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Inflight Magazine for Air Seychelles • October - December 2024



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Dear Guests,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you onboard our state-of-the-art A320neo aircraft for your flight. Knowing that you have chosen the national airline as your carrier of choice today fills me with gratitude and pride, and I am certain that our award-winning cabin crew will take the best care of you.

This year seems to have gone by in the blink of an eye, but as the saying goes, time flies when you are enjoying yourself. Air Seychelles is the pride of the nation, and working for this esteemed organisation is indeed a joy. This year, we will honour and recognise thirty-one long-serving staff who have been with the company between ten to thirty-five years. What a feat! We will share pictures of the awards ceremony in the next edition of Silhouette.

Meanwhile, the rest of the HM family as we like to call ourselves, both on the ground and in the air, toil tirelessly to ensure that our customers receive the very best service while adhering to the strictest of safety protocols. As you know, safety is always our top priority.

To keep abreast with what has been happening lately, please visit pages 66 and 67. From new partnerships and collaborations to new seasonal operations over the festive season, we have been keeping very busy lately, and we really would not have it any other way. As a teaser before you start leafing through the pages, I want to share news on operational milestones. In November, we celebrate five years of service between the lively city of Tel Aviv, Israel and our paradise and in December, a decade of serving the route to Mumbai, India. This is testament to how well these routes are doing on our network. Of course, it would not have been possible without our valued passengers. Thank you. More on this in the next edition.

With this, I wish you Bon Voyage and Happy Holidays! Please share your feedback with our team by completing the post flight survey that will be sent to you after your flight.

Thank you for flying with Air Seychelles, where we proudly fly the Creole Spirit.

Until next time.



Captain Sandy Benoiton
Chief Executive Officer



“
Safety is our
top priority
”

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A weekend in Singapore

Here are some top recommendations for those spending a weekend in Singapore and want to experience the many cultures.



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A cultural phenomenon

Streets, parks, and open spaces across the country frequently host impromptu matches, with both children and adults enthusiastically partaking. It's a game that brings people together from all walks of life, bringing joy and sense of belonging.



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Endemic, biodiverse flora & fauna

Mauritius, an island nation in the Indian Ocean, is well-known for its diverse flora and fauna, many of which are endemic cultures.



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A dream getaway

It is feasible to visit this tropical paradise on a budget. With careful planning and a little of knowledge, you can experience the Maldives' breathtaking scenery, pristine waters, and vibrant culture without breaking the bank.



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The charm of a tropical idyll

La Réunion offers amazing adventures, breathtaking natural beauty, and rich cultural experiences. This island provides something for everyone, whether you enjoy being outside, being in nature, or learning about different cultures.



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A culinary mosaic

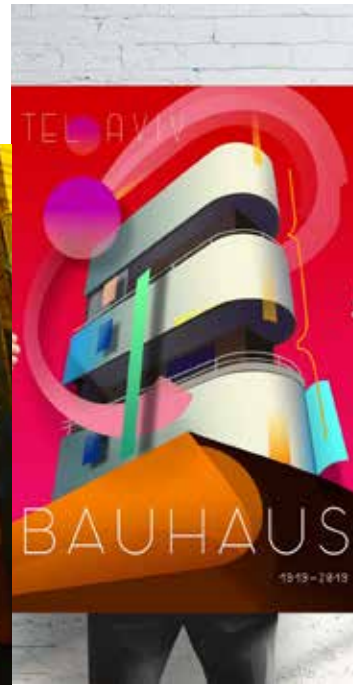
From street food to fine dining, every meal in this city tells a story of tradition, innovation, and the unending passion of its people for good food. Whether you are a seasoned foodie or a curious traveller, Colombo promises a gastronomic journey.



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The golden city

South Africa's striking and busy capital, provides a diverse range of shopping, dining, and entertainment options. Known as the 'golden city,' it is a melting pot of varied cultures, culinary delights, shopping therapy, and exciting entertainment possibilities.



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Tel Aviv, also known as the 'White City,' is a vibrant metropolis on Israel's Mediterranean coast.

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Cover image
Underwater and above-water views of coral reef on Praslin Island, Seychelles. Image © Shutterstock.com

silhouette

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We look forward to entertaining you very soon!



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Our main gaming floor boasts five tables, offering Roulette, Blackjack, Poker and all your favourite Slot machines, all with limits set to suit all player budgets.

All main floor gaming and slots are in Seychelles Rupees. We accept all major currencies and Visa cards. An ATM is also available.

If you require a more exclusive gaming experience, then our selection of private and semi-private US Dollar gaming rooms are just what you are looking for.

Club Liberté is also home to the award winning **5 Spices Restaurant** which offers a variety of choices, ranging from an extensive à la carte option, with both Creole and Internationally recognized cuisine, plus an outstanding "always fresh" **sushi menu that is rated as among the very best on Mahé.**

Our Casino & bar opens at 2pm for Slots play / 6pm for tables games, and closes at 2am.



To avoid disappointment we highly recommend booking a restaurant reservation in advance.

Entrance is only permitted to persons over 18 years of age, dress code is casual and a valid ID is required by law should you wish to play in the casino.



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☉ The Creole Festival

Venue: Mahé

Date: 12-31 October 2024

The Creole Festival in the Seychelles is a dynamic celebration of Creole culture, exhibiting its history, resilience, and vibrancy while offering a diverse experience of Creole traditions, music, dance, and cuisine.

Kamtole, a traditional Creole music and dance event, features the primary attraction, *kontredans* (contredance), as well as the sensual *moutia* dance, which is performed around a bonfire with cowhide drums. The rhythm is intoxicating; A Sunday picnic (*Dimans Kreol*) is a popular beach picnic where Seychellois and tourists gather to celebrate and enjoy the seaside, and the festival serves a variety of local dishes, from spicy curries to fresh seafood, reflecting the diverse influences on Seychellois cuisine.

☉ International Conference on Soil, Plant and Water Science (ICSPWS)

Venue: Anse Boileau

Date: 18 October 2024

The conference provides a forum for professionals involved in soil, plant, and water science to exchange knowledge and gain insight into the most recent technology, techniques, and solutions as they have been developed and applied in various countries. Participants comprise a diverse range of stakeholders, from research and academia to industry and government organisations.



☉ International Conference on Sustainable Water Management (ICSWM)

Venue: Anse Boileau

Date: 18-19 November 2024

The conference provides a forum for professionals involved in water resources management to exchange knowledge and gain insight into the most recent technology, techniques, and solutions in sustainable water management as they have been developed and applied in various countries. Participants comprise a diverse range of stakeholders, from research and academia to industry and government organisations.

☉ Bazar Domaine – Au Cap, Mahé

Venue: Domaine de Val des Pres heritage site, Mahé

Date: Every month

The Seychelles National Heritage Resource Council organises cultural events such as Bazar Domaine, which takes place once a month. If you want to experience Seychelles' real Creole culture, this is the festival to attend.

It is known for its cultural performances. It features talented artisans, live music, artists, and a fantastic art exhibition. If you wish to learn more about Seychellois culture, heritage, and traditions, mark this festival on your calendar.





☉ **Seychelles Fashion Week**

Venue: Mahé
Date: 28-30 November 2024

Seychelles Fashion Week joins other fashion weeks around the world to showcase creativity in the fashion sector.

This Fashion Week aims to invite fashion fans to the Seychelles, showcasing the island nation’s incredible culture and creativity. Drawing on African, Eastern, and European influences, this Indian Ocean archipelago has a rich craftsmanship that pervades Seychelles Creole culture.

The Seychelles Fashion Week allows all designers to compete with their colleagues from the major fashion cities. Fashion Week, with its high visitor ratings and outstanding reputation for conservation and hospitality, provides an excellent opportunity to share ideas and establish partnerships with other African countries and throughout the world.



Branded residences project launched in Seychelles

One of Seychelles’ most eagerly awaited developments, is the first branded residential apartment project on the island of Mahé. The Residences at Melià Seychelles, is now well under construction opposite the Eden Island Super Yacht Marina, due for completion in December 2025. Located directly on the waterfront, there will be 68 branded residences, of which 40 will form part of the Rental Pool managed by the legendary Spanish hotelier Melià, offering access to exceptional service and facilities, including a 48 metre pool, Melià spa, a well-equipped gym and three different restaurants, including The Balcony, which will have epic rooftop sea views.

Nearby islands can be explored by boat from the hotel’s private pontoon and regular shuttles are available through the hotel concierge to visit those must-see attractions, such as the vibrant capital and the island’s famously idyllic beaches. Offering a mix of one, two- and three-bedroom apartments, there are a variety of typologies to choose from.

For those who love to travel, ownership also provides preferential rates and exclusive discounts at all Melià hotel properties worldwide, which includes 347 hotels in more than 40 countries. Sales have now launched and visits can be arranged in person or virtually.

The sales team can be reached directly at enquire@theresidencesatmeliaseychelles.com or +248 260 59 00

More information at www.theresidencesatmeliaseychelles.com



Twenty years of SIB

The Seychelles Investment Board (SIB), established in July 2004, celebrated its 20th anniversary on 1 July 2024. Over the past two decades, SIB has played a pivotal role in promoting and facilitating investment in Seychelles, significantly contributing to the nation’s economic development. SIB’s mission is to position Seychelles as a leading global investment hub, attracting both local and foreign investments.

SIB offers a wide range of services to support investors, including investment promotion, facilitation, and market intelligence. As the main liaison for investors, SIB guides them through the process of establishing and expanding businesses in Seychelles.

The board actively participates in international investment forums such as AFSIC, Seafood Expo Global, and AIM Congress to promote Seychelles as an attractive investment destination. These forums provide opportunities to highlight investment prospects in key sectors like tourism, renewable energy, fisheries, and financial services.

SIB’s facilitation services ensure a smooth investment process, assisting investors with regulatory requirements, permits, and local partnerships. By enhancing its services and working closely with stakeholders, SIB remains committed to fostering sustainable economic growth and maintaining Seychelles’ global competitiveness.



Ⓜ The Feast of Tabernacles

Venue: Jerusalem

Date: 16-23 October 2024

The Feast of Tabernacles, also known as Sukkot or the Feast of Booths, is a week-long autumn holiday honouring the Israelites' 40-year trek through the desert. Sukkot, along with Passover and the Festival of Weeks, is one of the three major pilgrimage feasts mentioned in the Bible, during which all Jewish males were expected to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem's Temple.

Sukkot means 'booths.' Throughout the festival, Jews commemorate this time by constructing and living in temporary shelters, exactly as the Hebrews did when wandering in the desert. This jubilant celebration commemorates God's deliverance, protection, supply, and faithfulness.



Ⓜ International Conference on aerospace and aerodynamics

Venue: Port Louis

Date: 21 October 2024

ICAA is organised by iFeARP World to let research academics, delegates, and students interact and share their expertise and knowledge of technological applications. ICAA will be an excellent international venue for exchanging ideas and findings in aerospace and aerodynamics. The goal of the Conference is to provide a venue for scholars and practitioners from academia and industry to meet and share cutting-edge developments in the field.



Ⓜ Course de l'Ail

Venue: Petite Île, Réunion

Date: 27 October 2024

The Garlic Race will take place on a 20-kilometre route. Participants will be able to run in a relay, with teams of two covering 10 kilometres each. The event also includes a walk. The marathon will conclude at the relay domain, which provides a pleasant location for both runners and hikers.

The Garlic Festival takes place every October on Petite Île.



Ⓜ Diwali or Deepawali

Venue: All over India

Date: 1 November 2024

Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, takes place on the new moon night of the Hindu month of Ashwin, which corresponds to winter. As the sun sets, the streets transform into a festive scene, with shimmering garlands of electric and oil lamps stretched across balconies and windows. During fireworks display, relatives and friends exchange sweets, gifts and feed the poor.



☹ Maldives Victory Day

Venue: Malé

Date: 3 November 2024

Every year on 3 November, Maldives Victory Day is observed. This day marks the Maldives government's victory over forces attempting a coup in the country. The holiday is a government holiday that is celebrated throughout the country. The day is often honoured by numerous formal gatherings and parades, speeches, and a flag-raising ceremony near the Victory Monument. Parades are held on Malé and Hulhumalé Streets. The day commemorates the international community's efforts to aid the Maldives' government. It is also a day for Maldivians to remember and celebrate their love for their country.

☹ Basadi Nation Festival

Venue: Johannesburg

Date: 7-8 December 2024

The Basadi Nation Festival, aimed at fashion and music professionals, offers two days of fashion shows, live music, art installations, and other activities in Johannesburg.

On the first day, attendees can catch up on the latest fashion trends, while on the second day, they can immerse themselves in the world of creative musicians and participate in practical fun workshops.



☹ Ultimate Shopper's Paradise 2024

Venue: Sirimavo Bandaranaike Memorial

Exhibition Centre, Colombo

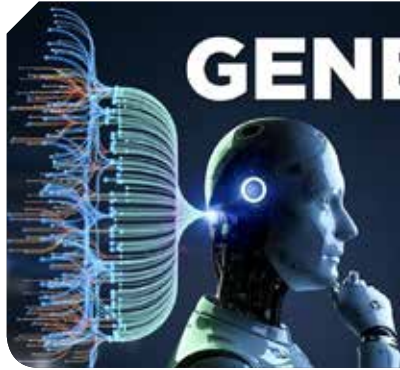
Date: 13-22 December 2024

Colombo Shopping Festival is a one-of-a-kind platform where everything is offered under one roof, allowing tourists to shop for all of their Christmas and New Year's needs in one location. There are great bargains and lots of entertainment for the entire family to enjoy. It will provide you with an unforgettable experience. There will be 250 exhibitors, with an expected 80,000 visitors.

Technology advancements

The fourth quarter of 2024 is expected to deliver some noteworthy technology developments across a variety of industries.

Here are some of the important trends and technologies to watch for:



GENERATIVE AI

Generative AI: This technology will continue to improve, providing better data protection and monitoring capabilities. Companies will increasingly rely on AI technologies to manage data flows and identify anomalies, hence improving overall cybersecurity. It is artificial intelligence that can generate text, images, movies, or other data using generative models, frequently in response to stimuli. Generative AI models understand the patterns and structure of their input training data and then create new data with similar features.

Mixed-reality headsets: Apple's Vision Pro, which boasts the highest-resolution display for such a gadget, is likely to make waves. This headset attempts to perfectly integrate the physical and digital worlds, potentially revolutionising how we interact with technology. It is a mixed reality headgear (Apple refers to it as a 'Spatial Computer') that combines an M2 CPU with a large number of proprietary silicon, sensors, cameras, and other components. It's a niche device, but it's the first in a new category that Apple sees as essential in the future years.



Smart Rings: Wearable technology is transitioning to smart rings, which are expected to become as popular as smartwatches. These rings will have a variety of functions, from health tracking to managing smart home equipment. They will track everything a smartwatch does, like sleep, activity and wellness, all around your finger and without a screen. Furthermore, they typically have longer battery life than smartwatches, so you spend less time charging and more time wearing them.

Neural headphones: New headphones with neural technologies will be introduced, capable of monitoring brain waves and giving more immersive and customised music experiences. These improvements could change the way we interact with audio gadgets and computers. These unique headsets detect electrical activity inside a person's brain. Electrodes are implanted on the surface of someone's head to measure the electrical signals generated by the brain's neurons.



