

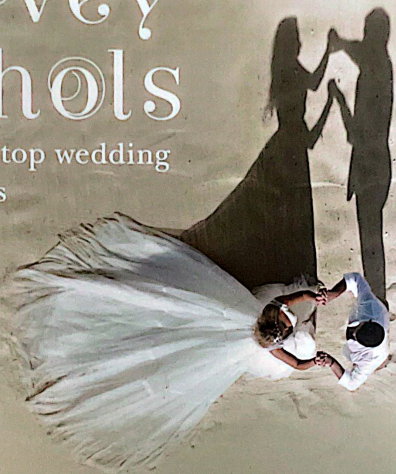
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MAGAZINE

Harvey Nichols

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TRAVEL GUIDE: Mauritius

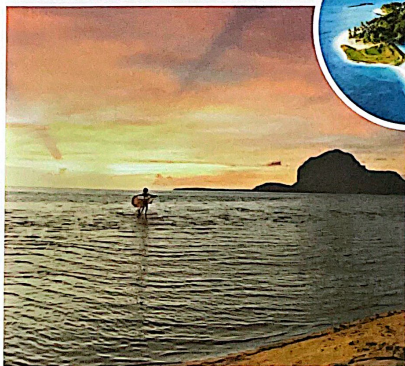
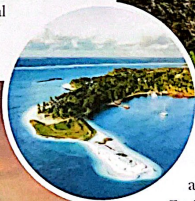
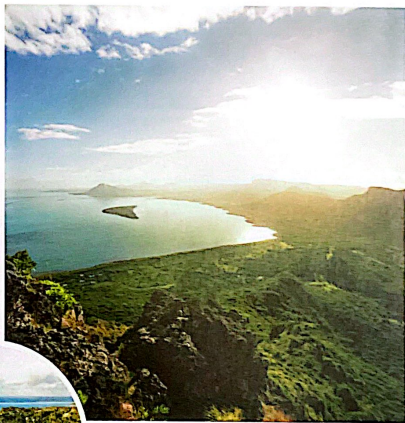
Discover the best of the Indian
Ocean paradise

Travel Guide: Mauritius

From beautiful landscapes and stunning spa resorts to cultural exploration and wildlife encounters, **John Coyne** discovered the best of the Indian Ocean paradise of Mauritius

Embarking on a remarkable adventure to the enchanting island of Mauritius, I had the pleasure of immersing myself in its captivating beauty. Located in the Indian Ocean, just off the coast of Southeast Africa and renowned for its pristine beaches it offers the perfect sanctuary for those wanting to spend days lounging on the beach or on the ocean. It also has so much more to offer beyond the beach, this is truly a destination with something for everyone.

During my stay, I had the pleasure of experiencing two luxurious resorts, Sands Suites Resort and Spa and Maradiva Villas Resort and Spa. Both resorts are located on the sheltered west coast of the island, offering magical sunsets over the Indian Ocean and providing the perfect base to make fond memories exploring the island's cultural heritage, beautiful landscapes and wildlife encounters.



SANDS SUITES RESORT AND SPA

The Sands offers spacious and well-appointed suites with modern amenities.

Each suite is designed with comfort and relaxation in mind, featuring a private balcony or terrace overlooking the lush tropical gardens and sparkling Indian Ocean.

The resort boasts several dining options, including a main restaurant serving international cuisine, a beach restaurant offering seafood and grill specialities and a lounge bar where you can enjoy refreshing drinks and cocktails.

A range of facilities and activities are offered to keep guests entertained. You can relax by the pool

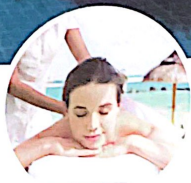


or beautiful beach, indulge in rejuvenating spa treatments, work out at the fitness centre or try a range of water sports such as snorkelling, diving and kayaking. The resort also offers a variety of excursions and tours to explore the island.

Nestled along the pristine shores of Flic-en-Flac Beach, Sands offers a haven of serenity and natural splendour. From the moment I set foot in the resort, I was greeted with genuine warmth and exemplary hospitality. I had a first-floor suite which exuded elegance and comfort, adorned with modern amenities and breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean.

The infinity pool, surrounded by lush tropical gardens, provided an idyllic setting to unwind, while the private beach offered a serene escape. The resort's restaurants showcased a fusion of international and Mauritian flavours tantalizing my taste buds with exquisite culinary creations.

sands.mu



MARADIVA VILLAS RESORT AND SPA

Maradiva Villas Resort and Spa offers spacious and elegant villas with private pools. The resort has 65 villas in total, each designed with a contemporary yet traditional Mauritian style. The villas are divided into various categories including garden suites, luxury pool villas, beachfront villas and exclusive presidential suites. All villas come with modern amenities and offer a high level of privacy.

