meals Included:** Breakfast

