

DESTINATION MAGAZINE

# LA RÉUNION

## THE ULTIMATE ISLAND

THE TOP FIVE

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INTENSELY

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## We miss you!

The current health crisis keeps us from travelling as planned. The tourist industry is suffering. Physical distancing has strengthened our virtual bonds. This crisis has been a catalyst for change and adjustment, accelerating the digital revolution everywhere, at every level. Far from stopping us, the crisis has acted as an enforced break, providing a breathing space in this high-speed world, giving us time to pause, take stock and reconnect with the basics. Because we miss you, we are offering you an immersive adventure by exploring the essence of Reunion Island also known as "La Réunion, l'île intense" by the French people.

Through this magazine, we wanted to offer you a new way of thinking about your future travels by discovering an island that is greener, more concerned about its ecosystems and more connected to its people; an island boasting local know-how, a wealth of age-old traditions and a unique mixed-race heritage, originating from Africa, Europe, India and Asia.

Here is your chance to discover an island where nature and all the natural elements will inspire you, make you tremble, dance and experience the joy of living. Take the time to discover Reunion Island, an Ultimate Island, from its crashing waves to its mountain peaks. Dive deep into the heart of the Indian Ocean. Take in the view at the top of the breath-taking "Piton des Neiges" and get away from it all with a visit to the island's famous cirques. These treasures have been designated world heritage sites by UNESCO.

Set off on a timeless adventure. Enjoy a magical break by meeting the local people. Explore the island off the beaten track. While you're waiting to come and visit us, flick through the pages of this magazine and let your imagination run wild. Prolong the experience with our numerous videos, recipes, and podcasts. Discover Reunion Island, or rediscover it as you have never seen it before. **Find us on social networks so you can see what to expect from your Reunion Island experience, before you finally touch down.**

Susan SOBA  
Executive Director



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# FEEL THE VIBRATIONS OF THE LAND

Reunion Island will reveal its intensity to you via its seven remarkable regions. Seven different atmospheres will help you discover the wonders of the island, its myths and legends, art and history, the easy-going way of life and friendly, welcoming locals. **There are unique and authentic experiences to be had!**



## THE NORTH COAST

The north coast is both urban and cosmopolitan, offering travellers a chance to see the two faces of Reunion Island: one is boldly modern and open to the world, while the other values history and heritage.

- Domaine de Beaubassin
- Discover Creole cuisine

## THE WEST COAST

From sunrise to sunset, there are a thousand and one enjoyable activities to choose from on Reunion.

Head to the west with a spring in your step to explore the beautiful beaches. Close your eyes, take a deep breath and let the sound of the waves soothe you.

- Zarlou instant yoga and detox
- Sunset cruise after the beach

## THE SOUTH COAST

The wild south coast, preserved from urbanisation, gives way to the power of nature where the wind and the ocean collide in a fascinating spectacle.

- Explore the river down to the sea
- Explore the south in a Buggy

## THE EAST COAST

Visitors will see the original, unspoiled land of the east coast as a Garden of Eden. With its lush natural environment and waterfalls, you will find the enchanting atmosphere along the water's edge nothing short of bewitching.

- Visit a Hindu Temple
- Enjoy a riverside walk

## CALDERAS ON REUNION ISLAND

There are some stunning hikes to do in and around the calderas, known as Cirques, and the physical effort will most definitely be rewarded. You will find yourself at the heart of an intense island. All around you, you can learn about the history of Reunion Island through the rugged landscapes and mountain peaks. Look up and you'll be transported into a different era.

- Zarlou Rando hiking in Mafate
- "Cari-canyoning" in Cilaos

## THE HIGHLANDS OF REUNION ISLAND

The island's summits await adventurers searching for freedom, a way to unwind and really get back to basics in the most authentic setting, at the heart of a UNESCO World Heritage site.

- Road trip in a converted van
- Visit a tea plantation

## REUNION ISLAND'S VOLCANO

The island's summits await adventurers searching for freedom, a way to unwind and really get back to basics in the most authentic setting, at the heart of a UNESCO World Heritage site.

- Blue lava tunnel
- Trip in a 4x4, between the volcano and waterfalls.



MORE INFO  
IN VIDEO



# THE ELDORADO *of the 5 senses*



Reunion is a unique, tropical island with a both gentle and volcanic temperament, nestled at the heart of the Indian Ocean, with 2,500 km<sup>2</sup> of enchanting landscapes and 200 different microclimates.

This French territory at the heart of the Mascarene Islands boasts a natural environment that will literally take your breath away.

This unique destination reserves visitors with the most authentic of welcomes, in a wonderful natural environment, where people from all different walks of life live together in perfect harmony. From the dazzling blue lagoon to the bright green staggering cirques; from the volcanic shades of red to the bright yellow sun; from the crashing waves to the mountainous peaks, come and explore this Ultimate Island.

Reunion is an exotic, preserved and rejuvenating island, making it a destination of choice for all your adventures. Explore the summits, marvel at the magical landscapes, escape to the heart of the cirques, enjoy the traditional "rouler" and "maloya" music, stretch like a cat in the warm sun,

breathe in the intoxicating fragrance of vanilla, spices and frangipani flower, learn some words from the Creole language and meet the locals of Reunion, not-to-mention the gourmet delicacies, on Reunion you can expect all of this and more. Your experience on the island will be one that awakens all the senses. You will never have been so close to such an impressive and unspoilt natural environment. Take the opportunity to discover something new, such as walking on Mars at the Plaine des Sables, entering Mother Nature's kingdom in Mafate or finding Nemo on a diving experience from the beach at L'Hermitage.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### REUNION WAS FORMED BY A VOLCANO

Reunion is a volcanic and mountainous island. Its peak, the Piton des Neiges, a former volcano, stands at an altitude of 3,071 metres, and this is how the island rose from the waves of the Indian Ocean, three million years ago.



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@reuniontourisme



# THE PEARL OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

Reunion is 9,180 km away from Paris, in the Mascarene Islands, at the heart of the Indian Ocean, formerly known as the "Eastern Ocean".

Along with Mayotte, it is the only French department in the southern hemisphere, and is a neighbouring island of Mauritius, Rodrigues and Madagascar. Reunion is one of the esteemed islands that make up the superb tourist destination known as the "Vanilla Islands", along with Mauritius, Madagascar, the Seychelles, the Comoro Islands and Mayotte!

In 2020, Reunion also received the "Best Nature Destination in the Indian Ocean" Award at the 27th World Travel Awards.



## "LONTAN" REUNION\*: THE GOOD LIFE

Reunion has evolved over the years, but its identity remains strong. Some have retained the former way of life, the games, the Lontan cuisine but also the patois (local dialect), the way the "gramounes" (elderly) chat. See for yourself the heritage of yesteryear: the Chinese shops, the "Zarabe" shops, the traditional "courant d'air" buses, picnics, fishing, the ox wagon, Creole huts, corn mills, the coffee grinder and the "grègue" (teapot), the "caro" (iron), the washing rock and much, much more.

\* *Lontan*: Reunion expression meaning yesteryear.

## REUNION IN 6 DATES

**1513**  
The uninhabited island was discovered by the Portuguese navigator Pedro de Mascarenhas

**1638**  
The island became French territory under the name of **Bourbon Island**

**1793**  
Bourbon Island became **Reunion Island**

**1848**  
Slavery was abolished on 20 December

**1946**  
On 19 March, Reunion became a **French Overseas Department**

**1982**  
The island was recognised as a **French region**

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 1793, Ile Bourbon became Reunion, in tribute to the coming together (reunion) of volunteers from Marseille and the battalions of the National Guard – known as the soldiers of Year II – during the assault on the Palais des Tuileries, the previous year. It was this uprising that led to the end of the constitutional monarchy in France.

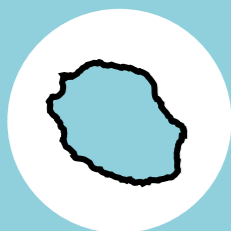
### SETTLEMENT ON REUNION ISLAND

Reunion Island was unclaimed territory when settlement began in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The first settlers, the French, were soon joined by a few Europeans, sailors or craftsmen, and the first slaves were sent over as and when labour was needed. Reunion Island was created through successive waves of immigration.. It is home to an exceptional population, and is a reference in terms of diversity, with locals who originally came from Madagascar, East Africa, South-East India and the West Indies, South China and Europe.

Reunion has a population of 859,959 (as of 1 January 2020 according to INSEE).



## REUNION IN A FEW NUMBERS



**2,512 km<sup>2</sup>**

This is the surface area of the island.



**GMT+4**

The time zone, a small time difference with metropolitan France; 3 hours ahead in winter and 2 hours in summer.



**3,071 metres**

is the height of the **Piton des Neiges**. Climb the highest peak of the Indian Ocean.



The **2 seasons** in Reunion

**Austral summer:**

from November to April.

The average temperature is 30°C.

**Austral winter:**

from May to October.

The average temperature is 23°C.



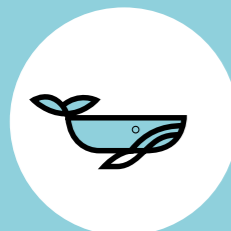
**40%** of the island

has UNESCO World Heritage status.



**2,632 metres**

The Piton de la Fournaise is one of the most active volcanoes in the world.



For **10 years**,

it has been possible to go diving with whales during the austral winter season.

### A CHAMPION IN ALL CATEGORIES

- nearly 2,000 plant species, including 848 native species, varied and colourful fauna, 3,500 aquatic species,
- 100,000 hectares of National Park,
- 2 volcanic ranges, 1 hyperactive volcano,
- 900 kilometres of marked paths, 3 mapped-out Grande Randonnée (Great Hiking) trails,
- 3 spectacular cirques including 1 that is exclusively pedestrian, countless forests,
- more than 300 waterfalls including the 3 highest in France,
- around 20 climbing sites with more than 6,000 metres in total...

Reunion is a champion in all categories but since it's not always about the numbers, we'll tempt you with sweet words instead!

## INTERVIEW

“**Pauline Hoarau**”  
International model



She poses, struts, glides... From fashion shows to film sets, international model Pauline Hoarau regularly comes back to her native island to take some time out. These moments are a vital break for this fan of the mountains. She came to tell us all about her favourite spots on the Ultimate Island.

**Pauline, where do you go the moment you arrive here?**

*As soon as I arrive, I go to Saint-Paul to my grandma's house to eat a "cari". Coming back here is like a breath of fresh air. I feel good when I'm here.*

**Where do you go to recharge your batteries?**

*To the mountains, I like hiking very much, so as soon as I get into nature, surrounded by greenery, I feel good. I also love watching the waves at Grande Anse.*

**Where is the most refreshing location?**

*Mafate! This is a remote place at the heart of the island. I like to spend time here by myself, to wake up surrounded by the mountains. The sunrise here is really magical, I love this place. The view from the Roche Vert Bouteille trail is also a beautiful way to begin your experience of Mafate.*

**Which is the most intense location?**

*Without a doubt, the volcano. I don't think there are many places where you can get so close to a volcano, go caving under the lava flow, it's an exceptional experience.*

**How is Reunion unique for you?**

*The blend and mix of cultures is something you don't see anywhere else. I've realised this through all my travelling and every time I come back here, it feels good.*

**What will you take back in your suitcase?**

*Small gifts: vanilla, even for me, massalé spice blend, turmeric, all the spices that I might not be able to find where I am going.*

**What smell represents Reunion?**

*The scents that come from the kitchen when you're making a "cari", with onions, tomatoes, turmeric, thyme... Right there! When I make it in mainland France, it makes me feel really great!*

**Which taste reminds you of Reunion?**

*Spices, turmeric... It's difficult to choose just one!*

**What kind of music reminds you of Reunion?**

*Sega music and other current sounds.*

**Choose your favourite.**

**"Rougail saucisses" (sausage) or prawn "cari"?**

*Prawn "cari", but my favourite meal is rougail with cod.*

**Bouchon (pork dumpling) or samosa?**

*Samosa.*

**Sunrise or sunset?**

*Sunrise when I'm up early enough (laughs) but if I'm not, sunset.*

**Hiking or paddling?**

*Hiking! Although I love a paddle afterwards.*

**Sega or Maloya?**

*Sega.*

**Will you sing a tune for us?**

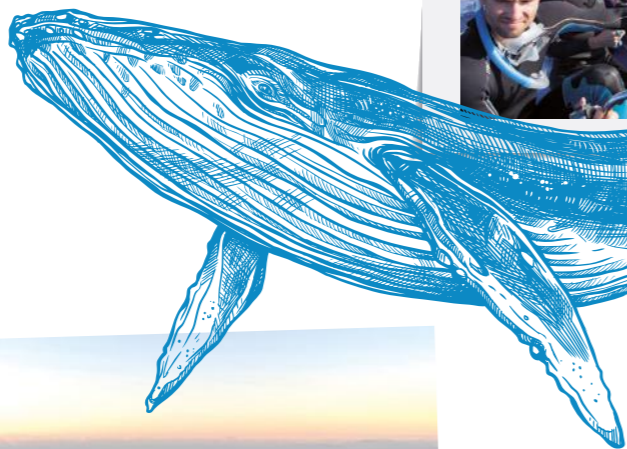
*"Allons danser, Allons danser, un "ti séga" (Let's dance, a little séga), a song by the well-known Reunion group Baster.*



# MAGICAL EXPERIENCES / TOP 5

The sheer intensity of Reunion will be revealed through the unique experiences on offer all over the island.

Here is a selection of timeless experiences for you.



**1**  
CONTEMPLATE THE SUNRISE  
OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN

From the Cirque de Cilaos, set out to conquer the iconic slopes of the Piton des Neiges. The path will lead you through the forest, over frost and volcanic rock. Whenever you reach a bend, you will be able to enjoy some spectacular views of the cirque. But the best is yet to come. After a good night's rest at the unmissable Caverne Dufour refuge, make sure you get up before dawn to cover the last kilometres before reaching the summit. At 3,071 metres above sea level, on the roof of the Indian Ocean, you will be faced with the most beautiful view, when the first rays of sun reflect onto the exceptional Reunion landforms with the ocean stretching off into the background, as far as the eye can see!



**2**  
AN ENCOUNTER  
WITH DOLPHINS AND  
HUMPBACK WHALES

Come and meet your diving instructors at the port of Saint-Gilles. They are so passionate about the Indian Ocean. Don't hesitate to venture out to sea with them! Just a few minutes into your boat trip, you'll come face-to-face with a pod of dolphins, playing around the boat and doing somersaults out of the water. It is time to go and observe them peacefully underwater! You will be swimming alongside these joyful cetaceans and will hear their whistles. During the austral winter, the largest animal in the world can be seen in the waters of Reunion: the humpback whale. You'll be utterly bewitched by how they communicate and how the baby whales perfectly imitate the movements of their mother, performing acrobatics with the sunset as their backdrop.



**3**  
CONTEMPLATE THE MILKY WAY

Why not treat yourselves to a unique experience of a night under the stars on Reunion Island? The highlands of the island are an ideal vantage point to admire the wonders of the southern sky. At two thousand metres above sea level, far from the hustle and bustle of the city, in the great silence of nature, slip into a sleeping bag and just lie back and enjoy the spectacle. Your mind will wander under the dazzling sky and get lost in the long, bright trail of the Milky Way.



**4**  
EXPLORE THE LAVA TUNNELS OF AN ACTIVE VOLCANO

Do you want to experience the adventure you always dreamed of as a child? Just like Indiana Jones, set forth into the most beautiful lava tunnels, in the volcanic depths of the island! Don gloves, knee pads, helmets, headlights and shoulder harnesses, and you'll be ready for your adventure into the depths of the Earth! Bluish, orange or red rocks, sparkling grey surfaces, walls with reflections of precious stones or gold leaf and stalactites that resemble melted chocolate: at every step, the light of your lamp will unveil these authentic natural wonders. In this mineral universe, your senses will be heightened as you venture further into the silence and darkness. Reunion Island also boasts a myriad of tunnels. It's simple, there's something for everyone on this island!



**5**  
ESCAPE TO THE HEART OF  
THE PRIMARY FOREST\*

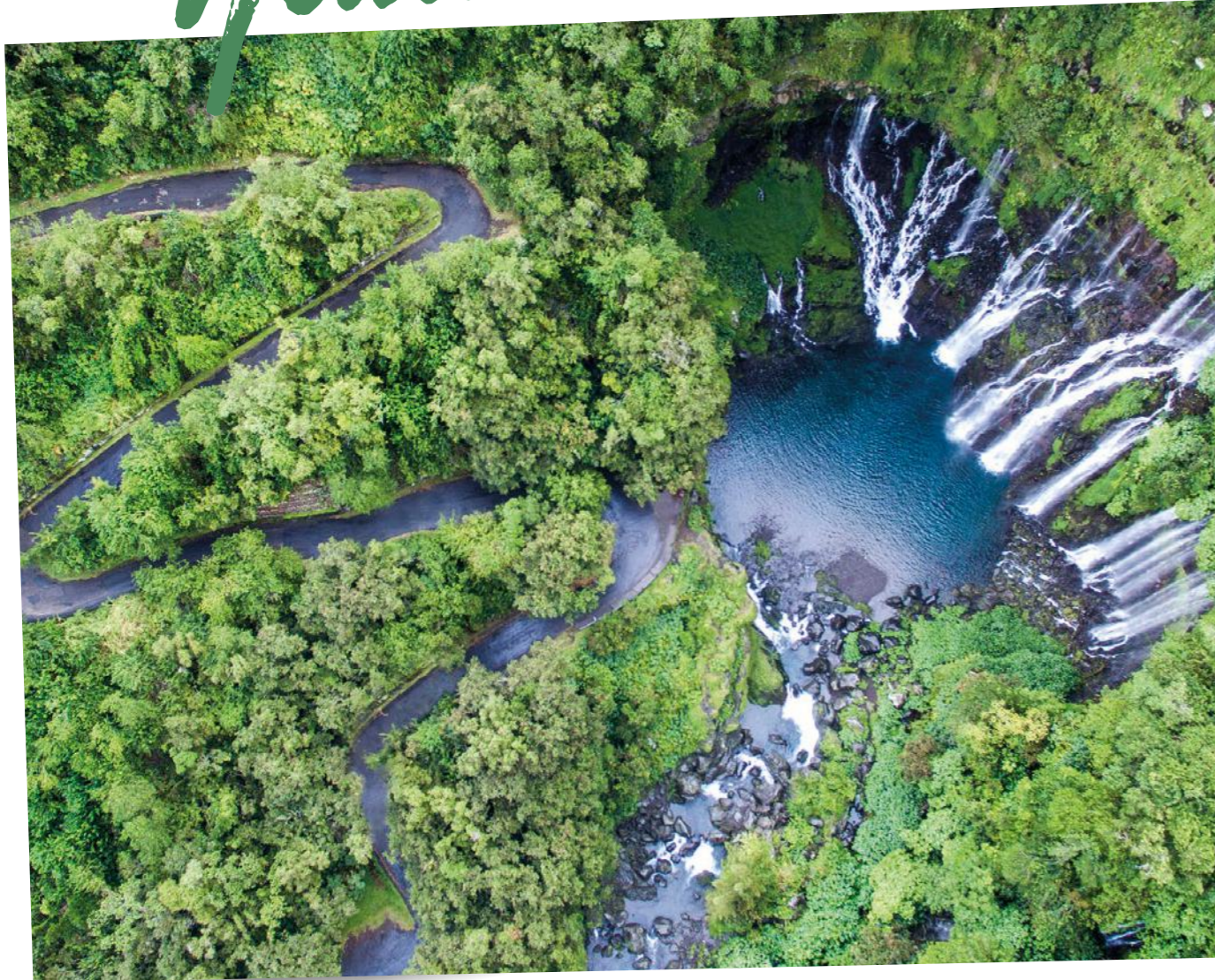
At 1,300 metres above sea level, you will come across the most magical tropical forest: **Bélouve**. Before starting the trail, you can enjoy the incredible panoramic view of the Cirque de Salazie. Then, the path will gradually lead you down into the magical atmosphere of the lush forest. The sunrays reflect off the high branches and highlight the patches of mist. In this forest there are Highland tamarinds with crooked branches, tree ferns, trunks covered in moss and wild orchids... The path leads to a breath-taking view over the "Trou de Fer" canyon and spectacular waterfalls. On the Bébou-Bélouve forest path, every step is a magical experience!

