

SPECIAL  
OFFER - SAVE  
**£300**  
PER PERSON

# WONDERS OF MADAGASCAR

AN EXPLORATION OF THE NATURAL WONDERS  
OF MADAGASCAR ABOARD THE MS SERENISSIMA

2<sup>ND</sup> TO 18<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2020



NOBLE CALEDONIA



The term ‘unique’ is an often overused description in the travel world but certainly applies to the island of Madagascar. The animals, plants, landscapes and people that make up this thousand mile long island are unlike anywhere else in the world. This extraordinary country long remained obscure as a destination and is still relatively unknown amongst even the most serious of travellers. There is minimal infrastructure in many parts of the island and for those wishing to explore the island in some depth, doing so by small ship, especially one as well-suited as the MS Serenissima is far preferable to exploring by any other means. Our small ship, with her fleet of Zodiacs for forays ashore allows us access to wonderful places denied to larger ships and with our onboard experts you can learn about and enjoy encounters with fabulous endemic wildlife in this immensely rich and timeless corner of the Indian Ocean.

In addition to the breathtaking scenery, the area abounds with strange and wonderful plants and trees, countless varieties of birds and abundant wildlife including the iconic lemur. The long separation from the African mainland has given rise to its amazing number of unique species of flora and fauna and its people are also unique having descended from Malay-Polynesian mariners who sailed from South East Asia between 1500 to 2000 years ago. Later arrivals included slaves from Africa, traders from Arabia, India and Portugal and more latterly French colonials. Our experienced expedition team will provide commentary on all that we see and will reveal the wonders of this immensely rich and timeless corner of the world.



## The Itinerary

**Day 1 London to Mauritius.** Fly by scheduled flight.

**Day 2 Mauritius.** Arrive this afternoon and transfer to the Westin Turtle Bay Resort for an overnight stay. The rest of the day is free to enjoy the hotel facilities before we meet for dinner in the hotel this evening.

**Day 3 Mauritius.** Enjoy breakfast in the hotel and a morning at leisure. After checking out we will take an island tour including the Trou-aux-Cerfs volcano, the Grand Bassin Lake and Black River Gorges before transferring to the MS Serenissima in the late afternoon. Enjoy Welcome Drinks and Dinner as we sail tonight.

**Day 4 Reunion.** We arrive at breakfast in Reunion where we have a choice of excursions. On a full day tour we will visit the central highlands where spectacularly rugged peaks of dormant or extinct volcanoes cradle huge amphitheatres known as cirques, where mountains tower to over

10,000 feet and beautiful waterfalls plummet hundreds of feet. The rich soil and mellow climate produce a lush and verdant landscape which is dotted with villages and towns with a uniquely French atmosphere. Fields of sugar cane and plantations of tropical fruits, vanilla and all manner of spices perfume the air. We will enjoy views from the Nez des Bouefs and see the Piton de la Fournaise crater. After enjoying a creole lunch in a local restaurant we will visit the “Cite du Volcan” museum. Alternatively, enjoy a morning tour to a vanilla plantation in St Andre where we learn about the history and culture of this integral part of Reunion’s heritage. We will also enjoy some free time in St Denis before returning to the MS Serenissima for lunch. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure before we set sail this evening.

**Day 5 At Sea.** Enjoy a day at sea as we cross to Madagascar.

**Day 6 Ile Sainte Marie, Madagascar.** Our first call in Madagascar is at Ile Sainte Marie,

also known as Nosy Bohara, a lush tropical island offering sandy beaches, coral reefs and natural beauty. This morning we will explore the capital of Ambodifotatra including the oldest church in Madagascar built in 1837 and the vibrant market. Over lunch we sail the short distance to La Crique and Natiora. Here we will use the Zodiacs to land on the beach from where our naturalists will lead some walks into the gardens and the small forest. Alternatively, enjoy the chance for a swim or snorkel off the beach.

