

## Madagascar East & West

*Pangalanes Canal, Kirindy Forest, Andasibe-Mantadia, Antananarivo*



*Explore the contrasting sights and sounds of Madagascar's eastern and western coastlines on this 13-day journey beginning and ending in Antananarivo.*

*The East & West coasts of Madagascar provide a dramatic contrast. While the East Coast receives plentiful rainfall and is defined by its lakes and canals, which sustain a lifestyle and economy that revolves around fishing and trade, the West Coast has a much drier climate and is notable for its vast forest reserves as well as its beautiful beaches. This is where you will find the famous Avenue of the Baobabs, Tsingy forests, and the magnificent Fossa.*

*Our Madagascar East & West itinerary takes in the best that both coastlines have to offer.*

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

On arrival in Tana you will be met and transferred to the Gassy House Hotel for one night (B&B basis).

### **Gassy House Hotel**

*Gassy House Hotel is located close to Ivato Airport, in a quite location overlooking the village of Ivato and surrounding rice fields. It's a small hotel, with 36 en-suite rooms, and a swimming pool set in pleasant and colourful gardens. All rooms feature internet access, en-suite bathrooms, and open onto a verandah overlooking the gardens.*

## **Day 2: Tana to Morondava**

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for the morning flight to Morondava, where you will be met on arrival by your driver-guide and transferred to Chez Maggie for one night (B&B basis).

### **Chez Maggie**

*This tranquil retreat was one of the first properties to be built on Nosy Kely, a small peninsula located just beyond Morondava. It offers spacious bungalow accommodation in a pretty garden setting.*

*Chez Maggie is west-facing with plenty of beach front.*

*Facilities at Chez Maggie include a restaurant, bar, swimming pool and laundry service, while the available activities include sea kayaking, fishing and boat transfers to Belo sur Mer.*



## **Day 3: Morondava to Kirindy**

After breakfast at Chez Maggie, depart with your driver for Kirindy, stopping en route at the iconic Avenue of Baobabs.

Arrive Kirindy this afternoon and check-in at the Relais du Kirindy for 1 night (B&B basis).

### **Relais Du Kirindy**

*Opened in 2017, Relais du Kirindy is located just outside the Kirindy Nature Reserve and is the only luxury lodge option in the region.*

*If offers accommodation in 20 bungalows, each of which opens onto a large terrace and is furnished inside with mosquito nets, fans and large double beds. The rooms are en-suite with hot running water and showers.*

*There's a large pool and terrace with loungers and an outdoor bar, overlooked by the lodge restaurant.*



In the afternoon, enjoy a leisurely walk in the Kirindy Reserve, where the wildlife viewing is generally excellent.

The 25,000-acre Kirindy Forest has the greatest density and diversity of primates in the world. It is also perhaps the best reserve in western Madagascar for seeing several of the island's endemic dry forest species.

Dominated by majestic baobab trees, the forest is home to the world's smallest known primate as well as dozens of amphibian and reptile species. The Kirindy Reserve also protects more than 60 species of bird. Birds endemic to Madagascar that are found within the reserve include the white-headed vanga, Coquerel's coua, sickle-billed vanga, cuckoo roller, Madagascar nightjar, and banded kestrel.

As well as a stunning variety of plant and bird life, the Kirindy Forest is home to eight lemur species; several species of tenrec and shrew; the narrow-striped mongoose; giant jumping rat; and the rare, magnificent fossa.



After dinner, enjoy a guided walk in search of nocturnal species and to listen to the sounds of the night. The clear skies of Kirindy also provide magnificent opportunities for star gazing.

#### **Day 4: Kirindy to Morondava**

Enjoy a morning walk in the forest before departing for Morondava, with further opportunities to stop en route and photograph the region's spectacular baobab trees. Arrive back at Chez Maggie and check-in for one night (B&B basis).

#### **Day 5: Fly Morondava to Tana**

Transfer to Morondava Airport for the morning flight to Tana, where you will be met on arrival and transferred to the Gassy House Hotel for one night (B&B basis).

#### **Day 6: Tana to Andasibe-Mantadia National Park**

After breakfast, meet with your driver-guide and depart for Andasibe. This is a drive of approx. 3 hours, taking you through the green landscape of the east. This is a humid region which, unlike the western coast of Madagascar, experiences plentiful rainfall, sustaining a landscape of vast primary forests and lakes.

Expect to arrive at Lemurs Lodge, where you stay two nights on B&B basis, early this afternoon.

#### **Lemurs Lodge**

*This attractive lodge is located close to Andasibe-Mantadia National Park. The cozy chalets, some with a seating area or balcony, offer garden views and open onto terraces. A continental breakfast is served daily, and Wifi is available throughout the property.*



**Day 7: Andasibe-Mantadia National Park**

After breakfast, venture into Andasibe-Mantadia National Park with your guide on an early morning hike.

Andasibe is a huge tropical rainforest where 9 species of lemur can be spotted. Other notable fauna and flora include chameleons, tenrecs, and a wide variety of orchid flowers.



With any luck you'll encounter Andasibe's most famous resident, the Indri Indri, or Babakoto. These are the largest lemur on Madagascar, known especially for their spectacular whooping calls. (The name "Babakoto" is derived from a local legend; it is said that one day a small boy called Koto slipped from a tall tree in the forest while trying to collect bees. He was saved and returned to his village by the forest lemurs, and from that time the Indri Indri was called "Babakoto", or father of Koto).

