

# silhouette

Inflight magazine of Air Seychelles • April - June 2019



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## Dear Guests, Welcome aboard!

At Air Seychelles, we are always exploring ways to connect guests to islands within the Seychelles archipelago, as well as across the Indian Ocean.

To ensure that we continue to offer you more travel options to and from the Seychelles, I am pleased to announce that from 3 July until 26 October 2019, Air Seychelles will operate a twice-weekly service to the capital city of Madagascar, Antananarivo.

Home of the lemurs and famed giant baobab trees, Antananarivo – also known as Tana – is the ideal destination for guests looking to combine their trip to the Seychelles for the upcoming summer holidays with a quick and easy getaway to another nearby tourism destination.

In this regard, we have carefully timed our flight schedule for you to spend less time waiting and more time exploring the places you want to go to.

On that note, if you are thinking of exploring the hidden gems of Madagascar, why not browse through pages 38 to 42 and read our special Madagascar feature focused on the untold treasures of the Ifaty and Mangily village.

In addition to the new seasonal service to Antananarivo, for this year we have planned further network enhancements that will significantly broaden and deepen our reach around the region.

As from 12 May 2019, we will introduce our sixth frequency between Seychelles and India's largest city, Mumbai. The new service, to be operated on Sundays, will provide an additional 272 seats on the route, which is great news for business and leisure travellers planning their holidays in advance.

It is in this spirit that we also announce the commencement of our daily services to the vibrant heart of South Africa, Johannesburg. Starting as from 3 June 2019, the new frequency will not only enhance air access for leisure, trade and commerce travellers but it will provide more options to guests looking for a unique high-quality wildlife and beach holiday combination.

The best way to book your seat on one of our flights is through [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com). Even better, upgrade your travel by purchasing access to our VIP and Premium Lounge in the Seychelles for the best pre-flight experience with us.

Book your trip today and we look forward to welcoming you aboard!

I wish you a pleasant trip.



“  
We have carefully timed  
our flight schedule for  
you to spend less time  
waiting and more time  
exploring the places you  
want to go.  
”

Remco Althuis  
Chief Executive Officer

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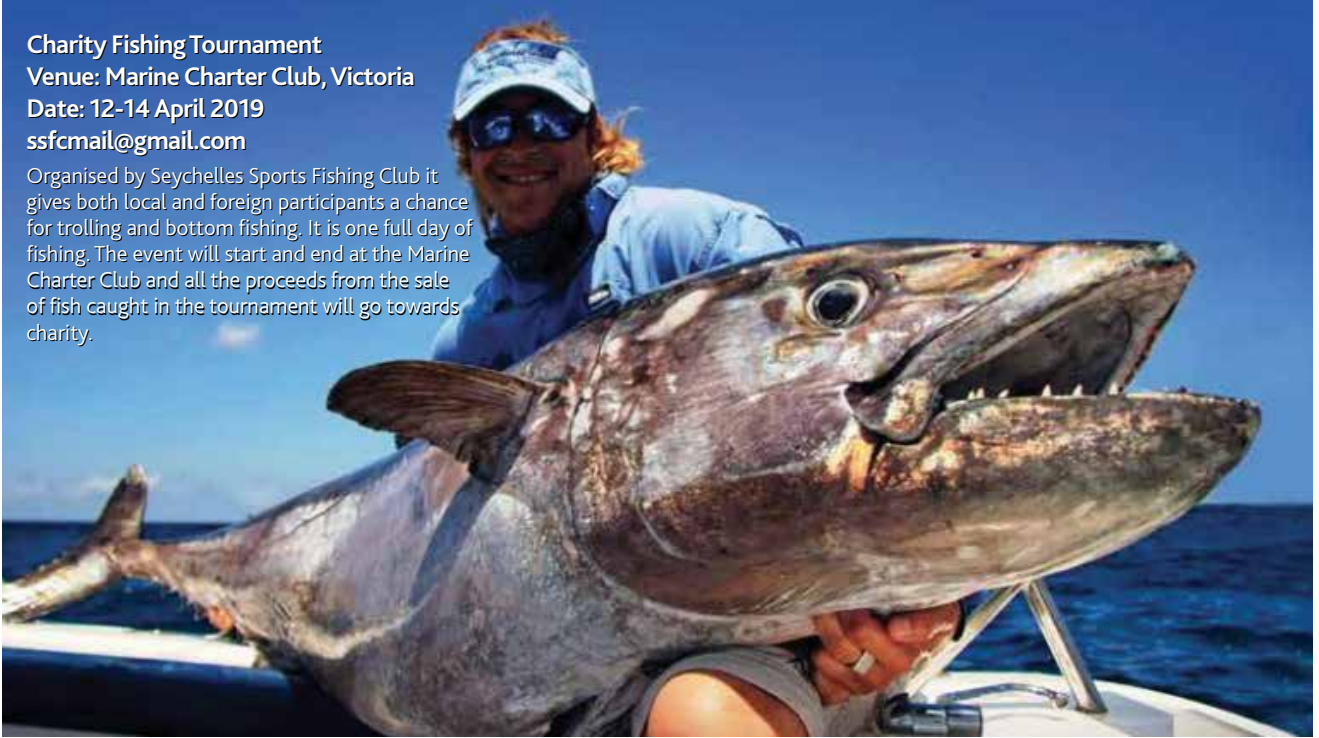
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**Charity Fishing Tournament**  
**Venue: Marine Charter Club, Victoria**  
**Date: 12-14 April 2019**  
**ssfcmal@gmail.com**

Organised by Seychelles Sports Fishing Club it gives both local and foreign participants a chance for trolling and bottom fishing. It is one full day of fishing. The event will start and end at the Marine Charter Club and all the proceeds from the sale of fish caught in the tournament will go towards charity.



**SSFC/Heineken Slam and SSFC/World Wide Fund for Nature Billfish Release Challenge**  
**Venue: Mahé**  
**Date: 15 June 2019**  
**ssfcmal@gmail.com**

SSFC teams up with Heineken in a trolling event with the main focus of bringing back yellowfin tuna, dorado and wahoo to capture their slam. SSFC also teams up as a part of this tournament with WWF in the Billfish Release Challenge to continue conservation of the Seychelles Marine Environment.



**National Day**  
**Venue: Victoria**  
**Date: 29 June 2019**

Everyone descends on Victoria to celebrate National Day and its military parade. The President, Prime Minister and senior dignitaries will attend the occasion. After the parade, the President of Seychelles will address the nation. The official celebration of National Day includes music concerts and a spectacular flower show.





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### FIA World Rally Cross Championship

Venue: Yas Marina Circuit, Abu Dhabi

Date: 5-6 April 2019

[www.yasmarinacircuit.com](http://www.yasmarinacircuit.com)

Yas Marina Circuit hosts the season opener to FIA World Rally Cross Championship 2019 for the first time. A packed weekend of fast-paced action on track with cars accelerating 0-60mph in less than two seconds, tight turns, exhilarating with live music throughout the day, a big stage act on Friday evening, food trucks as well as all day activities.



### Royal Raid- Trail Run

Venue: Port Louis, Mauritius

Date: 11 May 2019

[www.royalraid.com](http://www.royalraid.com)

The Royal Raid still takes you further to the heart of south-western Mauritius. The event consists of three races being held one after the other:

- Royal Raid 70 kilometres to be covered in less than 17 hours,
- Royal Raid 35 kilometres to be covered in less than 9 hours,
- Royal Raid 15 kilometres a race of 15 kilometres.

The runner will have the exclusive opportunity to discover Yemen Nature Reserve, one of the largest and most beautiful nature reserve in Mauritius. The endemic fauna and flora of the Black River National Park and its famous ascension of Parakeet Trail, Heritage Nature Reserve and its sugarcane fields.



### Mauritius Tour Beachcomber

Venue: Shandrani

Date: 16-18 May 2019

[www.beachcomber-events.com/mtb](http://www.beachcomber-events.com/mtb)

The Mauritius Tour Beachcomber is a unique mountain bike stage race. It creates an unparalleled opportunity to get the best vibes of Mauritius while riding across wild and very varied terrain; from mountains, forests, sugarcane and tea fields to beaches and atop cliffs.

The competition will yet again beckon mountain bikers in the very depth of a vast playing field loaded with challenges, discovery and breath-taking sceneries. It is a dreamlike experience at each pedal stroke on unique trails.

## More upcoming events

### Ugadi Festival

Venue: All over Mauritius

Date: 6 April 2019

### The 34th Annual Gandhi Walk

Venue: Gandhi Hall Impala Crescent, Lenasia, Johannesburg

Date: 7 April 2019

[www.gandhiwalk.org.za](http://www.gandhiwalk.org.za)

### Bohag or Rongali Bihu Festival, Assam

Venue: Guwahati, India

Date: 15-21 April 2019

[www.bihufestival.org](http://www.bihufestival.org)

### Baisakhi or Vaisakhi

Venue: All over India, particularly in Amritsar

Date: 14 April 2019

[www.baisakhifestival.com](http://www.baisakhifestival.com)



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shopping experience at Eden Plaza with its restaurants, and variety of shops including a supermarket, banking facilities, medical practices and a health spa.

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# Have we reached 'peak iPhone'?