\* Primary: the primary forest on Reunion is remarkable in every way. It is particularly unique in that it has never been changed by humans (hence the name, primary).



MORE INFO  
ABOUT UNMISSABLE  
EXPERIENCES

# INTENSELY *Natural*



## NATURE THAT TAKES YOUR BREATH AWAY

A 100% natural environment!  
Rugged landscapes,  
primary forests, nature reserves,  
heavenly beaches, active volcanoes...  
Everything that this island has on offer  
is pure and simply magical!

The long list of the island's beautiful features  
is truly remarkable:  
Reunion is regularly ranked among the most  
beautiful islands in the world. The island's  
remarkable biodiversity is recognised worldwide,  
its volcano is one of the most active on the planet,  
it is home to a superb and exceptional National Park  
and 40% of the island's territory has UNESCO World  
Heritage status!

## AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR REUNION AND ITS PEAKS

Reunion Island recently celebrated  
the 10th anniversary of the day  
its "Pitons, Cirques and Ramparts"  
gained UNESCO World Heritage status.  
Thanks to this recognition,  
the spectacular landscape and unique  
biodiversity of the Ultimate Island  
was given the attention it deserved.

Today, France boasts more  
than 40 UNESCO World Heritage sites,  
of which only 5 are natural sites,  
and the "Pitons, Cirques and Ramparts"  
is one of them. The unique nature  
of Reunion's extraordinary territory  
has been backed up by the analysis  
of nearly 40 years' worth of scientific  
research. It is no mystery as to why  
the Ultimate Island is ranked as one  
of the planet's most beautiful treasures  
when you consider its volcanoes,  
biodiversity, microclimates galore,  
endemic species and magnificent  
scenery.



## DID YOU KNOW

Beyond the prestige it confers, the recognition  
of the "Pitons, Cirques and Ramparts"  
of the island as a World Heritage site by Unesco is also,  
and above all, the guarantee that  
Reunion's unique animal, plant and mineral  
heritage will be protected



## A UNESCO TREASURE

Thanks to its preserved ecosystem,  
the core zone of the National Park  
was recognised as a World Heritage  
Site in August 2010, under the name  
"Pitons, Cirques and Ramparts"  
of Reunion Island. Let's have a closer  
look at this natural treasure, deemed  
to be of outstanding universal value  
for humanity.

A quick overview of Reunion Island's  
5 iconic UNESCO sites:

- Piton de la Fournaise
- Trou de Fer
- Piton Maïdo
- Cirque de Mafate
- Piton des Neiges

## THE TIMELESS CIRQUES\*

The three cirques on the island (Cilaos, Mafate  
and Salazie) are arranged in the shape of a clover  
around the Piton des Neiges, each rivalling the  
other in terms of beauty. These spectacular sites  
are protected by steep escarpments of rocks  
and greenery. A multitude of waterfalls cascade  
down the cliffs, which are covered with tree ferns  
or primary forest area.

You'll have to earn the privilege of enjoying the  
iconic Mafate. The area can only be accessed on  
foot. But, we guarantee that your efforts will be  
rewarded thanks to no less than ten peaks more  
than 2,000 metres high, 140 km of waymarked  
trails that wind their way between rock faces  
with basalt columns, and through the authentic  
hamlets with welcoming accommodation!

In Salazie, you'll find some of the island's most  
beautiful waterfalls, the Piton d'Anchaing, the  
picturesque village of Hell-Bourg and "chouchou"  
fruit as far as the eye can see! Finally, do not  
hesitate to venture along the "road with 400  
turns" to relax at the heart of the majestic Cilaos,  
and take advantage of the invigorating springs...  
Or take on the climb up the Piton des Neiges!



\*Cirque: A caldera, a large circular or elliptical  
depression, usually kilometres wide,  
often flat-bottomed, located in the heart of large  
volcanic formations and resulting from an eruption.





## NATURE THAT MUST BE PROTECTED AT ALL COSTS

With hundreds of endemic species\*, Reunion's biodiversity is unique in the world. As everything must be done to protect it, the island's approach to tourism is centred around sustainable development, offering visitors the chance to explore this environment, while respecting nature and local culture.

### A SUSTAINABLE ISLAND

There are countless sustainable and responsible initiatives in place across the island. Even before the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 2009, Reunion was already working on many projects to combat global warming, with an ecological target to be met by 2030: to achieve energy independence by using renewable energy sources, with the ultimate goal of preserving the island's biodiversity.

It is not a coincidence if Reunion is one of the most beautiful eco-responsible destinations in the world!

To help you explore Reunion, there is a great variety of activities on offer, all respectful of the environment. Tourism on Reunion Island is developed with respect for the natural environment in mind, but for this process to be a success, everyone needs to do their part, to be "eco-friendly" citizens: so make sure you choose solar torches, kraft bags, eco-friendly flasks and sunscreens that won't harm the environment!

*\* Endemic: an endemic species is a species (animal or plant) that occurs naturally in a given place, even if it has subsequently been planted or displaced worldwide.*



Meet the people from the National Park and the ONF (National Forestry Office) who work hard to preserve the territory.

### ONE OF 34 "GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS"

This recognition does not refer to the scorching volcano but to the island's natural riches, which are quite considerable on such a small island and are particularly threatened by human activity. When people came to settle on the island in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they introduced, voluntarily or otherwise, several thousand exotic species from all over the world, thus disturbing the natural environment for endemic species. Many of these exotic species now pose a real threat to native flora and fauna. Humans are also responsible for other disturbances that contribute to the alteration and destruction of certain habitats and therefore endanger the island's biodiversity. The trees, the flowers and the birds are all calling out for help, but for a long time they have not been listened to... **Very fortunately, this is changing.**

### A LUSH GARDEN

The mild temperatures mean that the whole island is like a tropical garden and more than 1,600 plant species flourish here. Over 70% of them are of Afro-Malagasy origin, and arrived naturally, brought over by birds or with the winds and marine currents. The island is also home to 237 endemic species. You'll be amazed by the 120 species of orchid that bloom in the undergrowth or forests of the Highlands and by the extraordinary Flamboyant and Frangipani trees. No other tropical island boasts such incredible plant life. The sheer variety on the island is thanks to the many microclimates here.

The Reunion coastline and the sandy beaches are covered with resistant shrubs such as common screw pines, casuarinas and veloutiers. On the west coast, the savannah occupies a vast space and is mainly composed of grasses and thorny plants such as Sweet Acacia and Heteropogon Contortus.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Today, nearly 40% of the island's electricity production is covered by renewable energy. Hydropower accounts for about 20% of the island's electricity production and the recycling of sugar cane waste makes up nearly 10%.



The low-altitude dry forests are home to unique denizens, which usually bear the symbolic Creole names: drum wood,

milk wood, sponge wood, coloured wood, etc. In the south-east of the island, a humid rainforest is home to the famous barbel palms and ironwood and a multitude of mosses, ferns and orchids. The cloud forests in the Highlands are the lushest and best preserved of the island, such as Bébou and Bélouve forests which are still in their primary state today. Trees such as "bois magie" or "Tan rouge" (Weinmannia tinctoria) flourish side by side and numerous tree ferns, called "fanjans", push their parasols above the canopy. At altitudes higher than 2,000 metres, the landscape becomes more mineral and the lush green forests give way to smaller vegetation with "hard leaves" and twisted shapes.



## MAFATE, A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM LAB

This cirque is not the easiest place to get to! It is an incredibly well-preserved site as it can only be accessed on foot.

To make sure this remains so for the foreseeable future, tourism here is developed in a sustainable and responsible way. Waste management, clean energy, environmental pollution control, sharing, minimised use of technology, local production and consumption all make the Cirque of Mafate a shining example of ecotourism.



Before setting off on a hike in the fabulous Cirque of Mafate, make sure you read the eco-friendly charter created by the Tourist Office for the west and make note of the 6 golden rules for adopting the Mafate Attitude, to be a responsible hiker and get the most out of your Mafate adventure.

**Adopting the Mafate Attitude means you will need to:**

- 1- consume local produce, by shopping in local stores
- 2- take your rubbish with you, don't forget to bring a rubbish bag
- 3- listen to the sounds of nature
- 4- get involved in the daily life of the inhabitants while respecting their traditions
- 5- disconnect and admire the landscape
- 6- spend time with the locals for an enjoyable and authentic experience.



DISCOVER THE MAFATE ATTITUDE



INTENSELY NATURAL





## THE ISLAND OF A THOUSAND WATERFALLS

Reunion Island's waterfalls flow from the top of the mountains through a lush backdrop of vegetation into one or more deep blue pools.

The fresh air and waters here are so refreshing, especially during the austral summer. Often, you can only access and admire these waterfalls and pools on foot. You are pretty much guaranteed sunny weather if you choose to take part in one of the exceptional experiences, supervised by professionals: swimming, excursions, canyoning.

### THE VOILE DE LA MARIÉE WATERFALL

This superb, legendary waterfall, known as the Bride's Veil is located in the Cirque de Salazie, and runs down the slopes through lush and abundant vegetation, to resemble a long, undulating veil. The Voile de la Mariée can be seen from the road. For an additional experience, you can choose to hike to the pool at the foot of the waterfalls.

### BLANCHE WATERFALL

With a height of 640 metres, this waterfall is the third highest in France according to the list of the highest waterfalls in the world. Blanche waterfall is in the Cirque de Salazie and can be reached after a short walk through lush vegetation and fruit orchards, and past some small Creole "cases" (houses). Then you will have a panoramic view of this magnificent waterfall. It is possible to abseil down Blanche waterfall.

### TROU DE FER

Spectacular images of this site are already famous around the world. Trou de Fer canyon is 300 metres deep and is a geological curiosity. The magnificent waterfalls plunge into the deep cirque in this extraordinary natural environment. It is possible to fly over Bélouve in a helicopter, for a spectacular view of the canyon from up above. This is the highest waterfall on French territory with a height of 725 metres.

### TAKAMAKA WATERFALL

In the east of the island, on the road that runs alongside the Rivière des Marsouins, you'll come across the sublime Takamaka waterfall surrounded by lush tropical vegetation. From the footpath, you'll have the opportunity to admire the many waterfalls and pools where you can stop to cool off or indulge in your favourite activity: canyoning.

### LANGEVIN WATERFALL

The Langevin or Grand Galet waterfall is in the wild south, in Saint-Joseph, and is actually several small waterfalls, spread across a rocky wall covered in vegetation and plunging into a large pool of clear, deep-blue water. It is an idyllic setting for swimming and canyoning. The banks of the Langevin river are popular for Sunday picnics.



## FINDING NEMO

All the colours of the rainbow can be found in the waters of the Indian Ocean, thanks to the 3,500 animal and plant species that live there!

You can see the countless multicoloured fish through the clear waves of the lagoon. With 150 species of stony corals and 500 species of fish, the Reunion Island coral reef is one of the most abundant in the world!

Just a few metres from the shore, you'll find yourself face-to-face with a colourful lagoon trigger fish. Watch out for the little Nemos nestled in their anemones and see a swarm of butterflyfish pass by! Parrot fish, Peacock hinds, Snowflake morays, and Blue tangs will parade in front of you in their finest attire.

Fish that look like guinea fowl, fish that can inflate themselves to almost double in size, fish with crests or leopard spots, will all swim past you with cautious curiosity. In deeper waters, the spectacle is even more striking with Scorpionfish, Tetraodontiformes, Honeycomb morays, shy octopuses but also elegant rays and sea turtles that seem to fly through the crystal-clear waters. All these species are protected by the Marine Nature Reserve created in 2007 and to discover them, all you have to do is take to the waters!



MORE INFO  
IN VIDEO

## MEETING DOLPHINS AND HUMPBACK WHALES

Several species roam the waters of Reunion Island: the Spinner dolphin, the Spotted dolphin, Fraser's dolphin, and the Common Bottlenose dolphin, which can be observed all year round. And, in the absence of mermaids, you will be enchanted by the song of humpback whales! The waters of Reunion are particularly popular with these cetaceans who come here to give birth from June to October.

**It is a once-in-a-lifetime experience to witness the incredible synchronised swimming shows of these majestic mammals!**



### A CLOSER LOOK THE "ROUTE DES BALEINES"

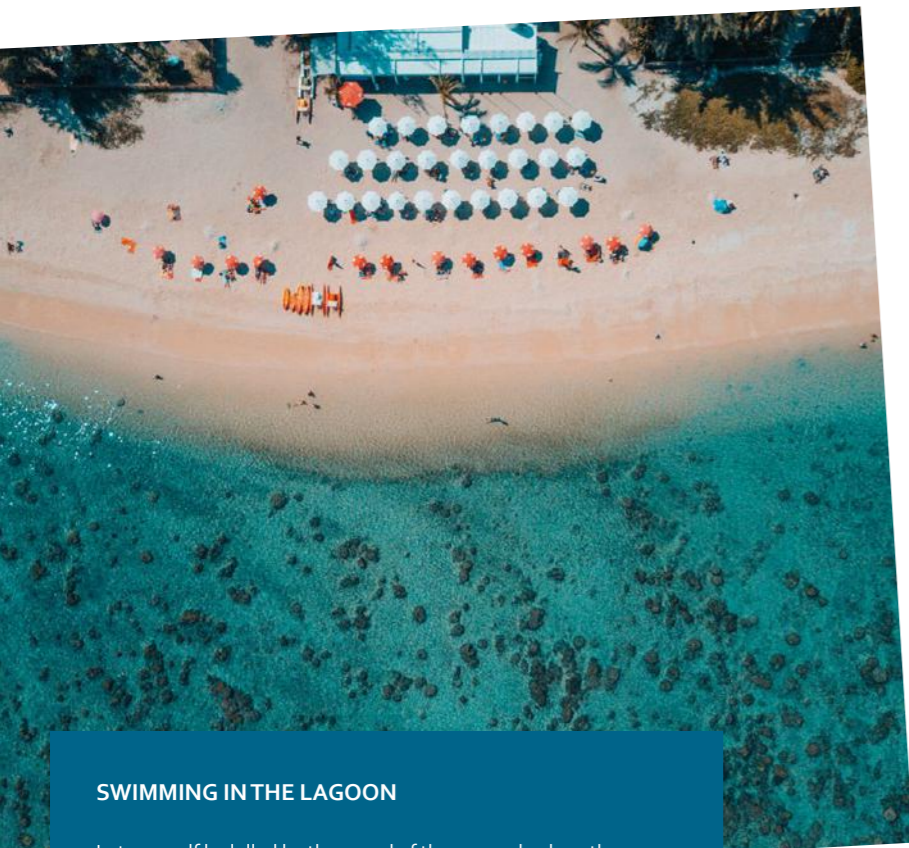
During the austral winter, after a long journey all the way from the Antarctic, humpback whales arrive on the coast of Reunion Island every year, choosing the warm waters of the Indian Ocean to bring their offspring into the world.

Nature lovers flock to the island to be in with a chance of catching a glimpse of the incredible show put on by these giants of the seas, and some of the lucky ones are even treated to an unforgettable encounter with one of these creatures, at the heart of the Indian Ocean. To ensure that whale watching as an activity is developed in a sustainable way and to ensure the well-being of these animals, a set of rules to respect when approaching whales was established in 2010, and modified in 2017 for the World Humpback Whale Congress that was held in Saint-Leu.

## CODE OF GOOD CONDUCT

Reunion Island has its very own team to raise awareness, its own certification, decree from the prefecture, and tools for encouraging respectful ways of approaching and observing marine mammals and sea turtles! A Code of Good Conduct for approaching and observing these animals in a responsible manner was established in 2009 on Reunion Island. This year, the Code of Good Conduct is being updated by the CEDTM (Centre for the Study and Discovery of Sea Turtles), Globice and the Marine Nature Reserve. The code features recommendations for the respectful approach and observation of animals from a boat and in the water.

**Before you go out to sea, make sure you read and sign this Code of Good Conduct!**



### SWIMMING IN THE LAGOON

Let yourself be lulled by the sound of the waves, bask on the warm, white or black sand beach or enjoy a swim in the lagoon.

- 30 km of white sand coral beaches, and the bathing areas are concentrated on the west coast where you'll also find the reefs and lagoons
- 22 km of crystal-clear lagoons with 26°C turquoise-blue waters, exceptionally preserved by a coral reef and ideal for a swim in the quiet and peaceful environment. Safety nets have been installed at L'Hermitage and Roches Noires beaches (according to municipal decree).

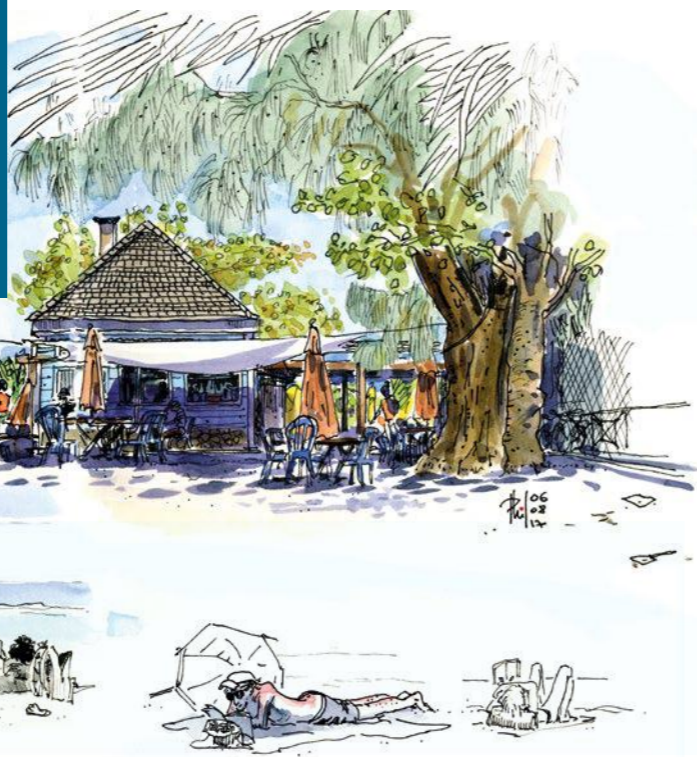
Bathing and water sports are authorised in specific, marked-out areas that are supervised by prefectural decree, in accordance with article L.2213-23 of the general code of territorial authorities.



### A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

Don your masks, fins and snorkel! Dolphins come to Reunion Island all year round. Water temperatures range from 22-23°C during the austral winter (May to October) to 27-30°C in the lagoon during the summer (November to April).

The Lagon de l'Hermitage in Saint-Gilles in the west of the island, which is fully classified as a marine reserve, is the largest, widest and best preserved on Reunion Island. The crystal-clear waters are shallow (less than 2-m deep) and are dotted with corals, making it the island's most popular place for snorkelling, protected from the choppy Indian Ocean by a coral reef.