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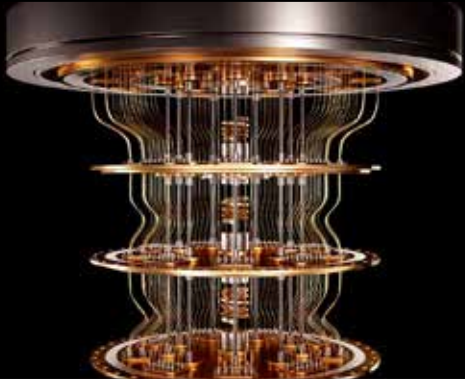


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Technology advancements



Quantum technologies: Post-quantum cryptography (PQC) and quantum networking will gain popularity. These technologies will improve data security and pave the road for larger-scale quantum solutions in the future. It is a type of technology that operates on the principles of quantum mechanics (the physics of subatomic particles), such as quantum entanglement and superposition. This technology has applications in cryptography, computation, sensing, and communication. It has the potential to transform industries such as finance, healthcare, and logistics.

E-Ink technology: E-Ink will have new applications in personalising gadgets such as computers and cell phones. This technology enables configurable and energy-efficient displays on device covers, which provide both aesthetic and functional benefits. Each microcapsule includes negatively charged white and positively charged black particles contained in a clear liquid. When a positive or negative electric field is provided, the appropriate particles rise to the top of the microcapsule and become visible to the spectator.



Advanced AI devices: New AI-powered devices, such as the Rabbit R1, will appear, allowing users to engage with their favourite apps using natural language, minimising the need for traditional interfaces.

Improved geothermal systems: Better drilling techniques will uncover more geothermal energy potential, resulting in a cleaner, more sustainable energy source. An upgraded geothermal system creates geothermal electricity in the absence of natural convective hydrothermal resources. Traditionally, geothermal power plants operate only when naturally occurring heat, water, and rock permeability are sufficient to extract energy.



These improvements represent a big step forward in how technology will merge into our daily lives, making it more personalised, efficient, and secure.

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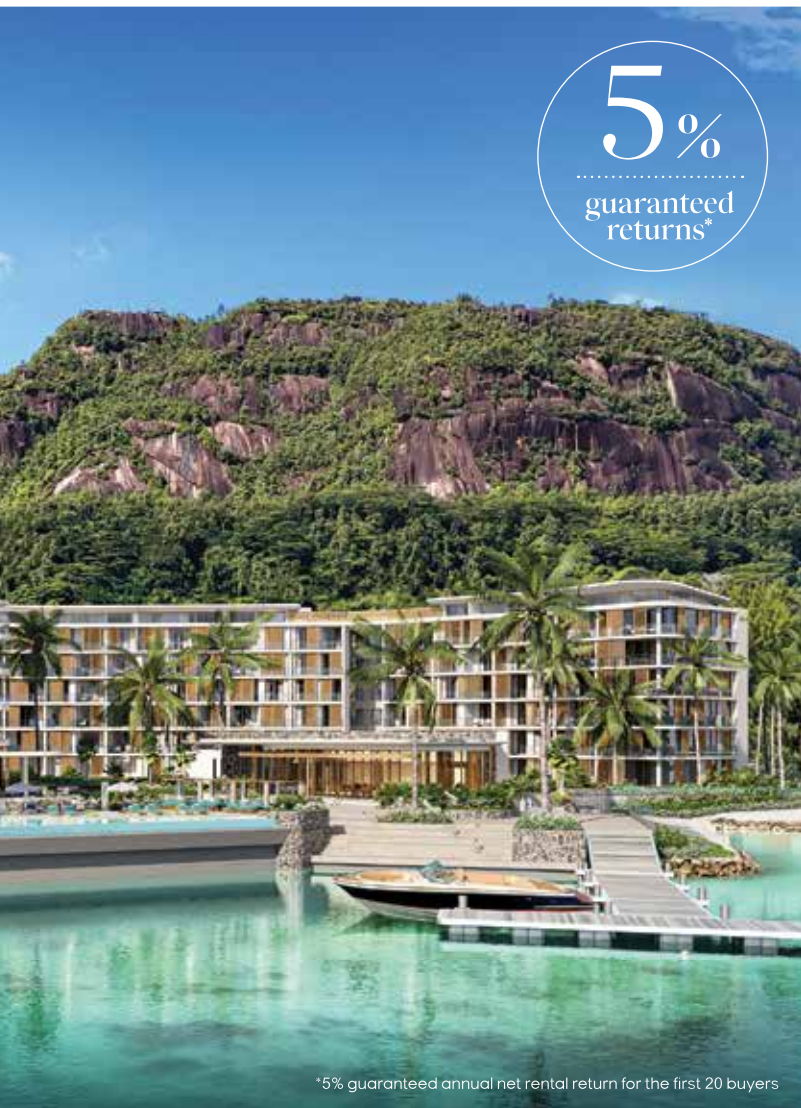
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A rare investment opportunity awaits, offering a captivating lifestyle and guaranteed returns. The Residences at Meliá Seychelles sits conveniently overlooking the Eden Island super-yacht marina on the beautiful island of Mahe. Nestled amidst lush tropical gardens and boasting panoramic views, this breathtaking seafront estate has **68** branded residences for sale, managed by the legendary Meliá Hotels & Resorts and due for completion in December 2025.

- The first branded residential apartment project in Seychelles
- Freehold title ownership
- All apartments are sea facing and come fully furnished and equipped
- Residency status available to owners
- VIP treatment offered to owners of the **40** units in the rental pool
- **28** additional units for sale as private residences which can be owner occupied or rented out long term by owners
- World class facilities on your doorstep
- Rewards, privileges & discounts at more than 347 Meliá hotels worldwide
- Management and service 24/7 to ensure your enjoyment



Interview with Dr. Frauke Fleischer- Dogley

WORDS: GLYNN BURRIDGE



IMAGES COURTESY OF SIF + WIKIMEDIA

Q: Please supply some background information to allow readers to know who is Dr. Frauke Fleischer-Dogley?

A: Dr. Frauke Fleischer-Dogley is a renowned conservation biologist with nearly 30 years of experience in protected areas and nature conservation management. She was awarded her PhD in 2006 from Reading University in the UK, where her research significantly advanced the understanding of population management of the coco de mer (*Lodoicea maldivica*), an iconic palm endemic to the Seychelles known for bearing the largest seed in the plant kingdom. Her work highlighted the critical threats posed by the over-collection of these seeds to the survival of this unique palm forest system.

Dr. Fleischer-Dogley believes in science-based management decisions, innovation, and the need for continuous review of established practices to improve conservation and make management more effective. Her extensive experience includes managing Seychelles' World Heritage Sites for 18 years, as well as roles in tourism planning, ecotourism, and international cooperation.

She has co-authored a book on the coco de mer as well as a wide range of numerous scientific papers on various conservation issues, including population recovery of rare species, invasive species as well as discussing topics covering marine research. Currently, she serves on the National UNESCO Commission, the Marine Spatial Planning Management Committee, and is Seychelles' designated focal point for the Convention on Migratory Species. Additionally, she played a crucial role in establishing the Seychelles' Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust and served as a director on its board.

In 2007, Dr. Fleischer-Dogley was appointed CEO of the Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF), a Public Trust responsible for managing and protecting Seychelles' UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Vallée de Mai and Aldabra Atoll. During her tenure, she has focused on improving the management effectiveness of these sites, setting up comprehensive marine monitoring programmes, and significantly enhancing the research capacity of the foundation. Her efforts have led to a multiple expansion of the Aldabra reserve and the establishment of the Aldabra Marine National Park, contributing to Seychelles' commitment to protecting 30% of its marine area.

Q: What is the scope, function, and purpose of SIF?

A: The Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF) manages and protects Seychelles' UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Aldabra Atoll in the far south of the archipelago and Vallée de Mai on Praslin Island, along with the Fond Ferdinand nature reserve. As the longest-running environmental organisation in Seychelles, SIF has pioneered nature conservation efforts since its establishment as a public trust in 1979. It has successfully managed these World Heritage Sites for over 45 years, contributing significantly to biodiversity conservation and fostering international and national collaborations.

We employ a unique management approach by sustainably twinning two diverse sites for national conservation benefit. To operate and protect these sites, which are over 1,000 kilometres apart and face distinct challenges, SIF relies on income primarily from tourism sales, supplemented by project funding, grants, and donations.

We envision a world where natural heritage is recognised as an irreplaceable and invaluable source of life and inspiration. Through a

combination of conservation, research, education, and sustainable tourism, we aim to protect and enhance the understanding of natural heritage through the continuous engagement of Seychellois and the world.

Q: What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

A: One of the most challenging aspects of the work we do is to continuously push boundaries to connect Aldabra Atoll to a public that may never see it.

Communicating the importance of natural heritage is often a one-way street, and measuring the effectiveness of such communications can be difficult.

We aim to engage the wider public to understand and believe in natural heritage, not just as distant places with scientific significance, but rather as beacons of hope that are intrinsically connected to each and every one of us.

Our homes depend on places like Aldabra. They replenish what we take, they restore what we destroy; they are not untouchable but instead, vital sources of life. Balancing this with the need to keep Aldabra and other heritage sites on national and international agendas, despite their remoteness and logistical operational challenges, is a constant challenge.

Natural heritage sites, although protected by law, often face passive threats that cannot always be anticipated and mitigated.

Q: How vulnerable are Seychelles' Outer Islands, specifically Aldabra, to climate change and rising sea levels? What can be done to mitigate these threats?

A: We have always thought of Aldabra, being a low-lying atoll, to be significantly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and rising sea levels, but these discussions have always been clouded by inverted commas and not fully knowing what issues needed addressing.

It was declared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) that climate change is the top threat to UNESCO World Heritage, however, we knew we needed to assess this threat with an evidence-based approach to make management decisions.

In 2021, through the support of the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation, we initiated a project to conduct a Climate Vulnerability Index Assessment (CVI). Developed by researchers from James Cook University, Australia, this tool, specifically designed for UNESCO World Heritage Sites, allows us to understand how a particular area is being impacted by climate change.

Through a series of workshops and analysis, identify the key climate stressors and Aldabra's key values, and in turn, how these key values could be impacted or compromised. The exercise identified extreme weather events, storm frequency and intensity and drought as key climate stressors of concern. This scientific approach has allowed us to understand how climate change will affect Aldabra and prioritise our monitoring and planning efforts.

Results from the initial assessment have led us to focus on long-term solutions, representing a visionary approach on the way we look at building resilience for natural heritage. Since, we have initiated the Rat and Cat Eradication Feasibility Study (RaCE), a project that looks into one of the world's largest eradications of invasive mammals planned for an island, a key solution to ensure the resilience of Aldabra's rare endemic species.

Q: How do you see the future of these islands, of which your organisation is the custodian, in 25 years?

A: In 25 years, I hope that our islands, both inner and outer, have grown more resilient, with long-term and sustainable solutions in place. Through evidence-based management and scientific research define these solutions, and develop initiatives to improve our chances of mitigating climate change implications.

Science-based initiatives, like the eradication of invasive species for biodiversity preservation, will play a crucial role in our future as natural heritage custodians where we will reap the benefits or face the consequences not just in 25 years, but even much sooner than that.

My vision is hopeful because I believe in science and I believe in our capacity to make the right decisions, and our ability to make the right coalitions to collaborate for the future. Our natural heritage will continue to thrive, with the necessary measures identified and implemented and not only this it will remain the source of our wealth today and tomorrow if we work and ensure their protection and preservation.

Q: What do you wish people knew about natural heritage?

A: UNESCO defines something to have Outstanding Universal Value – the criteria needed to meet the status of World Heritage – if it has cultural or natural significance so *exceptional*, that it transcends national boundaries, and becomes of common importance to all humanity. In Seychelles, we have been blessed with not one, but two Natural World Heritage Sites.

My wish is for people to recognise the irreplaceable value of this natural heritage, whether it is close or far. We often take it for granted – 'Vallée de Mai is just around the corner' or 'I will never see Aldabra' – yet we directly engage with their symbols and their significance in our daily lives. If we imagine Seychelles, void of the coco de mer or the Aldabra giant tortoise, both of which are at a central point in our national crest, then we would realise how much of our identity and heritage would be truly lost.

Natural heritage is not just about the tangible symbols, but it is about the intrinsic value and ecological significance of these species and sites. Preserving them is essential to ensuring a sustainable future for Seychelles.

My wish for natural heritage is for all of us to obtain a sense of ownership as its custodians. Seychelles' natural heritage is all around us, and it is within us.





Praslin

Seychelles' very own ancient Isle of Palms

WORDS: GLYNN BURRIDGE

It's 7.30 a.m. and the claxon clattering across the concrete of the now empty quay announces that Cat Cocos, a fast catamaran ferry, is leaving on its first crossing of the day to Praslin Island, Seychelles' second largest island and popular tourism hub. Praslin, which lies 45 kilometres (24 miles) northeast of Mahé and can be reached in only 15 minutes by Air Seychelles' domestic service or an hour aboard the spacious, comfortable Cat Cocos, has a population of only 8,600 and this, perhaps more than anything else, colours the nature of the experiences it offers. Praslin's original name was *Isle de Palme*, probably on account of the density of the vegetation that its discoverer, Lazare Picault encountered on his second voyage to the islands in 1744. Strangely, the island was much neglected until 1768, when it was visited by Captain Marion du Fresne on a voyage commissioned by diplomat Cesar Gabriel de Choiseul, Duc de Praslin, after whom Praslin was duly named in the same year. Seychelles' second island's chief claim to fame is undoubtedly home to the legendary Vallée de Mai UNESCO World Heritage Site, one of only two places in the world where the famous Coco-de-mer grows wild on palms 40 metres tall and some 200 years old.

The curious Coco-de-mer nut had long washed up on the shores of countries fringing the Indian Ocean giving rise to the belief that it grew on some exotic tree concealed beneath the ocean and so one can well imagine the excitement when a little-known surveyor, Barre, discovered the then well-hidden Vallée de Mai and its secret treasure-trove of nuts on an early expedition into the interior.





So impressive is this forest that it once led General Gordon (of Khartoum fame) dispatched to Seychelles in 1881 to advise on their fortification against possible French attack, to state his conviction upon his return to England that this valley must be the site of the biblical Garden of Eden. Down to the present day, this primeval forest continues to fascinate for the way it represents one of the planet's ancient, untouched habitats which is home to some of Seychelles' most precious species of flora and fauna.

Topographically, Praslin is less mountainous than Mahé and even the first settlers remarked that it would probably be easier to settle than the main island. Divided by a ridge of hills running from east to west and intersected by a road that leads through the Vallée de Mai, it measures

only 10 kilometres by 4 kilometres and is a breeze to navigate with a lot less traffic on its simple network of roads connecting the three, principal urban centres: Baie Ste. Anne, Cote D'or and Grand Anse. The first of these is the island's main port where the Cat Cocos and the lion's share of maritime traffic arrives.

Nestled against the mountainside within full view of neighbouring La Digue and scenic Round Island, Baie Ste. Anne is the stepping stone to this Seychelles' second jewel in the crown. Recently, an increasing number of new services, businesses and retail outlets have sprouted in the environs of the port which has nonetheless been able to maintain its other-worldly charm and, in spirit, remain faithful to its rustic past. Leaving the port behind and travelling along the same coast in a westerly direction, will bring you first to a T-junction where a road gently meanders into the east-west ridge of mountains straddling the island, past the iconic Vallée de Mai where you can stop at the newly-built Seychelles Island Foundation pavilion for a walk among age-old palms (20 euros per person) and, perhaps, even a sighting of the super-rare Seychelles black parrot, the world's tiniest frog, chameleon, tenrec, Seychelles blue pigeon, Seychelles bulbul and other treasures before descending to Grand Anse on the other side of the island with its sickle-shaped beach and gently bustling centre.