**Days 7 & 8 Nosy Mangabe & Masoala National Park.** Over breakfast we arrive at Nosy Mangabe, a 520 hectare island reserve in Antongil Bay. Here we find one of the most diverse areas of virgin rainforest in Madagascar which has also been an important research centre since the mid-1960s when several aye-ayes and lemurs were released into the forest. We will use our Zodiacs to land on the beach next to the forest and organise a series of

nature walks looking at the varied trees, plants and ferns and also hope to spot chameleon, lizards and black and white ruffed lemur. For the birders, we will keep an eye out for Madagascar buzzard, kingfisher and paradise flycatchers. We remain in Antongil Bay overnight to visit Madagascar’s largest protected area, the Masoala National Park which comprises coastal rainforest, flooded forests and marsh and mangroves. Mammal species encountered include the red-ruffed lemur, the red-fronted brown lemur and the ring-tailed mongoose. The park is also home to various species of brightly coloured Mantella frogs and all manner of extraordinary chameleons. Masoala is also a refuge of the endangered Madagascar red-owl and Madagascar serpent eagle and many endemic bird species. We will run a series of walks for all levels during our time here whilst you also have the option to swim off the beach or perhaps visit the local village.



**Day 9 Diego Suarez.** After a morning at sea we will enter dramatic Diego Suarez, a stunning natural harbour with a cosmopolitan mix of inhabitants including Creoles, Indians, Chinese, Comorans and Arabs. This afternoon choose from a city tour visiting the Commonwealth Cemetery and Place Joffre, or the Malagasy Rain Forest at the Mount Amber National Park. Dividing into short and long walk parties we will go in search of lemurs and chameleons as we explore the rain forest. In the towering vegetation, we may spot several species of lemurs and chameleons as well as endemic birds, including parrots.

**Day 10 Nosy Hara.** Sail overnight over the northern tip of Madagascar where strangely shaped limestone islets dot the aquamarine-coloured sea. The expedition team will decide on the most suitable island for landing, such as Nosy Hara. Enjoy swimming off the beach or choose to explore the island on foot observing the unusual vegetation. Depending on weather conditions, we will also offer a Zodiac cruise around the islands and a chance to snorkel over the coral.

**Day 11 Nosy Tanikely.** We arrive this morning at the Nosy Tanikely Island Marine Reserve, an uninhabited island which offers snorkelling opportunities and wonderful beaches. We will take the chance to either swim in the clear waters or snorkel over the corals keeping an eye out for reef fish, turtles and morays. Alternatively, our naturalists will lead guided walks on the island where we may see the resident lemurs, fruit bats and hermit crabs and enjoy fantastic views from the lighthouse on the island's highest point. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea.

**Day 12 Mahajanga.** Mahajanga is a major port in northwest Madagascar situated on the Betsiboka River and is our base for a full day excursion to Ankarafantsika National Park. This deciduous forest is a haven for birds, lemurs and reptiles and on a choice of walks, we will explore with our guides. Eight species of lemur have been observed here including the famous Microcebus, the smallest primate in the world. Meanwhile over 120 species of birds nest here and we will keep an eye out for the Madagascan fish eagle and banded kestrel whilst the 44 species of reptile include chameleon, turtles and crocodiles that live in Lake Ravelobe. We will enjoy lunch in the park and in the afternoon there will be options to join further walks, watch for birdlife at the nearby lake or we have requested permissions to visit the Durrell breeding programme which was established at Ampijora and is dedicated to protecting the ploughshare tortoise, one of the most threatened breeds in the world.

**Day 13 At Sea.** Relax on board and enjoy the lecture programme as we continue our journey around the Madagascan coast.

**Day 14 Morondava.** From our anchorage off the town of Morondava, we will use the Zodiacs to land on the local beach. From here we have a choice of excursions to explore the local region. A half day morning tour will visit the Avenue de Baobabs. Of the eight baobab species in the world, six are endemic to Madagascar. Here we will see the *Adansonia grandieri* species with a row of 20 to 25 trees which border the gravel road. We will learn about the trees and their spiritual significance before returning to Morondava and exploring the local market. Alternatively, join a full day excursion to Kirindy Forest. Situated approximately a two hour drive from Morondava, we will

pass the Avenue de Baobabs as we travel north. Kirindy is a 10,000 hectare, dry deciduous forest, one of the most endangered in the world where the flora and fauna includes many endemic species. Here we find three species of baobab, many birds and reptiles including snakes, tortoises and lizards, eight species of lemur including the rare pale form marked lemur and other mammals including giant jumping rat, fosa and narrow-striped mongoose.

