



Antananarivo

POP 1.2 MILLION

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Best Places to Eat

- » La Varangue (p36)
- » Le Café de la Gare (p36)
- » Le Saka (p36)
- » Le Petit Verdot (p36)
- » La Terrasse du Glacier (p36)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hôtel Sakamanga (p31)
- » Résidence Lapasoa (p32)
- » La Varangue (p32)
- » Hôtel Tana-Jacaranda (p34)
- » Le Manoir Rouge (p43)

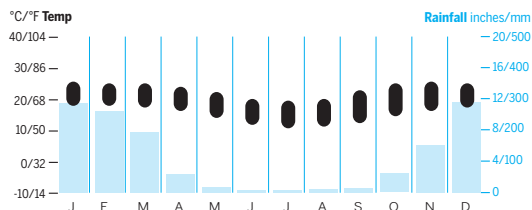
Why Go?

Tana, as the capital is universally known, is all about eating, shopping, history and day trips. The town centre itself, with its pollution and dreadful traffic, puts off many travellers from staying, but bypassing the capital altogether would be a mistake: Tana has been the home of Malagasy power for three centuries and there is a huge amount of history and culture to discover by visiting its sacred hills.

In the city itself, the Haute-Ville, with its beautiful colonial buildings, steep streets and cool climate (average altitude in Tana is 1400m), is a great place to wander about. There are also some excellent markets and shops that stock products and crafts from across the country at very competitive prices. Finally, Tana is *the* place in Madagascar to treat yourself to a fine meal: some establishments rival Europe's Michelin-starred restaurants, but without the price tag.

When to Go

Antananarivo



Jun–Aug Winter season in Tana, when night temperatures drop below 10°C.

Jul–Sep *Famadihana* season, when families exhume their ancestors' bones to communicate with them.

Oct The purple blossom of jacaranda trees lines the shores of Lac Anosy.

Antananarivo Highlights

- 1 Follow our walking tour through Antananarivo's lovely **Haute-Ville** and busy **Basse-Ville** (p33)
- 2 Spend an afternoon in the spiritual home of Malagasy identity, the royal hill of **Ambohimanga** (p43)
- 3 Splurge on dinner at **La Varangue** (p36)
- 4 Join a **guided tour** (p31) of Tana's sacred hills or the capital's surrounding villages
- 5 Shop till you drop (and haggle all you can) at **Marché Artisanal de La Digue** (p40)
- 6 Take a day trip to **Ambatolampy** (p46) in the highlands
- 7 Attend an afternoon of **hira gasy** (p39) – music, dancing and storytelling spectacles – in Tana or the surrounding villages

