

MADAGASCAR - THE BEST OF THE BEST

TANA TO MASOALA AND TSINGY PROGRAMME
2nd to 19th October 2011

PROGRAMME:

Day 1:

Arrival in Tana

Arrival in Tana and transfer to the hotel;
Check in at the hotel directly upon arrival.
Time permitting will allow for a short city tour if the flight arrives during the day

Overnight at Hotel Combava or similar
BB

Day 2:

Tana – Maroantsetra – Masoala Peninsula

MD 408 TNR WMN 05h10 07h55 (may be changed upon booking)

Breakfast at the hotel in Tana then we will be transferred to the airport in Tana for your early flight to Maroantsetra.

Check in at 04h10 at the latest at Tana airport, so we will leave the hotel at around 04h00.

Fly to Maroantsetra the Masoala Peninsula in the North Eastern part of Madagascar. We will arrive in Maroantsetra at 07h55 and will be met by a representative of the Lodge for the transfer to the boat port, and then depart Maroantsetra by boat for the trip across the Bay of Antongil to Masoala Forest Lodge at Tampolo, in the Masoala Peninsula. The journey of 40 km takes between 2-3 hours, with the possibility of dolphin and whale sightings in season and the thickly forested mountains of the peninsula as a dramatic backdrop to the destination.

Settle into and explore the camp and nearby beaches and forest or maybe a quick snorkel on the reefs before lunch.

After lunch enjoy a short siesta, followed by a guided walk along the stunning coastline to view the sacred island at Tampolo point.

Return by sunset, in time for a hot shower and sun-downers on the beach before dinner.

Overnight to the sound of the sea and the forest at Masoala Forest Lodge
BBLD

Days 3:

Masoala Peninsula.

After breakfast, a guided pirogue trip up the Tampo River and then walk through the coastal forest to the cascades, with the chance of sighting some more of the wildlife endemic to this area.

After a relaxing afternoon on the nearby private beaches, an evening of entertainment and high spirits in the camp with the traditional Malagasy music and dance group from the local village.

Overnight at Masoala Forest Lodge

BBLD

Day 4:

Masoala Peninsula

After breakfast, a guided walk into the primary forest of the Masoala National Park to view the birds, lemurs and countless other creatures endemic to this forest.

Return to the camp for lunch and rest. Possibly make a short kayak outing in the evening for those who feel energetic enough for this, with the option of a night walk to view the nocturnal wildlife after dinner.

Overnight at Masoala Forest Lodge

BBLD

Day 5:

Masoala – Maroantsetra – Antananarivo – Antsirabe

170 km – about 4hours

MD 408

WMN TNR

13h55

15h10 (may be changed upon booking)

After breakfast and after a last morning in this stunning forest, transfer by boat to Maroantsetra where we will be transferred to the airport for the flight out to Tana. **(Lunch on board)**;

Upon arrival in Tana, directly hit the road to the famous arts and crafts town of Antsirabe for 3 hours drive on tarmac road.

Check in at the hotel upon arrival in Antsirabe

Dinner in the town of Antsirabe

Overnight at Couleur Café or similar

BBD

Day 6:

Antsirabe – Ranomafana

280 km – about 9hours

Breakfast at the hotel in Antsirabe

We will drive to Ranomafana this day so will take an early breakfast to take advantage of all the landscape during the day. After short visits of a few workshops in Antsirabe, we will continue to Ambositra where we will make a stop to visit woodcarving workshops. Ambositra is famous for woodcarving and marquetry.

Continuation to Ranomafana after a stop on the road for lunch.

We will arrive in Ranomafana around 6 pm, just time for an evening walk before checking in at the lodge.

Overnight at Setam Lodge or similar

BBD

Day 7:

Ranomafana National Park

Breakfast at the lodge

Full day visit of Ranomafana National Park this day to discover among all these species, the Golden Bamboo lemur which is at the origin of the creation of this park. This lemur was discovered in 1986, and its particularity will make it an endemic lemur as it lives only on the young bamboo leaves of this forest. This is Madagascar's premier mid-altitude rainforest reserve. Twelve species of lemurs, Madagascar's amazing primates, are found at Ranomafana.

Back at the lodge in the afternoon and then evening walk again

Overnight at Setam Lodge or similar

BBD

Day 8:

Ranomafana – Ranohira

280 km – about 9hours

Breakfast at the lodge before leaving Ranomafana this day for Isalo National Park.

On the way, stop at Ambalavao for Antemoro paper workshops, and for Anja Private Reserve for more lemurs. This is a local small private reserve run by the local guides' community. It is not a big forest, but the Lemur Catts are well represented there as well as the brown lemurs, and this will be a chance to see more lemurs.

Continuation to Isalo National Park where we will arrive in the late afternoon;

Check in at the lodge in the afternoon

Overnight at Jardin du Roy or similar

BBD

Day 9:

Ranohira – Isalo National Park

Breakfast at the lodge

Today we explore the bizarre landscapes that are scattered throughout Isalo National Park for a whole day, and with a little luck we might encounter the three lemur species that are found here the Red-fronted Brown Lemur, the highly charismatic Ring-tailed Lemur and the loping bipedal Verreaux's Sifaka.

Back at the lodge in the late afternoon

Overnight at Jardin du Roy or similar

BBLD

Day 10:

Ranohira – Zombitse – Tulear

Breakfast at the lodge before the transfer to Tulear;

The sunshine on the sandstone landscape is stunning in the early morning as we leave.

Stop at Zombitse National Park for a forest walk in this dry deciduous forest to look for some other bird and lemur species.

Check in at the hotel in Tulear after a short visit of the town and the Arboretum of Antsoakay

Overnight at Hotel Hyppocampo or similar

BB

Day 11:

Tulear – Morondava – Marofandilia forest

MD 741 **TLE MOQ** **07h05** **08h05** (may be changed upon booking)

After an early breakfast, transfer to the airport for our flight to Morondava.

Check in is at 05h30, so we will leave the hotel no later than 5h00.

Upon arrival in Morondava at around 08 o'clock, transfer to Marofandilia Forest.

Check in at the camp site then transfer to Kirindy forest to look for the special lemurs and wildlife there. Chances to see a *fosa* and other lemurs;

We will overnight in this wonderful baobab forest where we could have chances to see some lemur species too, as well as birds, and of course, baobabs!

Overnight at Baobab in Love Camp

BBD

Day 12:

Marofandilia Forest – Bekopaka – Tsingy

After an early breakfast, drive up north to Bekopaka for about 6h30 of track. We will pass several ferries on Manambolo and Tsiribihina Rivers on the way, which is part of the great experience as it allows meeting many local people who move along the river.

Check in at the hotel upon arrival and dinner before a good rest to prepare the trekking into the Tsingy the next day

Overnight at Orchidée du Bemaraha or similar

BBD

Day 13:

Tsingy of Bemaraha

After breakfast, we drive to the park entrance today to walk in the Tsingy of Bemaraha. Depending our fitness, we can visit both the Great and/or Small Tsingy the same day.

Visiting the Tsingy requires to be fit enough for some climbing sometimes (for the Great Tsingy).