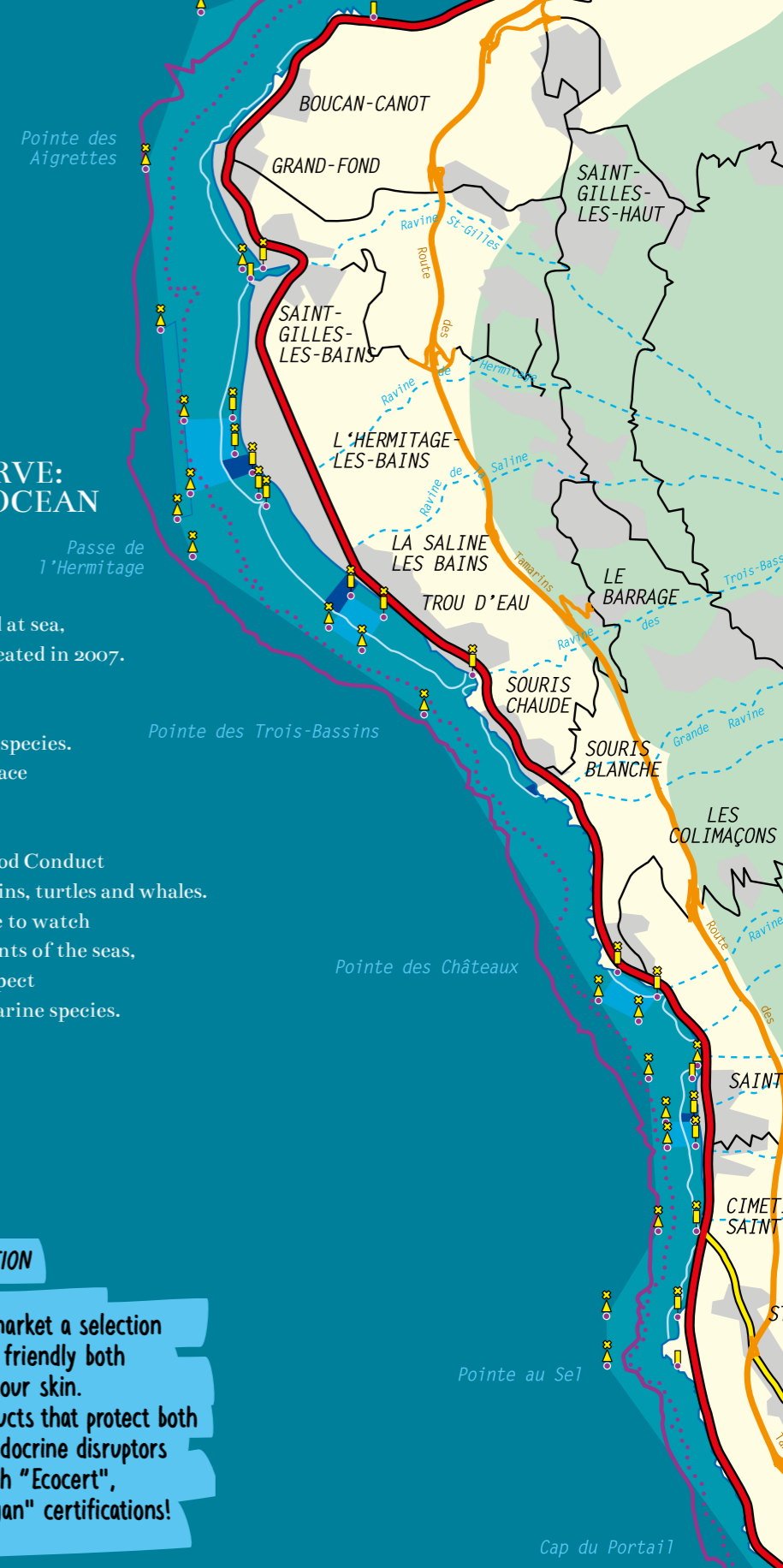
## THE MARINE RESERVE: RESPECTING THE OCEAN

Because the island's natural treasures are also found at sea, a marine nature reserve was created in 2007. It covers 40 km of coastline (including 20 km of coral reef) and is home to more than 3,500 species. Regulations have been put in place to monitor water sports.

Similarly, there is a Code of Good Conduct to respect when observing dolphins, turtles and whales. This therefore makes it possible to watch the spectacular dance of the giants of the seas, while ensuring the greatest respect for the environment and the marine species.

### OUR SUGGESTION

You can now find on the market a selection of sunscreens that are friendly both to the coral and your skin. You can now find organic products that protect both you and nature, with no endocrine disruptors nor nanoparticles, with "Ecocert", "Nature et Progrès" or "Vegan" certifications!



## BOTANICAL GARDENS AND WALKS

Thanks to the presence of both endemic (found exclusively on the island) and native (introduced by man) species, the flora of Reunion is diverse and extremely rich. If you would like the opportunity to learn about and admire the variety of species that grow in the island's preserved primary forests, then come and visit the gardens and admire the exotic and colourful flowers, take a stroll along the botanical trails, past the rare trees.

### MASCARIN, REUNION'S BOTANICAL GARDEN IN SAINT-LEU

Wander around this magnificent botanical reserve that includes a wide range of Reunion Island's plant species. In this historic place, there is a bamboo ravine, a collection of "lontan" plants (the plants of yesteryear), the orchard, succulent plants, palms, orchids and ferns, as well as a collection of coffee trees. The Garden also houses the Conservatoire Botanique National de Mascarin (National Botanical Conservatory of Mascarin).



### JARDIN DES PARFUMS ET DES ÉPICES (GARDEN OF FRAGRANCES AND SPICES) IN SAINT-PHILIPPE

Come to this garden in the middle of the Mare Longue forest to marvel at remarkable trees, some of them centuries old. All your senses will be heightened here, as you discover more than 1,500 species of plants, trees and flowers, including fragrant plants, spices, medicinal plants, ferns, orchids and palm trees.

### SENTIER BOTANIQUE DE LA PROVIDENCE IN SAINT-DENIS

On the outskirts of Saint-Denis, the botanical trail starts in the Forêt de la Providence perched between the town and the mountains, with the ocean on the horizon. This trail is suitable for families with children and takes you on an exploration of endemic plants, animal and plant species, with some spectacular, plunging views of the town down below. It is also where the GR®R2 "Grande Randonnée" hiking trail starts, running from Saint-Denis in the north, to Saint-Philippe in the south of the island.

### LE JARDIN D'ÉDEN (GARDEN OF EDEN) IN SAINT-GILLES

In this superb 2.5-hectare garden, you will be walking past some 700 species (bamboo, aquatic plants, aromatic plants, collection of geraniums, blue flowers, a stream of taros). Children will be fascinated watching the bees go about their busy day in their hives. You will be amazed by the sheer variety of colours and scents on this unique and fascinating walk.



### THE BÉBOUR BÉLOUVE TRAIL IN SALAZIE

Venture along the paths through the Bébour-Bélouve forest. It's worth the detour! The Petite-Plaine botanical trail will lead you through the Cryptomerias, then the primary forest, ideal for picnics, and is criss-crossed with paths, one of which skirts the Piton Bébour. You will then be walking across a diverse range of vegetation, with its subtle fragrances. Don't miss the viewpoint overlooking the Trou de Fer canyon.

### LE JARDIN DES MILLE ET UNE SAVEURS IN SAINT-ANDRÉ

At the typical Creole garden, the Jardin des Mille et Une Saveurs in Saint André, you will be whisked away on an amazing journey. Come and discover the flowers (bird-of-paradise, ylang-ylang, etc.), fruit (banana, pitaya, mango, guava, starfruit, bilimbi, etc.), herbs, spices, medicinal plants, and trees (palm, vacoa, avocado, voa vanga, papaya, etc.) in this "garden of a thousand and one flavours".



# Zootopia

## ON THE ULTIMATE ISLAND

During your walks, open your eyes and you might just catch a glimpse of the shimmering lizards and unusual Panther Chameleons, which blend into the scenery and walk in slow motion.

You'll be amazed by the chirping call of the house gecko which could easily be mistaken for a crazy laugh (communicative!). Just listen and enjoy this rather atypical chirping sound, coming from the King of metamorphosis.



l'endormi  
Sleepyhead



### DID YOU KNOW?

Barau's Petrel is a species of marine bird endemic to the island. It finds its food at sea, then comes to take refuge on the Piton des Neiges at an altitude of between 2,700 and 2,900 m.

On Reunion Island, there are 560 species of butterflies, including 190 endemic species, which swirl gracefully around you and make their colours dance in amongst the flowers! Can you hear something rustling in the foliage? It's most probably a Tailless Tenrec! This small nocturnal animal looks a bit like a hedgehog.

The fauna of Reunion is most definitely original.

## RAINBOW-COLOURED PLUMAGE

Carried over by the wind, birds had settled on Reunion Island long before the first sailor took a step on the land.

The original fauna has been reduced to less than a dozen endemic bird species, some of which are unfortunately endangered. Among these precious birds, the Reunion Cuckooshrike will accompany you along the forest paths of the Roche Écrite nature reserve, and the majestic Reunion Harrier, the only raptor on the island, with its 1.2-metre wingspan, dominates the skies above the cirques and is one of the rarest birds in the world! As for the even rarer Barau's Petrel, it nests at very high altitudes, especially in the foothills of the Piton des Neiges or Grand Bénare. Along the coast, you'll see the Tropicbirds, the island's beautiful, iconic seabird, elegantly hovering above your head. This protected species with an aerodynamic silhouette ending with two half-metre long feathers and a white coat adorned with a few black lines, nests mainly in the cliffs.

While walking in the forests of Bébour-Bélouve, you can observe species that do not exist anywhere else in the world, such as the Mascarene Paradise Flycatcher, with grey, red and bluish hues, which will gladly approach you, the Reunion Grey White-Eye, a small passerine with a ring of white feathers that resemble glasses, who likes to explore the small bushes and flowers, and the flamboyant Red Fody (also called a Cardinal), whose red plumage reminds us of the cassocks of the Catholic cardinals.

During your walks, other variegated birds will attract your attention, such as the Reunion Stonechat with its white eyebrows, the bright yellow Village Weaver and the Common Waxbill, who looks like he's wearing a red mask! Only the dodo is missing. Until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Reunion Island was the kingdom of this plump bird, which unfortunately was not able to withstand human invasion.





INTERVIEW

“  
*YabAlex*”

A wildlife photographer and a native of Reunion.



Red Fodies, Tropicbirds, falcons, Mascarene Paradise Flycatchers, Reunion Cuckooshrikes, Reunion Harriers, YabAlex knows everything there is to know about the birds of Reunion. This Fine Arts graduate has been specialised in wildlife photography for 20 years, he travels around Reunion photographing the most beautiful birds and he also raises awareness for their protection. He shares his passion through beautiful books and colourful exhibitions.

We interviewed this photographer to get a better idea of how he sees his island through his lens.

**Reunion is an island that cannot be summarised through picture postcards. What would you say to those who are visiting the island to support this?**

*Reunion is so much more than a postcard showing a sunny beach with coconut trees. Within ten minutes of your arrival on the island, you can find yourself in the mountains, surrounded by lush vegetation and incredible trails. However, the temperatures in the Highlands are not at all the same as the seaside! So, to visit the island, you'll need to pack more than just your "savates deux doigts" (flip flops)! (laughs)*

**Which bird do you most like to photograph?**

*And which is the most elusive?*  
*The Mascarene Paradise Flycatcher<sup>1</sup>, "Zoizo la Vierge" in Creole. In my opinion, it is the most beautiful bird with its red, grey and bluish black shades. Also, this bird can only be found in the forest, a place where I particularly like to work, with pleasant temperatures and some great walks. The advantage is that you can photograph the Mascarene Paradise Flycatcher while walking, you don't have to stay hidden. The most elusive bird is the Reunion*

*Harrier<sup>2</sup> because, with its piercing gaze and its high point of view compared to us poor earthlings, it cannot be easily photographed. To succeed, you'll need to track them, wear camouflage and have a lot of patience!*

**Would you say that you hunt your subjects with the stealth of a lynx, with the sharp vision of an eagle or do you have your own unique approach?**

*Just like the lynx, I venture into the very heart of the forest, I know how to be discreet and, even if I am a little short-sighted, I have a sharp eye to photograph my subjects! (Laughs) And, like the lynx, I also have good hearing! That is a practical skill, because it means I can recognise the birds by their song.*

**What landscape of Reunion do you admire the most?**

*The pastures of the Chaloupe Saint-Leu, with the beautiful Highland tamarinds in the centre. This is the place where I spent my childhood, the place where I played with my brothers and cousins. It's a moving place that really whisks me back to my childhood. When I go there to take pictures, I always make sure I have the time to stop, take a moment and enjoy the sunset.*

**What would you advise those who, like you, would like to photograph the most beautiful plumages of Reunion Island?**

*I would tell them to go along the La Roche Écrite trail to enjoy the beautiful colours of the Forêt des Hauts, the tamarind forests and the fabulous view of Mafate and Salazie. It is also the only place where you can find all the forest birds that are endemic to the island because the Reunion Cuckooshrike does not live anywhere else.*

**And for those who prefer selfies, where can they find the perfect backdrop?**

*The viewpoint at the Trou de Fer because you have to cross through the magnificent Bélouve forest before getting there and then, as a final bonus, you can take a selfie up above the vast canyon and its extraordinary waterfalls.*



<sup>1</sup>Also known as Chakouat, Zoizo Malheur, Tchitrec des Mascareignes, Tersiphone de Bourbon or Gobe-Mouche de Paradis de La Réunion -  
<sup>2</sup>Or Busard de Maillard.





INTENSELY

# Adventurous



MORE INFO ABOUT ACTIVITIES

## OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL SPACES

Do you dream of spending your holiday on Reunion Island on the warm sand, a gripping thriller novel in one hand and a glass of rum in the other? It's possible. But you can also enjoy a wide range of activities that will make you feel more alive than ever!

On land, at sea, or in the air, a whirlwind of pleasure and entertainment awaits you! You'll find everything you need to help you enjoy the island and admire it from all angles! So, whether you have the nonchalance of a house gecko or the energy of a Reunion Cuckooshrike, follow Buzz Lightyear, rushing to infinity and beyond!

Here it's simple, your playground is limitless: it starts on land, unfolds at sea and stretches up into the skies. The dream backdrops of the island make you want to replay scenes from well-known literature and walk in the footsteps of mythical characters. Do you want to see what it's like to be Indiana Jones for a day? Then why not try out canyoning, rock climbing, rafting, kayaking and exploring lava tunnels! You can see how adventurous you really are on one of the fantastic hikes around the peaks. Are you more into James Bond? Then go for a gyropod, flyboard, jet-skiing experience, go diving, free falling, or even fly over the island in a microlight or helicopter.



If it's thrills and high speed that you're looking for, you won't be disappointed! However, if you are more of an epicurean and spiritual type, much like the characters from a Woody Allen comedy, and you prefer to wander the streets of unknown cities, then the botanical gardens of the island are made for you! You could also choose a stand-up paddle experience, where you'll find yourself gazing out towards the horizon, completely lost in your dreams. Finally, if you share the passion of diver Jacques Mayol, there is more than enough to get your gills fluttering in our magical lagoons or in the depths of the Indian Ocean.



## ON LAND

There are countless activities to choose from on dry land on Reunion: stunning golf courses, treetop adventure parks and climbing, picturesque horse rides, different levels of hikes, and many other activities for visitors who are itching to get out and explore the island! With its flora, mountains and breath-taking views, the island is most definitely worthy of its reputation as a hiker's paradise. Family walks to let off steam with the children or long-distance hikes for the more adventurous, there's something for all levels and for all tastes!

Are you passionate about astronomy? At nightfall, follow a guide to a fairy-tale like clearing to contemplate the starry sky. If it's volcanoes that fascinate you, step into the depths of the Earth and explore the lava tunnels with a caving expert. You can also choose trekking, Nordic walking, eco-walks, sporty hikes or bivouac outings.

The mountain can also be explored on a canyoning outing, with natural slides that guarantee a real rush of adrenaline, or why not take on the staggering cliffs at one of the twenty-odd climbing sites, or explore on horseback, as close to nature as possible.

Reunion's bridle paths cross the island's most beautiful landscapes. You will be riding in the shade of the casuarinas and tamarinds, wandering across the savannah at sunset, and trotting through the volcano massif. Although Reunion can be visited on foot or on horseback, you can also opt for an adventure here on two, three or four wheels! Choose from mountain bikes, recumbent bikes, segways, elliptical bikes, quadbikes, buggies and 4x4s! Accompanied by professionals or on your own, on foot, in the saddle or attached to a harness, come and explore Reunion in your own way and discover all the treasures it has to offer!



THE UNMISSABLE "DIAGONALE DES FOUS"

The Grand Raid is the main ultra-trail running race organised on Reunion Island and one of the most difficult in the world. This event is held in October, and involves crossing the island, from Saint-Pierre to Saint-Denis, passing through the Piton de la Fournaise mountains and the Cirques of Cilaos and Mafate. This route, which is both steep and complex, has been dubbed the "Diagonale des Fous" (Madmen's Diagonal). This iconic race on Reunion island is popular with some of the best trail-runners in the world, who come to face the highly trained local runners, all with one thing in common: passion for this discipline! The number of available places is limited so book yours early.

There are three other routes that all take place at the same time: the Mascareignes, the Trail de Bourbon and the Zembrocal Trail.



## INTO THE RAPIDS

Each one is even higher than the last: Langevin, Trou Blanc, Fleur Jaune, Bras Rouge, Takamaka, Trou de Fer... Under the watchful eye of your guide, you'll be exploring the most beautiful canyons on the island. This fantastic experience includes abseiling, natural slides, multi-metre jumps and zip lines. Want to set yourself a challenge? This adventure is for you!

### CANYONING

But that's not all! With around twenty climbing sites offering more than 6,000 metres in total, Reunion has everything climbers could possibly dream of.

Routes along the rock faces, wide tracks, via corda and ridge trails, will all show you the island from another angle. You are guaranteed to be in your element on the steep slopes of Reunion Island! There are climbing walls and various training routes suitable for beginners.

And for seasoned athletes, you'll get a rush of adrenaline along walls more than 300 metres long!

Finally, the whole family can have some fun and sporty adventures along the treetop adventure trails through the forest. You can climb up in the trees as high as 12 metres off the ground, cling to vines and whizz down the giant zip lines. Watch out Tarzan!



### TAKE ON THE TROU BLANC CANYON

Up in the highlands of the Cirque of Salazie, you will find Simon, your canyoning guide for the day. After a 40-minute walk, you will begin your descent into the Trou Blanc canyon, an unmissable experience for fans of white-water thrills! Walking, sliding down natural slides, swimming and jumping into pools of crystal-clear water from a height of several metres: that's what you can expect from this six-hour adventure surrounded by spectacular scenery. Canyoning is an experience that offers a stunning combination of aquatic adventures and minerals, for an adrenaline rush and a total change of scenery!

#### MORE INFO ABOUT WHITEWATER ACTIVITIES



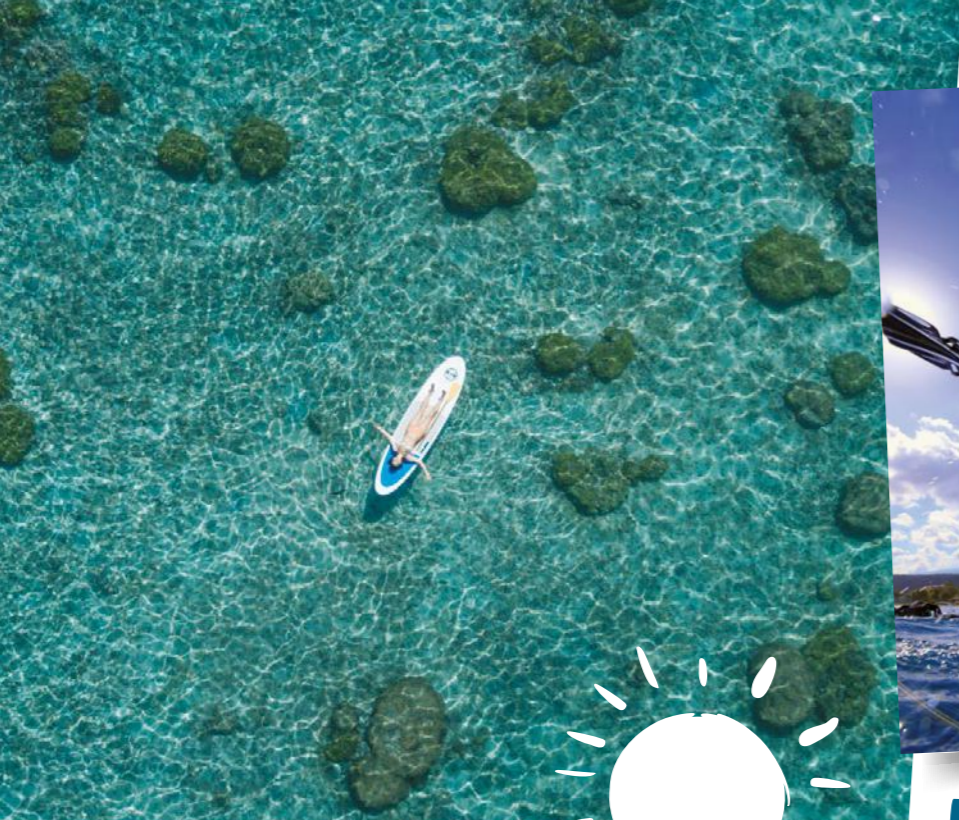
### RAFTING

With four other brave souls, you'll climb into an inflatable boat for an enjoyable experience, in an exceptional setting! You'll navigate the most beautiful rivers of the island, trying to master the currents.