WORDS: JOE MINIHAINE

On 2 August 2018, Apple became the first company to be valued at United States Dollars one trillion. In the 11 years since it launched the first iPhone, its share price had risen by 1,100 percent.

On 2 January 2019, Apple issued its first profit warning since 2002. After temporarily halting sales of its shares, it saw USD 55 billion wiped off its value, as investors panicked and wondered whether the days of its all-conquering dominance of the tech sector were coming to an end.

There are a number of reasons for the contrasting times of August 2018 and January 2019. And they all come back to one central question. Has the world finally reached peak iPhone, a saturation point from which there's no return?

For over a decade, Apple's smartphone has been the gold standard by which all rivals are measured. Its hardware is widely regarded as the best in the business, its evolving design inspiring copycat products. Its ubiquity across the globe also means that while Google's Android platform is found on more devices, the iPhone's allure is strong. Apple's long run of record breaking quarters and multi-billion dollar earnings are testament to that fact.

The Chief Executive Officer of Apple Inc, Tim Cook was quick to cite macroeconomic conditions when revealing that Apple's profits would be lower than anticipated in the first three months of 2019.

"While we anticipated some challenges in key emerging markets, we did not foresee the magnitude of the economic deceleration, particularly in greater China." Cook went on to suggest that the ongoing trade war between Beijing and Washington was also having an adverse impact on Apple's ability to sell at required levels in what has become its most important market.

However, there are wider issues at play. Apple's 2018 iPhone range appeared to leave consumers cold. The company released a trio of new handsets: iPhone XS, iPhone XS Max and iPhone XR. The release of the latter was delayed by two months, giving Apple some leeway with investors when it was revealed that sales of iPhones between July and September 2018 has been flat.

Much was made of the iPhone XR's lower price point. However, at USD 749 without a SIM card for the cheapest model, it was still as much as some of the best phones offered by the likes of Samsung and Huawei, and significantly more expensive than the lauded OnePlus 6T.

While Cook bullishly defended the iPhone XR, saying it was Apple's bestselling smartphone, he allowed for the reduction in wholesale prices to Asian markets, specifically Japan and China, in a bid to boost sales.

While initial market research points towards this having a positive effect, it does appear that Apple's premium pricing strategy is finally catching up with it.

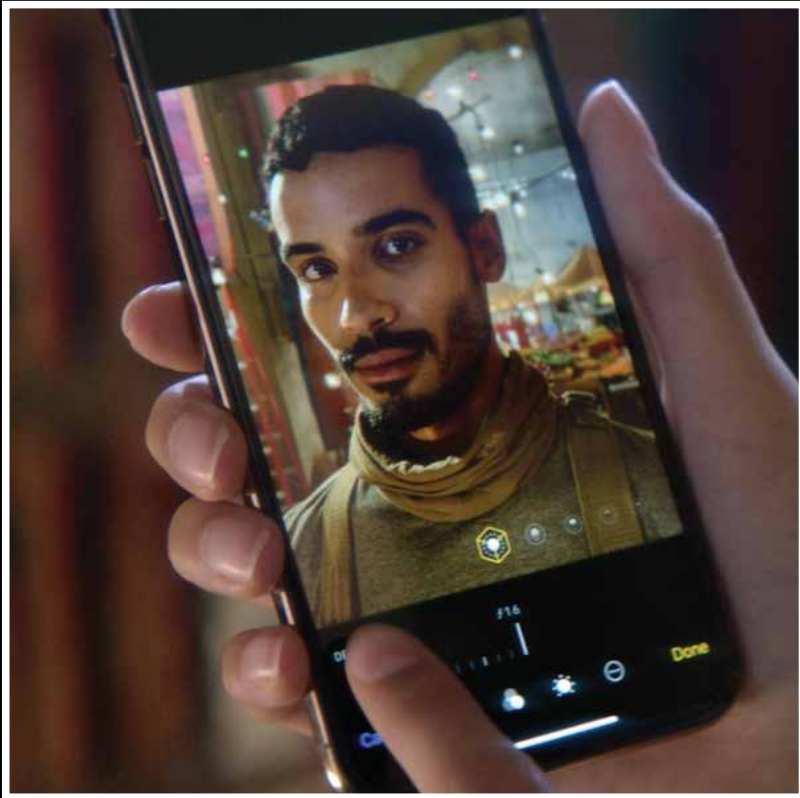
A further misstep, albeit one that benefitted existing iPhone owners, is also to blame for the sales slump. Having been found to be slowing down older devices with failing batteries, Apple was forced to offer replacement power packs for USD 29, a massive USD 50 reduction. While that offer expired on 31 December 2018, Cook freely admitted when revealing his profit warning to investors that in giving older phones a new lease of life, Apple had cannibalised sales. In a letter, he wrote that customers had, "... taken advantage of significantly reduced pricing for iPhone battery replacements."

So, have we reached Peak iPhone? It certainly seems that the days of most consumers changing to a new phone every two years is over. That's partly down to the sheer cost of a new device, often upwards of USD 1,000 for the best model, but also because these products can last longer than they used to.

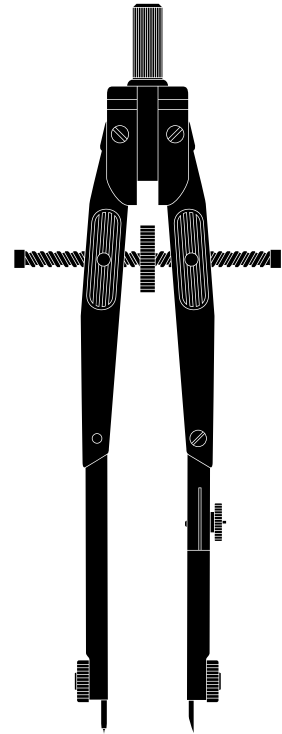
Asymco analyst Horace Dediu studied Apple's sales figures in forensic detail and concluded that the average lifespan of its products was four years. And while improvements in camera tech and processing speed come each year, consumers seem less fussed by that than the fact they can save money by accessing cheaper deals once the initial cost of the phone has been paid off.

While this might seem like an Apple specific problem, the wider issue is that we're reaching peak smartphone. True innovation in the space has been sorely lacking, at least at prices that average consumers can afford. It's a problem that affects Samsung as much as Apple. It's just that with its trillion-dollar valuation and ubiquitous branding, Apple's plight makes for more sensational copy. The days of record-smashing financial returns may be over, but Apple will still make billions. It's just that we'll all be handing them our hard-earned pay less regularly than we have done over the past 10 years. 📉





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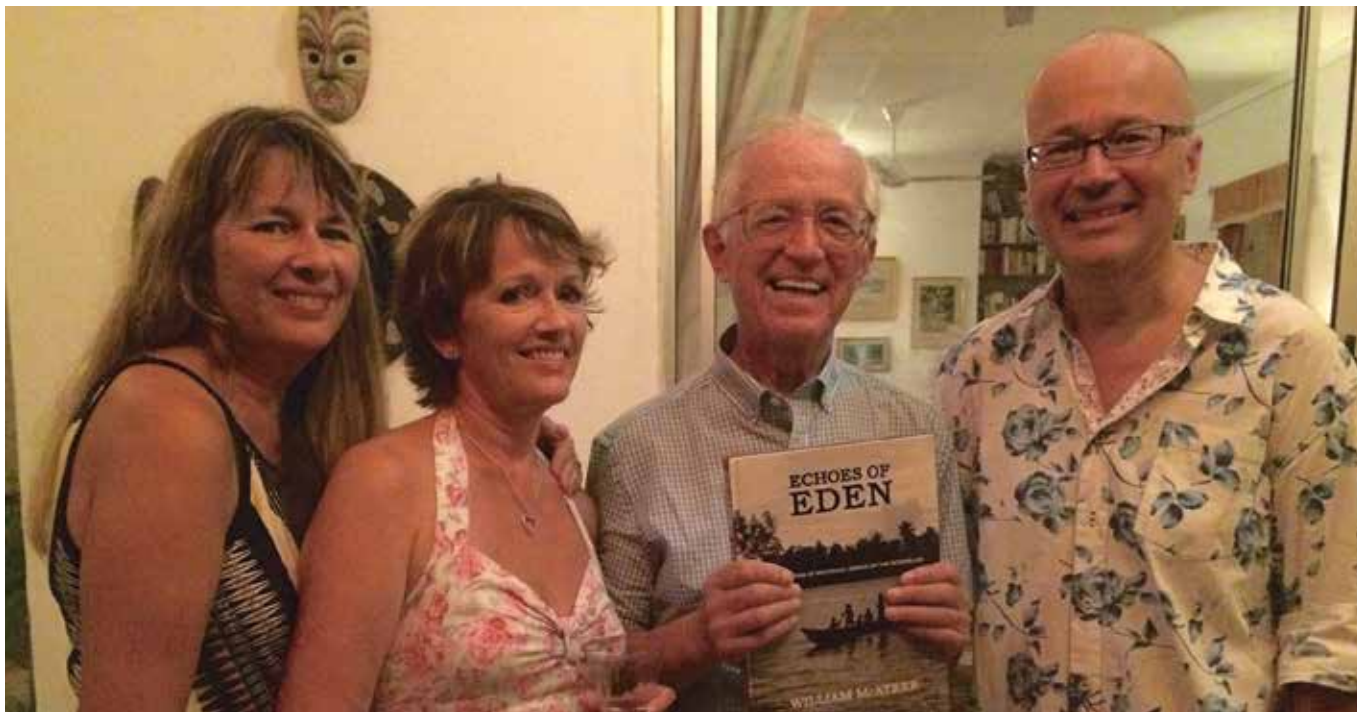
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# William McAteer