The Small Tsingy trail does not require such fitness, but it is important to know that the walk is sportive. **Gorges and Angelikoa Circuits** (or other circuits depending on conditions on the ground)

Back to the hotel in the afternoon

Overnight at Orchidée du Bemaraha or similar

BBD

Day 14:

Tsingy of Bemaraha – Morondava

After a last day in the Tsingy, we now move to Morondava to end our western trip.

After a day on the road back to Morondava, check in at the hotel in Morondava

Dinner at the hotel

Overnight at Palissandre du Menabe or similar

BBD

Day 15:

Morondava – Tana – Andasibe

MD 740/713 **MOQ TNR** **07h25** **10h30** **via Tulear**
(may be changed upon booking)

Early breakfast again before the transfer to the airport for the flight back to Tana.

Check in is at 05h45 so leave the hotel at the latest at 5h00

Upon arrival in Tana, transfer to Perinet Reserve.

Arrival in Perinet after 3 hours drive, and after meeting your local guide at the park entrance, check in at the hotel.

Visit the private reserve of the lodge and continue with an evening walk around the lodge;

Back to the lodge for dinner

Overnight at Vakôna Forest Lodge or similar

BBD

Day 16:

Andasibe – Tana

After an early breakfast, visit Andasibe National Park during the day to look for the Indri indri and in the afternoon, leave Perinet for Tana again.

Check in at the hotel in Tana

Overnight at Hotel La Varangue or similar

BB

End of main tour (16 days)

Hotels...

<http://oceane-aventures.com/>

☀ LE COMBAVA – Charm Superior catetory

<http://www.hotel-combava.com/>

Location: The Combava is 10 minutes from the airport, near the big traditional handicraft market on the way to the airport.

Description: The hotel has 09 spacious rooms and 3 junior suites equipped with safe, satellite TV, wireless internet connection, lounge, dining room, kitchenette, mini bar and magnetic key.

Other services:

- ☛ The restaurant: A traditional card-based international and fresh local produce from his own farm.
- ☛ Airport transfers



☀ COULEUR CAFE – Superior Charm**+

BP 155 - ANTSIRABE

<http://www.couleurcafeantsirabe.com/>

Location: Couleur Café is a wonderful Guest House on National Road nb7, in Antsirabe at 170km from Antananarivo. It is well located directly on the roadside in one of the main streets of Antsirabe.

Description: There are 5 rooms of which 3 are double rooms, 1 twin and one family room. They are decorated in a such lovely way that mixes modernity in the designs, and the traditional Malagasy style. Couleur Café tried to ally noble materials to warm choices of colors that give a feeling of well being. In addition, the facilities are all built around a beautiful British style garden which is always green.

Other: Laundering, internet access, Madagascar essential oil and spices show room. Once you go inside the main living place, which is also the breakfast place, you can smell the essential oil perfumes from the show room and from the kitchen. This makes the experience of the place even more special.





☼ SETAM LODGE

<http://www.setam-madagascar.com>

Location: Located on national road nb 25 connecting national road nb7 to Mananjary, about 25 km from the junction. About 1.12 miles after the Ranomafana park entrance. The village is located at 3.11 miles from the complex and it is also where we can find the thermal swimming pool and the thermal baths of Ranomafana where still many people come to make treatments.

Description: 10 bungalows of 20 individual twin rooms that can be arranged as double or triple accommodation (one double + one single extra bed), TV, heating device and hot water bath/shower room.

Other:

- ☼ Restaurant: breakfast and lunch or dinner based on local products served on buffet style or chosen menu. Various score and local music, bar, pressing service, foreign exchange office.
- ☼ Picnic lunches are available on request
- ☼ Leisure: excursions and hike upon request with experienced guides.



☼ JARDIN DU ROY – Superior category

Location: this is a new hotel (opened in 2007) located at a few kilometres from Ranohira. This hotel, which is perfectly integrated in its local and natural environment, offers modern comfort and is located just near by the Relais de la Reine Hotel. In heart of an oasis of more than 40 hectares, it has an exceptional panorama for excursions in the Isalo Massif (80 rooms).

Description: 15 air conditioned bungalows with all comfort. All equipped with en-suite bathroom, air conditioning, private terrace, and all arranged on double room occupancy with additional 1 or 2 extra beds in the Mezzanine.

Other services:

- ☼ restaurant and bar with a fireplace
- ☼ leisure: billiard; swimming pool, tennis, horse riding, balneo center, craftshop
- ☼ private runway (*common facilities to RR*)
- ☼ 4WD vehicles for the accessible tourist sites (*common facilities with RR*)



☼ HYPPOCAMPO – Superior category

<http://www.hypocampo.com/>

Avenue de France, Mahavatse II
Tulear 601
Madagascar

Location: the hotel is located in the locality of Mahavatse – few minutes from the centre of the town

Description: arranged on two floors, 08 Doubles and 02 Suites each looking across the courtyard pool, the garden and to the sea. Sunlight, space and peace are the main definitions of the hotel. All the rooms are air-conditioned and equipped with an internet connection point and a telephone as well as a satellite television and DVD player.

Other: restaurant – bar and terrace – swimming pool – airport transfers



✿ "BAOBAB IN LOVE" CAMP, MAROFANDILIA MENABE

Baobab in love Camp
Marofandilia
Site: www.fanamby.org

The « BAOBAB IN LOVE » tented camp site is located inside Marofandilia Forest, 44 km from Morondava, near Marofandilia craftsmen village. The local craftsmen manage the small souvenirs boutique, and their products are currently being certified by Fanamby. This tented camp was named after a big «Baobabs in Love» found in the campsite area. Two itineraries are possible from this tented camp to discover Baobabs and lemurs such as the famous *Microcebus Berthae* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madame_Berthe%27s_Mouse_Lemur), and also many species of birds and endemic plants.



✿ ORCHIDEES DU BEMARAHA

www.orchideedubemara.com

Location: Conveniently located near the Tsingy of Bemaraha Bekopaka and village, the hotel offers both comfort and scenery.

Description: the property offers three categories of rooms for your comfort and to suit all budgets (1 to 3 persons with possibility of adding an extra bed).

- ✿ 18 All Comfort: The rooms have a double bed 180 cm or two single beds with mosquito net, a table, a shower room solar hot water, a separate health fan, safe, wardrobe and a terrace fitted. Some bungalows are equipped for families of 4 to 9 people with connecting rooms.

- ✚ 6 Standing: The rooms with a bed in a bed 140 cm and 90 cm (extra bed) with private health net solar hot water safe fan terrace.
- ✚ 10 Bungalows Under Canvas: 1 double + 1 single bed or 3 beds (1 to 3 people without upper beds) with shared toilets and showers solar hot water

Other: The facilities include a large restaurant terrace bar to enjoy cocktails and a wide variety of specialties combining French cuisine and exotic flavors of Madagascar while enjoying the magnificent view of a unique landscape.

- ✚ Restaurant that can accommodate up to 100 persons
- ✚ Bar
- ✚ Swimming pool
- ✚ Massage room
- ✚ Craft shop
- ✚ Billiards room
- ✚ Quad renting



✚ PALISSANDRE COTE OUEST – Superior

Palissandre Côte Ouest

Morondava

Web: www.hotel-palissandre.com

Location: Charm hotel located at Nosy Kely Morondava, about 30mn drive from the Baobab Alley and the airport.