There are several dining options to cater to different tastes. The main restaurant Coast2Coast, serves a fusion of international and Mauritian cuisine in an elegant setting overlooking the infinity pool. Cilantro is the resort's fine dining Indian restaurant, offering authentic flavours and a refined atmosphere. You can also enjoy drinks and light bites at the Breakers Bar or in the comfort of your own villa through the in-villa dining service. —

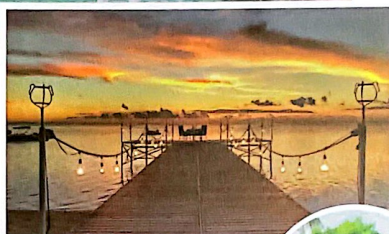


MARADIVA VILLAS RESORT AND SPA

— Maradiva provides a range of facilities and services to enhance your stay. These include a spa, fitness centre, swimming pool and tennis court. The resort also provides various activities and excursions to keep guests entertained. These include water sports, a catamaran cruise, explore the nearby coral reefs, or take a guided tour to discover the beauty of Mauritius. There are also several local attractions worth exploring; the Tamarina Golf Club is perfect for golf enthusiasts or you can visit Casela Nature Park, home to various animal species and offering activities like zip lining and quad biking.

Maradiva Villas provided an exclusive retreat designed for intimacy and indulgence. Each villa boasts its own private pool and garden, ensuring absolute privacy and tranquility. The attention to detail in my beachfront villa's architecture and furnishings was remarkable, exuding sophistication and opulence.

The gourmet dining experience at Maradiva Villas was a culinary journey to remember. From delectable seafood to international haute cuisine, every dish was



a masterpiece. The resort's beachfront dining allowed me to savour exquisite meals while being serenaded by the gentle waves.

The spa at Maradiva Villas offered a sanctuary for holistic rejuvenation, with an array of therapeutic treatments and wellness practices. The design is strongly influenced by Indian philosophy and specialises in Ayurvedic treatments. An initial consultation with Doctor Praveen Nair identified my dominant dosha, ensuring the oils used would provide the maximum benefit to me.

maradiva.com



WHAT TO DO

Exploring Port Louis

A visit to Mauritius would be incomplete without delving into the vibrant culture and history of its capital city, Port Louis. My first stop was a visit to the Citadelle (also known as Fort Adelaide), a hilltop fort which now serves as a venue for shows and other cultural events and provides stunning views across the city and harbour. The city's bustling Caudan Waterfront is a hub of activity, with a wide range of shops, restaurants and entertainment options. I enjoyed leisurely strolling along the waterfront, indulging in local delicacies and exploring the vibrant marketplace.

The Central Market, a sensory delight, immersed me in the vibrant colours and aromas of exotic spices, fresh produce and local crafts. While the Aapravasi Ghat, a UNESCO World Heritage site, provided a



poignant glimpse into Mauritius' history of indentured labour.

Le Morne

Situated on the Southwestern tip of Mauritius, the breathtaking region of Le Morne beckoned me with its natural wonders and cultural significance. The iconic Le Morne Brabant mountain stood majestically; its rugged cliffs and verdant flora creating a postcard perfect backdrop. I embarked on a memorable hike, guided by knowledgeable local Allan Ramalingum (who runs the adventure company Local Spirit) who shared the mountain's history and legends. The breathtaking 360-degree views from the top are worth the exertion and Le Morne's pristine beaches, with their powdery sands and sparkling turquoise waters, provided an idyllic retreat to cool off after my descent.

Lunch at Eureka House

This magnificent house is a well-preserved colonial mansion that offers a glimpse into Mauritius's history. Like time has stood still, it is very much as it was when originally occupied. Fortunately for me, it now serves delicious traditional Mauritian food as well as serving as a time travel machine. I took lunch on the veranda in the company of the current owner of the house, Jacky de Maroussem. A perfect host, his anecdotes brought the history of the house to life. Afterwards, the extensive grounds provided the perfect opportunity to walk off my lunch in a world of peace and calm, exploring its waterfalls and indigenous flora.

Breakfast with Giraffes at Casela Nature Park

Head to Casela Nature Park, located close to Flic en Flac to sample its incredible array of activities and fun experiences on offer. With an impressive population



of over 1800 animals; if you are willing to connect with nature or seek your next dose of adrenaline this is the place for you. I had the amazing opportunity of having my breakfast with the tallest animal on earth. These sweet and gentle giants were the perfect companion for breakfast and once I had fed them, I got to enjoy a delicious breakfast buffet while these majestic animals roamed around keeping a close eye on me.

Day Trip to Mahebourg

Visit the charming town of Mahebourg, located on the Southeastern coast of Mauritius. Explore its historical sites, such as the Naval Museum and the Mahebourg market, where you can find local crafts, spices and fresh produce. Take a leisurely stroll along the waterfront and enjoy the views of its lagoon (the biggest in Mauritius). Here I opted for a boat trip which was the perfect opportunity to explore and swim in the turquoise waters. Afterwards, I stopped for lunch at Karay Mario, housed in a building that once was a sugar plantations infirmary. It offers only locally sourced ingredients with daily sumptuous specials to be enjoyed.

Chamarel Rum Distillery

Rum or food lovers should not miss the opportunity to embark on a tour of the Chamarel Rum Distillery, which is situated close to the 'Coloured Earths of Chamarel' tourist attraction in the South West of the island. Learn about the rum making process, from the cultivation of sugar cane to distillation and ageing of the spirits, sample the different varieties and purchase bottles to take home as souvenirs. The onsite restaurant 'L'Alchimiste' opens for lunch and specialises in unique cuisine, prepared with local products sourced from the estate itself.

rhumeriedechamarel.com 📍