Fortunately, your guide is there to help you manoeuvre your raft when you come to the rough rapids. You are guaranteed laughter and thrills on this action-packed adventure down the rapids!

#### MORE INFO ABOUT WHITEWATER ACTIVITIES





## FEELGOOD EXPERIENCES

There are some unmissable experiences to be had off the coast of Reunion! So come and have some fun cruising, diving, paddle boarding or any of the other equally exciting water-based activities and discover the incredible sea creatures that call this island home.



Snorkelling, daytime or night-time diving and other aquatic excursions are all a great way to discover the coral reef and observe the fascinating creatures with fins and gills, in warm and clear waters, 365 days a year! If you prefer to stay dry, a range of different boats offer sensational excursions off the coast. Comfortably seated in a boat with a transparent bottom, you can watch the underwater parade without getting wet. Lying on the nets of a catamaran, you can contemplate the horizon, rocked by the trade winds, a glass of punch in your hand. In a bubble boat, you can enjoy an exquisite underwater safari. You can also learn how to sail along the coast on a monohull sailboat, master a stand-up paddle to glide over the waves of the lagoon and build your biceps by paddling on a kayak or a canoe. Or why not enjoy the thrills of jet skiing, water skiing, wakeboarding or kitesurfing? If you're really feeling adventurous, you could try to tease the barracuda.

## 3,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA

### ONE, TWO, THREE, SPLASH...

It's your turn to dive in! Let's go, put on your wetsuit and join your underwater friends with fins! In the Indian Ocean, it's carnival time all year round! Parrot fish, Peacock hinds, Snowflake morays and Blue tangs parade in their best attire. Fish that look like guineafowl, fish that can inflate themselves to almost double in size, fish with crests or leopard spots, will all swim past you with cautious curiosity. Choose from the many diving centres who invite you to come and explore this underwater world.

If you want to come and meet the protected tropical species, there are diving sessions available to suit all levels of ability, even beginners. With 150 species of stony corals and 500 species of fish, the Reunion Island coral reef will never cease to surprise you!

You even have the possibility to go diving at night, go on aquatic excursions, explore the coral reef, visit shipwrecks and swim with dolphins!

Just a few metres away from the shore, you have the opportunity to get to know little Nemos and shy octopuses!



## IN THE AIR

How beautiful Reunion is from above!  
From the skies of Reunion, there are some thrilling adventures to be had, with stunning views of this island with such striking beauty.

If you're looking for something a bit more original, don't hesitate to ask about the breath-taking activities that Reunion specialises in, including helicopter rides, microlight flights, paragliding, parachute or powered parachute jumps. The exceptional flight sites, nature as far as the eye can see and optimal weather conditions all year round make Reunion Island a world-famous territory for all those who want to soar like the Reunion Harrier. In the mountains or above the lagoon, the sky is your kingdom! Like Jasmine and Aladdin on their magic flying carpet, in the skies of Reunion you'll discover a whole new world, filled with colours, you'll feel weightless in the blue sky and your heart will be doing somersaults. There's nothing more to say, on Reunion Island, you'll be on a constant high!



### PARACHUTE JUMPING

Go to the Pierrefonds airport in Saint-Pierre. You'll feel such excitement when you are greeted and briefed by your instructor, before climbing aboard a helicopter! At an altitude of 3,000 m, the side door opens. Harnessed to your tandem jumper, you let go. Literally. Together, you'll free fall into the air, with the Piton des Neiges, the Grand Bénare and the Indian Ocean down below you. Then, as the parachute unfolds, your speed will stabilise and you can just sit back and enjoy the incredible views. Back on earth, you will be overwhelmed by a feeling of fulfilment. You will have just had one of the most intense experiences of your life!

Contact:  
Aéroport de Pierrefonds  
97410 Saint-Pierre  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 02 53 76



### FLY OVER THE ISLAND IN A HELICOPTER

With your helmet firmly attached, you will be sitting at the front, next to the pilot. After gaining altitude, the Ultimate Island will unfold below you from a new angle and you'll become even more aware of the sheer variation of the landscapes. You'll fly over the lagoon, over the steaming Piton de la Fournaise, the glowing scenery of the Plaine des Sables, the magnificent hamlets of Mafate, the lush vegetation of Salazie and the staggering slopes of Cilaos. You'll skim over the cliff face and the magnificent Trou de Fer waterfall, a highlight of the trip! After this 45-minute awe-inspiring ride, you'll land back on the ground, your heart still spinning like the blades of the helicopter!

### PARAGLIDING

The time for your introduction to paragliding has come! With Rémi, several times crowned champion of Reunion, you'll take the Colimaçons road, into the highlands of Saint-Leu. At an altitude of 800 m, you'll reach the take-off zone. The view from up here is glorious. When all the usual safety checks have been carried out, you'll be given the green light. You'll run straight down the grassy slope, towards the sea. The paraglider sail will inflate and your feet will rise off the ground. When you're in the sky, Rémi will give you the controls. Turning right, then left, you'll be soaring through the air just like a tropicbird, looking to use updrafts for the ultimate thrills. Up there, in the peaceful Reunion sky, your eyes will gaze over Saint-Leu and its surroundings. A few moments later, you'll land gently on the sand, your head still in the clouds.



MORE INFO  
ABOUT PARAGLIDING



# INTENSELY *Authentic*

## LIVING TOGETHER IN HARMONY ON REUNION

Just a mere 350 years ago, the first settlers arrived on the island, from all different walks of life, people with African, European and Asian roots. Reunion Island is an exemplary melting pot, and the key values of the island are respect, kindness and sharing. Here, different cultures and religions live together and embrace each other in perfect harmony. A warm welcome, colourful architecture, exciting museums, wild dances, captivating shows and intoxicating music, that's what Reunion Island is all about.



**WELCOME TO THE LAND OF LIVING TOGETHER IN HARMONY!**

Marked by its colonial history, Reunion is a land shaped by African, Indian, Indonesian, Chinese, Malagasy and European influences. This French department embraces its ethnic diversity and is fiercely proud of its past and its traditions. During your travels, you'll be able to admire the Christian churches, Tamil, Buddhist and Taoist temples, mosques and Chinese pagodas built all over the island.

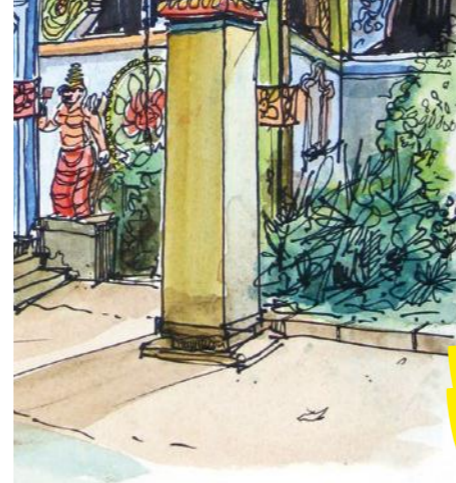


Check out the calendar of the island's unmissable festivities

### THE UNION OF CULTURES

The different religions and traditions present on the island flourish in this special land where respect and tolerance are key values. In the city centres of Saint-Denis or Saint-Pierre, it is not uncommon to hear the muezzin, church bells and malbar drums sound at the same time, in perfect communion. You are guaranteed an incredible

experience if you take part in the various colourful and festive celebrations that are held throughout the year! In February, the spectacular Chinese New Year is celebrated all over the island, with its famous dragon dance and many other shows. At Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramadan, it is common practice to pray outdoors.



The Hindu religion is also celebrated with Diwali, the Tamil Festival of Light, the Tamil New Year, in April and the impressive firewalking events, from December to January.

Finally, do not miss the celebrations of the abolition of slavery that take place just before Christmas, on 20 December.

The sounds of Maloya, Sega and Moraingy echo through the streets. Parades, songs, dances and percussion are celebrated across the island during the Kaf Festival.

### A CLOSER LOOK...

#### CHURCH OF SAINTE-ANNE

This Catholic church has a unique architecture, combining Gaudian and Baroque art, and was the location for Jean-Paul Belmondo and Catherine Deneuve's wedding. That is, in Truffaut's film "Mississippi Mermaid". It was built in 1857 and finished in 1863, and has been improved over time by magnificent mouldings, coloured frescoes and a small chapel built in honour of Sainte-Thérèse by Father Georges Daubenberger from Strasbourg in 1921.

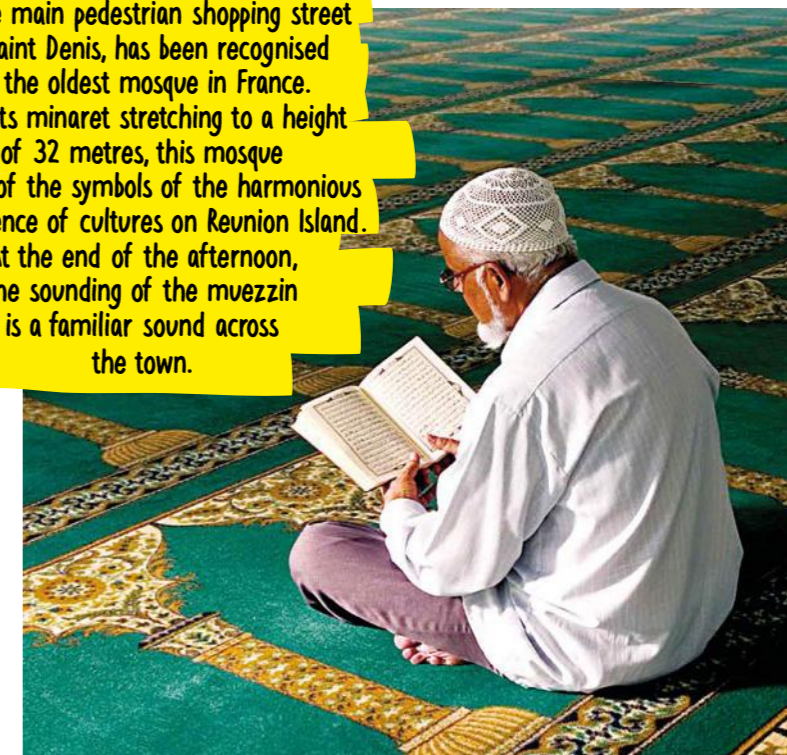
It can be seen from a distance thanks to its high steeple towering over the forest canopy, its original colours and the surprising carvings of the mouldings. Take a guided tour

of this holy place, classified as a Historic Monument since 1982 and, under the watchful eyes of cement statues and gargoyles, learn about its entire history, in 45 minutes flat!

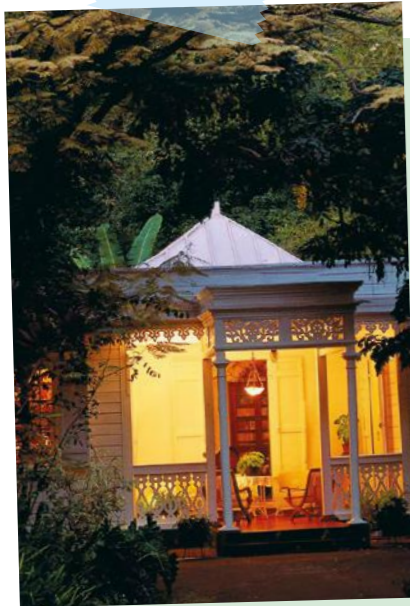


### DID YOU KNOW?

Noor-E-Islam Mosque, on the main pedestrian shopping street of Saint Denis, has been recognised as the oldest mosque in France. With its minaret stretching to a height of 32 metres, this mosque is one of the symbols of the harmonious coexistence of cultures on Reunion Island. At the end of the afternoon, the sounding of the muezzin is a familiar sound across the town.



## OPENING THE DOORS OF HISTORY



### A CLOSER LOOK...

#### LES JOURNÉES DU PATRIMOINE (HERITAGE DAYS)

Every year in September, the history of Reunion island is celebrated. During the heritage days, both public and private historic monuments open their doors to visitors. This is an opportunity to marvel at the beauty and wealth of the Ultimate Island's architectural and artistic treasures and to discover trades and expertise of bygone days.

**Make sure you put the dates for this cultural and festive tour in your diary!**

Visiting the magnificent colonial houses and the small multicoloured buildings is a great way to discover the island: behind their roofline friezes, the old Creole "cases" (houses) hold a large part of the history of Reunion.

The first houses, generally rectangular or square-shaped, were built like ships, with wooden frames, and walls covered with tamarind shingles.

We enter through the veranda, an outdoor extension of the living room.

The Creole "cases" inherited the 18<sup>th</sup> century Neoclassical tradition, to which architectural influences of French India and then 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian building elements were added. They often have pretty colours and are decorated with "lambrequins", friezes made of sheet metal or wood, of Indian inspiration, which go around the roof.



### CULTURE IN MUSEUMS

*"To learn is to deposit gold in the bank of one's mind."*

We've got good news for you, on Reunion you'll find everything you need to satisfy your craving for knowledge! At the four regional museums, you'll be able to learn all about the history, culture, heritage and traditions of the island. La Cité du Volcan is a visitor's centre devoted to the volcano, the Musée Stella Matutina will plunge you into the history of sugar cane farming, which, incidentally, is very closely linked to the history of the people of Reunion. At the Kélonia centre you can learn about sea turtles and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs de l'Océan Indien (MADOI) exhibits beautiful collections of artworks, art objects and furniture. There are also other equally remarkable museums, as well as former great estates or mansions, all open to visitors! Botanical gardens, an aquarium, modern and contemporary art exhibitions, an astronomical observatory, an insectarium, old colonial dwellings, distilleries, chocolate shops, shrines to coffee, vanilla or turmeric...

**There's something for everyone!**

*\*By Shad Helmstetter - Le Pouvoir de motivation intérieure*

MORE INFO ABOUT MUSEUMS

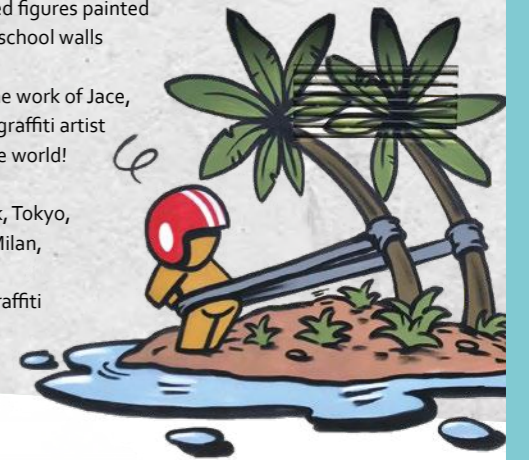


### URBAN CULTURES

As you explore the island, you may notice funny little ochre-coloured figures painted on dilapidated buildings, school walls or even on rock faces...

This "gouzou" graffiti is the work of Jace, the island's most famous graffiti artist who is admired all over the world!

From Reunion to New York, Tokyo, Paris, Lisbon, Venice and Milan, there are thousands of examples of "gouzou" graffiti around the world today!



#### ENJOY AN ARTY MOMENT

Art is all around you on the Ultimate Island. Take the time to come and admire it in the many shops, museums and galleries where it is proudly displayed.

Reunion Island strives to value its local resources and traditions in adopting a boldly creative and modern approach. Contemporary art is also celebrated at the Artothèque and in many galleries.

At the Musée Léon-Dierx, you can admire works by Picasso, Gauguin, Cézanne, Renoir and Caillebotte, as well as paintings by local artists Arthur Grimaud, Adolphe Le Roy and Antoine-Louis Roussin. The collections also include photographs so visitors can discover the 19<sup>th</sup> century landscapes of Reunion Island.

"Pei" (local) crafts can also be seen all over the island.

The island is particularly famous for its baskets, which are woven using screw pine leaves, and for its creations made from volcanic stone, lava, tortoiseshell, wood, ceramics and embroidery. There are almost 420 professionals making jewellery, knick-knacks and marquetry.

**You're guaranteed to find some beautiful souvenirs to take home with you!**

# THE CREOLE VILLAGES OF REUNION ISLAND

Nestled at the heart of the Cirques of Salazie, Mafate and Cilaos, there are villages and small hamlets called "îlets", where the locals go about their easy-going, Creole way of life surrounded by an unspoilt natural environment. Bourg-Murat, la Plaine des Palmistes, Grand-Coude, Petite-Ile, Petite-France, La Plaine des Cafres... each village has its own special characteristics and unique atmosphere, but they all live by the values of nature and authenticity.

The viewpoint from Les Makes acts much like an astronomical observatory, with an endless view of the horizon stretching off into the distance. In the Maïdo Forests, at the heart of La Réunion National Park, diverse, one-of-a-kind ecosystems unfold before your eyes. In Bourg-Murat, you'll discover the local atmosphere and Creole flavours with its dairy cow farms and pink berry honey. In Saint-Leu, the atmosphere is more coastal, with the coral reef and the waves flowing into the "souffleurs" (blowholes), before crashing back, sometimes up to several metres high. At the Plaine des Palmistes, L'Entre-Deux and Hell-Bourg, explore the pretty villas that wealthy families had built in the mountains to escape the heat of the austral summer, as well as the traditional coloured metal houses surrounded by gardens full of flowers.

As you stroll through Hell-Bourg, a former spa town resort with an old-fashioned charm and the only overseas town listed among the 'Most Beautiful Villages in France', admire the colourful façades along the General de Gaulle shopping street, the glimmering cemetery, enjoy an entertaining and educational visit to Maison Folio and the Musée des Musiques et Instruments de l'Océan Indien (Museum of Indian Ocean Music and Instruments). In L'Entre-Deux, learn about the history of those who decided to live deep in the mountains

of the island, whether they were settlers or former slaves on the run, known as "Marrons", or craftsmen. The houses they lived in are full of memories and it's possible to learn about the rich past through the architecture of this charming village. Although the walls speak for themselves, nothing beats human contact along the family-friendly trails. After photographing the huts that look like houses straight out of a fairy-tale, don't miss the opportunity to chat to the locals of Saint-Leu and the artisans working with chocolate, coconut or coffee, emblems of the village. They will be delighted to stop and chat to you!



## LA MAISON FOLIO: A FIRM FAVOURITE

If you want to take a trip back in time, push open the door of Maison Folio, in Hell-Bourg. You will find yourself in a time when the prominent Creole families of the island left the warmth of the coast, in search of comfort in the cooler temperatures of the Highlands, in charming, stylish little Creole houses.

built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, your guide will talk about the antique furniture, everyday objects of the time and local handicrafts, with an added touch of humour, and interesting anecdotes and traditions. But the highlight of this place is most definitely the garden. It is a perfect representation of the Creole way of life, with its "guétali"

(kiosk), fountain, paths paved with old stone, its many aromatic and medicinal plants and the exotic scents.

**Contact:**  
20, rue Amiral Lacaze  
Hell-Bourg 97433 Salazie  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 47 80 98  
+262 (0)6 92 22 22 98

## CULTURAL HERITAGE HISTORIC MONUMENTS

If only the walls could speak... If they could, we imagine that those on the island of a thousand faces would be particularly talkative! Reunion is the French overseas department with the most Historic Monuments, 192 in total, 18 of which are classified.

All these buildings reveal an episode in the history of the island. Industrial heritage occupies a special place, especially the former sugar or railway factories in particular (Reunion is the only French overseas department to have owned a railway). But the island's Historic Monuments are incredibly diverse: churches, fountains, villas, bridges, chimneys, lighthouses, cemeteries, gardens, temples, etc.



