Journey to the “eighth continent” for a chance to discover the endemic plants and wildlife of one of the world’s most unique biodiversity hotspots — Madagascar! From lemurs and chameleons to flying foxes and giant bats, the incredible diversity of Madagascar’s native species inhabit a range of ecosystems across varied and stunning landscapes. Learn about the intersection of culture, nature, and economy as you visit traditional villages known for production of aluminum pots, silk, and sapphire. At national parks and private reserves, meet with local conservationists and leading researchers, including a stop at Stonybrook University’s renowned Centre ValBio to learn more about sustainability efforts in a changing country.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- Come face-to-face with Madagascar’s unique and unusual wildlife, including chameleons, geckos, tortoises, lemurs, and rare birds.
- Take guided hikes in Isalo National Park, famous for its canyons, waterfalls, and sandstone formations.
- Hike in the 102,000-acre Ranomafana National Park and learn about flora, fauna, and research efforts at Centre ValBio, a leading field research facility run by renowned primatologist Dr. Patricia Wright.
- Visit Lemur’s Park, a botanical park where nine different species of lemur can be observed roaming freely.
- Seek out the world’s largest lemur, the Indri, in Andasibe-Mantadia National Park.
July 11 - Depart
En route.

July 12 - Antananarivo
Arrive in Antananarivo (Tana), Madagascar on a late night flight. After clearing immigration and customs, and exchanging money at the airport, meet your local guide and transfer to the hotel. Check in and rest after the long flight. * We recommend considering a stopover in Paris en route to rest or coming in a day early to rest. Overnight at Relais Des Plateaux.

July 13 - Antananarivo
This morning, have breakfast and program orientation. Receive a presentation by your guide on the history, economy, education and culture of Madagascar. Have lunch at the hotel followed by some time to rest. This evening have dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Relais Des Plateaux. (BLD)

July 14 - Andasibe
This morning, have breakfast, check out of the hotel and head to Ambohimanga for a visit to the Royal Hill, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The fun continues with a traditional lunch in an open-air restaurant accompanied by traditional dancing and singing by a local dance troupe. After lunch drive to Andasibe. En route admire the large roadside Raphia farinifera palms. Arrive at the hotel, check in and have dinner. Overnight at Andasibe Mot.DAO. (BLD)

July 15 - Andasibe
Rise early for breakfast and then enjoy a full day exploration of the Analamazaotra Special Reserve in Andasibe. The primary forests of Andasibe Mantadia contain a dense humid forest covered with lianas, moss, fern tress, orchids, and a vast array of wildlife; endangered and endemic species, 13 species of lemur, including the Indri lemur. Conservation of the forest is a critical challenge in this region due to the graphite mines inside the park; we will discuss conservation initiatives as it relates to natural resources and wildlife. Later today, take an evening walk in the Mitsinjo Analamazaota Forest Station. Explore the flora of the trial system and then as darkness descends, continue walking in search of nocturnal wildlife. With luck, have a chance to observe the locally endemic Goodman’s Mouse Lemur. Common encounters also include the Greater Dwarf Lemur, leaf-tailed geckos, and an impressive sample of Andasibe’s amphibian diversity such as the tree frogs Boophis viridis and Boophis pyrrhus. Return to the hotel for dinner. Overnight at Vakona Forest Lodge. (BLD)

July 16 - Andasibe
This morning, have breakfast while listening to the peculiar call of the endangered Indri, the largest living lemurs, reaching up to three feet tall! Andasibe is an ideal place to observe the Indri, as there are some Indri families there who have been habituated to humans. Considered a sacred animal in Madagascar, the Indri is the focus of several origin myths. In addition to the Indri, 13 lemur species can also be seen: woody lemur, grey bamboo lemur, diademed sifaka, brown lemur, red mouse lemur, red bellied lemur, black and white ruffed lemur, and aye aye. These forests are also home to 15 other mammal species, more than 100 types of birds, 50 species of reptiles, and 80 amphibian species. Overnight at Vakona Forest Lodge. (BLD)

July 17 - Antananarivo
This morning have breakfast and then visit Lemur Island, founded by Vakona Lodge to provide sanctuary to displaced Lemurs that were former pets and not suitable for reintroduction to the wild. The lemurs are isolated on the island, which is frequented by human visitors. The local guide will provide important information about this project that provides guests with the unique opportunity to touch and be photographed with lemurs. Check out of the hotel and transfer to the central part of Tana and have dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Royal Palissandre. (BLD)

July 18 - Antsirabe
This morning after breakfast, explore the capital city with a local historian and then drive to Antsirabe; en route visit the small town of Ambatolampy to visit the aluminum pot factory and experience a taste of Malagasy life. The “factory” is a small scale, mostly outdoor production of the pots that are used all over the island for cooking over open fires. It is surprising to learn that one craftsman can make as many as 20 of these robust pots per day. Visit the local market where the guide will explain the seasonality of foods available and how commerce works. Check in at the hotel and then have dinner joined by local Malagasy community members (with translation by the guide) for a discussion on women’s issues and programs. Overnight at Plumeria. (BLD)