**Glynn Burrige** speaks to William (Bill) McAteer, historian and author of a number of iconic, Seychelles books.



## When and why did you come to Seychelles?

I have been a newspaper journalist for much of my life. After leaving school in Glasgow I got a job with *The Glasgow Herald* newspaper as a copy boy. After a year with *The Herald* I was called up to do National Service in the Army. I was very lucky, because the day I reported to the military the Japanese surrendered. So, I was in the army, but the war was over. However, I spent three years in the army, was commissioned into the Highland Light infantry and was sent to the Middle East and ultimately to northern Greece. When I left the army, I returned to Glasgow where I went to Glasgow University for four years and got a degree in Economics. I then returned to the newspaper as a sub-editor. After a year I was bored and I went out to Kenya and joined the *East African Standard* in Nairobi. It was a four-year contract, but after about six months one could take local leave so I took a cargo ship to the Seychelles islands, and spent two weeks there. There were very few tourists or visitors at that time, which was in 1955. I met my wife there, very briefly, but we met again in Kenya where she had two brothers, and eventually Juliette and

I got married in Nairobi in 1958. We only went back to Seychelles after the airport was opened in 1971. When I left the newspaper group we stayed on in Nairobi, where I taught a journalism course at the University of Nairobi for about 10 years.

## What do you do for a living?

Well nowadays I live off my Seychelles pension, some rental income, and a modest amount of savings. I lead a fairly simple life and live comfortably, and about once a year I have a holiday away from Seychelles. At first when I and my wife, who was Seychellois, returned to Seychelles, it was just for holidays, but later we were able to buy a plot of land (which was relatively inexpensive at that time) and we built the home I live in now.

## As a former journalist, are you still writing?

Yes, I am, although not so much nowadays. Previously, after I switched from day-to-day journalism to history, I wrote and published three volumes of Seychelles history, from the islands'



discovery up to Independence. I also published a sort of coffee-table book, called *Echoes of Eden*, made up mainly of articles on Seychelles that I had written in the past for *Silhouette* magazine, published by Camerapix Magazines Ltd, who kindly gave me permission to republish these articles.

#### Who has been the biggest influence on your life?

I know it sounds trite, but I think it was my parents, each in their own way. We were a small family, only two sons, myself and an elder brother. My father tended to leave the rearing of us to my mother, who was a kind and generous person. I think as the younger son I was spoiled, but from her I learned a lot about how to live and look after yourself, all of which has stood me in good stead. My father, on the other hand, was too tied up with his job and other pursuits to give much time to my brother and me. But I do remember, on the rare occasion when he intervened, his advice was always sound. As I digested his words, it became clear to me that I was on the wrong track, and that I must change course.

And I did.

#### Who is the person you most admire?

Undoubtedly the person I most admire is the late Mohamed Amin, the brilliant photo-journalist who captured the world's attention with photographs of trouble spots in Africa and the Middle East. Most notable was his coverage with the British reporter Michael Buerk of the Ethiopian famine of 1984. His film and photographs of that disaster helped to start the charity Live Aid concerts. But my personal memories of 'Mo', as he was affectionally known, go back to when he was a schoolboy eager to have his first photograph published in a newspaper. Later it was Mo, by then a famous photographer, who encouraged me to start writing articles for the in-flight magazine *Silhouette*. During 1996 I was arranging to go with him on a trip to Qatar to write for one of his Spectrum Guide books. That trip never took place as Mo and his colleague Brian Tetley were killed when their plane was hijacked and eventually crashed near the Comoro Islands in November 1996.

#### Which countries have you lived in?

In addition to the three East African countries, Kenya, Tanganyika (as it then was) and Uganda, in all of which I have lived and worked for some 20 or more years, I also spent 12 years with the *GulfTimes* newspaper in Doha, Qatar. My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed our

stay in the desert emirate. I also visit South Africa about once a year. This began when my wife required some eye treatment that was not available in Seychelles, and so we went there and made many South African friends. About two or three years ago I also spent some time in Scotland, where my son lives, but I find it too cold for me now. Sadly, my wife died in 2011.

#### Do you have any particular hates?

Yes, I dislike litter bugs, those who throw papers and other rubbish out of the car window. Litter has become one of the curses of affluent societies and unfortunately Seychelles has joined that club. Seychelles is a holiday venue for visitors from different parts of the world and it is essential that we all make an effort to keep our island home clean and tidy. We don't want rubbish, and that also includes loud, blaring music, inconsiderate driving, and stray dogs all over the place.

All these have a negative influence on our visitors, and tourism is one of our main foreign exchange earners. Also as a mid-ocean state we are very much aware of all the plastic in the ocean, which is ruining our planet.

#### Are you involved in any new projects?

Well at the moment I am a member of a small team of writers who are putting together a book which is to be published to mark the 250 years since the establishment of the first settlement in Seychelles. As you probably know the Seychelles, a group of granitic and coral islands and atolls in the Western Indian Ocean were completely uninhabited when they were first visited by Europeans in the early 17th century. Other than the amazing bird life on the islands and the fish and turtles in the sea, the only living creatures on the islands when they were claimed by the French in about 1742 were giant tortoises and crocodiles. The crocodiles were fairly quickly eliminated by humans, but the tortoises and turtles managed to survive, as do our fruit bats, although in greatly reduced numbers. 🦋



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## Astove Atoll

Astove Atoll is home to the awe-inspiring "Wall". This breathtaking marine environment has magnificent drop offs that attract the world's finest divers and aquatic photographers and is famous for Jaques Cousteau who filmed part of "The Silent World" along its edges. The newly renovated Coral House with only six rooms receives a handful of guests each week. Astove is surrounded with white sandy beaches which are home to one of the largest populations of nesting turtles.

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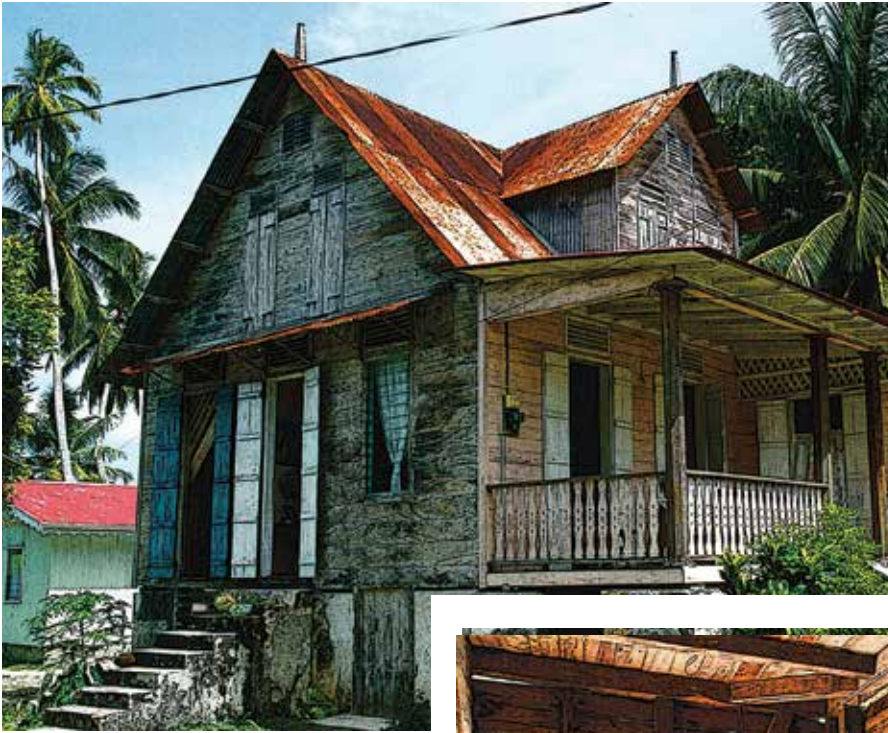


# No place like home

WORDS: JUDITH SKERRETT

**B**e it ever so humble – there’s no place like it. Visitors to Seychelles may pause to wonder what it would be like to have your own little castle there and there are all types of home in Seychelles to choose from. Perhaps one of the elegant colonial mansions once home to the plantation owners previous centuries, reflecting the statelier manners of their day. They are certainly built with the climate in mind. Roof pitches are steep, to deal with large amounts of rain unleashed by a tropical downpour, but the overhangs are wide (to protect doorways and windows), and shallower-pitched to slow down the speed of the water flow and project it further away from the house. There are doors on all sides of the house, allowing good through-breezes. Cool air passes through the house via slots or openings above doors and windows indoors, and in older houses, the internal partitions do not reach the ceiling. Wide verandas and wooden shutters keep direct sunlight out of the house. They are usually raised up on boulders or pillars, to protect timbers from termites, allow air to circulate under the house to enhance cooling, and to keep it well above any danger of sudden flooding.





