

Mauritius



Escaping Enlivening Enjoying Exploring



Mauritius,

Beautiful, welcoming, generous, surprising, colourful, sunny. . .
and, hopefully, unforgettable!



• Mauritius

From the north's incredible variety of beaches with stunning coves and lagoons, to the south's volcanic landscape of the Chamarel Seven Coloured Earths, visitors can indulge in all four corners of Mauritius by Escaping, Enlivening, Enjoying and Exploring.

A Republic spanning **2 000Km²**

Luxurious lagoons

1.2 million inhabitants

Traditional, homely and sophisticated cuisines

Choice of activities

Endemic forests

Refined luxury hotels

French, English, Creole, Hindi, Chinese

European, African and Asian roots

An ideal couple's escapade





Escaping

Getting away, leaving it all behind,
embracing new horizons. . .

Sea activities

Diving

With its spacious lagoons, protective coral reefs and vast expanse of sea, Mauritius is a prized diving destination. The reef is a treasure trove of brightly-coloured exotic fish, amazing corals and even shipwrecks dating from those times when pirates and privateers trawled the Indian Ocean. For the curious yet less adventurous, submersible crafts and undersea walks remain popular alternatives to take a close look at the sea life.

Catamaran

Whether you wish to view the island's beauty from the sea or you want to revel in a leisurely day, shaded from the sun from the wind-filled mainsail, a wide choice of sea excursions is available to suit all preferences. Full-day excursions and private rentals are available from the northern, eastern, south-eastern and western coasts. One can catch the wind towards one of the islands strewn around mainland Mauritius, particularly to the north; meet the dolphins off the west coast or chart a day's course due east to make the most of the array of pleasures that iconic Ile aux Cerfs holds in store. And for those with a romantic streak, take an evening cruise and watch the sun set in the distance. These can be booked with providers serving the north and west coasts.

Speedboat

Take an exhilarating ride at splashing speed and cast anchor at any of the islets studding the lagoon, close to Mauritius. In the north, Gabriel island, Flat island and the unmistakably-shaped Gunner's Coin are well worth a sea outing. On the south-eastern coast, Blue Bay's marine park is one of the best places to see the beautiful marine life. Go snorkelling or take a glass bottom boat tour of the most breathtaking beaches to be seen. For an uplifting morning swim with the dolphins or viewing a spectacular sunset out at sea, the west coast is the way to go.



Air activities

ULM planes

Glide the sky on the wings of a great bird and swoosh above the green patchwork of sugar cane fields, over crystal-clear lagoons and dazzling white sand beaches on board an ultra-light motorised airplane. A ULM plan tour reveals the beauty of Mauritius from a sensational viewpoint. Ile d'Ambre or Roches Noires region are particularly picturesque from the air.

Seaplane

Flying close to the sea provides a unique view over the coral reef. The seaplane is another exhilarating way to enjoy wonderful aerial views of the breathtaking nuances of blues and the textured greens that compose the panorama of the south-western coast, embracing its wild beauty at a glance.

Helicopter

Taking off from the international airport, helicopter rides offer an exclusive way to view the island's spectacular diversity of landscapes. This privileged aerial tour is invariably acclaimed as being truly sensational by all those who experience it.

Land activities

Golf

From the million annual visitors Mauritius currently records, 60,000 of these are golfers. The island offers professionals, passionate amateurs and beginners no less than ten 18-hole courses and three 9-hole courses in perfect conditions for the game. Set in spectacular sites and wonderful natural environments, designed for championships by renowned golfers such as Peter Matkovich, Peter Allis, Rodney Wright, many of these courses count among the most beautiful worldwide and are sought out for the original challenges and unique experiences they provide. The 2015 and 2016 AfrAsia Bank Mauritius Open seasons marked a major milestone for Mauritius as a professional golf destination. In 2016, Mauritius was awarded the prized title of Golf Destination of the Year for the Africa Indian Ocean and

Gulf countries region by IAGTO, the Global Golf Tourism Organisation.

Breathtaking views

Forever engraved as lifelong memories or imprinted in treasured photos, Mauritius' landscapes offer an abundance of breathtaking views. Among the most panoramic are, Trou aux Cerfs crater in the central highlands, Le Pouce Mountain, Lion Mountain, Le Morne Brabant and Macchabée forest overlooking the Black River Gorges, the rugged windswept cliffs towering over the wild beauty of the Gris-Gris beach.





Theme parks

Mauritius holds over ten natural parks and leisure parks. Each offer the opportunity to grasp the wealth of local flora and fauna as well as acclimated specimens from farther horizons such as giant tortoises, crocodiles, ostriches, giraffes, lions, cheetahs and caracals. Local deer and rabbits can be fed in mini farms and even some of the more impressive animals can be closely approached, or walking tours including a walk with lions. A choice of unforgettable thrills awaits both kids and grown-ups including horse riding, quad-biking, jeep safaris, or to really get your heart racing, go for a zip-line, a canyon swing or a canyoning adventure.

Must-dos

Casela Nature Park
Cascavelle - caselapark.com
+230 452 2828

La Vanille Réserve des Mascareignes
Rivière des Anguilles
(crocodiles, giant tortoises, insects...)
lavanille-reserve.com | +230 626 2503

Domaine de l'Étoile
Sebastopol - terrocean.mu
+230 5729 1050

Frederika Nature Reserve
Bel Ombre - domainebelombre.mu
+230 623 5615

La Vallée des Couleurs Nature Park
Chamouny - lavalleedescouleurs.com
+230 5471 8666

Domaine de Labourdonnais
Mapou - chateaulabourdonnais.com
+230 266 9533

Curious Corner of Chamarel
Baie du Cap - curiouscornerofchamarel.com
+230 483 4022

Pamplemousses Botanical Garden
Pamplemousses
+230 243 9401

DodoQuest
Escape Rooms Adventure, Moka
dodoquest.com
+230 433 2777 | +230 403 8562

Gros Cailloux Leisure Park
Petite Rivière - kidibou.mu
+230 238 5586



Enlivening

Coming alive in every single cell of your body.



Water sports

Big-game fishing

Mauritius is a well-known big-game fishing destination and a favourite with deep-sea sport adrenaline lovers and challenge seekers. Beyond the magnificent coral reef bordering the lagoons, lies the warm depths of the Indian Ocean. These waters flourish with prized species and specimens. The emperors and masters of this marine world are undoubtedly the all-famous black and blue marlins; mako and tiger sharks; dogtooth, yellow and bonita tuna; sphyraena barracuda and sea bream. During these fishing trips, set against the idyllic scenery of tropical islets shimmering under the sun, visitors can sometimes enjoy the friendly company of dolphins.

Canoe-kayak

Canoeing or kayaking through the thriving mangrove maze populating the mouths of rivers and the coastlines of solitary islets is the ideal way to explore this special ecosystem. Experienced kayakers can venture out to sea beyond the reef through its natural passageways.

Must-dos

Blue Safari Submarine

Grand Bay - blue-safari.com
+230 265 7272

Fun Adventure Mauritius (sea kart)

Rivière Noire - fun-adventure.mu
+230 5499 4929

Yemaya (canoe-kayak)

Calodyne
+230 5752 0046

Yoaneye Kitesurfing

Le Morne - yoaneye.com
+230 5737 8296

Dolphin watch

Big-game fishing



Adrenaline sports

Kitesurf

Regular and ideal wind conditions, splendid lagoons, good waves generated by the coral reef are what it takes to make great kiteboarding spots. Mauritius has it all, which makes the island a well-known and favoured kitesurfing destination even for the most demanding sportsmen of the kitesurfing community. So much so, that Le Morne's One Eye spot is now famous worldwide.

Zip-line

A sensational glide across a river, above a pool or over the tree tops is the sheer pleasure derived from a zip-line ride. The adrenaline surge is thrilling, the vista enthralling. Generally to be found in the eastern and western regions of the island, zip-line rides are most often an integral part of an excursion, including trekking and invigorating dips in natural pools amidst gorgeous surroundings.

Skydive

Taking the great leap into the void is the extreme dream for some and Mauritius is a destination that makes this dream come true. Starting with a 25-minute flight at an altitude of 3,000 metres for an aerial sightseeing across the north of the island, it's then time for the skydive: a tandem jump with an experienced instructor for a heart-racing one-minute freefall until the parachute opens for a 5-minute flight over exceptional views of the island!



Land sports

Hiking

Mauritius holds several beautiful circuits for hiking and nature lovers. The heart of the island, is bordered by volcanic peaks which in addition to being accessible on foot, also offers amazing panoramic views. Black River Gorges National Park is the largest on the island. Several tracks are marked to find one's way easily. We recommend the picturesque descent from Petrin, starting in the highlands of the central plateau and going down to the west coast in Black River. It allows the hiker the privilege of crossing primary forests, sighting endemic fauna and passing by deeply-cut gorges and waterfalls.