If you don't take that road, you will continue west, cutting through the promontory at Anse La Blague to Praslin's northern coast of Côte D'or which is effectively the hub of tourism on the island where a great variety of accommodation choices is to be found along with an enticing selection of restaurants, bars and boutiques. Here, perhaps more than anywhere else on the island, you will feel the tourist buzz as visitors stroll the picture postcard beach with its golden sands and heart-stopping panoramas of St. Pierre and Curieuse islands.

A fork in the road will take you behind Côte D'or towards the high point of the island known as Zimbabwe and although you can no longer go to the very top, it still affords some amazing views of the island and its surrounds. A continuation of the road leads on to one of Seychelles' premier beaches, Anse Lazio, with its surrounding rocks of pink granite and promise of world-beating swimming and sunbathing to mention nothing of dining island-style, at the water's edge with your feet in the sand.

The beauty of Praslin, so easy on the eye, is on display along every one of these roads whether you're travelling by car hire, public bus or even bicycle, and at every turn, another delicious surprise awaits. In whichever corner you find yourself, the pace of life is noticeably slower than in Mahé as one might expect, given the smaller population. But there's something else as well here on this once-upon-a-time isle of palms: the lingering sensation of a more laid-back lifestyle of bygone years that has all but disappeared on the mainland, and on many other islands besides. Something of the past has remained in these picturesque settlements that have very much the 'connected' feel of villages about them. Relics of another time with an old world atmosphere to match.

On the surface, much has changed on Praslin which, over the last few years has witnessed the appearance of several major international hotel chains: 5-star palaces such as Constance Lemuria Resort having the only 18-hole championship golf course in Seychelles and Raffles Seychelles along with home-grown products such as the much-vaunted Duc de Praslin. Exclusive spas & wellness centres and up-market eateries abound yet there is a reassuring contingent of home-grown boutique hotels and eco-lodges as well to balance out the accommodation choices available, further enriched by a sprinkling of local guest houses, villas, apartments and self-catering, each one occupying its own special niche, all bubbling with Praslin charm.

The Praslin airport underwent a complete makeover to re-open in 2001, making an attractive addition to the island's increasingly sophisticated suite of services but in comparison to Mahé it remains down-scale and in keeping with the reigning spirit of once-upon-a-time island living that remains a defining feature of the island.

Niche activities are on the increase too and besides offering world-class golf, diving & sailing and memorable excursions to surrounding islands: Aride, Curieuse, Cocos and Sisters Islands, there is now value-added entertainment in the form of a Black Pearl Farm Gallery, Heritage Route, Art Galleries and Pirate Treasure Trail. Praslin now even boasts its very own annual Food Fiesta which allows visitors a unique chance to savour delicious Seychellois Creole cuisine via this important cultural touch point. More, far more, than two centuries has passed since the outside world first stumbled across this island with its thickly-matted vegetation and grand panoply of palms. And yet, for all of the trappings of its latter-day evolution into a prized tourist destination, Praslin's traditional island spirit remains undulled. Refreshingly, it is still a place where to recalibrate body and soul according to the age-old rhythms of nature and where, not very far beneath modernity, there beats the ancient heart of a magnificent island sanctuary for man and nature alike.



A weekend in Singapore

WORDS: MARGEUX SCHREURS

At the age of eight, I moved from the Netherlands to Singapore, where I learned about the many Asian cuisines, cultures, and religions of this interesting and vibrant city. These are my top recommendations for someone spending a weekend in Singapore and wants to explore the varied cultures.



📍 Chinatown

Chinatown is architecturally distinct from the rest of Singapore, with low-rise buildings dominating the streets, red and gold decorations, and small restaurants serving traditional Chinese Singaporean food like Hainanese chicken rice, noodles and *satay*. Souvenir shops and indie boutiques dot the area, offering clothes, crafts and antiques, while Club Street is full of trendy wine bars. I appreciated visiting the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum (288 South Bridge Road) and the Sri Mariamman Temple (corner of South Bridge Road and Pagoda Street), the most important places of worship for Singapore's Tamil Hindus.

📍 Hawker Centres

Let's be honest: a trip to Singapore isn't complete unless you've sampled so many of the local flavours that your trousers fit a little tighter by the end. Hawker centres are an important aspect of Singaporean culture, so much so that UNESCO has recognised it. These eating and drinking establishments are a rich reflection of the island's cultural melting pot; simply wander around any hawker centre to find Singapore's heartbeat!

Hawker culture in Singapore dates back to the 1800s, when early migrants set up temporary stalls on street sidewalks, town squares, and parks to sell quick, economical meals.

The Singapore government has attempted to consolidate hawkers under one roof. Hawker centres have evolved into safe, clean, open kitchens where consumers can see exactly how their food is produced and served.

There are around 120 Singapore markets and hawker centres and I recommend Newton Food Centre (500 Clemenceau Avenue North) and North Bridge Road Market and Food Centre (861 North Bridge Road), where you can enjoy chicken rice, fried *kway teow*, *hokkien mee*, *bak kut teh*, *satay*, *laksa*, and chilli crab, to mention a few.



📍 Little India

Little India, also known as Tekka in the Tamil community, is situated on the east side of the Singapore River. This region was once home to Tamil immigrants as part of the British policy of racial segregation, but it is today a bustling cultural enclave complete with temples and mosques, street art, and vividly painted shophouses. Unfussy canteens and fashionable cafes line Serangoon Road, beside shops selling gold jewellery, bright silks, fresh flower garlands and Indian spices. Nearby, Mustafa Centre welcomes shoppers and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The ethnic district is most vibrant during Hindu festivals such as the Deepavali festival of lights. As a child, this was my favourite time to visit Little India.



📍 The Merlion

You can't visit Singapore without seeing its most renowned picture, the Merlion (1 Fullerton Road), a mythical creature with a lion's head and a fish body. The creature's name is a mix of the words 'mer' (sea) and 'lion', with the fish body representing Singapore's origins as a fishing town (when it was still known as Temasek in Javanese) and the lion head representing Singapore's original name, 'Singapura', which means lion city. Being of prominent symbolic nature to Singapore and Singaporeans in general, it is widely used to represent both the city-state and its people in sports teams, advertising, branding, tourism and as a national personification.

The area surrounding the monument has always been one of my best spots to walk in Singapore, especially at sunset, when you can see both day and night.



📍 Arab Street

Kampong, the Arab area, is about a 5-minute walk from the Bugis MRT station. It includes Bussorah Street, Haji and Bali Lanes, and Muscat Street. It is traditionally a Muslim district and is regarded as one of the most fashionable in town. The region offers a considerably calmer energy and a less tourist crowd. Haji Lane is lined with local designer companies, modern cafes, and antique boutiques. The main Arab Street is lined with stores selling magnificent fabrics, handcrafted perfumes, and Persian carpets. There are still many restaurants and eateries that specialise in Middle Eastern cuisine. To end the day, head to one of the cool bars for a drink or two while listening to live music and enjoying the atmosphere. We used to hang out here as youths. Two 'must-visits' in this region are the majestic Masjid Sultan mosque and the pleasant Zam Zam, a restaurant that serves outstanding Indian – Muslim food.



📍 Gardens by the Bay and Marina Bay Sands

The Gardens by the Bay (18 Marina Gardens Drive), is a lush location that encapsulates Singapore's spirit as a 'City in a Garden,' as promoted by the National Parks Board Singapore. When I returned to visit, I was completely captivated by the beauty of the location. The garden includes a flower dome, a skywalk, a lake, a heritage garden, and more. The vistas during the day are just as stunning as those at night. Marina Bay Sands (10 Bayfront Avenue) is also close, with its famed infinity pool, which is now only accessible to those who have reserved a room. The accommodations at this hotel are not inexpensive; nonetheless, I can assure you that the price is justified given the view.

📍 Singapore Zoo and the Night Safari

The Singapore Zoo (80 Mandai Lake Road) and Night Safari (same address) are two of the most popular attractions, particularly for families with children. I enjoyed riding the little train on the night safari, but the Singapore Zoo also contains some amazing and happy animals in lush green enclosures. The Night Safari opens at 7.30 p.m. and remains open until midnight, giving some excitement.



📍 Chijmes

Chijmes (30 Victoria Street) is a wonderful old church that is a great place for lunch or dinner. It is also a destination for anyone seeking to mix entertainment, history, and architecture. We would frequently visit Chijmes for non-Singaporean cuisine, as it boasts some of the best. Some of my fave restaurants are the Japanese Ashino, the American-themed Bobby's Restaurant and Bar, the Mexican El Mero Mero, and the more casual café and bar Prive.



📍 Singapore River Cruise

At night, take a cruise along the Singapore River (Boat Quay or Clarke Quay), which passes through the city core. The cruise is stunning, and it's a terrific way to observe Singapore's corporate buildings in juxtaposition to the fishing boats further out in the harbour. The boat tours run approximately an hour and are best followed by a beer at one of the pubs on Boat Quay or one of my favourite dishes, chilli crab, at one of the many restaurants.



📍 Haw Par Villa

To understand more about Chinese culture in Singapore, we would usually visit Haw Par Villa theme park (262 Pasir Panjang Road) and go on an unforgettable journey through Chinese folklore. The park opened in 1937 and is well-known for its graphic depictions of Chinese folklore's Ten Courts of Hell, which are not for the faint of heart! There are also fewer graphic statues and murals for those who are not yet ready to learn about the traditional Chinese concept of hell.



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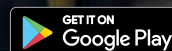
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A cultural phenomenon

WORDS: SMRITY DAVE

Cricket has a special and treasured place in the heart of India. Its transformation from a colonial import to a national obsession is an engrossing story of cultural assimilation, passion, and sportsmanship.

It is more than just a game; it is a cultural phenomenon. Streets, parks, and open spaces across the country frequently host impromptu matches, with both children and adults enthusiastically partaking. Cricket heroes are revered as demigods, and their exploits on the pitch are watched with religious zeal.

The sport's impact stretches to Bollywood, politics, and beyond. Cricket matches, particularly those between India and Pakistan, elicit strong emotions and nationalistic sentiments that frequently go beyond the confines of sport.

The first known match occurred in 1721 between British seamen. The sport began to acquire popularity among the Indian elite, who wished to resemble the British nobility. The *Parsis*, an aristocratic minority in Bombay (now Mumbai), were among the first Indians to take the sport seriously, establishing the Oriental Cricket Club in 1848. After a delayed start, the Europeans finally invited the *Parsis* to play a match in 1877. By 1912, the *Parsis*, Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims of Mumbai competed in an annual quadrangular tournament against Europeans.

India joined the International Cricket Council in 1926 and made their Test debut in England in 1932, led by CK Nayudu, who was regarded as the best Indian batsman of the time. The one-off Test match between the two sides took place at Lord's in London. The Indian team improved throughout the 1930s and 1940s, but it did not win an international

competition during this time. World War II prevented India from playing men's Test cricket in the early 1940s.

The team played their debut series as an independent country in late 1947 against Don Bradman's Australian cricket side in England in 1948. Later that year, they won their first Test series, against Pakistan. They continued to develop during the early 1950s, culminating in a series win over New Zealand in 1956. However, they did not win again for the rest of the decade, losing heavily against strong Australian and English teams. They managed to draw home series against Pakistan and Australia, as well as another series against England. In the same period, India won its first series outside the subcontinent, against New Zealand, in 1967-68.

After independence, cricket became more than simply a sport; it was a unifying factor for a newly sovereign nation. The 1983 Cricket World Cup triumph, led by Kapil Dev, was a landmark moment. It not only brought the country together in joy, but it also paved the way for cricket to become a popular sport in India.

India's cricketing power grew with giants such as Sunil Gavaskar, Sachin Tendulkar, and, later, MS Dhoni and Virat Kohli. The introduction of satellite television in the 1990s delivered live cricket to millions of Indian households, increasing the sport's appeal.

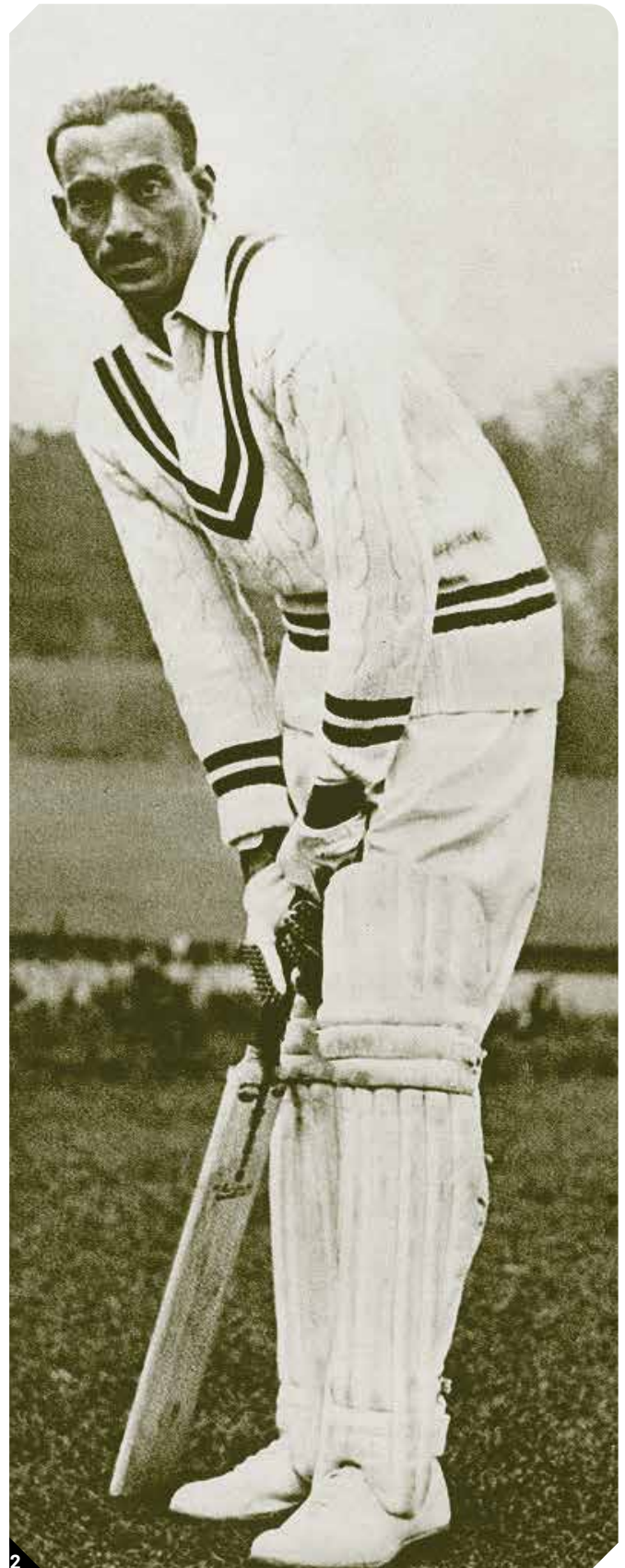
The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) was formed and has evolved as a formidable force in world cricket, reflecting the sport's enormous popularity and financial influence in the country. The Indian Premier League (IPL), which debuted in 2008, transformed the game with its combination of sports and entertainment. The league drew elite foreign talent and provided a platform for local players to emerge, cementing cricket's place in the Indian culture.

The introduction of men's One Day International (ODI) cricket in 1971 added a new dimension to the cricket world. However, India was not regarded strong in ODIs at the time, and players such as captain Gavaskar were known for their conservative style of batting. India began as a weak ODI squad and did not get to the second round in the first two Cricket World Cups.

Today, India is a dominant power in international cricket, with a deep talent pool and cutting-edge infrastructure. The team's victories in the 2007 ICC T20 World Cup, 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup, and 2024 T20 World Cup demonstrate its brilliance. Players like Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, and Jasprit Bumrah continue to inspire millions.