Adult male and females Indri Indri stay together for life, along with their young. A female Indri gives birth to a single offspring every 2-3 years. No one knows how long an Indri may live, but their lifespan is estimated to be between 25 and 40 years. Adults are from 70-90cm tall and weigh from 7-10kg.



After the hike, continue to Andasibe village, a typical Betsimisaraka settlement, for a guided tour. During the tour, you'll have the chance to learn more about the Betsimisaraka, the second largest tribe of Madagascar, whose livelihood revolves around cultivating rice and vanilla.

**Day 8: Andasibe – Ankanin'ny Nofy**

Leaving Andasibe this morning, you drive east to Manambato, a quiet village situated on the banks of Lake Rasoabe, and the gateway to the Pangalanes Canal. From Manambato, transfer by boat to the Palmarium Hotel, where you stay three nights (B&B basis).



**Palmarium Hotel**

*Situated on the shores of Lake Ampitabe, the Palmarium is a charming bungalow hotel that offers easy access to Akanin'ny Nofy (Palmarium Park) and the Pangalanes Canal.*

*Only accessible by boat, the peace and tranquillity of the Palmarium is hard to find elsewhere and the staff really go out of their way to make your stay pleasant. There are lemurs that visit the hotel regularly and, whilst not fully tame, they are a delight to watch.*

*Each of the Palmarium's 17 bungalow rooms enjoys a private veranda with hammocks and a view of the lake.*



**Day 9: Ankanin'ny Nofy**

Explore Ankanin'ny Nofy Reserve in the company of an experienced wildlife guide. This park occupies 50ha of land on Madagascar's eastern coast, bounded by Ampitabe Lake and the Indian Ocean, in the Pangalanes Canal.

During the tour, you will be able to discover the region's rich flora and fauna, including various palms, orchids and mahoganies. One of the most fascinating of the plant species found in this region is the carnivorous Pitcher Plant. Representing the region's fauna, there are many species



of reptile and 9 different lemur (Indri, sifakas, common brown, black, red, sleeping, bamboo, crowned and black and white ruffed).

While at the Palmarium, you can also arrange visits to the nearby wild beaches and fishing villages.

**Day 10: Ankanin'ny Nofy - Tamatave - Île Sainte Marie**

Depart the Palmarium after breakfast and travel by boat to Tamatave, where you will be collected by your driver and transferred to the airport for your flight to Isle Sainte Marie.

On arrival on the island, you will be met and transferred to the Princesse Bora Hotel, where you stay 3 nights in a standard villa (half-board).



**Princesse Bora Hotel**

*This lovely beach property offers charm and luxury in abundance.*

*The 20 villas are built from natural materials, including stone and rosewood, and feature thatched roofs in a traditional Malagasy style. All rooms open onto a private terrace furnished with a mahogany table and chairs and a shaded hammock. Inside they are equipped with generous double beds, fans and en-suite bathrooms.*

*Facilities at the Princess Bora include an open-air bar and restaurant, a small spa, a fabulous 25-meter pool, and a second natural swimming pool, which is situated on the beach and accessed by a long pontoon.*

*Various activities are available at the Princesse Bora. Snorkelling & kayaking equipment is free to use, as are the hotel bikes, which are great for exploring the island. Excursions can also be arranged to remote parts of the island.*

*Every year, from the beginning of July to the end of September, the hotel organises daily whale watching trips. This is a great opportunity to discover these mammals in the company of an experienced eco-guide. There are departures every morning from the hotel, with the trips typically lasting 3 hours.*



**Days 11 & 12: Île Sainte Marie**

The next two days are at leisure to explore Île Sainte Marie and to relax at the Princesse Bora.

Île Sainte Marie, or Nosy Boraha, is a narrow granite island 57km long and 8km wide, situated just off the east coast of Madagascar. It used to be a haven for pirates during the 16<sup>th</sup> century (the queen of the island was even married to one!), and to this day the island retains a laid-back, raffish character.



Sainte Marie's beautiful white-sand beaches are shaded by coconut palms and its bays and coves protected by coral reefs. Surrounding the main island are several mostly-uninhabited islets.

Much of the main island of Sainte Marie can be explored by bicycle, though walking excursions to explore the historic sights in and around Ambodifotatra and the Baie des Forbans, including the 19<sup>th</sup> century Catholic Church and pirates' cemetery, are also popular.

During the winter months (from June to the end of September), the sea around Île Sainte Marie is host to an annual natural spectacle, as large numbers of humpback whale travel north from the Antarctic to the warmer waters around Île Sainte Marie to calve and nurse their young.

**Day 13: International departure**

Transfer to the airport to catch the morning flight to Tana. On arrival, you will be met and transferred to the Gassy Country Hotel for day use.

At the appropriate time you will be transferred to the airport to check in for your international flight home.

If your flight schedule requires it, we can arrange for an additional night in Tana.

*Please see price guide overleaf.*



## Price Guide

*The cost of this itinerary is from **£3,250 per person**, based on twin/double share and subject to availability at the time of booking. For more information, or if you would like to enquire about a tailor-made holiday combining part or all of the above itinerary, please [contact us](#).*

### Includes:

- Domestic flights (Tana-Morondova-Tana / Tamatave-Sainte Marie-Tana incl. taxes)
- Boat transfer from Manambato to Palmarium/to Tamatave
- Accommodation and meals as described
- Entrance fees and special guides for the visits mentioned
- All transfers (by private 4WD vehicle and boat)
- National Park entry fees

### Excludes:

- International flights – please ask us for a quote
- Optional excursions
- Meals other than those mentioned
- Drinks with meals
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance
- Items of a personal nature

