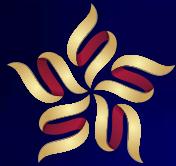


# silhouette

Inflight Magazine for Air Seychelles • January - March 2026

SLOTS - TABLES - STAR BAR - VIP LOUNGE - DANCERS - DJ & ENTERTAINMENT



**STAR CASINO**

EDEN ISLAND, MAHÉ

SEYCHELLES

*Simply The Best*

CASINO AND ENTERTAINMENT  
VIP SHUTTLE SERVICE AVAILABLE



Eden Plaza - **+248 467 3400** - Follow us on **Instagram**

**Dear Valued Guests,**

It is with immense pleasure that I welcome you on board today's flight. Whether you are travelling for business or pleasure, we are truly honoured to have you with us and thank you for choosing to fly with the national airline.

As we move past the festive rush, a renewed appetite for travel fills the air – whether you're planning a family getaway during the school holidays or a well-earned escape for yourself. As the nation's carrier, Air Seychelles is proud to connect you not only through our direct routes but also via seamless onward connections – think Colombo and Abu Dhabi – opening countless possibilities for your next adventure. Book early to secure the best seats and connections before peak demand sets in.

The New Year finds us energised and ready to keep conquering the clouds. In 2026, we will strengthen existing partnerships and explore exciting new destinations. Stay tuned to our press releases, and follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram to be among the first to learn about new developments and offers.

Whether you are travelling alone or with family and friends, rest assured that you are in expert hands. Our award-winning cabin crew are dedicated to your comfort and safety and look forward to taking care of you throughout your journey.

After your flight, you will receive a short survey – please take a moment to share your thoughts. Your feedback helps us improve our service and create even better experiences for you and our future passengers.

With this, I invite you to sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride. Once again, thank you for flying the Creole Spirit with us, and we hope to welcome you on board again soon.

My best personal regards,



**Captain Sandy Benoiton**  
Chief Executive Officer



“

**Opening countless  
possibilities**

”

# Features

**32**

## **The world's greenest city**

It has already succeeded in reframing the conversation. It has been proven that sustainability is not a luxury – it is a necessity, even in the heart of the desert.

**36**

## **Where culture meets lagoon paradise**

It is a place where urban life and natural beauty coexist, where culture is alive in every street and every meal, and where adventure awaits just around the corner.

**39**

## **Lively market scenes**

To meander around these markets is to connect with the city's essence – its past, present, and ever-changing soul.

**42**

## **A visual celebration**

The combination of a fantastic climate, awesome scenery, amazing wildlife and quite outstanding food and wine makes this a country where you truly can have a variety of experiences.

**46**

## **Where beauty knows no bounds**

To visit this island is to step into a paradise larger than life – a place where heaven seems to have touched the earth. And once you've been, you may find you never want to leave.

**50**

## **The freedom of waves**

Although some now carry compasses, the majority of mariners navigate by dead reckoning, based on the distribution and shape of islands on the horizon.

**54**

## **The vibrant and historic capital**

A dynamic city that offers a diverse range of attractions for travellers. From its rich history and culture to its shopping and dining scene, there is something for everyone.

**58**

## **Hong Kong street food**

From breakfast through to late-night snacks, here are ten of the best street food bites to fuel your adventures.



# Regulars

**01**

## Chief Executive Officer's message

**11**

## Kaleidoscope

Kaleidoscope: Local and international news; Top gadgets redefining travel in 2026; Nature's medicine chest in a bottle.

**22**

## Island of timeless charm

The lack of traffic, easy pace of life, the perfect scenery and not least the complete absence of tarmac makes the Island famous.

**27**

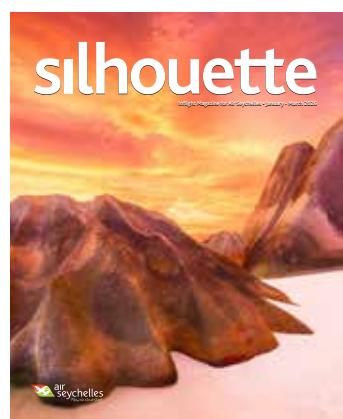
## Where faith meets art

Like a flower in perpetual bloom, it is both a prayer hall and a cultural monument – a symbol of noble achievement and a tribute to the memory of those who settled on Market Street.

**63**

## Inside Air Seychelles

Travel facts; Air Seychelles news; Route map and fleet; Air Seychelles global offices.

**Cover image:**

Beautifully sculpted granite boulders, a dramatic sunset at Anse Source d'Argent on La Digue Island, Seychelles.  
© shutterstock.com

# silhouette

**Founding Publisher**  
Mohamed Amin

**Editorial Director**  
Rukhsana Haq

**Editor**  
Tim Barnard

**Editorial Assistant**  
Rachel Musyimi

**Creative Designer**  
Sam Kimani

**Production Manager**  
Azra Chaudhry, London

**Editorial Board**  
Rukhsana Haq, Adrian Skerrett, Glynn Burridge

**Contributors**  
Kate Nivison, Adrian Skerrett, Marie-Cécile Sullivan, Peter Holthusen, Mambo Gichuki, Tim Rogers, Tony Smart, Samantha Clark, Margaux Schreurs

Silhouette is published quarterly by  
Camerapix Magazines Limited for Air Seychelles

**Air Seychelles contact:**  
Nathali Pillay  
Manager Marketing & Guest Experience | Commercial  
PO Box 386, Mahé, Seychelles  
Telephone: (+248) 4391000  
Email: npillay@airseychelles.com  
www.airseychelles.com

Camerapix Magazines Limited  
PO Box 45048, 00100, GPO Nairobi, Kenya  
Telephone: +254 (20) 4448923/4/5  
Email: creative@camerapix.co.ke

Editorial and Advertising Office:  
Camerapix Magazines (UK) Limited  
32 Friars Walk, Southgate  
London N14 5LP  
Telephone: +44 (20) 8361 2942  
Mobile: +44 7756 340730  
Email: camerapixuk@btinternet.com

www.camerapixmagazines.com

Correspondence on editorial and advertising matters  
may be sent to either of the above addresses.

**CAMERAPIX**  
MAGAZINES LTD.

© 2026. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the publisher. While every care is taken to ensure accuracy in preparing Silhouette, the publisher and Air Seychelles take no responsibility for any errors or omissions contained in this publication.



OWN A SLICE OF  
*Paradise*



FINE HOMES & LUXURY PROPERTIES. **FIND YOUR PLACE IN THE SUN**

[www.remax-paradise-seychelles.com](http://www.remax-paradise-seychelles.com)

[info@remax-paradise-seychelles.com](mailto:info@remax-paradise-seychelles.com)

+248 271 2210



# •CLUB LIBERTÉ• 5

CASINO AND RESTAURANT

SPICES  
RESTAURANT

**Club Liberté — Seychelles' premier *casino, restaurant, sushi bar, and nightlife destination*— invites you to experience the ultimate blend of luxury, excitement, and indulgence.**

Whether you're drawn by the thrill of the tables, the allure of gourmet cuisine, or the pulse of Seychelles' nightlife, Club Liberté is your number one place to be seen at on the island!

## **Live the VIP Experience at Club Liberté Casino — Seychelles**

Perfectly located beside the **Four Seasons  
Resort at Baie Lazare, Mahe**,

Club Liberté is easily accessible from Seychelles' most exclusive escapes the likes of Kempinski, Mango House, Canopy by Hilton, and within reach of both Constance Ephelia and the new Cheval Blanc.

Guests staying at Canopy by Hilton and Mango House can enjoy a **complimentary daily shuttle** to and from the casino for a seamless evening of luxury.

For enquiries, call or WhatsApp  
**+248 260 5459** or email

[marketing@casino-liberte.com](mailto:marketing@casino-liberte.com)

We can't wait to welcome you!

**SCAN & Install the  
Club Liberté App  
and stay up to date  
with our offers.**



**SCAN & BOOK  
Get 10% discount off  
Food & Drinks at  
5 Spices Restaurant**



## Feel the Thrill

Step onto our glamorous main gaming floor, featuring:

- Five live tables offering **Roulette, Blackjack, and Poker.**
- A wide array of latest slot machines for every style of player.
- Limits tailored to all budgets, with gaming conducted in **Seychelles Rupees.**



We accept major foreign currencies and Visa cards, with an ATM conveniently located onsite.

## Upgrade to Exclusive

For those who crave exclusivity, our private and semi-private **high-stakes** gaming rooms offer a refined and elevated experience, available in **US Dollars**. It's the perfect setting for discerning players seeking privacy and prestige.



## Dine & Discover

**5 Spices Restaurant**, our award-winning culinary gem, offers a world-class dining experience in a relaxed yet refined ambiance. Delight in:

- A sophisticated **à la carte menu**
- A fusion of **Creole specialties** and **international classics**.
- An "always-fresh" **sushi menu** praised among the best on Mahé.

Pair it all with our expertly crafted cocktails and curated wine list.

## Unwind & Enjoy

Open daily from 2 PM for slots and bar, 6 PM for table games and dining, until 2 AM.

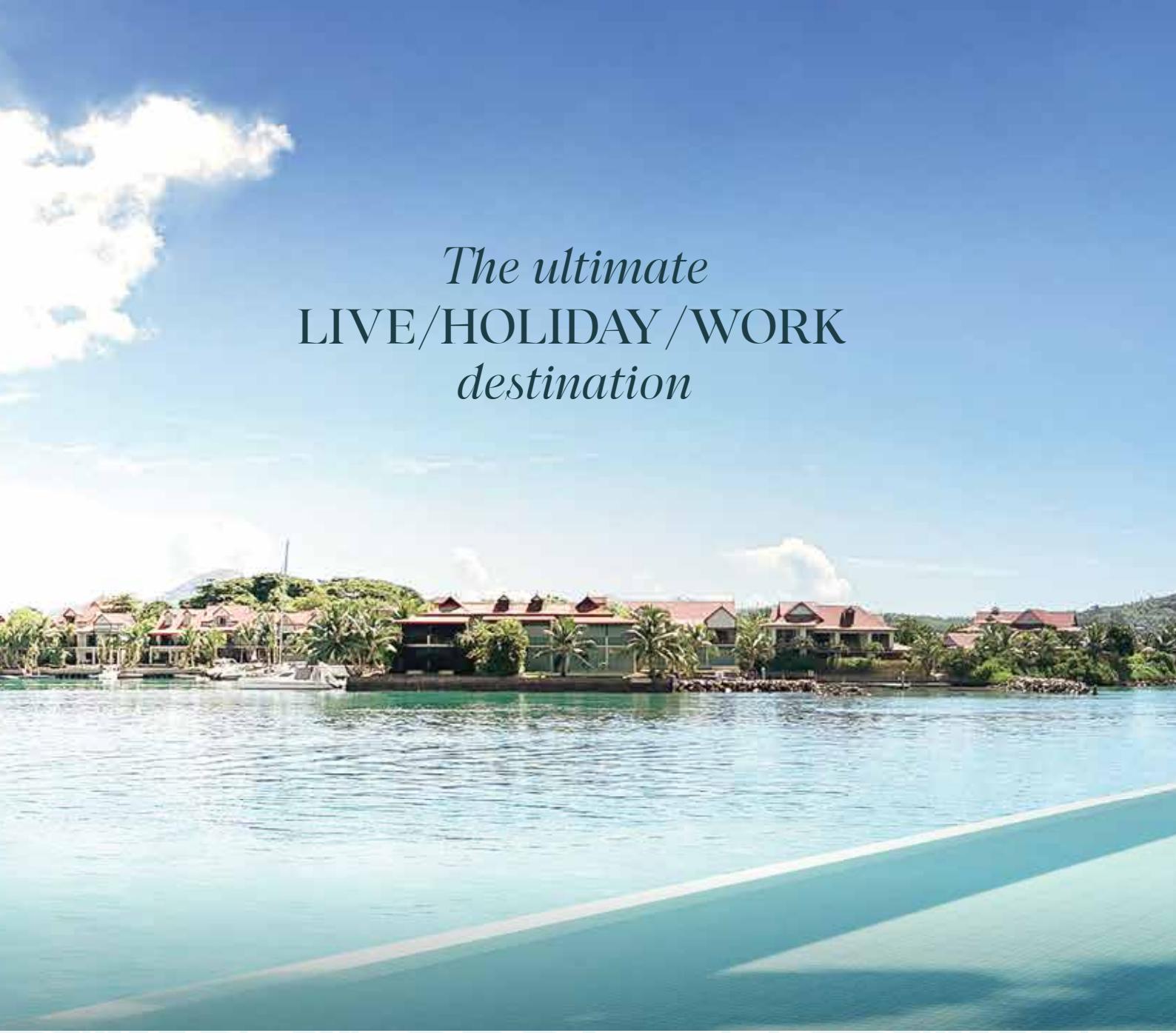
Bookings are highly recommended to secure your table at the restaurant.

## Important Info

Entry is for guests 18+ only. Casual dress. Valid ID required for casino entry.

View menus & book now at [www.casino-liberte.com/seychelles-restaurant](http://www.casino-liberte.com/seychelles-restaurant)





*The ultimate*  
**LIVE/HOLIDAY/WORK**  
*destination*

The first branded residential apartment project in Seychelles. A collaboration with the legendary Meliá group. Seafront living, breathtaking views, 5 star hotel services, world class facilities and global privileges.

**Elevated Waterfront Living from \$490,000**

(Units come fully fitted and furnished. Price shown includes all transfer costs)

\*The developer is offering a 5% p.a guaranteed net rental return for three years to the first 50% of buyers of units in the Rental Pool.  
The artist renderings, representations and Interior decorations, finishes, appliances, and furnishings shown are for illustrative purposes only.



Rental  
Guarantees  
Available

(Terms & Conditions  
apply)\*

*Become*  
an owner

*Completion mid-2026*

**Maryna Morin-Adeline**

+248 260 59 00

[maryna@theresidencesatmeliaseychelles.com](mailto:maryna@theresidencesatmeliaseychelles.com)

THE RESIDENCES  
AT MELIÃ SEYCHELLES



[THERESIDENCESATMELIASEYCHELLES.COM](http://THERESIDENCESATMELIASEYCHELLES.COM)

# Hertz®

P.O Box 600, Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles  
Tel: +248 4322 447 - Fax: +248 4324 111  
hertz@seychelles.net - www.hertz.com

# Hertz®



# REAL ESTATE



No. 9 Kingsgate Travel Centre, Independence Avenue, Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles  
t: +248 422 6088 | f: +248 422 6086 | m: +248 271 1711 | e: info@arrivaseychelles.com  
[www.arrivaseychelles.com](http://www.arrivaseychelles.com)



## International Conference on Leadership, Human Rights, and Reconciliation

Date: 5 January 2026

Venue: Victoria

The conference intends to provide a forum for researchers, academics, and professionals to explore leadership, human rights, and reconciliation via keynote speeches, presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities. This conference, hosted by several groups, aims to bring together specialists to discuss their areas of expertise in order to improve collaboration in the disciplines of leadership, human rights, and reconciliation. Its goal is to inspire and stimulate new ideas through various workshops and activities.

---

## International Conference on Multidisciplinary Educational Research, Teaching and Learning

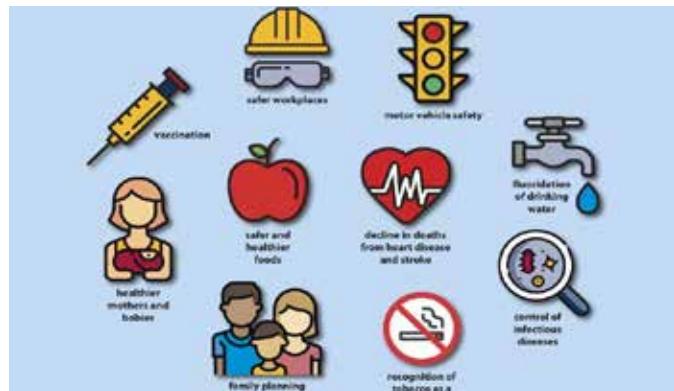
Date: 15 January 2026

Venue: Anse Boileau, Seychelles

The conference aims to provide a forum for educators, researchers, and other professionals to share information and promote the disciplines of educational research, teaching, and learning through keynote speeches, presentations, and networking opportunities. Students, educators, academics, and professionals will come together to share insights, encourage new ideas, and create collaborations in multidisciplinary educational research.

## 7th International Conference on Multidisciplinary Research

*Research and the Flourishing of Humanity amid Complexities*



## International Conference on Public Health Safety and Injury Prevention Policies

Date: 23 January 2026

Venue: Victoria, Mahé, Seychelles

It will provide an excellent opportunity for researchers, delegates, and scholars to interact. It is a source of inspiration. The primary goal of this expert-led conference is to help attendees overcome industry uncertainties and accelerate growth through actionable solutions, as well as establish career plans by networking with global scholars, researchers, business owners, academics, and legislators. Discover innovative ideas and compelling real-life case studies that will help you attract better possibilities.

---

## Bazar Domaine – Au Cap, Mahé

Date: Monthly

Venue: Domaine de Val des Pres Heritage Site, Mahé

The Seychelles National Heritage Resource Council organises cultural events such as Bazar Domaine, held once every month. If you want to experience authentic Seychellois Creole culture, this is the festival to attend.