The master houses are huge and most definitely leave an impression with their colonnades and their beautiful gardens, in "Gone with the wind" style, that would not look out of place on programmes about historic, luxury houses.

On Rue de Paris in Saint-Denis, a veritable open-air museum, there are a few examples of these charming Creole houses. Some are even classified as Historic Monuments or have been transformed into beautiful museums.

Others remain mysterious, hidden behind large wrought iron gates. The Maison Martin Valliamé in Saint-André, the Villèle museum (formerly Maison Desbassays) in Saint-Gilles or the Tourelles estate in La Plaine-des-Palmistes are also worth a visit.

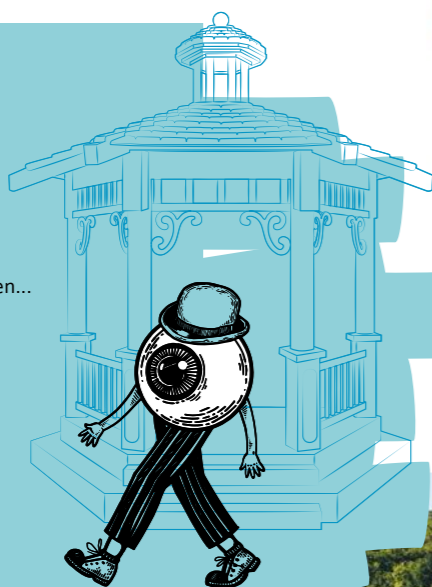
### 🔍 A CLOSER LOOK...

#### THE GUÉTALI (KIOSK)

In old Creole society, you had to be able to see without being seen... For this, the "guétali" (meaning "watch for it"), a small open kiosk, was the ideal place!

In some gardens, you can still see these shelters, worthy of a Jane Austen novel, a perfect place to criticise (or gossip) discreetly, or to lie in wait for your lover and exchange sweet words! On Reunion Island, second homes are called a "change of air".

That's right, on the island, poetry is everywhere!



### 🔦 SPOTLIGHT

#### The Rivière de l'Est suspension bridge

Here's an historic monument that really can look down upon the others. Suspended 42 m above the Rivière de l'Est, it is a fine sight. It is 152 metres long, making it the longest bridge in the world when it was completed in 1894. This was a major innovation on Reunion because it offered an alternative to transporting sugar cane by fording the river, which was too risky and unreliable.

For this suspension bridge project, the engineers and industrialists Ferdinand Armodin and Pierre-Joseph Bonnin pipped Gustave Eiffel

at the post and their construction, with its 103 kilometres of cables, its 61 tonnes of sheet metal and 25,000 kilograms of cast iron has resisted all the tropical cyclones that have hit the island and the landslide that caused a considerable flood in 1927.

It is no longer possible to walk across this bridge as it has been closed to pedestrians since 2016. But nothing prevents you from admiring it and enjoying the plunging view of the banks of the Rivière de l'Est. On the road between Sainte-Rose and Saint-Benoît, you cannot miss it!



INTENSELY AUTHENTIC



## THE SOUND OF MUSIC



The Ultimate Island is full of musical treasures such as Sega and Maloya, both inherited from the Reunion ancestors and classified as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Maloya, originally played practised by the African and Malagasy slaves on the plantations on L'île Bourbon as it was known back then, was banned in the city until recently. It was only in 1982 that it was allowed to be played freely! An ode to pain, melancholy and hope, it can be compared to the "blues" of the American slaves in its origins but is, on the other hand, very different from a musical point of view. Based on a ternary rhythm, it uses mainly percussion instruments:

bob<sup>1</sup>, kayamb<sup>2</sup>, roulèr<sup>3</sup>, piker<sup>4</sup>, ...

So, listen up and enjoy the sounds of "roulèr, kayamb, djembé and piker"!



<sup>1</sup>Or "bobre": musical bow, cousin of the Brazilian berimbau

<sup>2</sup>Raft-shaped rattle

<sup>3</sup>Large drum struck with two hands

<sup>4</sup>Bamboo cylinder that is hit with two sticks

### FUN FACT

As a musical genre that was created out of the pain and rebellion of slaves of Malagasy and African origin in the sugar plantations of Reunion Island, Maloya was awarded the status of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009.

## TAKE MY HAND AND DANCE!

Besides the traditional dances, Reunion dance today has a real creative dynamic, with several original professional choreographic companies and a significant rise in modern and urban dance. The island's musical heritage has evolved.

Electronic sounds, rap, etc. have taken root and are now blended

with new artists and new scenes which can be seen at popular festivals such as the Sakifo de Saint-Pierre, which is particularly popular with some of the big names on the national and international scene, the Electropicales de Saint-Denis, the Grand Boucan de Saint-Gilles, the Indian Ocean Jazz Festival, and many others!

## THE MUST-SEES SAFIKO

The Sakifo Musik Festival comes to Saint-Pierre every year and sounds from all over the world echo through the town for 3 days. This cocktail of pop, rock, electronic music, French music, blues, reggae, funk, music from Africa and the Indian Ocean, is a must-see and attracts up to 40,000 spectators every year!



### TO HEAR, TO SEE, TO EXPERIENCE: DO MOON

DO MOON is the meeting of... two "mounes" ("two people" in Reunion Creole), FlowDi and Scholar. E.g., two DJs/composers. They mix and they compose unique ethnic house music, suited to live performances. They regularly perform at the most popular venues on the island, and they are also booked for the biggest stages (Sakifo, Electropicales, Kabardock) and international festivals in India and Morocco for example.



Listen to the song 4 Ti Mo on YouTube

### A UNIQUE PAUSE

Like a game of "Happy Families"! The Pounia family is made up of the father, mother, grandmother, son and daughter. The artist's life and the stage have become a family affair.

The father, Gilbert Pounia, is the historic leader of the Ziskakan group, established in 1979 using the texts of Reunion poets and writers. This songwriter, who used maloya with a hint of rock and Indian sounds, enriched and modernised the musical palette of Reunion. He took Reunion culture out into the world, beyond the island's borders, with his albums, surrounding himself with talented musicians.

The mother, Anny Grondin, is the storyteller. She talks passionately about her identity, culture and the Creole language. Kriké, Kraké! She tells stories of Reunion and elsewhere in schools, festivals and multimedia libraries.

The daughter, Maya Kamaty, is an author, composer, and performer of a blend of electro, pop and Maloya. Her captivating voice resonates in India, Australia, Morocco, Canada, as well as mainland France and on Reunion Island.

The son, Wazis Loy Pounia, is a bassist and percussionist for the group Ziskakan. The whole Pounia family comes together at Zinzin in Grand Bois in the south of the island. A unique place where Reunion culture meets gastronomy, poetry, stories and music. Under the watchful eye of grandfather Clovis whose portrait hangs on the wall, the game of Happy Families is played out. The Pounia family also includes the maternal grandparents Odette and Lucien, grandmother Nadine, and son-in-law, Guillaume. And then there are those who stay behind the scenes, the "dalons" (friends).





**A CLOSER LOOK**   
**KABAR**

Kabaré (from the Madagascan "kabary"): assembly, giving rise to the recent neologism, kabar: a convivial concert, Reunion-style "fez noz" which, according to writer Axel Gauvin, can in fact be a festive musical event open to the public, a ceremony paying tribute to the Afro-Madagascan ancestors, or any specific melodic context. But it is first and foremost an opportunity for outdoor celebrations to the sound of Maloya music, when people come together to dance, sing and enjoy all things Creole!

Danyèl Waro, Reunion's own Léo Ferré from the Highlands, Davy Sicard, who gets the locals dancing to the sound of his "Maloya Kabosé", and Meddy Gerville with his Maloya-flavoured jazz, are just some of the big stars of the Reunion music scene. Over the years, the music of Reunion Island has been enriched and reinvented through exchanges with "pei" (local) musicians, Europeans and performers from around the Indian Ocean. It is now a blend of French popular music, jazz, electro-fusion, rock and reggae.

INTERVIEW

“  
*Olivier Araste*



Lead singer of the Maloya band  
LiNDiGo



The band LiNDiGo has been performing the diverse genre of Maloya music for 20 years now. With hundreds of concerts given around the world and 7 albums to their credit, this is one of the most popular bands on Reunion Island. With their latest album, "Kosa Néna"<sup>1</sup>, they went back to their roots. Nothing could be more natural for this band from Bras-Panon, whose motto is "Kan ou koné ou sa ou sort, ou koné ou sa ou sava"<sup>2</sup>, and who enjoy rehearsing in the plantations or while paddling out the sea. Olivier Araste, the band's charismatic lead singer of this group, who proudly combines his roots and wings, agreed to talk to us about his island, his music and to tell us about his favourites and recommendations.

**The natural environment of Reunion Island is a fabulous music box filled with a multitude of sounds. You used some of these sounds in your songs, such as the flowing river on "Larivé" for example. Which sounds inspire you the most?**  
*The wind blowing through sugar cane plantations and bamboo.*

**In this land full of emotions, which place do you find moves you the most?**  
*The Sentier de l'Eden trail from the Cascade du Chien waterfall, with the highland ferns, guava, screw pines, old tea plants and coloured woods along the way. When you arrive at the viewpoint, there is an exceptional panoramic view over the entire east coast, from Saint-André all the way to Sainte-Rose.*

**In which unusual place do you dream of giving a concert?**  
*At the top of the Piton des Neiges.*

**What would you advise those who visit the Ultimate Island, to:**  
> **begin the day with a fanfare?**  
*Take a stroll around a carnival market!*  
> **make their heart race?**  
*Go to the Plaine des Sables.*  
> **experience Creole culture through music?**  
*Find out about the "kabar" and the "bals la poussière" dances, which illustrate popular culture and the atmosphere of Reunion so well.*

**In your opinion, is it true that music keeps people mellow?**  
*Yes, music soothes, it's true. Kind of like herbal tea! (laughs)*

**How would you summarise the relationship between Reunion and music, using song lyrics?**  
*"Mwin léné La Réunion Oussa nana tout Ban' nasyon" (I was born in Reunion, where all the nations are).*

**Is there a cause you would like to support with your voice?**  
*Ecology. The beautiful reefs, the forests, the rivers, the sea, the animals... All the beauty of the world must be saved.*



Listen to the song **LafrKindMada** on YouTube 

<sup>1</sup> Album "Kosa Néna" - LiNDiGo-Gélico / L'Autre Distribution  
<sup>2</sup> "When you know where you come from, you know where you're going" - Lyrics from the title LafrkindMada (album LafrkindMada - LiNDiGo - 2008)

# INTENSELY

# Spicy



## REUNION TRADITIONS

Reunion Island is an intensely gourmet island and, at mealtimes, the Reunion value of sharing takes on its full meaning! Don't hesitate to have a chat with the locals of the island. Who knows, perhaps you will be invited to a traditional family picnic over the weekend? "Don't be afraid to venture off the beaten track for new food experiences! Curiosity and improvisation are your best allies when exploring the island and its inhabitants."

Just like in cooking and religion here, the traditions reflect the mixed population. Christmas, Chinese New Year, fire walking, cock fights, picnics, "pain bouchon" (local bread), fairground markets, Maloya and much more.

All these traditions and many others illustrate the rich cultural diversity of the Ultimate Island.



## PICNIC-MANIA

A true institution, the picnic alone represents the Reunion way of life. Throughout the year, on weekends or during school holidays, the locals of the island get together for some quality time with family or friends. At the seaside, on the sand, they recreate their dining rooms with tables, chairs, fabrics, pots full of rice, sausages, boucané (smoked pork) and other delicious provisions! In the Highlands, in the Lowlands, in the forests, near a waterfall, a river or facing the ocean, the whole island can provide the prime spot for these festive outdoor meals.



## KESKIDI ? (WHAT IS HE SAYING?)

### Top 3 Creole "gastronomy" expressions

**Kan i koz ek boucané, sosis i res pandiyé**  
lit. "when addressing the boucané, the sausage stays on the hook"  
= When you are speaking to someone, another person shouldn't cut in.

### Dann' vié marmite i fé bon cari

lit. "A good curry is made in an old pot" = The best wine comes out of an old vessel.

### Atten' boudin cuit dan vent' cochon

lit. "hoping to find sausage already cooked in the belly of the pig" = Waiting for something to fall into your lap.

## AWAKEN YOUR TASTEBUDS

On Reunion, diversity is also found on your plate! Local gastronomy includes European, Chinese, Indian and Malagasy influences. Reunion cuisine is authentic, generous and colourful, and has something to satisfy everyone.

You will find yourself using, perhaps to excess, various adjectives such as delicious, tasty, succulent, divine, when you taste the island's food. Note to all passengers, do not tighten your belt too much, you are about to embark on an incredible culinary journey!



There is only one menu like this in the world, with a French base, a pinch of Malagasy customs, a zest of Chinese know-how and a hint of Indian flavours! Rice, grains, rougail: the mythical trilogy behind traditional Reunion cuisine is a true masterpiece!

Cari is a reference dish on Reunion Island, and is a good example of this. Lightly fry the meat, fish or vegetables, add finely sliced onions, tomatoes, garlic, ginger, turmeric, salt, pepper and thyme and simmer it all together.

Serve with rice and a few brèdes (a kind of spinach) and there you have a delicious traditional dish of Reunion to enjoy at will! If you are fond of Indian cuisine, opt for a biryani, a tandoori or a rooster massalé, a dish in a sauce made with coriander, cumin, chilli pepper, curry leaves and tamarind pulp. Are you dreaming at the thought of a good stew? Rooster stew, zourites (octopus) stew, duck stew, venison stew... you'll be spoilt for choice!

As an added bonus, you'll find all the best products of the Indian Ocean on your plate, including avocados with prawns, green papaya salads or smoked fish (swordfish, blue marlin, tuna, mahi-mahi...!)

## ALL KINDS OF RUM



### FROM CANE SUGAR TO RUM

On Reunion, sugar is not only used to add to your tea! It is part of the culture, history, and heritage.

Sugar cane has played a significant role in shaping the island's economy, therefore also forging the destiny of the island.

During the tour of the island's distilleries and its two gigantic sugar factories still in operation, you will learn all about the production of cane sugar and local rum, which is 'arrangé' (macerated) most of the time.

It is indeed mixed with delicious fruit that is left to macerate for between six months and two years with, for example, a wild orchid such as "faham" (*Jumellea fragrans*), or other plants and spices. All the tropical fruit of Reunion is used to make macerated rum that sounds rather appealing: coconut-rum, vanilla-rum, pineapple-rum, etc. For a great ending to a good Creole meal, macerated rum is a must!

### SIP THE SWEET BEVERAGES

In Reunion culinary traditions, the "aperitif" is particularly important. It must be said that the summer atmosphere, 365 days a year, is particularly well-suited to this tradition.

To accompany the sunset on the beach, you can enjoy samosas, "bouchons" and chilli bites, and toast to the holidays with a local beer (dodo) or a delicious beverage made with rum.

L'Entre-Deux, La Fournaise, Le Punch Coco (coconut punch), Le Baiser Tropical (tropical kiss), Le Nirvana, Le Flamboyant... Here, even the names of the cocktails take you on a journey! So, as we say, "anou"! Or "cheers"! And don't forget to drink with moderation...




### RECIPE

## Coconut Punch

A delicious cock tail!

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 coconut
- 1 l. white rum\*
- 25 cl. sweetened condensed milk
- 1 vanilla pod

 PREPARATION  
15 mins.



### RECIPE

- Peel the coconut
- Grate the coconut
- Put the grated coconut into a blender
- Add 50cl of water
- Blend for 5 mins
- Press the coconut juice to obtain coconut milk.
- To then make the condensed milk, heat the coconut milk in a saucepan
- Add the split vanilla pod

### THE CHEF'S TIP

- You can add cinnamon according to your tastes  
Heat gently for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Leave to chill for 30 mins
- Add the rum
- Serve chilled
- Enjoy, it's fresh and creamy!


### TIPS


Decorate the glasses by putting cane syrup on the rim then dip them in ground coconut.

# Rougail saucisses\* (\*Sausages rougail)

The unmissable rougail saucisses (with pork or chicken sausages according to your taste) is one of the most famous dishes of Reunion cuisine. Serve with white rice, grains.



 **PREPARATION**  
30 mins

 **COOKING TIME**  
40 mins

Serves 4

## INGREDIENTS

2 fresh sausages  
2 smoked sausages  
4 small chillies  
4 tomatoes  
2 onions

Ginger  
Salt  
Pepper  
Oil



## PREPARATION

- Dice the tomatoes into small pieces
- Cut the onions
- Cut the ginger
- Boil the sausages for 10 mins
- Cut the sausages
- Put the chillis into a pestle
- Add salt
- Crush the mixture
- Add ginger
- Crush the mixture

## RECIPE

- Heat the oil
- Fry the pieces of sausage
- Add the onions
- Add the spices
- Fry until golden brown
- Add the tomatoes, stir in well
- Cover and leave to simmer for 20 mins

## TIPS


When the tomatoes are cooked, the sauce should be thick and dark red. Do not add water. You can add large chilli peppers (finely cut lengthwise) to your rougail saucisses.


# Cari poulet\* (\*Chicken cari)

Chicken cari is one of the most familiar dishes in Reunion Island cuisine and very easy to make.



Preferably choose a free-range chicken. The version with tomatoes is the most widespread and best known, but traditionally this dish was prepared without tomatoes. Why not organise a picnic with family or friends by the sea, under the casuarina trees or at the heart of the mountain in the picnic areas, and enjoy your chicken cari all together?

 **PREPARATION**  
30 mins

 **COOKING TIME**  
30 mins

Serves 6

## INGREDIENTS

1 whole chicken  
2 medium-sized onions  
4 garlic cloves  
4 small tomatoes  
1 piece of ginger

A branch of thyme  
1/2 teaspoon of turmeric  
Salt  
Pepper  
Oil



## PREPARATION

- Dice the tomatoes into small pieces
- Cut the onions
- Cut the ginger
- Put the garlic into a pestle
- Add salt
- Add pepper
- Crush the mixture

## RECIPE

- Heat the oil
- Fry the chicken pieces until browned
- Add the onions and the spice mix
- Sauté
- Add the turmeric
- Add the thyme
- Add the tomatoes
- Stir it together.
- Cover and leave to simmer for 15 mins

## TIPS

The sauce should be sufficient but not abundant. You can remove the fat when you've finished cooking (remove a little oil). Serve with white rice and grains (kidney beans, lentils)

RECIPE  
BY KELLY RANGAMA  
MICHELIN-STARRED CHEF



# *Turmeric flavoured Heirloom tomato tart*

## WITH FETA AND SPRING ONIONS

An easy recipe to make full of the flavours of Reunion Island.



PREPARATION  
30 mins



COOKING TIME  
15 mins

Serves 4

### INGREDIENTS

#### Shortcrust pastry:

Butter: 125 g  
Fine white flour or hard white flour: 250 g  
Sugar: 25 g  
Fine salt: 5 g  
Eggs: 25 g  
Water: 40 g  
Turmeric: 1 pinch

#### Garnish:

Heirloom tomatoes: 1 of each colour (4 in total)  
Cherry tomatoes: 12  
Spring onions: 4 tops and bulbs  
Large green pepper: 1  
Feta: 200 g  
Turmeric: 1 pinch  
Basil or chives: Several leaves  
Fleur de sel  
Ground pepper  
Olive oil  
White balsamic vinegar

### UTENSILS

Blender for the pastry  
Saucepan  
1 chopping board  
Small Individual Tart Mould  
Rolling pin  
Greaseproof paper



#### 1st step:

##### Shortcrust pastry:

- Use a blender with a flat beater, or if you don't have a blender, use a mixing bowl and mix with your hands.
- Working the dough is about making contact between the fat, which is butter in this case, and the different dry ingredients.
- Combine the flour, salt, turmeric, sugar and butter.
- Then add the egg and water.
- Mix evenly to obtain a good dough. Cover with film and leave in the refrigerator for about 20 mins.
- After resting, roll out the dough the size of the pan with a rolling pin.
- Let the dough cool for a few minutes.
- Prick the dough with a fork.
- Cook in a 160°C oven for 10/15 mins, checking how brown it is.
- Leave to cool.