The IPL (Indian Premier League) has also contributed significantly to the popularity of cricket among the younger generation, giving it a profitable career option. Women's cricket in India has also grown significantly in popularity, with the national squad doing well on the international scene.

India's unblemished campaign in the 2023 Cricket World Cup began with a six-wicket victory over Australia. They advanced to the final with a 302-run victory over Sri Lanka, followed by a 70-run victory over New Zealand in the semi-final. Virat Kohli became the first player to reach 50 ODI centuries, surpassing Sachin Tendulkar's previous record. Mohammed Shami also recorded the highest bowling figures for an Indian in the ODI World Cup (7/57). However, they were defeated in the final by Australia





1. Probir Sen shakes hands with Queen Elizabeth II, 1952. Probir Sen was the first Bengali to represent India in Test matches from 1943 to 1952.
2. Colonel Cottari Kanakaiya Nayadu, the first captain of the Indian cricket team in 1932.
3. Indian cricket team 2024. **Photo PTI**
4. Mithali Raj batting for India women against England.



by the same number of wickets that they had defeated them by, six wickets. Virat Kohli was the highest run scorer in the ODI World Cup with 765 runs, the most ever in a single edition of the World Cup.

India won the 2024 T20 World Cup by defeating South Africa in the final on 29 June 2024, at the legendary Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados. This is the Caribbean's largest permanent capacity arena (28,000) and is located west of Barbados' capital. This ancient cricket pitch has been hosting matches for over 120 years, dating back to 1895 when international touring teams played there.

The 2024 ICC Men's T20 World Cup was the ninth edition of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. It was co-hosted by the West Indies and the United States from 1 to 29 June 2024; the tournament being hosted by the West Indies for the second time, while this was also the first major ICC tournament to feature matches played in the United States.

India became the third side, after England and the West Indies, to win the cup twice, as well as the first to win the tournament without losing a game. Arshdeep Singh was the joint-highest wicket taker, with 17 wickets.

When India's new world cricket winners returned home, tens of thousands of happy fans descended on Mumbai's Marine Drive to cheer them. Skipper Rohit Sharma and Hardik Pandya carried the prized trophy in an open bus convoy to Wankhede Stadium, where they joined in festivities organised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India. After waiting for hours to see Sharma, Virat Kohli, and the other cricketers, fans danced, waved the Indian flag, and flashed their smartphones.

Cricket in India is a narrative about passion, resilience, and shared identity. It's a game that brings people together from all walks of life, bringing joy and sense of belonging. As India continues to develop world-class cricketers and achieve incredible exploits, the nation's love affair with its favourite sport remains strong.



Choose a direct route from Seychelles to Mumbai or take advantage of partner airline flights via Colombo to other cities in India. Visit: www.airseychelles.com for more information.

Endemic, biodiverse flora & fauna

WORDS: SILHOUETTE

Mauritius, an island nation in the Indian Ocean, is well-known for its diverse flora and fauna, many of which are endemic.





The Mauritius ebony tree

The Mauritius ebony tree is currently rare and only found in protected locations. It is an evergreen shrub or small tree that grows to around 20 metres in height and is found throughout Africa. The leaves are thick and dark green in hue. Flowers and fruit are tiny. Its bark and heartwood are black, and its sapwood is white.

Trochetia boutoniana, the national flower, is in short supply due to poor regeneration and invasive monkeys that nibble on the flower buds. The sole occurrences are on the slopes of Le Morne Brabant in Mauritius.

Pandanus palms is one of Mauritius' nine indigenous palm species, as well as one of seven endemic palms. This palm species was first documented in the 1700s using specimens collected from the mountain Pieter Both, where it appears to have been common at the time.



Pandanus palms

Cláudia Baider and the chair of the Mascarenes Plant Specialist Group discovered *Dombeya mauritiana*, an endemic Mauritian tree that was previously assumed to be extinct in the wild, in the Black River Gorges National Park in Mauritius in April 2009.

🕒 Flora: Exotic and luxuriant

The native Mauritian woodland is now almost entirely gone. What does exist is located in the southwest and is now protected within the limits of the Black River Gorges National Park. The difficult environment, primarily superficial lava flows, and mountainous elevation have kept this area of the virgin forest intact.

The first type of vegetation to grow after volcanic activity ended was sea plants. Later, as powdery soil emerged from the lava flows, seeds and plants are supposed to have been transported by winds, sea, and birds before establishing themselves. At the end of the 16th century, Mauritius was covered with luxuriant vegetation thanks to abundant rainfall and an equable climate.

Later, much of the virgin forest was cut down to make space for highways, vast sugarcane planting, and urban development, as well as to supply wood for the domestic construction industry. By 1880, less than four percent of native woodland survived. Today, it is estimated that less than one percent of the island's natural pure vegetation remains.

Many indigenous trees and plants have been destroyed over the years, but Mauritius still has over 200 blooming plant species specific to the island, with roughly one-third of them being unique, some of which are among the rarest in the world, and well over a hundred being critically endangered.



Günther's gecko



Mauritian anemonefish



The Mauritius parakeet



Mauritius skink

⊕ Fauna

Mauritius remains a Mecca for bird enthusiasts looking for unique island varieties found nowhere else on the planet. The Mauritius kestrel was believed to be the world's rarest bird at the time, with only four known individuals. Also, on their way out were the pink pigeon and echo parakeet.

Without frantic action to reverse the fate of these and other endemic Mauritian birds, future visitors would only be able to imagine what a lovely place it once was.

Fortunately, due to local and international efforts, it is still a fantastic site. Mauritius kestrels raised in captivity have been released into the wild. More than 400 wild Mauritius kestrels have been reintroduced in three mountain locations.

More remarkable has been the pink pigeon programme, with the hundredth captive-bred dove released in 1944. The wild population is presently far in excess. Other rare birds include the exquisite Mauritius paradise flycatcher, Mauritius cuckoo-shrike, and Mauritius fody. Then there's the Mauritius olive white-eye, Mauritius black bulbul, house sparrow, Indian mynah, Red-whiskered bulbul, ring-necked parakeet, and barred ground dove.

Many tropical specialties can still be enjoyed today. The brown noddy, blue-faced booby, and sooty tern breed on Serpent Island. Red-tailed tropicbirds and wedge-tailed shearwaters breed on Round Island, whereas white-tailed tropicbirds are rather numerous on Mauritius' mainland.

When the Dutch arrived on the island in 1598, bats were the only native mammals there. The four types of fruit bats that lived on the island are assumed to have arrived from the East Indies before the 17th century.

Pteropus niger continues to live in the Black River Gorges area. At dusk, colonies can be observed flying to feed on eucalyptus and sisal trees.

The smaller of the two bats, *Pteropus subniger*, disappeared from Mauritius in 1864, having been hunted to extinction by humans. *Pteropus rodricensis*, a smaller bat from the same family, is unique to Rodrigues. The two insectivorous bats are the Mauritius tomb bat and the free-tailed bat. The black rat, sometimes known as the tree rat, is said to have swum ashore from shipwrecks on Mauritius' protective reef before the 17th century.

The long-tailed macaque is said to have been introduced from the East Indies. Considered little more than a pest. Deer were imported in 1639 by Dutchmen. These survive to this day. Then there are brown rats, house mice, napped hares, hedgehogs, and mongooses.

In the 17th century, Mauritius had only one native sea animal, the dugong, which was prevalent in the lagoon around Rodrigues. By early 1991, the dugong had become extinct worldwide. At least eight whale and dolphin species were identified, with the National Parks and Conservation Service listing ten whales.

Mauritius owns millions of square kilometres of the Indian Ocean. It has the right to utilise these waters, fish and harvest the ocean, and extract minerals and salt for its own use. At the same time, it has the duty to care for the waters that it governs, to prevent pollution, to monitor fish stocks, to prevent overfishing, and to regulate fisheries and catching methods.

The Mauritian anemonefish, a marine fish is confined to Mauritius and perhaps Réunion. The Mauritian Fairy Basslet (*Gramma melacara*), a colourful fish species, is unique to the reefs of Mauritius – tortoises and lizards – arrived from distant regions on rafts made of twigs and creepers.

The common day gecko, Rodrigues day gecko, forest day gecko, and ornate day gecko, all endemic, are regarded as the true gems of the Mauritian reptile world due to their stunning colouration. The tails are azure, while the bodies are bright green with red markings. Endemic to Mauritius, it is presently limited to Round Island. The enormous gecko, similar to Günther's gecko, was previously seen on Rodrigues but is now extinct.

Mauritius's unique biodiversity is under threat from habitat destruction, invading species, and human activity. Conservation efforts, including as the creation of protected areas, breeding programmes, and habitat restoration, have been critical in conserving the island's endemic wildlife. The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation and the government's National Parks and Conservation Service are among the key groups supporting these initiatives.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Mauritius 3 times a week. Visit www.airseychelles.com for more information.



A dream getaway

WORDS: SILHOUETTE

The Maldives is commonly seen as an exclusive, expensive vacation, yet it is feasible to visit this tropical paradise on a budget. With careful planning and a little knowledge, you can experience the Maldives' breathtaking scenery, pristine waters, and vibrant culture without breaking the bank. Here's how to arrange a low-cost holiday in the Maldives.

The first step is to look for affordable flights. Book your flights early in advance to get the best discounts. Try to travel during the off-peak season (May to November), which will save you money.

The Maldives has experienced an increase in low-cost housing alternatives, notably on smaller islands where guesthouses provide a less expensive alternative to premium resorts. Local islands such as Maafushi, Thulusdhoo, and Dhigurah have a variety of guesthouses that offer pleasant rooms at a fraction of resort fees. These guesthouses frequently provide breakfast and provide an opportunity to learn about the local culture first-hand.

Budget hotels can be found in the capital city of Malé, as well as on neighbouring populous islands. These hotels have minimal facilities and are near local attractions.

While most visitors travel directly from the airport to their resort, you should start with exploring the unique island city if staying in a city hotel. Ferry boats operate between the airport island of Hulhulé and the busy streets of Malé City, providing a unique glimpse into true Maldivian life away from the resort islands.

Begin your adventure at Republic Square, where a massive Maldivian flag flies above the streets. Then visit the Islamic Centre and Friday Mosque, both of which provide unique insights into the Islamic culture of this island nation. The mosque was built in 1658 and is made of finely carved coral stone. After visiting the National Museum and Tsunami Monument, which commemorates the horrific 2004 tsunami that ended in the popular Sultan Park. If you're not too squeamish, the colourful Fish Market is also worth a visit.

If you plan to visit Malé City, remember to dress appropriately. Beachwear appropriate for resorts will be frowned upon here.

Dining in the Maldives does not need to be pricey. Eat at local cafés (known as *hotaas*) and restaurants that serve authentic Maldivian food at cheap prices. Delicious and affordable dishes include *roshi* (flatbread), unleavened bread eaten for breakfast and *mas huni* (tuna salad).

Choose accommodations with kitchens so you can cook some of your own meals. To save money, buy fresh produce, snacks, and seafood at the local market.

The islanders' staple diet consists of rice and fish broth, *garudiya*, which is usually made from tuna. It is occasionally enhanced with a dash of salty fish paste, *rihaakuru*, or a spicy side dish of onion and lime, *asaara*. Traditionally, Maldivians do not consume reef fish.

Another common snack is unleavened bread and *mashuni*, a salad made with grated coconut, dried fish, lime, and spices. There are also a variety of mild, creamy curries cooked with homemade curry pastes, seafood and locally grown veggies including breadfruit, pumpkin, sweet potato and eggplant.

The most delicious culinary pleasures in the Maldives are savoury and sweet short eats, known as *hedhikaa*, which can be found in tea shops and restaurants. *Kuli eche*, or savouries, are typically made with dried smoked tuna fish, grated coconut, lime juice, onion, and chilli. The sweets, *foni eche*, are made of flour, sugar, and eggs and are best served with the national beverage, hot sweet tea, *sai*.



But you'll want to earn your food through some adventure. The Maldives is one of the best destinations in the world to learn to dive. While your first dives will take place in the hotel pool, when it comes time for your open ocean qualifying dives, you'll find the tranquil, clear waters of a sheltered coral lagoon only metres away on the powder-white sand beaches. Once you've honed your skills, the pristine reefs around provide a vivid undersea world to explore: expect to encounter everything from turtles to (harmless) reef sharks on your first dives beneath the surface.

There are numerous economical ways to see the Maldives' natural beauty and attractions. Snorkelling is a must-do activity, and several local islands provide free or low-cost snorkelling options directly from the shore. Relax on stunning public beaches, where you may sunbathe, swim and picnic. Instead of reserving through resorts, plan your own day trips and excursions with local boat operators. Visit local islands, attend cultural events, and mingle with the locals to learn about Maldivian culture and traditions.

The Maldives is quickly becoming known as one of the world's surfing hotspots, with world-class breaks to offer. The greatest time to visit is between April and October when the southwest monsoon provides surfers with the ideal combination of swell and offshore breezes.

When it comes to marine megafauna in the Maldives, the manta ray reigns supreme. From June to October every year, fluctuating ocean currents and water temperatures cause massive plankton blooms across the Maldives,

providing a microscopic marine smorgasbord for these gentle giants. Whale sharks join the manta rays, finned smoothly between the atolls.

The finest site to witness these roving giants is Baa Atoll, the Maldives' only UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Snorkelling and scuba tours carry passengers by speedboat to Hanifaru Bay, home to one of the world's greatest populations of manta rays.

While the Maldives has outstanding scuba diving, the larger residents also attract marine explorers each year. Manta rays are graceful residents that are frequently sighted on scuba dives and snorkelling excursions, but the star of the show is undoubtedly the spectacular whale shark.

Rhincodon typus, the world's largest fish, may appear daunting in the pristine Maldivian waters, yet this plankton-eating filter feeder is completely harmless to people. Unless you get in the way of its large tail, that is.

Whale sharks are present in the Maldives all year. From May to December, they are most usually seen on the western atolls, but between January and April, they go east. If whale sharks are on





There are numerous economical ways to see the Maldives' natural beauty and attractions.

your bucket list, the South Ari Atoll, a Marine Protected Area, is a fantastic place to visit. Fortunately, you don't have to be a scuba diver to swim with whale sharks, and local operators provide daily snorkelling expeditions.

There is also a lot of activity going on above ground. With its warm waters and plenty of coral reefs, it's no surprise that the Maldives has become a surfer's dream vacation. The best breaks are on the eastern border of the North and South Malé Atolls, where surf is coming in from the Indian Ocean.

Surfing is all about swell, and from April to October, the southwest monsoon provides that perfect combination of deep-ocean surf and offshore winds. When that swell hits the eastern atolls' reefs and point breaks, it produces some of the best surfing in the Indian Ocean.

Public ferries and shared speedboats make transportation in the Maldives more inexpensive. The Maldives offers a public ferry system that connects numerous small islands for a modest fee. It is a terrific method to island hop and explore new areas. If you need to travel quickly, consider sharing a speedboat

with other tourists to split the cost. Some local islands provide bicycle rentals as a low-cost and environmentally friendly mode of transportation.

However, the island breaks may become busy, so if you want the freedom to hop between undisturbed waves, consider hiring a charter boat to shuttle you between the best sites, bringing the waves to your doorstep each morning.

If your children are too little to participate in the underwater experience, don't worry; there is plenty of entertainment available. The islands provide a variety of child-friendly activities. A Maldives vacation with kids can be both rewarding and challenging for parents. Hiring a babysitter for your trip is an investment in your well-being and happiness as parents. It gives you the opportunity to relax and unwind in paradise while ensuring that your children have a wonderful and enjoyable experience. So, next time you plan a family vacation to the Maldives, consider the invaluable assistance of a babysitter to make the most of your time in this tropical paradise.