The bazaar is known for its vibrant cultural performances and showcases talented artisans, live music, local artists, and an exceptional art exhibition. If you wish to learn more about Seychellois culture, heritage, and traditions, be sure to mark this event on your calendar.





### **Sheikh Zayed Festival**

**Date:** Daily until 22 March 2026

**Venue:** Al Wathba, Abu Dhabi

The Sheikh Zayed Festival promises to be one of the UAE's grandest cultural events. Named in honour of the UAE's Founding Father, the festival showcases the nation's heritage alongside global cultures through events, exhibitions, and performances.

Set against a backdrop of spectacular drone, laser, and fireworks shows, the festival combines Emirati traditions – from falconry and camel racing to handicrafts and folk music – with international pavilions representing countries from around the world. Visitors can enjoy live concerts, parades, heritage villages, and an expansive food bazaar offering Emirati and global cuisine.

With over 4,000 activities and a unifying theme of "UAE: Uniting Civilizations," the festival highlights the UAE's role as a bridge between cultures. Family-friendly zones, art installations, and educational workshops ensure that there's something for everyone.

### **National Day of Sri Lanka**

**Date:** 4 February 2026

**Venue:** All around Sri Lanka

Every year, Sri Lanka's National Day is celebrated with pageantry and patriotic pride, marked by official ceremonies and colourful military parades. The heart of the celebrations beats in Colombo, where the President hoists the national flag and delivers a nationally televised address to the nation.

In his speech, the President reflects on the government's accomplishments over the past year, acknowledges the challenges that lie ahead, and calls upon citizens to unite in honouring the country's journey of independence. A solemn two-minute silence is observed to pay tribute to Sri Lanka's national heroes – men and women whose courage and sacrifice have shaped the nation's destiny.

Beyond commemorating independence, National Day is a moment of reflection, gratitude, and national pride – a time to remember those who fought for freedom and to celebrate the spirit of a nation that continues to move forward with resilience and hope.



### **Bank Leumi Tel Aviv Marathon**

**Date:** 27 February 2026

**Venue:** Tel Aviv Yafo

The Bank Leumi Tel Aviv Marathon is one of Israel's most anticipated sporting events, set to return with its trademark blend of athleticism, community spirit, and coastal energy. Drawing tens of thousands of participants and spectators from around the world, it's often described as a 'party marathon' – a vibrant celebration that transforms Tel Aviv's streets into a sea of colour, music, and movement.

The event caters to runners of all levels with a wide range of race options, including the 5K, 10K, 21K half-marathon, and the iconic 42K full marathon. For younger athletes, there's even a Mini Marathon designed to encourage children to embrace the joy of running.

Open to participants aged 18 and above (or younger runners with parental consent), the marathon invites both seasoned runners and enthusiastic first-timers to take part in an unforgettable experience.



# Refuel. Reset. Relax.



Travel light to explore the islands, wait in comfort for your flight, or freshen up after hotel check-out — all without a boarding pass.

Located before immigration at Seychelles International Airport, Payanke is open to all travellers, regardless of airline or class.

Enjoy



**Baggage Storage**  
Explore or island-hop hands-free



**Shower Facilities**  
FRESHEN UP ON YOUR SCHEDULE



**Wi-Fi & Air-conditioned Seating**  
Stay connected and cool



**Food & Drinks**  
Available a la carte or as part of your package

Walk in or pre-book at [payanke@airseychelles.com](mailto:payanke@airseychelles.com)





### **A Celebration of Harvest and Gratitude (Thai Pongal)**

**Date: 14-17 January 2026**

**Venue: Colombo, Kandy and Batticaloa**

The Thai Pongal festival is a vibrant Tamil celebration that honours the Sun God for a bountiful harvest. Families prepare *Pongal*, a sweet dish of newly harvested rice, lentils, and jaggery, symbolising prosperity.

Homes are decorated with colourful *kolams* (rice-flour designs), and communities gather for prayers, music, and dance. In Kandy, Hindu temples host rituals over four days, while streets fill with food stalls and the lively Grand Thai Pongal Procession, complete with floats and musicians.

Along the eastern coast, Batticaloa celebrates with beachside food booths, concerts, and a spectacular fireworks display that lights up the night sky – the perfect finale to this joyous festival of thanks.

### **Joburg Film Festival**

**Date: 3 – 8 March 2026**

**Venue: Johannesburg**

The Joburg Film Festival 2026 returns as one of Africa's most dynamic celebrations of cinema, bringing together filmmakers, industry leaders, and film enthusiasts from across the continent and beyond. Dedicated to the art of storytelling through film, the festival offers a platform for both emerging and established voices to showcase their creativity and vision.

The festival is a premier showcase of innovation and excellence in African filmmaking. Screenings, masterclasses, and panel discussions will span multiple venues across Johannesburg and Gauteng, transforming the city into a vibrant hub of cinematic energy.

With a focus on promoting cultural tourism and the global exchange of ideas, it celebrates not just films but the power of storytelling to shape perspectives and connect communities.



### **Mauritius National Day**

**Date: 12 March 2026**

**Venue: All around Mauritius**

The island nation of Mauritius proudly celebrates two defining moments in its modern history – its independence from Britain in 1968 and its transition to a republic in 1992. The 2026 Independence Day marks yet another year of unity, pride, and progress for this vibrant Indian Ocean nation.

In the days leading up to the celebration, the island comes alive with the colours of the national flag – red, blue, yellow, and green – fluttering across government buildings, schools, businesses, and private homes. Communities gather for ceremonies, parades, and cultural performances that honour the country's rich heritage and diverse population.

Official events, typically held in the capital, Port Louis, feature the raising of the national flag, the singing of the anthem, and stirring speeches celebrating Mauritius' achievements and aspirations.

### **Eid ul-Fitr**

**Date: 20 March 2026**

**Venue: Maldives**

Across the islands, the morning begins with congregational prayers in mosques and open grounds, where men and women gather in crisp new attire, offering thanks and alms so everyone can share in the day's blessings.

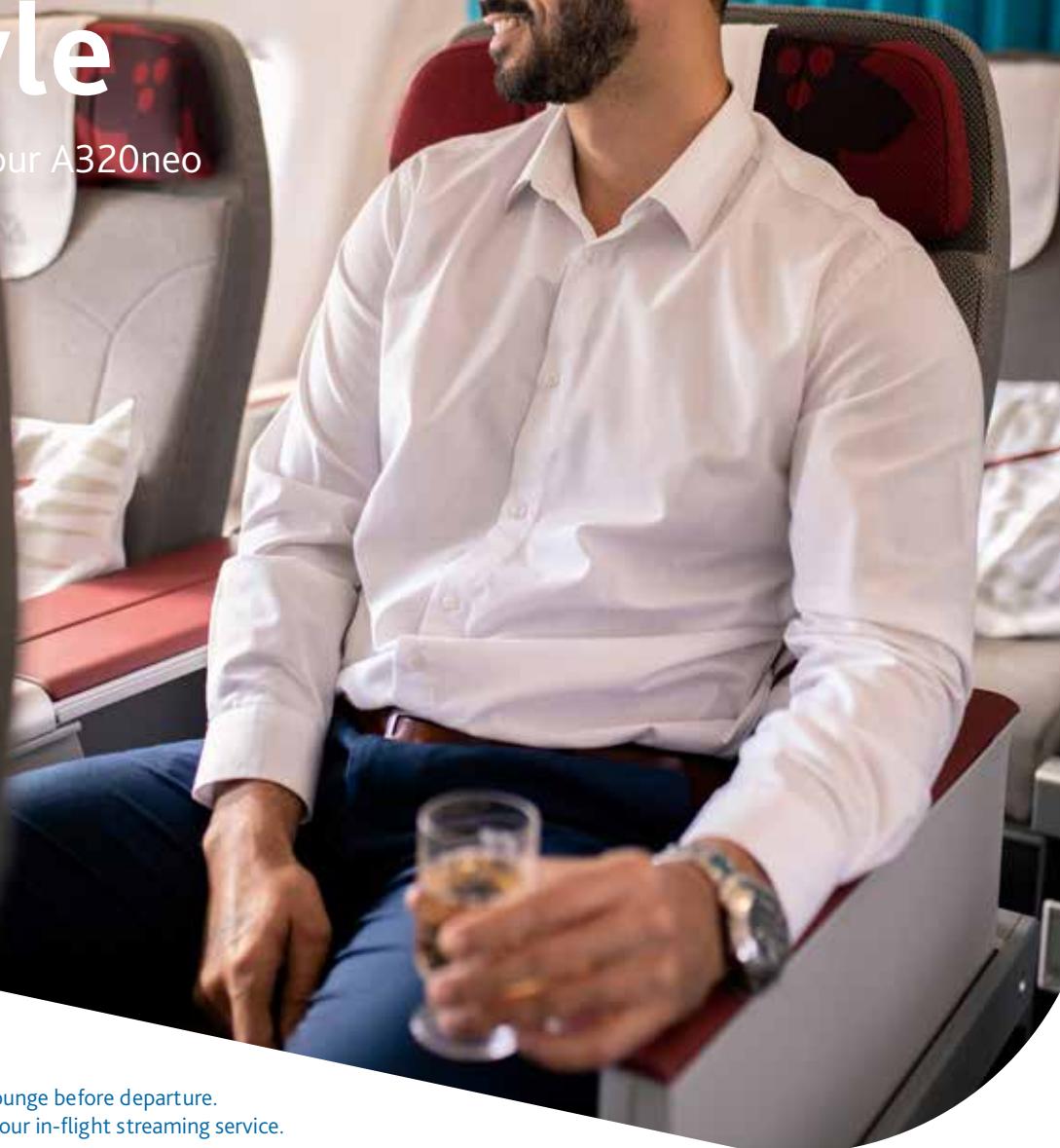
Soon after, island communities come alive with colour, rhythm, and celebration. The steady beat of *Bodu Beru* drums echoes through the atolls, children laugh in playful *Fenkulhi* water games, and the symbolic *Bodu Mas* – a giant fish woven from palm fronds – is paraded through the streets, honouring the nation's fishing heritage.

Homes welcome friends and family with aromatic curries, rice dishes, and sweet treats, while resorts extend the festivities with traditional performances, special feasts, and cultural showcases for guests.



# Journey in Style

Business Class on our A320neo



Receive access to our Premium Lounge before departure.  
Recline and relax whilst enjoying our in-flight streaming service.

Savour a blend of local cuisine and internationally-inspired dishes and experience the convenience of our Dine on Demand service.

 **air  
seychelles**  
*Flying the Creole Spirit*



Book your ticket on [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)  
or download our app



Travel in 2026 is set to be smarter, lighter, and more connected than ever. From gadgets that keep your devices charged to trackers that make sure your luggage never goes missing, here are ten must-have tech essentials to pack for your next trip.



← **1. High-fidelity noise-cancelling headphones**

The Sony WH-1000XM6 and similar models are expected to set the standard for travel headphones, offering world-class noise cancellation, crystal-clear calls, and immersive sound. Perfect for long-haul flights or busy terminals.



→ **2. A high-capacity, fast-charging power bank**

Modern power banks with 35,000 mAh or more will charge not only your phone but also tablets and laptops. Look for models with USB-C Power Delivery, multiple built-in cables, smart safety features, and a digital display to keep track of battery status.

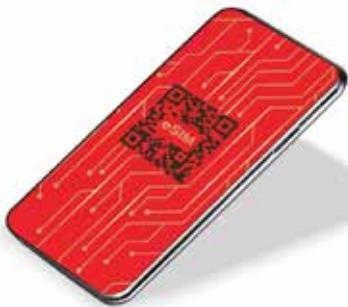


← **3. A universal GaN travel adapter**

Say goodbye to carrying multiple adapters. Compact GaN (Gallium Nitride) adapters, such as the Verbatim GaN III, can charge up to five devices at once through AC, USB-C, and USB-A ports.

#### → 4. Smart luggage tracker

Lost luggage is less of a worry with trackers like the Apple AirTag, Samsung Galaxy SmartTag, or Tile. These GPS and Bluetooth tags send real-time updates to your phone and often include extras like alarms, QR codes for contact info, and community search support.



#### ← 5. Your smartphone with a global eSIM

eSIMs make travel simpler and safer by eliminating the need for physical SIM cards. They're built into your phone, less prone to loss or damage, and harder to remove if your device is stolen. Just check that your carrier supports eSIM before you go.



#### → 6. A waterproof E-Reader

The latest Kindle Paperwhite is slim, lightweight, and waterproof – perfect for poolside or beach reading. With a glare-free 300ppi display, adjustable lighting, and wireless content downloads, it feels like carrying an entire library in your hand.



#### ← 7. Portable translation device

Pocket-sized translators now support dozens of languages, making it easy to communicate with locals, read menus, or navigate new cities without relying solely on apps or internet access.



#### → 8. Compact travel drone

Foldable drones with 4K cameras fit easily into a backpack, letting you capture stunning aerial shots of your adventures without bulky gear. Many now feature obstacle avoidance and automated flight paths.



#### ← 9. Wearable health monitor

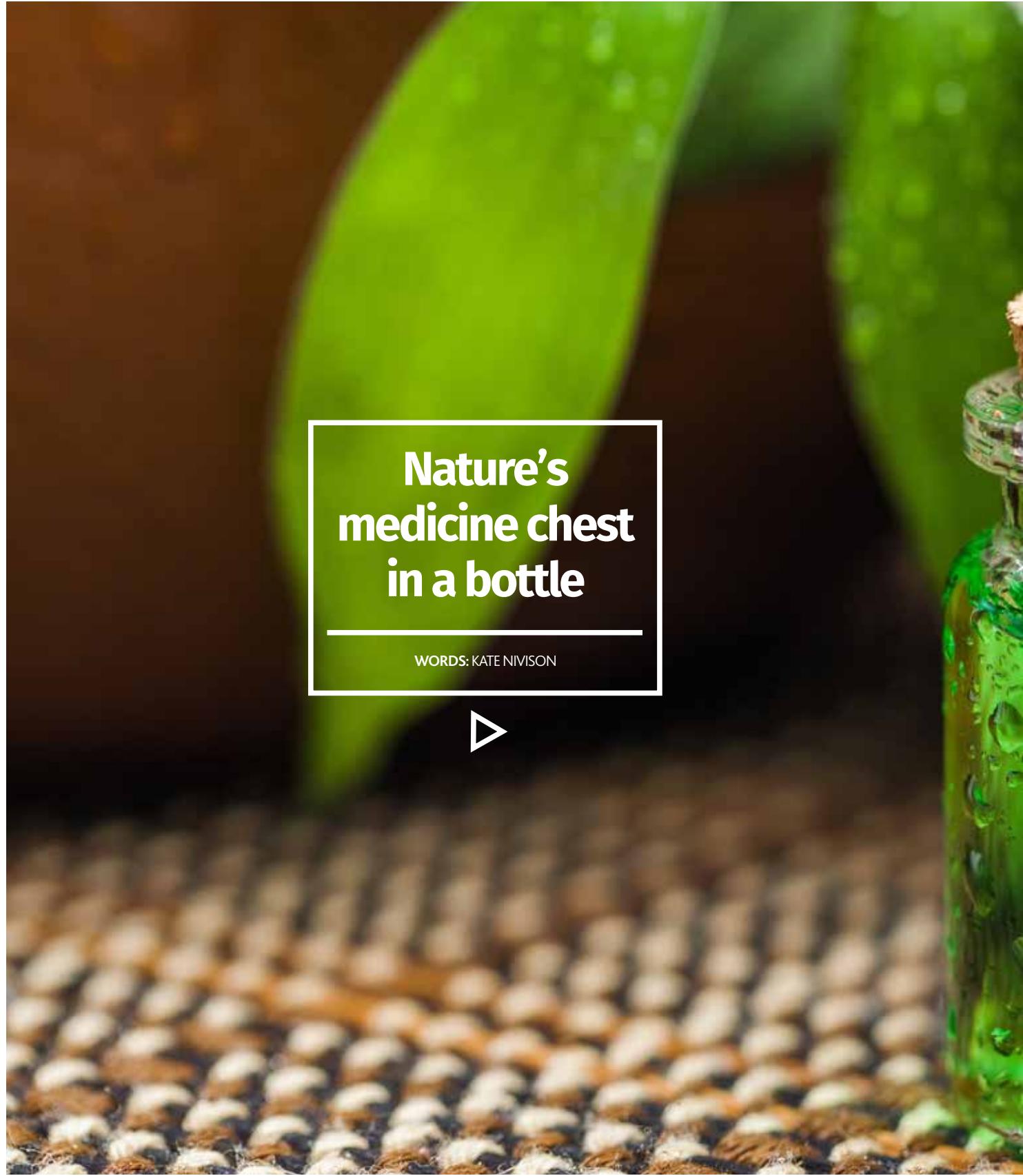
Smartwatches and health bands track your fitness, sleep, and even blood oxygen levels – handy for long flights, high-altitude destinations, or simply keeping well on the road.



#### → 10. Portable UV steriliser

Compact UV sterilisers can disinfect your phone, passport, or hotel surfaces in minutes – ideal for hygiene-conscious travellers.