Description: The hotel is made up of 30 Bungalows of 32m² each, with private terrace faced to the sea, comfort and refinement in the Malagasy tradition dispersed in the coconut garden. Queen Size bed 1.80mx2.00m. Equipped with air-conditioner, satellite TV, individual safety box, mini-bar, shower, and hair-dryer.

Other services :

- ✚ Restaurant and bar
- ✚ Swimming pool ; pedal-boat, windsurfing, snorkelling, Pétanque, Tennis, Archeries
- ✚ Spa
- ✚ Room service, laundry, transfer between airport/hotel, babysitting on request, internet, change





🌿 VAKONA FOREST LODGE – Superior ***

Andasibe - BP 750
Web: www.hotel-vakona.com

Location: Situated at 170 km from the capital on the national road to Tamatave, VAKONA is at 1km from Andasibe village, and at 6km from the national road. This makes it easily accessible by 4X4, or smaller cars, and even minibuses. At 900m of altitude, just before the mounts of Mandraka, Vakona is situated at the edge of several national parks such as Mantadia. The humid tropical primary forest of the East is undeniably the thickest and the most wooded of the Island which makes it a unique jewel. Because of the isolation of the Island during centuries, the fauna and flora grew apart from the others continents, offering in that way lots of endemic varieties in Madagascar. An amazing spectacles of Indris songs will mystify you with no doubt.



Capacity: 10 family bungalows with terrace and 14 bungalows arranged in double each having : one terrace with a relaxing area, two twin beds which can be converted into double, one bathroom with hot water and individual toilet, safe box and a refreshments center.

Other services:

- ✚ Catering: French, Chinese and Malagasy dishes. Situated in the middle of the hotel, a glazed restaurant at about 160° gives you a constant view outside, unless you prefer the terrace overhanging the lake. Original and living, this restaurant with always richer cards mixing French, Chinese and for sure Malagasy meals.
- ✚ Leisure's: one swimming pool, an area for children, walks or mountain bike rides in the forest, horse riding, canoe 'till the lemurs' islands, squash, petanque, table tennis, billiard (pool).
- ✚ The **Vakona** private reserve leads you around a lake where forty crocodiles live freely, you'll meet Kovu and Nala, two fosa (endemic carnivores of Madagascar, predators of Lemurs) you'll admire parrots, ostriches, aquatic birds, you'll shiver in the sight of boas and will scratch the neck of tortoises.



🌿 LA VARANGUE – Charm Superior catetory

17 rue Printsy Ratsimamanga
Antaninarenina
Antananarivo

Location: In the centre of town. Close to business and administrative centre, restaurants and other administrative buildings. The hotel building itself is a traditional house that has been restored with beautiful furniture and style: sculpted boat bar, colorful building and balcony ...

Description: 7 comfortable rooms arranged as 5 standard rooms, 2 studios, fully furnished and private bathroom facilities, hot shower, telephone, individual safe box, refreshments centre, and TV. Of which: Category 1 (double bed), category 2 (double bed room, more spacious), studio (one double bed and one single), Extra bed available upon request.

Others: One bar and one restaurant open on a terrace, great view on the Haute Ville. La Varangue is mainly known for its restaurant and cuisine.



Wink on your trip...

☀ **ANDASIBE MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK**

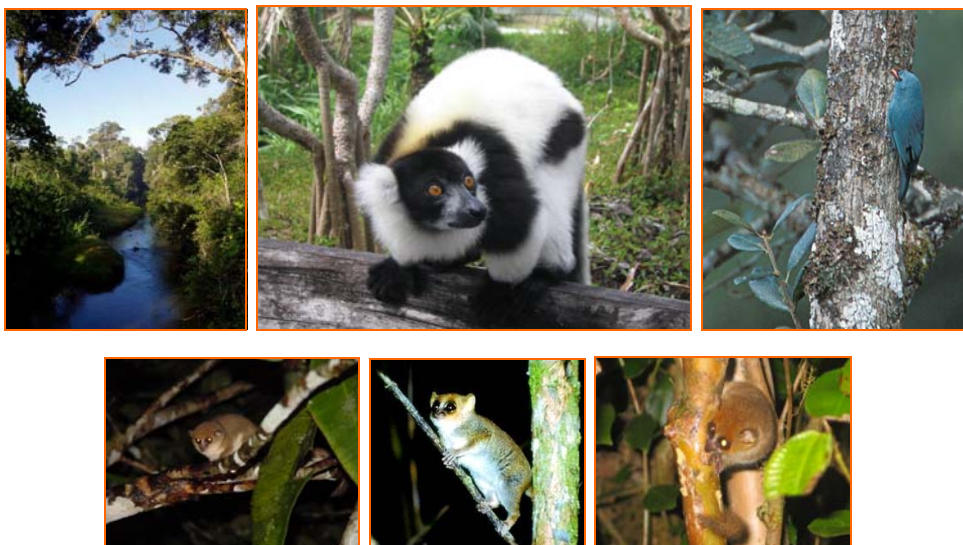
This park is an amalgamation of Analamazaotra Special Reserve close to the town of Andasibe (Perinet) and the more recently created Mantadia National Park that lies nearby the Vakona lodge. In combination, this is now perhaps Madagascar's premier rainforest reserve, offering the chance of close encounters with various lemurs and an opportunity to glimpse some of the island's highly sought after rarities.

☀ **ANALAMAZAOTRA SPECIAL RESERVE**

Andasibe is a fragment of mid-altitude montane rainforest covering an area of 810ha at altitudes between 930 and 1040m. This Special Reserve is the only place to see and hear the indri indri, the 'piebald teddy-bear' whose song enraptures visitors. Indris live in small family groups. Their morning calls are answered by groups up to 3km away. It is endemic to this forest and cannot be seen anywhere else and it cannot live in captivity. The reserve is a fragment of mid-altitude montane rainforest covering an area of 810ha. Key species of mammals are the Indri indri, common brown lemur, red bellied lemur, grey bamboo lemur. At night, brown mouse lemur, greater dwarf lemur, eastern woolly lemur and hairy-eared dwarf lemur. For birds (depending on season), Blue coua, Red-fronted coua, Blue Vanga, Red-tailed Vanga, Nuthatch Vanga, Tylas Vanga, White-headed Vanga, some species of Asity, Ground rollers, Cuckoo roller, Collared nightjar...