#### 2nd step:

##### Garnish:

##### Bring a saucepan of water to the boil.

- Score the heirloom tomatoes (not the cherry tomatoes) gently in the shape of a cross.
- Plunge these tomatoes for several seconds in hot water, and once the skin begins to separate, remove them from the water and place them into cold water. Drain them and gently remove the tomato skins.
- Cut the tomatoes into quarters.
- Set aside the tomato quarters.
- Lay the tomato skins on baking paper with a pinch of salt and put in the oven to dry at 80°C.
- Cut the cherry tomatoes into quarters.
- Season the tomatoes with the fleur de sel, pepper, olive oil and balsamic vinegar.
- Wash the spring onions and dice them at an angle.
- Wash the large pepper and cut into cubes.
- Break up the feta. Season with olive oil, pepper and turmeric.

##### Presentation:

- On the base of the tart, place the pieces of feta, and then the tomato quarters on top.
- Sprinkle over the spring onions and the chopped green pepper.
- Finish by adding the dried tomato skins.
- Add the chives or small basil leaves.

# CULINARY ACTIVITIES / TOP 5



MORE INFO ABOUT UNMISSABLE EXPERIENCES



## 1 CREOLE TASTES, FROM THE FIELD TO THE PLATE

In the highlands of Sainte-Anne, come and experience the "lontan" cuisine of yesteryear with Philippe, a farmer who loves to carry on the ancient traditions of Reunion Island. In the warm atmosphere of a wood-fired kitchen, take part in a culinary workshop unlike any other. "Risofé" (fried rice), "ti jacques boucané" (smoked pork and jackfruit), "massalé la corée" (a sort of curry), and green papaya doughnuts are all concocted before your eyes by the expert hands of Philippe and his apprentice chefs. While the pots are bubbling away, you'll head out onto the farm! You'll learn how to cut the cane and discover some of the wonders of Reunion Island including pineapple, baba figue (banana flowers), vangesaye (lemon), "Bourbon Pointu" coffee, oranges, vacoa (pandanus), zembrozade (loquat), citron galet (lime) and much more. This tour includes tastings and anecdotes which will all make your mouth water. Fortunately, with Philippe, you'll get the chance to taste everything you see! After a delicious Creole meal, served in banana leaves, you'll have the opportunity to taste the honey directly from the hive! To summarise this experience, full of a thousand flavours, just quote Philippe: "the simplest things in life are the best!"

**Contact:**  
Place de l'Église  
97437 Sainte-Anne  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 46 16 16 - +262 (0)6 92 60 37 68



## 2 DISCOVER CREOLE CUISINE

You'll have a warm welcome from Daniel to his beautiful house, where he has set up an open kitchen, which is a blend of tradition and modernity. It's time for a culinary workshop to discover the dishes that have given Reunion cuisine its great reputation. When you arrive at La Sirandane, in the highlands of Saint-Benoît, you will be greeted by the scent of the "risofé" (fried rice), which will be simmering on the wood fire. Daniel, the owner of the place, is already in the kitchen adding the final touch to this dish made with the rice from the day before, which is the traditional breakfast on Reunion Island, along with a glass of fresh fruit juice and hibiscus flower tea. This former computer scientist created La Sirandane a few months ago with his wife Carole. He is passionate about cooking and decided to start running these workshops. For him, it is also a way of travelling: "we welcome travellers from all over the world, with a universal language: cooking". Samosas, duck cari, brèdes lastron (local greens) with cod, and for dessert: sweet potato cake and taro cake, all the delicious flavours of Reunion. In addition to having a great time, you'll leave with recipes that you can recreate at home, to impress your future guests!

**Contact:**  
39 A, chemin Vidot – l'Abondance  
97470 Saint-Benoît  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 67 80 39



## 3 SECRETS OF THE COCONUT

Everything about the coconut tree is good! A visit to La Maison du Coco will be enough to convince you of that. Mireille and Didier invite you to come and discover the 1,000 possible uses of the "tree of life" on their farming estate in Saint-Leu. You'll learn how to pick coconuts, how to break them apart using a sword to extract the refreshing milk, and how to grate the pulp to make delicious macaroons. You'll have the opportunity to taste fresh coconut, the milk, virgin oil (unique in Europe), molasses, coconut sugar and homemade sorbet. Visitors can even choose to stay for lunch made entirely of coconut. A small bonus: after your introduction to braiding palm leaves, you'll be able to take your creation home with you!

**Contact:**  
134 rue Georges Pompidou  
97436 Saint-Leu  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 70 63 73



## 4 CARI-CANYONING IN CILAOS

Luciano awaits you at the heart of the Cirque de Cilaos, one of the jewels of Reunion Island, for a "cari and canyoning" experience in the Rivière de Bras Rouge. This aquatic gem takes its source directly at the foot of the Piton des Neiges at an altitude of 2,500 metres. After a half-hour walk through the lush natural environment, it's time for nearly 3 hours of aerial and aquatic activities! Natural slides, jumps, zip lines, swimming in the rapids, abseiling and so much more. After all that effort, there will be time to relax at Luciano's place. Between two Creole houses with authentic decorative roofline friezes, in a lush green setting, you'll have a superb view of the cirque, and enjoy the most authentic of Creole lunches.

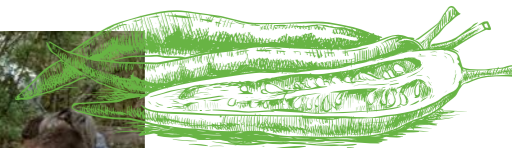
**Contact:**  
8B, chemin 3 mares  
97413 Cilaos  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 67 94 50



## 5 SPIRULINA AND ITS 1,000 BENEFITS

Do you want an energy boost, to sleep better, experience increased serenity and concentration, or are you just curious about nature's treasures? Come and discover "the foodstuff of the century" in the highlands of Sainte-Marie! Meet the dynamic Catherine for a unique tour of a place that is often kept secret: Run Spirit Aquaculture Farm. They grow a unique product, with almost magical nutritional properties, which is 100% local: Spirulina. From the cultivation ponds to the laboratory, you will discover the different stages in producing this blue-green micro-algae and its many virtues. Then comes the tasting time! In a glass, in butter, or with fresh lemon juice, Spirulina has some surprises in store for you. After this enjoyable visit, you won't be able to do without it!

**Contact:**  
70, chemin de Ligne – Bois Court  
97438 Sainte-Marie  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 10 55 35



## TAKE A LOOK AT THE INCREDIBLE MARKET STALLS

Reunion Island has its fair share of delicious fruit, thanks to the Victoria pineapples, bananas and coconuts that grow all year round! What's more, each season has its own vitamin-rich delights: lychees, mangoes and papayas in December and January, passion fruit from March to May, and in June it's time to harvest the guava! Jackfruit, breadfruit, longans, tamarind, tangor, carambola (star fruit) and pitaya... Don't miss the island's most unique fruit, nor the "lontan" (traditional) vegetables!

To find out more, you'll need to head to the markets. There, you'll be able to get the full experience of daily life on Reunion Island, and an excellent introduction to local cuisine. As you stroll past the colourful market stalls, you'll be dazzled by the citrus fruits and bringelles (aubergines), which seem to call out to you: Eat me! Eat me! Eat me!

Feel free to take in the atmosphere and enjoy the countless scents that tickle your nostrils as you walk around the market: spices, fruit, vanilla, geranium, turmeric... All your senses will be heightened!



### THE MYSTERIES OF THE VETIVER

In the expert hands of Didier, one of the last vetiver farmers on the island, this wooded grass can be transformed into real treasures, prized by the greatest perfumers, used to make parasols and even... moth repellent bundles! How? To find out more, head to Far-Far de Bézaves, in the highlands of Saint-Joseph, where you will be getting your hands dirty, from planting to harvesting, pruning using a sword, for an authentic experience of the history of this centuries-old crop. At the heart of this farm which also grows sugar cane, "Bourbon Pointu" coffee and turmeric, all the secrets of the vetiver are revealed. Finally, you will have the opportunity to enjoy a cassava cake and caramel cream with rouroute\*, followed by real Bourbon Pointu coffee. There couldn't be a better way to bring this authentic and fragrant visit to a close!

\*arrow root

Contact:  
205, rue Edmond Albius – Bézaves  
97480 Saint-Joseph  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 19 97 93

MORE INFO ABOUT  
VETIVER



### SPOTLIGHT

Foodies will never be disappointed here as the Bourbon vanilla is the best in the world! If you take a tour of one of the plantations, you can find out more about this exceptional product, unique to Reunion Island.

#### UNIQUE BLUE VANILLA

We found pods that are unique in the world right at the foot of the volcano, in Saint-Philippe! Nicole and Aimé's blue vanilla does not need any cooking and, after two years of maturing, its pods remain alive and are 100% edible. Just like a great wine, they continue to improve over time and the aromatic qualities make it an exceptional product that has won many awards and is appreciated by the greatest chefs. On a tour of the workshop, the secrets of this high-quality product will be revealed and you will be invited to a tasting of homemade macerated rum.

Contact:  
7 RN2 Le Tremblet  
97442 Saint-Philippe  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 37 03 99

MORE INFO ABOUT  
BOURBON  
VANILLA



#### BOURBON POINTU COFFEE

Grand-Coude is definitely a place of choice for exceptional gourmet delights as this is where one of the best coffees in the world is grown! At the dawn of the new millennium, Jacques and Marie-Claude created Laurina, another name for the Bourbon Pointu coffee. This endearing couple will take you through the unique history of the plant in a small museum with typical Creole architecture, and then you will be taken to the coffee trees to learn all about their production, where everything is done by hand. You won't need to read your coffee grounds to predict that you'll experience a whole range of emotions at the Maison du Laurina.

Contact:  
24 chemin de la Croizure  
Grand Coude - 97480 Saint-Joseph  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 03 54 78  
+262 (0)6 92 68 78 72

MORE INFO ABOUT  
BOURBON POINTU  
COFFEE

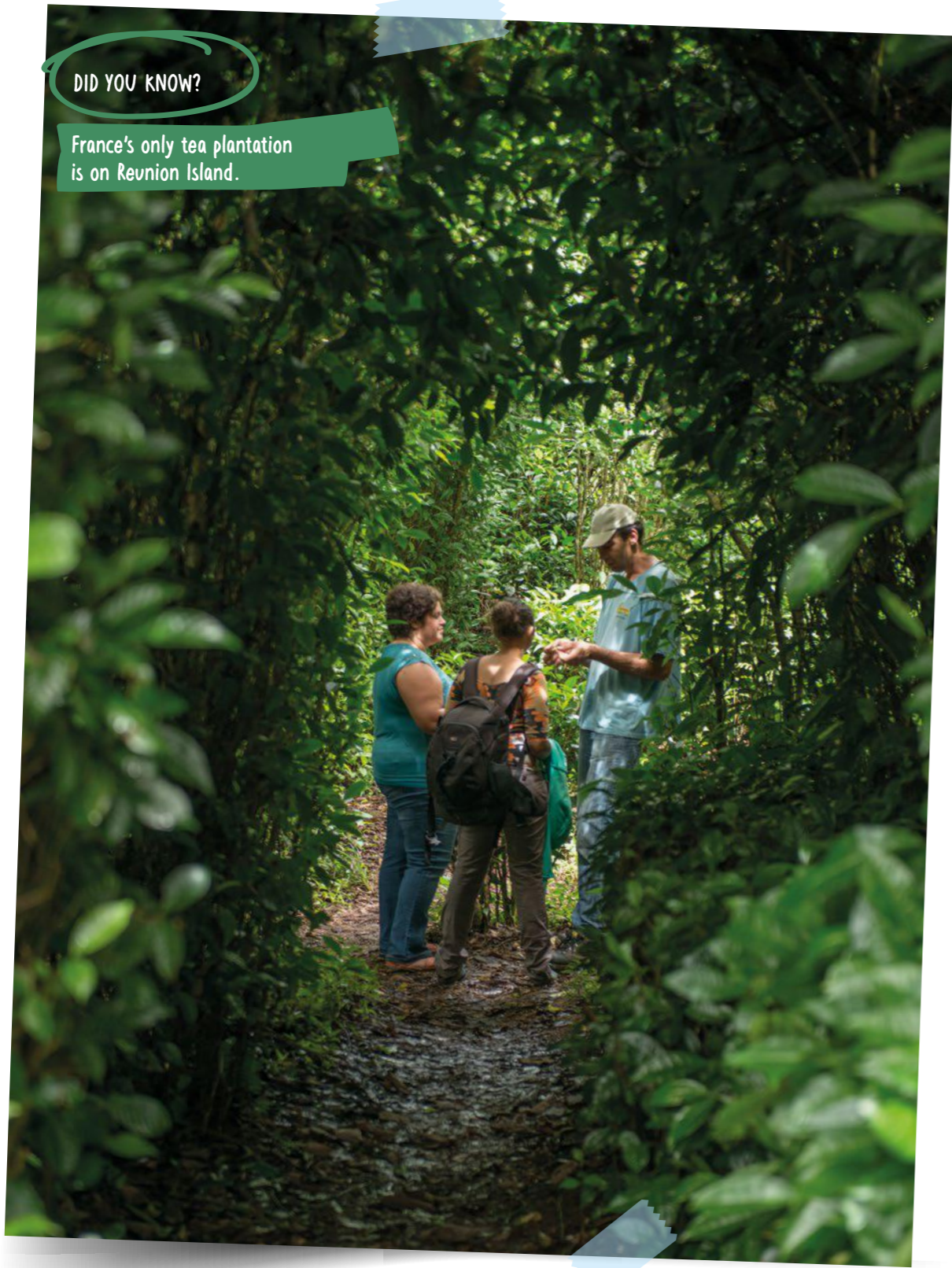


INTENSELY SPICY



DID YOU KNOW?

France's only tea plantation is on Reunion Island.



INTERVIEW

# “Emmanuelle Guichard



Co-creator of Labyrinthe En-Champ-Thé.



Come to Grand-Coude, in the highlands of Saint-Joseph, to a farm that is both beautiful and rare. Johnny and Emmanuelle, the only tea producers in France, will welcome you to their real plant maze, where you can rediscover your inner child in the shade of the giant tea plants.

**Tea leaves falling into the hot water of a Chinese emperor, the eyelids of a Buddhist monk transformed into a tea tree, there are countless legends on the topic of tea. Does Reunion tea have its own mythology?**

*The legends that come to mind are much less poetic... one of them claims tea miraculously helps people lose weight. Although it can help those who consume it regularly to lower their cholesterol and is a good addition to diets, it is unfortunately not a magic potion! (laughs)*

**On your farm, you also use geranium. Can you tell us about some of its virtues?**

*There are so many, where do I start? (Laughs) Geranium is perfect for lowering blood sugar levels. Those with diabetes should consume it regularly. As an infusion, as an evening herbal tea, it promises a restful night because it is also very relaxing. It can also be used in the bath! It is often recommended by inhalation for those who have the flu, and in a diffuser for asthmatics. It is good for the skin, especially for treating sunburn. It is increasingly found in cosmetics because it is restorative, protective, soothing, calming and purifying. Finally, it is a very good mosquito repellent. Used in a diffuser, it is very effective at keeping them at bay. We distil it and you can find it as an essential oil and a hydrolat.*

**Which place do you always want to come back to again and again?**

*Cilaos. The route to get there is already a journey in itself! (Laughs) And then, when you get there, you really feel like you're at the heart of Reunion Island, in a special place. With the lush vegetation, the waterfalls, it's the apotheosis of nature!*

**Tell us about a place that always leaves you speechless.**

*I'm hesitating... Le Pas de Bellecombe. Discovering this lunar landscape on the way to the volcano really moves me every time. But I've seen Cap Jaun in a photo and I think it looks beautiful too. I can't wait to see it "in the flesh".*

**Without taking into account specific tastes and colours, which Reunion speciality is unanimous?**

*Rougail saucisses (sausages)! It has sometimes been copied outside of Reunion Island but it's never the same. (laughs)*

**Of the 5 basic tastes (salty, sweet, sour, bitter, umami), which one would you attribute the most to the Ultimate Island?**

*Salty. Spices, delicious dishes, the sea... that's Reunion! But it is also sweet, with all the delicious fruit.*

**What would you advise those who visit the island to:**

**> experience Creole culture?**

*Discover Maloya. It is a dance, a musical genre a story and an atmosphere all rolled into one. Once you've discovered it, you're guaranteed to end up loving it. The people who dance the Maloya do not only dance, they are this dance! I would also recommend getting an experience of the religious diversity of the island because there is so much to discover.*

**> delight the taste buds?**

*You have to go to the markets, taste everything, take in the colours and flavours. And I also recommend you taste a cari with the locals, there's nothing more authentic!*

**> enjoy a moment of relaxation?**

*Roche Plate, set apart from the rest of the world, with its dense and spectacular vegetation and its flowing river.*

**What would you say to make their mouth water?**

*Reunion is a very rich land. Landscapes, flavours, discoveries. Here there is so much to delight the eyes and the tastebuds!*



INTENSELY

# Volcanic

On the Ultimate Island, two volcanic ranges take up the lion's share of the land: that of the Piton de la Fournaise and the Piton des Neiges, the roof of the Indian Ocean. But the term "piton" is more widely used to refer to the numerous mountains, peaks and summits of the island and, in particular, the multitude of secondary volcanic cones. Although these small pitons, visible throughout the island, did not have a founding role, they are the remains of the innumerable eruptions that shaped the island or of the tectonic activity that led to slides and collapses of blocks of the two main pitons.

## COSMIC LANDSCAPES

The successive lava flows of the Piton de la Fournaise descended into the ocean and enlarged the island, producing a pretty impressive result. The scenery of the wild south coast is a visual treat with steep basalt cliffs, lush green vegetation and the deep blue Indian Ocean. The lava road alone is worth the journey with its flows frozen for eternity. But the discovery of the Piton de la Fournaise is nevertheless highly recommended!

Before arriving at Pas de Bellecombe-Jacob, the starting point of the hike to the volcano, you have to cross the Plaine des Sables and its hardened lava ground and brown-orange scoria... You'll feel like you've landed on Mars! Without leaving Earth, you'll feel like astronaut Thomas Pesquet setting foot on the red planet: very, very lucky. Then, once within the enclosure of the volcano, you'll tread over the hardened lava and discover a landscape that is almost entirely

mineral, contrasting with the lush vegetation present on the rest of the island. The white marks on the ground will guide you straight to the fiery heart of the place...

