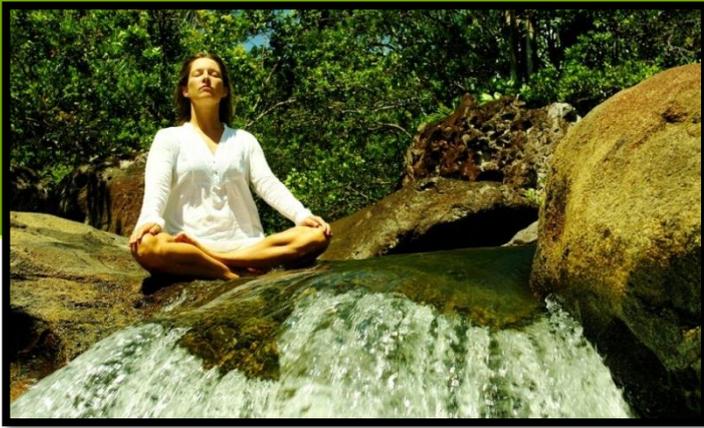




MASOALA FOREST LODGE/ YOGA RETREAT/ MADAGASCAR



Where the rainforest meets the sea

Monday 23 June 2014 – Monday 30 June 2014

YOGA IN THE RAINFOREST

The idea for a yoga retreat came from our guests: "This place is ideal for yoga".

Now we are excited to offer the first Yoga Retreat in the Masoala Forest Lodge - a place designed as an eco-haven to touch lightly on the earth, to allow an intimate experience of this unique environment and all the diverse species that call it home, to provide a sense of adventure and conservation.

Nestled between pristine rainforest and coral rich sea, accessible only by boat, Masoala Forest Lodge is surrounded by unspoiled nature; a place truly primordial, a paradise of pristine, wild, exotic & beauty.

Masoala Forest Lodge - not just a lodge in the rainforest – but an authentic experience - an interactive journey of information, education and inspiration

Your journey begins with a flight to the small town of Maroantsetra where you board the motorboat for the exciting voyage across Antongil Bay, a World Heritage Site and breeding ground for humpback whales, to the Masoala Peninsula. This densely forested peninsula contains the largest remaining block of protected rainforest and harbours an important part of the fauna and flora of Madagascar, including a wealth of rare and unique species.

From the comfort of the lodge you explore the wildlife and beauty of this natural paradise with two Yoga classes on offer every day and optional activities including forest walks, snorkelling, kayaking, traditional pirogues, swimming in the sea and the crystal clear streams, whale watching and experiencing sustainable life in the rainforest with the local Malagasy community.

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THE LODGE

The six palm thatched tree-houses are elevated on stilted wooden platforms, to provide uninterrupted views of forest canopy and sea and allowing visitors to experience the forest from the perspective of the lemurs and birds. This elevation from the undergrowth is also luxurious and maximizes privacy and natural ventilation from all sides.



Using fast-growing indigenous Ravenala and Raffia palm, bamboo and sustainably-sourced indigenous timber, the tree-houses are inspired by the traditional designs of the local Betsimisaraka tribe in design and construction, with steep thatched roofs to aid in the run-off of rainwater and allow for the natural cooling of the internal spaces.

Natural lighting and ventilation has been elegantly provided by the exclusion of exterior walls and the inclusion of a canvas and mesh inner tent, creating a bug free and private sanctuary that is extremely energy efficient.

Inside the tent, the furnishing and layout is an exercise in restrained luxury and sophisticated design, providing all creature comforts without excess.

The two communal areas are also stilted, thatched and open-plan, providing natural lighting and ventilation in a minimalistic and efficient style.

The beach house, with views over the beach and Antongil Bay, serves as a communal dining, lounge and bar area.



The sea deck is spectacularly sited on the rocks overhanging the sea, with wrap around views of the sea and forested coastline and the fish below. This deck provides the perfect venue for yoga class and will be used for sundowners, to enjoy a massage, or just relax in a hammock and take in the unrivalled view of rainforest meeting sea.