The plan of the house was drawn out on the site, and the frame built up on the supporting blocks. Capucin, a local hardwood, was the best material for the all-important framework, because it resisted termites well. Bois Rouge was useful for long sections because it grew tall and straight. For the roof structure, Gayac and Bois Noir timber was used, because they were lighter than Capucin. The earliest solution to the problem of roofing was to use thatch, and some thatched plantation houses can still be seen today. Palm leaves were sun-dried for several days, then laid on the roof in bunches, from the bottom upwards, overlapped and tied to battens. A thatch 20-300 millimetres thick was waterproof and kept the heat out, but unfortunately was a happy refuge for insects, especially centipedes. The alternative was shingles made of a hardwood, such as Capucin, nailed to boards fixed to the roof rafters. Sadly these old wooden tiles were often replaced with corrugated iron sheets, which began to make an appearance in the 1940's, because they were cheap and easy to use, but even these have charm once rusted to a range of reds, browns and oranges.

The older houses have an elegant symmetry: doors and windows are equidistant from a central point of the facades. Opposite doors and windows are often aligned, so that it is possible to see right through the house, and where the eye can travel, the breezes can follow.



“  
**The humbler village homes  
 are quickly vanishing,  
 becoming no more than a  
 memory of that simpler age.**

The pleasant, shady veranda was used as the main living area during the heat of the day. Woven bamboo blinds, called 'chicks', could be rolled down to keep the sunshine or the rain, out. Indoors, there was a living room at the heart of the house, the bedrooms opening off. The kitchen was always a separate building, because of the risk of fire. Ommanney describes it as "a place of chatter and song and high cackling laughter where, upon wood or charcoal braziers, household rites are performed amid clouds of choking fumes". The bathroom and toilet (latrine) were also separate buildings.

Not all the houses were on such a grand scale. The "perched, crazy buildings of the poor ... built of wood, corrugated iron, split bamboos and coconut thatch ... stand precariously supported at the corners on uncertain-looking piles of stones or on concrete blocks. In many cases it looks as though a gentle kick would send the house and its human contents crashing down into the stream below ..." says Ommanney.

Visitors in early days found these simpler dwellings charming. James Prior visited Seychelles aboard the frigate 'Nisus' in 1810-11, and was much taken with the look of the local villages:

"The appearance of the village is of such a description, that an enthusiast might be tempted to exclaim – here I may take up my abode, secure of being exempted from the cares of the busy world. It is placed in a small and shady glen, sheltered by the higher grounds ... and strewn here and there with a cottage ... The structure of the cottages corresponds with the outline. Several are neat and well-built; others sufficiently rustic to shew that their owners care little for external decoration; some framed merely by huddling together the rough and unshaped materials for building ...

the tamarind, plantain, banana, and cocoa-nut trees shade the doors and windows. I was charmed by this picture of rural life, for it seemed one of those calm, contented, and charming scenes of seclusion, familiar in the pages of romance ..."

Some of the early governors and their families were similarly carried away by the idyll of Seychelles rural living. Fanny Barkly was the wife of a 19th century British governor. On La Misere they had a "Government Cottage". Fanny describes it as having "... a veranda and several rooms, but no ceiling, and the rooms were all devoid of paper, just the mere planks. In fact, it was all very much in the rough,









"... the house may be the scruffiest looking hovel known to man but inside it will be spotless, with the shiniest of surfaces, the cleanest of floors and the neatest, if the cheapest, furnishings to be seen anywhere."

The basic old houses had two rooms, side by side with a veranda on the front. The sitting room, or 'salon' houses the best furniture and ornaments.

"There are usually a large table and a quantity of chairs and small tables," the anthropologists Marion and Burton Benedict wrote. "There is a radio and perhaps a phonograph. Old Christmas cards and pictures torn from magazines decorate the walls. The bedroom(s) contain a single large bed and straw mattresses that are rolled up when not in use."

That description was written in the early 1980's, but it is already increasingly difficult to find houses which still conform to the traditional pattern. Tastes are changing. Seychellois want comfort and the latest conveniences in their homes.

but this constituted part of its charm. We had a beautiful natural bath among the rocks, with a douche formed by a cascade which fell into it. A thick fringe of maidenhair grew around it, and it was shaded from the heat of the sun by great tree ferns and tall trees."

Not all officials were as complementary about local housing. A Colonial Annual Report from the 1950's remarks that "an early but lasting impression on a stranger visiting Seychelles is made by the low average standing of housing." It is rare indeed, these days, to see the oldest (and what came to be regarded as the poorest) form of local housing, the 'cas paille', made of latanier palm leaves on a wooden frame with a thatched roof. There are still examples of the 'cas tole' house, made of corrugated iron sheets, but these too are rapidly disappearing.

However unprepossessing the exterior, every visitor is impressed by the spotless interior of a Creole home. Christopher Lee sums it up.





## SLOTS AT GRAN KAZ VICTORIA

Housed within Mercury House, a National monument located in the very heart of Victoria, on Francis Rachel Street, Gran Kaz Victoria was created in 2014 to offer Seychellois aged 18 and above the best possible gaming experience.

Gran Kaz Victoria offers over 150 of the latest, most technologically-advanced slot machines operating a smart cashless gaming system and designed to maximise gaming pleasure.

With a low minimum bet ranging from 1 cent to 100 rupees, and a wide range of games to suit the tastes of all players, there's truly something here for everyone. Visitors can enjoy gaming in this visually stimulating, spacious and comfortable building from 10 am to 2 am Monday to Sunday.

## CASINO AT GRAN KAZ VICTORIA

Located in the Mercury House annex, Gran Kaz Victoria Casino is a world-class casino with ambience and service to match.

Choose your table of choice: Roulette, Black Jack, Russian Poker, Mini Baccarat, Ultimate Texas Hold'em and Casino Hold'em Poker.

Open Sundays to Thursdays from 2pm to 2am, Fridays and Saturdays from 2pm to 4am.

## SLOTS AT GRAN KAZ BEL OMBRE

The latest addition to the Gran Kaz Footprint, located in the North of Mahe, Gran Kaz Bel Ombre is a spacious, comfortable, modern and technologically-superior entertainment centre, especially designed to cater for a wide range of audiences. With 60 top-of-the-line slot machines, a smart "cashless" gaming software system, Gran Kaz Bel Ombre echoes Gran Kaz's mission to bring gaming excellence to Seychelles. Open 7 days a week from 11 am to 2am, this venue is the preferred gaming spot for those seeking exclusivity.

## ENTERTAINMENT AT GRAN KAZ VICTORIA

### ZeZ Bar

ZeZ Bar is one of the nation's favourite watering holes located on the ground floor of Mercury House and offering competitive prices and fantastic service. ZeZ Bar offers locals and visitors alike a vibrant atmosphere in which they can watch their favourite sports matches, enjoy an after work drink with colleagues, or catch up with friends, with its central location ensuring it's always buzzing with activity.

### Bonni Bar

Found on the first floor of Mercury House, Bonni Bar is a smaller, more discreet version of the ZeZ Bar, better suited to a more select crowd. Preferred by those in search of a quiet venue for a drink and chat, without all of the hustle and bustle of a busy bar atmosphere, Bonni Bar offers the convenience of a central location and an intimate atmosphere ideal for smaller gatherings.

### Piano Bar

The Gran Kaz Victoria Piano Bar located in the Mercury House Annex is the perfect place for sophisticated mingling. Featuring a soothing, lounge-like atmosphere, unforgettable signature cocktails, and renowned Gran Kaz First Class Service, this is the epitome of a fine casino bar.

## ENTERTAINMENT AT GRAN KAZ BEL OMBRE

### Tanbour Bar and Grill

Tanbour Bar and Grill, in Bel Ombre is the greatest sports bar on the island. Offering visitors the largest screen for enhanced sports viewing pleasure with amazing signature cocktails and a delectable bar menu, the Tanbour Bar and Grill is the ideal place to unwind after work or to meet up or party with friends at the weekend.

Renowned for hosting unique, outdoor events, the Tanbour Bar and Grill has already brought audiences amazing experiences such as the Moonlight Invasion, the Valentine's Day Charity Auction, Gran Kaz's International Jazz Day Celebrations and many more, so be sure to keep an eye out for upcoming spectacles and events!

Tanbour Bar and Grill also provides facilities for private functions on the Patio, offering an exceptional open air venue, plus a variety of incredible packages to choose from. Gran Kaz Bel Ombre is the perfect place for hosting your special event - anything from a small cocktail to an exclusive dinner.



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## New housing developments – luxury villas and apartments



Eden Island

blocks are also being put up at a rapid rate to accommodate younger Seychellois who, having grown up in the age of the supermarket and deep freeze, no longer require a garden full of banana and breadfruit trees, or a mooring at the end of the garden for their fishing boat, but instead need a myriad of plug sockets for their TVs and computers. This modern housing is less evocative, less picturesque than the old thatched huts and gracious colonial houses, but is certainly more convenient to live a modern lifestyle! Likewise, modern Seychellois homes are created using all the latest techniques and materials. Seychelles timber and thatch is no longer widely available, but many new homes still retain some of the old architectural devices in their design and some make a feature of the local granite.

