



Coast To Coast: The Ultimate Mauritius Travel Guide

Description

Nestled in the azure waters of the Indian Ocean, Mauritius stands as one of the world's most exquisite islands, galvanized by the warm breeze, with swaying palm trees as far as the eye can see – offering a multi-faceted experience that caters equally to families, honeymooners, and travelers of all kinds. From pristine white sands to lush rainforests and towering mountains, the picturesque island paradise beckons travelers with its stunning beaches, vibrant culture, diverse landscapes and sizzling hot culinary experiences.

HOW TO GET THERE

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport serves as the main gateway to Mauritius. Air Mauritius operates direct flights between Mumbai and Mauritius. Travellers can also connect from over 25 cities in India with Air Mauritius' airline partners, Vistara and Air India.

VISA ON ARRIVAL

Upon arrival at Mauritius International Airport, visitors can apply for a single-entry visa if their stay exceeds 60 days. This visa is valid for 90 days, with the option to extend for an additional 90 days. However, tourists cannot stay in Mauritius for more than 180 days.

GETTING AROUND

There are multiple ways to [get around Mauritius](#), from organised excursions to car rentals and public transport. Local **tour operators** offer organized island excursions and boat trips around Mauritius, easily arranged through hotels. Tours range from half-day to full-day itineraries, often using minibuses for group travel. For independent exploration, consider **hiring a car** for freedom and flexibility. **Taxis** are also available, especially in the evening when bus services cease, and can be arranged through accommodations for convenience.

ORIENTATION

The island covers 2030 sq km and driving from the east to the west coast covers about 45 km and typically takes 1 hour and 15 minutes. Travelling from the north to the south of the island spans approximately 61 km and usually requires around 1 hour and 20 minutes by car.

North Mauritius



Cap Malheureux Church in North Mauritius. Photo (C) Mauritius Now

The north of Mauritius is renowned for its lively atmosphere and bustling nightlife, making it the perfect destination for those seeking excitement and adventure. As the sun sets, [Grand Baie's bars and restaurants](#) come alive with DJ sessions, live music, and vibrant nightclubs. Indulge in **fine dining**, **sip cocktails at chic beachfront bars**, or unwind at laid-back eateries overlooking the sea. **Shopping** enthusiasts will delight in the plethora of boutiques, malls, and markets offering unique souvenirs. The north is also a haven for **outdoor** enthusiasts, with **golf courses**, **kitesurfing** spots, and pristine **sandy beaches** awaiting exploration. Embark on **boat trips** to discover enchanting [northern islands](#) like **Ilot Gabriel** and **Coin de Mire**, renowned for their stunning scenery and superb **snorkeling** opportunities or immerse yourself in the rich culture and history of the region by visiting landmarks such as [Château de Labourdonnais](#) and the iconic red-roofed church at [Cap Malheureux](#).

South Mauritius



Blue Bay Marine Park. Photo (C) MTPA

The southern coast of Mauritius exudes a rugged charm, boasting authentic **fishing villages**, **expansive beaches**, and dramatic **volcanic rock cliffs** pounded by crashing waves. Escape to this tranquil enclave to immerse yourself in nature's wonders, from the majestic **Rochester Falls** to the awe-inspiring **Le Souffleur water spring**, reminiscent of a geyser shooting into the sky. Embark on the **Tea Trail** to delve into the island's rich tea heritage, meandering through three plantations and admiring grand colonial mansions. Indulge your senses with the island's favorite vanilla tea along the way. Discover hidden gems like **Pomponette** and **Riambel** beaches along secluded paths, and pay homage to Hindu traditions at the sacred Ganga Talao, home to the towering 33-meter statue of Shiva. For an enriching nature experience, embark on a guided hike through the pristine **Ile aux Aigrettes** nature reserve, where you can encounter rare wildlife such as the pink pigeon and Mauritius fody. Cool off in the crystal-clear waters of **Blue Bay Marine Park**, renowned as one of the island's premier snorkeling destinations.