The wholesome three course meals are catered to all tastes, with organic produce from the lodge gardens and fresh rainforest fruits and seafood provided by the local community. Fresh wood-oven baked bread and snacks, fruit juice, local teas and infusions from the rainforest and locally grown and roasted coffee are always available.

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YOGA

ABOUT BRIGITTA TUMMOM - Senior Iyengar Yoga Teacher

Brigitta: "Yoga has been part of my journey for many years and it is a way of life. It is an on-going adventure of exploration of mind, body and breath. Yoga is a meditation in action and a beautiful way to connect us more with our inner self, with our fellow human beings and all of life. I love to share this passion and it is a privilege to be teaching this tradition and to see the deep joy and transformation that this discipline brings."

Brigitta is the past chair of the BKS Iyengar Yoga Institute of Southern Africa and is currently involved in its Teacher Training Programme.

Besides teaching regular classes in Holland and later in Switzerland, she also ran workshops in Denmark, Ireland and Greece. She moved to Cape Town in 1990, where she has been teaching regular classes and retreats.

Find more information about Brigitta Tummom on her website www.yogapoise.co.za

YOGA SESSIONS

There will be two yoga sessions per day, each 1 1/2 - 2 hours in duration, morning and late afternoon. There will be sessions on the beach, on the deck over the water and in the forest. This will deepen and enrich the sense of joy and belonging in life that comes from doing yoga.



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WILDLIFE OF MASOALA

Nature lovers will be in paradise at Masoala Forest Lodge. The primary rainforest is home to the gorgeous Red-ruffed Lemur – one of the planet's most dazzling mammals! White-fronted Brown Lemurs are common in the coastal forest and Dwarf, Mouse and Woolly Lemurs are regularly seen on night walks.

Madagascar is known for its Chameleons and some of the most impressive examples are found at Masoala. Brightly coloured Panther Chameleons are regularly seen whilst it will probably be one of the sharp eyed guides who points out the tiny Stump-tailed Chameleons. Barely a few centimetres in size these diminutive dwellers of the leaf litter compare dramatically to the enormous Parson's Chameleon – the planet's largest chameleon.

The spectacular rainforest at Masoala is one of Madagascar's best birding spots. Sightings of the incredible Scaly and Short-legged Ground-Rollers are regular. Mixed species flocks can contain an incredible diversity of Vangas – the islands most celebrated bird family. The unbelievable Helmet Vanga being the star of this show whilst the much scarcer Bernier's Vanga is a tantalizing possibility.

Other desirable endemics include Brown Mesite, Madagascar Wood Rail, Rufous Vanga and Red-breasted Coua. The lucky few may be treated to the very rare Madagascar Serpent Eagle, thought to be extinct until re-discovered at Masoala. Many of the more common Madagascar endemics, such as Blue Coua, Madagascar Green Pigeon, Lesser and Greater Vasa Parrot, France's Sparrow hawk and Rainforest Scops Owl, can be regularly seen in the lodge grounds.

A huge diversity of life also dwells below the warm waters of Antongil Bay. Snorkelling the reefs in front of the lodge will produce a colourful selection of hard and soft corals, reef fishes and other marine life. Green Turtles and Bottlenose Dolphins are often seen and during the months of July and August the bay is a breeding ground for Hump-backed Whales. Sightings of these magnificent animals are regular and special whale watching trips can be arranged.

The Masoala rainforest is also home to many valuable timber trees, such as Ebony and Rosewood, and rare palm species, including the biggest palm in Madagascar, the "Red-ruffed lemur palm".

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COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

The small village of Ambodiforaha and their rice fields are a short walk from the lodge and the friendly people of the Betsimisaraka tribe are eager to provide an insight into their traditions and techniques of subsistence farming and life in the forest. The Masoala Forest Lodge is committed to a program of community benefit to assist these people to maintain their sustainable lifestyle in this protected environment.

Only local Malagasy craftsmen and artisans were commissioned for the construction and furnishing of the lodge, demonstrating the local craftsmanship and providing job creation.