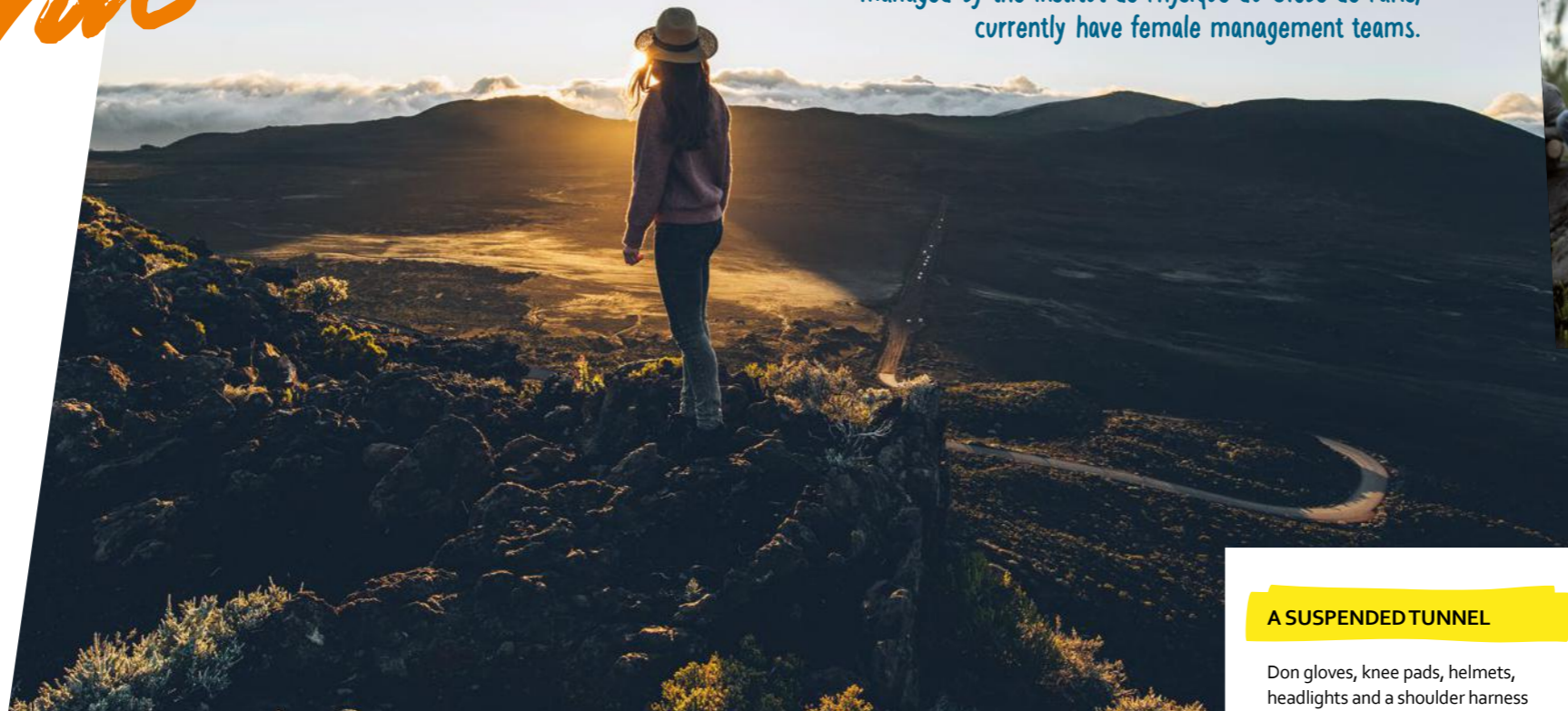
## AN ACTIVE VOLCANO

*Volcan la pété ! (Volcano erupting!)*  
If you hear this expression during your stay on Reunion, don't be afraid! It actually means you are one of the lucky ones, and that the iconic star of the island has woken up to dazzle its many fans once again with an unforgettable sound and light show.

The Piton de la Fournaise is one of the most active volcanoes in the world!

Two of the three French volcanological and seismological observatories, managed by the Institut de Physique du Globe de Paris, currently have female management teams.

DID YOU KNOW?



## SPÉLÉO-MUSIQUE (CAVING & MUSIC)

If you choose to go to the 2004 volcanic flow for a caving expedition when there's a full moon, you're in for an exceptional experience!

Why is that you may ask... Because you'll be watching the most incredible concert ever... Accompanied by Julien, your guide, and a quartet of traditional instruments, you'll travel through a lava tunnel dotted with almost organic shapes. When you reach a small cave, you'll turn off your light, and there, the first notes will burst into the darkness, the Creole rhythms filling the air. There, under the volcano, time literally stands still and you'll find your heart starts beating very fast! When you go back to the entrance of the tunnel, the magic will continue as the light of the moon reflects onto the dark lava flows, with the sea below, creating a mysterious atmosphere. "It is a unique and unforgettable moment!"

Contact:  
10, impasse du Fond de Rond-point  
97433 Salazie  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 11 50 13

## A SUSPENDED TUNNEL

Don gloves, knee pads, helmets, headlights and a shoulder harness and you'll be ready to dive, or rather to climb, into one of the largest lava tunnels of the island, born from an eruption of the Piton des Neiges, tens of thousands of years ago. At a height of 6 metres, you can tame the silence and darkness by following in the footsteps of Sébastien, your guide, through the "narrow passageway" or the "breakfast room" with its lava benches. In this mineral world, your sensations will be heightened tenfold. Tea tasting in the dark and a zipline descent will complete this extraordinary experience. Although some still walk the tunnel hoping to find Pirate Buse's treasure, it is undoubtedly on its walls, with reflections of precious stones and gold leaf, that the real treasure is to be found!

Contact:  
Ric à Ric  
46, rue Cour Vue Belle  
97422 La Saline Saint-Paul  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 86 54 85

colossal giant, about 500,000 years old and culminating at 2,631 metres, is active every nine months on average. Despite the incandescent lava and spectacular fireworks, it is non-explosive and so is harmless. During an eruption, access to the Fouque enclosure is forbidden but you can admire the lively show from Piton de Bert or from Piton Partage. At night-time, it's even more impressive!

To enjoy the power of nature all the more and better understand it, you can also see what it's like to be a speleologist in the lava tunnels and visit the Cité du Volcan, a treasure trove of knowledge located in the Plaine des Cafres.



> Vidéo

of the Piton de la Fournaise eruption in April 2021



# “Aline Peltier



Director of the Observatoire Volcanologique du Piton de la Fournaise (Volcano Observatory).

The first woman to hold the position of director of the “Observatoire Volcanologique du Piton de la Fournaise (OVPF)” on Reunion, Aline Peltier, lovingly watches over the “mountain of fire” that never sleeps. Observing a volcano also requires the sense of touch, to examine the texture of the scoria and collect rocks from the ground. She agreed to tell us more about her job and her very close relationship with the Ultimate Island and its “friendly” volcano.

**You regularly share your passion with young people, so what would you say to those who dream of doing your job someday?**

*In two words, those who want to become a volcanologist will need, “perseverance and sacrifice” because the studies are long and the places are limited, due to the fact that there are not many French volcanoes to actually study. But, there are about 1,500 active volcanoes on the planet so there are places to fill elsewhere. Choosing this path requires sacrifices but it is a dream job so it is well worth it.*

**What volcanological mystery do you dream of uncovering?**

*That’s easy, I’d love to be able to predict the exact moment the magma will arrive at the surface. It’s every volcanologist’s dream. Today, we are able to have an overall vision of the activity of a volcano, in that we know an eruption is imminent, but we do not know if the eruption will take place in one week or three weeks, for example. Although we can track where the magma is, its depth, before it comes out on the surface, we unfortunately cannot say how long it will take to emerge from the depths. And there’s a big difference between 20 minutes and a few hours! When we notify the prefecture, it’s impossible to say “the magma will erupt at 4:43”. One day perhaps...*

**“Do you have green fingers, nimble fingers or are you all thumbs?”**

*I don’t have green fingers at all. All thumbs, sometimes (laughs). But when it comes to the volcano and my work, I would rather say nimble fingers...*

**Can you describe your relationship with the Piton de la Fournaise?**

*It is an extremely strong bond. I fell in love with this volcano in 2003, while I was doing research at the volcanological observatory during my master’s degree. Then I did everything I could to get back to work here. It is a dream volcano for any volcanologist because it erupts very frequently and it presents fewer risks than other volcanoes in the world.*

**Apart from this volcano, is there anywhere else on Reunion that you love to go?**

*Mafate, because I hike a lot, and the hiking trails of this cirque are numerous and particularly beautiful. It is the ideal place for those who like to be close to nature. And for the best view of Mafate, the Grand Bénare is my favourite place. It offers an incredible panoramic view, with the Piton de la Fournaise in the distance.*

**What do you particularly love about this fiery island?**

*The fact that everything is mixed and so diverse: landscapes, population, climate...*

**Speaking of landscapes, is there one that particularly sets your heart “on fire”?**

*La Plaine des Sables, without hesitation. It is a place that is guaranteed to leave a lasting impression on whoever sees it. I’ll always remember the first time I saw it. I was really awestruck!*

**Which Reunion tradition do you find the most intriguing?**

*The Creole picnic. That probably comes from my love of food (laughs). It’s a tradition I particularly like because it is the perfect example of this notion of “mixture” that is so representative of the island.*

**Of all the legends and superstitions surrounding the Piton de la Fournaise, which one is your favourite?**

*To tell the truth, I’m not too keen on the legends about the volcano, they are too dark, too creepy! Damned souls blowing on the embers to fan the fire of the earth, sightings of a witch who eats naughty children (Grandma Kalle), the mouth of hell, legends about slavery... no thanks!*

”



“The eruption of 9 April, 2021”

INTENSELY

# Revitalising

IN HARMONY WITH  
THE NATURAL ELEMENTS

"The body is a womb for the soul", said the poet Khalil Gibran. Just like a moth orchid, the body indeed needs a cosy and safe home to flourish. You're in luck, because although Reunion is a land of adventures, it is also the perfect place to take care of your body and mind.

The soothing virtues of its heavenly beaches and peaceful cirques don't need to be proven.

It is also home to numerous wellness venues, where you can unwind and take care of yourself.

So, treat yourself to a relaxing break! After all, everyone deserves a bit of pampering every once in a while!

NOT-TO-BE-MISSED  
"INITIATIKYOGA"  
ONLINE YOGA LESSONS

On her YouTube channel, Sandra Grande offers free yoga classes on her YouTube channel, live from Reunion Island.

Join her for a Vinyasa Flow Yoga Solar Session at dawn and start the day on the right foot! Suitable for all levels.



A FAVOURITE

## LAZING UNDER THE COCONUT TREES

There's an unexplained phenomenon on the island with a thousand faces: its irresistible beaches make you want to burst into song! Just picture this... your feet are sinking into the fine sand, a soft trade wind is brushing your skin, caressed by the warm sun and then you dive, finally, into the refreshing waters of the lagoon. There you go. Makes you want to sing, doesn't it? With its 200 kilometres of coastline, Reunion Island has around 30 kilometres of white and black sandy

beaches, including 22 kilometres of lagoon, all preserved and protected by the exceptional surrounding coral reef. Wide banks of fine sand, the delicate shade of coconut and casuarina trees, and the lagoon with its turquoise-blue waters provide you with the ultimate relaxation and opportunities for a peaceful swim.

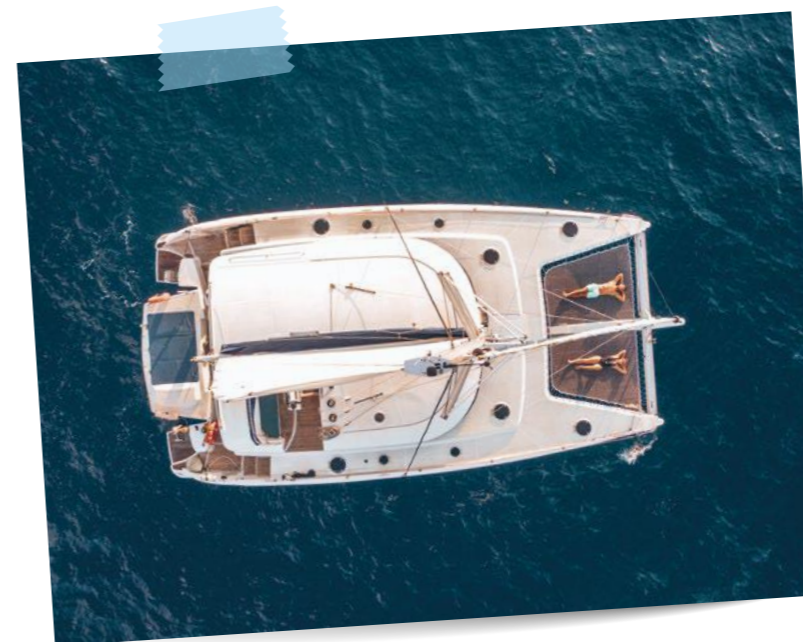
As the sun goes down, look off into the blue horizon and admire the sky as it changes colour.



## THOUGHTS AS LIGHT AS AIR

With its spectacular rocks, its 3 GR (Grande Randonnée) hiking trails, its landscapes like paintings, its fiery volcano, its fairy-tale forests and its waterfalls that seem to cover the rock face with lace, Reunion Island is a true paradise for hikers... or even for occasional walkers!

So, while you're hiking on the island, just let your thoughts wander and blossom like the foliage of the Flamboyant trees in December!



## BESPOKE TREATMENTS

Beauty institutes, spas, fitness centres and thermal baths in Cilaos... the hardest thing is to choose between them! You can relax with your significant other in a private jacuzzi, flush away toxins and tension in a steam room, invigorate yourself in a hydromassage shower or awaken your senses with aromatherapy.

Vanilla, vetiver, ylang-ylang and coconut are just some of the natural treasures of the Indian Ocean on the programme, so you can take full advantage of their benefits and whisk your senses away on a journey! Passion fruit wrap, pineapple and papaya scrub, coconut, bamboo or argan oil massage or spice masks transport you to parallel universes where you'll feel the sweetest sensations on your skin!

Come to one of the island's wellness centres and treat yourself to some pampering, inhale, exhale and just let yourself be carried away.



"Vanilla flower"

INTERVIEW

“TAM”

Creator of the Atelier  
Mémoire D’Sens.



At her olfactory workshop in L’Entre-Deux, Tam invites you on a journey of fragrances. This fragrance designer will share with you the techniques of making magical scents and the history of raw materials through the different eras. She will give you advice on the essences that match your personality and even help you create an elixir that is perfectly tailored to you, and you only. Bespoke fragrances, showcasing the essential oils of the Ultimate Island, prized by the greatest perfumers. **Tam agreed to share her passion and her favourite aromas with us.**

**Where did your interest in fragrances first come from?**

*My childhood memories of Reunion Island. When I came to the island, I always felt like my nose was full of scents. The scents of sea spray in Saint-Leu and the unique fresh scent of L’Entre-Deux, mixed with the scent of flowers that I could not identify at the time (looking back, they must have been the flowers of mandarin trees and grapefruit) remain firmly rooted in my memory. These memories of fragrances first led me to collect small miniature vials. Then, my sensitivity, along with chance happenings in life and random meetings, led me to create perfumes and develop this workshop.*

**“Au pays parfumé que le soleil caresse” (“In the fragrant land that the sun caresses”), is the beginning of the poem “À Une Dame Créole” that Charles Baudelaire wrote in 1841 on Reunion Island. What does this “fragrant land” mean to you?**

*I love this poem. This “fragrant land” means so much to me! In particular, the idea that a tropical island can be created from the humidity of the stone and the strength of the waves. Reunion has a wild side, with the scent of sea spray and then the more mineral scent which is very much present in the south of the island, around the volcano. But it also has something very feminine about it, with the aromas of jasmine, datura flowers and the*

*intoxicating ylang-ylang scent, which bring a real touch of sensuality. Baudelaire must have been fascinated by all the scents of this Creole garden he describes so beautifully!*

**What do you think is the most enchanting fragrance on the island?**

*The scent of ylang-ylang.*

**Which scent would you like to bottle?**

*My daughter’s scent. Like a dainty version of Jean-Baptiste Grenouille (from the novel “Perfume”). I would like to be able to scoop up this essence from her skin with a little spoon. But there is another fragrance, one that’s very particular, which intrigues me and that I would like to capture: that of a wet pebble.*

**Can you give us two fragrances of Reunion that you think make the perfect match?**

*The scents of vetiver and ylang-ylang.*

**Where do you find your inspiration on the island?**

*In the highlands, after a beautiful hike. At the top of Dimitile, especially in the wild south, facing the sea. Generally speaking, the rock faces and wild nature inspire me.*

**For you, where can you find the ultimate holiday scent?**

*At the beach. I am not talking about monoi oil or the smell of sunscreen, but rather the “salty” scents, which are typical*

*of the seaside. The beach has the scent of sand and salt that mingles with the heat of the sun. When I am asked to create a perfume, I am often asked to reproduce the fragrance of the “coast”.*

**Who would you like to come face-to-face with on a walk?**

*With Charles Baudelaire of course! He was a big part of my teenage years. His melancholic, dreamy, romantic side, but also his very dark side, fascinated me at the time and continue to fascinate me.*

**You have great taste, so what would you advise those who visit the island to:**

- > take a breath of fresh air  
*Hiking in Mafate.*
- > treat a loved one with a romantic outing?  
*Walk along the small, rural footpaths, such as the wild south Coastal Trail that leads to Cap Jaune.*



# RELAXATION ACTIVITIES

# TOP 5

Even if the warm sun, the crashing waves, the pure air of the cirques and the friendly smiles from the locals of Reunion are already putting you into a state of complete and utter relaxation, there's nothing like a spot of pampering after a day of hiking.

So don't hesitate to push open the door to one of our havens of peace! Reunion Island is a real oasis, the ideal destination to relax. Here are five activities for the ultimate taste of paradise.

## 1 5-STAR WELLNESS

In Petite-Île, you can expect an exceptional experience at the Palm Hotel & Spa\*\*\*\*, the first hotel in the Indian Ocean to obtain the European Ecolabel, just above the iconic beach of Grande Anse. After a massage at the Akéa Spa, a hydrotherapy massage in the pool or a relaxing dip in the Jacuzzi, you can admire the sunset over the ocean, languishing on a four-poster bed on the sand, sipping a delicious cocktail of fresh fruit. Then, at the Makassar, you will taste dishes combining local ingredients and local produce for a true explosion of flavours. An idyllic moment surrounded by a tropical garden!

**Contact:**  
43, rue des Mascariens  
97429 Petite-Île  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 56 30 30

## 2 MESSAGE ON THE LAGOON

A relaxing massage on a paddle board, lulled by the gentle sound of the waves... A dream that can come true thanks to Didier! He will welcome you on La Saline beach for a moment of relaxation, to experience as a couple. In the shade of a beach umbrella, beach mats, deckchairs, cushions and special detox cocktails await you. To reconnect with your senses, Didier has concocted a programme called "É-PUI-SANT"...

- 1- You close your eyes, Didier's voice guides you to a more soothing, deeper, more relaxing breath.
- 2- You learn to massage yourself, by identifying acupuncture points to stimulate. Fatigue, stress, migraines, muscle tension... From now on, your expert fingers will be able to relieve all these ailments!
- 3- Your host will invite each of you in turn to lie on a floating massage table, with ergonomically designed cushions and a surrounding frame with drapes. All your worries will drift away into the waters!

**Contact:**  
La Saline-les-Bains and l'Hermitage  
97434 Saline-les-Bains, Saint-Paul  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 49 15 54



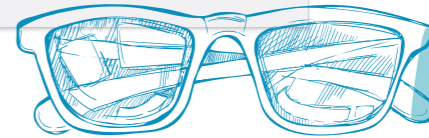
## 3 POTHOLING & MEDITATION

**Awaken your senses in a lava tunnel on Reunion.**

This outing is led by Sébastien and Aïtana. He's a potholing instructor and she's a qualified yoga instructor. This surprising duo will take you into the volcanic depths of Reunion Island for a unique sensory journey... You'll be equipped with a helmet and then guided into a kingdom of darkness and absolute silence, where all your senses will be heightened! The Bassin Bleu lava tunnel is the ideal volcanic backdrop for an introduction to meditation!

Located just minutes from the lagoon on the west coast, the tunnel in the Bassin Bleu is the result of a lava flow from Piton des Neiges and has created one of the largest underground galleries on the island. Dating back about 400,000 years, it is one of the oldest lava tunnels on Reunion Island. There are many chambers in the Bassin Bleu lava tunnel, each with different atmospheres and geological diversity, and the palette of colours ranges from red ochre to intense black. A visit to this site is absolutely enchanting!

**Contact:**  
61 chemin Bottard - appt 8  
97434 Saint-Gilles-les-Bains Saint-Paul  
Tel. +262 (0)6 92 82 37 42



## 4 A NIGHT IN A LUXURY HOTEL

Come to Saint-Leu to experience the serenity of a 5-star Relais & Châteaux hotel that is both elegant and discreet: the Blue Margouillat.

This establishment has a distinguished cosy atmosphere, dimmed lighting and panoramic views of the Indian Ocean. From the balcony overlooking the sea, you might even catch a glimpse of passing whales!