Travel gadgets in 2026 are all about making trips smoother, safer, and more enjoyable. Whether you're staying connected, entertained, or simply making sure your bags arrive with you, these smart tools will make every journey a little easier.



# Nature's medicine chest in a bottle

---

WORDS: KATE NIVISON

---







Delicate and fragrant, these blossoms are the source of famed tea tree oil.

**W**ouldn't we all like to travel light – or at least a bit lighter? With so many improvements in travel gear in recent years, you'd think shedding a few kilogrammes from the wheelie case or backpack has never been easier. Yet what so often breaks the camel's back – or more likely yours – is the medical kit: all those bottles, creams, sprays, tubes, pills, and potions now deemed essential for the average traveller. For a family, just triple it.

So perhaps it's time to take a tip from some real experts at travelling light – the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. When British ships began to arrive on their shores, the crews were often in poor shape after the long voyage – suffering from fungal infections, fevers, boils, ulcers, rashes, infected insect stings, sunburn, tooth abscesses and swollen gums, to name just a few.

They were reportedly offered a "cup of tea" for their ailments by the locals – though it wasn't quite the milk-and-two-sugars kind they were used to. It tasted rather odd, and some even thought they were being poisoned. Yet it soon became clear that their hosts' claims – that this brew made from the leaves of a certain tree could cure almost all their ailments – weren't far off the mark. If you didn't like the taste, you could apply it directly to the affected area, and if that didn't work, there were poultices and an oil, also made from the leaves.

As word spread, it emerged that several trees from the same family grew in various parts of Australia, and their leaves were used similarly. The one that produced the best "tea" and oil was eventually identified as *Melaleuca alternifolia*. However, calling it the Tea Tree is confusing with the China tea bush (*Camellia sinensis*). So they tried "Ti Tree" – until another, unrelated Ti Tree turned up in the South Pacific. As the reputation of the oil, in particular, grew as a handy "cure-all", it was decided to stick with "Tea Tree" as the official name under which the products of *Melaleuca alternifolia* could be tested and eventually marketed. That stage, however, was a long time coming.

*Melaleuca alternifolia* is related to the clove, myrtle, and eucalyptus families, which gives some idea of its pungent yet quite pleasant, medicinal aroma. With its fluffy white flowers, tall, slender shape, and narrow leaves, there's little to distinguish it from many native Australian trees. Its natural habitat is the hot, low wetlands of north-eastern New South Wales, where it prefers sandy soils. Since the remarkable properties of its oil became better known, it's now grown commercially around Wyrallah in New South Wales, where leaves are machine-harvested. The largest distillation plant and a research centre linked to the University of Western Australia at Perth are also located there.

These days, no one bothers with the original tea infusion – it's the distilled oil that's created all the interest. Although not yet formally accepted by the medical community, Tea Tree Oil (TTO) has been marketed for over 100 years by the alternative medicine industry, generating countless (if mostly anecdotal) success stories. It has many fans, particularly among holidaymakers and backpackers who like the idea of one tiny bottle of TTO replacing a dozen heavier, bulkier "just in case" products. After all, if your friends claim – and they do – that a single bottle can clear a blocked nose, ease sore throats and toothache, and stop itchy stings, blisters, and cuts from becoming infected (without stinging itself), why not give it a try? What's more, very few people react badly to it, even when used at full strength, and it doesn't have an unpleasant smell.

Naturally, with a product to which so many claims are attached, a little healthy scepticism is in order. Some websites list dozens of possible medicinal uses for TTO, while one lists more than that – and not just



A small, woody, cup-shaped capsule, just two to three millimetres wide, that holds a cluster of fine seeds.

the kind that plagued 18th-century sailors. The ABC of these claims starts with acne, takes in candida (thrush) and cold sores, races through *shingles* and ticks, and only halts at warts. The same source also recommends it as a stain remover, livestock spray, antifreeze, and air-conditioning disinfectant. One must surely wonder – what is in this stuff? And would you want to rub on or inhale something that's apparently great for killing fleas, nits, and even soaking nappies, when it hasn't yet been internationally registered as a medicine?

So first, the science. Tea Tree Oil is distilled almost exclusively from the leaves of *Melaleuca alternifolia* and is made up of over 100 components, "most of which have been identified", according to Perth researchers. Almost all of these occur in other plant oils, but not in the same concentrations or combinations. The two main ones are cineole (also a major component of eucalyptus oil) and *terpinen*. If *terpinen* sounds familiar, that's because it belongs to the *terpene* family – which includes turpentine, beloved by house painters for cleaning brushes. That may not sound encouraging, but other terpenes include beta-carotene (found in carrots) and *lycopene* (in apples and tomatoes) – both of which are good for you.

Researchers have conclusively shown that it's the *terpinen* in TTO that works against a wide range of harmful bacteria and microbes when applied to them on glass (*in vitro*) in a lab. Even *Staphylococcus aureus*, one of the worst bacterial offenders, succumbs to TTO in a laboratory dish. They've also shown that TTO penetrates the skin effectively, enhancing its antiseptic, antiviral, and antimicrobial properties. Testing on live subjects is now underway to prove its value for specific conditions – though, in effect,



The *Melaleuca* tree produces distinctive flowers that play an important role in supporting local ecosystems.



Thriving in open woodlands and coastal wetlands, the tree flourishes in warm, moist conditions.

humans have been testing it on themselves for thousands of years. Of course, fully verifying every claimed use under clinical conditions will take time.

Meanwhile, TTO is widely available in chemists, in pure oil form or added to shampoos, soaps, and creams. With the pure oil, you simply follow the directions on the tiny bottle, using it neat or diluted as advised. When applied undiluted, it should be used sparingly and never come into contact with the eyes. It must not be taken internally or decanted into plastic from the dark glass bottle it's sold in. For travelling light, it can replace mouthwash, antiseptic cream, sting relief, nasal spray, or inhaler, while also tackling toothache, most skin problems, and even, heaven forbid, bedbugs.

A lot of praise for TTO comes from those prone to cold sores and candida, but one potential use in particular has caused excitement. Many once-powerful antibiotics are losing their efficacy through overuse, and some bacteria have become completely resistant. Chief among these is the dreaded MRSA (*Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus*), now lurking in more and more hospital wards. MRSA can live harmlessly on healthy people, but once it infects a ward of the sick or immunodeficient, it can kill – and we have few weapons left to stop it.

Unfortunately, even "the wizard of Oz" can't help once a wound or a patient's lungs are infected – but there are high hopes that TTO could be useful in preventative hygiene. Used in hand wipes, floor washes, nasal sprays, and general disinfectants to wipe out MRSA colonies on healthy medical staff or visitors before they pass it on, it could become a valuable weapon against the spread of hospital-acquired infections.

What a neat twist of fate it would be if a "cure-all" discovered by Australia's resourceful Aboriginal people – and first offered in kindness to their uninvited guests – turned out to play a crucial role in the fight against antibiotic-resistant infections in some of the world's most advanced hospitals.





# Island of timeless charm

---

WORDS: ADRIAN SKERRETT





Granite giants meet turquoise tides – Anse Source d'Argent's iconic shoreline.

**L**a Digue is special. The landscape, people, and environment are characteristic of Seychelles, yet the island maintains features that set it apart. Upon arrival, visitors may notice a slower pace of life, due in part to the lack of an airstrip and minimal traffic. La Digue is known for its distinct atmosphere, which has been acknowledged throughout its history. Understanding the origins of La Digue's character involves examining events from another nearby island many years ago.

In 1798, on the French island of Réunion, a small group of rebels staged a protest against their government, complaining about high taxation, wasteful financial management, and rumours that Réunion was to be handed over to the English. Led by Etienne Alexandre Belleville, a commander of the National Guard and Jean Lafosse, a priest, the rebels marched upon the capital of Réunion, Saint-Denis. A government official attempted to ease tensions at the town's edge, but unrest persisted. The rebels advanced, were surrounded by loyal troops, and surrendered quietly. Belleville and other ringleaders were arrested and sentenced to deportation, though the destination was unspecified in the sentence. Captain Loiseau of the brig Laurette was told simply to drop them somewhere on the coast of India. His passengers, however, had other ideas. Tales of what happened

next vary. According to Loiseau, after a brief stop at Mahé, the deportees seized the ship and, at knifepoint, forced him to sail to La Digue, where they went ashore, leaving Captain Loiseau and his crew to sail away unharmed. Another story suggests Loiseau was bribed or perhaps felt sympathy for their cause and was inclined to help them. Whatever the truth, the face of La Digue had been changed forever. While some rebels left, most stayed and formed a mini-republic. The *Digwa* still see themselves as distinct from other Seychellois, and descendants of one of their leaders, Célestin Payet, continue to be influential on the island.

La Digue is the fourth largest island of the granitic group. It is less than half the size of Praslin but more steeply inclined, rising to 333 metres at Nid d'Aigle. The population is also less than half that of Praslin, with around 3,000 inhabitants living mainly on the west coast between La Passe and the village of La Réunion. La Digue is no longer the sleepy backwater it once was, but the small size of the local population in relation to the number of visitors from the outside world has given them a standard of living that allows them to maintain a relaxed attitude to life while enjoying some of the fruits of the modern world, such as televisions and washing machines.



A timeless tropical allure where lush island meets the crystal waters.



La Digue's charm lies in its sculptured granite shores and its slow island rhythms.

All but a handful of visitors arrive by ferry at the jetty at La Passe, though a few now come by helicopter. Ferries run from Mahé via Praslin, or direct from Praslin. It is possible to visit for the day from either. The ferry from Baie St Anne on Praslin follows the sheltered shoreline of Praslin before crossing a short stretch of open ocean and heading for an artificial concrete harbour jutting out to sea. Rounding the jetty, the ferry enters a calm haven where yachts and schooners rest beneath the palm-fringed shore.

Passengers disembark and walk a short distance along the jetty to the shoreline. Here, there is a fish market on the left, generally quiet, but a hive of activity when the fishermen bring in their catches. On the right is the Tourism Information Centre and a small, inexpensive cafeteria, Tarosa Café, which serves pizzas, burgers, and seafood. The name of the café is a clue to the different nature of this island. Tarosa is a name used only on La Digue for the male Madagascar Fody, the most common land bird. This is one indication that the *Digwa* have evolved as a distinct culture within a culture, and Mahé is almost like a separate country to them.

Once ashore, the best way to explore La Digue is by bicycle. Alternatively, you can travel on the ox carts, which have remained in use on this island long after they were replaced by petrol power on the other main islands. True, there are a handful of taxis and camions (open-sided lorries with fitted seats), but there are no hire cars, no traffic jams, and the bicycle is king. The bicycles are generally in good condition, but it is wise to test one or two before settling upon your final choice. Bike rentals are generally around €10 per day, or €40 for an electric bike. The flat coastal plateau and its beaches as far as L'Union Estate can comfortably be explored on foot, but a bicycle is quicker and will enable you to travel further afield.

Turning south at the jetty, there are several grand plantation style houses gracefully growing old at La Passe. Beyond these is the Veuve Reserve, named after the Creole for the most beautiful bird in Seychelles, the Seychelles paradise flycatcher. It is the very symbol of La Digue. In the face of development, the reserve was established to preserve some of the last remaining takamaka and Indian almond habitat, where the birds feed and build their nests. A Visitor's Centre at the reserve entrance provides information on the birds, and the warden can provide useful pointers on where to find the flycatchers.

A short distance inland from the bird reserve is Château St Cloud, a grand and enchanting building built at the height of the Napoleonic Wars. Once at the heart of a vanilla plantation, it is now a small hotel. The vanilla industry came to prominence in Seychelles towards the end of the 19th century, and La Digue was the centre of production. In 1899, the value of vanilla exports surpassed that of coconuts for the first time, but in 1906, the industry crashed when artificial vanillin arrived on the market, bringing hardship to the *Digwa*.

In the opposite direction, returning to the coast, the road turns southward once more past the picturesque Roman Catholic Church of Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption. Beyond these, the track leads to L'Union Estate, an old plantation where there is a working *kalorifer*, which was used to process copra (dried coconut) and a coconut oil press. They still grow vanilla orchids here, and other attractions include the La Digue Rock, a gigantic granite boulder appearing like a natural sculpture, giant tortoises, horse riding and a picturesque plantation house.



In La Digue, two wheels define the island's easy pace.

Just beyond L'Union Estate is the most famous beach of La Digue, Anse Source d'Argent, as beautiful as its name, meaning Bay of the Source of Silver. There are no facilities whatsoever here, just natural beauty. The silver white sands framed by giant granite boulders and perfectly positioned palms feature on many picture postcards. Countless TV adverts and films, including *Emmanuelle*, have been made here.

When *Digwa* say they have the 'Best Beach in the World' on their doorstep, it is no idle boast. This is the accolade that has been given to Anse Source d'Argent in numerous surveys over the years, including by the respected American travel journal Condé Nast Traveller, the American TV Travel Channel, the Discovery Channel and Tripadvisor. Towering granite boulders rear up like gigantic film props above the soft, white coral sands. The palms sway the way palm trees are supposed to at just the right angle. Rising above the palms are taller trees, casuarinas and takamakas, in which pure white fairy terns, snowflakes on wings, lay their eggs on bare branches. The only sounds are the breeze whistling in the treetops and the waves lapping the shore, where silvery ghost crabs dart along the tideline. The water shifts from pale turquoise in the shallows to deep purple-blue in deeper areas, where diverse coral, fish, and unique creatures thrive. Cycling beyond L'Union Estate is challenging, but the descent is rewarding with impressive views of Grand Anse.

From Grand Anse, you can reach other beautiful beaches on foot. Petite Anse is a 10-minute walk along a trail just five metres behind the Grand Anse fruit stand. This beach is quieter than Grand Anse and arguably more

beautiful, offering long sandy stretches and shallow water. Anse de Cocos is located 20-30 minutes further on from Petite Anse and hence tends to be even quieter. There is a large rock formation situated on the beach that offers a great opportunity for photography.

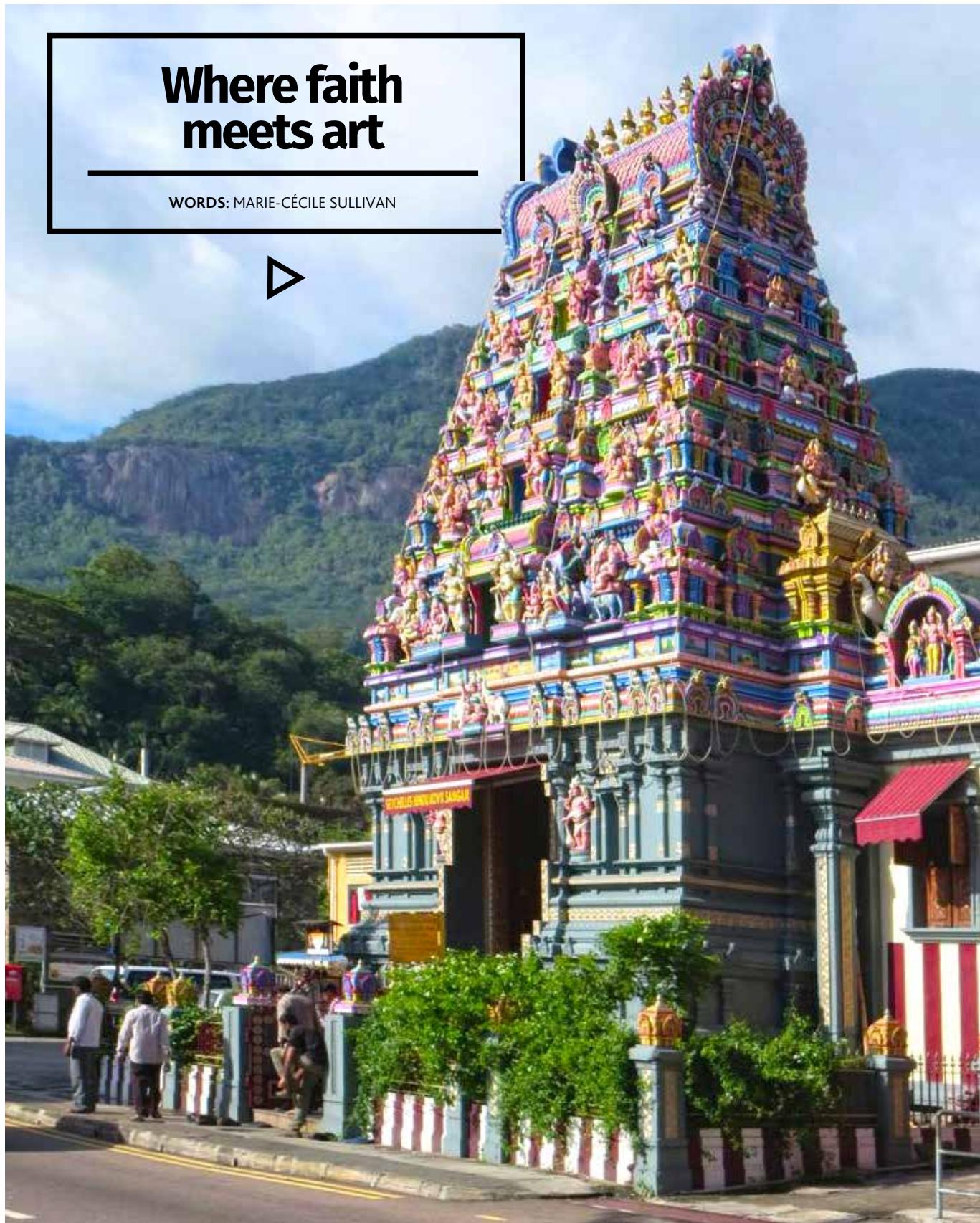
For the even more adventurous visitor, La Digue offers some exceptional nature trails with impressive viewpoints. The best ones include Anse Marron, the Nid d'Aigle Hike and the Anse Songe Trail.