The lodge serves as a living cultural museum, with traditional artefacts and utilitarian objects provided by the local communities in daily use and on display, providing a sharing of cultural information with the guests and a sense of pride and ownership for the local community

CONSERVATION

This vast rainforest of the Masoala Peninsula contains the largest tract of pristine rainforest remaining in Madagascar and being especially species-rich, Masoala is known in conservation as the “hot spot within the hotspot” of bio-diversity that is Madagascar.

This rainforest is home to primates, carnivores, birds and reptiles and countless plant species, of which over ninety percent are endemic to Madagascar.

Madagascar has the richest primate diversity of any country on the planet. Lemurs, a group of primates that is endemic to the island of Madagascar, are threatened by habitat destruction and poaching for the bush meat trade.

If not protected, logging or slash and burn farming could eliminate half this forest and it's wildlife by mid-century. Yet, these are the lungs of the world.

With this in mind, the Masoala Forest Lodge seeks to complement the efforts of Madagascar National Parks, the Wildlife Conservation Society and Zoo Zurich in the conservation of this rainforest and the Antongil Bay by embracing a philosophy of sustainable, earth-friendly design, construction, operation and maintenance, while providing an alternative and sustainable source of income to the local population

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SUGGESTED ITINERARY

"Masoala Adventure" – 7 Night package:

Day 01

- You are met on arrival at Maroantsetra airport and transfer to the boat for the voyage across Antongil Bay to the Masoala Forest Lodge. The journey takes around two hours, with the possibility of dolphin and whale sightings in season and the forested mountains of the Masoala Peninsula as a dramatic backdrop to the destination.
- On arrival at the lodge beach, you are welcomed ashore and settle into camp.
- After freshening up in the accommodation, lunch is served in the beach house.
- The afternoon activities include the first two hour yoga class and exploring the beaches and coastal forest in the lodge area and maybe enjoying a swim in the sea.
- Sundowners around the fire on the beach and dinner in the lodge.

Day 02:

- Awaken early for coffee on the sea deck before the morning yoga class.
- A relaxed breakfast on the sea deck before departing on a walk down the coast and up into the primary rainforest in search of the Red-ruffed lemurs, Dwarf chameleons and other wildlife endemic to this forest.
- After some hours in the dense forest with the giant hardwoods and majestic tree ferns return to camp by boat for a well-earned lunch and rest.
- The afternoon activity could be a second yoga class or a snorkel on the nearby coral reefs, rich in diversity, or a guided sea kayak to the look-out rock at the "Secret Cove" for the sun set, with the chance of a close encounter with Bottlenose Dolphin or Green Turtle.
- Dinner in the lodge.

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Day 03:

- Awaken early for coffee on the sea deck before the morning yoga class.
- A relaxed breakfast on the sea deck before departing on a guided walk through the coastal forest, in search of more birds and mammals.
- After a couple of hours walk, take a welcome swim in the crystal clear water of the cascades of the Tampolo River at the foot of the forested mountains.
- Return to camp on a traditional dugout canoe paddled down the shady river.
- After lunch, take part in the second yoga class or enjoy a relaxed afternoon swimming on the private beaches or snorkelling on the coral reefs.
- A guided nocturnal walk with the intriguing possibility of seeing some of the secretive nocturnal wildlife such as Leaf-tailed Gecko, Dwarf and Mouse lemurs and maybe even the elusive Aye-Aye.
- Dinner in the lodge.

Day 04:

- Awaken early for coffee on the sea deck before the morning yoga class.
- A relaxed breakfast on the sea deck before departing on an exploration by sea kayak or boat of the calm water and fantastic rock formations of Tampolo point. Stop for a swim on the beach at the "Sacred Island" and then kayak into a pristine mangrove and forested river, with the chance of spotting Blue-spotted stingrays in the shallow water or perhaps the Lesser bamboo lemurs crossing the river.
- After a picnic lunch on the beach, return to camp by kayak or boat, for the second yoga session or an evening of entertainment and high spirits with the visit of the traditional Malagasy music and dance group from the local village.
- Sundowners around the fire on the beach and dinner in the lodge.