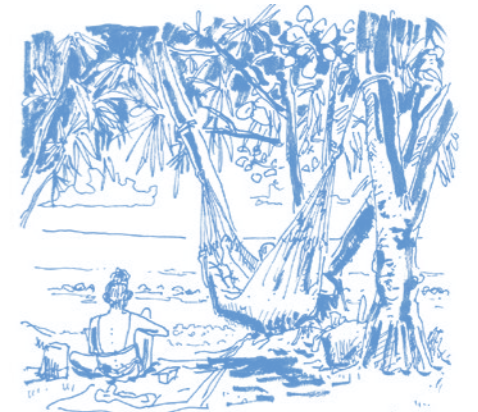
You can enjoy the sun by the heated pool, lying on a sun-lounger. Then you will enjoy delicious, homemade Creole products at the hotel's gourmet restaurant, which just happened to be one of the best on the island. With both eyes and taste buds satisfied, you'll then be ready to snuggle into a cosy cocoon, for a great night's sleep, filled with sweet dreams!

**Contact:**  
Impasse Jean Albany  
97436 Saint-Leu  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 34 64 00

## 5 SUNSET WITH YOUR TOES IN THE WATER

What is there to do with the last hour of daylight on the Ultimate Island? Just enjoy the moment, and admire the setting sun. The last rays draw a golden path on the lagoon, the water glistens, the soothing waves whisper delicately. You admire the changing sky as it goes from orange yellow to flaming pink in an instant, then the golden sun plunges into the ocean. Sitting on the sand, which is still warm, you then sip a delicious cocktail and just enjoy the moment. Alone on the sand with your eyes on the water, you could almost imagine French crooner Roch Voisine appearing before you. After sunset, the West Coast is filled with music, laughter and clinking glasses to toast to the beginning of a festive evening.

**It is time to experience the conviviality that Reunion is so famous for!**



MORE INFO  
ABOUT  
THE UNMISSABLE  
EXPERIENCES

# THE BEST OF THE ULTIMATE ISLAND

## Discover the biodiversity and UNESCO sites

Your tour will focus on the "Pitons, Cirques and Ramparts" of Reunion Island, listed as World Heritage sites by UNESCO. There is no doubt that these gems, protected by La Réunion National Park, will become your personal favourites. The natural setting is lush, endless and unique, the biodiversity exceptional, and the eco-tourism tour will encourage you to adopt an eco-friendly attitude.

- Explore the Cirque of Salazie and admire the legendary Voile de la Mariée waterfall.
- In Mafate, hike through the breath-taking natural setting and adopt the Mafate attitude. The cirque is only accessible on foot or by helicopter.
- In Saint-Philippe, two reserves can be discovered on foot or on horseback: the coastal path and the "Bois de Couleurs" forest in Basse-Vallée.
- Along the Route des Laves, ponder the forces of nature. The Piton de la Fournaise is one of the most active volcanoes in the world and the Plaine des Sables will leave you utterly speechless.

## Reunion Island guarantees authenticity, tradition and culture

Focus on the mixed culture and unique way that everyone lives together on Reunion. A most enticing, colourful and fascinating programme awaits you, filled with historical heritage, traditions, local products, spicy cuisine, and catchy music.

- Saint-Denis: visit the colonial mansions and religious buildings (a Tamil temple, mosque, pagoda, church) that portray the multi-ethnic character of the island.
- Saint-André: Don't miss out on the Bois-Rouge sugar refinery, a renowned rum distillery where you can learn all about the rum-making process.
- Tables d'hôtes, restaurants, farmhouse bed & breakfasts welcome you in a friendly and authentic setting. Keep an eye out for those that mention "cuisine au feu de bois" (dishes cooked in a wood-fired oven). Follow the delicious aromas and hurry inside. You absolutely have to try the "ti jacques boucané" (smoked pork and jackfruit), rougail saucisses (sausages), the traditional chicken cari, sweet potato cake and macerated, flavoured rum, among many other culinary flavours.

## Awaken the Inner Adventurer

Reunion Island is an exceptional venue for sports and outdoor leisure activities in complete safety, in an unspoilt environment. Activities are supervised by qualified professionals. They include hiking, horse riding, mountain biking, 4x4, canyoning, scuba diving, kayaking, rafting, paragliding, caving:

- The Piton des Neiges: the ascent of the Piton des Neiges, the highest point of Reunion Island (3,071 m) is an exceptional trek from Cilaos, Salazie or the Plaine des Cafres.
- Les 3 Salazes: this climb, very impressive in places, with classified tropical mountaineering terrain, is widely accessible and is supervised by an experienced mountain guide.
- The west coast: Enjoy the warm, clear waters all year round and admire the 3,500 animal and plant species that inhabit the waters of Reunion Island.

## Rejuvenation, Wellness and Clean Pure Air

After exploring the peaks of the island, enter the world of silence and see its wonders with your own eyes. Rejuvenate by the sea, awaken your senses in the pure primary forests, catch a glimpse of birds that are unique to the island. Dive into the rapids for the ultimate refreshing experience. Relish this realm of biodiversity: visit gardens and museums, natural sites, and let yourself be lulled by the trade winds.

- Saint-Paul: go kayaking, have a picnic at the heart of the Etang Saint-Paul National Nature Reserve, which has been recognised as a wetland of international importance.
- Maïdo: sunrise at the Piton Maïdo viewpoint with a panoramic view over the Cirque of Mafate.
- Be charmed by the magic of humpback whales between June and October, while respecting the Cetacean Code of Good Conduct for whale watching.
- Facing the ocean, admire the sunset and enjoy a fresh fruit cocktail.
- Les Makes: Add some sparkle to your evenings as you observe the Milky Way at Les Makes, and learn all about the magic of the stars.

# LABELS

- that certify excellence -

Hospitality, quality and excellence bring together tourism professionals to echo the Reunionese tradition of coming together. The certifications are a sign of top quality and are there to help you prepare for your trip to Reunion Island

Professionals who are committed to offering you the very best.



As a reference brand, the "Qualité Tourisme Île de La Réunion" certification is a marketing tool for promoting professionals who have been awarded the certification. These professionals are committed to respecting the ten promises on the quality charter, which have been set depending on the sector, to help improve the quality of their services. Their top priorities are to ensure customers are welcomed with a smile, and that their needs are met.

### The sectors involved are as follows:

- Accommodation
- Restaurants
- Sports and Leisure
- Cultural activities
- Transport
- Craft shops
- Tourist Offices

## OTHER CERTIFICATIONS

Gîtes de France, Hébergement de Charme, Tourisme & Handicap, EU Ecolabel, Clef Verte, Esprit Parc National, Le Pavillon Bleu, Bienvenue à la Ferme, Clévacances, Qualité Tourisme™, Relais & Châteaux, Accueil Paysan, Maître-Restaurateur

Browse the list of all the certified providers:

<https://en.reunion.fr/organize/holiday-tips/labels/>

## ACCOMMODATION

Reunion Island continues to develop its hotel and tourist capacity, classified to French standards, dotted across the island and in unique places.



Rated hotels, luxury hotels, boutique hotels, unusual accommodation, tourist accommodation, eco-lodges, bed & breakfasts, holiday rentals and hiking gîtes, all at <https://en.reunion.fr/>



MORE INFO ABOUT ACCOMMODATION

### Top 5 unique accommodation options

For those who dream of a change of scenery, unique experiences and unforgettable places, to explore the Ultimate Island, you should know that there are close to a dozen unique accommodation options on Reunion: huts, yurts, trailers, transparent bubbles, hanging tents, igloos, etc. Here is a selection, just for you!

**1 - Kaz Insolite: Sleep in a transparent bubble.**

In Les Makes, in a forest of cryptomeria trees and endemic plants, at 1,500 metres above sea level, you are in for the most unusual night in a bubble!

**2 - Cana Suc: the authenticity of the highlands.**

Cana Suc self-catering and B&B accommodation in a traditional Creole style,

"dan'n tan lontan"(just like in the past), in Sainte-Rose, you will be welcomed into an exceptional, lush setting.

**3 - A road trip in a converted van.**

For three days, in a converted van, you will criss-cross the roads of the island to discover its wonders.

**4 - Terre Rouge: cryptomeria hut in the wild south.**

Looking for an exotic getaway in the Wild South of Reunion? Sleep in the huts made of cryptomeria trees and Terre Rouge basalt rubble in Vincendo.

**5 - Huts on an island: your accommodation on stilts.**

In La Rivière Saint-Louis, in a 14,000 m<sup>2</sup> park on the edge of a ravine between the sea and the mountains, five completely independent wooden huts on stilts are designed to offer guests a chance to stay at the heart of nature.

### Accommodation networks

**Gîtes de France**

Accommodation and restaurants  
Contact:  
Relais Départemental des Gîtes de France  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 72 97 81  
gdf974@gmail.com  
[www.gites-de-france-reunion.com](http://www.gites-de-france-reunion.com)

**Clévacances**

Accommodation  
clevacances@orange.fr  
<https://www.clevacances.com/en/>

Accommodation certified by

**Bienvenue à la Ferme**

Contact: Cellule Agrotourisme de la Chambre d'Agriculture de La Réunion (Agrotourism Unit of the Chamber of Agriculture of Reunion)  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 94 25 94  
j.francois.begue@reunion.chambagri.fr  
[www.reunion.chambagri.fr](http://www.reunion.chambagri.fr)  
[www.bienvenue-a-la-ferme.com](http://www.bienvenue-a-la-ferme.com)

Accommodation certified by

**Accueil Paysan**

Mobile: +262 (0)6 92 91 22 92  
paysanreunion@hotmail.fr  
<https://www.accueil-paysan.com/en/>

**Meublés de Tourisme (Furnished accommodation)**

The Parc des Meublés de Tourisme consists of a hundred units classified from 1 to 5 stars. Reservations made with the owners.

**Gîtes de randonnée (hiking gîtes)**

Tel. +262 (0)2 62 90 78 78  
resa@reunion.fr  
<https://en.reunion.fr/>

**Holiday villages**

**Le Village de Corail**  
Saint-Gilles-les-Bains  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 24 29 29  
villagecorail@cg974.fr  
[www.villagecorail.re](http://www.villagecorail.re)

**Le Village des Sources**

Cilaos  
Tel. +262 (0)2 62 31 71 39  
accueilvds@cias-sud.re  
[www.village-des-sources.fr](http://www.village-des-sources.fr)

To obtain professional rates for the services on the Reunion information and booking platform, we recommend you contact the destination management partner agencies (Alizoa Voyages, Anthurium Tourisme, Azot Tour, Bourbon Tourisme, Connections Réunion, Dream Off La Réunion, Horizon Réunion, Mille Tours, Papangue Tours, Réunitours, Sentiers et Découvertes, Terres Métisses, Yes we Can Travel).

<https://en.reunion.fr/organize/sorganiser-en/all-agencies/>





## HOW TO GET THERE?

### BY PLANE

Four airlines operate between France and Reunion with a flight time of eleven hours from Paris:

Air France: [www.airfrance.fr/en](http://www.airfrance.fr/en)  
Air Austral: [www.air-austral.com/en](http://www.air-austral.com/en)  
Corsair: [www.flycorsair.com/en](http://www.flycorsair.com/en)  
French Bee: [www.frenchbee.com/en](http://www.frenchbee.com/en)

### Reunion Airport

<https://en.reunion.fr/organize/getting-around/air-transport/>

### Departing from Europe:

Regular airlines, which service mainland France from the major European cities, can propose rates from pre- to post-routing for passengers to Reunion Island.

### BY CRUISE

Make the most of your day and experience a complete change of scenery, for brand-new thrills and some great discoveries.

### Fédération Réunionnaise de Tourisme

Tel. +262 (0)2 62 42 39 94  
[administration@frt.re](mailto:administration@frt.re)

## ENTRY PROCEDURES

For French or European Union nationals, a valid identity card or passport is sufficient. For nationals of other countries: valid passport, visa if applicable, and a return travel document or continuation of travel, according to the legislation in force.

### Customs clearance

Guide to customs clearance:  
[www.douane.gouv.fr](http://www.douane.gouv.fr)

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### INTER-ISLAND OPTIONS

Vanilla islands: Comoro Islands, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Reunion, Seychelles:

<https://www.vanilla-islands.org/en/indian-ocean-islands/>  
Island-hopping package: succumb to the charm of each of these islands with a fabulous Indian Ocean package deal. You'll discover some real gems. The destination management team can put together a bespoke package for you.



### HEALTH

In the same way as for departures to all tropical destinations, precautionary measures are to be taken. Passengers from endemic countries will need vaccinations against yellow fever and cholera. There is no risk of malaria on Reunion Island. Health services are available throughout the island, according to French standards. The Indian Ocean's medical platform will deal with emergencies.

Emergency services are provided by dialling 15 (medical emergencies).

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

All the outdoor and indoor areas of the airport, the sites and tourist facilities are, for the most part, accessible by and adapted for people with disabilities or reduced mobility.

### TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION

#### HOW TO PHONE REUNION ISLAND

- From mainland France: local ten-digit number.
- From overseas: country code +262 followed by the last 9 digits.

To reach a landline +262 2 62. ...

To reach a mobile +262 6 92. ...

or +262 6 93. ...

#### HOW TO PLACE A CALL FROM REUNION ISLAND

- Calling mainland France: the ten digits of the number you'd like to reach
- To another country: 00 + country code + area code + number you wish to reach.

### DRIVING ON RÉUNION ISLAND

You must have a French or international driving licence. The road network has almost 4,000 km of roads, including 140 km of dual carriageways, 720 km of secondary roads and more than 2,300 km of smaller roads. These roads allow you to cross the island in suitable conditions, and admire the beautiful scenery all around you. For driving, French standards apply, on the right side of the road, in application of the highway code.



### GETTING AROUND REUNION ISLAND

You are free to explore the island at your own leisure as the infrastructures meet European standards. Car rental, buses, taxis, chauffeur-driven cars, airport shuttle services, and tourist carriers provide transportation throughout the island. To reach the hiking trails, you can hire a different means of transport other than a car (4x4, motorbike, bicycle, campervan). Fuel is available across the island, at a fixed price.

Taxis are available at all times at the taxi ranks in front of the airport terminal and in the city centre. They will take you all over the island.

**Airport taxis:** +262 (0)2 62 48 83 83

International or local car-hire companies offer reliable cars and fair and trustworthy rental contracts (you can find them when you arrive, just outside the terminal building). Don't hesitate to book your hire car before coming to the island:

<https://en.reunion.fr/organize/getting-around/other-rentals/>

#### Chauffeur-driven cars:

A service offering vehicles with driver (VTC) will take you all over the whole island.

<https://en.reunion.fr/organize/getting-around/>

Tourist transport specialising in excursions and guided tours on Reunion Island.

**The Car Jaune** (Yellow Coach) network, public transport, serves the whole of Reunion island.

The network includes a Tourist line (line T) that links the two airports (Roland Garros and Pierrefonds) and takes visitors around the west coast of the island: [www.carjaune.re](http://www.carjaune.re)  
An urban transport network serves most towns.

### LANGUAGE

French, Reunion Creole.

## CREOLE GLOSSARY

*Allons bouger:* Let's go

*Bat karé:* Go for a walk

*Bonbon:* Savoury or sweet delicacy (chilli bite, banana bite)

*Bord'mer:* Beach

*Case:* House

*Dalon:* Friend

*Koman i lé?:* How are you?

*Kosassa?:* What is it?

*Kwélafé?:* What's happening? or What's new?

*Ladi lafé:* Gossiping

*Lé bon:* Ok

*Lontan:* yesteryear

*Mi aime a ou:* I love you

*Mi koné pas:* I don't know

*N'artrouv!:* see you soon

*Ousa?:* Where?

*Pilon:* Mortar for crushing spices

*Pokové?:* Why?

*Rougail:* sauce served with Creole dishes

*Zarlou:* treasure

## DISTANCE TABLE

(By the Route des Tamarins)

	Hell-Bourg	Beaches	The volcano	Cilaos	Roland Garros Airport	Pierrefonds Airport
	East	West	South-East	Centre	North	South
<b>Saint-Denis</b> Time	55 km 55 min.	37 to 51 km 28 to 35 min.	83 to 105 km 1 hr 08 min. to 1 hr 53 min.	105 km 1 hr 46 min.	10 km 10 min.	49 min.
<b>Saint-Gilles</b> Time	92 km 1 hr 23 min.		95 km 1 hr 25 min. to 1 hr 48 min.	75 km 1 hr 26 min.	47 km 38 min.	43 km 29 min.
<b>Saint-Pierre</b> Time	113 km 1 hr 53 min.	32 to 49 km 23 to 33 min.	46 km 52 min. to 1 hr 15 min.	46 km 1 hr 07 min.	89 km 1 hr 03 min.	6 km 4 min.
<b>Plaine des Cafres</b> Time	77 km 1 hr 23 min.	55 to 72 km 53 min. to 1 hr 03 min.	23 to 69 km 45 min. to 1 hr 22 min.	69 km 1 hr 37 min.	72 km 58 min.	29 km 34 min.
<b>Plaine des Palmistes</b> Time	59 km 1 hr 03 min.	66 to 83 km 1 hr 05 min. to 1 hr 15 min.	41 to 61 km 1 hr to 1 hr 05 min.	87 km 1 hr 57 min.	54 km 38 min.	47 km 54 min.
<b>Cilaos</b> Time	160 km 2 hr 40 min.	58 to 75 km 1 hr 16 min. to 1 hr 26 min.	92 km 1 hr 59 min. to 2 hrs 22 min.	-	115 km 1 hr 56 min.	40 km 1 hr 03 min.
<b>Hell-Bourg</b> Time	-	92 to 109 km 1 hr 23 min. to 1 hr 33 min.	78 to 100 km 1 hr 23 min. to 2 hrs 08 min.	160 km 2 hrs 40 min.	55 km 55 min.	128 km 1 hr 44 min.
<b>Saint-Philippe</b> Time	89 km 1 hr 35 min.	60 to 77 km 55 min. to 1 hr 05 min.	11 to 81 km 12 min. to 1 hr 55 min.	81 km 1 hr 47 min.	84 km 1 hr 10 min.	41 km 44 min.

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## REUNION ISLAND TOURISM BOARD

Ile de La Réunion Tourisme (IRT), Reunion Island Tourism Board, an institutional body and project manager for marketing this tourist destination, contributes to the implementation of the tourist policy decided by the regional council, in consultation with institutional partners and professionals.

With know-how and expertise recognised by the entities and territories of the department, this non-profit organisation (under the 1901 law), created in 2007, is responsible for the definition and implementation of the regional tourism strategy.

It promotes Reunion as a destination, by spreading the values of respect and sharing and takes an active part in the development of responsible tourism, respectful of the Reunion populations, their diversity, and the territories visited as well as travellers.



### ON REUNION ISLAND

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Immeuble La Balance, Bât. B  
CS 61087  
97864 Saint-Paul CEDEX  
Tel. +262 (0)262 90 78 78  
Contact: @reunion.fr  
<https://en.reunion.fr/>

### For partnership requests:

partenariat@reunion.fr

### For press enquiries:

communication@reunion.fr

### For influencers:

digital@reunion.fr

### INFORMATION AND BOOKING PLATFORM

Registration number: IM974110007  
Tel. +262 (0)262 90 78 78  
resa@reunion.fr

### IN EUROPE

**In Paris**  
10, place de Catalogne  
75014 Paris  
Tel. +33 (0)1 40 75 02 79  
irtparis@reunion.fr

### In Germany

Fremdenverkehrsamt der Insel  
La Réunion  
Güterplatz 6  
D-60327 Frankfurt a. M.  
Tel. +49 (0)69 97 323 171 0  
insel-la-reunion@reunion.fr  
[www.insel-la-reunion.com](http://www.insel-la-reunion.com)



## REUNION ISLAND TOURISM BOARD

Reunion Island

Tel. +262 (0)2 62 90 78 78

[contact@reunion.fr](mailto:contact@reunion.fr)

[reunion.fr](http://reunion.fr)

Paris Branch

Tel. +33 (0)1 40 75 02 79

[irtparis@reunion.fr](mailto:irtparis@reunion.fr)



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