Trekking

From its volcanic origins, through millions of years of patient weathering, Mauritius keeps a distinctive mountainous ridge around its central plateau. Manageable tracks lead to the most popular peaks, namely Lion Mountain, Le Pouce Mountain, Le Morne Brabant and Piton de la Rivière Noire. These offer a mix of trekking and green tourism, the exploration of beautiful landscapes, a discovery of the island's wealth of exotic fauna and flora and, as the ultimate reward, over-the-top views.

Walks on the wild side

Walking with lions and cheetahs in Casela,
Cascavelle - caselapark.com
+230 452 2828

Yanature
Rivière Noire - yanature.com
+230 5428 1909

Domaine de l'Étoile
Sebastopol - terrocean.mu
+230 5729 1050

Vallée de Ferney
Ferney - valleedeferney.com
+230 729 1080 | +230 634 0440



The most attractive trails

Le Morne Brabant

Black River Gorges National Park
+230 464 4016

Ferney Trail,
Ferney

Domaine de l'Étoile,
Sebastopol - terrocean.mu
+230 5729 1050

Moka Trail,
Moka

Le Pouce,
Moka

Piton de la Rivière Noire

Macchabée Forest

7 cascades

Tamarin Falls

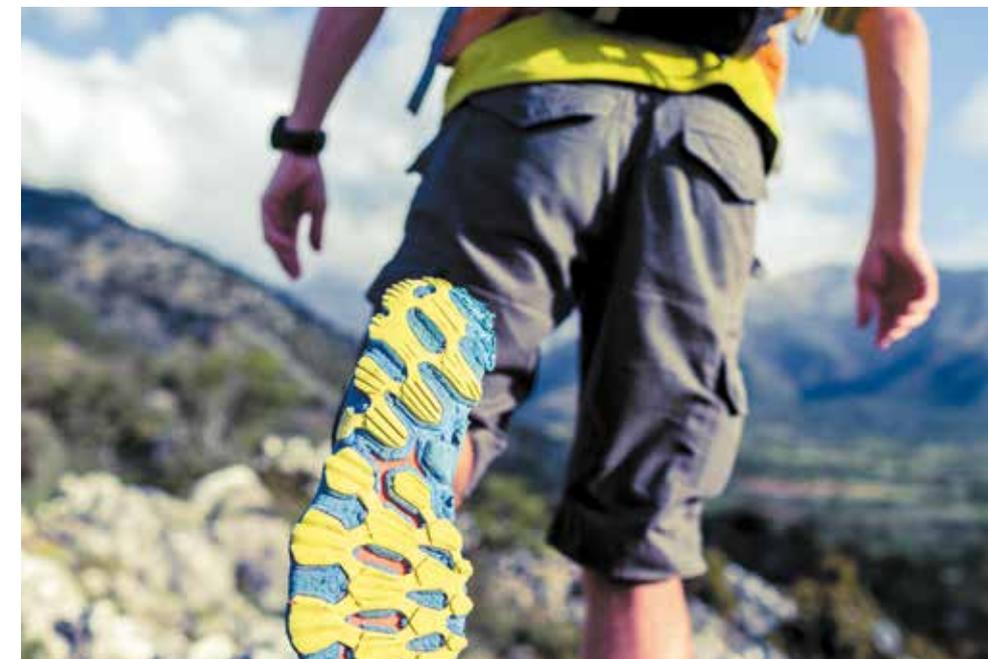
Trois Mamelles Mountain

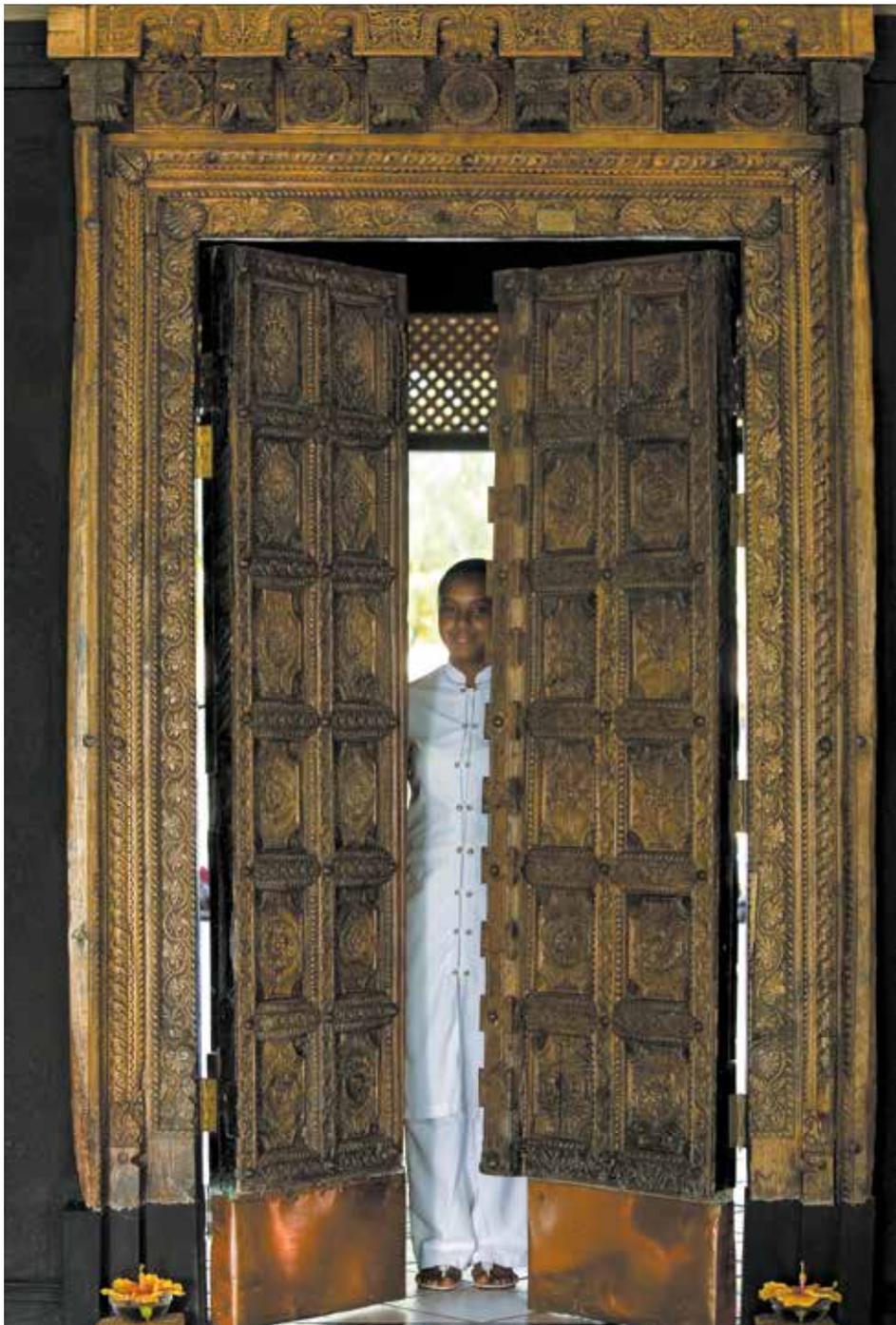
Trails

Increasingly every year, Mauritius' runways in nature are taken over by trail aficionados. This sport is on the rise and there is a calendar of regular events. With Mauritius' climate and stunning landscapes, a trail here is definitely more than just athletic challenges.

Biking

Mauritius' fair weather, almost year-round, makes the practice of nature sports pleasurable indeed. Whether as a means of discovering wonderful landscapes with a cycling group or to rise to the challenge of a sports competition, biking leads one and all to explore splendid mountain tracks set in wonderful scenery.





Refreshing Spas

Spa Hotels

Many of the hotels boast fantastic spa facilities, bringing their clients the benefits of quality treatments in settings where every detail of the decor and the selection of treatments have been thoughtfully designed and meticulously elaborated to deliver sheer well-being and ultimate serenity. Under the expert hands of professional therapists, classic, customised and signature treatments and massages, answer clients' needs to refresh the body and mind.



Private Spas

The reputation of Mauritius rests upon its idyllic natural beauty as well as the excellent service delivered by its hotels. Today, this includes a quality offer and extensive choice of spa services. Private institutes reflect the country's cultural diversity through the eclectic array of treatments they offer to restore personal harmony and wellbeing. Some propose holistic approaches, integrating the physical, mental and spiritual levels for a comprehensive rebalancing and re-energising. Others find their inspiration in the ancestral philosophies and techniques which came through the oriental roots of the island and propose ayurvedic therapies, meditation, relaxation and yoga sessions as well as shiatsu and traditional balinese massages, including beauty treats using plant-based products. Many institutes comprise private saunas, hammams and tepidariums as well as twin cabins to accommodate couples. Most spas propose a comprehensive range of beauty and body treats such as facials, manicure and pedicure, application of permanent nail varnish, waxing, scrubs, wraps...