East Mauritius



Île aux Cerfs island. Photo (C) Jacob Sjöman for MTPA

East Mauritius beckons with some of the island's most stunning beaches, a vast lagoon with crystal-clear waters, and refreshing breezes year-round. [Belle Mare beach](#) boasts one of the longest stretches of sand, ideal for leisurely strolls under the shade of casuarina trees. Explore pristine shores along the east coast and embark on boat or catamaran excursions to idyllic islands like [Île aux Cerfs](#), perfect for beach outings or a round of golf. Don't miss a visit to **Trou d'Eau Douce**, a charming fishing village steeped in history, where you can witness breathtaking sunrises and observe local fishermen heading out to sea. Explore the coastal scenery by bicycle, discover **Roches Noires** and its waterfront, or immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of the [Central Flacq market](#). For adventure seekers, climb **Lion Mountain** for panoramic views, cool off in waterfall pools, or delve into the wilderness of [La Vallée de Ferney](#) wildlife reserve on quad bike or foot. And don't forget to explore [Bras D'Eau National Park](#), home to majestic ebony trees and rare bird species, perfect for a scenic walk.

West Mauritius



Le Morne Beach. Photo (C) MTPA

The western coast of Mauritius boasts enchanting sunsets, breathtaking nature, and pristine beaches, all amidst a relaxed pace of life. Discover perfect beaches and exceptional diving and snorkeling spots like **Crystal Rock**. Kitesurfing enthusiasts should head to **Le Morne** on the southwest coast, renowned for its strong tradewinds and famous spots like **One Eye**, with numerous schools available for instruction. The iconic [Le Morne Brabant mountain](#), a UNESCO World Heritage Site, dominates the west coast skyline, offering a rich history to explore during your stay. For adventurers, [Black River Gorges National Park](#) is a hiker's paradise, featuring 50 km of marked trails and scenic waterfalls. Look out for the famous [Chamarel Waterfall](#). Indulge in street food at **Tamarin Bay**, hike up to **Phare d'Albion Lighthouse**, or unwind at a beach bar with a DJ spinning tunes against the backdrop of a stunning sunset. For a truly unforgettable experience, book a scenic **seaplane ride** to witness the mesmerizing ['underwater' waterfall](#) from above.

Central Mauritius



Hiking Pieter Both Mountain. Photo (C) Mauritius Now

While most visitors head for the coastal resorts, Central Mauritius has some hidden gems including mountains, historic mansions, and vibrant shopping malls. Embark on a hike to [Le Pouce Mountain](#), following in the footsteps of **Charles Darwin**, or explore [Pieter Both mountain](#) with a knowledgeable guide. Delve into the island's rich history by dining in a colonial house at **Le Domaine des Aubineaux in Curepipe**, or wander through the historic [Eureka House in Moka](#), now transformed into a captivating museum surrounded by lush gardens and cascading waterfalls. Shopaholics will delight in the modern shopping malls like **Les Arcade Currimjee** and [Bagatelle Mall](#), while **Quatres-Bornes** boasts **La City Trianon and Phoenix Mall**, easily accessible via the Metro Express. Don't miss the chance to tee off at the historic [Gymkhana Club Golf Course](#), dating back to 1844, offering 18 holes and a unique night driving range experience.

