



Southern Madagascar

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Auberge Peter Pan (p91)
- ➔ L'Estérel (p84)
- ➔ Isalo Rock Lodge (p78)
- ➔ Le Relais de la Reine (p78)
- ➔ Corto Maltese (p84)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Bakuba (p84)
- ➔ Anakao Ocean Lodge (p92)
- ➔ Talinjoo (p97)
- ➔ Isalo Rock Lodge (p78)
- ➔ Auberge Peter Pan (p91)

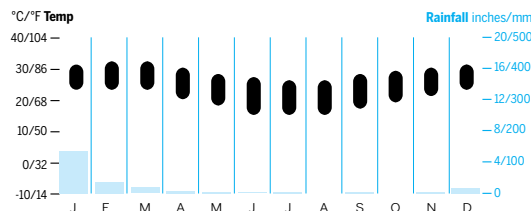
Why Go?

Southern Madagascar is a wide-open adventure among some of nature's most dramatic forms. The stark desert canyons of Parc National de l'Isalo rival those of Arizona. The west coast offers gorgeous coastal settlements that serve as gateways to the fifth-largest coral reef in the world. The cape is the last stop before Antarctica, and vast kilometres 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 come. 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. After all, away from the RN7 it's strictly 4WD country.

When to Go

Tuléar



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

Sep-Nov Ideal
4WDing season.

Dec-Mar Rainy season makes travel difficult away from the RN7. Many roads are impassable.



Southern Madagascar Highlights

1 Dive the **Great Reef** (p81), then go whale watching from Anakao

2 Take a dip in the Piscine Naturelle, spot lemurs and walk the canyons at **Parc National de l'Isalo** (p75)

3 Drive the sand track past a turquoise sea and to the spiny forest north of **Tuléar** (p82)

4 Visit the sapphire mines of **Ilakaka** (p80): that ring will never look the same

5 Stand at the tip of the 'eighth continent' at **Cap Sainte Marie** (p94)

6 Hang out with the surfers and marvel at the isolation at **Lavanono** (p94)

7 Do like Sir David

Attenborough and see elephant bird eggshell fragments in **Faux Cap** (p94)

8 Track down rare birds and nocturnal lemurs at **Parc National Zombitse-Vohibasia** (p80)

9 Say hi to the lemurs at **Réserve de Nahampoana** (p99)