Enjoying

Tuning your soul to the simple joy of living. . .

A family spirit

What makes Mauritius such a renowned destination is the island's hospitality and collection of accommodation options available for all. Ranging from hostels, two and three-star hotels, charming private villas to luxurious international resorts*, all share one thing in common, an exemplary welcome and sense of service.

*Please refer to list of hotels and classification on MTPA website.



Villas & Bungalows

Holidaymakers preferring a private beachside villa or bungalow during their stay, have a large choice of options available to rent around the island. This type of accommodation allows greater independence, direct access to sea activities through individual operators and an authentic local lifestyle experience. Rentals are fully equipped for self-catering and offer guests a comfortable and intimate alternative.



Bed & Breakfast

Many of the island's Bed & Breakfasts are located by the seaside or directly on the stunning beachfronts. B&Bs consist of suites or rooms and some have private outdoor terraces. Rooms are fitted with air-conditioning, a mini-bar, TV, Wi-Fi internet connection and a safe. Nearby shopping facilities make daily life easy.



Traditional, homely & sophisticated cuisines

The multicultural composition of Mauritian society is tastefully expressed in its cooking. Mauritian cuisine, whether traditional, homely or sophisticated, showcases an amazing choice of creative fusions, a special talent at mixing spices, colours, savours and aromas, offering the visitor an impressive array of tantalising dishes. Today, the island's multifaceted cuisine takes its inspirations as much from China, India, Middle and Far East as well as France and South Africa. All it takes is a stroll around to understand that Mauritians love street food. Every corner presents a variety of local specialties. Be curious and try out some popular exotic preparations such as dhal puri, farata, samoossa, gato pima, gato arouy. For Chinese food lovers, the must-do is the yearly Chinatown Festival and its food stands for a treat of specialities and delicacies. There are many good quality and varied restaurants in Mauritius and it is worth knowing that a number of Michelin-starred Chefs are at work locally, ensuring that the most exquisite gastronomic delights are on offer.

Good quality restaurants are many and varied in Mauritius and it is worth ensuring even the most exacting gourmets with a choice of exquisite gastronomy at exclusive venues.

Must-dos

Snacks

- 🍲 Gâteaux piment (chili cakes)
- 🍲 Samoussa (curry-stuffed triangular fritters)
- 🍲 Gram bouilli (boiled spiced chickpeas)
- 🍲 Badja (gram flour fritters)
- 🍲 Pain frit (battered bread fritters)
- 🍲 Pistaches grillées (grilled peanuts)
- 🍲 Gâteaux arouille (taro fritters)
- 🍲 Cassava biscuits

Meals

- 🍲 Dhall Puri (Indian pancakes)
- 🍲 Faratas (Indian bread)
- 🍲 Ti Puri (Indian fried pancakes)
- 🍲 Halim (spicy oriental soup)
- 🍲 Briani (spicy oriental rice)
- 🍲 Boulettes chinoises (Chinese dim sum)
- 🍲 Chop suey (Chinese stir-fry)
- 🍲 Mines frites / Riz frit (Chinese fried noodles/rice)
- 🍲 Curry de poulet (chicken Indian curry)
- 🍲 Riz & lentilles (rice and lentils)

Sweet treats

- 🍲 Poutou (steamed rice semolina cakes)
- 🍲 Gâteaux patate (sweet potato and coconut turnovers)
- 🍲 Piaw (syrupy oriental donut)
- 🍲 Gâteaux moutaille (jalebi, oriental sweetmeat)
- 🍲 Rasgulla (milky syrupy oriental sweetmeat)
- 🍲 Sutfine (oriental threaded cake)
- 🍲 Alouda (jelly seeds milk)
- 🍲 Rasmalai (milk dough, oriental sweetmeat)
- 🍲 Pudding de pain (bread pudding)
- 🍲 Gâteaux manioc (cassava pudding)
- 🍲 Gâteaux banane (banana fritters)
- 🍲 Pudding de maïs (maize pudding)

- 🍲 chinese
- 🍲 oriental
- 🍲 creole

The 3 bestselling recipe books:

The Best of Mauritian cooking,
Barry Andrews, Paul Jones & Gerald Gay

Mauritian cookery,
Orphie

Sunshine on the plate,
Shelina Permalloo

Top 10 beaches

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Ile aux Cerfs | La Cambuse |
| Mont Choisy | Trou aux Biches |
| Flic en Flac | Le Morne Brabant |
| Blue Bay | Belle Mare |
| Pereybère | Tamarin |

Beach life

Visitors almost invariably fall in love with Mauritian beaches once they catch sight of the sublime lagoons and feel the beautiful white sands between their toes. The island's idyllic tropical beaches are set against jet-black volcanic rocks amongst the lush green landscape. The charming names of the most exquisite beaches now stand as landmarks: Pereybère, Flic en Flac, Le Morne, Belle Mare, Blue Bay and Ile aux Cerfs. Why not visit a public beach on a Sunday; the perfect family picnic rendez-vous for Mauritians.



Must-do excursions

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Northern Circuit | Seakart |
| Southern Circuit | Speedboat |
| The Tea Route | Cap Malheureux |
| A sea outing on a pirogue | Chamarel |
| Dolphins viewing/swim | Grand Bassin |

Hiking

Though Mauritius might be best known as a tropical beauty for its seductive sea shores, the heart of the island holds untouched nature that can only be uncovered by those willing to wander off the beaten tracks. Hiking is the best way to go to discover many of the island's generous outdoor and green tourism activities, including, Macchabée Forest, Le Pouce Mountain, which offers a matchless view over Port Louis; Le Morne Mountain, declared UNESCO World Heritage site, or roam through the preserved ecosystem of Black River Gorges. Widely renowned, and counting among the absolute musts, is the Pamplemousses Botanical Garden - the oldest of its kind in the southern hemisphere, hosting an extraordinary diversity of indigenous plants.

With one another

Fishermen's villages

Fishing has been traditionally present all around the coast of the island. Many regions still harbour villages which bear the distinctive lifestyle and spirit of a fisherman's abode including, Grand Gaube, Souillac, Le Morne, Trou d'Eau Douce, Case Noyale, La Gaulette and Mahebourg. In its traditional form, fishing remains popular, offering visitors the opportunity to enjoy the catch of the day at its freshest. The most appreciated, as known under their local names, are the "dorade" (sea bream or common dolphin fish), "vieille rouge" (blacktip grouper) and "cateau" (parrotfish).

Shopping

Between its traditional marketplaces - where bargaining is almost a ritual - are upscale commercial centres and great shopping opportunities all over the country. Local shops, international stores and luxury brand boutiques can answer every wish of a cosmopolitan clientele with a varied range of products.

Typical souvenirs

Tea, sugar, vanilla, rum, spices, local sweet treats, toys, dodo bird figurines and plush toys, ship models, silver and gold jewellery, tropical pareos and beach towels. All products are manufactured under the national label « Made in Moris ».

Nightlife

Mauritius holds many entertaining nightlife spots to spend an evening. The most upbeat and cosmopolitan clubs and bars are found along the north coast between Pointe aux Canonniers, Grand Bay and Pereybere. Flic en Flac on the west coast weaves more of an exotic and authentic island-style ambience, with pubs and night clubs suited to all ages and tastes. Tamarin is a great place to explore with many venues including pubs, restaurants, live music, a DJ and dance floor, all under the same roof. Hotels also provide nightly entertainment with shows, live music and dancing.



Events

Every year, a number of international events bring new visitors to Mauritius. Mauritius hosts the AfrAsia Golf Tournament, different raids, marathons, triathlons and cycle races. Windsurf and kitesurf competitions also increasingly attract high-level participants from the four corners of the world. On the cultural scene, the International Kreol Festival is now a major annual event, which culminates with the most important Creole musical concert, attracting more than 100,000 spectators. New to the island's calendar of events is the festival, Portwi by Light, a magical night feast celebration of old Port Louis, setting it alight and alive, in a festive mood during the end-of-year. The island's national calendar is also strewn across the year with several highly colourful religious festivals, as celebrated by every community of multiethnic Mauritius.

Meetings Incentives Conference Events (MICE)

With its state-of-the-art infrastructures, Mauritius holds an increasing appeal for groups of visitors from the specific MICE travel and tourism market. These groups come mainly from France, Great Britain, South Africa, Reunion island. A lesser number come from the rest of Africa, Central Europe and Asia.

