



COMOROS
THE PREFUMED ISLAND

May 06 - May 11, 2024
Led by Tour Manager, David William

Comoros is a group of islands on the northern end of the Mozambique Channel off the east coast of Africa that receives very few visitors. This tropical island paradise is a unique destination where one can escape the crowds and familiarity of the well-known tourist paths offering an exotic blend of rich history, strong culture, magnificent landscapes, and exceptional biodiversity. The largest island, Grande Comore, is home to Mount Karthala, the country's highest point offering incredible scenery and opportunities to discover intriguing geographical formations, hiking, and endemic bird watching. The smallest island, Mohéli, has an excellent variety of wildlife encounters, including lemurs, Livingstone bats, whales, and sea turtles, and is the best place to take part in fun and exciting activities such as boat tours, snorkeling, village walks, hiking, and kayaking.

Ihab Zaki
Managing Director

Monday, May 06

Arrive in Moroni (COMOROS)



Upon arrival in **Moroni**, the capital city of **Grande Comore**, meet the local representative and transfer to *Golden Tulip Hotel or similar*, which is nestled amid seven acres of tropical gardens with stunning ocean views for check-in and overnight.

Note: Standard check-in time is 3:00 pm. If you arrive on May 05 or the early morning of May 06, an extra hotel night needs to be booked.

Tuesday, May 07

Moroni (Grande Comoros)



Begin the day with a walking tour through the historic town of **Itsandra**, one of the oldest on the island, dating back to the 14th century. The town was the cradle of the local Swahili civilization and, for a long time, the capital of Ngazidja. Out of the town's historical attractions, the most impressive is a 17th-century **fortress** once linked to the city by a long, walled corridor. Some sections of the ramparts that surrounded the walled city are still visible. Next, explore the old **Arab Quarter**, including the **Mausoleum of Al Habib Omar Bin Sumeit** and several other **mosques** that date back to the 14th century. The town has several 17-18th century **Public Squares** surrounded by **monumental gates**. Stop at the **Handicrafts Shop** to admire fine local woodcarving and other arts and crafts examples. Head south through Moroni to **Singani Village** in the afternoon, the site of the most recent lava flow that destroyed the village in 1977.

Get a bird's-eye view from above the village, see the route the lava took, and learn how the village was rebuilt using the lava as raw materials on top of the flow. After the tour given by an expert guide living in this village, we will be welcomed into her home to meet her family and have an in-depth experience of typical Comorian life. Learn how to cook a typical meal and interact with the hosts while dining on our creations. Those interested in beauty treatments, such as henna and traditional Comorian sandalwood facemasks, can try them.

Take a short drive to **Iconi Town**, an ancient sultan capital that lies in the shadow of a steep volcanic cone from where many women jumped to their death to avoid enslavement by Malagasy pirates in the 1800s.

The ancient **Kaviri Djewe Sultan's Palace**, built from coral and lava stone, lies at the center of the town. At the medina, wander the **bangwes**, historic open spaces, or public squares where the men still meet to debate and make decisions for the community. **Funi Aziria Banwe** is the greatest example of a 17th-century bangwe. On the outskirts of town lies **Lake Marabou**, a tidal salt-water pool offering a secluded spot to view the mangroves and sea birds with **Mt. Karthala** towering above it all. Return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B,L)**

Wednesday, May 08

Moroni - Moheli



After breakfast, transfer to the airport for our late morning flight to **Moheli**, a UNESCO biosphere island, to discover lemurs, coral reefs, whales, manta rays, sea turtles, and deserted islands. Upon arrival, transfer to *Laka Lodge or similar* for check-in, enjoy lunch, and have a chance to relax on the Lodge's private beach. Later, explore the **village** with one of the residents as the local guide, visit **local homes**, and meet the villagers with their beautiful, welcoming smiles. Stroll through the surrounding gardens to see how local food is produced and visit an artisanal **Ylang-Ylang Farm** to learn about the process of growing and distilling this essential oil, which is the base of Chanel #5 and other famous perfumes. Return to the *Lodge* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Thursday, May 09

Moheli



Embark on an exciting excursion by boat to explore the **Marine Park** and its picturesque islands. Stop off on a deserted beach to explore this private hideaway and for those who like, spend some time **snorkeling** for amazing close-up views of the rich marine life just a few yards from the beach. Return to the *Lodge* for lunch, then **swim** in the

lagoon, and possibly encountering hawksbill turtles feeding on seagrasses. Look out for the local family of lemurs that come down to the *Lodge* grounds for photo opportunities! Dinner and overnight at the *Lodge*. **(B,L,D)**

