



# Rodrigues

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## Best Places to Eat

- Nyeusi (p163)
- Le Marlin Bleu (p163)
- Mazavaro (p164)
- Aux Deux Frères (p163)
- Cases à Gardenias (p164)

## Best Places to Stay

- Tekoma (p162)
- Bakwa Lodge (p162)
- Cases à Gardenias (p161)
- La Belle Rodriguaise (p162)
- Chez Bernard & Claudine (p162)

## Why Go?

Blissfully isolated over 600km northeast of the mainland, this tiny volcanic outcrop surrounded by a massive turquoise lagoon is a stunning mountainous gem that barely feels connected to its big sister, Mauritius, let alone the wider world.

Often billed as the 'Mauritius of 25 years ago', Rodrigues actually bears little resemblance to its neighbour beyond the scenic strips of peach-tinged sand. The island's population of around 40,000 is predominantly African and Creole – a far cry from the ethnic melting pot next door. You won't find a stalk of sugar cane here either – Rodrigues' hilly interior is clothed with fruit-bearing trees and vast acreages of vegetable patches. The pace of life is undeniably slow – which gives the island its time-warped vibe. Great food, some fine natural sites and a host of activities round out an experience that lives long in the memory.

## When to Go

- November to February is high season with high prices, although cyclones are possible from January. Accommodation and air tickets can be hard to come by so book well in advance if travelling at this time.
- October, March and April are still considered high season in places, but there are generally fewer crowds. Underwater visibility is especially good for diving and snorkelling at this time and it's generally a nice time to be on the island.
- Generally you'll find lower prices and milder temperatures from May to September, and no chance of cyclones.

## 👁️ Sights

Besides Rodrigues' golden beaches – the best of which flank the island's eastern ridges – there are several interesting sights to take in, including a couple of caves and several noteworthy architectural contributions. It's also worth noting that Rodrigues has few structured towns so we've included the island's main sights below.

### 👁️ Port Mathurin

This tiny port is the island's hub, largest town and, for want of a better word, its capital. The word 'soporific' may come to mind, but during the day the town has a friendly vibe, especially around the buzzing market stalls.

#### Saturday Market

(Map p161; ☀️ 4.30-10am) The Saturday market is as busy as Rodrigues gets and a good place to shop for fresh produce and souvenirs. It's

open the rest of the week but really gears up on Saturdays when much of the island turns out. It's next to the bridge near the post office. Turn up later than 10am and you'll wonder what all of the fuss is about.

#### La Résidence

ARCHITECTURE

(Map p161; Rue de la Solidarité) One of the oldest buildings still standing in Port Mathurin, La Résidence dates from 1897, when it provided a fairly modest home for the British chief commissioner. Its facilities are now used as function rooms for the new Regional Assembly. As such, it is closed to the public although it is possible to get an idea of the structure from the verandah of the tourist office (p164) across the road.

### 👁️ Around Rodrigues

#### ★ François Leguat Reserve

WILDLIFE RESERVE

(Map p156; ☎️ 832 8141; [www.tortoisescoverserve-rodrigues.com](http://www.tortoisescoverserve-rodrigues.com); adult/child incl tortoises & cave



## Rodrigues Highlights

- 1 Savour traditional Rodriguan cuisine at a local *table d'hôte* like **Chez Jeanette** (p163)
- 2 Take a boat ride out to the seabird colonies of pretty **Île aux Cocos** (p158)
- 3 Cavort with hundreds of curious tortoises at the **François Leguat Reserve**
- 4 Get up early and immerse yourself in the busy **Saturday Market** in Port Mathurin
- 5 Hike past Rodrigues best beaches from **Graviers to St François** (p158)
- 6 Dive the pristine waters off the east coast at **La Passe St François** (p159)
- 7 Sleep by the sea at **La Belle Rodriguaise** (p162)