Conventions, Trade Fairs & Exhibitions

Dedicated to major international conferences and conventions, Swami Vivekananda International Conference Centre is the most important infrastructure available for large-scale events. Its surface area covers 17 000 m², includes one 425-seat capacity amphitheatre, a 600-seat plenary hall, 10 commission and committee chambers, seating up to a 100, and a reception hall with a capacity of 3 500 persons in theatre layout and 2 000 for banquetting purposes.

Event Management

As the regional benchmark for up-to-date, quality hospitality infrastructures and service excellence, Mauritius has become a prized destination for the organisation of major and exclusive group events. From themed evenings, beach parties, jet-set weddings or team building, large-scale and select event management now constitutes an important proportion of operations. This development has been made possible thanks to the number of upscale venues and quality facilities readily available at luxury hotels, access to time-honoured domains, historical mansions and chateaux. Iconic Ile aux Cerfs in the east also proposes special events services. All venues offer splendid natural settings, elegant decors and a team to manage logistics.

Weddings and Honeymoons

Mauritius is among the best locations for weddings and honeymoons thanks to its stunning scenery, warm tropical climate and the friendly hospitality of the Mauritian people. Most hotels offer extensive wedding and honeymoon packages and have their own experienced wedding coordinators to organise every last detail of the wedding. Whether intimate or large events of up to 800 guests, professional teams will work their magic. Idyllic settings and customised service are the principal ingredients of the wonderfully romantic and successful Mauritian formula. No wonder the island stands out as a preferred destination to celebrate love.

For practical information, please refer to MTPA's website:
www.tourism-mauritius.mu

Cinematographic tourism

Mauritius has positioned itself as a shooting destination with the international cinematography industry. Local authorities and the Mauritius Government Tourist Office offer a set of incentive and facilitative measures to the film industry. For example, a shooting set on the island can bring as much as 40% discount, with regards to expenses incurred locally.





Exploring

Opening up to a world of priceless riches,
and treasured discoveries.

Culture & History



Blue Penny Museum

Established in 2001 in Le Caudan Waterfront, the Blue Penny Museum is devoted to Mauritian history and art. Prestigious collections, works of high quality and enlightening comments carry you, across ancient maps and ancient coins, back to the times of marine navigation and exploration in the Indian Ocean and the colonial history of the island. The original statue of the heroes of the romantic novel Paul and Virginie, the extremely rare Blue Penny and Red Penny postal stamps count among some of the assets of the museum.

Opening Hours: Every day except Sunday and public holidays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Note: Photo shooting is not allowed inside the museum. The « Post Office » stamps can only be viewed for 10 minutes every half hour as these philatelic gems must be protected from the ageing effect of sunlight.

Tel.: +230 210 9204

bluepennymuseum.com

L'Aventure du Sucre

Close to Pamplemousses Botanical Garden, an old sugar factory has been converted into a museum dedicated to 250 years of the history of sugar production in Mauritius, wherein lie the foundation of the country's history, the roots of its identity, the basis of its economic development and... the island's very soul. The name of the museum means "the adventure of sugar". All along an interactive path that calls to all ages, set between old sugar factory machinery and hedges of sugar cane, the history and story of the sheer "Mauritian gold" unrolls. 2 mascots engage the youngest visitors in a game of question and answer throughout the visit. At the end of the itinerary, a tasting of sugar and cane liquor (rum) takes place. Visitors can thereafter go through the Village Boutik for souvenirs and enjoy lunch at Le Fangourin restaurant set in beautiful gardens of the old sugar domain.

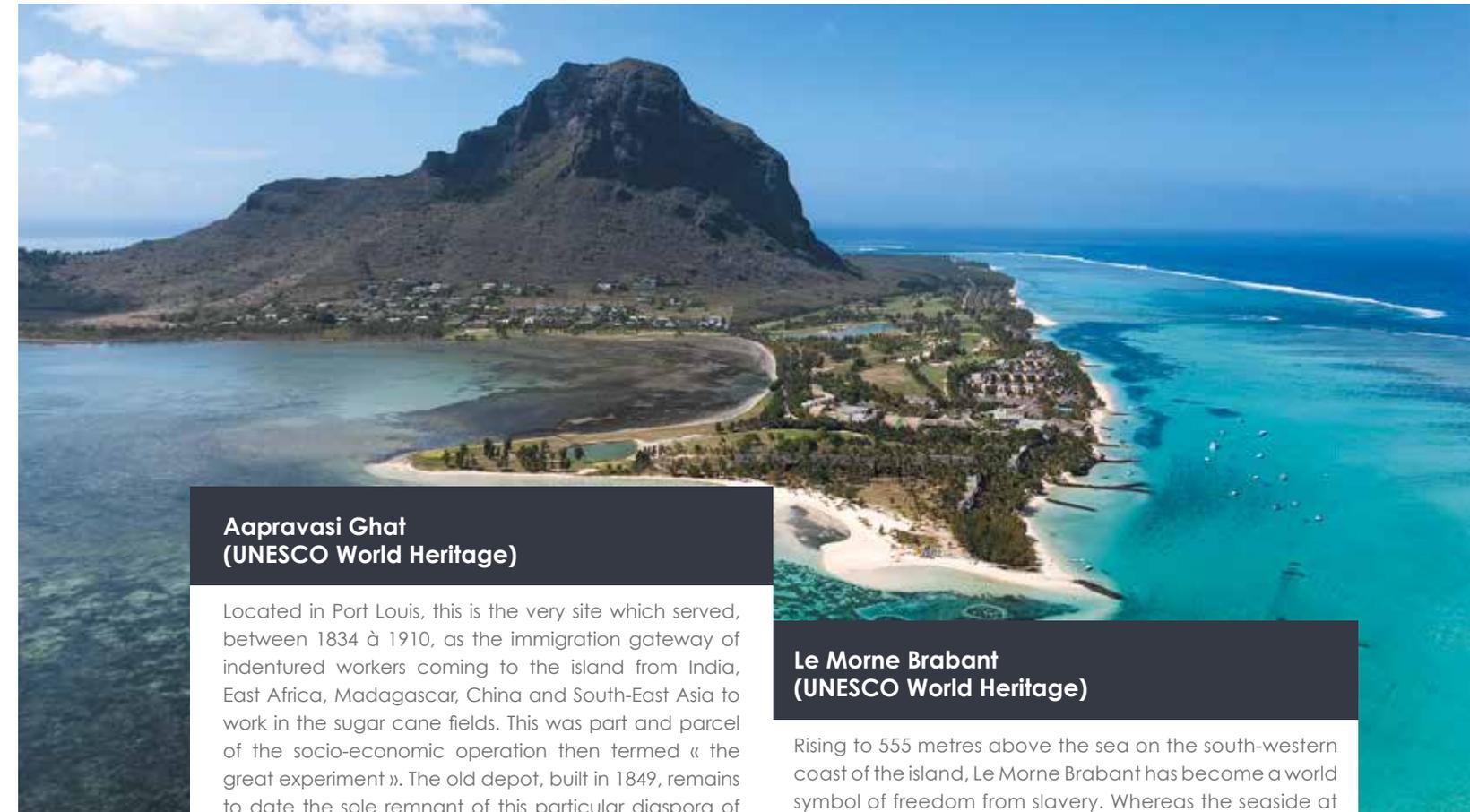
Opening Days: Every day, even on public holidays, except for the following annual closure dates: December 24th, 25th, 26th, 31st; January 1st and 2nd.

Opening Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Note: It is advisable not to start a visit later than 4 p.m. The site is, for the most part, wheelchair-friendly.

Tel.: +230 243 7900

aventuredusucre.com



Aapravasi Ghat (UNESCO World Heritage)

Located in Port Louis, this is the very site which served, between 1834 à 1910, as the immigration gateway of indentured workers coming to the island from India, East Africa, Madagascar, China and South-East Asia to work in the sugar cane fields. This was part and parcel of the socio-economic operation then termed « the great experiment ». The old depot, built in 1849, remains to date the sole remnant of this particular diaspora of modern times. The old depot, built in 1849, remains to date the sole remnant of this particular diaspora of modern times.. It is because of this that it is recognized as a major historical landmark and a UNESCO World Heritage site

Opening Hours: Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Note: Video projections, upon request, include a 20-minute children's story (for ages 3 to 6) and a 10-minute summary of the history of the site, in English and Creole.

Tel.: +230 217 31 59

Le Morne Brabant (UNESCO World Heritage)

Rising to 555 metres above the sea on the south-western coast of the island, Le Morne Brabant has become a world symbol of freedom from slavery. Whereas the seaside at its foot and the exquisite beaches it shelters are today the pride of several luxury hotels, the mount itself was in fact the place where fugitive slaves used to hide during the early colonial times of the island. Today it represents a memorial to the common memories of all slaves of that period, as represented by the commemorative plaque in honour of "the unknown slave". Le Morne Brabant, as the Aapravasi Ghat in Port Louis, record the distressing pages of history of Mauritius, which have been slavery and indentured labour. Le Morne Brabant was officially declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2008. Another noteworthy fact: Le Morne is also the sole remaining natural habitat to the trochetia flower or « earring » flower, which is Mauritius' national emblem since 1992.