☀ **MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK**

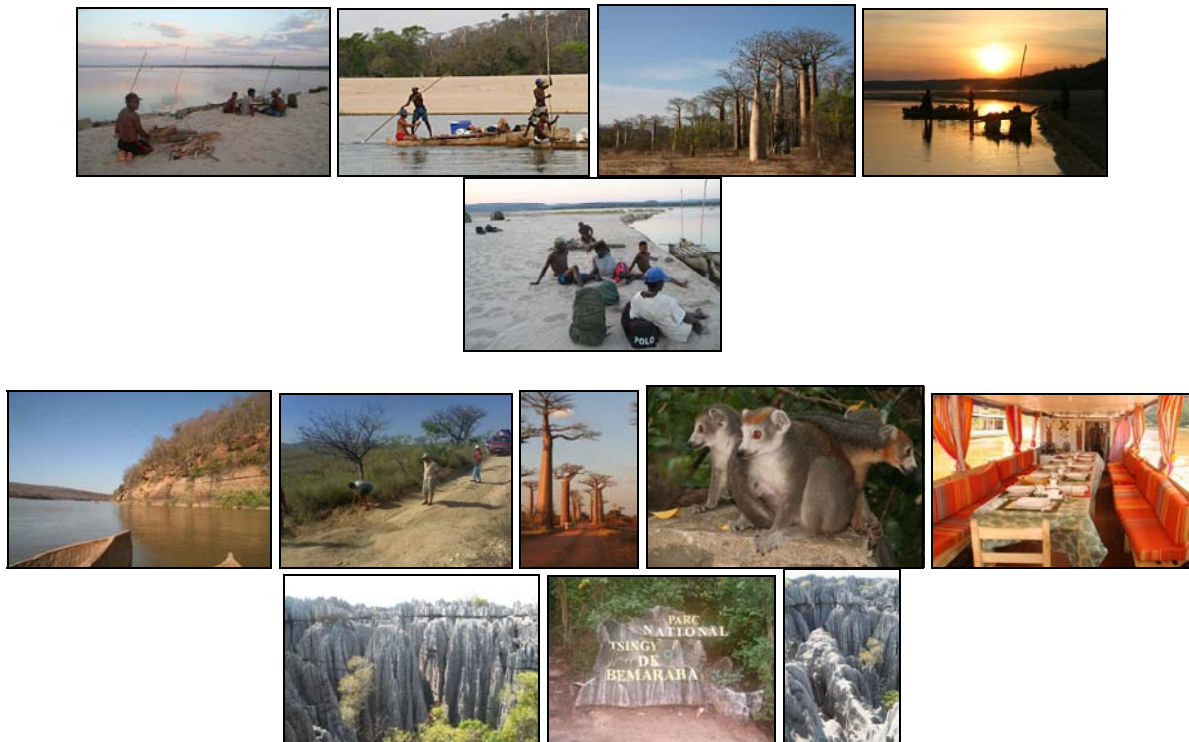
MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK: is a superb example of lowland and mi-altitude rainforest lying between 800m and 1260m and extending to 10 000ha. The main lemur species to find there is the Diademed Sifaka (Simpona) and the Black and white ruffed lemur (Varika). Two species of ground rollers are only found in Mantadia for the bird species. But there are also many many reptiles and frogs to see!



☀ THE TSINGY OF BEMARAHA

LES TSINGY DU BEMARAHA : The Tsingy is as a cathedral of limestone, which forms a dense network of breaks, crevices, and surfaces of sharpened limestone blocks carved by the wind and the rain. Limestone rocks formed by deposits of fossils and dead shells under the sea 200 million years ago, and subsequently shaped by the rain water there are 5 million years. The visit to the park and its labyrinths lead you slowly to the top through the tunnels where it is sometimes necessary to get on all fours, not to mention the suspended bridge and viewpoints with wonderful views over the park . Proclaimed World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1990, the National Park of Bemaraha covers 157.710ha of the Bemaraha plateau and rises to a moderate altitude of 934m.

TSIRIBIHINA RIVER TRIP TO THE TSINGY



☀ RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK

Situated on a national road between Tana and Tuléar, at about 40 Km in the North of Fianarantsoa (about 2hours driving). Ranomafana which means « hot water » has been known for its spa. The region is classified as a National park. It covers 40 000 Ha of surface between 800 and 1200 m of altitude. There are 96 species of birds at Ranomafana; the bird watching is very recommended. 12 species of lemurs live at Ranomafana. The last one which was discovered in 1986 was the Hapalemur aureus or the bamboo lemur, endemic in this region.



☀ **ISALO NATIONAL PARK**

Isalo National Park is for us the other word for beautiful landscape of erode 'ruiniforme' sandstone outcrops, canyons, rare plants and the feeling of space. The reflexion of the sunlight on the rock formations is just so beautiful so that it has become a must to pass by the Window of Isalo at sunset to catch up some nice pictures. This is one of the oldest national parks of Madagascar. The park covers 81,540ha of the Isalo Massif. The sandstone has been eroded into strange shapes, and it is part of the visit to guess which shape is the rock at a sight. May be seen here are the ring-tailed lemur, the Verreaux's Sifaka and the red-fronted brown lemur. For birds, Benson's rock-thrush, white-throated rail, Madagascar coucal, Madagascar wagtail, Madagascar kestrel.



Fact sheets...

MASOALA NATIONAL PARK

The national park of Masoala is located in the Northeast. At some places, among the rarest of Madagascar, the primary forest takes down of more than 1,300 m of altitude until the sea. It is a prowess of the nature, because in fact, in Masoala, the forest meets the sea. Trekking and scuba diving to the appointment! GPS: 15° 27'Sud - 15° 59'Sud

Masoala is actually a complex of the protected areas of 240,520 ha. It has four terrestrial parcels and three marine parcels. It is part of the forests of the East of Madagascar classified among the world natural heritage sites of the forests of the Atsinanana. The Masoala complex, the Masoala Park and the special reserve of Nosy Mangabe is the biggest protected area of Madagascar. We can find islets of the forests or rocks, coral reefs, zones of herbaria and narrow strips of mangrove swamp forest there.



Masoala is among the richest regions on biodiversity. We can find 50% of species of the plants of Madagascar and more than 50% of the species of mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles in there.

Fauna

102 species of birds which have been counted in Masoala, of which, more than 60% are endemic. Among the ten species of lemurs of the park, four are part of the category of the primates the more threatened in the red list of the [International union of the Conservation of the Nature \(IUCN\)](#). Among the carnivores, Masoala is the only locality where the mongoose *Salanoia concolor* or Brown-tailed mongoose have been observed since the 1970. This species is the least known of the Malagasy carnivores.

The Humpback whale, the big dolphin and the belly pink dolphin live in Masoala Peninsula (seasonal). The Sirenian specie and the Dugong can also be seen in this region. 41 types of corals have been listed in Masoala. Reptiles, amphibians, marine turtles and fishes (marine and fresh water fishes) are also found there.

The best of Masoala fauna

Masoala fauna highlights:



Red Ruffed Lemur or *Varecia rubra* (endemic lemur)

Phaner furcifer or oriental pitchfork lemur. Masoala is one of the rare localities of the pluvial forest where we can find this species.