Port Louis

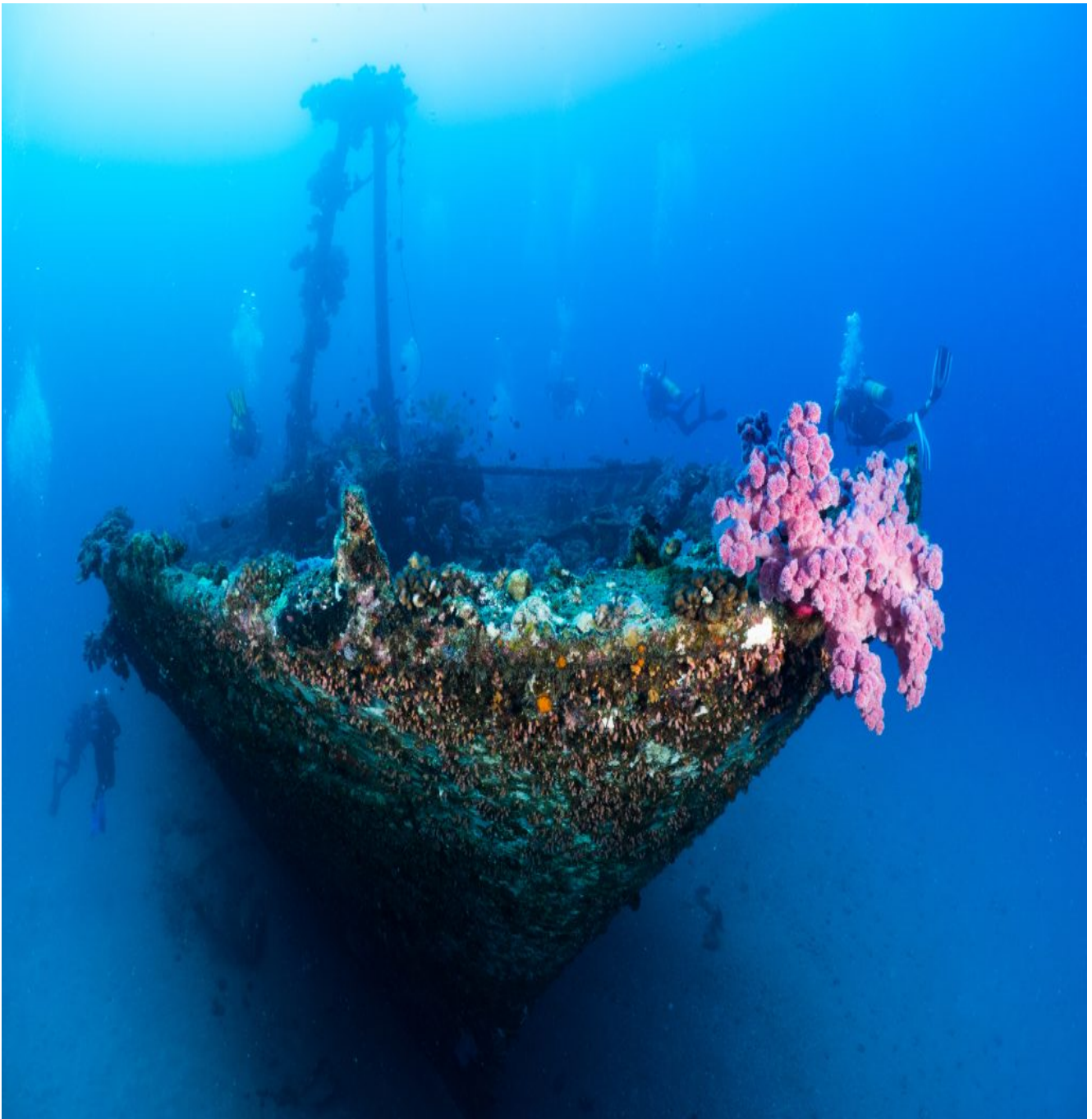


Port Louis. Photo (C) mauritiusnow.com

Discover the Vibrant Heart of Mauritius in [Port Louis](#), the bustling capital nestled in the northwest. Here, amidst towering skyscrapers and lush parks, you'll find a fusion of modernity and tradition. Explore the [Central Market](#), a local treasure trove brimming with tropical fruits, delectable pastries, and the island's famed aloude drink. Wander through [Chinatown's](#) labyrinthine streets, where aromatic delicacies beckon from every corner and vibrant street art adorns the walls. Begin your exploration at the [Caudan Waterfront](#), a vibrant hub boasting shopping malls, cultural centers, and waterfront promenades adorned with colorful umbrellas. Immerse yourself in the island's rich history at [Aapravasi Ghat](#), a UNESCO World Heritage Site that bears witness to Mauritius' multicultural heritage. Marvel at the architectural diversity of Port Louis, from the Sockalingum Meenatchee Ammen Kovil temple and the Jumrah Masjid mosque to the St Louis Cathedral and the Kwan Tee Pagoda, each a testament to the city's cosmopolitan soul.