La Vallée des Couleurs Museum

One of its kind in the Mascareignes islands, this museum is located at the heart of a natural park. It recollects the geological history of the island, explaining how the island was formed. On exhibit are some fossils and samples of basaltic, sedimentary or metamorphic rocks. A 3-D animation shows the different geomorphological landscapes that can be encountered across the country. The various components of magmatic rocks are demonstrated in the astonishing assemblage of the 23 nuances of volcanic ashes coming from the small crater of Bassin Blanc.

Opening Hours: Every day from 8.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.
Tel.: +230 5471 8666 | +230 5292 8841

Le Château de Labourdonnais

Dating from 1859, this family home embodies the concept of "a castle at the heart of nature". It is today an invitation to discover 19th century art of living in Mauritius, reconciling history, culture, flowers and fruit trees, gastronomy and Mauritian know-how against the agricultural roots of the domain within which it is planted. Above 50 hectares of land are still under cultivation, producing a variety of tropical fruits such as citrus, papaya, mango, guava, passion fruit. There is also a distillery – Rhumerie des Mascareignes, which elaborates fine agricultural rum and where one can learn about the distillation process and maturing techniques.

Opening Hours: Every day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Tel.: +230 266 9533



Les Aubineaux

Located on the uplands, Les Aubineaux is one of the last remaining typical colonial mansions dating from the end of the 19th century. The domain contains a distillery producing essential oils and shelters an exquisite floral park and age-old endemic and camphor trees. In the house one can admire exquisite pieces of furniture showing off their stylish East India Company style and an interesting collection of old photographs before enjoying a traditional tea break.

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, from 8.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday, from 8.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.
Tel.: +230 676 3089



Frederick Hendrik Museum

Situated in Old Grand Port, on a coastline that has made its way into historical records for many a reason, this charming museum has been built in a beautiful garden planted with trees and flowers. Old Grand Port and its mountainous backdrop and undulating greenery sloping down close to the sea has seen the construction of the first stone building of the Indian Ocean. This was the first port of the island; this is where the Dutch landed and settled on the island (which, by the way, was named Mauritius in honour of the elder brother of Frederik Hendrik - Prince Maurice de Nassau). The museum takes you back to the times of the first inhabitants of the island and exhibits an array of archaeological artefacts recovered from excavations, such as chinaware, fragments of pipes, old tools, a few ornaments and some cannon balls.

Opening Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, from 9 a.m. to noon. Closed on Wednesday and public holidays.
Note: Photos are allowed on the site but not inside the museum.
Tel.: +230 634 4319

Photography Museum

Located in Port Louis, this private museum was founded by Mr Tristan Breville & his wife. The museum proudly counts almost a million photographs. The daguerreotype landed in Mauritius in 1840, only four months after the acquisition of Louis Daguerre's patent in France, making Mauritius one of the first countries across the world to have practiced photography. The museum proudly counts in its collection more than 1000 cameras from various times, among which the lens manufactured by Charles Chevalier for Daguerre in 1839. The museum also serves as an iconographic research centre, including a dedicated library, a collection of ancient postcards and more than 25 hours of old films about Mauritius.

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
musee-photo.voyaz.com
Tel.: +230 238 5737 | +230 211 1705

Mahebourg Naval Museum

Located in an ancient colonial mansion in Mahebourg, this museum offers a privileged incursion into the maritime history of Mauritius. The museum's collection is mainly dedicated to relics that have been retrieved from shipwrecks, ancient maps of the island, navigation equipment, ship models, weapons - of which those of famous privateer Robert Surcouf and the bell from the no less famous wreck of the Saint-Géran, stranded off the North-east coast in 1744... Visitors, one can also see there a piano of the Royal Navy and superb lithographies of famous men who have marked the history of Mauritius as well as splendid paintings of Mauritian landscapes of olden days and even bones of the illustrious dodo bird.

Note: This is the place to visit for enthusiasts who are passionate about ancient weapons, maps, pieces of furniture and money coins. The visit remains most instructive for anyone interested in the rich past of Mauritius.

Opening Hours: Normal Mondays to Saturdays – 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ; Sundays and public holidays 9 a.m. to noon.

Note: Photos are not allowed inside the museum.

Tel.: +230 631 9329

Mauritius Post Museum

Located in Port Louis, the museum uncovers key moments in the history of the Mauritius Post and its evolution to current days and is symbolical of the efforts that were invested through time to improve local and international communications. The building housing the museum is one of the oldest of the capital city – it was inaugurated in 1868. Not to be missed: the rare opportunity of viewing on original specimen of the famous Black penny stamp, which is the first stamp ever to be issued by Great Britain.

*Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.
mauritiuspost.mu/postal-museum*

Tel.: +230 208 0033



La Maison Euréka

Chinese Cultural Heritage Museum

This museum is set in Grand Bay. It tells the history and the story of the Chinese Diaspora to Mauritius by way of 6 themes: the arrival of the immigrants; the shop; the food; Chinese culture; the pagoda and the Chinese newspaper. A typical Chinese shop has been reconstituted, where one can experience what it was like in the good old days – with its traditional scale, abacus calculator, the salted fish displayed in the shop window. Another immersion into local Chinese lifestyle takes place inside the typical traditional kitchen, with its wok pans, enamel crockery and petrol burners. One also gets a better understanding of the vicissitudes that Chinese immigrants were confronted to, back then, and how this community took part in the construction of modern-day Mauritius.

Tel.: +230 263 2680, Grand Bay.

La Maison Euréka

La Maison Eureka, better known as « The Creole Mansion », was built in 1830. A visit there is a time travel to 19th century colonial lifestyle in Mauritius as you stroll across the music and art rooms and the salons exhibiting ancient geographical, antique objects and old photos. Besides its historical value, it is also famous for its manicured English-styled garden and a refreshing pause in its wonderful natural setting above the waterfalls of the lush green quarters of Moka, the domain is well worth a visit.

*Opening Hours: Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

Tel.: +230 433 8477 | +230 433 2584

Best endemic fauna and flora sites

Domaine de l'Étoile

An ancient sugar plantation turned into a natural park of 1,200 undulating hectares of forests, preserved flora and fauna, hiking tracks extending between lush green valleys and mountains – such is the Domaine de l'Étoile. A range of family-friendly activities is on offer there, such as: buggy and quad rides, walks and horseback rides, giant zip line, archery. Specially designed for the youngest visitors: the kid's village and horse riding club.

Tel.: +230 5729 1050
terrocean.mu

Ile aux Aigrettes

Placed under the guardianship of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, this small calcareous coral island of 25 hectares of preserved nature is anchored off the coast of Mahebourg, in one of the most beautiful lagoons of the island. This gem sculptured by nature is the remnant of a sand dune that emerged after the sea levelled down some 10,000 years. The natural reserve today shelters several rare endemic and indigenous Mauritian species of flora and fauna: kestrel and fody birds, Telfair's skink, giant tortoise and the pink pigeon, a highly precious, because threatened, species. The flora to be found there is as invaluable – "bois de bœuf", "bois de pipe", "bois de rat", bottle palm and an extremely rare orchid which, sheer luck allowing, one can admire in flowering stage.

Opening Hours: Every day, from 9 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.
Tel.: +230 631 2396 | +230 5258 8139



La Vallée de Ferney

La Vallée de Ferney, one of the last nature havens of the island, is a declared 200 hectares sanctuary for a variety of rare and threatened indigenous species of fauna and flora. Ferney valley is a reference as an eco-touristic site actively working in parallel at conserving and restoring the original fauna and flora of the island. A visit to this site means a concrete contribution towards supporting the ambitious project of saving the biodiversity of the island which is, unfortunately, one of the most threatened today across the world.

