Scopus Travel • Itinerary

9 Nights~10 Days - A Southern Safari

A tour that brings out the traveler from a tourist. 10 days of rejuvenating adventure in nature.

PRICING	TOTAL TOUR DAYS	ARRIVAL PORT	DEPARTURE PORT
—	10	Antananarivo	Antananarivo

Countries Covered: **Madagascar**

Tour Overview

9 Nights~10 Days - A Southern Safari

Family Tour | Leisure | Nature-Wildlife Clubs | Adventure

- Arrival and orientation in the Malagasy capital of Antananarivo, set among the hills of Madagascar's central highlands.
- Scenic journey south along the RN7 through rice terraces and traditional villages to the spa town of Antsirabe.
- Exploration of the lush rainforest ecosystems of Ranomafana National Park, one of Madagascar's richest biodiversity reserves.
- Visit to the community-managed Anja Community Reserve near Ambalavao, known for its thriving population of ring-tailed lemurs living among granite outcrops.
- Discovery of the dramatic sandstone canyons, palm-lined valleys, and natural pools of Isalo National Park.
- Journey through the arid landscapes of southern Madagascar toward the coastal city of Toliara and the seaside fishing village of Ifaty.
- Optional exploration of the unique **spiny forest ecosystem** at Reniala Spiny Forest Reserve, home to rare drought-adapted plants and endemic birds.
- Experience the tranquil coastal atmosphere of Ifaty and the maritime traditions of the Vezo fishing communities along the Mozambique Channel.
- Domestic flight from Toliara back to Antananarivo with time to shop for Madagascar's celebrated local produce such as vanilla, pink pepper, and handcrafted chocolates made from Malagasy cocoa.

- **Accommodation Plan:** 1 Night – Antananarivo | 1 Night – Antsirabe | 2 Nights – Ranomafana National Park | 2 Nights – Ranohira (Gateway to Isalo National Park) | 2 Nights – Ifaty | 1 Night – Antananarivo.
- Recommended clothing: Casuals, Outdoor shoes, Sweater, Shawl/Scarf, Pullover/Windcheater.

Trip Itinerary

Day Wise Program

Day 01 — Antananarivo

Accommodation: Anatananarivo | Meals Included: Dinner

Arrival in Madagascar's hilltop capital, where terracotta houses climb the surrounding hills and rice paddies fill the valleys below. After airport formalities, transfer to the hotel and time to settle in.

Antananarivo—often called "Tana"—is the historic heart of the Merina kingdom and remains the political and cultural center of the island. The city spreads across a series of ridges and hills, offering sweeping views over the highlands and an introduction to Madagascar's distinctive architecture and lively urban atmosphere.

A lone farmer walks through lush rice paddy field surrounded by homes and buildings in Antananarivo, Madagascar.

View of the densely packed houses on one of the many hills of Antananarivo, the capital city of Madagascar

Antananarivo, french name Tananarive, short Tana, Very poor capital and largest city in Madagascar, Madagasikara republic. View to top of Central Antananarivo.

Tana to Anadacibe, Madagascar

Antananarivo Reisfelder Madagaskar

Day 02 — Antananarivo to Antsirabe

Accommodation: Antsirabe | Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Driving distance: ~170 km
Estimated transfer time: ~5 hours

The journey south begins along the famous RN7 highway, one of Madagascar's most scenic routes through the central highlands. The road passes terraced rice fields, traditional brick villages, and bustling roadside markets where farmers display seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Arrival in Antsirabe, a charming highland town known for its cool climate, wide avenues, and colonial heritage. Colorful pousse-pousse rickshaws move through the streets, while small artisan workshops produce handcrafted souvenirs and miniature vehicles made from recycled materials.

Landscape with the ploughing farmers at the rice fields and Onive river - Antanifotsy, on the way to Anstirabe

Marktangebot in Antsirabe

Day 03 — Antsirabe to Ranomafana National Park

Accommodation: Ranomafano

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Driving distance: ~240 km
Estimated transfer time: ~6–7 hours

Today's drive continues through the fertile landscapes of the Betsileo region, known for its impressive rice terraces carved into the hillsides. The route passes through lively rural towns and the artisan center of Ambositra, renowned for traditional Malagasy wood carving.

As the journey progresses, the scenery gradually transforms into lush green hills and dense tropical forest. Arrival in Ranomafana, a small village nestled beside the rainforest and gateway to one of Madagascar's most biologically rich protected areas.

Rubber-tyred Michelin Train in Madagascar - Last in the world

Rickshaws in Antsirabe, Madagascar highlands

Maison Malgache. Antsirabe, Madagascar

Traditional highland housing, Antsirabe, Madagascar

Rain forest landscape Ranomafana Madagascar

Day 04 — Exploration of Ranomafana National Park

Accommodation: Ranomafano

Meals Included: Breakfast & Dinner

A full day is devoted to discovering the remarkable biodiversity of Ranomafana National Park. Guided walks lead along forest trails shaded by tall bamboo groves, giant tree ferns, and dense tropical canopy.

