

ADVENTURES IN MADA

Bi-monthly Newsletter



NEW FOOD

There is no competition when it comes to my favorite food here. Samosas (also called Sambos) are a common snack. Their shell is similar to an egg roll and can be filled with anything! My personal favorite is filled with ground zebu (beef), onion, and some seasonings.

LEARN MALAGASY

There are plenty of **andrango** or lizards in Madagascar! I believe this little guy is technically a gecko, but I'm not sure. They receive different reactions from everyone. Personally, I love them because they eat the bugs (which I do not love!)

NEW FRIEND(S)*

This is Madame Bao, she is the General Secretary of the FBL (women's ministry). Madame Bao and I connected instantly and continue to grow close as we help each other with our respective native languages. She always tells me "you are my daughter, not by birth, but by my heart"

FAVORITE VIEW

This is a little different than the views that I've posted in the past. In December, the Madagasgals had our first retreat in Andasibe. It is an Eastern rain forest most commonly known for lemurs, but the flowers there were gorgeous! It was nice to get out of the city and take in some of the flora that Mada is famous for!



NEW EXPERIENCE

Christmas in Mada

I have always loved Christmas Eve. It's usually when my family gets together, it's my favorite church service, and it feels like Christmas is at its peak. So, I was thrilled to be invited to spend Christmas Eve with Pastor Haja and his family.

I went over and was greeted by a smiling Pastor Haja who excitedly told me they had appetizers (I told him my family ate appetizers on Christmas Eve) just like I would have in America and ushered me into the living room. The chairs were decorated with Santa hat coverings, there was a tiny Christmas tree in the corner, and despite the heat; it felt like Christmas time. The time before we left for church consisted of Herry teaching me to play guitar (I wasn't very good), Pastor Haja playing Christmas music, and a lot of laughter.

Church that night included the usual Christmas Eve service, but then it turned into an open mic night! When our choir got up to sing I was confused when I got handed a candle...none of our rehearsals included candles. Then, towards the end of our set, we lit our candles and started singing Silent Night; something I've done at St. John for as long as I can remember. It was a powerful moment where I felt linked to my community here and my community back home at the same time.

Christmas here is beautiful in a different way than it is in America. Here everyone has the day off (not common for Madagascar) and just enjoys each other; or as Diamondra put it "The Malagasy Christmas present is time."



Our Christmas table!



Herry posing with his guitar



Photo opp with Pastor Haja and Janet!



Men's group at the mic!

KEEPING UP WITH THE MADAGASGALS

Thank you for walking on this journey with me and for your continued support. I can feel the strength of your positive vibes and prayers. I ask that you continue to send them to not just me, but all the Madagasgals.

If you want more of the Madagasgals (and let's be honest here, who wouldn't), I encourage you to check out my blog at:

adventuresinmada.wordpress.com or my Instagram: [adventuresinmada](https://www.instagram.com/adventuresinmada) as well as the blogs of my cohort listed below!

****Shout out to Pastor Kirsten for the photo of me and Madame Bao!***

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We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us

~Joseph Campbell~

Madagasgals Blogs:

Arin Liszka:
arinsmadagascaradventure.wordpress.com

Annika Johnson:
goingoutgoingin1819.wordpress.com

Kasey Shultz:
adventuresofspecialk.wordpress.com

Kristen Slaybaugh:
slaybaughkm.wixsite.com

Rachel Peterson:
missionmada.home.blog