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Day 05:

- Awaken early for coffee on the sea deck before the morning yoga class.
- A relaxed breakfast on the sea deck before departing by boat on the voyage through the Tampoilo Marine Reserve to the mouth of the Antalavia River. The forested coastline viewed from the boat is stunningly beautiful, with countless deserted beaches and calm blue sea.
- On arrival on the beach at Antalavia, board the dingy for the short paddle in the estuary to the cascades of the Antalavia River. Here refreshingly cool, clear water forms perfect swimming pools, over-hung by the lush forest with a chance of seeing White-fronted brown lemurs leaping through the canopy.
- After a picnic lunch on the beach and a short rest under the trees, you have the choice of doing the second yoga session on the beach or returning to camp on foot with your guide.
- Sundowners around the fire on the beach and dinner in the lodge.

Day 06:

- Awaken early for coffee on the sea deck before the morning yoga class.
- A relaxed breakfast on the sea deck before departing on a guided walk through the coastal forest trails to the rice fields and farm land of the nearby village of Ambodiforaha. This is an opportunity to experience the local Betsimisaraka culture and sustainable way of life in the rainforest. You can visit their traditional houses and kitchens and perhaps see baskets, mats or hats being woven, vanilla, cloves, coffee or rice being prepared and pop in for a quick visit to the village school, co-funded by the lodge.
- After lunch at the lodge, you have the option of the second yoga session or a stroll down the beach to the Tampoilo River and a peaceful pirogue trip on the cool shady river to observe the birdlife.
- Sun downers around the fire on the beach and dinner in the lodge.

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Day 07:

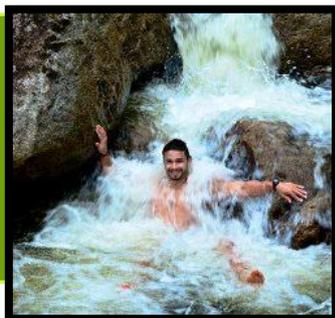
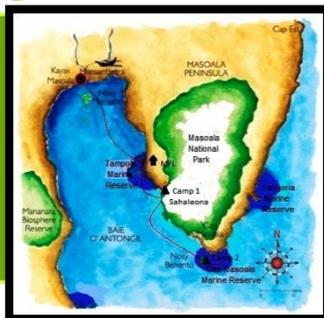
- Awaken early for coffee on the sea deck before the morning yoga class.
- A relaxed breakfast on the sea deck before passing the day as you choose – a second yoga session in the afternoon, or perhaps sun bathing on one of the private beaches, or birding and mammal spotting on the private forest trails at the lodge, or relaxing with a good book and a cold drink in a hammock on your private veranda or the view deck overhanging the sea.
- Alternatively, take the opportunity to return to the primary forest in search of more endemic wildlife.
- Sundowners around the fire on the beach and dinner in the lodge.

Day 08:

- An early breakfast on the sea deck.
- Board the boat for the voyage to the island of Nosy Mangabe.
- Once ashore on the densely forested island, explore the network of trails with your guide with a chance of spotting Black and white-ruffed and White-fronted brown lemurs, leaf-tailed geckos and perhaps a Madagascar tree boa. You can view the traditional Malagasy tombs in a cave and the engraved rocks on the "Plage des Hollandaise".
- After a picnic lunch on the beach, you board the boat once more for the voyage to Maroantsetra and transfer to the airport in time for the flight out to Antananarivo.



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RATE: 1755 € per person sharing, single supplement 527 €

INCLUDED:

- Boat transfers from Maroantsetra to the Masoala Forest Lodge, return
- Accommodation on full board basis in the Masoala Forest Lodge
- All meals, snacks, water, teas and coffee and soft drinks in the Masoala Forest Lodge (except alcoholic beverages which are available on surcharge)
- Laundry at Masoala Forest Lodge
- Activities (guided forest walks in primary and coastal rainforest and to local village/nocturnal walk in coastal forest/ sea kayaking and snorkeling/ river excursion by traditional dug-out canoe/ private forest trails and beaches at the Masoala Forest Lodge for self- exploration)
- National Park entrance fees and official forest guide for Masoala National Park

EXCLUDED:

- Flights to and from Maroantsetra
- Gratuities/Tipping
- Curios and personal purchases



www.masoalaforestlodge.com



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