Tel.: +230 729 1080 | +230 634 0440
valleedeferney.com

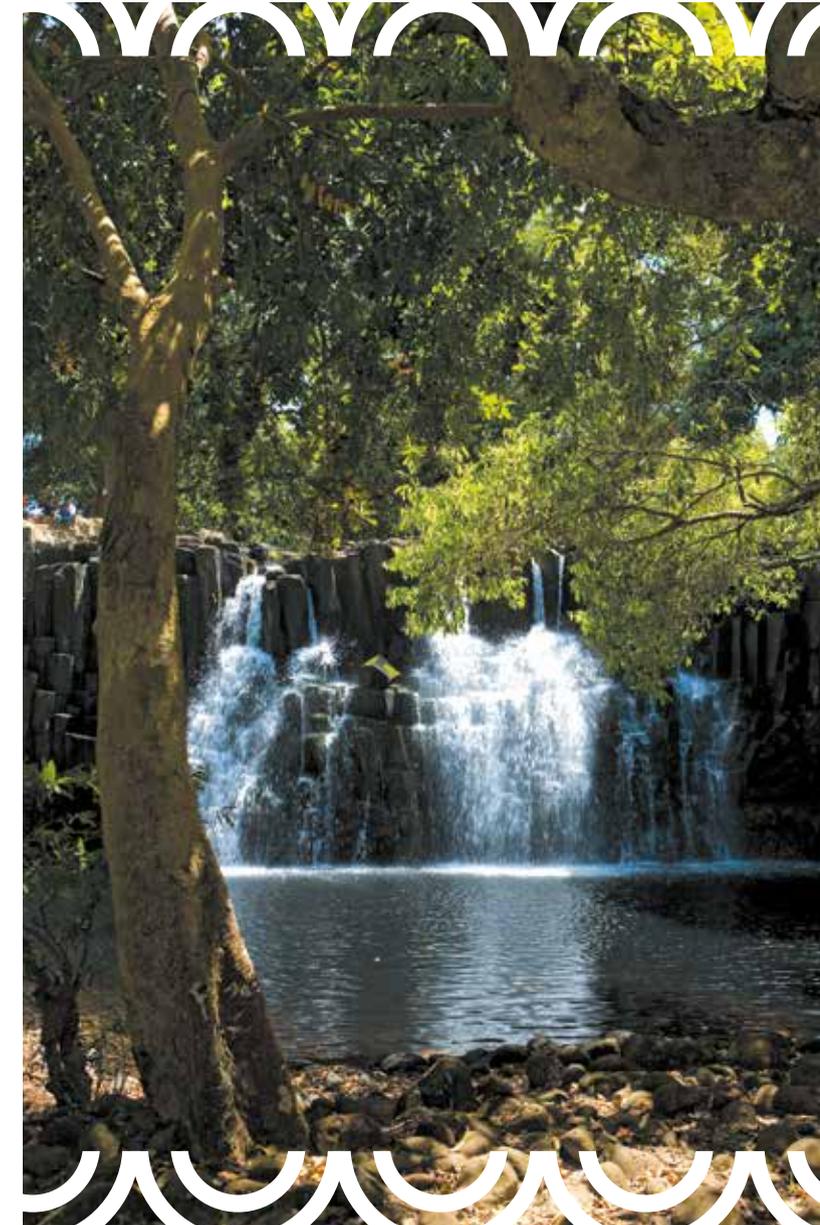
Black River Gorges National Park

The first national park of Mauritius was established with the view to preserve the last remaining endemic forest of the island. Inaugurated and opened to visitors in the 1990's, it includes the Macchabée forest, Combo and Bel Ombre's natural reserves. Still standing there is the today rare ebony tree, sought for and plundered by constructors of seafaring war crafts as the hardest wood available, during the expansion era of maritime navigation. The park also offers several hiking and trekking tracks of different distance and difficulty level, which can be covered in a few hours. For example, the climb to Piton de la Rivière Noire, the highest peak of the island at an altitude of 828 metres is surprisingly accessible in little time whereas some excursions through the reserve require a whole day.

Pamplemousses Botanical Garden

Pamplemousses Botanical Garden is the major accomplishment of French Botanist Pierre Poivre at the time when he was the colonial administrator of the island during the 18th century. Under his direction, the 37 hectares covered by this extraordinary garden were planned and landscaped to acclimate species from the four corners of the world, such as the baobab and giant Victoria Amazonica water lilies. It is also the place to admire the Talipot palm – a most extraordinary palm tree, among the nearly hundred species which have settled in the garden, together with Araucaria pines, vacoas, ravenalas and guava trees. Truly legendary, Pamplemousses Garden has seen illustrious visitors, some of whom have left a trace of their visit in the shape of a commemorative tree, namely François Mitterrand and Nelson Mandela, respectively French and South African Presidents, as well as Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi - to cite but a few.

Tel.: +230 243 9401



Spirituality

An idyllic environment, weaving an ambience of serenity and the ancestral traditions of the Mauritian people, have nurtured an overall philosophy of life and innate spirituality. This translates to a spirit of benevolence, an outgoing generosity of spirit, the natural willingness to share and help. At the basis of this positive attitude is an inner quest for peace, wisdom, self-knowledge and the desire to be one's highest possible self. Mauritians value peace and balance and show gratitude for the gifts life brings. The people know that harmony is key and that its attainment goes through relaxation, sacrifice, fasting and devotion. These values impregnate and regulate everyday life in Mauritius.

Picturesque celebrations

Thaipoozam Cavadee (January-February)

This is a Tamil celebration; it takes place at the full moon of « Thai » month, occurring between January and February and is the culmination of a 10-day fasting and abstinence. The celebration day is composed of a pilgrimage to the temple for offerings and purification rituals.

Chinese New Year (February)

The traditional Spring Festival marks the Chinese New Year. It occurs on the first day of the first month of the ancestral lunar calendar and is a major festivity. Spectacular celebrations take place in China Town and on the streets, including martial arts demos, folkloric dance and the dance of the dragons!

Maha Shivaratri (February-March)

The name of this major Hindu celebration means « The great night of Lord Shiva ». It happens between February and March. Leading to it, are five days of fasting, pilgrimage, prayers and offerings, culminating at the sacred lake, for Mauritians of Hindu faith: Grand Bassin.

Père Laval (September 9th)

Every year on the eve of the commemoration of the death of Father Laval, an illustrious French missionary, some 150,000 Mauritians of Catholic faith converge, in a pilgrimage to his vault, from all parts of the island.

Diwali (October-November)

This is a highly symbolical celebration for Hindus, marking the victory of good over evil. Houses are adorned with multiple lights and special sweetmeats are shared around with family and friends.



Must see art galleries

Le Café des Arts

Trou d'Eau Douce - lecafedesarts.restaurant.mu
+230 480 0220

Galerie Hélène de Senneville

Grand Bay
galeriehelenedesenneville.com
+230 263 7426

Galerie du Moulin Cassé

Pereybère
+230 263 0672



ROUTES

Iconic sites

North	South	East	West	Centre
Cap Malheureux church	Gris-Gris	Ile aux Cerfs	Le Morne Brabant	Trou aux Cerfs crater & viewpoint
Gunners' Coin	Chamarel	Ile aux Aigrettes	Martello Tower	Mauritius Glass Gallery
Pamplemousses Botanical Garden	« La Roche qui Pleure » (the weeping rock)	La Vallée de Ferney	Casela Nature Park	Les Aubineaux
Château de Labourdonnais	La Vanille Réserve des Mascareignes	H. Rault cassava biscuit factory	La Tourelle de Tamarin	Grand Bassin
The bay of Grand Bay	Macondé	The sea temple in Poste de Flacq	Tamarin salt pans	Champ de Mars race course
« Le Toit Rouge » or Red Roof	The Vortex	Le café des Arts	Black River National Park	Old Port Louis
L'Aventure du Sucre	Ile des Deux Cocos	The waterfall on Grand River South-East	Cascavelle	Marie Reine De La Paix
The flamboyant or flame tree	Saint-Aubin	Le Mouchoir Rouge islet	Bénitiers island	Le Piton du Milieu
Saint-Antoine	La Vallée des Couleurs		Albion lighthouse	Eureka, The Creole Mansion
	Tea Factory		Trois Mamelles mountain	Port Louis Central Market
	Rivière des Galets		Tamarin Bay	Aapravasi Ghat
	Le Pont Naturel (natural lava bridge)			The Citadel (Fort Adelaide)
	Cavendish Paradise			China Town
	Saint-Félix beach			Jummah Mosque
	La Cambuse beach			Place d'Armes
				Caudan Waterfront
				Kaylasson Temple





**1 DAY
IN PORT LOUIS**



A 10-minute walk from Place d'Armes

Le Caudan Waterfront

When visiting Port Louis, visitors must explore the Caudan Waterfront. Its open-air space by the port, the elegant pleasure crafts anchored at its marina and varied restaurants make it an excellent single-stop to leisurely shop around the markets and international boutiques, before having a meal.

Central Market

The Central Market occupies a two-century old site on Queen Street, midway between the bus stations linking Port Louis to the rest of the island. Open every day of the year, except under most unfavourable weather conditions, Port Louis Central Market is a landmark for both locals and tourists owing to its vibrant and colourful ambience; vegetable and fruit arrangements, traditional foodstuffs, spices and so much more...

Moslem Area

This quarter of the City holds a special place in the heart of Mauritians of Muslim faith. This is also the area to discover the most authentic preparations of this community's food specialties such as the biryani mixed rice or the halim spiced soup.