**Day 15 Tulear.** Our last call in Madagascar will be Tulear on the southwest coast. Arriving at lunchtime we have a choice of activities this afternoon. Maybe drive to the Antsokay Arboretum which is entirely devoted to conservation of the plants from the southwest of Madagascar and, after more than 30 years of hard work, offers a densely kept selection of flora presenting a typical sub-arid thicket with baobab trees towering

over the smaller plants. We will see the four hectare botanical garden which comprises over 900 species of plants of which 90% is endemic to the region. Alternatively visit the Reniala Private Reserve, a small area of just 60 hectares but containing a spiny forest which is unique to South Eastern Madagascar. The park is home to 200 plant species including baobabs as well as being a paradise for birders with sightings of paradise flycatchers, Madagascar hoopoe and Madagascar crested drongo.

**Day 16 Tulear to London.** Disembark this morning and transfer to the airport for our specially chartered flight to Johannesburg. Connect here with our scheduled onward flight to London. Alternatively, for further wildlife experiences join our extension to the Kruger National Park.

**Day 17 London.** Arrive this morning.

## PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

### SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £300 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

Cat	Cabin Description	Brochure Price	Special Offer Price
2	Standard Stateroom	£7695	£7395
3	Classic Stateroom	£7895	£7595
4	Superior Stateroom	£8095	£7795
5	Deluxe Stateroom	£8395	£8095
6	Junior Suite	£8495	£8195
7	Owner's Suite	£9295	£8995
8	Serenissima Suite	£9795	£9495
10	Standard Single	£7695	£7395

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Economy class scheduled air travel from London to Mauritius and Johannesburg to London • Specially chartered flight from Tulear to Johannesburg • Overnight hotel accommodation in Mauritius with dinner & breakfast • 13 nights aboard the MS Serenissima on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch and dinner on board • Expedition Team • Shore excursions • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes.  
**Not Included:** Travel insurance, visa.

## Post-Cruise Extensions

We are delighted to offer a choice of extensions after your voyage aboard the MS Serenissima. Join an extension to the wonderous Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe or enjoy some more incredible wildlife viewing, take our extension to Kruger National Park.

### Kruger National Park Extension

17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020



#### The Itinerary

**Day 1 Johannesburg South Africa.** Arrive by our chartered flight from Madagascar and overnight at a Johannesburg hotel. Meet tonight for dinner.

**Day 2 Johannesburg to Kruger National Park.** After breakfast in the hotel we return to the airport for our scheduled flight to Nelspruit's Kruger Airport. The Kruger National Park is South Africa's largest game reserve with nearly two million hectares of land that stretches for 352 kilometres (20,000 square kilometres) from north to south along the Mozambique border and is given over to an almost indescribable wildlife experience. This is the land of baobabs, fever trees, knob thorns, marula and mopane trees underneath which lurk the Big Five (buffalo, elephant, leopard, lion and rhino), the Little Five (buffalo weaver, elephant shrew, leopard tortoise, ant lion and rhino beetle), the birding Big Six (ground hornbill, kori bustard,

lappet-faced vulture, martial eagle, pel's fishing owl and saddle-bill stork) and more species of mammals than in any other African game reserve. We will transfer to the Lukimbi Safari Lodge where we enjoy lunch before embarking on our first game drive this afternoon. Return to the lodge for a traditional Boma dinner this evening.

**Day 3 Kruger National Park.** Hot and cold beverages will be waiting for us after our early morning wake up call. Enjoy a morning game drive showcasing the wildlife and nature of the southern region of Kruger National Park, followed by breakfast at the lodge. Bounded by the Crocodile River in the south and the Sabie River in the north, the southern region is also host to the jagged ridge of the Lebombo Mountains along the border to Mozambique, and the highest point in the park, Khandzalive. The valleys are home to trees rarely found in other parts of the Kruger Park, such as the Cape chestnut, coral tree and lavender fever-berry. After breakfast, embark on an optional morning bush walk, followed by free time and a leisurely lunch. Later this afternoon there is the option of another game drive before dinner at the lodge.

**Day 4 Kruger to London.** After another dawn game drive we will enjoy breakfast and check out of the lodge before driving to Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport for our short flight to Johannesburg. Connect here with our onward flight to London.