Eretmochelys imbricate overlapped turtle or scaled turtle

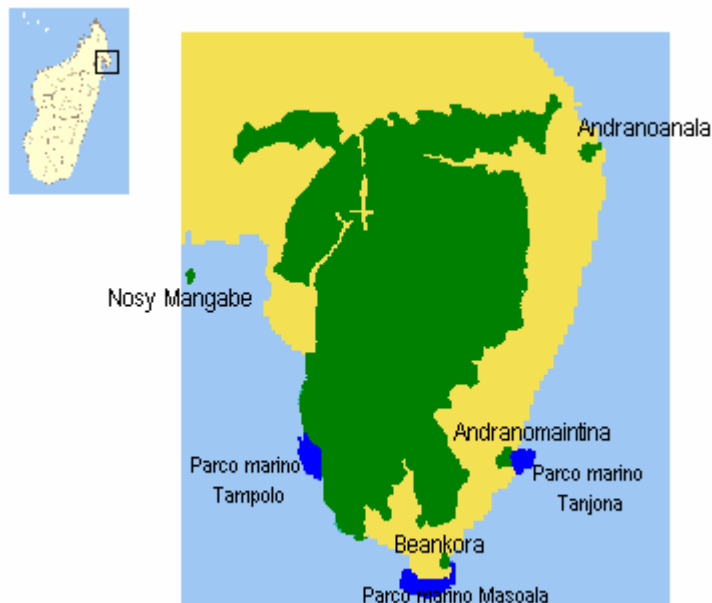


Euryceros prevostii or Helmet Vanga (endemic bird)



Flora

More than 600 plant species are listed in Masoala : 7 species of mangroves, 99 species of seaweed, more than fifty species of palm trees are listed at Masoala. Then, another interesting species like carnivorous plants can be seen over there. Unfortunately, with the exception of palm-trees, brackens, seaweeds and another species, nobody does an inventory at Masoala.



EASY CIRCUIT	
Circuit names	Specifications
The circuit of the detached parcel of Andranoanala	Duration : 4h by 4x4 Distance : 45 km from Antalaha The circuit passes through a coastal forest to the discovery of the carnivorous plant <i>Nepenthes masoalensis</i> . It is a part that is constituted of marsh and flooded forest.
EASY CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of the Marin park of Ambodilaitry	Duration : 3h30-4h by motor boat Distance : 60 km Departure from Maroantsetra. White beach, emerald sea, lagoon and coral reefs will be in the program. Don't forget your swimsuit!
EASY CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
Le circuit de la Cote Ouest de Masoala	Duration : 1h30 - 2h by motor boat Distance : 40 to 50 km from Maroantsetra

	It is one of the rare places of Madagascar where the primary forest constituted of forest of low altitude and coastal forest reaches the seaside. The humid dense forest coasts the marine park on kilometers of beaches.
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of Nosy Mangabe	Duration: 15 min. by motor boat. 3h to 2 days for camping Distance : 5Km from Maroantsetra Forest, beach and cascade to honor. But you will also visit historic sites, as the beach of the Dutchmen the rocks of which was engraved by sailors of the 16th century, as well as the cultural sites where the Betsimisaraka tombs are. This circuit will bring you on the path of the Aye-aye, the Uroplarus and the Mantella.
HARD CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The trekking circuit	Duration : 1 week Distance : 120 km It is a long and beautiful hike that joins Antalaha and Maroantsetra (3 to 5 days) or Maroantsetra to Cap-Est (5 to 7 days) while passing through small villages of farmers of vanilla and clove while crossing a humid dense forest.

ISALO NATIONAL PARK

Isalo is located in the district of Ranohira, in the Ihorombe region, Southern Madagascar. It is 279km from Fianarantsoa, and 80km from Ihosy. The park is crisscrossed by rivers and extends over an area of 81, 510 hectares. The park encompasses the northern part of the Isalo massif, which is composed of Jurassic continental sandstone with a very varied geomorphology. It is a ruin shaped massif marked by deep canyons and oases decorating the landscape. The climate is tropical and dry, with an average temperature of 17°C to 25°C. Heavily eroded, only remains of sandstone rocks and canyons are visible now. This is a real exceptional experience to discover.

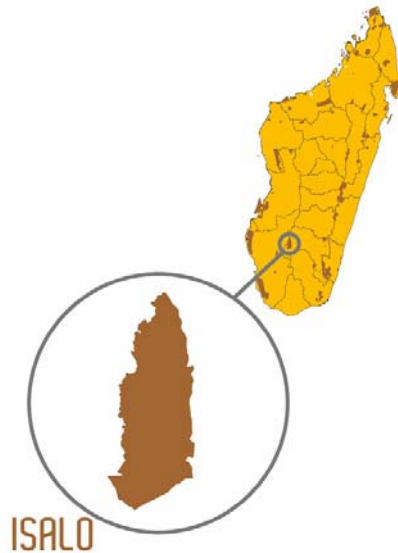
<http://www.overlandinafrica.com/maps/madagascar/isalo-national-park/>

Fauna

Isalo animals are typical of the climate, of the vegetation and of the geomorphology of the park. There are 77 bird species, 14 species of mammals (7 of which are primates such as the Lemur Catta and Verreaux's Sifaka). There are also 14 species of diurnal and nocturnal lemurs. Reptiles, amphibians, carnivores, insectivores and rodents complete the fauna list of Isalo (33 reptile species, 15 species of amphibians).

Flora

Isalo National Park hosts over 400 plant species. Many of them are endemic to Madagascar as **Pachypodium rosulatum**, family of Apocynaceae, the Catharanthus ovalis, which is an herb that is found nowhere else in the world except in the Ihorombe and Zomandao plain. Isalo savannah is colonised by palm trees typical of the region: **Bismarkia nobilis**, "Satrana" the particularity of which is to resist fire.



ISALO FAUNA

- * Amphibians: 15 species, including the *Scaphyophrine gottlebei*, a species of frog that hides underneath the earth during dry season, and comes back to the surface when first drops of rain fall.
- * Reptiles: 33 species
- * Birds: 77 species, with 70% endemism rate, including Benson's Rock Thrush, *Pseudocossyphus bensonii*
- * Primates: 7 species: *Cheirogaleus medius*, *Microcebus murinus*, *Mirza coquereli*, *Propithecus verreauxi verreauxi*, *Lepilemur ruficaudatus*, *Lemur catta*, *Eulemur fulvus rufus*.
- * Micromammals

ISALO FLORA

99 families with 220 genres and 340 species identified including the following:

- * 2 endemic families:
 - Sarcolaenaceae (6 genres)
 - Sphaerocephalaceae (1 genre in Isalo – 3 species in Madagascar)
- * 238 endemic species on 340 species identified (70% endemic)