China Town

Naturally, some of the best Chinese food restaurants are to be found there. Once a year, the many components of Chinese traditional and contemporary culture take over the streets to celebrate the Chinese Food & Cultural Festival, inviting all Mauritian residents and visitors for entertaining and delicious moments.

Other sites to visit:

- *Aapravasi Ghat (UNESCO World Heritage)*
- *Photography Museum*
- *Marie Reine De la Paix*
- *The Citadel*
- *Place d'Armes*
- *Blue Penny Museum*

A 10-minute drive from Place d'Armes

Father Laval's Vault

September 9th is a day of pious celebration for Mauritian Catholics, but not only: it is not uncommon to see people of other faiths join in the pilgrimage to Ste Croix locality to honour, on the date of his death, the French Missionary, Father Laval. Since the event's 150th anniversary in 2014, the vault and church precinct have been enlarged to welcome an average of 150,000 pilgrims.

Kaylasson Temple

Shri Sockalingum Meenatchee Ammen Tirukovil, best known as Kaylasson Temple, is the most important Tamil place of worship of the island. Its construction dates back to 1854 when, a bunch of local Indian traders of Tamil origin decided to erect a magnificent architecture to honour God Shiva. The temple represents a reclining human body together with the thousand-petal lotus.

The Citadel

Formally named Fort Adelaide, commonly known as The Citadel, this historical and imposing stone architecture overlooking the city and port from a hill, was constructed between 1834 and 1840 as a military measure to protect Port Louis against uprisings occurring on the island in the wake of the abolition of slavery. The view one gets from this point of vantage makes it well worth a visit.

Natural History Museum

This is the oldest museum of the island and was declared National Museum in 2000. It occupies the site of the ancient Royal College of Port Louis and bears witness to the wealth of Mauritian fauna and flora. The museum shelters 35,000 samples of geological and natural history, of which 3,000 can be viewed.

Chinese Pagodas

The construction of the first places of worship for the Chinese immigrants started around 1820. Today, the island counts eleven pagodas, all located in Port Louis. The most ancient is Kwan Tee pagoda in Les Salines.



10 DAYS IN MAURITIUS



J1 - Port Louis

The capital of Mauritius is located on the North-West coast. Today it is mainly the business and administrative centre of the country, bustling with activity daylong. The old Port Louis city still keeps within a wealth of historical and cultural places of interest such as The Citadel and its panoramic view, the folkloric Central Market and other landmarks reflecting multiethnic Mauritius, notably Chinese pagodas, Kaylasson temple, Jummah Mosque and St Louis Cathedral.

Le Caudan Waterfront

Le Caudan Waterfront leisure and commercial complex is a must when visiting Port Louis. Its open-air space, marina, restaurants, craft market, luxury and international brand boutiques, make it an excellent single-stop.

J2 - Pamplemousses and its legendary garden

Situated midway along the Port Louis to Grand Bay highway, the charming village of Pamplemousses holds particular interest owing to its historical sites and, foremost, its legendary botanical garden. Known by botanists the world over, the garden is famous for its important collection of exotic and indigenous plants. Worthy of a special mention are the giant water lilies and a large variety of palm trees among which the exceptional Talipot palm known to flourish only once during its sixty-year life span, just before dying away.

L'Aventure du Sucre

Close by to Pamplemousses Garden is an ancient sugar factory turned into the « adventure of sugar » museum to tell the story of the Mauritian sugar industry.

J3 - Off to sea!

Catamaran

Whether to view the island's sculptural beauty from the sea or to revel in a leisurely day shaded from the sun, admiring the island from a boat, there is a wide choice of sea excursions available to suit all preferences. Full-day excursions and private rentals are available from the northern, eastern, south-eastern and western coasts.

Speedboat

Take an exhilarating ride at splashing speed across dazzling lagoons and cast anchor at any of the islets studding the lagoon, close to Mauritius.

Diving

With its spectacular lagoons and protected coral reefs, Mauritius is a prized diving destination. The reef is a treasure trove of brightly-coloured exotic fish, amazing corals and even shipwrecks dating from those times when pirates and privateers trawled the Indian Ocean. For the curious yet less adventurous, submersible crafts and undersea walks remain popular alternatives to take a close look at the sea life.

J4 - Sea sports

Kitesurf, seakarting, kayaking, canoeing and ocean-deep big-game fishing beyond the reef are just some water sports available in Mauritius. The island has an abundance of options for those seeking an adrenaline rush.

J5 - L'île aux Cerfs

Iconic Ile aux Cerfs is a beautiful island just a 5-minute boat-ride away from Shangri-La's Le Touessrok hotel. Visitors can relax on the dazzling ivory beaches, have lunch at a choice of restaurants, have fun with kids at the tortoise farm or even have a game of golf at the extraordinary 18-hole golf course occupying the other side of the island, and one of the best Mauritius has to offer.

J6 - Theme Parks

Mauritius holds above ten natural parks and leisure parks. They offer the opportunity to grasp the wealth of local flora and fauna as well as acclimated specimens from farther horizons such as giant tortoises, crocodiles, ostriches, giraffes, lions, cheetahs and caracals. In wider and wilder natural expanses, a choice of unforgettable thrills awaits both kids and grownups: horseback riding, quad-biking, segway or jeep safaris, or else to really get your heart-rate up, go for a zip line, a canyon swing or a canyoning adventure.

J7 - Le Morne, hiking or climbing

Rising to 550 metres above the wonderful beaches and lagoons at its foot, Le Morne Brabant is one of the most spectacular peaks of Mauritius. Classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site for its historical value, the mount offers exhilarating climbing on its steepest sides as well as more recent hiking tracks going by the most accessible parts. At the summit, one is at a loss for words – the view leaves more breathless than the road up ever could.

J8 - Trekking & Black River Gorges

From its volcanic origins, through millions of years of patient weathering, Mauritius keeps a distinctive mountainous ridge around its central plateau. Manageable tracks lead to the most popular peaks, namely Lion Mountain, Le Pouce Mountain or Piton de la Rivière Noire. One can also trek across Black River Gorges, a favourite for its waterfalls, landscapes, panoramas and its rich flora and interesting bird watching.



Grand Bassin

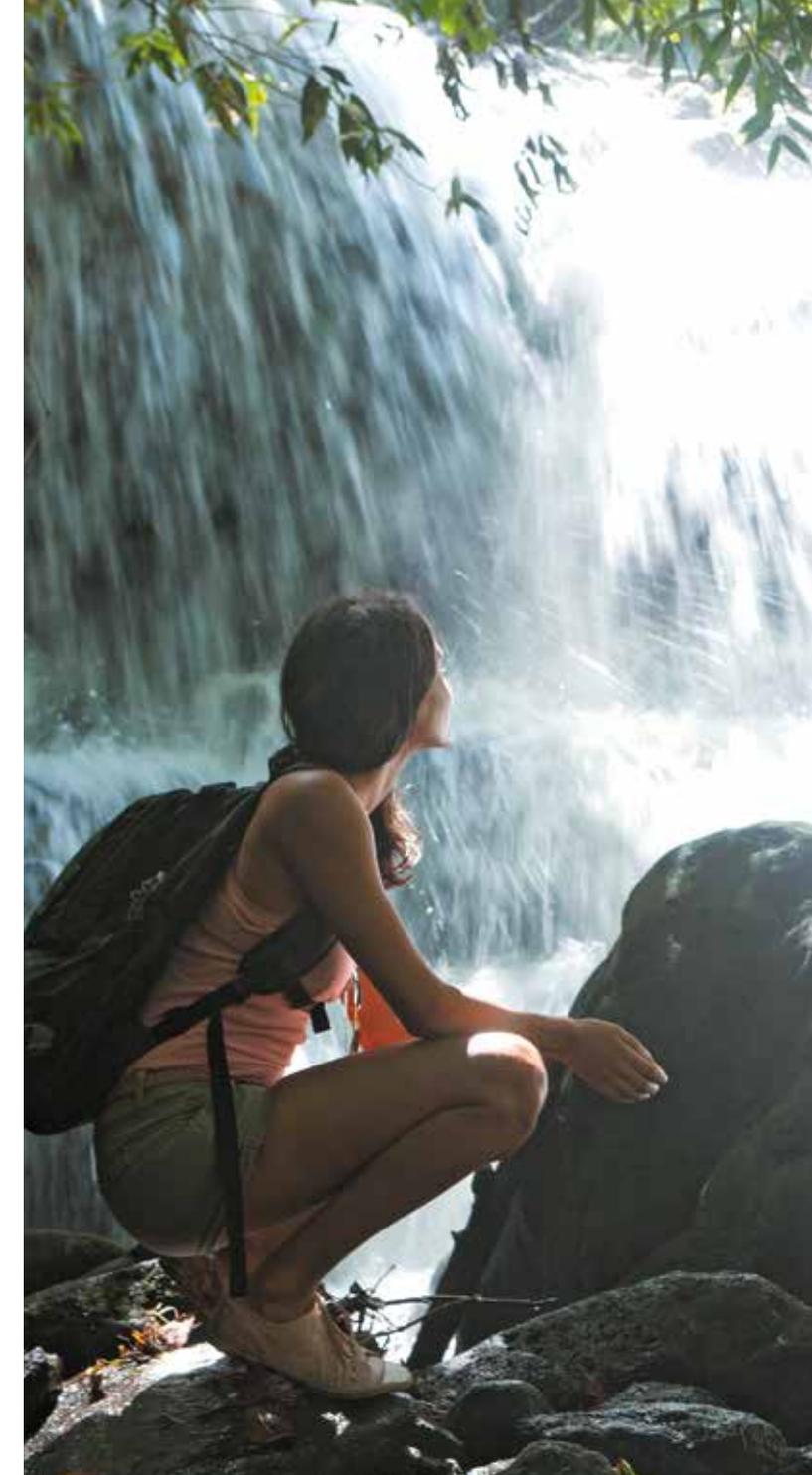
Grand Bassin is one of the two natural lakes of the island. Located near Mare aux Vacoas, it occupies the crater of an ancient and now dead volcano. In addition to its typical and beautiful upland environment, Grand Bassin is a religious place where Mauritians of Hindu faith go on pilgrimage.

