



Southern Madagascar

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Best Places to Eat

- » Isalo Rock Lodge (p76)
- » Corto Maltese (p82)
- » Chez Cecile (p86)
- » Anakao Ocean Lodge (p90)
- » Auberge Peter Pan (p90)

Best Places to Stay

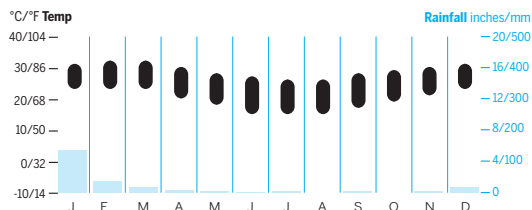
- » Bakuba (p82)
- » Anakao Ocean Lodge (p90)
- » Le Relais de la Reine (p76)
- » Le Relais d'Ambola (p91)
- » Satrana Lodge (p76)

Why Go?

Southern Madagascar is a wide-open adventure among some of nature's most dramatic forms. The stark desert canyons of Isalo rival those of Arizona. The western coast offers a massive coral reef, the fifth largest in the world. The cape is the last stop before Antarctica. And miles and miles of spiny forest contain the strangest and most formidable plants on Earth. There are also two scruffy cities, Tuléar (Toliara) and Fort Dauphin (Taolagnaro), but that is not why you came. The question is how to tackle a region of this size. For many, a lodge in Isalo and a slice of beach are enough. But for others, the south is the perfect recipe for off-road exploration, an episode of *Top Gear* you can write yourself. There are thousands of kilometres of dirt tracks, many of them reasonably good, with no one on them. Renting a 4WD isn't cheap, but everything else is, so get your expedition underway.

When to Go

Tuléar



Jul-Sep Whale-watching season on the Great Reef.

Sep-Nov Ideal four-wheeling season.

Dec-Mar Rainy season makes travel difficult; many dirt roads impassable.



Southern Madagascar Highlights

- 1** Snorkel, dive, fish, or paddle the **Great Reef** (p78)
- 2** Visit the sapphire mines of **Ilakaka** (p77): that ring will never look the same
- 3** Drive the coastal sand track through the spiny forest north of **Tuléar** (p84)
- 4** Arrive in style: take the speedboat from Tuléar to **Anakao** (p89)
- 5** Stand at the very tip of the 'eighth continent' at **Cap Sainte Marie** (p92)
- 6** Hang out with the surfers at **Lavanono** (p91)
- 7** See elephant bird eggshell fragments in **Faux Cap** (p92)
- 8** Take a dip in the Piscine Naturelle at **Parc National de l'Isalo** (p74)
- 9** Say hi to the lemurs at **Réserve de Nahampoana** (p96)
- 10** Lunch by the mouth of the Onilahy River in the remote town of **St Augustine** (p89)