The different trails and circuits within the park

EASY CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of the natural swimming pool	<p>Distance : 3 km by car, from Ranohira to the parking of Mangily / 3 km of trekking</p> <p>The natural swimming pool especially attracts the visitors: it is an unexpected oasis in the middle of the rocks, where flows a trepid waterfall You will browse the cliffs, the plain of Tapia, the big savannas and the massif eroded in strange shapes. The visit of the Bara and Sakalava graves makes the mystical key of the circuit.</p>
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of the cascade of the Nymphs and the black and blue swimming pool	<p>Distance : 4 km by car, following a trekking of 2,8km within 3h30mn</p> <p>It is an EASY CIRCUIT until the area of camping, however the ascent of the river, from the camping area to the cascade or to the black Swimming pool, can be a little arduous. The trail is equipped with rails, for your safety. You are going to reach the deep gorge until the blue swimming pool or the black swimming pool, to climb the cascades where nest the numerous rare birds, the butterflies and the lizards. The highlight of this circuit is the freshness of the water at the Cascade of the Nymphs!</p>
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of the canyons of the makis and rats:	<p>Duration : 2h 30</p> <p>Distance : 17 km by car following a trekking of 1,7 Km</p> <p>This circuit associates the wild nature and cultural discovery . It is made of panoramic views on the rice fields, the cliffs incised of open gorge on the Maki and Rats canyons, and on the big plateau of Ihorombe. The hike will lead you to the heart of a former royal village. You will visit the surrounding wall of the palace, the royal shower, the tombs of the sovereigns as well as the traditional Bara tombs. While carrying on up to the lush gorge, you will find numerous colonies of lemurs, birds, butterflies and lizards... The best for the end: to prick a head in the swimming pool at the bottom of the canyon!</p>
Circuit name	Specifications
The crest circuit	<p>Duration : 2h 30</p> <p>Distance : 3km by car, 4Km on foot</p> <p>It is the discovery of the rock formations of the massif that have been eroded by the wind and the rain over years and years. Some of the rock formations now have names such as the "Queen of Isalo", "the Boot of Isalo", "the Wolf" and "the Tsingy" of Isalo...</p>
Circuit name	Specifications
The Malaso circuit	<p>Duration : 4h of road</p> <p>Distance : 42 km by car, 2 Km on foot</p> <p>The car will drive you in a botanical site where grows the Pachypodium, Aloe and Kalanchoe... From there, one hour of trekking will make you discover some aspects of the vegetation of the Isalo. You will border the enclosing wall of the south, the Tshitafototra canyon and will find on your path the Maki. This circuit will lead you toward the Isalo point of view ranch and the "Boot of Isalo"...</p>
Circuit name	Specifications
The Antsifotra circuit	<p>Duration : 5 hs of road</p> <p>Distance : 29 km by car/ 5 Km on foot</p> <p>This circuit will lead you to the heart of a gallery forest where the lemurs dwell. It ends to the foot of another nice waterfall.</p>
Circuit name	Specifications
The Anjofo circuit	<p>Duration : 5h</p> <p>Distance : 29 km by car, 5 Km on foot</p>

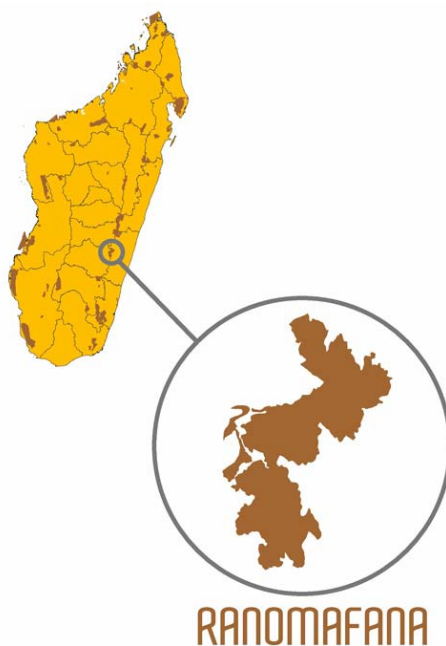
	This circuit borders ombrophile vegetation where you will admire orchids, birds, lemurs. It finishes on a cascade.
Circuit name	Specifications
The lake circuit towards Isalo	Duration : 4h de route Distance : 20 km by car, 1 Km on foot This circuit is a crossing of a Tapia forest, the crock-of-the-rock forests decorated with palms, where some lemurs live. The race ends at the Green Lake of Isalo.
HARD CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Big Tour	Duration : 4 days on average Distance : 120 km on foot or 40 Km by car and 80 Km on foot It is the big tour of the Isalo massif that compiles all sites, inescapable fauna and flora of the park. Archaeological sites and especially the underground "cave of the Portuguese", dry and humid forests, meeting of birds and diurnal as well as nocturnal lemurs, to finish at the natural swimming pool. The panorama is fabulous and the visit is very enlightened.

Tips for hiking in Isalo

In any season it is advisable to bring: drinking water supplies (2l/pers), warm clothes for the night, sweets and dried fruit products against mosquitoes, sunscreen and hat, bags for your trash. Compulsory tickets are sold at the Park entrance.

RANOMAFANA NATIONAL PARK

Ranomafana National Park, formally established in 1991, is an evergreen rainforest covering an area of 41,600ha, and stands between 800 and 1200 m above sea level. For three decades, the village of Ranomafana was best known for its spa and thermal baths. People came from all countries of the Indian Ocean, Southern Africa and even in Western Europe, to heal several afflictions. The mountain, an old volcano, produces hot springs with healing virtues (rheumatism). The idea of national park was born when, in 1986, they discovered a species of lemur never seen before, *Hapalemur aureus*, which has particularity to feed mainly on the shoots of an endemic variety of bamboo containing cyanide. Mystery of nature: the animal eats a daily dose that can kill 10 humans! The park also contains many varieties of plants unknown anywhere else, probably because of the volcanic basement of the place.



WHERE

Province: Fianarantsoa

Access: 60 km from Fianarantsoa, 400 km from Antananarivo.

7 km from the town of Ranomafana and the park entrance, 9 hour drive from Antananarivo, Fianarantsoa 2 hours.

Area: 41,000 ha

Climate: tropical wet

Average temperature of 14 to 20 ° C.

Average annual rainfall about 4000 mm.

Across the Indian Ocean, only Salazie, Reunion Island does better with 5000 mm of annual rainfall.

Rainy season from October to March.

Almost zero rainfall in August

Specificity: 12 species of lemurs including the golden bamboo lemur (*Hapalemur aureus*), 118 species of birds, orchids, rainforest ...

Pool and spa baths. Thanks to its composition sulphurous pool fed the spa water (hot water) allows curative treatments.

Dominant ethnic groups: Tanala and Betsileo

Accommodation: Hotels in Ranomafana.

THE WILDLIFE

Covering an area of 41,000 ha, Ranomafana National Park has a rugged terrain. Altitudinal variation ranges from 1375 m, the highest peak in the park (Mont Mahara) and 400 m to the region Sahavoemba. It is a hilly area with steep slopes and dense water network, tributaries of the Namorona River. The tropical climate is humid with annual rainfall of 2600 mm. Average temperatures range between 14 and 20 ° C. The vegetation is dense forest and wet, and it is likely to rain even during dry season during forest walks.

The Fauna

There are 26 species of mammals, including 2 rare species of lemurs *Hapalemur simus* and the Golden Bamboo Lemur. There are also hundreds of bird species, reptiles, butterflies, and insects. Ranomafana is the premier ecomuseum of Madagascar.

Furthermore, another highlight of Ranomafana is the presence of the Fosa (pronounced *Foos*, *Cryptoprocta ferox*) in the forest: half-feline, half-canine, this carnivorous mammal is the only large carnivore in Madagascar. It became nocturnal by necessity because it is chased by the farmers, and for good reason, it is the largest poultry devastating of the island! Finally, the park also contains a hundred species of birds such as Goshawks (Henst's gashawk, *Accipiter henstii*) other Rollers and Vangas (Vandamm's vanga...) Finally, during the visit, generously cover your neck, legs, arms with mosquito repellent: it not only has the virtue of putting away the mosquitoes, but also all not very pleasant small creatures such as leeches! ! Or, get yourself to iodized salt (available in all stores in bags of 200 grammes to 250 grammes). This is totally reliable! Or, if all that happens to run out, light a cigarette and approach the glowing tip of the "fag" on the back of the leech: it goes away immediately.