THINGS TO DO

Diving Adventures



Diving in Mauritius. Photo (C) Mauritius Now

Mauritius boasts a stunning lagoon encircling its shores, offering not only picturesque scenery but also exceptional diving opportunities at the reefs lining the lagoon's edge. Along the island's western coast, where the waves crash against the horizon, lies a dramatic drop-off where the lagoon merges with the open ocean, revealing a captivating world of underwater cliffs teeming with diverse marine life. **Flic en Flac** serves as the gateway to some of the region's finest dive sites, including **La Cathédrale**, renowned for its sightings of agile lobsters.

Rodrigues Island



Snorkeling in Mauritius. Photo (C) Mauritius Now

Tucked away as one of Mauritius' most secluded regions, Rodrigues exudes a distinct aura, seemingly existing in a realm apart from the mainland. The island is located around 580 kilometres northeast of Mauritius and takes about an hour and a half to fly to the island from Mauritius. Spend your days embarking on **boat excursions** to nearby islands, encountering majestic tortoises, exploring the vibrant Saturday market at Port Mathurin, or indulging in **diving and snorkeling adventures** along the southern coast or around La Passe St François.

Hike The Black River Gorges Mountain



Hiking in Mauritius. Photo (C) Mauritius Now

Nestled in the verdant heart of Mauritius lies the pristine Black River Gorges National Park, a mere stone's throw from the coastline. This protected wilderness is a haven for indigenous flora and fauna, housing a rich tapestry of **biodiversity**, including rare species like the Mauritius kestrel, echo parakeet, and pink pigeon. Embark on a **hike** through lush forests adorned with **cascading waterfalls**, keeping a keen eye out for white-tailed tropicbirds soaring overhead and pink pigeons gracefully traversing the trails. Mauritian flying foxes, wild boars, macaque monkeys, and deer also inhabit the island.

A Trip To Chamarel



Chamarel Waterfall. Photo (C) MTPA

Escape the coast and venture to **Chamarel**, a hidden paradise nestled in the hills of Mauritius'. Enjoy panoramic views of the coastline and indulge in the burgeoning culinary scene with quaint eateries and upscale restaurants. Explore the **7 Coloured Earth Geopark**, where colourful sand dunes reveal 600 million years of geological history. Don't miss the majestic **Chamarel Waterfall**, standing at 100 meters tall, fed by the Saint-Denis River. Catch a glimpse of this natural wonder along the Geopark's access road or embark on a scenic trail to witness its elegant cascade firsthand.

Into The Wild: Île aux Aigrettes

Situated on the periphery of the lagoon just off the untouched southeastern coast of Mauritius, Île aux Aigrettes offers a glimpse into the ancient and untamed Mauritius that early explorers encountered. This forest provides a sanctuary for a variety of **endangered bird and wildlife species**. As you traverse the terrain, keep an eye out for the magnificent Mauritian giant tortoises, a cherished inhabitant of the island.



Kitesurfing in Mauritius. Photo (C) MTPA

Unwind on the Exquisite Beaches

Mauritius is renowned for its stunning beaches that embrace the island like a radiant garland. While every resort boasts its own stretch of shoreline, the abundance of sandy shores ensures that tranquil public beaches, frequented by local families enjoying picnics, are always within reach, offering a more intimate seaside experience away from bustling tourist crowds. The **eastern coast boasts an array of pristine options**, while the **southern beaches exude a serene and untamed charm**. For those seeking aquatic adventures, the western coast presents an ideal playground with a plethora of water-based activities to enjoy.