The lack of traffic, the easy pace of life, the perfect scenery, and above all the complete absence of tarmac makes La Digue famous. This is the epitome of an island paradise. Nevertheless, you cannot stop progress, even on La Digue. Some visitors who saw La Digue 10 years ago will say, 'Ah, La Digue has changed. It is not the same as it used to be. Indeed, this is true. Once there were no vehicles, but now there are a fair few, though still negligible compared to elsewhere. The women of *Digwa* once washed clothes in the stream and dried them on the banks, but now use washing machines. Formerly poor, the *Digwa* now benefit from tourism, enjoying a higher standard of living and a greater quality of life.

The friendly, welcoming people of La Digue retain a relaxed attitude to life. You cannot imagine that stress is a major concern on the island. There is an acceptance that change is not only inevitable but also to be welcomed. At the same time, strenuous efforts are being made to bring the benefits of progress in a generally benign and enlightened manner. It seems to be working. Homes and tourist lodgings blend with their surroundings, preserving historic traits for a seamless mix of old and new.

# Where faith meets art

WORDS: MARIE-CÉCILE SULLIVAN





The entrance of Sri Navasakthi Vinayagar Temple welcomes visitors in a burst of colour, faith, and intricate artistry.

**C**reated almost 240 years after the first Indians arrived in Seychelles, the Vinayagar Temple is more than just a spiritual sanctuary – it is a veritable artistic wonder.

The *Kumbabishekam*, or re-consecration, of the 16-year-old Navasakthi temple in Victoria was not only a momentous occasion for the Hindu community of Seychelles, but also a landmark event in the nation's history. The morning of Sunday, 20 January 2008, began dull and blustery, with persistent showers falling at 9:30 a.m. Yet Hindu seers had forecast this precise moment as the most auspicious for the blessing. The guest of honour was Angidi Verma Chettiar, Vice President of Mauritius, a predominantly Hindu country. Also in attendance were the Vice President of Seychelles, along with local and foreign dignitaries.

As Sundramurthi Thambiran, the Hindu guru, began the sacred rites with Brahmins from Tamil Nadu, the weather gradually shifted. Soon, the temple basked in glorious sunshine, like a flower radiant in fresh bloom. That Sunday morning, Victoria's Quincy Street became fragrant

with incense, alive with colour, and filled with the sight of Hindu devotees scattering petals. Mantras mingled with the resonant sounds of *nathaswarams* (clarinets) and *thavils* (drums). One hundred and fifty litres of holy water, stored in 35 jars, were poured over the temple, as devotees and onlookers eagerly cupped their hands to catch a few precious drops to wash. Originally inaugurated on 6 May 1992, the temple was the fruit of hope, perseverance, and benevolence. Its consecration came 138 years after the first Catholic and Anglican churches were built in Seychelles (in 1854) – despite the presence of Indians in the islands for more than a century. Indeed, historical records confirm that among the first settlers on St. Anne Island in 1770 were five Indians from Pondicherry, then a French outpost in Madras State on the Bay of Bengal.

The Seychelles Hindu Kovil Sangam was formally established in 1984, three years after Seychelles' Sunni Muslims opened their mosque. The Indian community agreed it was time they, too, had their own place of worship.

Funds were raised internationally, and intriguingly, the first foreign donation came from a ten-year-old girl in Sri Lanka, who enclosed one dollar in an envelope but forgot to include her name and address.



Sattanatha Muthiah Ganapathi (26 April 1931 – 7 April 2017), an Indian architect and *sthapati*, renowned for designing and constructing traditional Hindu temples.



Sri Navasakthi Vinayagar Temple – a Hindu sanctuary where spirituality and sculpture rise in vibrant harmony.

Generosity flowed in from Malaysia, South Africa, Switzerland, and even Papua New Guinea. Locally, vegetarian food fairs were organised – the first ever in Seychelles, held in May 1988. With Seychellois palates naturally attuned to spicy Indian cuisine, dishes such as *sambar* with rice, *paplet ghashi* (pomfret in coconut gravy), *kathal* (jackfruit) curry, and *vadas* were so well received that another food fair followed the next year. There, many discovered the tangy delights of *moong dal halwa*, *kulfi*, and *choorma ladu* – proof that Seychellois enthusiasm extended far beyond chilli cakes and samosas.

In October 1989, an expert in Hindu architecture from Tamil Nadu, Ganapathi Sthapathi, recommended building a Vinayagar Temple. Vinayagar – another name for Ganesha, the remover of obstacles – is depicted as a rotund human figure with the head of an elephant, and his images abound across India.

The foundation stone was laid on Sunday, 6 May 1990. Construction, entrusted to Vijay Construction, costed approximately 950,000 rupees. From August 1991 to March 1992, a team of *sthapathis* (temple architects) carved the sculptures that adorned the then seven-metre-high structure.

After its consecration, the Hindu temple became the most striking feature of Market Street. On 6 February 1993, Seychelles hosted its first Thaipoosam Kavadi Festival, with the temple priest, Sri Selvaganesha Sivachariar, presiding.

Hinduism, a faith without central dogma or singular authority, is a vast, dynamic, and deeply spiritual tradition. Its supreme objective is salvation – deliverance from the endless cycle of rebirths, known as *moksha* or *nirvana*. Hindu gods, or *devas*, are countless: manifestations of a boundless holiness rather than figures akin to the singular 'Lord' of monotheistic traditions.

At the Vinayagar Temple, devotees pray to *Brahma* (the Creator), *Shiva* (the Destroyer), *Vishnu* (the Preserver), *Muruga*, and others. Many Hindu Seychellois also participate in the *Ardh Kumbh Mela*, one of the



The *thavil*, a barrel-shaped instrument traditionally played alongside the *nadaswaram* during festivals and ceremonies.



The icon of Ganesha, revered as the deity worshipped before embarking on any new undertaking.



The *nadaswaram*, a wind instrument with a hardwood body, and a large flaring bell made of wood or metal.



largest religious gatherings on earth. Held every six years in Allahabad (now Prayagraj), it spans 45 days and draws millions of pilgrims who believe bathing in the Ganges frees them from the cycle of rebirth and ensures immortality.

Hindu scriptures affirm that every 12 years, temple deities lose their divine potency, making re-consecration essential. For its first *kumbabishekam*, the Hindu temple of Victoria was not only re-consecrated but also enlarged to 16 metres in height. Over three years, it underwent a remarkable transformation, becoming a breathtaking tapestry of carvings drawn from Hindu mythology.

Like a flower in perpetual bloom, the temple is both a prayer hall and a cultural monument – a symbol of noble achievement and a tribute to the memory of those Indians who, at the turn of the 20th century, settled on Market Street. Their businesses and enterprises would go on to shape Seychelles' social and commercial life.

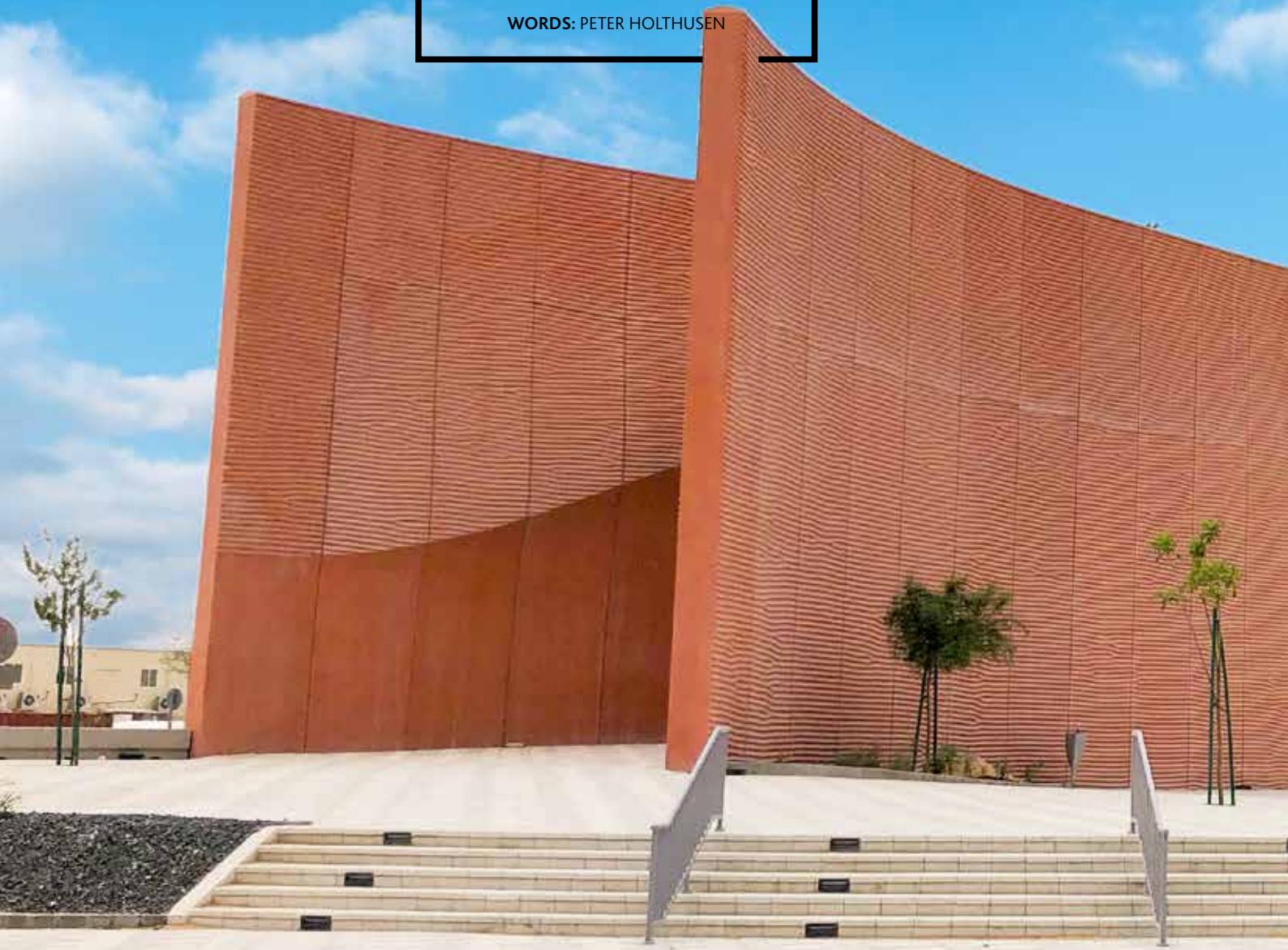
Today, Seychelles is endowed with a marvel of patience, skill, and the vibrant imagination of Hindu culture. According to scripture, another *kumbabishekam* for the Vinayagar Temple was held twelve years later on 23 January 2013, while the most recent event – the *Kumbhabhishekam* at the separate Kaholeshwar Shiva Temple – took place on 28 June 2023. While this is typically done every 12 years, the exact timing varies depending on the temple and the stage of reconstruction or cleansing.



A Hindu devotee carries a *kavadi*, with metal prongs piercing his skin during a traditional ritual at the annual Thaipusam festival.

# The world's greenest city

WORDS: PETER HOLTHUSEN



In the late 1950s, Abu Dhabi was little more than a sleepy fishing village, its economy sustained by dates, fish, and the occasional pearl. Life unfolded on a sandy spit of land, cut off from the mainland at high tide, and dotted with barasti huts, a whitewashed fort, a handful of goats, and winding tracks leading to the sea. When oil was discovered here in 1958, the population was around 5,000 – hardly the portrait of a city destined to become one of the most dynamic capitals on earth.

Half a century later, that landscape is unrecognisable. Today's Abu Dhabi is a shimmering Arabian Manhattan: skyscrapers cover the skyline, broad boulevards are shaded with palms, and five-star hotels line the Corniche. This once modest settlement is now one of the fastest-growing capitals in the world, a global hub at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe. But Abu Dhabi is not content to rest on its oil-soaked laurels. It is seeking to reinvent itself yet again, this time as a pioneer in sustainability.



At the heart of this vision is Masdar City – a bold experiment in green urbanism, designed to answer a pressing question: can a city built in the desert truly be zero-carbon, zero-waste, and powered entirely by renewable energy?

Launched in 2006, Masdar City is more than just another real estate development. It is a living laboratory – a place where renewable energy

companies, research institutes, and entrepreneurs are invited to shape the technologies that could define the cities of tomorrow.

The site, just 17 kilometres from downtown Abu Dhabi and next to the international airport, is ambitious in both scope and scale. Planned to cover six square kilometres, Masdar will eventually house 50,000 residents, 1,500 businesses, and attract more than 60,000 commuters each day. Designed by the world-renowned Foster + Partners, with

engineering support from Mott MacDonald, the city aims to operate entirely on renewable power and recycle nearly all its waste.

Backed by Masdar, a subsidiary of the Mubadala Development Company, and heavily funded by the Abu Dhabi government, the project is as much about economics as it is about ecology. By positioning itself as a hub for clean-tech innovation, Abu Dhabi hopes to diversify beyond oil and establish itself as a leader in the global green economy.

The first phase of construction began in 2008. A global recession soon forced timelines to stretch and budgets to shrink, but progress continued. By 2010, the first six buildings were complete, including the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology – the city's intellectual heart, built in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Its energy-efficient campus consumes 70% less electricity and potable water than comparable facilities and is equipped with smart metering systems to track every watt and drop.

Building a zero-carbon city in the desert is easier said than done. The global financial crisis slowed construction, stretching what was initially an eight-year project into one that will take decades. Plans for a fully car-free city have been moderated, with practical concessions made for electric and hybrid vehicles. And the original timeline for full completion – once set for 2015 – shifted.

From 2020 to 2025, Masdar City has steadily progressed from idea to reality as Abu Dhabi's sustainable urban hub. The project's original completion date was moved to accommodate design changes and the integration of new technologies. During this period, several significant initiatives have evolved, including The Link, a mixed-use residential, commercial, and living complex totalling roughly 30,000 square metres.

The 'CO-LAB' component of The Link is especially ambitious: meant to be net-zero energy, it generates energy in excess of its use (about 135%) and offsets its embodied carbon over time. Furthermore, Masdar City has launched a massive innovation drive, investing in industries such as energy, artificial intelligence, space, life sciences, and agriculture through planned projects and ongoing development. Operationally, the City has improved its sustainability indicators through certified green buildings, lower energy and water use intensity, improved waste management, and increased community engagement through events and inclusion programmes.

Yet the setbacks do not diminish the significance of what Masdar represents. In a region defined by oil, the very act of investing billions in a city powered by renewables sends a powerful message: the future will not look like the past.

Walking through Masdar City today, you feel a blend of ancient design principles and futuristic technology.



**Previous page:** UAE Space Agency headquarters in Masdar City.

**Above:** Masdar City, Abu Dhabi – a hub of sustainable living and innovation.



Innovation at its core, architecture fueled by a sustainable future.

Narrow streets are oriented to block hot desert winds, while traditional wind towers funnel cooler breezes down into shaded courtyards. The effect is striking: despite the desert heat, temperatures within the city's core are noticeably more bearable.

Transport too, is a glimpse into the future. Private cars stay outside the city; electric vehicles and clean-energy buses handle internal travel. Early visions of a citywide Personal Rapid Transit system of driverless 'podcars' have been scaled back, but pilot projects remain in operation, supplemented by electric taxis and test fleets of vehicles like Mitsubishi's i-MiEV. The bigger picture is a car-light city where people move seamlessly without reliance on petrol.

Energy is the beating heart of Masdar. From the beginning, the city was conceived as a renewable powerhouse. A 40-megawatt solar plant was among its first major projects, supplying electricity for construction and early residents. Rooftop solar arrays add another 90 megawatts to the grid.

Beyond photovoltaics, Masdar has been testing concentrated solar power (CSP), including an innovative 'beam-down' system that reflects sunlight from a tower to ground-level receivers. Plans also include wind farms outside the city, geothermal exploration, and even the world's largest hydrogen power plant.

Water, always scarce in the Gulf, is another challenge. Masdar's solar-powered desalination plant reduces consumption by 60% compared with conventional systems, while 80% of the city's water is recycled. Wastewater is treated and reused for irrigation. Even organic waste is transformed into compost or energy, while plastics and metals are recycled for new purposes.

Sustainability here is not a slogan – it is embedded in the city's DNA. Even construction materials follow the ethos: palmwood, a sustainable hardwood substitute made from old coconut palms, features prominently in buildings and public spaces.