The mansions of the plantation owners may endure as reminders of a way of life which is rapidly being forgotten, but the humbler village homes are quickly vanishing, becoming no more than a memory of that simpler age, of a way of living 'exempted from the cares of the busy world'. 🌴

The search for refuge from a busy world has led people from all corners of the globe to make their homes here, for at least part of the year. With the coming of developments such as Eden Island and Pangia Beach it has become possible to combine the escapism of a Seychelles pied a terre with all the modern essentials, such as air conditioning and satellite TV – marvels past generations could only dream of.

Eden Island is a man-made island which has not only luxury residences of varying sizes, but also a shopping centre and a thriving boardwalk restaurant complex which overlooks a busy marina crammed with impressive yachts, many of which belong to residents of the island.

Also on the east coast of Mahé, Pangia Beach offers the dream of paradise located within easy access of both the capital, Victoria and the international airport. Its luxury apartments have spectacular views over the Ste Anne Marine National Park and the complex has its own marina, swimming pool and other facilities.

The increase in tourism developments has led to a shortage of land for local people to build their homes upon, with the result that there is more construction on the hillsides, in ever more precipitous locations. Another solution has been the creation of reclaimed land in the coastal

shallows around Victoria, and of a series of man-made islands, formed from dredged coral rubble, which lie off Port Victoria and along the west and east coasts. On these islands homes are being built to suit a range of pockets, including some social housing. Apartment



Pangia Beach





The Coco D'or Hotel, is built on an Acre of lush tropical land, on the north west coast of Mahé. The hotel is a mere four minutes walk from Beau Vallon, one of the island's most beautiful beaches. The Coco D'or sets itself apart from other hotels in Seychelles by virtue of its location, amenities and unparalleled service philosophy.

The hotel provides 3 specialized cuisines of Local & International, Pizza and Chinese.

27 appointed rooms and suites, each with a private bath, balcony, terrace and/or living room are divided into two categories:-

- Standard room** 24 rooms with a verandah and tropical garden, 6 rooms with a terrace and 2 with a lounge.
- Deluxe suites** 3 rooms with a private patio terrace and mountain and garden view, two bathrooms, a kitchenette and a separate living room.



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# The glamorous paradise

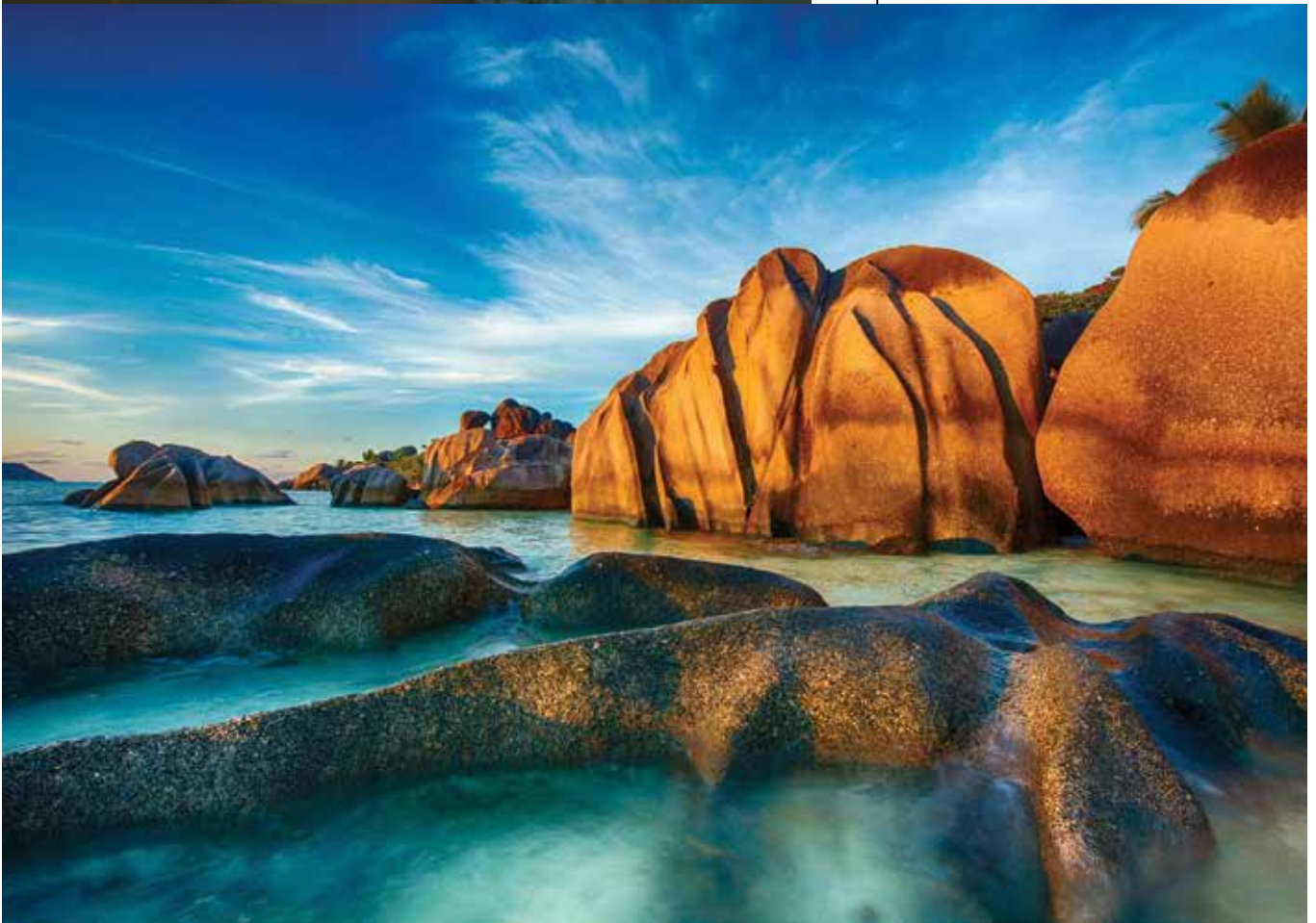
WORDS: TATIANA PROLESKO

Suppose that our reader has already been to the Seychelles, as a result of which he or she decisively checked the archipelago off the list of visited countries of the world. Or perhaps they are only thinking about making their first trip here. The Seychelles have way more attributes than might seem the case at first glance, and they can manifest in completely different ways, knocking your socks off time and time again. We would like to share with you several tips on how to handle this gem!





1 A properly designed travel programme has a major influence on the tourist experience. For example, if you spend all 14 days of your vacation on Beau Vallon beach uninterrupted, the indigenous charm of the Seychelles may be lost on you, since this famous beach has changed greatly over the past five to seven years. However, if you visit at least 10 other bays, or better yet 50 or 100, then the delightful Beau Vallon will turn into a special puzzle piece of your mosaic of Seychelles experiences.



2 Choosing suitable accommodation in accordance with the vacation concept that is right for you. Preferences of a large group of friends who lean toward active recreation will differ from the ones chosen by the newlyweds or families with small children. The range of accommodation options in the Seychelles is enormous with a variety of categories and different budget lines.



The Seychelles Islands are unlike any other islands in the Indian Ocean. In these parts, the climate is ideal for recreation 365 days a year; comfortable air temperature and warm ocean waters will allow you to swim for hours. The richest flora and fauna combines with the absence of tropical cyclones, dangerous insects, fish and animals to make it a truly enticing experience of nature. It is effortless, convenient and safe to move around any part of your choice island at any time of day or night.

3



If a prospect of celebrating a major life event looms on the horizon, it might turn out to be cheaper and certainly unconventional to have a celebration in the Seychelles. You will have a good reason for refusing to celebrate, let's say an anniversary, on a large scale at home: "We jetted off out of the country!".

In the Seychelles, you can combine an official registration of marriage with a honeymoon. Your big day turns into a laid-back vacation without undue stress, letting you enjoy every moment. The document preparation process is very simple, and after the wedding ceremony you can rent a car with a driver and arrange a photoshoot in the most beautiful places on the island. Chances are, none of your friends will have the wedding photos with such landscapes in the background, and your pictures will go viral on Instagram!

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Some people are of the opinion that Mahé Island is a way station, it's noisy, and there's nothing to do there, so you should go on vacation on Praslin and La Digue. But that's not fair, since there are about 70 beaches on Mahé Island alone, as well as lots of attractions, including museums. Just to be on the safe side - combine three-four islands in one trip, and one of them is sure to catch your fancy. Not a single tourist will regret such a decision, despite the fact that additional transfers will be required. It might seem that palm trees and sand are the same everywhere, but we assure you that's not the case: each Seychelles island has its own unique charm, history and personality.

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When planning a trip to the Seychelles Islands, don't be alarmed by a three-star designation next to the name of a hotel or a guest house that you like. Such accommodation options deserve better than that. More often than not, they are located right by or close to the ocean; every eventuality is covered to ensure a comfortable stay for their guests who are offered delicious food, attention and an individual welcome. And all this at a very affordable price, especially if you book your trip well in advance and avoid peak seasons. That way, you will receive maximum freedom of choice and be able to take advantage of the special offers and discounts, which will allow you to avoid unnecessary spending.