Try your hand at traditional hand-line fishing from a Maldivian *dhoni*, or lace up for some water skiing in the tranquil lagoons. It is certainly a destination for the entire family.

Sample budget itinerary

Here's an example itinerary for a weeklong budget break in the Maldives:

- Day 1:** Arrive in Malé and travel to a local island accommodation.
- Day 2:** Explore the local island, relax on the beach, and go snorkelling.
- Day 3:** Take the public ferry to a nearby island for a day trip.
- Day 4:** Try water sports such as kayaking or paddle boarding (rent from local operators).
- Day 5:** Cultural Tour, including visits to sights and marketplaces.
- Day 6:** Self-guided snorkelling tour to popular reefs.
- Day 7:** Leisure time and departure.

Budget travellers should always purchase travel insurance, especially if they are on a tight budget. Pack smartly and to avoid rental fees, bring basics such as snorkelling gear. Use local SIM cards to get a cheap internet connection.

With these ideas, you may enjoy the Maldives' breathtaking scenery, clean waters, and colourful culture without breaking the bank. A low-budget holiday in the Maldives is not only feasible, but it may also be a very remarkable experience.



Air Seychelles operates flights from Seychelles to Colombo, 2 times a week, with connections to the Maldives with Sri Lankan Airlines. Visit: www.airseychelles.com for more information.

The charm of a tropical idyll

WORDS: MARIA SMART

La Réunion, a French overseas department in the Indian Ocean, is an island with stunning natural beauty and different landscapes. La Réunion, with its volcanic peaks and lush forests, gorgeous beaches, and rich cultural experiences, provides a unique blend of adventure and leisure for every tourist.



Here's a list of things to do:



Piton de la Fournaise

Unforgettable natural wonders

Piton de la Fournaise is one of the world's most active volcanoes and a must-see destination for adventurers. Whether you hike to the peak or take a guided tour, the stunning volcanic terrain provides an otherworldly atmosphere. Before arranging your visit, check the volcano's activity status.

The previous eruption started in August 2006 and terminated in January 2007. The volcano erupted again in February 2007, on 21 September 2008, 9 December 2010, lasting two days, and 1 August 2015. The most recent eruption started on 15 September 2022. The volcano is located in Réunion National Park, a World Heritage Site.

This volcano is over 530,000 years old, and for the most of its history, its flows have mixed with those of Piton des Neiges, a larger, older, and deeply eroded inactive volcano that covers the northwest two-thirds of Réunion.

A forestry road, followed by a track, connects Bourg-Murat's plains highway to the Pas de Bellecombe (Bellecombe Pass), which includes a parking area and a snack shop. It is located above the caldera rim cliffs and provides a view of the caldera's northeastern part. A stairway trail leads down from the pass to the caldera level.

The Cirques of Cilaos, Mafate, and Salazie are three natural amphitheatres created by collapsed volcano craters, each with breathtaking views and distinct trekking options.

Cilaos is recognised for its picturesque town, thermal springs, and strenuous hiking paths. Mafate, which can only be reached by foot or helicopter, is a haven for hikers looking for peace and beauty. Salazie, known for its lush greenery and waterfalls, is a popular destination for nature enthusiasts and photographers.

These cirques, also known as natural amphitheatres, are unique and attract tourists looking for a true adventure. Some people come here for the fantastic canyoning experiences. Others wish to walk the hundreds of kilometres of trails that span the cirques. Some people spend their vacation in Réunion mountain riding, while others prefer a more relaxed



Réunion National Park

walk with pauses along the way to see the cirque's appealing mountain communities.

Regardless of the cirque you visit or which activity you select, you will be treated to spectacular landscape, friendly residents, and world-class adventure all on one magnificent tiny island.

While La Réunion's beaches are less well-known than its volcanic interior, they are just as compelling. L'Ermitage is a popular destination for families, thanks to its tranquil lagoon and coral reef. Saint-Gilles has a busy nightlife and water sports, while Étang-Salé is noted for its unusual black sand beach and breathtaking sunsets.

Beaches are frequently outfitted with barbecues, facilities, and parking spots. L'Ermitage beach is Réunion Island's most wide and well-preserved lagoon, and it's a popular snorkelling spot. It is a white sand beach bordered by casuarina trees, where locals frequently host picnics. La Plage des Brisants is a popular surfing spot where various athletic and recreational activities take place. L'Étang-Salé on the west coast is a very distinctive beach since it is covered with black sand made up of microscopic basalt fragments. This happens when lava comes into touch with water, cools quickly, and shatters into sand and shattered debris of various sizes. Much of the material is small enough to be called sand. Grand Anse is a tropical white sand beach and is surrounded with coconut trees and features a rock pool for swimmers, a pétanque playground, and a picnic spot. Le Vieux Port in Saint Philippe is a green sand beach made up of microscopic olivine crystals produced by a lava flow in 2007, making it one of the world's youngest beaches.

Thrilling outdoor activities

With almost 1,000 kilometres of defined trails, La Réunion is a hiker's dream. Trails range from easy walks to tough multi-day hikes, so there is something for everyone. Hiking is a great way to experience Réunion's craggy mountaintops, cirques, and pitons, and the French overseas department has plenty of hiking trails to try. Many of the island's hiking paths are located within Réunion National Park, although others are outside of it.

The Cirque de Cilaos offers some of the most gratifying hiking experiences on one of Réunion's most famous cirques. The trails are accessible from Saint-Louis via the 420 bends road (route aux 420 virages). While visiting this charming community at the foot of the Piton des Neiges cliff, don't miss the embroidery museum (musée de la broderie).

To reach Marla from Cilaos, use the Taibit Pass (about 5 hours from Cilaos and 4 hours from Cordes). The cirque is also accessible from the cirque de Salazie along the Col des Boeufs, using a manned vehicle. This permit allows you to join La Nouvelle after two and a half hours of walking through the tamarind forest, while Marla takes three. Set aside a few days to fully experience this place.

The cirque de Salazie's entrance is on the eastern side, allowing easterly winds from the ocean to deliver spray, making this one of the most-lush areas on the island. The caldera's name possibly come from the Malagasy term salazy, which means 'good campground'. The Saint-André is conveniently located near a number of communities. The Piton des Neiges, the island's highest peak, has such a strong allure among select fans that they return time and again. It can be accessible from a variety of locations (Plaine-des-Cafres, Hell-Bourg, and gîte de Bélouve), with the ascent from Cilaos being the most popular. Even capable hikers will need at least an 8-hour day to complete the full trip.

The slippery road and dangerously smooth basalt stones pose the biggest risk to hikers in damp conditions after rains, but the routes also dry out rapidly. Fog is easily probable, especially after midday, although diverting or even straying from the designated route is nearly impossible due to the dense foliage that surrounds the hiking trail.



Col des Boeufs



Cirque de Salazie



Rougail morue



Cari



Saint Paul Market

Rich cultural experiences

La Réunion's Creole culture is a remarkable blend of African, Indian, Chinese, and European influences. Discover the island's rich legacy through its music, dance, and gastronomy. Do not pass up the opportunity to eat classic Creole meals like *cari* (a flavourful curry) and *rougail* (a spicy tomato-based dish). The curry is made with onion, garlic, and spices like turmeric (called *safran pèi* on the island) and *masalé* (the local variant of Garam Masala), then cooked with fish, pork, eggs, and tomatoes. Ginger can be added to dishes as an optional ingredient. *Combava* zest and curry leaf (known as *Kaloupilé*) are also highly popular. Chop suey (rice, not pasta) and other Asian meals, such as pork with pineapple, are particularly popular.

As an island, fresh and high-quality seafood are readily available. *Rougail morue* can be made with fish as well. It is nearly typically eaten with a legume (grain), such as broad beans, locust beans, or the well-known *cilaos* lentils. Also, serve with cooked or raw veggies, such as *bleda*.

Visiting the island's markets allows you to experience the vibrant local culture. The Saint Paul Market is a popular destination for fresh vegetables, spices, handicrafts, and street cuisine.

La Réunion offers amazing adventures, breathtaking natural beauty, and rich cultural experiences. This island provides something for everyone, whether you enjoy being outside, being in nature, or learning about different cultures. Pack your luggage and prepare to explore the numerous wonders of La Réunion!

Practical information for travellers

Getting there: Roland Garros Airport serves La Réunion, with direct flights from Paris and other major cities. Domestic flights connect La Réunion with adjacent Mauritius and Madagascar.

Best time to visit: The dry season, which lasts from May to November, is the best time to visit La Réunion because the weather is gentler and more conducive to outdoor activities. The wet season, which lasts from December to April, brings milder weather and the occasional typhoon.

Accommodation: La Réunion offers a choice of accommodation options to suit all budgets. From magnificent resorts and charming guesthouses to low-cost hostels and self-catering apartments, you'll find the perfect place to stay.

Getting around: Renting a car is the most convenient way to explore the island, but buses and taxis are also available. Consider renting a bike or taking a guided tour to discover the island's hidden gems.



Air Seychelles operates flights from Seychelles to Mauritius 3 times a week with connections to La Réunion and Madagascar with partner airlines. Air Seychelles seasonal direct flights to La Réunion to start 30 Dec 2024. Visit: www.airseychelles.com for more information.

Johannesburg to Seychelles

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A culinary mosaic

WORDS: PETER THOMAS



Nestled along the western coast of Sri Lanka, Colombo is a dynamic monument to the island's rich cultural tapestry, with its culinary scene providing a delectable doorway into the country's eclectic background. Colombo, Sri Lanka's largest city and commercial centre, is a culinary melting pot that combines indigenous traditions with influences from India, Portugal, the Netherlands, and the Middle East.

Sri Lankan cuisine is noted for its unique blends of herbs, spices, seafood, vegetables, grains, and fruit. The food is heavily based on several types of rice, as well as coconut, which is a common fruit throughout the country. Seafood, whether fresh or preserved, plays a prominent role in the cuisine of a country, which was a hub in the historic oceanic.

Sri Lanka is historically known for its cinnamon. This is a popular spice in Sri Lanka, and it has a more delicate, sweet flavour than *Cinnamomum*

cassia, which is more commonly used in other Southeast Asian dishes. Sri Lanka also consumes a wide variety of red rice, some of which are regarded as heirloom in the country. Tea is also a popular beverage throughout the country, and Sri Lanka is renowned for producing some of the world's best tea.

A gourmet journey across Colombo delivers an unparalleled assortment of flavours and fragrances that cater to both the adventurous and the conventional palette:



The Pettah Market

Morning: The market bustle and traditional breakfast

Start your culinary trip at the Pettah Market, a busy hub of activity where the air is filled with the aromas of fresh produce, spices, and street food. Vendors joyfully sell anything from tropical fruits like rambutan and mangosteen to the island's well-known spices like cinnamon and cardamom.

The Pettah Market, also known as Manning Market, is an outdoor market in the suburb of Pettah in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Khan Clock Tower, a large structure in the midst of a roundabout, serves as the formal entry to the Pettah Market. The Colombo Old Town Hall & Museum serves as a post office on the ground floor and a museum on the top level. Outside there is an exhibit of old steam engines.

The candy-striped Jami Ul-Alfar Mosque, constructed in 1909, is the most recognisable building in the Pettah bazaar.

For breakfast, visit a local restaurant for typical Sri Lankan cuisine. Hoppers (*appa*) are a must-try. These bowl-shaped pancakes prepared from a fermented batter of rice flour and coconut milk can be eaten plain, with an egg, or sweetened with palm treacle. Pair them with *pol sambol*, a spicy coconut relish with a zesty edge.



Hoppers

Mid-morning: Street food and sweet treats

As the morning advances, Colombo's street food scene comes to life. Indulge in *isso vade*, a typical local delicacy made of lentil cakes topped with spicy prawns. Another street food mainstay is *kottu roti*, which is produced by stir-frying chopped flatbread with veggies, eggs, and your choice of meat, all seasoned with fragrant spices. It is distinctly Sri Lankan and tastes the finest when prepared fresh by street sellers.

No visit to Colombo is complete without trying its sweets. Try *kokis*, a crispy, deep-fried rice flour cookie, generally created during festive periods, or savour the melt-in-your-mouth delight of *kiribath*, a coconut milk rice cake typically served with *lunumiris*, a fiery chili paste.



Kottu roti



Ministry of Crab

Lunch: A taste of tradition

For lunch, indulge in the robust aromas of a classic Sri Lankan rice and curry dish. At renowned restaurants such as Upali's or Ministry of Crab, you may sample a range of curries cooked with fish, poultry, lentils, and a cornucopia of veggies. Each curry contains a distinct blend of spices, resulting in a symphony of flavours ranging from mild and creamy to hot and spicy.

Sri Lankans' staple dish is rice and curry, which is a large mound of rice surrounded by various curries and delicacies. If you want to eat a cheap lunch, follow the Sri Lankan masses and visit one of the million little cafes, which are confusingly referred to as 'Hotels'. This is perfect for travellers and people who want to avoid the touristy hotels and you're charged according to how much you eat.

Afternoon: Tea time elegance

Sri Lanka is linked with tea, and a trip to Colombo will not be completed without indulging in the age-old tradition of afternoon tea. Visit one of the city's colonial-era hotels, such as the Galle Face Hotel, to sample a wonderful range of Ceylon teas accompanied with delicate pastries, scones, and finger sandwiches.

'Short eats' are a range of snacks sold by the dozen in 'short eat' shops and restaurants. These are eaten on-the-go. Pastries, Chinese buns, and patties are some examples of quick meals. Try vade, savoury deep-fried fritters made with a variety of ingredients. Varieties include *parippu vade* (lentils), *ulundu vade* (black gramme and rice), *isso vade* (shrimp) and crab vade. Chinese rolls or egg rolls, which frequently contain minced meats, potatoes, and veggies are common. Patties and pastries – filled with veggies, meat, or fish. Vegetable/fish roti, a flatbread with a filling wrapped into a triangle shape and baked, fish buns/ *Malu pan* are soft fluffy buns stuffed with spicy potato and mackerel stuffing and are best as a savoury snack or served with tea.



Galle Face Hotel



Mt. Lavinia Beach

Evening: Seafood extravaganza

As the sun sets, Colombo's coastline offers the perfect setting for a seafood feast. The Mt. Lavinia Beach area is dotted with restaurants serving the freshest catches of the day. Indulge in succulent lobster, prawns, and crabs, often prepared with a fusion of local spices and international techniques.

The signature dish, the Pepper Crab, is a standout, known for its robust flavour and generous portions. The two main ways of preparing crab are dry or curry. Many traditional Sri Lankan herbs and spices are added to make the crab dish rich and delicious.

Lobsters are cooked either by boiling steaming or grilling and served with hot, melted butter garnished with vegetable leaves like broccoli salad. One of the tastiest seafoods, fresh cooked lobsters are also served chilled with a mayonnaise, cocktail or other cold seafood sauce for dipping.

The favourite way to eat shrimp is devilled and can also be made into a juicy curry.

Oysters are a special dish prepared to perfection by local chefs. It is often eaten with a sauce and is an ideal accompaniment to any meal.

The favourite kinds of saltwater fish are tuna, seer and shark while the river fish varieties like the *pethiya*, *lula* and *kanaya* are bonier and a bit different in taste. The common ways of having fish is curry, fried, in a salad with fresh leaves, fish wellington or as dry fish. Another popular fish delicacy is *ambul thiyal*. Try fried Cuttlefish is a delicacy and adds spice to any meal.