For all its solar panels and shaded alleyways, Masdar City is not just about infrastructure – it's about creating a culture of innovation. Its anchor tenant, the Masdar Institute, is joined by global organisations, start-ups, and environmental NGOs who see the city as fertile ground for testing ideas. Companies specialising in clean technologies, sustainable architecture, and eco-friendly products are encouraged to set up shop here, creating a cluster effect that attracts talent from around the world.

This ambition positions Masdar alongside the likes of Tsukuba Science City in Japan or Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah University of Science and Technology – specialised, research-intensive hubs that merge academia, industry, and community life. But unlike its peers, Masdar has the added mission of proving that sustainability can thrive even in one of the harshest climates on Earth.

As the world grapples with climate change, urbanisation, and the need for sustainable energy, Masdar City offers both inspiration and lessons. Its integrated approach to energy, water, waste, and mobility demonstrates what is possible when ambition meets innovation.

For Abu Dhabi, the city is more than a showcase; it is a catalyst for economic diversification and a symbol of its intent to lead in the global green economy. For the rest of the world, it is a case study – an evolving experiment in how we might build the cities of tomorrow.

Masdar may not be perfect. It may never achieve an absolute zero-carbon status. It has already succeeded in reframing the global conversation on how cities can adapt to climate challenges.

And in doing so, Masdar City has set a new benchmark, not just for the UAE, but for cities everywhere.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Abu Dhabi daily. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information

# Where culture meets lagoon paradise

WORDS: MAMBO GICHUKI



White sands and surf — Boucan Canot captures the vibrant spirit of Réunion.

**N**estled in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar and southwest of Mauritius, Réunion is a volcanic island of contrasts. A French overseas department, it offers travellers a unique blend of European refinement, Creole culture, and tropical wilderness. From towering volcanic peaks to turquoise lagoons, and from bustling city streets to serene coastal towns, Réunion is a destination that captivates every type of traveller.

Saint-Denis, the island's capital, is more than a gateway; it's a cultural experience. The city is alive with energy, yet it retains a sense of intimacy and charm. Walking through its streets, visitors encounter a tapestry of history and modernity: colonial-era buildings with ornate balconies, pastel-coloured Creole houses, and chic cafés where locals sip coffee under the warm tropical sun.

At the heart of Saint-Denis, *Jardin de l'État* offers a lush urban escape with exotic plants, a small museum, and shaded walkways perfect for a morning stroll. Nearby, the *Saint-Denis Cathedral*, an elegant Baroque structure, reflects the city's colonial heritage. Art galleries, museums, and boutiques abound, making it a haven for culture lovers and shoppers alike.

The city's markets are a sensory feast. From the spicy aroma of local curries to colourful tropical fruits, the *Marché de Saint-Denis* is a place to sample Creole delicacies such as samosas, *rougail*, and fresh seafood, while engaging with locals who embody Réunion's vibrant cultural mosaic. Saint-Denis also celebrates its diversity through festivals and music, with traditional *maloya* rhythms echoing through the streets during special occasions.



Calm waters, coral beauty – Réunion's serene lagoon escape.

### Lagoon bliss: Saint-Gilles-les-Bains

Just an hour's drive from the capital lies Saint-Gilles-les-Bains, Réunion's premier beach and lagoon destination. The contrast is striking: the bustling streets of Saint-Denis give way to tranquil turquoise waters, soft white sand, and swaying palms. The calm lagoon is ideal for swimming, snorkelling, and observing colourful fish and coral reefs, making it a paradise for families and adventurers alike.

For those seeking activity, kayaking, paddleboarding, and sailing are popular ways to explore the coast. Hiking trails nearby offer panoramic views of the Indian Ocean and the island's volcanic interior. As the sun sets, the lagoon shimmers under golden light, creating a perfect backdrop for a quiet stroll along the beach or a romantic evening at a beachfront restaurant.

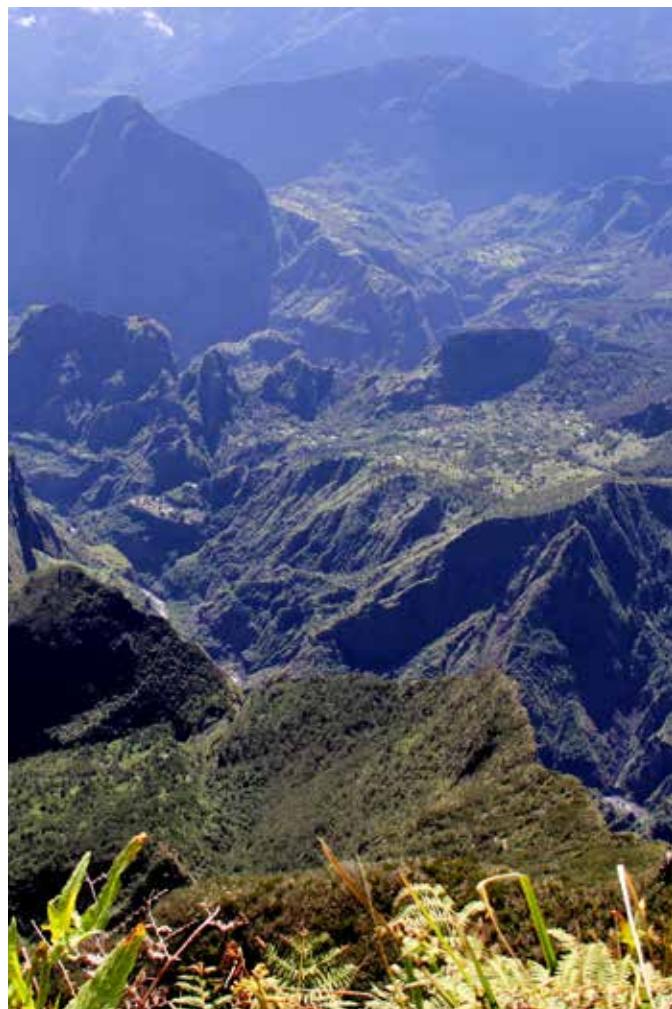
Beachfront cafés and restaurants serve fresh seafood and Creole specialities, including tropical fruit desserts that capture the essence of the island. Dining here is not just about food – it's an immersive sensory experience, where the gentle ocean breeze and the sound of waves add flavour to every bite.

### Réunion: The island of contrasts

Beyond Saint-Denis and Saint-Gilles, Réunion offers landscapes that seem almost dreamy. The island is home to *Pitons, cirques and remparts of Réunion*, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. *Piton de la Fournaise*, one of the world's most active volcanoes, rises majestically in the east. Hikes around its craters reveal dramatic lava fields and panoramic vistas, offering an unforgettable adventure for hikers and nature lovers.

For those who prefer cooler climes, the island's highlands, including *Salazie, Mafate, and Cilaos*, are dotted with cascading waterfalls, lush valleys, and charming mountain villages. Mafate, accessible only by foot or helicopter, is a true retreat for hikers seeking solitude amid spectacular scenery.

The cultural diversity of Réunion adds another layer of fascination. People of European, African, Indian, and Chinese descent coexist harmoniously, and this is reflected in the island's cuisine, music, and festivals. *Maloya* and *séga music* tell stories of the island's past, while culinary traditions combine French finesse with Indian and Creole flavours.



Piton de la Fournaise dominates Réunion's volcanic landscape, offering hikes and unforgettable vistas.

**From city streets to lagoon dreams – morning coffee in Saint-Denis, midday snorkelling in Saint-Gilles lagoon, afternoon hike up Piton de la Fournaise, and evening sunset on the beach.**



Echoes linger at Pointe Baleine, an island hideaway born from whaling roots.

### Must-do experiences

- Explore the colonial streets and markets of Saint-Denis.
- Snorkel or kayak in the lagoon at Saint-Gilles-les-Bains.
- Hike Piton de la Fournaise or trek the trails of Mafate.
- Sample local Creole cuisine and tropical fruits across the island.
- Witness a sunset over Sant-Gilles lagoon for a picture-perfect memory.

Réunion is a small island with enormous appeal – a place where urban life and natural beauty coexist, where culture is alive in every street and every meal, and where adventure awaits just around the corner. From the bustling streets of Saint-Denis to the tranquil waters of Saint-Gilles-les-Bains, and beyond to volcanic peaks and lush valleys, the island offers a travel experience that is as diverse as it is unforgettable.

Whether you are drawn by history, nature, or cuisine, Réunion leaves an indelible mark, promising memories that linger long after your journey ends.

### Practical tips for travellers

**Getting there:** Réunion is served by Roland Garros Airport near Saint-Denis, with international flights connecting via Paris, Mauritius, and other Indian Ocean hubs.

**Getting around:** Renting a car is the easiest way to explore both the capital and coastal destinations, as public transport is limited outside the main towns.

**Where to stay:** Boutique hotels in Saint-Denis offer city convenience, while Saint-Gilles-les-Bains features beachfront resorts with lagoon access. Mountain lodges in Mafate or Cilaos provide options for hikers and adventure seekers.



Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information

# Lively market scenes

WORDS: TIM ROGERS

Tel Aviv, Israel's bustling beachfront metropolis, thrives on energy and contrast. It combines ancient heritage with modern invention, and nowhere is this diversity more visible than in its markets. Tel Aviv's markets, from the mediaeval alleys of Jaffa to the sleek food halls of Sarona, are thriving centres of trade, culture, and gastronomy. Visiting them is one of the most enjoyable ways to explore the city's vibrant heart.



Burekas Penso is a pastry lover's delight.



Colours, crowds, and culture collide – welcome to Shuk HaCarmel's vibrant heart.

## Carmel Market (Shuk HaCarmel)

Since the 1920s, Carmel Market, Tel Aviv's largest and most famous market, has been a hub of activity. It runs along Carmel Street between Allenby Street and Magen David Square and is a swirl of colour and melody. The higher end sells clothing and electronics, while the lower alleys brim with fresh vegetables, spices, baked goods, and delectable street cuisine.

Haggling is still part of the fun here – less so for minor products, but quite active for larger purchases. At the end of the day, stallholders frequently reduce prices, sparking a frenzy for deals. Tuesdays and Fridays are especially lively, when artists and crafters line nearby Nachalat Binyamin Street with jewellery, paintings, and handmade items. A trip through Carmel immerses you in Tel Aviv's sensory soul, which is equal parts chaotic and charming.

## Levinsky Market (Shuk Levinsky)

Levinsky Market, located in the bohemian Florentin district, is a unique treasure. Founded in the late 1920s by Greek immigrants, it was quickly expanded by Iranian immigrants who introduced Persian cuisines and fragrances. Today, it's a melting pot of flavours from the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Small stores sell spices, dried fruits, nuts, and delicatessen items, which are often arranged in vibrant displays. Legendary restaurants like Pereg Spices, Halva Magic (Kesem Ha Halva) at Levinsky 48, and Café Levinsky 41 consistently draw foodies back for more. The market is compact but

vibrant, with family-run bakeries, cafés, and grocery stores that have been in operation for generations. It's a location where history pervades every smell and bite.

## Jaffa Flea Market (Shuk HaPishpeshim)

South of the city is Jaffa, an old harbour from which contemporary Tel Aviv grew. Its flea market is a maze of passageways packed with antiques, vintage items, and bric-a-brac. You might come across magnificent furniture, antique carpets, Jewish ritual objects, or eccentric collectibles from decades ago.

In recent years, the area has been rejuvenated, with fashionable cafés, boutiques, and galleries merging with historic vendors. Bargain seekers, collectors, and casual browsers may all find something here, whether it's a rare gem or just the joy of exploring one of Tel Aviv's most fascinating neighbourhoods.

## Sarona Market

If Tel Aviv's older markets symbolise tradition, Sarona Market represents its global future. It opened in 2015 in restored Templar-era buildings and is the city's most modern food hall and culinary exhibition.

With over 100 businesses, including 40 restaurants, it brings together Israel's most innovative chefs with international names such as Fauchon Paris. Stalls are brimming with artisanal cheeses, excellent wines, gourmet



Vintage charm meets modern cool – Jaffa Flea Market's timeless allure.



A popular tourist attraction home to numerous businesses, food stalls and restaurants.

chocolates, and exotic delights, while eateries range from *sushi* to Israeli fusion. Sarona, which is open seven days a week, including *Shabbat*, has swiftly gained popularity among foodies. It's less about bargaining and more about indulging – a culinary playground.

### Nachalat Binyamin Arts and Crafts Market

On Tuesdays and Fridays, Nachalat Binyamin Street hosts Israel's largest open-air arts and crafts show. What began in 1987 with a small group of artists has grown to include over 200, each displaying handmade jewellery, pottery, textiles, toys, and artwork.

The mood is lively yet casual, with live music frequently complementing the scene. Many artists use the market as their primary shopfront; thus, browsing provides an opportunity to meet the producers in person. Nachalat Binyamin's slower pace and creative attitude make it an ideal counterpoint to the hectic energy of nearby Carmel Market.

### King George Street Clothing Market

King George Street, a short walk from Carmel, features a small yet busy clothing market. Prices start at as little as five shekels, making it a popular destination for bargain hunters. From beachwear and casual clothing to the occasional designer piece, the varied mix reflects the city's laid-back vibe.

King George Street is one of Tel Aviv's most recognisable boulevards – central but unhurried, metropolitan yet bohemian. Shopping in Tel Aviv provides visitors with a look into the daily rhythms of local life, serving as a reminder that the city is as much about its districts as its attractions.

### Tips for visiting Tel Aviv's markets

**Timing:** Most markets are open Sunday to Friday, closing early on Fridays ahead of *Shabbat*. Many remain closed on Saturdays.

**Bargaining:** Negotiating is less common than in the past, but it is still part of the fun, especially at Jaffa and Carmel.

**Cash:** Not all vendors accept cards, so carry some shekels.

**Footwear:** Markets can be crowded and sprawling – comfortable shoes are essential.

**Hydration:** The Mediterranean climate can be intense, so keep water handy.

Tel Aviv's markets are much more than just retail centres. They serve as cultural crossroads, bringing together history, tradition, and creativity. The Carmel hums with daily activity; Levinsky celebrates immigrant flavours; Jaffa protects the city's historic roots; Sarona demonstrates its modern aims; Nachalat Binyamin promotes local artistry; and King George Street displays its relaxed everyday flair.

Together, they paint a portrait of a city that thrives on diversity, creativity, and constant motion. To meander around these markets is to connect with Tel Aviv's essence – its past, present, and ever-changing soul.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Tel Aviv two times a week. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information





## A visual celebration

WORDS: PETER HOLTHUSEN

If one had to choose a single word to describe South Africa, it would be *diversity*. This is a land of remarkable contrasts – visible in its landscapes, in the character of its cities, and in the vibrant mix of colours, creeds, and cultures that form the essence of its people.





**Above:** Khaya La Bantu, a living tapestry of Xhosa tradition.

**Previous page:** Dramatic cliffs and endless horizons, the wild beauty of Cape Point.

## A land of many faces

Scenically, South Africa could be half a dozen countries rolled into one. Visitors arriving in the Western Cape may be surprised, perhaps even puzzled, to find no roaming lions or elephants, few safari camps or bushveld horizons. Instead, this region offers a different kind of beauty: a gentle landscape of vineyards, orchards, rolling pastures, and elegant Cape Dutch homesteads.

But this is only one corner of a vast nation made up of nine provinces – each distinct, each unforgettable. Head north-east to Mpumalanga, where the game-rich savanna plains deliver the quintessential African safari experience. Journey inland and you'll encounter the Great Karoo's arid expanses, the fertile Highveld plateau, and, further east, the mighty Drakensberg Mountains – a formidable wall stretching 250 kilometres with only a handful of passes, including the legendary Sani Pass, gateway to Lesotho and home to Africa's highest pub.

## Echoes of the past

The Drakensberg holds centuries of human history. For millennia, it was home to the San, or Bushmen, whose delicate rock art still adorns the caves and cliffs – silent stories of hunting, animals, and spirit worlds. Giant's Castle Game Reserve alone protects over 700 rock paintings, while the Ndedema Gorge shelters one of the greatest concentrations of ancient art on the continent.

History here is also marked by conflict. KwaZulu-Natal's rolling hills witnessed fierce clashes between the Zulu, the British, and the Boers. Today, battlefields like Isandlwana, Rorke's Drift, and Spionkop invite visitors to walk the ground where warriors and soldiers once fought, with re-enactments bringing the past vividly to life.

## The call of the wild

For wildlife lovers, few places rival South Africa. Spotting the *Big Five* – lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, and buffalo – is a dream fulfilled in the legendary Kruger National Park, a wilderness the size of a small country. Thanks to world-class conservation, South Africa's wildlife legacy remains secure for future generations.