J9 - Big-game fishing and a spectacular sunset

Mauritius is a well-known big-game fishing destination and a favourite with deep-sea sport adrenaline lovers and challenge seekers. Beyond the magnificent coral reef bordering the lagoons, lie the warm depths of the Indian Ocean. These waters abound with prized species and specimens. The emperors and masters of this marine world are undoubtedly the all-famous black and blue marlins; mako and tiger sharks; in a lesser measure, the dogtooth, yellow and bonita tuna; barracuda and sea bream. During these fishing trips, set against the idyllic scenery of tropical islets shimmering under the sun, visitors can sometimes enjoy the friendly company of dolphins.

J10 - Shopping in Curepipe & Floréal

Set in a charming old-fashioned atmosphere and against the backdrop of colonial remains, there is an array of shops and boutiques to choose from Curepipe and Floréal, its chic suburb, suiting all needs and tastes. The 80-metre deep Trou aux Cerfs crater is easily accessible on foot and by car. It is a must-do when shopping in Curepipe or Floréal; the panoramic viewpoints it offers all round its 300 metres diameter set amidst lush greenery is well worth a stop.



RODRIGUES ISLAND

Rodrigues Island is a tiny little jewel (18 x 8km = 108km²) off the north-east coast of Mauritius, with a population of around 38,000 people. Of volcanic origin, it owes its name to the Portuguese ships' pilot, Diego Rodrigues, who discovered it in February 1528.

The island prides itself in its silky beaches, its gorgeous uneven topography, the natural politeness of its inhabitants, its scrumptious gastronomy and its landmarks, as well as its sea activities. Interestingly, Rodrigues also has a vast limestone plain with beautiful show caves.

Location - Indian Ocean, 650km to the north-east of Mauritius

Climate - Tropical, with 28 to 35 ° C in summer (October to May) 18 to 27 ° C in Winter (June to September)

Capital - Port Mathurin

Status - Dependency of the Republic of Mauritius with an autonomous status

Official Language - Creole, French, English

Time Zone - GMT +4 wintertime & +5 summertime

How to get there - 1h20 by plane & 36 hours by sea from Mauritius

Passport/Visa - Foreigners: a passport valid until 6 months after departure date & return ticket required. A visa is not necessary for most visitors.

Vaccination - No compulsory vaccination

Currency - Mauritian Rupee (MUR)

Power Supply - 220 volts 60 Hz

Accommodation - Rodrigues Island offers visitors a vast choice of accommodation, ranging from 4 star hotels to fully-furnished studio apartments as well as inns, guesthouses, cottages and apartments. Something they all have in common is their warm welcome 'the Rodriguan way', which will mark your stay on the island.

Incoming Agencies - Various structures are available to facilitate the discovery of the island. Service providers offer the possibility to rent vehicles, organise excursions, cruises big game fishing outings and visits to the islets.



People and Culture

Rodrigues Island is also renowned for its authenticity- which makes the uniqueness of its anti-stress island.

Authentically Creole, the Rodriguan culture is vibrant through the music, dances and cuisine of its people. The music is a sweet blend of European melodies and African rhythms; the 'sega tambour' is the folk dance of Rodrigues.

The population mainly lives off fishing, farm produce handicraft and more recently, tourism. Women play an active part in the economic life of the island.

The people – 96% of whom are Christian – live a naturally harmonious life.

Gastronomy

The Rodriguan gastronomy (enriched by Chinese, Indian and European influence) is made up of local produce that is naturally available in abundance. Dishes made with fish, octopus, pork and chicken are of incomparable flavour. The cuisine consists of simple but tasty dishes that bring out the natural taste of the produce. A typical Rodriguan meal is served with rice or maize and red beans, and is accented with chilli or chutneys.

Fauna & Flora

Rodrigues used to be home to a member of unique birds of which the solitaire (*Pezophaps solitaria*), now extinct, is most famous. The Rodrigues Fody (*Foudia flavicans*), the Rodrigues Warbler (*Acrocephalus rodericanus*) and seabirds such as terns are protected species living peacefully in natural reserves and on the islets in the lagoon. A sanctuary for reptiles such as the Giant Tortoise and the Gecko, Rodrigues also has an endemic mammal, the Golden Fruit Bat (*pteropus rodericensis*). The protection of the flora has become a priority. Huge effort is being invested in the conservation, restoration and recreation of the pristine natural ecosystem of the island. Critically, rare and endangered plants like the 'café marron' (*Rasmonia rodriguesii*), are receiving special attention and monitoring.

Sports and Leisure

The topology of the island lends itself to a number of nature discovery opportunities, namely through trekking excursions, mountain-bike hikes, nautical activities and cave exploration. The undersea world uncovers its secrets to divers and fishermen. Surf, kite surf and windsurf enthusiasts will find there an unparalleled haven whilst the steep-sided ravines attract ornithologists as well as nature lovers.





This is the official destination label taken up by the set of island nations of the western part of the Indian Ocean, namely Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar, Reunion, Comoros and Mayotte. The Vanilla islands are accessible either on board cruise liners or by air from all islands, except for Mayotte which is reachable from Reunion island.



Cruises

Port Louis Harbour in Mauritius welcomes an increasing number of cruise liners, among which the renowned Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth. On board other liners - from Italy, England and Monaco and, respectively, Costa Croisières, Fred Olsen and Silversea, one can go island-hopping whilst enjoying the entertaining time aboard. In view of the increasing number of cruise liners visiting the region and with the view to offering quality service to those berthing in Mauritius, the construction of a new terminal is underway, which should be operational in 2017.

For further details, please visit vanilla-islands.org



Practical information

Location – Mauritius is located in the Indian Ocean, 2 000 km to the south-east of Africa; 900 km off Madagascar. The island is of volcanic origin, with a land surface of some 2 000 km² with a mountainous hinterland and a coastline of white coral sand and lagoons.

Climate – Average summer temperature: 24.7 ° C; mean winter temperature 20.4 ° C

Capital City – Port Louis

Status – Independent Republic

Official language – English

Other spoken languages – Creole, French, ancestral languages (Hindi, Mandarin, etc.)

Time zone – GMT +4 (+5 during northern hemisphere summer time)

Getting to Mauritius – Getting to Mauritius – The following airlines serve the island : Air Mauritius, the national airline ; the super-connectors Emirates and Turkish Airlines as well as other lines from major incoming tourist markets, namely France, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, South Africa, Reunion Island, India, China, Russia.

Passport/Visa – Immigration formalities require that foreign visitors present a return ticket as well as a passport valid for 6 months beyond due date of departure from Mauritius.

Vaccination – Non-mandatory

Currency – Mauritian Rupee (MUR). Major credit cards accepted.

The list of « Must-dos », « A walk on the wild side », « The most attractive trails », « Top 10 beaches », « Must-do excursions », « Best endemic fauna and flora sites », « Must-see art galleries », has been established by an independent panel, composed by representatives of 8 tour operators and 1 AHRIM representative, under the direction of an independent facilitator. Selection methodology applied can be consulted on <http://www.tourism-mauritius.mu/trade/>

All information herein contained has been verified as accurate, at date of impression (October 2016).

Contact

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4th & 5th floors, Victoria House,

Saint-Louis Street,

11302, Port Louis

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Fax: +230 212 5142

<http://www.tourism-mauritius.mu>

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