Embark on a Boat Adventure for Spectacular Views

While Mauritius and remote Rodrigues often steal the spotlight, there's an overlooked archipelago of inner islands just a day's boat trip away from the main island. To the east lie **Île aux Deux Cocos and Île aux Cerfs**, offering serene corners amidst occasional crowds. **Pretty Île aux Bénitiers graces** the west coast, while to the north, choices abound with **Coin de Mire, Île Plate, and Îlot Gabriel**, each offering their own charm. Combine exploration with snorkeling sessions and a picnic lunch for a truly memorable day in Mauritius.



Dolphin Spotting in Mauritius. Photo (C) MTPA

Spot Whales & Dolphins

While the east coast of Mauritius boasts its luxurious resorts, the west coast beckons with exciting aquatic adventures. **Tamarin Bay** is renowned for sightings of spinner or bottlenose dolphins frolicking in the lagoon. From July to October or November, humpback whales make their annual migration through the open ocean off the west coast, providing an incredible opportunity to witness these magnificent creatures breaching beyond the lagoon.

Catamaran Sailing

Embark on a catamaran adventure with the freedom to tailor your sailing experience to your preferences. Opt for packages that allow you to island-hop, providing the opportunity to discover more of Mauritius than you ever thought possible. Marvel at the native flora and fauna during the day, and embrace the enchanting experience of spending a night at sea.



Sailing in Mauritius. Photo (C) MTPA

Helicopter Rides

Experience Mauritius from a whole new perspective with exhilarating helicopter rides that offer panoramic views of the island's sugarcane fields, crystalline lagoons, and impressive rock formations. For an added thrill, opt for seaplane tours that showcase the country's unique underwater waterfall. For adventure enthusiasts, consider combining your helicopter ride with a skydiving experience for an additional fee. Keep in mind that tandem skydiving requires meeting certain fitness criteria and undergoing basic training.

WHAT TO EAT

Diversity is a defining feature of Mauritian life, and the island's cultural melting pot really comes alive in the island's culinary story. **Indian, Chinese, Franco-Mauritian** and **Creole influences** come together in Mauritian kitchens – dining here is at once a genuine pleasure and a globe-trotting adventure. The island boasts world-renowned chefs and endless places to sample local delicacies and staples.



Fine Dining in Mauritius. Photo (C) MTPA

Global culinary influences and celebrity resort chefs are one thing, but there's no finer dining experience in Mauritius than grabbing a table at a beachfront shack, and ordering the freshest Indian Ocean **seafood** imaginable. Take your pick from lobster, prawns, octopus, grilled fish, calamari and more, and decide whether you want it served grilled or smothered in a red Creole sauce, then sit back and enjoy your seafood feast with a view.

Indian cuisine is easily accessible in Mauritius, with numerous Indian restaurants dotting the culinary landscape. Many traditional Mauritian dishes, such as biryani, fish curry, roti, chutney, and puri, draw inspiration from Indian cooking styles. **Vegetarian diners** will find a wealth of options at Indian eateries, with the added bonus of being able to sample authentic Mauritian fare as well. **Local vegetarian delicacies** like tofu boulettes (dumplings), dholl puri, gateau dhal (chilli cakes), and sept cari (a selection of seven curries served on a banana leaf) are sure to tantalize your taste buds.



Photo (C) MTPA

STAY

Mauritius is a paradise blessed with stunning beaches and an abundance of luxurious five-star hotels. The island boasts Michelin-starred chefs, designer furnishings, and golf courses on private islands, making it a dream destination for visitors. However, beyond the glitz and glamour, there's another side to Mauritius, where small boutique hotels offer rustic ocean-view bedrooms and laid-back dining. For those seeking a deeper connection with nature, the island also features some wonderful new eco escapes. Most resorts cater wonderfully for families, with kids clubs, water sports and more. It does not matter which secluded corner of the island you head to, there'll be abundant resorts to choose from. Expect large and luxurious rooms, multiple swimming pools, ample gardens, world-class restaurants, organized activities and perhaps a no-indulgence-spared spa.

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