July 19 - Ranomafana
After breakfast, transfer to the mountainous Ranomafana National Park, situated on the edge of Madagascar’s High Plateau with elevations ranging from 1,640 to 4,921 feet. Ranomafana contains a variety of forest and is part of the Rainforests of the Atsinanana World Heritage Site. Ranomafana has served as a model for subsequent parks and reserves in Madagascar and abroad. En route, visit a local workshop and discuss local commerce in rural Madagascar. Check in at the lodge and have dinner. Overnight at Centrest. (BLD)

July 20 - Ranomafana
This morning, after breakfast, hike in the 102,000 acre Ranomafana National Park. Please note that hikes are moderately difficult up hill hikes on the way in and often include off trail experiences. The rainforest is home to the critically endangered greater bamboo lemur, golden bamboo lemur, and 11 other lemur species, plus species of precious wood, palm trees, orchids, and carnivorous plants. This afternoon, have lunch at Centre ValBio (CVB), a world famous research station established in 2003 and managed by Stony Brook University. Run by Dr. Patricia Wright, the accomplished American primatologist and conservationist, the CVB focuses on biodiversity, community health, environmental arts, and reforestation. After lunch there will be a presentation on the flora, fauna, and research efforts at ValBio. This evening have dinner at the hotel and take a walk in search of nocturnal species on the outskirts of the national park along the roadside in search of chameleons and mouse lemur. Overnight at Centrest. (BLD)
JULY 21 - ISALO
After breakfast, head to the Great South and Madagascar’s most visited park, Isalo National Park. The drive is along some of the best roads in the country and the scenery is breathtaking. Expect to spend most of the day driving. En route stop at Anja Community Reserve, managed by the local community and a vital example of sustainable tourism in Madagascar. The reserve boasts a diverse variety of species, including a large population of ring-tailed lemurs. Explore the reserve then have lunch in a nearby restaurant. After a long day of driving, we check in to our hotel, have dinner, and relax in anticipation of Isalo National Park - over 200,000 acres of beautiful landscapes of sandstones, canyons, fauna and flora, natural swimming pools, and waterfalls. Overnight at Le Relais de la Reine. (BLD)

JULY 22 - ISALO
Spend the day exploring Isalo National Park, a continental sandstone plateau dating to the Jurassic times. This trek is full of varied landscapes with different forms of sandstones, and dotted with the famous dwarf baobab. After an hour walk with short climbs, stop to rest in a spectacular valley resembling the famous Death Valley. The overlook shows miles of azure sky, rocky desert, and winding greenery. Continue to the natural pool with its white sandy bottom and tropical vibe for a swim before making the trek back to the starting point. Transfer back to the hotel by sundown. Have dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Le Relais de la Reine. (BLD)

JULY 23 - IFATY
Today begins with a stop at Zombitse National Park prior to a visit at the Antsokay Arboretum, created in 1980 by amateur Swiss biologist Hermann Petignat. The 100-acre site is dedicated to conservation of the country’s endemic fauna. Continue to the seaside town of Toliara, situated near the Tropic of Capricorn. Overnight at Le Paradisier. (BLD)

JULY 24 - IFATY
We rise early today for a special sunrise walk in Reniala Private Reserve, managed by a local environmental association working to develop ecotourism in the area. Hike some of the trails to explore the spiny forest, a unique ecosystem which only occurs in the southwest Madagascar. The reserve contains more than 2,000 plant species, as well as impressively old baobabs - including one that is 41 feet in diameter. The reserve also has 65 species of birds; rare endemics such as the Red-capped Coua and the Blue Vanga can easily be seen. Return to the hotel for a late breakfast, and explore the beach or hotel amenities. This evening enjoy a farewell dinner under the Baobab trees. Overnight at Le Paradisier. (BLD)

JULY 25 - ANTANANARIVO
Today transfer back to Antananarivo. This evening have dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Relais Des Plateaux. (BLD)

JULY 26 - ANTANANARIVO
Airport departure day. Day room included. (BL)

JULY 27 - IN FLIGHT
Arrive back in the U.S.

**LAND PRICING**

$5,875

Your price includes:

- Internal airfare (Ifaty - Antananarivo)
- 14 nights' accommodations in Deluxe and Superior First Class hotels
- 41 meals (14 breakfasts, 14 lunches, 13 dinners)
- Non-alcoholic beverages with meals
- Sightseeing and activities as described, including entrance fees
- Holbrook Travel tour guide
- Private vehicle transportation throughout program
- Luggage handling, one bag per person
- Bottled water on the bus
- Carbon offset
- Departure tax
- All tips/gratuities

*Price does not include: international airfare, trip cancellation insurance, drinks purchased on own, or items of a personal nature.*
MEET YOUR HOST

Melanie King is Director of Development at the Tennessee Aquarium and a passionate advocate for lemurs. Born in Northern Ireland she has travelled throughout Ireland, Scotland and Wales with visits to the north of France and Spain. She has also spent many vacations in Canada, from British Columbia to Newfoundland and a few parts in between. Further afield, she attended a wedding in the Indian state of Rajasthan, has taken a cruise of the Greek Isles and enjoyed a full crossing of the Panama Canal. Her favorite place is still Ireland.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add $930 per person. A $200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a $100 cancellation fee until April 07, 2020 at which time non-refundable final payment is due.