Kaema Sutra

Night: Fusion flavours and nightlife

Colombo's culinary landscape is ever-evolving, with a burgeoning scene of fusion cuisine and contemporary dining. Visit restaurants like the Gallery Café or *Kaema Sutra*, where traditional Sri Lankan dishes are reimagined with modern twists, creating innovative and visually stunning plates.

End your night at one of Colombo's chic rooftop bars or lounges, such as the Colombo City Centre or the Cinnamon Red Hotel, where you can sip on craft cocktails while taking in panoramic views of the city skyline.

Colombo's culinary delights are a mosaic of its rich cultural history and vibrant present. From street food to fine dining, every meal in this city tells a story of tradition, innovation, and the unending passion of its people for good food. Whether you are a seasoned foodie or a curious traveller, Colombo promises a gastronomic journey that will leave your taste buds tingling and your heart full.



Cinnamon Red Hotel

Common Colombo culinary ingredients

- **Spices:** cinnamon, black pepper, fennel, cardamom, cloves, fenugreek, nutmeg, mace, cumin, coriander and turmeric.
- **Herbs:** pandan leaf (*rampe*), curry leaf (*karapincha*), coriander leaf, shallot, goraka, lemongrass, tamarind, garlic, ginger, lime, cayenne pepper, tabasco pepper.
- **Fish:** Maldives fish, dried fish, mackerel, tuna, shark, sprats and fermented preserved fish.
- **Grains:** white rice (some common varieties are *samba*, *kekulu*, and *suwandel*), red rice (some common varieties are *kekulu*, *pachchaperumal*, *kaluheenati*, and *madathawalu*), finger millet, hog millet, and *olu haal* (water lily seed).
- **Oils:** coconut oil, sesame oil, cow ghee, buffalo ghee and mustard oil.
- **Sweeteners:** *kithul* jaggery, coconut jaggery and *palmyrah* jaggery.
- **Vegetables and greens:** *gotukola*, green papaya, snake beans, bitter melon, snake gourd, *luffa*, pumpkin and winged bean and moringa.
- **Meats:** chicken, beef, pork and mutton.
- **Yams, roots and tubers:** lotus root, purple yam, *tapico*, *kohila* (*Lasia spinosa*) and arrowleaf elephant's ear.
- Coconut milk and grated coconut are ubiquitous in the cuisine and are freshly prepared almost every day in most households. Maldives fish is heavily used in vegetable dishes to add an umami flavour.
- **Fruits:** bananas, mangoes, pineapple, soursop, guava, avocado and oranges.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Colombo, 2 times a week. Visit: www.airseychelles.com for more information.

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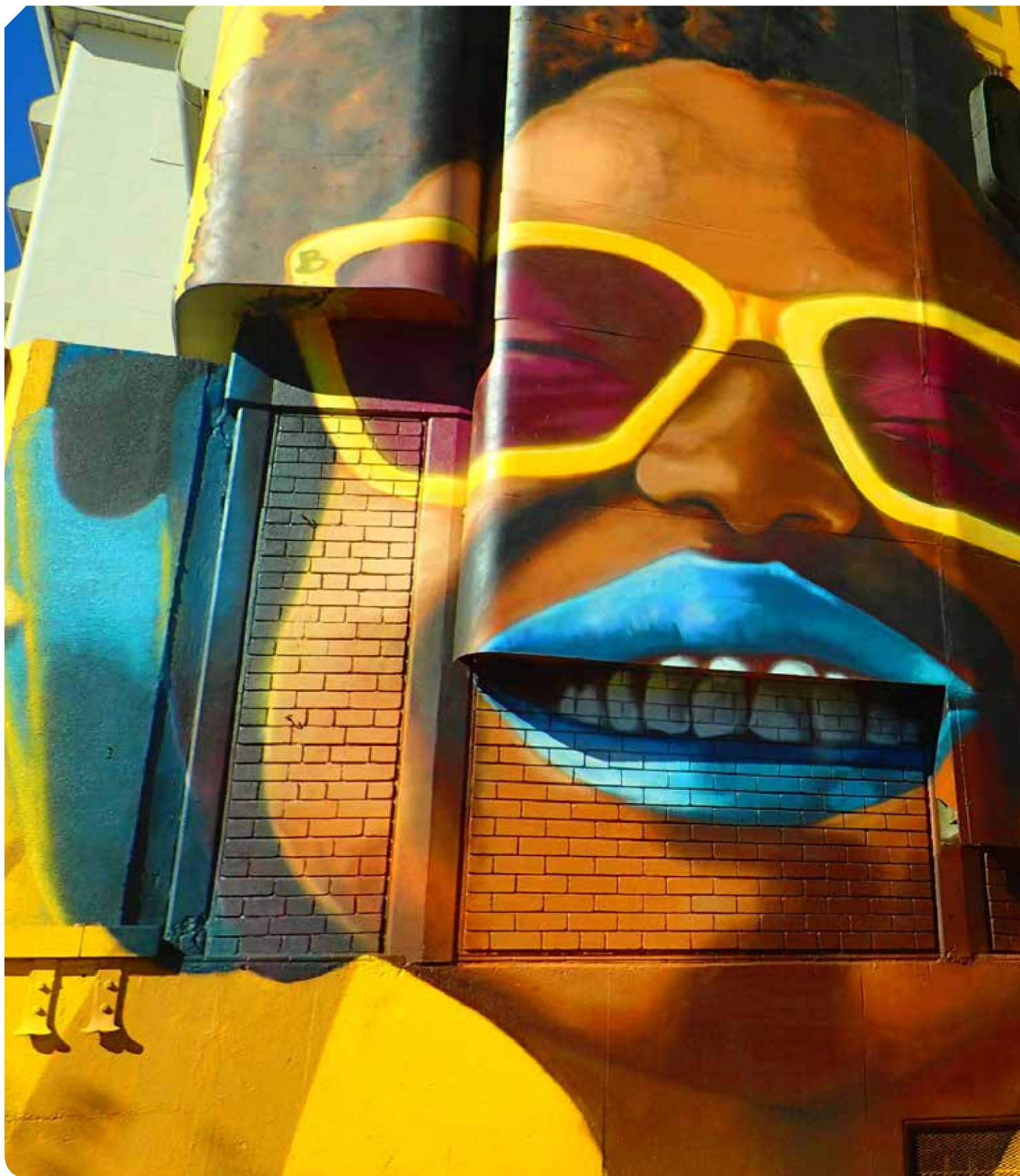
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The golden city

WORDS: MAMBO GICHUKI

Johannesburg, sometimes known as Joburg or Jozi, is South Africa's vibrant and busy capital, providing a diverse range of shopping, dining, and entertainment options. Known as the 'golden city,' it is a melting pot of varied cultures, culinary delights, shopping therapy, and exciting entertainment possibilities.

Joburg is a shopper's delight, with everything from upscale shops to lovely rural markets. Sandton City is a premier shopping destination with international premium brands and trendy boutiques. Rosebank Mall and its associated The Zone provide a more varied mix of African goods and contemporary fashion. If you're seeking one-of-a-kind bargains, the Neighbourgoods Market in Braamfontein is a must-see due to its artisanal products and lively environment.

Whether you're a local or a visitor, Joburg's vibrant retail, food, and entertainment sectors constantly provide something new and fascinating to discover.

Enjoy your time in Joburg!





The jewel of Jo'burg

**Address: 83 Rivonia Road, Sandhurst, Sandton, 2196, South Africa
Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.**

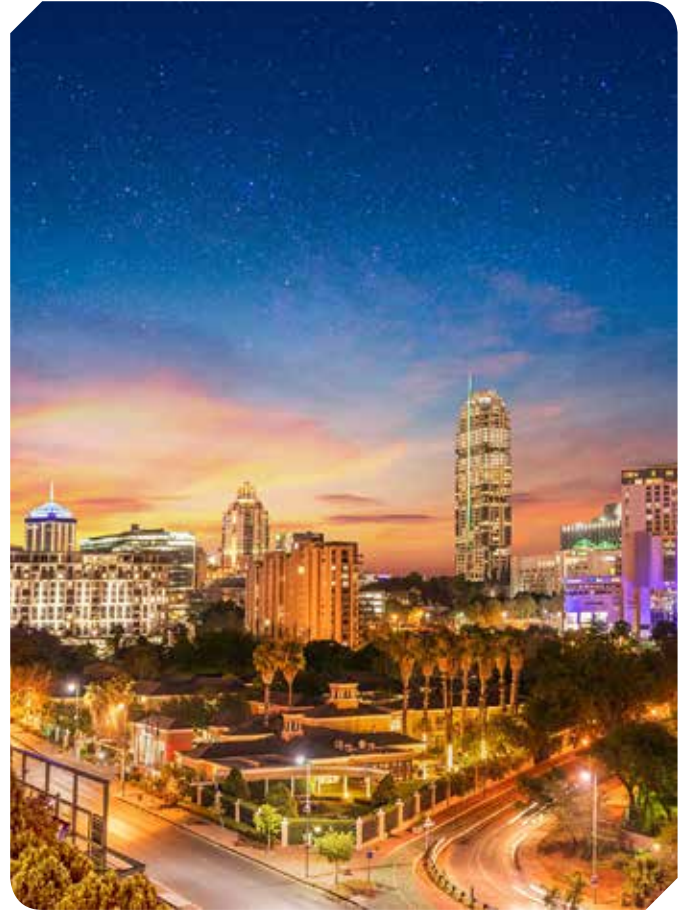
Sandton City, in the heart of Sandton in Johannesburg, South Africa, is one of the continent's leading retail attractions. Sandton City, known for its premium retail selections, world-class restaurants, and entertainment facilities, attracts millions of visitors each.

Sandton City was founded in 1973 and has undergone multiple expansions and renovations to preserve its position as a premier retail and lifestyle destination. It is part of the larger Sandton Central Management District, which contains several office buildings, hotels, and residential units.

Sandton City provides a unique shopping experience, with over 300 businesses. It includes both worldwide luxury labels and South African merchants. Woolworths, a high-end department store that sells fashion, food, and homeware, Checkers Hyper, a huge supermarket with a diverse product offering, and Edgars, a leading fashion retailer that sells clothing, cosmetics, and homeware, are among the key anchor tenants.

For those seeking luxury, Sandton City does not disappoint. The Diamond Walk section contains high-end labels such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Prada, Dolce & Gabbana, and Chanel.

Sandton City has a wide food culture, ranging from informal cafes to upscale dining. Tashas, a trendy café with an array of international foods,



The Butcher Shop & Grill, noted for its superb steaks and wine selection, and Hard Rock Café, a global brand offering American cuisine and live music, are some of the most popular eating options.

Beyond shopping and dining, Sandton City offers a variety of entertainment opportunities. There is a cinema, a cutting-edge movie theatre that shows the most recent blockbusters. KidZania, an interactive, educational city for children, provides a variety of role-playing games.

Sandton City is also a major economic hub, with the adjacent Sandton Convention Centre holding several international conferences, fairs, and events all year. The proximity to major company offices makes it an ideal location for business travellers.

There are various luxury hotels in and around Sandton City that cater to both leisure and business tourists. Sandton City is easily accessible via multiple kinds of transportation. The quick train service connects Sandton to O.R. Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg's Central Business District, and Pretoria. Numerous bus routes and taxis serve the neighbourhood, and there is plenty of parking for people driving to the mall.

Sandton City is more than simply a retail mall; it is a dynamic, multifaceted destination that combines luxury, convenience, and entertainment. Whether you want to shop, eat, or just explore, Sandton City offers a world-class experience in the heart of Johannesburg.

An electric mix

Address: 177 Oxford St, Rosebank, Johannesburg
Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.,
and Saturday, Sunday, and public holidays 9 a.m.

Rosebank Mall and The Zone, located in Joburg's lively Rosebank district, provide a complete shopping, dining, and entertainment experience. These nearby complexes have become popular attractions for both locals and visitors, mixing high-end shopping with a vibrant social scene.

Rosebank Mall has a rich history, extending back to its inception in the 1970s. It has undergone numerous modifications throughout the years in order to update its facilities and enhance its retail choices. Today, it is a popular retail centre, attracting a broad clientele. It combines worldwide and local brands to cater to a wide range of tastes and preferences. Some famous stores are Zara, presenting the latest in fashion trends; H&M, popular for its inexpensive and attractive clothing; and Woolworths, popular for its high-quality groceries, apparel, and home furnishings. In addition to fashion, the mall has a range of specialist retailers, including Exclusive Books and the iStore, which sells the newest Apple goods and accessories.

Rosebank Mall provides a wide selection of dining options, from casual cafes to premium restaurants. Rosebank Mall offers a variety of leisure activities, including movies, toy stores, spas, and wellness centres for relaxation and regeneration.

The Zone at Rosebank is noted for its youthful and fashionable atmosphere, which draws a younger crowd with its contemporary products. The Zone provides Rosebank Mall with extra retail and dining



opportunities. It serves as a social and entertainment hub, hosting events and fairs that attract visitors from all around Johannesburg. Regular live music, art displays, and cultural performances are held.

Rosebank Mall and The Zone are easily accessible via the quick rail service. Bus and taxi services also serve the region. Together they form a bustling and dynamic shopping and entertainment destination in Johannesburg. They cater to a diversified audience with a variety of retail stores, food options, and entertainment facilities, making them a must-see for anybody visiting the city. Whether you're seeking for the latest fashion, a gourmet dinner, or a fun day out, Rosebank Mall and The Zone have something for you.



A hub of creativity and culinary delights

Address: 73 Juta Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg

The market is open every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Neighbourgoods Market is one of Joburg's most popular weekend attractions. This market, located in the dynamic district of Braamfontein, has evolved into a cultural hub, offering a combination of gourmet food, artisan goods, and a lively ambiance. It epitomises the spirit of Johannesburg's urban renaissance and is a must-see for both locals and tourists.

Neighbourgoods Market, which opened in 2011, is located in a multi-story parking garage in Braamfontein, a region famed for its youthful energy and artistic flair. The market has played an important role in the Neighbourgoods' revitalisation, attracting a diverse throng every Saturday.

It is famous for its diverse selection of high-quality, freshly prepared dishes. The vendors serve everything from traditional South African cuisines to foreign food. Paquito's Treatery is well-known for its exquisite churros and Spanish-style tapas, while The Sandwich Revolution serves gourmet sandwiches with innovative ingredients and handcrafted bread. Sumting Fresh is well-known for its fried chicken and inventive street food.

The market is a treasure trove of handcrafted and locally manufactured items. Shoppers can find unique, handcrafted goods from local artists,

fashionable and frequently one-of-a-kind fashion items, and tastefully designed home furnishings.

Whether you enjoy coffee, artisan beer, or cocktails, Neighbourgoods Market has something for everyone. The market frequently incorporates live music and entertainment, which contribute to the celebratory mood. Local bands and DJs create a soundtrack that complements the overall experience, making it a fun place to socialise and unwind.

Neighbourgoods Market is more than simply a shopping and dining destination; it serves as a communal nexus for Johannesburg's unique culture. It's a location where people from all walks of life can gather to enjoy wonderful food, good conversation, and active city life. The market places a significant emphasis on promoting local companies and instilling a sense of community in its visitors.

Neighbourgoods Market in Johannesburg is a dynamic, must-see site that provides an authentic glimpse into the city's creative and gastronomic culture. Whether you're a foodie, a shopper, or simply looking for a fun way to spend your Saturday, Neighbourgoods Market has something for you. It exemplifies how urban spaces may be converted into community-focused hubs that promote local culture and innovation.