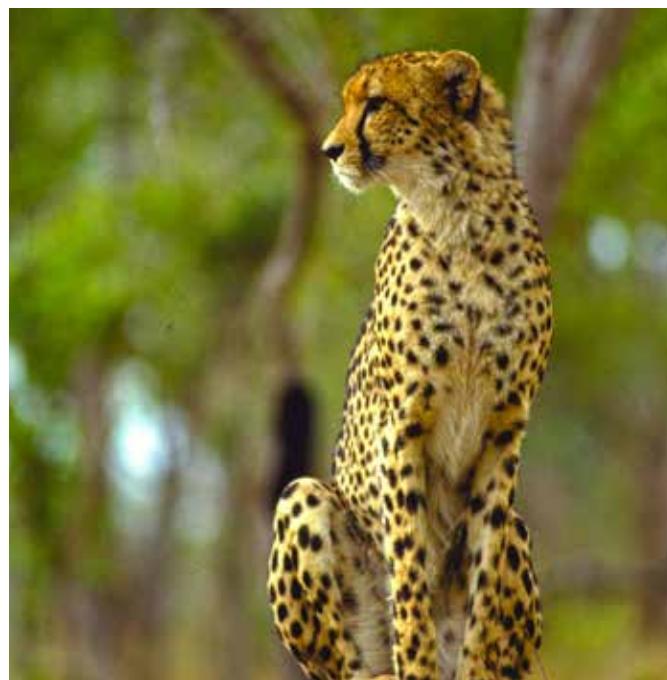
Beyond Kruger, dozens of reserves and national parks offer experiences ranging from intimate luxury lodges to rugged self-drive adventures. Each promises that same electric thrill when, around the next bend, an elephant emerges from the bush or a lion raises its golden head from the grass.

## Coastlines and cityscapes

South Africa's 3,000-kilometre coastline is just as varied. The warm Indian Ocean waters around Durban make it the country's favourite beach resort, while the Atlantic seaboard offers rugged beauty and world-famous shark cage diving at Gansbaai. Surfers, sailors, and sunseekers are spoiled for choice.

Then there is Cape Town – a city of rare beauty, framed by Table Mountain and the sparkling Atlantic. Stylish shops, gourmet restaurants, and the bustling Victoria & Alfred Waterfront ensure its cosmopolitan charm. Colourful Bo-Kaap, once home to freed slaves, adds a cultural vibrancy. And when the cable car whisks you to the top of Table Mountain, the view – arguably the finest panorama in Africa – stays etched in memory forever.

In the middle of Table Bay lies Robben Island, once a place of exile and imprisonment, most famously for Nelson Mandela, who spent 27 years behind its walls. Today, it is a poignant museum of resilience, where former inmates guide visitors through cells and quarries that once confined them.



Elegance meets power, the cheetah of the wild plains.

Johannesburg, meanwhile, is the beating commercial heart of the nation, a city of stylish suburbs, thriving art scenes, and vibrant townships. Soweto, once a symbol of apartheid oppression, is now one of South Africa's top attractions – alive with music, street art, and the resilient spirit of its people.

### Food, wine, and the good life

No visit would be complete without indulging in South Africa's culinary delights. The winelands of Stellenbosch and Paarl offer world-class vintages, paired with cuisine that draws on African, European, and Asian influences. Durban adds its own flair with spicy Indian dishes, while Cape Town blends sophistication with seaside freshness.

During our stay, we enjoyed the legendary Winchester Mansions Hotel, an elegant Cape Dutch mansion dating back to the 1920s. Overlooking the Atlantic, with 51 luxurious rooms, a heated pool, the indulgent Ginkgo Spa, and "Harveys at the Mansions" – one of the city's finest restaurants – it embodied the blend of relaxation and style that defines Cape Town. From its natural wonders to its culinary indulgences, South Africa embodies the full spectrum of travel experiences.

South Africa is aptly named the *Rainbow Nation*. Its kaleidoscope of landscapes – mountains, deserts, beaches, and vineyards – matches its cultural richness. Whether you come for wildlife, history, adventure, or simply the warmth of its people, South Africa offers an experience like no other.

Here, you can sip wine in a centuries-old cellar, hike through dramatic mountain passes, witness elephants at dawn, and watch the sun set over the ocean – all in a single trip. It is a land that defies easy definition, a place where diversity is not just a word, but a way of life.



Cableway rises to Table Mountain's iconic panoramic summit.



Carved by time, the Amphitheatre crowns the Drakensberg's grandeur.

### Top experiences in South Africa

**Go on Safari:** Track the legendary *Big Five* – lion, leopard, rhino, elephant, and buffalo – in Kruger National Park or one of the many private reserves.

**Table Mountain:** Ride the cable car or hike to the summit for a sweeping view of Cape Town, the ocean, and the Cape Peninsula.

**Robben Island:** Visit the historic prison where Nelson Mandela was held for 27 years, guided by former inmates who bring its story to life.

**Beaches & Surfing:** From Durban's golden Indian Ocean sands to the rugged Atlantic shores near Cape Town, South Africa is a paradise for sunseekers and surfers.

**The Winelands:** Stellenbosch, Paarl, and Franschhoek offer rolling vineyards, historic estates, and some of the world's best wines.

**Soweto Vibes:** Feel the heartbeat of Johannesburg in this iconic township, alive with music, street art, and powerful history.

**The Garden Route:** One of the world's great road trips: dramatic coastlines, ancient forests, and charming seaside towns.

**The Drakensberg Mountains:** Hike through UNESCO-listed landscapes, discover San rock art, and conquer the legendary Sani Pass into Lesotho.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Johannesburg three times a week. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information



Horseback riding on the soft, sandy shores.

## Where beauty knows no bounds

WORDS: TONY SMART

**M**auritius, a paradise island in the Indian Ocean, is a place many people dream of, especially when they are caught in traffic or having a rough day at work. This small island nation, once described by Mark Twain as "God's blueprint for Heaven", offers the opportunity to forget about schedules and responsibilities and simply relax with a drink of the native Green Island rum and Coke while watching the world go by.

Mauritius is certainly a wonderful island. The blue sea laps gently on the white sand beaches, and palm and casuarina trees sway lazily in the breeze. However, beaches like these may be found in Bali, the Bahamas, and the Maldives. What gives Mauritius the edge is not only its natural beauty but also its people – and the sheer variety of things to do when you tired of sun and sea.



Le Morne Brabant, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Le Morne, Mauritius – famed for its kitesurfing and the iconic Le Morne Brabant.

### The spirit of the Mauritians

Mauritians are among the most sought-after professionals in the global hotel industry thanks to their warmth and friendliness, qualities that are genuine and unforced. Go anywhere on the island, and if you need help, a Mauritian will give it to you. They will even stop what they are doing – no matter how important – to go out of their way for you. It is a wonderful human quality, increasingly rare in today's environment.

They are also a happy people who enjoy partying. They'll start dancing at any time to the island's contagious *Sega* music – the Indian Ocean's answer to Calypso. If you're so inclined, it's easy to make your holiday in Mauritius a one long celebration.

### Sunny and serene

If partying isn't your thing, Mauritius will more than satisfy your curiosity. On the Central Plateau, the extinct volcanic crater of Trou aux Cerfs is filled with lush vegetation and surrounded by rich flora offering panoramic views in every direction. It's a wonderful area with a surreal atmosphere – mist flowing across jungle greenery like something out of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Nearby lies Ganga Talao, a Hindu temple complex built around a crater lake. At its edge is the world's tallest statue of Lord Shiva, at 33 metres (108 feet) tall. The Ardh Kumbh Mela, the greatest Hindu pilgrimage outside of India, is expected to take place in Mauritius in 2027. While the

specific dates are yet to be announced, the event will likely coincide with the astrological alignments observed in the Hindu luni-solar calendar. Devotees can anticipate a period of spiritual activities, including prayers, rituals, and community gatherings, centred around the Ganga Talao. Legend has it that Lord Shiva and his wife Parvati flew over the island carrying the sacred Ganges, and when a few droplets dropped to the earth, the lake was formed.

The Black River Gorges National Park, located nearby, offers breathtaking views and some of the greatest trekking on the island. The park also has the stunning Chamarel and Tamarin waterfalls, which are must-sees for nature lovers.

### Beautiful bays and beaches

To the north is the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden (commonly known as Pamplemousses Garden), which offers a beautiful stroll weaving through gigantic lily ponds, flame-red flamboyant trees, hibiscus, bougainvillea, and even giant tortoises. As of 2025, the official entrance fee for foreign visitors is MUR 300 (USD 6-7). A short drive north lies Grand Baie, the island's most fashionable resort town, where trendy boutiques, beach cafés, and luxury boats provide a touch of Riviera flair to Mauritius.

Further along the coast lies the renowned red-roofed Catholic church of Cap Malheureux, where the British landed in 1810 to take control of the island from the French.



Fresh tropical fruits at a bustling island market.

## A tapestry of cultures

Mauritius' cultural riches are as impressive as its surroundings. The Portuguese arrived here in 1507 but never settled permanently. The Dutch arrived in 1598, renaming the island after Prince Maurice of Nassau and introduced sugarcane and deer. The French arrived in 1715, influencing much of the island's character, and the British seized possession in 1810, abolishing slavery and introducing a huge number of indentured servants from India. Chinese traders added thread to the fabric.

Today, Mauritius has a unique blend of European, African, Indian, and Chinese heritage, with peaceful coexistence among Christian, Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist groups. It's a multicultural harmony that appears effortless – and enviable.

## A mix of old and new

The capital, Port Louis, is well worth visiting. The Caudan Waterfront offers a bustling mix of designer stores, handicraft shops, movies, restaurants, pubs, and even a casino. Beyond the shoreline, the city combines modern



A bustling village market where locals sell fresh produce.



Island life on display at a lively fish market.

buildings with historic landmarks like the central courts and the Prime Minister's home.

Spend a Saturday at the Champ de Mars racecourse for an unforgettable Mauritian experience. It is the oldest track in the Southern Hemisphere and home to the world's second-oldest racing club, attracting audiences of up to 30,000. Even if you're not a racing lover, the atmosphere is electrifying – horse racing is Mauritius' most popular sport.

## Leisure and adventure

Much of Mauritius' tourism is focused on its five-star seaside resorts, but the island has much more to offer than pampered luxury. Mauritius is now a golfing destination in its own right, with seven world-class courses located along the shore, each with spectacular ocean vistas.

There are numerous water sports available, including water-skiing, windsurfing, snorkelling, and diving. On land, you can ride horses through cane farms, hike through the highlands, cycle along gorgeous roads or try archery and hunting.

A boat journey to Tamarin Bay, where dolphins reside all year, is an unmissable experience. Around 30 to 40 of them, including active children, frequently leap alongside visiting boats, creating a magnificent scene that never ceases to thrill.



Windsurfing the towering waves off a tropical shore.



Tamarina Golf Club, a scenic championship course.

Mauritius is increasingly growing as a spa destination. Many of its finest hotels have exceptional wellness facilities, which include everything from classic massages to holistic health treatments. The island's beautiful landscape and mild climate make it an ideal location for relaxation and renewal.

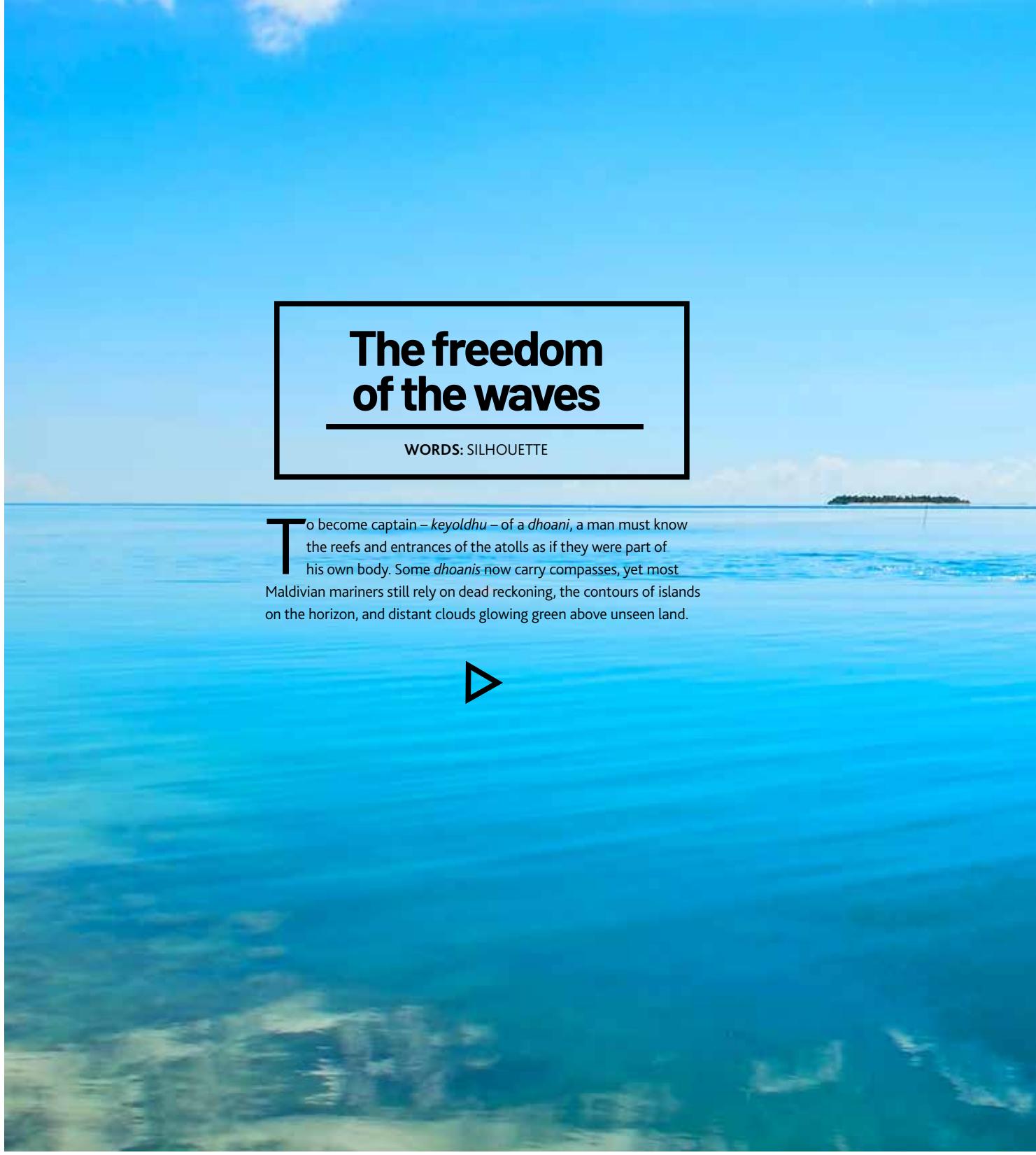
With its tropical weather – rarely hotter than 33°C or cooler than 17°C – Mauritius is as close to perfect as it gets. Plants thrive, the sea is warm, and life feels effortlessly abundant.

What makes Mauritius unforgettable is its blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, and the warmth of its people. It is a place where turquoise seas meet volcanic peaks, where temples and colonial churches share the same skyline, and where kindness is still second nature.

To visit Mauritius is to step into a paradise larger than life – a place where heaven seems to have touched the earth. And once you've been, you may find you never want to leave.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Mauritius four times a week. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information



# The freedom of the waves

---

WORDS: SILHOUETTE

---

To become captain – *keyoldhu* – of a *dhoani*, a man must know the reefs and entrances of the atolls as if they were part of his own body. Some *dhoanis* now carry compasses, yet most Maldivian mariners still rely on dead reckoning, the contours of islands on the horizon, and distant clouds glowing green above unseen land.



A lone sailboat glides across the Maldives' iconic turquoise waters – paradise in motion.



The skipper reads the currents too, measuring speed by tossing a piece of coir into the sea. At the tiller – a long pole held firmly between his legs – the helmsman, usually the captain himself, feels every shift of water and wind. In rough weather, he clings to the crutch that holds the yard when the sail is stowed, riding his vessel like a bucking bronco. As they near an island, a lookout moves forward, eyes straining for the narrow channels between reefs, for one mistake can drive the *dhoani* aground.

Even when bunks wait below, the crew prefer to sleep on deck, beneath the open sky. Comfort matters less than freedom – and safety, should a sudden squall strike or the anchor drag.

When the wind turns fair, even *dhoanis* with engines raise their sails. At the captain's call, all hands gather – even the cook – to heave the long yard pole aloft. "Aa-haa-a, a-haa-ai," rings out as the rough rope strains through their fists. Then, with a snap, the lateen sail fills. Like the white wing of a bird, it pulls the vessel forward, the *dhoani* leaning joyfully into the waves.

Now everything changes. The dull throb of the engine fades to the creak of rigging, and the music of water rippling past the sleek wooden hull. Sail, wind, and sea move in harmony – silent, efficient, and clean. The crew, visibly lifted, gather on the foredeck, beneath the shade of canvas, at peace, as their ancestors must have been countless times before.

Yet the sea remains unpredictable. A squall may rise from nowhere, the sky blackening as waves hiss with white caps. The *dhoani* lurches, its rigging groaning. Pots and pans tumble in the galley, clothes whip from their lines, and spray lashes the helmsman's face. With straining arms, he slacks sail, bow into the mounting sea.



Casting lines where sea and livelihood meet.



A traditional Maldivian fishing scene unfolds on the shore.



A serene *dhoani* drifts past Conrad Maldives Rangali Island, where aquamarine waters and coral dreams await.

Some captains head straight into the heart of the squall, trusting the strange quirks of the Indian Ocean to split the storm in two. If fortune smiles, they sail clear between walls of brooding cloud into calm seas once more. But sometimes there is no escape. Then, all rests in the hands of Allah. Old rites and offerings may be made to appease the spirits of the deep, yet in the end, safety lies in the boat itself – a vessel crafted by neighbours and friends, tested by generations.