**Day 5 London.** Arrive this morning.

*Please note that places for the our Kruger extension are limited to just 20 guests so we recommend reserving your place as soon as possible.*

#### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£2295** Single: **£2595**

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Overnight accommodation in Johannesburg on a bed and breakfast basis • Dinner on day 1 • Scheduled air travel between Johannesburg and Kruger National Park • Two nights accommodation at the Lukimbi Safari Lodge on a full board basis including game drives • Gratuities • Transfers • Taxes. **Not Included:** Travel insurance.



### Victoria Falls Extension

17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020

#### The Itinerary

**Day 1 Johannesburg, South Africa.** Arrive by our chartered flight from Madagascar and overnight at a Johannesburg hotel. Meet tonight for dinner.

**Day 2 Johannesburg to Victoria Falls.** After breakfast in the hotel we return to the airport for our scheduled flight to Victoria Falls. On arrival we transfer to the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge and enjoy some free time to settle in before joining a sunset cruise on the Zambezi River. Return to the hotel for dinner.

**Day 3 Victoria Falls.** After breakfast we enjoy a guided tour of Victoria Falls. Known locally as Mosi-oa-Tunya (the smoke that thunders), tons of

water plunge over a chasm that is nearly two kilometres wide falling more than 100 metres to the Zambezi River below. The shower of spray and the thunderous sound of the water can be heard from miles around. The tour takes you to the best viewpoints of this iconic waterfall, one of the "seven wonders of the world", allowing you to soak up the powerful and enigmatic atmosphere of Victoria Falls. Return to the hotel and enjoy a free afternoon or maybe join an optional tour such as a helicopter ride over the falls or a game drive in the nearby Chamabonda or Zambezi National Parks. Tonight we will enjoy our final night in Africa with a traditional Boma dinner of traditional Zimbabwean dishes.

**Day 4 Victoria Falls to London.** Check out this morning and transfer to Victoria Falls Airport for our flight to Johannesburg. Connect here with our onward flight to London.

**Day 5 London.** Arrive this morning.

#### PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Twin: **£2095** Single: **£2295**

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Overnight accommodation in Johannesburg on a bed and breakfast basis • Scheduled air travel between Johannesburg and Victoria Falls • Two nights accommodation at the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge on a bed and breakfast basis • Gratuities • Dinner on days 1, 2 & 3 • Transfers • Taxes. **Not Included:** Travel insurance, visa, optional tours at Victoria Falls.

# MS SERENISSIMA



Harald Jarl Lounge



On Deck



The Restaurant

The charming MS Serenissima began her career as the Harald Jarl, cruising the Norwegian coastline and fjords. Since 2003, when she was extensively renovated, she has been operating as a classic cruise ship. Previously known as the MS Andrea, she was upgraded again in 2013 and started her new life as the MS Serenissima. With her small size she can navigate into small, remote ports inaccessible to the big cruise ships and appears an impressive sight when moored. With her fleet of Zodiacs, she is capable of both destination and expedition cruising. In December 2018, the vessel will once again undergo a significant refurbishment and, after a re-configuration of the deck plan will accommodate a maximum of just 95 guests.

## Your Cabin/Suite

Accommodating no more than 95 passengers, the cabins are attractively designed for comfort and convenience. All cabins are fully air conditioned with an en-suite bathroom with shower, (please note cabins 601-605 and 507 have a bath with shower attachment) and a selection of toiletries in addition to a hairdryer, robes and slippers. All cabins come equipped with telephone, flat screen television, safety deposit box and other thoughtful appointments. Bottles of still and sparkling water are provided and replenished daily. From December 2018, there will be eight different grades of cabin arranged over five decks, and all feature either windows or portholes. Because of the very nature of the ship, the cabins do vary in shape and size, adding to the vessel's overall charm.