Even if at some point you have been to the Seychelles, and now you are just contemplating the idea of how to surprise yourself or pondering over what kind of a special present to give to a loved one; or maybe you're looking for an inspiration; or you want to make a movie and would like to get acquainted with the inhabitants of the most distant places on earth, leave a blank space in your list of goals and name it «Aldabra». Memories will last you a lifetime, maybe even beyond that. This unique atoll that is home to a nature reserve is recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, unique biological processes take place and rare natural phenomena occur.

7



The Seychelles Islands are not just a traditional beach vacation, as is generally thought. You can arrange for so many activities every day that you won't have time to read a single magazine on the beach: sightseeing tours, each of which can be broken down into a number of individual excursions to the places that sparked your interest; museums; trophy fishing; golf; diving; snorkelling; surfing; hiking in the mountains; visiting beaches that are accessible only from the ocean, food degustation in any number of fine restaurants, visiting the production factory of local rum and so much more!

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If the onset of fall, winter and cold weather makes you sad, and your circumstances allow you to live and work from anywhere in the world – pass time in the Seychelles! You don't necessarily have to live in a hotel; you can also rent an apartment or a villa. It's a great way to explore the Seychelles, not from the tourist's perspective, but as a local immersing oneself in the indigenous environment and the local way of life. You will appreciate the hospitality and friendliness of the Seychellois! What a marvel it is to watch them perform live music: creative talents of local residents will leave no one indifferent.



## 10

From the point of view of a land-based tourist, the Seychelles Islands are a glamorous paradise with snow-white sand, rustling palms, outlandish birds, fish and almost tame turtles. That said, there is a view that is a lot more complex and impressive – it opens up from the deck of a cruise ship, a yacht or a ferry. Divide your trip into two parts, combining hotel accommodation on one of the islands and a cruise to enjoy the archipelago. This way you will enjoy a far more rewarding experience. There is no question that you will see the Seychelles as you have never seen it before. And if you are planning to come here for the first time, we look upon you with admiring envy: the island's beauty takes your breath away from the moment your plane arrives at its destination. 🌴

# South Africa

## The rainbow nation

WORDS: PETER HOLTHUSEN



**C** In a bright sunny morning in May 1994, Nelson Mandela mounted the podium at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to take the oath of office as he was sworn in as the first black president of a free and democratic South Africa. At that moment, the eyes of the world were focused on a nation whose future, though holding enormous promise, remained uncertain. Today the picture is a lot clearer; the promise is being fulfilled.

If one had to choose a single word to describe South Africa, it would be 'diversity'. This is a land of quite remarkable contrasts, evident to even the most casual observer in the splendid variety of its landscapes, in the widely disparate nature of its cities, in the confusion of colours, creeds and cultures that make up its human complement.

Scenically, South Africa could be half a dozen countries rolled into one. First-time visitors to the Western Cape, for instance, might be surprised and perhaps disappointed when they arrive, for here there are no free-roaming wild animals, no heat-hazed bushveld stretching to far horizons, no safari camps, nothing that speaks of the classic Africa. Instead, they'll see a green and gentle countryside of pastures and vineyards and orchards heavy with fruit, historic homesteads renowned for their elegance, and towns that have matured gracefully over the centuries.

But the Western Cape is a relatively small corner of the wider region, just a selection of one of South Africa's nine provinces and quite unlike the other parts. (The nine provincial divisions are Gauteng, North-West, Limpopo Province, Mpumalanga, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, the Northern Cape and the Western Cape). The 'real' Africa is found far to the north-east, on the broad, game-rich savanna plains of Mpumalanga. In between lie the Great Karoo's sandy, semi-arid flatlands, beyond which is the Highveld, the most prominent segment of the greater interior plateau. Loftier and more grandly imposing are







1. Antelopes, Kruger National Park.
2. Cable car over the Table Mountains.
3. The Garden Route, Cape Province.
4. Sani Top Lodge, the highest lodge in S. Africa.
5. Outside Robben Island prison.
6. Penguins at Western Cape.
7. The painted chimney, famous landmark of Soweto.
8. Outdoor Food and Wine Festival.
9. Wave swimming in Durban.

the towering heights of the Drakensberg in the east – a mountain range so formidable that just one negotiable pass breaches its main 250-kilometre-long (150 mile) barrier.

Until 100 years ago, and for countless centuries before that, the Drakensberg was home to the San or Bushmen, the 'people of the Eland', as the victims of their lightning cattle raids called them. They have left monuments to their passing in their stick-like animal paintings, of which there are 700 in a cave-site museum in the Giant's Castle Game Reserve. Forty percent of all known rock art in South Africa can be found in the twilight overhangs of Giant's Castle and the Ndedema Gorge area of this spectacular mountain range.

Many pristine sanctuaries and game reserves entice the hiker, nature-lover and the fly-fisherman, with plenty of excitement and healthy outdoor activities on offer to children of all ages and interests. The only eastern road access to the Kingdom of Lesotho along the entire length of the mountain range is via the spectacular Sani Pass, which boasts the highest pub in Africa at its summit.

The country's turbulent history is no more evident than here, with tragic stories of conflict between the British, the Zulu and the Boers. Durban is a good jumping-off point for a tour of the Anglo-Zulu battlefields. Allow yourself a glimpse into the past as you experience first-hand, re-enactments of epic battles that took place at Spioenkop, Blood River, Majuba, Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift.

For wildlife buffs this is a country which is hard to beat, the thrill of spotting the 'Big Five' – lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo in their natural habitat is something which many people only dream of. The country's excellent track record in conservation means that these wonderful creatures will be around for our children and our children's children. The Kruger National Park is probably the most famous area for seeing wildlife and its number one position is hard to contest. If you are lucky you will spot all the 'Big Five' during your stay.

The beauty of the scenery through the Garden Route and around the winelands of Paarl and Stellenbosch will take your breath away. Cape Town with its rugged mountain backdrop and sparkling Victoria & Alfred Waterfront is not to be missed. The city has long been a draw for travellers to South Africa with the awe inspiring beauty of Table Mountain acting as a backdrop for this beautiful city by the water. But more than this Cape Town boasts great sightseeing, stylish shops, fine food and with its colourful Waterkant has established itself as Africa's San Francisco.

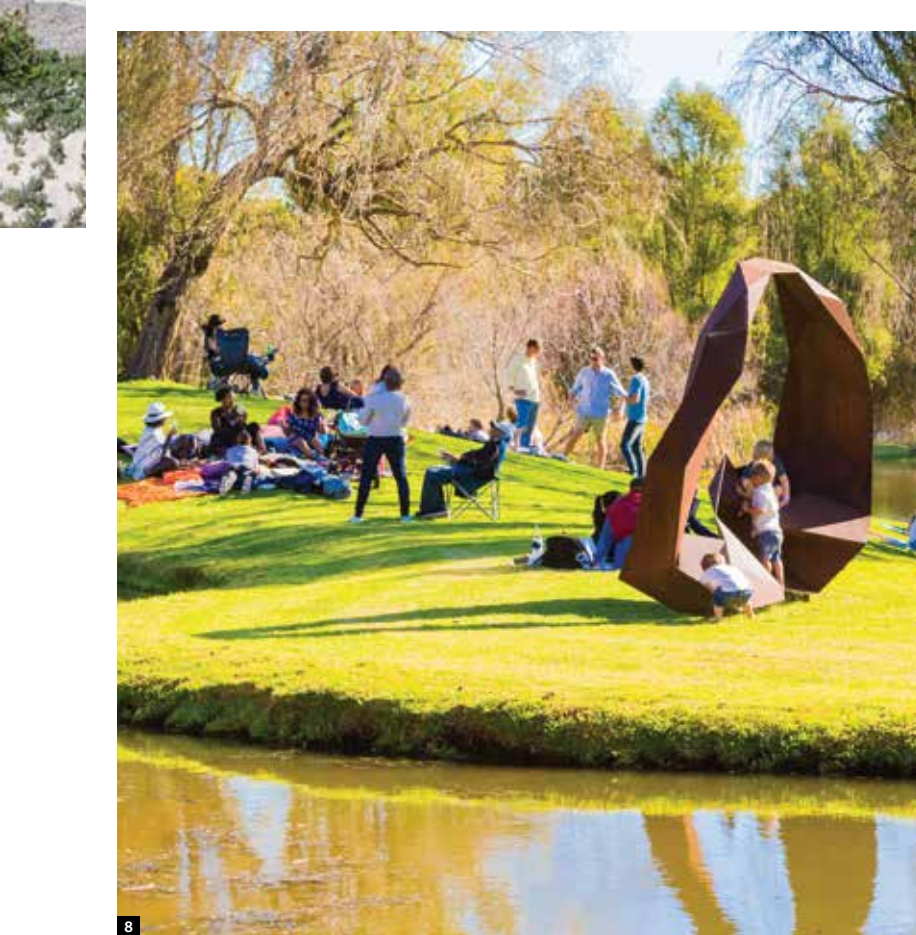




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In fine weather, a cable car can whisk you to the top of Table Mountain in seven minutes, but more rewarding is the two-hour hike (made safer with a private guide). The view from the summit constitutes one of the most spectacular panoramas in Africa, a continent of breathtaking vistas.