Friday, May 10

Moheli - Moroni



After an early breakfast, transfer to the airport for our late morning flight back to **Moroni**, and upon arrival, head to the northern part of the island to discover the geological features created through countless millennia of volcanic activity. These are some of Grande Comoro's most intriguing features, with incredible scenery and local myths about their remarkable history. Visit the legendary **Trou du Prophete**, and then enjoy a seafood lunch under the baobabs on the shores of the **Indian Ocean**. Continue to **Dragon's Back (Dos du Dragon)**, a moss-covered rocky outcrop resembling a mythical creature resting in the waters. Stop at **Lac Sale**, a stunning turquoise saltwater lake in a volcanic crater called the "bottomless lake." Visit the **Miraculous Mosque**, a sacred pilgrimage site for the locals, then transfer to the *Golden Tulip Resort or similar* for check-in and overnight. **(B,L)**

Saturday, May 11

Moroni - USA

OR Continue to Malawi



Transfer to the airport for your flight back to the US **(B)**
OR continue to **Malawi**.

*The program is also subject to changes based on the schedule of internal flights within the country".
"We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes when/if needed meet the needs of our clients".*



Tour Remarks:

Travelling to Comoros which is a small nation island that is underdeveloped and untouristed requires a combination of patience and a sense of humor. Visitors must be aware that there are sometimes challenges with infrastructure and maintenance can be of a lower standard than western one. Also the attitudes of the locals may be different and more relaxed when it comes to resolving issues and that requires a higher tolerance level.

Given that the Comoros does not receive many tourists, and how local people are not particularly used to tourism, and while not unfriendly, they are often showing up as reserved. While the Comoros may not have the type of "wow" sites like in other experiences of East Africa, but more than makes up for this with its easy-going nature and beautiful landscapes. The sheer sense of adventure in being in one of the least visited countries in the world has great appeal.

Flights between islands can be frequently delayed and cancelled while boat schedules can also change, which may in turn require us to make modifications to the itinerary and this requires a good degree of flexibility and some patience. In addition to this, local guides are young in this field of tourism, so their experiences are limited, and they need more practice with international tourists to catch up with their neighboring countries in Africa. Hence, despite our best efforts, the experience can at times be a little 'unpolished'. This is part of travelling in destinations such as this, but it's important to arrive with the right expectations when travelling here.



Tour Cost (Land Only): \$2,495.00

Per person sharing in double occupancy

Single Supplement: \$395.00

Price based on group size minimum of 4 participants and maximum of 10 participants

Trip Grade: II Lodging Level: ***

every imaginable tour from remote, rugged expeditions to overland African journeys to luxury yachts in the Mediterranean. Leading groups and experiencing their excitement as we travel together is the best part of my job.

This path has given me the opportunity to visit 50 States and over 160 countries on all seven continents. My passion for travel and my tour leading skills and my love for Africa are the perfect mix that equips me to share this special tour with you. I look forward to meeting you!

About your Tour Manager, David William... For as long as I can remember, I always had a deep-rooted need to travel. After graduating from university with a degree in hospitality & tourism management that included two years abroad, one in Oxford, England and the other at École Hôtelière in Lausanne, Switzerland my career as a hôtelier was on a successful track, but I longed to get away. Twenty years ago, I finally found my niche as a travel consultant and tour leader. During the last two decades, I have had the opportunity to organize and lead groups worldwide. I have organized



Tour Includes:

- Airport/Hotel Airport Transfers.
- Accommodation in standard first-class hotels and lodges or similar.
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Transportation by 4-WD Land cruiser.
- Bottled water during touring days and Soft drinks, juices, or water with meals.
- English-speaking guide or naturalist/assistant during all tours and safaris.
- Flights Moroni-Moheli-Moroni.
- All entrance fees to mentioned sites, activities, and boat excursion.
- Escort of tour manager (provided minimum number of travelers is reached).

Trip Grade:

II Active: Some hikes, slightly more demanding walks at or to sites, few elevations, comfortable but busy schedule and some long rides.

Lodging Level:

***** Superior:** Lodges and hotels with additional amenities, refined service, and comfort level acceptable to western standards. (3 or 4 stars)

Tour does not include:

- International airfare in and out of Comoros.
- Comoros Visa (upon arrival – currently \$35 - subject to change).
- Alcoholic beverages with or without meals and Meals not mentioned.
- Any required pre arrival & pre departure PCR tests.
- Items of a personal nature (camera fees, laundry, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules or misconnections.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Gratuities to guide, assistants, porters, hotel staff, etc.
- Travel protection insurance (Highly recommended).