## Your Dining

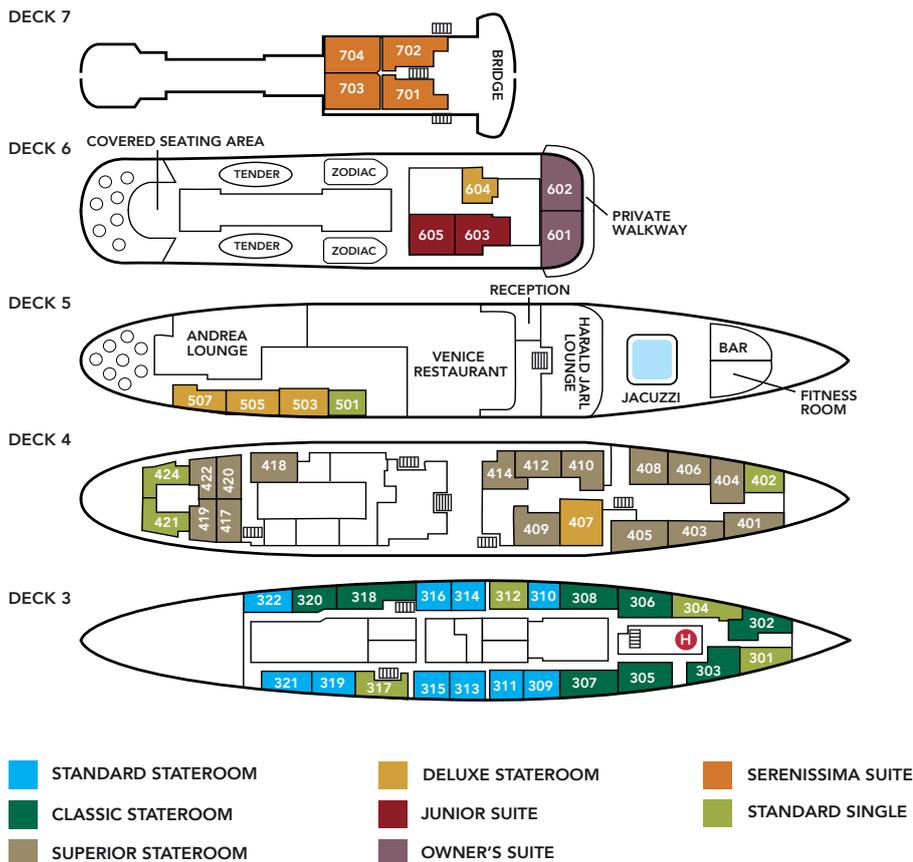
The free seating Venice Restaurant accommodates all guests in one sitting and, with its Deck 5 location, all of the tables benefit from great views. The picture windows also make the restaurant wonderfully light and airy. Breakfast is served buffet-style with cooked dishes available and eggs to order by the ship's accomplished chef. Lunch is also served buffet-style with hot

and cold dishes available. Dinner is served a la carte and is four courses, except at the Captain's Dinner, which is a six course affair. Where possible, local produce is sourced for an authentic dining experience. A choice of red or white wine, beer, soft drinks, and water is included at lunch and dinner. In good weather there are al fresco dining facilities available and tea and coffee are available around the clock in the Andrea Lounge.

## Your Space

The facilities on board include two lounges – the larger Andrea Lounge is comfortable and spacious and the smaller Harald Jarl Lounge is more intimate. There is also a small library and Wi-Fi is available at an extra cost throughout the vessel. The outside areas really are something special. A spacious observation deck allows 360 degree views of the passing scenery. From here, step down to the lido area with Jacuzzi and outside bar. The covered seating area at the back of Deck 6 is ideal for relaxing with a drink in hand. Perhaps, one of the best known and loved features of this vessel is its unique style. During the major refit in Sweden the then owners commissioned Swedish interior designers to create a Gustavian style interior. This bright Swedish 18th century influenced, country house style works particularly well on a vessel of this vintage, providing intimacy and a classic nautical sensibility often lacking in larger vessels.

## MS SERENISSIMA DECK PLAN & CABINS



NB. Please note cabin sizes vary in each category and measurements shown are approximate.



**DELUXE STATEROOM**  
(15 to 25 square metres)



**SUPERIOR STATEROOM**  
(11.5 to 18 square metres)



**CLASSIC STATEROOM**  
(14 to 19 square metres)



**STANDARD STATEROOM**  
(10 to 11.5 square metres)



**STANDARD SINGLE**  
(7 to 12.5 square metres)



During this voyage you will be visiting out of the way destinations and will be accompanied by an expedition team. Landings and excursions will be made by Zodiac landing craft. This cruise will appeal to the more adventurous and those who enjoy the natural world.



**SERENISSIMA SUITE**  
(25 square metres)



**OWNER'S SUITE**  
(22 square metres)



**JUNIOR SUITE**  
(21 square metres)

# NOBLE CALEDONIA

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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.  
Cover image: Magnificent panther chameleon