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Bauhaus style, White City

WORDS: TED ROGERS

Tel Aviv, also known as the 'White City,' is a vibrant metropolis on Israel's Mediterranean coast. With a rich history, cultural dynamism, and unique architectural heritage, the city has a distinctive soul that blends tradition and modernity. The Bauhaus style, also known as the International Style, has a significant presence in Tel Aviv, particularly in the White City. This architectural movement, which originated in the Bauhaus school in Germany, emphasises simplicity, functionality, and the use of modern materials. In Tel Aviv, the Bauhaus style was adapted to suit the local climate and urban setting, resulting in a distinctive architectural heritage. The use of deep balconies, recessed windows, and brise-soleils (sun blockers) serve to protect interiors from the hot heat. Buildings are built to maximise natural ventilation by strategically placing windows and openings that allow for cross-breezes. In German, Bauhaus literally means 'construction house,' and that's exactly what it began as. However, the space gradually evolved into a bigger movement with distinct visual hallmarks.

Walter Gropius, an architect from Weimar, Germany, founded the Bauhaus art movement in 1919. His ambition was to run a school that took a complete approach to art. Gropius sought to unite all of these media under one roof so that they could inform one another, rather than having separate schools for painting, sculpture, and building. It was in Weimar where the radical approach to artistry was defined and it was in Dessau where the Bauhaus style as we know it today really came to be.

While Gropius did not intend to create a distinct aesthetic brand – he was more interested in the process of how art was created – his school's approach resulted in a distinct style. The Bauhaus design school's emphasis on mass-produced function resulted in most of its works being abstract, modernist, and lacking excessive adornment.

The Bauhaus art movement included a large number of artists who had a significant impact on their respective professions. In the 1930s, many Jewish families moved to Israel, bringing with them the Bauhaus school's beliefs and concepts. The initiative quickly gained steam in Tel Aviv, the country's largest metropolis.

The Bauhaus architecture became so famous in the city that many projects were created based on these concepts. Tel Aviv has so many buildings with the Bauhaus concept that in 2003 part of the city was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This location became known as the White City, precisely because of the enormous amount of white buildings there.





Characteristics of Bauhaus architecture in Tel Aviv

In designing the new buildings in the 1930s and 1940s, the architects also made accommodations for the hot, sunny Israeli climate by using less glass (smaller windows) to reduce heat, creating flat roofs that could be used as an outdoor social space, and incorporating massive balconies to catch Mediterranean breezes and sun breakers to provide shade.

The prevalent use of concrete and stucco reflected both the Bauhaus emphasis on modern materials and the availability of these resources locally.

Functional design

Buildings were designed with functionality in mind. Each aspect had a purpose, with an emphasis on efficiency and utility. Functionality was also a key component of UX design. User-centred design was an important concept for designers to understand in order to create products that suited the needs of their users. UX designers mixed product functionalities with aesthetic qualities to improve the user experience.

The decorative components are minimalist, reflecting a modernist ethos that values clean lines and basic forms. Bauhaus designs are characterised by simplicity, with emphasis on clean lines, minimum or non-existent ornamentation, and limited colour palettes. By reducing designs, Bauhaus artists emphasise the utility and fundamental purpose of their works while still generating a striking, contemporary style.

Flat roofs

Flat roofs were appropriate for the Mediterranean environment, as they collected rainwater and provided additional outdoor living area. Many flat roofs served as common places for drying laundry, social gatherings, and recreational activities. They allowed the tenants to go up to the roof on hot nights.

Horizontal and vertical lines

Buildings incorporated horizontal and vertical lines to create a sense of order and balance. This included the installation of long, horizontal windows and balconies. Vertical windows, which represented straight lines, were another characteristic of Bauhaus architecture in Tel Aviv. The windows frequently traced the internal staircase. The light from the windows illuminated the stairs, saving electricity. In addition, the continuous bands of windows provided enough natural light and ventilation, which was critical in Tel Aviv's hot environment.

White and light-coloured facades

White and bright hues reflected heat. Walls not only provided privacy but were also shielded from the light. Large sections of glass, which let in light, were replaced with little recessed windows that reduced heat and glare.

The use of white or bright colours helped the overall appearance of the White City.



Pilotis (support columns)

To offer shaded gardens, residential buildings were erected atop ground-level pillars known as pilotis. They provide both a climatic and a social role by permitting circulation beneath the building and assisting in the ventilation of the entire metropolitan area at street level. The raised form creates covered outside areas, which are vital in the hot environment.

Functional balconies

In the Mediterranean environment, balconies were necessary for outdoor life. Many balconies were built to provide shade while reducing direct sunlight into the residences.

Tel Aviv's Bauhaus buildings are more than just architectural marvels; they reflect the city's modernist legacy and serve as a cultural and intellectual hub. The White City personifies the idea of a modern, practical, and energetic metropolitan environment. It is a one-of-a-kind combination of European modernism and local adaptation, resulting in a distinct and lasting legacy that continues to shape the city's character and aesthetic.

Ongoing restoration projects aim to preserve and rehabilitate Bauhaus buildings, ensuring that they retain their original character while meeting current living needs. Many of the structures, including architectural classics, had been neglected to the point of ruin, and some had already been demolished before legislation was passed. However, some of the original 4,000 Bauhaus buildings have been rehabilitated, and at least 1,500 more are set to be preserved and restored.

In 2009, Tel Aviv's municipal administration passed legislation to cover around 1,000 properties. In 2015, the German government and the city of Tel Aviv came to an agreement under which Germany would donate towards the preservation project over a ten-year period; a portion of the funds would be used to construct a preservation centre in Tel Aviv's



Max-Liebling House to stimulate collaboration among architects, craftspeople, and artists.

To stay up with the fast-changing world, Tel Aviv's preservation plans must strike a balance between cultural preservation and modernisation. The panel titled, 'Tel Aviv in 2030', discussed repairing the city to provide additional spaces for people to live, as many buildings had been destroyed as a result of a lack of preservation and wars.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Tel Aviv, 2 times a week. Visit: www.airseychelles.com for more information.

Olympics of the art world

WORDS: MARTIN KENNEDY

Whether you are a follower of modern art or not you've probably heard of the Venice Biennale, a huge exhibition of contemporary creativity which has been described as the Olympics of the art world. The latest edition – the 60th since the event began in 1895 – opened on 20 April and runs until 24 November 2024. No fewer than 87 countries are participating, with each one creating a national pavilion in response to the overall Biennale theme, 'Foreigners Everywhere', proposed by the Biennale curator Adriano Pedrosa.

Seychelles has been present at Venice Biennales since 2015, since then eighteen artists have flown the culture flag for our small island nation. In 2024 Seychelles is represented by four artists; Jude Ally, Ryan Chetty, Danielle Freakley and Juliette Zelime (who creates work as JADEZ). For the first time the Seychelles national pavilion is located inside the Arsenale, one of the two main zones of the event, and inside which all four artists are exhibited. However, there is a 'part two' exhibition at the prestigious Palazzo Mora where Ally and Chetty have created impressive video installations.

Jude Ally is exhibiting a tower of suspended cubes, each with windows cut from the sides. Two video films, made in Seychelles, are projected onto the cubes. There is also a monitor showing the complete film in a more conventional manner. The squares removed from the cubes are displayed on an adjacent wall of the gallery, each one covered in paintings on canvas.

Ryan Chetty, who won first prize at the 2022 Seychelles Biennale, has created a large pool, inside which pumped water moves one thousand small floating lightbulbs, creating a velocity of form intensified by a video projection that beams down onto the surface of the water. Two further videos, one of which features Seychellois contemporary dance, are projected onto large screens above and to the side of the pool structure. Both installations exemplify the new directions contemporary Seychellois artists are taking, with many artists creating more digital and installation work, whilst also continuing to create more traditional figurative artworks which invariably celebrate Seychelles culture, its pristine environment and the nation's traditions. During the last 120 years the notion of





Jude Ally



Ryan Chetty



Danielle Freakley



Juliette Zelime

IMAGES COURTESY OF VENICE BIENNALES



1. Ryan Chetty's water-based installation; 'A Nation of Many - Emanating from Everywhere'.
2. Jabez's 'hammock' installation, photographed after three weeks of visitors adding thread and hair.
3. Jude Ally's 'Through the Windows' installation, which features video films projected onto suspended cubes.
4. The original 'hammock' installation (entitled 'Nesting'), photographed prior to the opening of the exhibition.

what constitutes a work of art has been constantly redefined, with the predominance of painting and traditional sculpture being increasingly challenged by artists adopting fresh creative directions, including the creation of larger, more conceptual works which often involve the fusion of a number of media.

The ideas which drive artworks remain of vital importance in forging a link between the work and audience. This bond is explicit inside the Arsenal exhibition, with JABEZ and Danielle Freakley offering interactive installations which invite the visitors to participate, physically adding content to Jabez's installation and participating in the performance piece 'Please Say' by Danielle Freakley.

Jabez has created a hammock made from human hair, which hangs above a floor covering made from the same material. Original video films, complex and engaging, and which relate to and reinforce the message of the main installation, are shown on an adjacent monitor. Visitors, finding a free-standing structure holding coloured threads and scissors, are invited to tie a piece of thread to the hammock, choosing a colour which represents the continent of their birth. More adventurous viewers can cut off some of their own hair and tie this to the hammock. The reaction of the public to this work has been extraordinary, with many of the 20,000 people who visit the work each day adding threads of twine and human hair to the artwork.

This aspect of audience interaction continues with 'Please Say', Danielle Freakley's interactive installation, inside which visitors are invited to participate in a performance piece constructed around the notion of people being able to – literally – put words into the mouth of their partner. This work is an extension of a concept that has been the artist's signature style of expression for several years. Visitors can take away objects, including specially created ribbons, and use them to signify their openness to

recreating the 'Please Say' artwork anywhere and at any time in the future. The work will therefore extend beyond the physical and chronological confines of the Biennale.

At the opening of the national pavilion David Andre, Secretary General of the Seychelles National Institute for Culture, Heritage and the Arts (SNICHA), spoke about the importance of our nation maintaining a presence at the world's most important art exhibition. He reminded the audience of the importance of continuity in terms of the involvement of one of the world's smallest nations at major art exhibitions, including Seychelles' very own Biennale of Contemporary Art, last held in 2022. Two of the Venice artists won recognition at this event, with Juliette Zelime and Ryan Chetty winning major prizes prior to being selected to represent the nation in Venice.

By the way, if any readers intend to visit the Biennale they will be able to find our main national pavilion in the Salle d'Armi, Arsenale, floor 1. We are located next to the national pavilion of Ukraine.

Following the conclusion of the Biennale the works will be shipped to Seychelles in order to be installed at the National Gallery. This will enable all residents and people visiting Seychelles to view the installations at that time.

Reaction to the Seychelles work has been exceptionally positive, with major international collectors taking a great interest in future acquisition. Many visitors were pleasantly surprised that, although painting and printmaking is present in the Seychelles pavilion, most of the work is installation, time-based and interactive. Put bluntly, our artists have created artworks which look entirely 'in place' alongside that of other, much larger nations. Once again Seychelles is punching above its weight at an international exhibition of the highest standing.



Christmas presents

Just why and what we give – and exactly when – depends on where we are, says KATE NIVISON

When a survey in Britain asked people to name ten bright ideas that made the world a better place to live in, quite a few of them put Christmas somewhere on their list – and they weren't all children. Some of them were actually women. Considering how much extra work Christmas involves for them, that's surprising, because it's usually the women who get to buy (or make) all the presents, special foods and decorations that have for so long been such essential features of this now almost universal festival of peace and goodwill.

For the madly wealthy, there is the problem of how to gift-wrap the white Mercedes, the yacht or new camel/race horse, while for others, it could be trying to remember who gave you last year's unused gifts so that they can be recycled this year without offending well-meaning loved ones. At times, harassed mums, last-minute dads and the personal assistants of bosses and politicians must surely pause to wonder over a well-earned glass of something comforting, about who started the whole Christmas present thing anyway.

People all over Europe rather like their favourite pre-Christian fun bits, such as Yule logs, candles and bringing evergreen foliage into the house to represent warmth, light and the promise of new life in the winter darkness. Feasting, drinking and visiting the relatives were very much part of their older traditions, as was bringing presents. No one wanted to give these up, so the story of the Three Kings bringing presents was neatly woven in, and everyone was happy.

Some nice examples of this weaving, with additional touches of local colour, come from Italy and Russia. The Italian version tells of an old lady called Befana. When the Three Kings stopped at her house to ask the way to Bethlehem, she crossly said she was just too busy to help, but when she found out later who they were, she went around giving presents to children everywhere to make up for it, and has been doing so ever since (if they've been naughty, though, they only get a lump of charcoal instead). The Russian story is similar, but her name is Babushka, which simply means Grandma.

And when it comes to Father Christmas, Santa Claus, Grandfather Frost, or whatever name he is known by, the origins of Christmas present become even stranger. The 'Ho-ho-ho' man too, in his various manifestations, has been offering a bit of help on the present distribution side since around the 4th century. Two areas claim him as their own – Scandinavia and Turkey.

The Turkish version is probably the oldest. It involves a kindly old 4th century holy man, possibly a bishop called Nicholas from Myra in southern

Turkey, who took to climbing onto the roofs of poor families' homes and putting gold coins down the chimneys to provide their daughters with a dowry, or possibly to stop them selling their children into slavery, whichever you prefer.

But it is Scandinavia we have to thank for more about his familiar method of delivery. The sledge and reindeer came in as the new Christian custom moved north. The traditional dress of reindeer herders in Swedish Lapland is a bright red tunic, trousers tucked into the boots and a matching cap, with optional fur trimmings. Their shamans ('wise men' or sangomas) were well practised in the magic arts of alternative herbal medicines and believed they could fly through the night air on a reindeer-drawn sledge.

But what is the right time to open the presents, most of which are now far too big to be confined to stockings, shoes, or even pillow cases? Customs vary far and wide. English-speaking countries tend to favour Christmas Day itself, with the children allowed to open their stockings in the morning, while the bigger presents and adult gifts stay firmly under the Christmas tree until after, or half way through, a huge mid-day Christmas dinner. In the Netherlands, Belgium and other parts of northern Europe they don't have to wait that long. Children put their shoes (or clogs) out for 6 Dec, the feast of St Nicholas.

These days, present-giving has become an extravagant affair, with not just children but a huge circle of friends and business contacts expecting something. Another stroke of genius to encourage people to give to the less fortunate has arrived from various international charities in the shape of 'gift aid'.

Christmas traditions in the Seychelles are comparable to Christian European customs, and because the majority of the population is Roman Catholic, many people attend church services as part of the celebration. However, this does not imply that the excitement of Christmas shopping is shunned.

Much time and energy are spent looking for the greatest possible Christmas presents for friends and family, and the streets of Victoria, with its small boutiques and merchant shops, are packed with busy shoppers looking for a deal or a spectacular new item.

The Seychellois take great pride in decorating their homes with a wide variety of beautiful tinsel and fairy lights, and a Christmas tree takes centre stage in the living room, which might be a man-made tree or a Casuarina tree, a local evergreen conifer which is found abundantly on the islands.



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Inside Air Seychelles

News and information



Travel Facts
Inside Air Seychelles
Route network
Global offices

Important Information

Airport

Seychelles International Airport is the main airport on the main island of Mahé. There are two terminals for International and Domestic.

Information

There is a tourist information/ hotel booking desk in Arrivals. There are ATMs, a Bank and a Bureau de Change at the airport.

Time

Seychelles is four hours ahead of GMT and three hours ahead of Central European Time.

Electric supply

The power sockets are of type G. The standard voltage is 240 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.

Language

Creole, English and French are the official languages of the Seychelles.

Currency

The Seychelles Rupee. There is no restriction on the import and export of domestic and foreign currency in the country. However, anything over SCR 50,000 or foreign currency equivalent in any form should be declared on arrival or departure. Banks and Bureaux de Change are authorised dealers in foreign currency.

