

Welcome to Mauritius, Réunion & Seychelles

Prediction for your arrival: it's a sunny, 29°C in the air and water. Soon you're lazing on a white-sand beach with a tropical fruit juice in hand – the best cure for winter blues.

Life's a Beach

The Seychelles (and, to a lesser extent, Mauritius) is home to perhaps the sexiest beaches in the world. They're so consistently perfect that it's hard not to become blasé about them. There's nothing better to do than spend days under the bright tropical sun on the beach, swinging in hammocks, splashing in the sea and sipping a cocktail. Even Réunion, which doesn't fit the cliché of a sun-soaked Edenic paradise, has a few good stretches of sand.

From Beach to Adventure

Believe it or not, a day will come during your stay when you decide you've had enough with the beach lounging. Mauritius, Rodrigues, Réunion and the Seychelles aren't just about pampering and relaxation; when it comes to recharging adrenaline levels, they have big surprises up their sleeves. Hike the footpaths that criss-cross the islands, ranging from meandering trails to trudges up mountains; scuba dive in enticing warm waters, marvelling at more than 300 species of fish (and the odd shipwreck or two); catch the wind and waves on a kiteboard; take a boat tour; explore magnetic canyons; or discover the countryside on horseback.

To Luxe or Not to Luxe

It's hardly surprising that the Seychelles and Mauritius are choice destinations for honeymooners: here the world's most exclusive hotels compete with each other to attain ever-greater heights of luxury, from personal butlers and private lap pools to in-room massages and pillow menus – not to mention sensuous spas. But if this is not in your budget, don't let that dissuade you from buying a ticket to these destinations. Small, family-run hotels, bed and breakfasts and self-catering establishments offer a closer-to-the-culture experience at prices that won't require you to re-mortgage the house.

Cultural Gems

The biggest mistake anyone could make would be to assume that these islands are for beach holidays, nature and adrenaline only – there's so much more to each destination that any trip will be an unforgettable and exciting experience, whether it be exploring Mauritius' fascinating colonial past in its myriad mansions or museums, attending a music festival or a fire-walking ceremony, visiting an old sugar factory or a restored Creole villa, or simply soaking up the atmosphere of a picturesque village.



Why I Love Mauritius, Réunion & Seychelles

By Jean-Bernard Carillet, Author

On my first trip to Mauritius, I was blown away by the wealth of religious buildings and the rich Indian cultural heritage. On Rodrigues, I'll never forget the sensational dives in La Passe St François. On subsequent trips I did plenty of hiking in Réunion, including a memorable week across Cirque de Mafate. The Seychelles? After four trips there, I confess I have a soft spot for La Digue, because life is so unhurried on this tiny island, it's affordable and the beaches are just incredible. My favourite is Anse Cocos. See you there!

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