For all their skill, Maldivians know the sea is never tame. Foreign sailors entering the atolls without a local pilot do so at their peril. Even the British Admiralty's charts admit defeat:

*"The depiction of reefs and dangers is based almost entirely on a lead-line survey of 1835... Mariners should navigate with extreme caution."*

At times, the only markers for a safe channel are a bleached tree branch or a rusty pole, thrust into the shallows of the lagoon. Islanders pass with care, a lookout in the bow scanning every shade of turquoise to avoid coral outcrops. And still, every captain knows the dreadful sound of timber grinding across a reef. Sometimes the tide frees the vessel; sometimes, repairs must wait on the beach, scars carved into the hull.

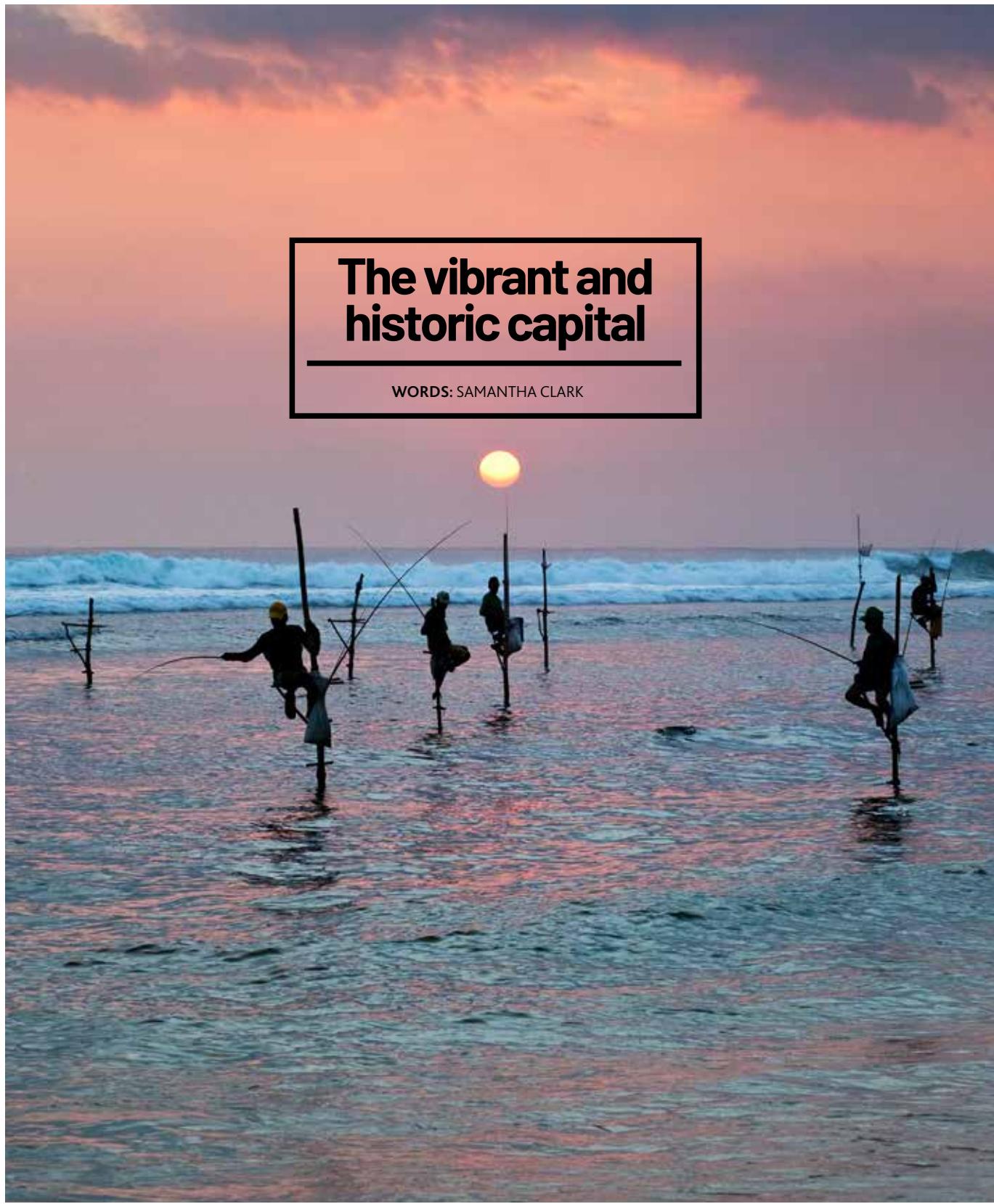
Currents between atolls can sweep a boat off course at five knots an hour. Not long ago, a *dhoani* was carried thousands of kilometres westward to the coast of Africa.

Yet despite the dangers, Maldivians are completely in their element at sea. They move across a swaying deck with balance and ease, as if the ocean were their natural ground. Many, indeed, spend more of their lives afloat than on land.

And even today, *dhoanis* are still an iconic and relevant part of Maldivian culture. Though modern speedboats are common, these traditional vessels remain essential – not only for fishing and inter-island travel, but also as an authentic way for visitors to experience the Maldives. *Dhoani* tours reveal the natural beauty of the islands and connect travellers to the rhythms of local life in a way no modern craft can. Affordable, practical, and deeply rooted in heritage, the *dhoani* continues to play a vital role in the Maldivian economy and way of life – a proud symbol of a seafaring people whose bond with the ocean endures.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Colombo two times a week, with connections to Maldives with SriLankan Airlines. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information



## The vibrant and historic capital

WORDS: SAMANTHA CLARK

Stilt fishermen silhouetted at Galle sunset.



Blooming over Beira Lake – Colombo's Lotus Tower lights up the city skyline.

**T**he first thing I noticed about Colombo was the pace. It's a city that vibrates rather than screams: *tuk-tuks* weave through traffic, street merchants shout, schoolchildren babble on the streets and the racy whisper of the Indian Ocean just beyond.

Colombo, located on Sri Lanka's western coast, is a diverse city. Glistening skyscrapers rise beside colonial homes, bustling bazaars flood into peaceful courtyards, and centuries of history blend effortlessly with today's global elegance. From the time I arrived, it was clear that Colombo is more than just a city to see; it is one to experience, taste, and remember.

My days began in the city's oldest districts. In Fort, Colombo's colonial heart, I wandered past government buildings and offices housed in exquisite ancient structures, whereas in Pettah, life spilled out onto the streets in a display of colour and sound. The marketplaces were overflowing with spices stacked high in hessian sacks, the aroma of cardamom and cinnamon combining with fried snacks and garments in every colour of the rainbow. The Jami Ul-Alfar Mosque, with its striped red and white domes, loomed like a storybook palace above the chaos. Built in 1908, its architecture is so striking that I found myself going around it merely to observe the overpowering patterns against the blue sky.

History was never far away. The Dutch Hospital, built in 1681, was designed to care for the health of officers and other staff working for the Dutch East India Company. Its proximity to the harbour enabled it to assist Dutch seamen. The majority of patients were given a mat, but those who

were most ill received a mattress. The patients' clothes were purchased from Java. Alleman, the longest-serving surgeon at the Colombo Hospital, attempted to enhance hospital conditions by expanding provisions. Paul Hermann, who worked at the Colombo Hospital from 1672 to 1679, was without a doubt the most well-known of all the doctors. He is recognised as the father of botany in Sri Lanka.

Today, it is a sophisticated dining and retail destination, yet its courtyards nevertheless remind you of memories of another era. I sipped an iced coffee there, the massive walls keeping the heat at bay, and imagined the sailors, traders, and colonists who must have gone under these identical arches in the past. A short walk away stood the Old Parliament building, with its neoclassical façade facing the sea. The grounds are dotted with bronze statues of leaders, serving as reminders of Sri Lanka's political history.

When the city's pace became too much, I went to Viharamahadevi Park in Cinnamon Gardens. This lush sanctuary, with its waterfalls and enormous Buddha statue, provided both shade and peace. Families picnicked, teens joked near the playground, and the city appeared to breathe. It was here that I learnt Colombo is more than simply monuments and history; it is about its people and the times they live in.

The Colombo National Museum was a magnificent display of culture and history. Housed in an attractive Italianate edifice, it houses the country's treasures: Kandyan regalia, antique sculptures, colonial armaments, and even King Wimaladharmasuriya's elaborate throne from the 17th century. I went carefully, losing sight of time as each gallery revealed another aspect of Sri Lanka's history.



Giant seated Buddha at Viharamahadevi Park, Colombo.



Colombo National Museum is a neoclassical treasure.

One evening, I crossed Beira Lake to see the Gangaramaya temple. The temple's architecture is a mix of Sri Lankan, Thai, Indian, and Chinese influences, but the most prominent feature is Seema Malakaya, a floating meditation hall built by Geoffrey Bawa. Built with the help of a Muslim benefactor, it appeared to reflect Colombo's ethos of peace. As the sun went down, the temple mirrored in the peaceful waters, and I had a unique sense of peace.

There is also the Pettah Floating Market, which is a one-of-a-kind marketplace by the Beira Lake with over 90 kiosks, many of which are on boats and sell local vegetables, handicrafts, souvenirs, and snacks. It is a famous tourist destination noted for its vibrant ambience in a bustling setting.

And then there was Mount Lavinia. Only a short drive south, its golden beach and colonial hotel are steeped in romance and legend. Sir Thomas Maitland, a British governor, reportedly fell in love with a local dancer named Lovina Aponsuwa. Their affair gave the town its name, and the Mount Lavinia Hotel remains as a constant reminder of their story. I spent the afternoon walking along the beach, waves frothing at my ankles, before feasting on delicious seafood as the sun set over the horizon.

Colombo is also a gateway to some of Sri Lanka's most beautiful beaches, including Bentota, Mirissa, Arugam Bay, and Passikuda, where the sea

is so quiet and shallow that you can stroll forever in the turquoise seas. Each length of coast seemed to provide a unique type of escape: surfing, seclusion, or pure relaxation.

Back in the city, shopping and dining were big temptations. The Pettah Market or Manning Market is an open market in the suburb of Pettah. It was chaotic but breathtaking, while the sleek Colombo City Centre provided a taste of luxury. The food scene was even more diverse, with street vendors selling hot *kottu roti*, delicate hoppers with *sambol*, creamy rice and curry, and cosmopolitan eateries reflecting the city's worldwide links. One evening, I sat at a street-side kiosk, eating string hoppers with the locals and enjoying as they recommended I try the spicier *sambol*. It was a supper more valuable than any fine dining experience.

Moving around was part of the adventure. *Tuk-tuks* zipped through traffic, buses rumbled past painted in brilliant colours, and I took the coastal train going along the shoreline, waves breaking just metres away. It seemed like Colombo was always on the move, but many were willing to slow down and share a moment with you.

When it came time to depart, I discovered Colombo had offered me more than just sights and stories. It had given me a sense of rhythm – the pulse of a city that had been trading, evolving, and prospering for over two millennia. It's a city that welcomes you not as a visitor, but as a member of its ever-changing story. For me, Colombo was more than a capital; it was a glimpse into the heart of Sri Lanka.



Parliament, Bank of Ceylon, and WTC towers in the Fort district.



The Pettah Floating Market – bustling stalls and floating market charm.



Peace, culture, and history at Gangaramaya Temple.

### Top things to see in Colombo

The **Gangaramaya Temple** is a popular religious landmark in Colombo, with modern and traditional architecture, Buddhist art, relics, and a peaceful lakeside setting.

**Seema Malaka Temple** – Located on Beira Lake, this serene temple is perfect for silent thought and photography.

**Galle Face Green** is a popular beachfront promenade where residents enjoy evening strolls, street food, and sunset views of the Indian Ocean.

**Viharamahadevi Park**, the city's largest and oldest park, features tree-lined walks, fountains, and a towering Buddha statue.

The **Colombo National Museum** showcases Sri Lanka's cultural history, including antique artefacts and Kandy thrones.

**Freedom Memorial Hall**, built to commemorate freedom from British domination, is a historical and architectural masterpiece.

Visit **Pettah Market**, a vibrant bazaar in Colombo, where you can shop for spices, textiles, jewellery, and gadgets among colourful streets.

**Colombo Dutch Hospital** is a restored colonial structure that currently serves as a chic dining and shopping destination.

**Mount Lavinia Beach** – Located just outside urban Colombo, this golden length of sand offers a tranquil respite with great seafood and ocean views.

**Colombo Lotus Tower** – South Asia's tallest structure, offering panoramic views of the city skyline.

**Colombo Town Hall** is a beautiful colonial building that resembles the US Capitol and is located next to Viharamahadevi Park.

**The Floating Market** offers a unique shopping experience on Beira Lake, with kiosks selling souvenirs, clothing, and local delicacies.



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Colombo two times a week. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information

# Hong Kong street food

WORDS: MARGAUX SCHREURS



**N**o idea what to eat while visiting the culinary capital of Asia? We've got you covered. From breakfast through to late-night snacks, here are ten of the best street food bites to fuel your adventures. You'll need them – exploring this dazzling city is hungry work.

Hongkongers take immense pride in their food, and their cuisine is celebrated worldwide. The best way to experience it? Follow the local wisdom: *"When in Hong Kong, eat as the Hongkongers do."*

Tip: Go early in the morning for freshness, or around meal times when turnover is highest. And if you're not used to spice, go easy on the chilli and Here are ten treats to try!





## 1. Cheung Fun

### 1. Cheung Fun

These silky rice noodle rolls are a breakfast staple – and worth the wait in line. Steamed to order, they're served warm with sweet soy sauce, sesame seeds, and sometimes chilli. If you miss them in the morning, you'll also find them at dim sum restaurants throughout the day. Bonus points if you can master them with chopsticks.

## 2. Curry Fish Balls

No Hong Kong food list is complete without curry fish balls. Cheap, cheerful, and quintessentially local, they've been around for decades and are often called the city's most traditional street snack. Deep-fried, simmered in spicy curry sauce, and skewered fresh from the bubbling cauldron – they're irresistible.



## 3. Egg Waffles

Light, chewy, and only slightly sweet, egg waffles (or *gai daan jai*) are everywhere – from markets to supermarkets. Made from eggs, flour, sugar, and evaporated milk, they're perfect for an afternoon pick-me-up. Try them plain, or go wild with toppings: fruit, condensed milk, ice cream, chocolate sauce – or even Nutella.



## 4. Egg Tarts

Flaky pastry, silky custard, and best eaten warm – egg tarts are a Hong Kong classic. You'll find traditional versions in bakeries and markets, but modern twists include green tea or chocolate fillings. Either way, they're addictive.

## 5. Stinky Tofu

Not for the faint-hearted, but beloved by many. Like blue cheese, its smell is far stronger than its taste. Fermented for weeks or even months, then fried until crisp, stinky tofu is best enjoyed with noodles and a cold fruit drink. You won't need directions – your nose will find it first.



## 6. Siu Mai

Traditionally a dim sum favourite, siu mai dumplings are also popular street snacks, served skewered on sticks. Filled with pork or fish and steamed in delicate yellow wrappers, they're often dipped in curry or soy sauce. Careful – they're piping hot inside.





7

### 7. Grilled Squid

Chewy, smoky, and full of flavour, grilled squid tentacles are seasoned with teriyaki, honey, or barbecue sauce, sometimes with a chili kick. They're especially popular in the evenings, when office workers stop for a bite on the way home.



8

### 8. Pineapple Buns

Don't be fooled – there's no pineapple inside. These soft white buns are named for their golden, crumbly tops, which resemble the fruit's skin. Best eaten warm with a slice of butter inside. Ask for *bor lor bao* and enjoy them at cafés and street stalls across the city.



9

### 9. Roasted Sweet Potato

A winter favourite, roasted sweet potatoes are sold alongside chestnuts from hawker carts. Sweet, warming, and wrapped in paper, they're the perfect snack on a chilly evening.



### 10. Roasted Chestnuts

Need a gentler snack after stinky tofu? Roasted chestnuts are simple, wholesome, and available year-round from street carts. Buy a bag – you'll find it impossible to stop at just one.