The park is home to several species of lemurs, including the rare golden bamboo lemur first discovered in this region. Numerous birds, reptiles, frogs, and colorful insects inhabit the forest, while orchids and medicinal plants flourish in the humid environment, making the park one of Madagascar's most important conservation areas.

Day 05 — Ranomafana to Ranohira - Anja reserve - Isalo

Accommodation: Isalo

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Driving distance: ~300–330 km
Estimated transfer time: ~7–8 hours

Departure from the rainforest region of Ranomafana National Park and journey south through the Betsileo highlands toward the drier landscapes of southern Madagascar. The road passes the historic town of Fianarantsoa and continues through fertile valleys and traditional villages where terraced rice fields shape the surrounding hillsides.

Near the town of Ambalavao, a short stop is made at the celebrated Anja Community Reserve. This small community-managed forest sanctuary is well known for its thriving population of ring-tailed lemurs that inhabit the granite outcrops and woodland valleys of the reserve. A brief guided walk offers the opportunity to observe these charismatic lemurs in their natural habitat while also supporting one of Madagascar's most successful local conservation initiatives.

The journey continues south across increasingly arid terrain where grasslands and rocky hills dominate the landscape. By late afternoon, arrival in Ranohira, the small frontier town located at the entrance to Isalo National Park.

Cane Cage full of alive chickens on the street ready to be sold by traders at the food market in Toliara. Madagascar.

Zebus drinking at waterhole with baobab tree, Morondava, Madagascar

Ring-tailed Lemur (Lemur catta), Anja Community Reserve, Haute Matsiatra Region, Madagascar

Grasshopper Rainbow Milkweed Locust or Rainbow Bush Locust (Phymateus saxosus), Endemic colorful insect, grasshoppers of the family Pyrgomorphidae. Anja Community Reserve, Madagascar wildlife animal.

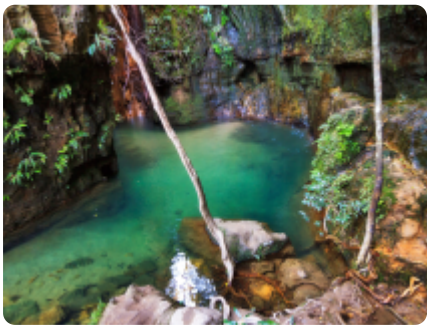
Day 06 — Exploration of Isalo National Park

Accommodation: Isalo | Meals Included: Breakfast & Dinner

Today is dedicated to exploring the spectacular landscapes of Isalo National Park, one of Madagascar's most visually striking natural areas. The park is famous for its sculpted sandstone massifs, deep canyons, and hidden valleys formed by centuries of erosion.

Guided walks lead through narrow gorges and palm-lined streams to natural pools where clear water gathers beneath towering cliffs. Ring-tailed lemurs and sifakas are often seen among the rocks, while the vast open landscapes provide sweeping views across the southern plateau.

Isalo National Park in Ihorombe Region. Wilderness landscape with water erosion into rocky outcrops, plateaus, extensive plains and deep canyons like in Utah. Beautiful Madagascar panorama landscape.



Beautiful river and cascade in a canyon in Isalo national park, Madagascar

Africa, Madagascar, Isalo National Park. A particularly nice sandstone formation glows in the setting sun.

Isalo National Park in the Ihorombe Region of Madagascar. Known for its wide variety of terrain, including sandstone formations, deep canyons, a palm-lined oases, and grassland, and rich wildlife

Day 07 — Ranohira to Ifaty (via Toliara)

Accommodation: Ifaty | Meals Included: Breakfast & Dinner

Driving distance: ~240 km
Estimated transfer time: ~5–6 hours

The journey continues southwest through the arid landscapes of southern Madagascar. The road passes dry savannah and sparse forests where baobabs and hardy vegetation dominate the scenery.

Arrival in the coastal region near Toliara, followed by a short drive north to the seaside village of Ifaty. Located along the turquoise waters of the Mozambique Channel, the area is known for its tranquil beaches and the maritime traditions of the Vezo fishing communities.

Majestic Grandmother Fony baobab, (Adansonia rubrostipa), Oldest part of the tree an estimated 1,600 years old. Tsimanampetsotsa national park. Madagascar wilderness landscape.

Day 08 — Ifaty

Accommodation: Ifaty | Meals Included: Breakfast & Dinner

A relaxed day along the tranquil coast of Ifaty, a small fishing village overlooking the warm waters of the Mozambique Channel. The area is known for its peaceful beaches and the maritime traditions of the Vezo people, whose wooden pirogues sail the lagoon in search of the day's catch.

Optional excursions may be arranged to explore the nearby Reniala Spiny Forest Reserve, one of the best places to experience Madagascar's remarkable **spiny forest ecosystem**. Guided walks through this unique habitat reveal a striking landscape of baobabs, octopus trees, thorny shrubs, and drought-adapted plants found nowhere else on earth. The reserve is also home to several endemic bird species, reptiles, and small lemurs that inhabit this arid coastal forest.