- 115 bird species, 30 of which are strictly forest birds
- 90 species of butterflies
- 98 species of amphibians
- a few fish species
- and 62 species of reptiles : chameleons, lizards, geckoes,...



The Flora

The flora is of a rainforest type. It consists of medicinal plants, giant tree ferns; epiphyte orchids (*Bulbophyllum*, *Eulophillea*...) Madagascar is one of the few countries in the world where one does not encounter any kind of hybrid orchid. Here, they are all pure varieties and the Big Island hosts 1 113 varieties. Another strange fact is that one variety of cactus lives and grows in Ranomafana forest: the *Rhipsalis Madagascariensis*. Unlike all cacti that prefer arid and hostile habitats, the *Rhipsalis* unlike all cacti grows in moisture and is moreover a parasitic plant, i.e like orchids; it lives on the on other plants in its immediate environment.



Practical information:

People generally make jokes about the weather in Madagascar, saying that there are two seasons here: *the rainy season and the raining season*. Yes indeed, it rains in Ranomafana during all seasons. One is invited to bring:

- warm clothes even during the day
- rain coats and gears
- other footwear to change (especially when walking in the mud, and if it rains)
- hat and sunscreen
- bags to put your trash during the hikes
- mosquito and leech repellent products
- relax yourself: after a tiring walk in the forest, think of taking a bite and or relax yourself at the thermal hot spring swimming pool;
- Ranomafana means “hot water”

BEMARAHA NATIONAL PARK

The park of Bemaraha spreads over 157 710 Ha with 100-km long from the North to the South and 10 to 40km large in West. Its Southern part enjoys the National Park statute with 72.340 ha of surface. Its Northern part that has the statute of Integral Natural reserve covers 85.370 ha. It is in the South that we can find the Tsingy, spectacular pinnacles, the access of which is extremely difficult. This karstic formation area is visible from afar, a forest of peaks and rocks that makes all so impressive.



Fauna

Bemaraha is a high spot of endemism and diversity. The scientists estimate that the general endemism rate of this park is up to 86,7% and the ecoregional one is 47%. 11 species of lemurs are listed from there, five families of Bats, 103 species of bird species. The index of the reptiles and amphibians is as large as Bemaraha possesses 34 species that are all endemic.

Flora

The park of Bemaraha has a vegetation which is as original as endemic. It has an essentially deciduous dry forest - typical of the western ecoregion, interrupted by savannas in the East. Its vegetation is dry on the calcareous flagstone and humid in the canyons. 86% of the 650 plant species listed in Bemaraha are endemic. They are adapted to an arid climate. For some, the leaves have been turned into thorns to store water. For the others, the trunks enlarge themselves to store water. Some plants dry their vegetative device and live in slow-motion before the rainy season. Finally, other plants simply chose to reduce their size and became dwarf bushes.

Circuits and trails at Bemaraha National Park

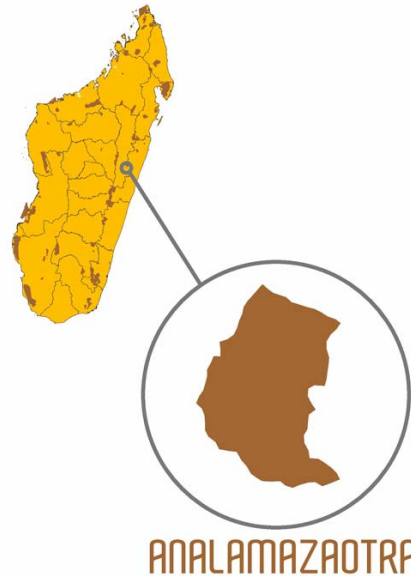
There are several types of trails and circuits within the National park. Each will depend on the fitness of the visitors, and we will choose the trails depending on our conditions when meeting with our local guides. The difficulties go from Easy to Medium.

EASY CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Tantely circuit (Small Tsingy)	Duration : 1 hour of trekking Distance : 2 km It is a "test" for the visitors before tackling the more sinuous ones. We can walk the 2 km long in about 1 hour. During the hike, you will be able to admire the Tsingy and a few animal or plant species.
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Manambolo circuit (Small Tsingy)	Duration : 4 h Distance : a loop of 4 Km This circuit in canoe shows you the abrupt gorge of 50 to 80 meters high, of the scenic landscapes going from the humid dense forest, to sparsed xerophyte vegetation and then the dense dry forest. You will also visit the underground cave made of calcareous formations. While regaining the cliff, take advantage of the panoramic view of the Tsingy and the extraordinary sightseeing spot of Manambolo River.
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Andadoany circuits and Ankeligoas (Small Tsingy)	Duration : 4 h Distance : 2 km while crossing some labyrinths It is the ideal circuit to contemplate the magic of the genesis of the Tsingy: you will circulate in the canyons through the labyrinths. You will thus have the opportunity to touch the partitions of these extraordinary pinnacles of rocks. Requires good climbing fitness.
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Ankeligoa circuit (Small Tsingy)	Duration : 5 h Distance : 6 km You will go up toward the roof of the Tsingy, which will look so majestic to you, on the belvedere. This second stage will bring you to visit the underground cave that reveals an ancient human presence in the Bemaraha.

MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of the Gorge (Small Tsingy)	<p>Duration : 3 h</p> <p>Distance : 3 km</p> <p>The circuit carries up the Manambolo in canoe until the Vazimba tomb. Then return by canoe without bordering the cliffs.</p>
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of Berano (Great Tsingy)	<p>Duration : 3 h</p> <p>Distance : 3 km</p> <p>This circuit is arranged at the Northern entry of the Park of Bemaraha, in Antsalova. It consists of a caving circuit, because you will visit the underground galleries, the canyons and the underground cave, with a speleological tendency. You will pass on the Tsingy May decorated by kalanchoes and will cross through by a canoe inside the galleries in the labyrinths. It will be a unique opportunity to contemplate the paleo gallery again in activity where the humid plants dwell.</p>
HARD CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Anjohimanintsy circuit (Great Tsingy)	<p>It spreads on 9 Km in 2 days or 5 Km in 1 day</p> <p>The Anjohimanintsy circuit: This itinerary is a combined circuit of Manambolo, Ankeligoa and Tantely. It is then a circuit in coming down to the well of limestone in progression in an underground cavity. Anjohimanintsy is a journey of adventure and discoveries of the mysteries of the Tsingy.</p> <p>It will be an opportunity to admire the different shapes of Tsingy through the galleries, the calcerous plateau, the canyons, the diaclases, the cathedrals, the underground cave as well as the deformed Tsingy May, This circuit takes you to admire the different sorts of vegetations: humid of the canyons and dry on the calcerous flagstones, with the possibility to observe some lemurs.</p>
ARDUOUS CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuits of Andamozavaky and Ranotsara (Great Tsingy)	<p>Duration : The circuit of Andamozavaky : between 4 and 6 hours</p> <p>Distance : The circuit of Andamozavaky : 4 Km</p> <p>It is the circuit of the big spaces, the dizziness and the big sensations. The circuit begins at 17 Km in the North of the village of Bekopaka to join the gigantic cathedrals of limestones, of the dense networks of breaks, of cracks, of the blocks of limestones sculpted in blades or in sharp tips which form the Tsingy.</p>
ARDUOUS CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Ranotsara circuit (Great Tsingy)	<p>Begins on the roof of the Tsingy, with a panoramic view of 360° from an elevated belvedere. Cross the suspended bridge of 70 m from the soil and feel the big space. Walk in the middle of the arcades of the Tsingy, until the bottom of a canyon and a forest tunnel. The sun sets from far away; it is another landscape that forms itself in the reflections of the sunset.</p>