#### Where to snack

##### Kowloon:

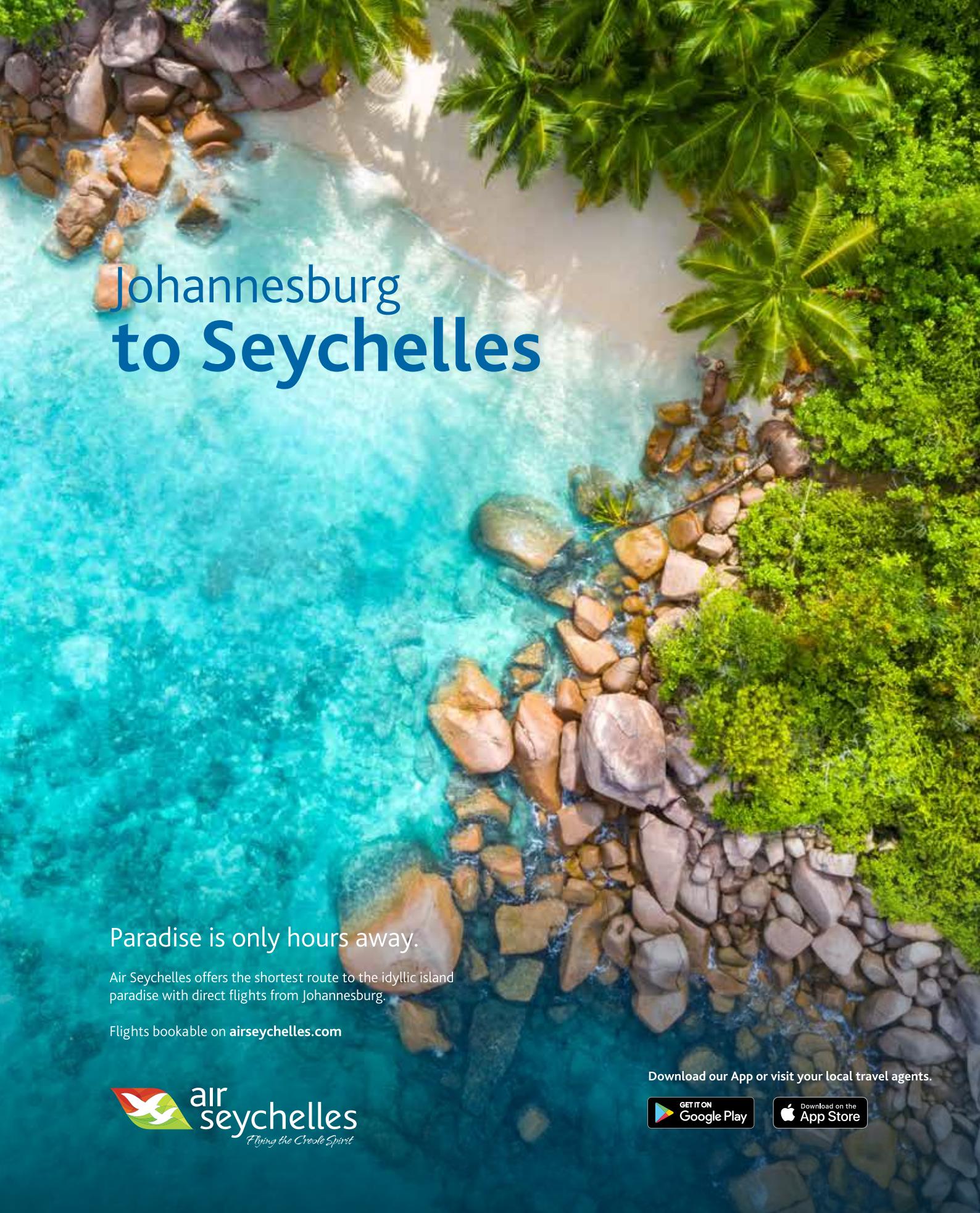
- Fuk Wa Street, Sham Shui Po - Open 9am to late
- Temple Street, Yau Ma Tei - Open 7am to 11pm
- Mong Kok, corner of Argyle Street & Fa Yuen Street - Open 9am to 8pm
- Mong Kok, corner of Fa Yuen Street & Bute Street - Open 9am to 8pm

##### Hong Kong Island:

- Causeway Bay, Tung Lo Wan Road - Open 9am to late



Air Seychelles operates flights between Seychelles and Colombo, as well as between Seychelles and Abu Dhabi, with onward connections to Hong Kong with SriLankan Airlines and Etihad Airways. Visit: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com) for more information



# Johannesburg to Seychelles

Paradise is only hours away.

Air Seychelles offers the shortest route to the idyllic island paradise with direct flights from Johannesburg.

Flights bookable on [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)

 **air  
seychelles**  
*Flying the Crocodile Spirit*

Download our App or visit your local travel agents.



# Inside Air Seychelles

News and information



[Travel facts](#)

[Air Seychelles news](#)

[Route network and fleet](#)

[Air Seychelles global offices](#)

## Important Information

### Airport

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

### Information

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

### Time

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

### Electric supply

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

### Language

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

### Currency

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

### Credit cards

Most credit cards and travellers' cheques are accepted.

### Banking

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

### Public holidays 2026

• New Year Holiday	1 Jan
• Good Friday	3 April
• Easter Sunday	5 April

### Easter Monday

6 April

### Labour Day

1 May

### Constitution Day

18 June

### Corpus Christi

4 June

### National Day

29 June

### Assumption Day

15 Aug

### All Saints Day

1 Nov

### Immaculate Conception

8 Dec

### Christmas Day

25 Dec

A copy of valid return ticket and proof of confirmed accomodation is required. [www.ics.gov.sc](http://www.ics.gov.sc)

### Ground transport

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

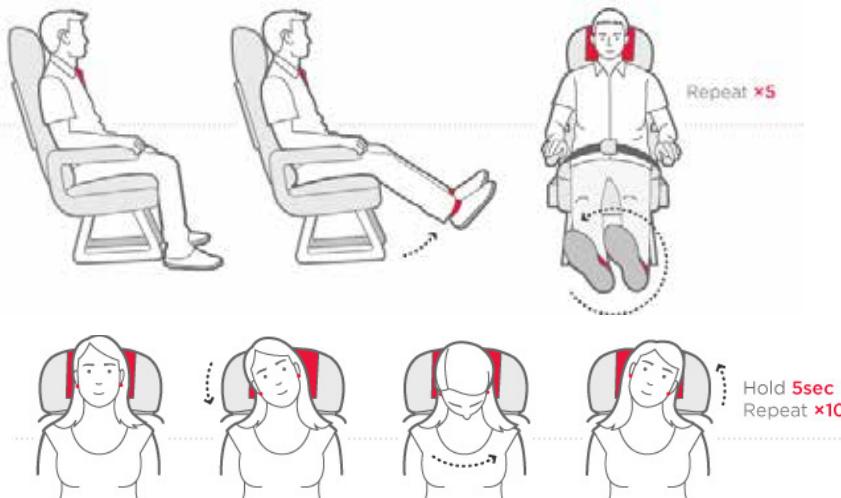
### Taxi service

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

### Tourist information office

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

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



#### Shoulder circles

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

#### Neck rolls

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

#### Sit up straight

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

#### Ankle circles

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

Singapore

Melbourne

Bangkok

Sydney

Delhi

Kuala Lumpur

Chennai

From Seychelles  
to Colombo  
and beyond...

Air Seychelles now offers twice weekly flights to Colombo with easy connections to several popular cities beyond Sri Lanka.

Flights bookable on [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)



Download our App or visit your local travel agents.





## Increasing frequency to Abu Dhabi

From 16 October 2025, Air Seychelles began operating a daily flight service between Seychelles and Abu Dhabi. This strategic expansion followed the successful introduction of the route in May 2025.

The increase in frequency responds to strong demand from leisure and corporate travellers seeking easier access to Abu Dhabi and its surrounding regions. It reflects Air Seychelles' ongoing commitment to enhancing connectivity for both the Seychellois community and international visitors.

Charles Johnson, Chief Commercial Officer of Air Seychelles, shared his satisfaction with the route's performance: "The support from our passengers has been tremendous, and we are delighted to meet their needs with a daily service. The route's success confirms its importance

within our network, and we are pleased to offer greater flexibility and convenience to our travellers."

Operated in partnership with Etihad Airways, the service strengthens Seychelles' tourism links, with an estimated 57,000 visitors expected annually – mainly from Europe, the Middle East, and Russia.

Abu Dhabi, the vibrant capital of the UAE, offers a rich cultural experience with its architectural landmarks, shopping destinations, and world-class attractions. Its proximity to Dubai further enhances the appeal, providing travellers with opportunities to explore both cities.

The route is operated by the airline's A320neo aircraft, accommodating 168 passengers.

Air Seychelles remains dedicated to delivering exceptional service and expanding connections between Seychelles, Abu Dhabi, and beyond, supporting the continued growth of tourism and commerce.

## Enhancing food safety standards

Air Seychelles remains committed to exceptional service and passenger safety through continuous staff development. In April 2025, the airline organised a comprehensive food safety training for 31 employees managing the Payanke, VIP, and CIP Lounges at Seychelles International Airport.

Conducted by Mr. Terry Lablache of HMC Trade and Services, the programme centred on HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) – an internationally recognised system for ensuring food safety. Staff were trained to identify and manage potential hazards across food handling, storage, preparation, and service, reinforcing the highest standards of hygiene, safety, and quality.

Mrs. Nicole Mancienne, Head of Commercial for the airline's lounges, commended participants for their enthusiasm and commitment. Despite a delayed presentation, a small ceremony was held on 6 August 2025 at the Payanke Lounge, where participants proudly received their certificates – further highlighting Air Seychelles' dedication to staff development, food safety, and service excellence.





## salon vallée de mai P r e m i u m   L o u n g e

### Plush, Spacious & Relaxing.

Enjoy the comfort of Salon Vallée De Mai, the Air Seychelles Premium Lounge designed for our Business Class and frequent flyer guests\*.

To find out more, visit [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)

Terms & Conditions apply. Economy Class guests can purchase lounge access - Visit reception for inquiries. \*Please reconfirm your eligibility with your Frequent Flyer Programme.



# Our Network

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

## International Network



### MAP KEYS

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

### CODESHARE PARTNERS



### INTERLINE PARTNERS



## Codeshare Airlines Network (India)



## Air Seychelles Domestic Network



## Our Fleet

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

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



### Airbus A320-200neo

Aircraft: 2

Length: 37.57m

Wingspan: 34.09m

Passenger capacity: 168

Cruising speed: 840km/h

Cruising altitude: 37,000ft



### Dhc-6 Twin Otter-400 Series

Aircraft: 5

Length: 15.80m

Wingspan: 19.80m

Passenger capacity: 19

Cruising speed: 260km/h

Cruising altitude: 10,000ft

# seyStream

in-flight entertainment



This aircraft is equipped with **seyStream** wireless in-flight entertainment system which can only be accessed on your personal device (*smartphone, tablet or laptop*).

- 1 Activate and maintain airplane or flight mode throughout the flight.
- 2 Enable the WiFi function.
- 3 Select 'seyStream' network and connect.

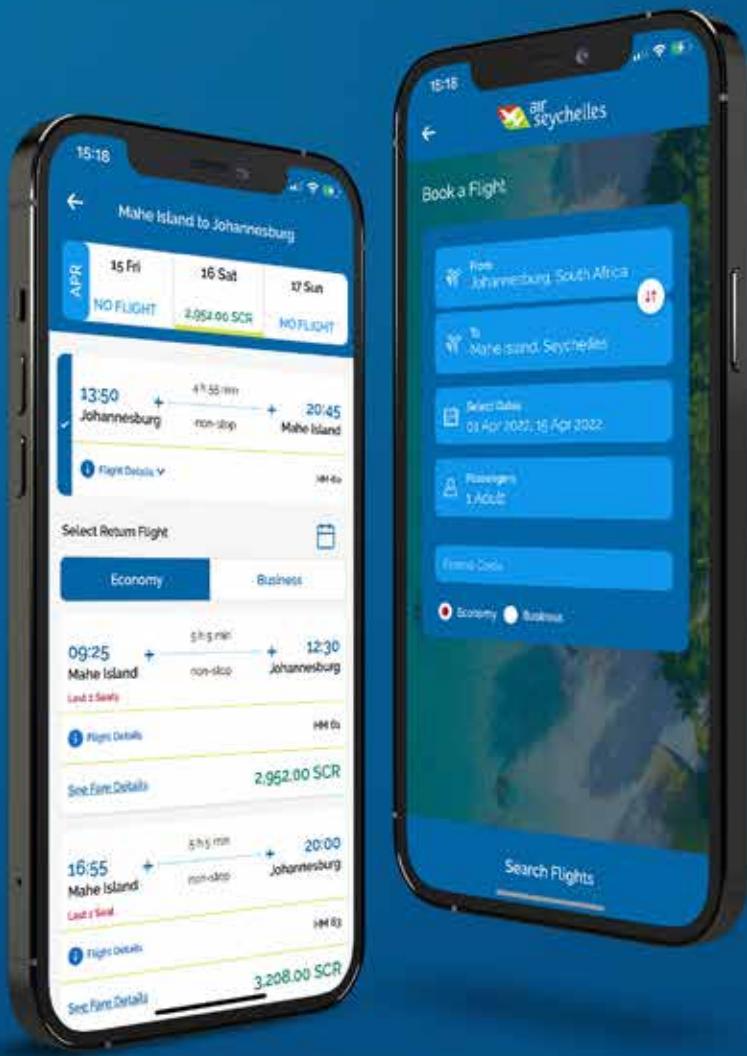
\*The automatic pop-up will re-direct you to a browser and **seyStream** will be ready for use. If the pop-up does not appear automatically, type in '**airfi.aero**' in your preferred browser.

As per the airline regulation, **seyStream** will not be accessible during taxi, take-off and landing or as advised by the cabin crew.

 air seychelles  
Flying the Creole Spirit

# Air Seychelles global offices

India		<p>Capital: New Delhi          Languages: Hindi, English          Currency: Indian Rupee          Area: 3,287,590 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 1,451,000,000 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Mumbai</p>	<p>Bird Group Ltd          204, 2nd Floor A Wing          Kanakia Wall Street 400093 Mumbai          Tel: +91 959 4013686          Email: hmsales@bird.travel          hmres@bird.travel</p>
Israel		<p>Capital: Jerusalem          Language: Hebrew          Currency: Israel Shekel          Area: 20,770 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 9,400,000 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Tel Aviv</p>	<p>AIRLINES GSA          3 Gilboa St          Airport City 7019900          Tel Aviv          Tel: +972 3 5160598          Email: res@airseychelles.co.il</p>
La Réunion		<p>Capital: Saint-Denis          Language: French          Currency: Euro          Area: 2,512 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 885,700 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Saint-Denis</p>	<p>Rogers Aviation (Mauritius) Ltd          The Gardens          Bagatelle Office Park          Moka, Mauritius          Tel: +230 2026671          Email: salim.mohungoo@rogers-aviation.com</p>
Mauritius		<p>Capital: Port Louis          Languages: French, English, Creole          Currency: Rupees          Area: 2,040 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 1,260,000 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Port Louis</p>	<p>Rogers Aviation (Mauritius) Ltd          The Gardens          Bagatelle Office Park          Moka, Mauritius          Tel: +230 2026697          Email: salim.mohungoo@rogers-aviation.com</p>
Seychelles		<p>Capital: Victoria          Languages: Seychellois Creole, English          Currency: Seychelles Rupee          Area: 456 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 130,418 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Mahé &amp; Praslin</p>	<p>Air Seychelles Ltd          Seychelles International Airport          PO Box 386          Mahé          Tel: +248 4391000          Email: callcentre@airseychelles.com</p>
South Africa		<p>Capital: Pretoria          Languages: English, Afrikaans (11 official languages)          Currency: South African Rand          Area: 1,221,037 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 63,000,000 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Johannesburg</p>	<p>Rogers Aviation          Bedfordview Office Park, Bedfordview          Johannesburg          Tel: +27 11 326 4440          Email: airseychelles@rogers-aviation.co.za          Reservations2@rogers-aviation.co.za          benjamic@rogers-aviation.co.za</p>
Sri Lanka		<p>Capital: Colombo          Languages: Sinhala, Tamil          Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee          Area: 65,610 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 23,100,000 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Colombo</p>	<p>Air Park (Pvt) Ltd          4th floor, Lakshman's Building, 321-4/1 Galle – Colombo Rd, Colombo 00300          Sri Lanka          Tel: +94 (0) 11 237 2870          Email: airseychelles@airpark.aero</p>
United Arab Emirates		<p>Capital: Abu Dhabi          Language: Arabic          Currency: United Arab Emirates Dirham          Area: 972 km<sup>2</sup>          Population: 12,500,000 (2024)          Air Seychelles destination: Abu Dhabi</p>	<p>Sharaf Travels LLC          Al Reem Plaza, Electra St.          Tel: Abu Dhabi, +971 2 67 70 678          Email: hmauh.res@sharaflight.com          Sharaf Travel Building, Khalid Bin Al Waleed St.          Tel: Dubai, +971 4 40 60 511          Email: hmdxb.res@sharaflight.com</p>



# Get the most out of your trip

Download our App for free.

- ✓ Book a Flight
- ✓ Manage your Booking
- ✓ Buy Extras
- ✓ Check-in Online





# The best way to Island hop

Make the most of your holiday with a trip to Praslin.  
On the short 15 minutes flight from Mahé, you can enjoy  
a bird's eye view of the Seychelles beautiful inner islands.

With over 20 daily departures, getting there and back has never been easier.

Charter services are also available.



Book your ticket on [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)  
or download our app

# Scenic Flights

by Air Seychelles

Enjoy a bird's eye view  
of the islands.



The Seychelles islands, a living museum of nature and a sanctuary for some of the rarest species of flora and fauna on earth. Let us take you to the sky and see places not accessible by foot.

Discover magnificent boulders, lush tropical greens of the mountains or simply be amazed by long strips of beaches and crystal clear blue seas on our 30 minutes scenic flight to the North or South of Mahé.

For more information, please email [hmcharters@airseychelles.com](mailto:hmcharters@airseychelles.com) or call +248 439 1000.



[airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)