Traditional wooden sailing canoes can often be seen returning from the sea with the day's catch, reflecting the centuries-old maritime culture of the Vezo people. The nearby lagoon and reefs also support a rich variety of marine life.

madagascar magpie robin, ifaty, madagascar

namaqua dove, ifaty, madagascar

madagascar magpie robin, ifaty, madagascar

Greater Vasa Parrot, Coracopsis vasa, sitting on a high branch, Tsimanampetsotsa national park. Madagascar

Day 09 — Tulear - Antananarivo

oad transfer: Ifaty → Toliara
Driving distance: ~27 km
Estimated transfer time: ~45 minutes

Morning transfer from Ifaty to the airport in Toliara for the domestic flight to Antananarivo. Upon arrival in the capital, transfer to the hotel.

Later in the day, time is set aside to explore local markets and specialty shops in Antananarivo, where Madagascar's renowned agricultural products can be found. The island is famous for producing some of the world's finest vanilla, along with aromatic spices and gourmet products derived from locally grown cocoa. Visitors often enjoy browsing stalls offering handcrafted chocolates, spices, and other Malagasy delicacies that reflect the country's rich agricultural heritage.

Pink Pepper:
Madagascar is one of the world's principal sources of pink pepper, the dried berry of the *Schinus* tree. Although commonly used as a spice, it is not a true pepper like black or white pepper. The berries have a delicate aroma and a mildly sweet, slightly fruity flavor that enhances seafood, salads, and gourmet dishes. Their vibrant pink color also makes them a popular decorative ingredient in culinary presentations.

Vanilla pods collected and left to dry on the sun

Fresh vanilla sold on a market in Nosy Be, Madagaskar

Day 10 — Departure

Transfer to the international airport for the onward flight.

Departure concludes a memorable journey through the diverse landscapes of southern Madagascar—from the cool highlands and tropical rainforests to the dramatic sandstone canyons and the tranquil shores of the southwest coast.

Rickshaw, Antsirabe, Antananarivo Province, Madagascar Central Highlands

Madagascar, Highlands, south of Antsirabe, women carry bundles thru rice fields.

Rubber-tyred Michelin Train in Madagascar - Last in the world

Traditional highland housing, Antsirabe, Madagascar

Popular Queries

Additional information

Who can travel?

- Adult passengers from all countries.
- Minors must be accompanied by an immediate relative/guardian.

What are the travel requirements?

- Passport valid for at least 6 months from the start date of the tour.
- Entry permit as required for various Nationalities.
- Madagascar visa policy.
- Health insurance valid for the duration of the journey, preferably "cash free" policies.

How safe is Madagascar?

- As safe as safe could be.
- With no large carnivores, nor poisonous reptiles, outdoors are very safe.
- The population is very friendly and easy going.
- Public Transportation is erratic and is not recommended for tourists on short holidays.

Are credit cards accepted in Madagascar?

- Not everywhere.
- Many vendors do not accept Master Card, and will insist on payment with VISA only or cash.
- Other popular cards like Amex, Diners, etc are also scarcely accepted.

Should cash be carried in local currency?

- It is advisable to keep at least 100~200 $/EUR in local currency - Malagasy Ariary.
- The exchange rate is approximately 4400MGA = 1US$ / 4700MGA =1EURO [April 2024]
- The best place to get it changed is on arrival at the airport.
- Please request assistance from our team on arrival.
- Arirary will be required to make local purchases, for restaurants, tips etc...

How much cash could be carried into and out of Madagascar?

- Visitors and residents can import up to MGA 400,000 and an unlimited amount of foreign currency. Sums of money greater than EUR 7500 will need to be declared at the customs department.
- Visitors and residents can also export up to MGA 400,000 in local currency and an unlimited amount of foreign cash providing a written declaration is made at the customs department.

What are the other important entry regulations in Madagsacar?

- **Free import**
  • 500 cigarettes or
  • 25 cigars or
  • 500 grammes of tobacco
  • 1 bottle of alcoholic beverages
- **Prohibited**
  • Illegal drugs
  • Weapons, explosives and ammunition
  • Knives and deadly weapons
  • Plant and plant products – unless permission has been obtained
  • Meat and meat products
  • Pets and animal products – unless permission has been obtained
  • Electronic equipment
  • Counterfeit money and goods
  • Pornographic materials
- **Restricted**
  • All passengers planning on re-exporting guns and ammunition will be required to apply for an export permit from their local “Chef de Province”.
  • All perfume is subject to duty regulations and cannot enter the country for free.
  • Fruit and vegetables will need to be declared and an entry permit obtained before being granted entry into the country.
  • Protected plant and plant materials are prohibited from entering the country.
  • All animals entering the country will be forced to undergo a sanitary inspection upon arrival. The creatures will require a veterinarian health certificate from the country of origin specifying the creature’s condition and lack of any contagious diseases. Dogs over three months and cats over six months old will need to be specifically vaccinated against rabies less than one month and over three months respectively prior to their entry into the country.

Are foregin insurance policies accepted in Madagascar?

- Yes they are and it is a mandatory requirement to travel with us.

How much does this package cost?

- The cost of a tour package is a function of various services; viz, class of accommodation, period of travel, meal plan etc.
- Please make a booking and we will send a price offer for your consideration.

https://scopus.travel