Credit cards

Most credit cards and travellers' cheques are accepted.

Banking

Banking hours are generally Monday-Friday 0830hrs-1430hrs. Saturday 0830hrs-1100hrs

Public holidays 2024

- New Year 1 Jan
- Holiday 2 & 3 Jan
- Good Friday 29 March
- Easter Sunday 31 March

- Easter Monday 1 April
- Labour Day 1 May
- Corpus Christi 30 May
- Constitution Day 18 June
- National Day 29 June
- Assumption Day 15 Aug
- All Saints Day 1 Nov
- Immaculate Conception 8 Dec
- Holiday 9 Dec
- Christmas Day 25 Dec

Passport requirement

Valid passports or other travel documents recognised by Seychelles are required for entry into Seychelles. The passport MUST be valid for the period of the intended stay.

Visa requirement

Visa is not required for entry into the Republic of Seychelles regardless of the nationality of the passport holder.

A copy of valid return ticket and proof of confirmed accommodation is required. www.ics.gov.sc

Ground transport

Driving in Seychelles is on the left side of the road. You can rent cars on Mahé and Praslin. There are several car hire counters outside the arrivals hall at Mahé International Airport.

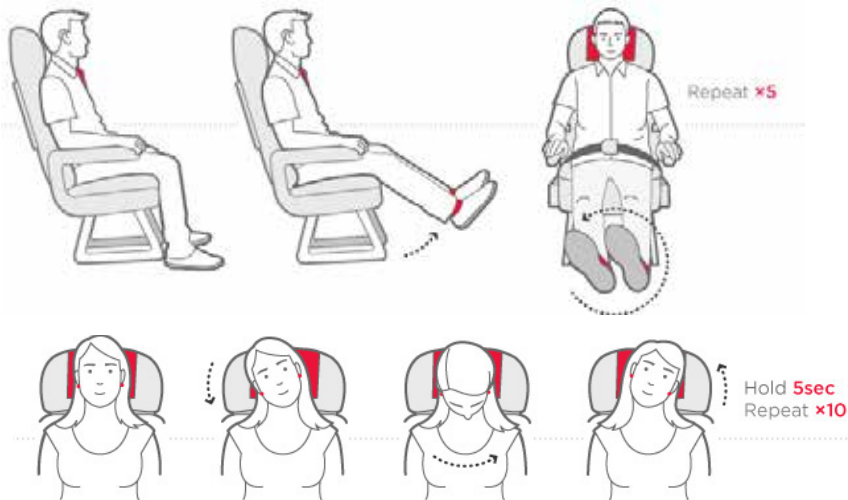
Taxi service

Taxi service is safe and reliable and you can get one from the International Airport or call for one from your hotel.

Tourist information office

The Seychelles Tourist Office is located in Independence House, Victoria, Mahé.

These simple exercises will help to relieve the tiredness and stiffness associated with flying. Check with your doctor first if you have any health conditions which might be adversely affected by exercise.



Seychelles Travel Authorization (STA)

- In compliance with the local immigration Act, all travellers must apply for an Electronic Travel Authorization through seychelles.govtas.com
- STA paperwork is necessary for travel and must be shown at the check-in counter.
- The approval process can take up to 24 hours, therefore request the paperwork at least 72 hours before the travel date.
- If the approved STA document is not produced, the airline may refuse to embark passengers to Seychelles.
- All travellers are encouraged to have travel insurance that covers the duration of their stay in Seychelles.

Shoulder circles

- Sit tall and move forward in your seat.
- Bring your shoulders up towards your ears, then circle back downwards.
- Reverse the exercise by lifting your shoulders towards your ears and drop them back.

Neck rolls

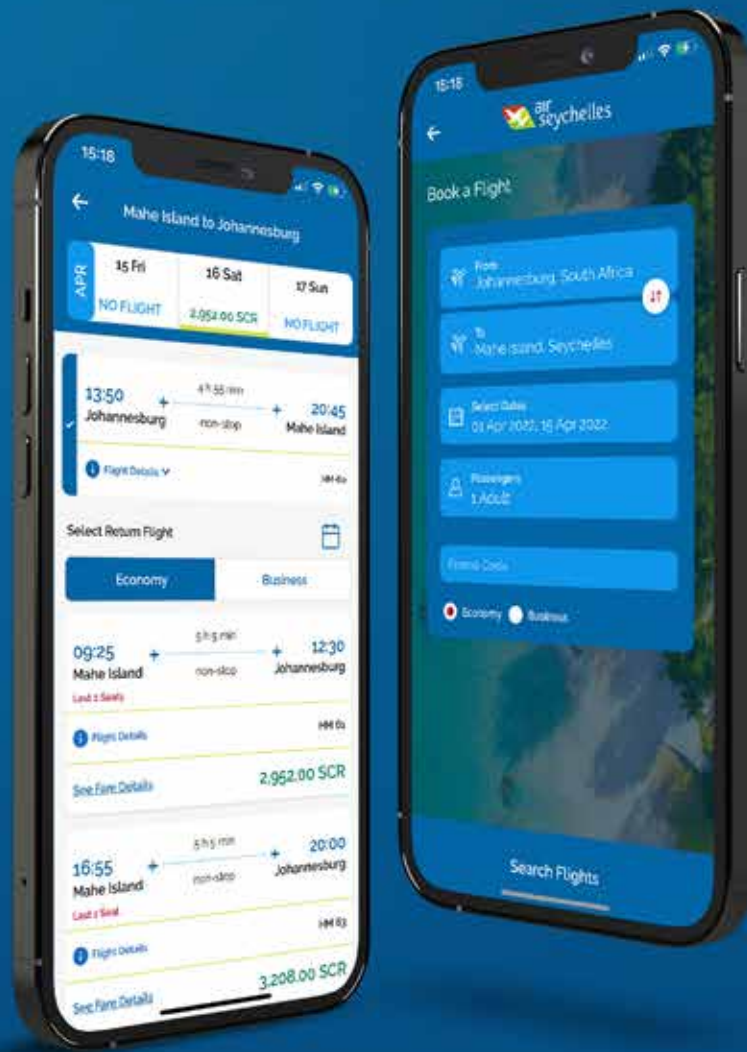
- Sit back in your seat and flatten the headrest.
- Gently and slowly roll your neck to one side, then back through the centre towards the other side.
- Try keeping the back of your neck extended.

Sit up straight

- Place the pillow at the hollow of your back.
- Sit tall in your seat to avoid compressing your spine.
- Do not cross your legs. Instead, try to sit with your weight evenly balanced.

Ankle circles

- Sit tall in your seat, and place the pillow under your thigh, just above the knee.
- Keep your weight even as you circle your foot around, keeping the whole foot as still as possible.



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Reunion Island

Flight No.	Date	Dep Port	Arr Port	Dep Time	Arr Time
HM049	30 Dec 24	SEZ	MRU	09:30	12:05
HM048	30 Dec 24	MRU	RUN	13:05	13:50
HM048	30 Dec 24	RUN	SEZ	14:50	17:25
HM047*	6 Jan 25	SEZ	RUN	08:00	10:35
HM046*	6 Jan 25	RUN	SEZ	11:35	14:10
HM049	6 Jan 25	SEZ	MRU	15:10	17:45
HM048	6 Jan 25	MRU	SEZ	18:45	21:20
HM047*	13 Jan 25	SEZ	RUN	08:00	10:35
HM046*	13 Jan 25	RUN	SEZ	11:35	14:10
HM049	13 Jan 25	SEZ	MRU	15:10	17:45
HM048	13 Jan 25	MRU	SEZ	18:45	21:20
HM049	18 Jan 25	SEZ	RUN	08:00	10:35
HM049	18 Jan 25	RUN	MRU	11:35	12:20
HM048	18 Jan 25	MRU	SEZ	13:20	15:55

*Subject to Government approval.
All Departure & Arrival times are in Local Time.



ENHANCING CONNECTIVITY WITH FLIGHTS TO REUNION

Air Seychelles and Tourism Seychelles are excited to announce the launch of seasonal flights between Seychelles and Réunion starting 30 December 2024, aimed at enhancing connectivity and promoting tourism. The flight schedule has been precisely crafted to cater to tourists who want to experience Seychelles’ natural beauty and cultural diversity. The flights will operate once a week on 30 December 2024, 6 January 2025, 13 January 2025, and 18 January 2025, with a technical stop in Mauritius.

Flight Schedule:

30 December 2024: Will depart Roland Garros Airport at 14:50, to arrive at Seychelles International Airport at 17:25.

6, 13 and 18 January 2025: Will depart Seychelles International Airport at 08:00, to arrive at Roland Garros Airport at 10:35. The return flight will depart Réunion at 11:35 and arrive in Seychelles at 14:10.

Air Seychelles Chief Executive Officer Captain Sandy Benoit highlighted the positive response to the new route, coinciding with the holidays for a convenient travel option. Bernadette Willemin, Director General for Destination Marketing at Tourism Seychelles emphasised that the new flights will boost visitor arrivals and strengthen Seychelles’ status as a premier tourism destination in the Indian Ocean.

This initiative reflects a commitment to fostering cultural exchange and providing seamless travel experiences between the two islands.

AIR SEYCHELLES PARTNERS WITH EXECUJET

Air Seychelles has partnered with ExecuJet to provide exclusive VIP Fixed-Base Operator (FBO) services at Seychelles International Airport (SIA). The Air Seychelles-owned FBO is the island’s only full-service FBO, providing outstanding services to discerning travellers.

The partnership aims to enhance the travel experience for VIP clients by ensuring a seamless and luxurious journey from arrival to departure. Services offered by ‘Air Seychelles VIP’ include:

- **VIP Passenger Handling:** Personalised and discrete services for maximum comfort and efficiency.
- **Luxurious Lounge Facilities:** Private and comfortable areas for relaxation and business needs.
- **Customs and Immigration:** On-site facilities for swift private processing.
- **Ground Transportation:** VIP chauffeur vehicles for luxury transportation needs.
- **Ground Equipment:** A full array of Ground Support Equipment for all aircraft sizes.
- **Concierge Services:** Tailored services to meet individual requirements, from hotel bookings to special requests.

Captain Sandy Benoit, Chief Executive Officer of Air Seychelles, and Gavin Kiggen, ExecuJet Vice President Africa, emphasised their commitment to excellence in aviation services and luxury travel, respectively. The relationship with ExecuJet expands Air Seychelles’ service offerings and strengthens its position as the region’s premier carrier. This collaboration is part of ExecuJet’s global network of over 140 FBOs, which includes new acquisitions such as Sky Valet and the Paragon Aviation Group.

With this partnership, Air Seychelles and ExecuJet aim to set new benchmarks in luxury travel, making every trip to and from the Seychelles a memorable experience.

For further information, go to the Air Seychelles and ExecuJet websites.





CAREERS WEEK

Air Seychelles played a significant role in this year's Careers Week, an initiative coordinated by the Ministry of Education to provide information about various careers. The event, themed "Making the Right Career Choice for a Successful Future," was launched on 8 July 2024.

Stephanie Nicholas and Sheila Banane delivered a presentation at Praslin Secondary School on 9 July on roles such as Guest Services Agents and Ramp duties. Students also went to Praslin Airport to interact with aircraft crew and ground workers. On 10 July, Christiana Labrosse, Guest Contact Centre Manager, gave a presentation to P5 children at La Rosiere Primary School about front-office responsibilities.

Ten students from the School for the Exceptional Child paid a visit to the Head Office on Mahé. They toured the technical operations hangar, watched equipment demonstrations, and learnt about various company positions. The tour concluded with a performance by the Air Seychelles Choir.

Miss Vernette Celestine from the School for the Exceptional Child expressed her gratitude for the offer, emphasising the rarity and significance of such experiences for her students. Captain Sandy Benoiton, Chief Executive Officer of Air Seychelles, emphasised the airline's commitment to encouraging future candidates and thanked the participating schools.

The Careers Week concluded on 12 July 2024.

RECONNECTING SEYCHELLES AND REUNION

Air Seychelles and Air Austral have established a Special Prorate Agreement (SPA) to facilitate travel between Seychelles and Reunion via Mauritius, following Air Austral's cancellation of their nonstop route. This partnership allows customers to travel on a single ticket with seamless baggage handling. For example:

Seychelles to Reunion via Mauritius:

Depart Seychelles at 09:30,

Arrive in Mauritius at 12:05.

Depart Mauritius at 14:45,

Arrive in Reunion at 15:30.

Reunion to Seychelles via Mauritius:

Depart Reunion at 13:15,

Arrive in Mauritius at 14:00.

Depart Mauritius at 17:05,

Arrive in Seychelles at 19:40.

Joseph Brema, Chairman of the Management Board of Air Austral expressed pleasure with the partnership, emphasising the importance of offering alternative travel options to



Reunion islanders who appreciate the Seychelles. Captain Sandy Benoiton, Chief Executive Officer of Air Seychelles highlighted the airline's role in providing an alternative travel bridge and expressed hope for a long-term cooperation.

Air Seychelles currently operates flights between Seychelles and Mauritius three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays.

Our Network

International Network



Disclaimer: Actual flight paths depends on the weather, government approval or other operational factors. The flight routes depicted on this map are for illustrative purposes only.

MAP KEYS

- Air Seychelles Flights
- - - - - Air Seychelles Seasonal or Charter Route
- Air Seychelles Codeshares
- Air Seychelles Interline Partner

CODESHARE PARTNERS



INTERLINE PARTNERS



Sri Lankan Airlines Network (India)



Our Fleet

The airline now operates the youngest fleet of A320neo aircraft. On its domestic network, the airline owns and operates five DHC6-400 aircraft and offers over 350 weekly scheduled services between Mahé and Praslin, as well as charter flights to other islands within the Seychelles archipelago.

Air Seychelles also offers a 30 minute scenic flight product, providing guests a bird's eye view of the Seychelles inner islands.



Airbus A320-200neo

Aircraft: 2

Length: 37.57m

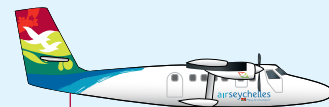
Wingspan: 34.09m

Passenger capacity: 168

Cruising speed: 840km/h

Cruising altitude: 37,000ft

Air Seychelles Domestic Network



Dhc-6 Twin Otter-400 Series

Aircraft: 5

Length: 15.80m

Wingspan: 19.80m

Passenger capacity: 19

Cruising speed: 260km/h

Cruising altitude: 10,000ft

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*The automatic pop-up will re-direct you to a browser and **seyStream** will be ready for use. If the pop-up does not appear automatically, type in '**airfi.aero**' in your preferred browser.

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Air Seychelles global offices

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<p>South Africa</p> 	<p>Capital: Pretoria Languages: English, Afrikaans (11 official languages) Currency: South African Rand Area: 1,221,037 km² Population: 45,919,000 Air Seychelles destination: Johannesburg</p>	<p>Rogers Aviation 3A Riley Rd, Building 11 Bedfordview Office Park, Bedfordview Johannesburg Tel: +27 11 326 4440 Email: airseychelles@rogers-aviation.co.za Reservations2@rogers-aviation.co.za benjaminc@rogers-aviation.co.za</p>
<p>Sri Lanka</p> 	<p>Capital: Colombo Languages: Sinhala, Tamil Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee Area: 65,610 km² Population: 22.16 million Air Seychelles destination: Colombo</p>	<p>Air Park (Pvt) Ltd. 377A/1 Galle Road, Colombo 03 Sri Lanka Tel: +94 (0) 11 237 2870 Email: airseychelles@airpark.aero</p>

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