MANTADIA NATIONAL PARK

Mantadia and the Special Reserve of Indri of Analamazaotra form the complex Andasibe Mantadia. These two protected areas are identical but unfortunately the human pressures separated them. Mantadia spreads over 15 480 ha.



Mantadia and Analamazaotra

The national park of Mantadia is in the Alaotra Mangoro. It is known for its rare orchids that bloom in the forest (seasonal), the Indri indri that can be observed all year round in Analamazaotra Reserve, its magnificent water falls and the famous cultural rituals of the inhabitants of its surrounding. Mantadia is joined with the national park of Zahamena by an impressive forest hall. GPS: 18° 28' South, 48° 28' East.

WHERE

Province : Toamasina (Tamatave)

Access : 1,5 km from Andasibe, 140 km de Tananarive, 200 km de Tamatave

Total area : Analamazaotra Special Reserve 810ha ; Mantadia National Park 15 500 ha

Climate : perhumid

Annual average temperature: 18°C.

Annual average rainfall: 1 700 mm over 210 jours.

Interests : the special Reserve is dedicated to the protection of the largest lemur, which is the indri indri ; an orchid garden.

Specificities : Mantadia National Park, where the orchids embellish the rainforest. The waterfalls and cultural rites still practiced by the locals contribute to the conservation of the park. And in addition, a beautiful view on the forest.

La Réserve Spéciale d' Indri d'Andasibe : L'appel envoûtant des indris, résonne aux alentours de la Réserve..

Ethnie dominante : Betsimisaraka

The fauna

The forest of the Mantadia Park accommodates a lot of animals which assure their perpetuity at the same time. 108 species of birds are known in the park, of which some play a role in the survival of plants like *Terpsiphone mutata*. We can also find 14 species of lemurs in there, 51 species of reptiles Boa of which the famous Boa manditra and 84 species of amphibian. In the rivers of Mantadia several endemic fish species of which two are classified among the threatened species by the [International Union of the Conservation of the Nature \(IUCN\)](#): *Ratsirakia legendrei* and *Rheocles alaotrensis*. Finally, the bugs are the most numerous. The ecosystem of Mantadia depends on its lower-case letters animals:

They are the pollinators of the plants of flowers, the recyclers of the nourishing elements of soil and the organic garbage. In the food chain, the bugs are the food of many birds and mammals.

The flora

The forests of Mantadia are the domains of lianas and epiphytes such as the orchids, mosses and the ferns. The orchids are very varied with more than a hundred species inventoried. Some varieties of plants have been introduced to Mantadia. They adapt well and are managed to constitute a little abundant homogeneous formation. The guava trees of China and other invading species as the *Camelea sinensis*, the *Rubus mauricana* tend to colonize some parts of the protected area. Eucalyptus trees, pine trees and bamboos grow along the border of the site.

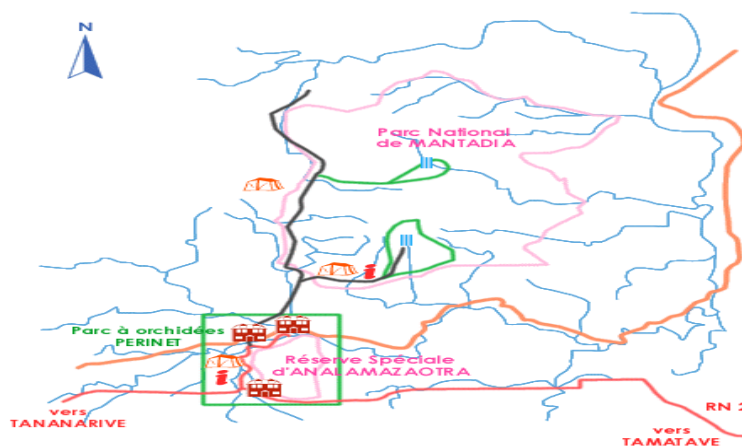
Summary of the biodiversity

Classes	Number of families	Nombre genres	Nombre species	Endemicity rate
Mammals	10	22	31	93
Birds	41	92	112	+ 50
Reptiles	06	20	39	80
Amphibians	03	07	36	80
Insects	-	-	100	

The different trails and circuits within the park

Trails can go from easy to arduous and from 2 hours to a whole day trekking. Walks are not all difficult, and not all the same scenery and they are generally easy trails.

Mantadia National Park within the area map:



Analamazaotra Special Reserve map



EASY CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Rianaso circuit	Duration : 2h walk Distance : 1,5 km The trekking begins at 9km of the park entrance. It is a crossing that will lead you toward a natural swimming pool where falls a cascade of water. Along the track, we can generally hear the amazing calls of the Indri indri that can be heard over 3kms around, and see some orchids. This is an exceptional forest experience.
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of the sacred fall	Duration : 2h Distance : a loop of 2 Km It starts from 10 Km from the park entrance. This cultural circuit of Mantadia will make you discover sacred places where the rituals are executed. The trails are arranged but remain perfectly respectful of the environment. The slope is stiff in some parts and the landscape is fascinating and the rivers will seduce you.
MEDIUM CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The circuit of Tsakoka	Duration : 3h Distance : 3 km This circuit has some little stiff slopes. The walk begins at 14 Km from the entry of the Park. You will have a fantastic view of the propithecus, varecia, «ground roller", an endemic bird of the region, and other endemic species of bugs, reptiles and amphibians. It is also an ideal circuit to admire the plants of the rivers.
HARD CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The Belakato circuit	Duration : 3h Distance : 3,5 km Belakato begins at 11 Km from the entry of the Park. This circuit includes stiff slopes. It is the best circuit to meet groups of lemurs like the Indri indri, the Propithecus, the Hapalemur. The track borders the waterfalls, lakes and rivers.
HARD CIRCUIT	
Circuit name	Specifications
The trekking circuit	Duration : One day Distance : 10 km The big trek starts at 6km of the park entrance. It mixes all the trails of Mantadia forest, and compiles the best visits.

TIPS FOR VISITING

Very wet during rainy season. Look for the indri indris very early in the morning from 6 or 7am to 9 or 10 am. Do not forget:

- Good hiking boots
- Rain gear
- Anti malarial prevention
- Mosquito and leech repellent products
- Litter bags (to throw your own waste)
- Public toilets in the park are paying: bring 100ar