In the centre of Table Bay, some 11 kilometres from Cape Town, is the notorious Robben Island, a tiny rocky outcrop used as a place of banishment and imprisonment for more than 400 years. During the years of apartheid, political prisoners were held here, including (for more than a quarter of a century) Nelson Mandela. Tours of the island, now a museum and testament to liberty and the triumph of the human spirit, are guided by former prisoners and include visits to the cells and labour quarry.

Johannesburg, or 'Jozi' as it is commonly known, is Africa's third largest conurbation (after Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt), a vibrant, modern city of gleaming high-rises, sophisticated shopping malls, exciting night spots, restaurants and cafés, galleries, museums, performing arts venues, and world-class visitor attractions. Small wonder the city was selected to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup.





With its stylish suburbs and beach front properties offering a whole variety of culinary and retail therapy, Durban is the country's most popular holiday resort due to its subtropical climate, excellent beaches and pleasantly warm seas. With a coastline stretching some 3,000 kilometres from the Atlantic in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east, South Africa is a great place for a beach holiday. There's a host of water sport options to enjoy – from cage-diving with Great White sharks off Gansbaai, to surfing, windsurfing, fishing or simply soaking up the sun.

Townships – created on the outskirts of cities by the apartheid policy of racial segregation – are today vibrant places reflecting the life-styles of the majority of urban black people. Soweto, near Johannesburg, or Khayelitsha, Langa and Guguletu in Cape Town are now one of South Africa's top 20 tourist attractions.

It was our pleasure to share the beauty of the Western Cape with a stay at the now legendary Winchester Mansions Hotel. Considered to be the best address in Cape Town, luxury reigns supreme at this award-winning hotel. Built in the mid 1920's, this Cape Dutch-style mansion has

51 luxurious rooms and 25 sumptuously appointed suites. A true haven of peace and tranquility, just a few minutes' drive from the bustling Victoria & Alfred Waterfront. Here too, you will find The Ginkgo Spa, a heated swimming pool and Harveys Restaurant, Bar & Lounge, one of Cape Town's finest eateries.

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. Choose from an organised tour, city stay or the freedom of self-drive, South Africa is a veritable treasure trove of surprises. The quality of the hotels and lodges, cosmopolitan cities and wonderful country retreats blend so harmoniously to make a holiday here simply unforgettable. The 'Rainbow Nation' is waiting to be discovered during your stay. 🇿🇦



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\*Daily flights from 2 June 2019

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1



# Ifaty & Mangily

The hidden gems of Madagascar

WORDS: PETER HOLTHUSEN

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A more lovely scene could scarcely be imagined than the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar.



**D**eep sapphire water breaks into pearls of foam upon the bristling reefs, dying onto glittering crystal sand fringing its horseshoe bays, palm-clad crescents embrace amethyst lagoons, encircled by bright, darting tropicbirds. Inland lies a lush and verdant wonderland, the most exquisite that any imagination could conceive.

All the riches of the earth, all the ingenuity of man could not have crafted a more beautiful setting, nor cornucopia of untold treasure as you will find on Madagascar. Cast adrift in the Indian Ocean, the island has been separated from other landmasses for longer than any other island on earth. For tens of millions of years evolution has played along here in virtual isolation.

Arriving in the capital Antananarivo (affectionately known by the locals as 'Tana') is the usual introduction to Madagascar and within a short time the atmosphere and people remind you that the island is like nowhere else in the world. Tana is a harmonious blend of Malagasy culture coupled with obvious remnants from the French colonial period, and modern buildings mix randomly with contemporary architecture.

To escape the modern influence of Tana, a sojourn to the south of the island is a must, for here you will find the seemingly untouched beauty of the Ifaty coastline, with its picturesque fishing villages, secluded beaches and coral reef.



The resorts of Ifaty and Mangily, around 27 kilometres north of the historic port town of Toliara (Tuléar) in the far southwest of Madagascar, are actually two separate fishing villages little more than three kilometres apart that share the same beaches, confusingly known as the Ifaty coastline.

Originally a simple community of Vezo fishermen, Ifaty is by far the smaller tourist destination, even while its name continues to dethrone the latter. The popularity of this area is largely due to its location behind a spectacular coral reef and proximity to Tuléar, and of course, the decent dirt road that connects them, which was paved in 2016.

Compared to Anakao, possibly the most famous beach resort in Madagascar, which almost has the same characteristics, Ifaty has an easier access and is far more beautiful too. It is a magical place that by strange and fortunate circumstances has remained an uncontaminated corner away from the more chaotic mass tourism routes.

For travellers, this idyllic setting on the pristine shoreline of the Mozambique Channel is synonymous with relaxation and beautiful beaches, mostly welcomed after a long



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trekking tour of the nearby baobab forests and nature reserves. Indeed, the beaches are beautiful and its closeness to Tuléar, where most trips to the south end, make Ifaty and neighbouring Mangily a well worth trip to lay down on the beach or do some snorkelling over the gin clear waters of its coral reef.

At first glance, the reef does not look in great shape but the facilities are great and beginners can still enjoy and observe an abundance of colourful marine life, including wrasse, box and cowfish, tarpon, grouper, parrotfish, angelfish, octopus, pipefish and even the occasional manta ray. The white sandy beaches of nearby Ranobe Bay (translated 'big water') offer further opportunities for snorkelling and diving, for within this bay and surrounding reef system live over 6,000 species, all of which are protected by two Marine Protected Areas which are locally managed and maintained by an association of Vezo fishermen. Both have something unique to offer, but other areas in the bay can be just as interesting, if not more!

The first Marine Protected Area – Rose Garden, or 'Massif de Roses', depending on the native language of who you ask, was set up in 2007. This area of patch corals is home to mostly rose coral, lending it its name. Lately, it has been the site of conservation research, and you can observe a number of coral nurseries set up on the west and east sides of the reef. There are lots of moray eels, bat fish, and a few electric rays hiding out in these nurseries.

Ankaranjelita (no real translation) – the second Marine



**This is truly one of the few remaining untamed and remarkable places left on earth.**



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Protected Area, was set up in 2008 and is about a 45-minute boat ride north of Rose Garden. The diversity here is much higher and the reef itself is more colourful. The fish tend to grow larger here than in other parts of the bay, in part because of the lessened fishing pressure placed on the area. Here, you'll find bubble coral, Moorish idols in droves, and parrotfish of all varieties. Night dives here bring out crocodile fish, strange sea cucumbers, and cowries literally coming out of their shells.

The water is warm and the sun shines on more than 300 days of the year. The Ifaty coastline has a number of well-equipped hotels, lodges and resorts, mainly built out of traditional materials from which you can organise trips by zebu carts (charrettes), lobster dinners, pirogue journeys over the reef, or visits to the nearby Reniala Reserve, whose spiny forest, majestic baobabs, and curious bottle trees form one of the last strongholds of primary forest in Madagascar.

This private reserve was opened in 2001 as a botanical garden, ornithological park and protected baobab forest. Nothing has changed here besides some carefully created paths inside the 0.5 kilometres area. The Reniala Reserve is a paradise for birders, who can easily observe some very rare endemic species, such as the long-tailed ground roller, subdesert mesite, the endangered Madagascar hawk, the red-capped coua or, if you are lucky, the mysterious blue vanga. There are 65 bird species in total within the reserve.

Visitors can also spot numerous mammals including the grey mouse lemur, one of the smallest primates in the world, and some carnivorous reptiles, like the threatened radiated and spider tortoises, warty chameleons, lizards and snakes.

For several years, there have been efforts to establish several groups of ring-tailed lemurs inside the reserve, financially supported by European conservation organisations. The majority of the animals come from the Lemur Rescue Centre at the Reniala Reserve, which was founded in 2011. It hosts confiscated animals, prepares them for reintroduction into the wild and is thus the first facility of its kind in Madagascar, working closely with scientists.

A further attraction for those missing the island of Nosy Boraha, or Île Sainte-Marie, off the east coast, are the migrating whales passing by in July and August. Whatever your reason for visiting, you'll waste no time discovering that to experience Madagascar is to experience nature in all her glory, for this is truly one of the few remaining untamed and remarkable places left on earth. 🌿



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1. Coast near Diego Suarez (Antsiranana).
2. Zevo fishing village.
3. Zevo fisherman.
4. Fishing and diving trip on Mozambique channel.
5. Coral reef near Tulear.
6. Zebu cart at the harbour in Tulear.
7. Pair of cotton-stainer bugs in Rehiala Nature Reserve.
8. The majestic baobabs.
9. Ring Tailed Lemur.



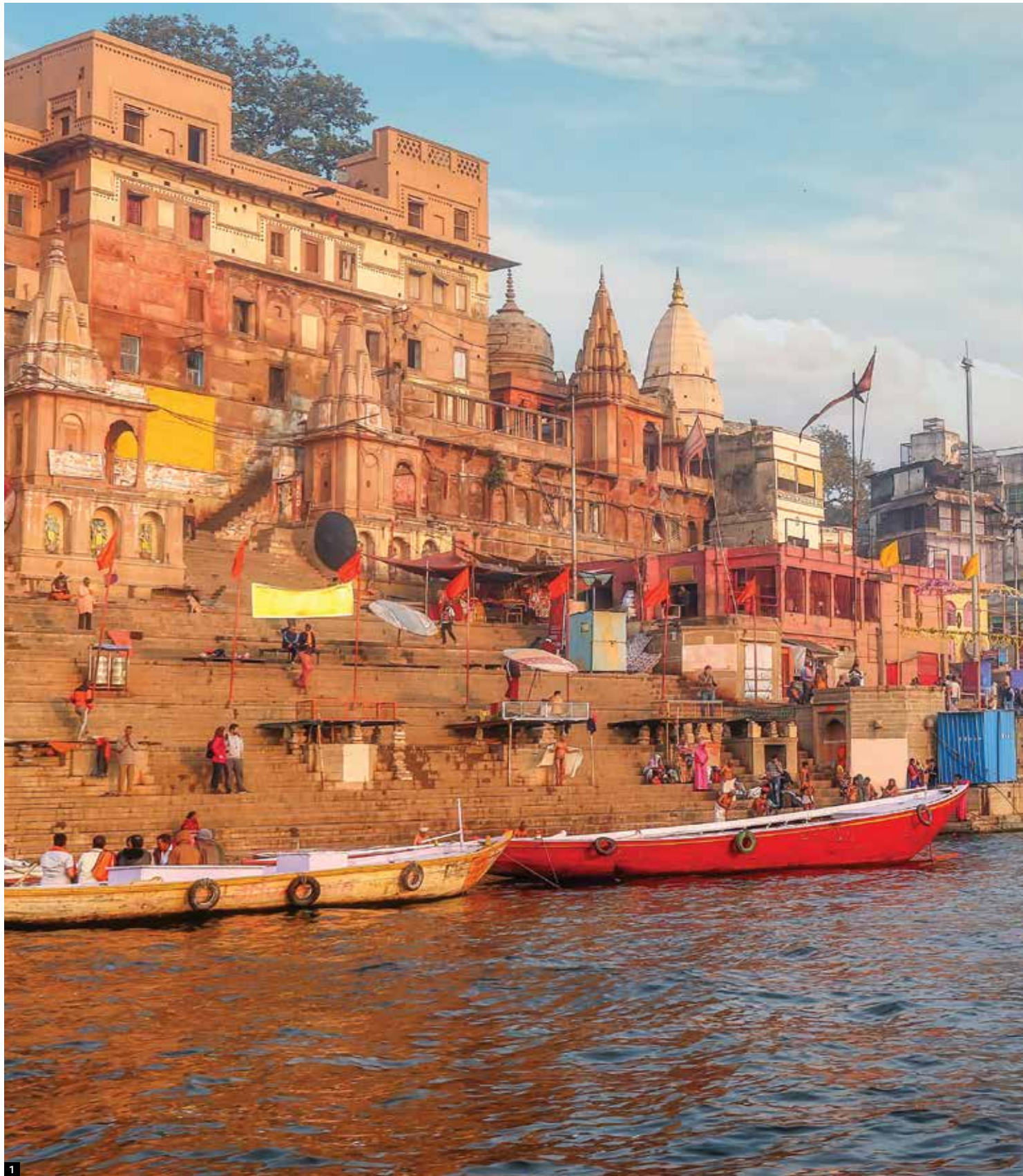
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# Varanasi

## North India's ancient cultural heart

WORDS: CHRISTINE PEMBERTON

**Varanasi, Benares, Benaras, Kashi – however you choose to spell or pronounce its name, this sacred town on the banks of the River Ganga (Ganges) has been at the heart of mystic, spiritual, timeless India for centuries. Dating back to the 11th century BC, and home to 2000 temples, Varanasi is one of the world's most fascinating cities, sacred and inspiring to Hindus whilst also playing an important role in Buddhism.**

**D**evout Hindus hope to die in Varanasi, believing it will lead them to eternal salvation. With so much religious and cultural significance attached to the city, one could feel a little overwhelmed at the thought of visiting and exploring the ancient lanes and temples. Where do you

start? How do you absorb so many centuries of history and culture? But don't let the weight of history nor the religious significance deter you from a visit.

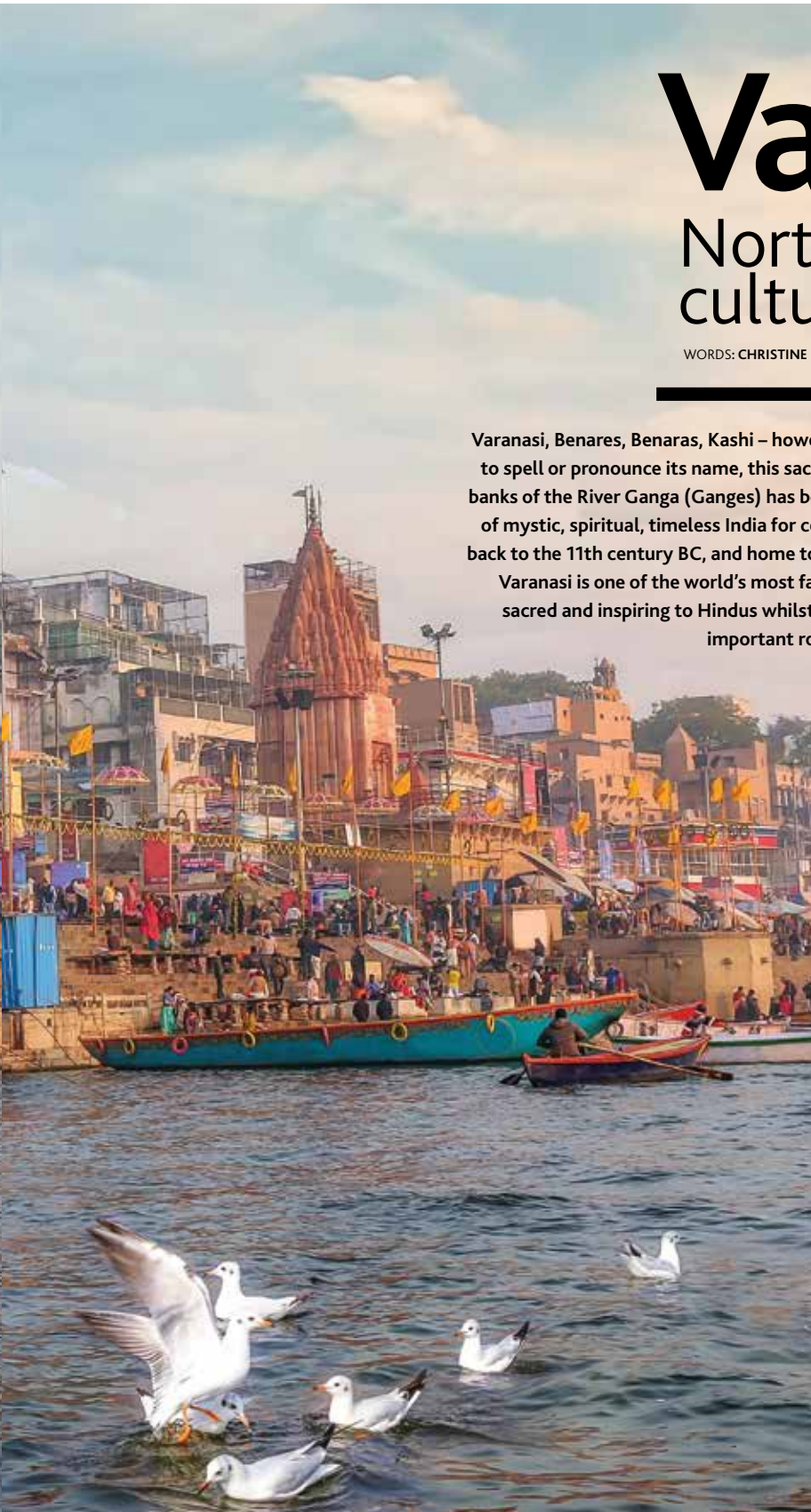
Varanasi proved to be everything I'd thought it should be – and so much more. It was a city that made me smile, despite the sobering sight of funeral pyres along the riverbanks.

Unexpectedly, Varanasi also made me laugh out loud, as we inadvertently walked through a Bollywood shoot, with splendid looking 'sadhus' all over the ghats. Or were they actors dressed up to look the part?

No matter, everyone greeted us courteously even though we interrupted the shoot by unknowingly wandering right through the middle of it. The music stopped, the dancers stopped, the sadhus/'sadhus' smiled benignly at us as bulked-up bouncers in tight black outfits escorted us through the cables and lights.

One of the 'sadhus' winked at me as I quickly took a photo, but I'm still not sure if he was real or an extra. A hilarious encounter, all the same.

Varanasi also made me shed tears of emotion at the sheer beauty of the ghats at dawn. Looking down over the Ganga with scattered pools of light and the spires rising through the mist, I found a scene of such magic, seen in so many books and so many photos, and yet there it was, for real, in front of me. Varanasi is shaped by religion, and the city





moves to the rhythm of pujas and funerals, of temple bells tinkling, of prayers and the spectacular evening 'aarti' on the banks of the Ganga.

The best way to appreciate the city is to take a boat along the river and watch as the many ghats and temples reveal themselves as you drift slowly along and the business of life goes on, amidst death. You cannot escape the sight of funeral pyres in Varanasi but, as is the way of India, life goes on around them.



People bathe in the water, they come down at dawn to say their prayers. Cows wander along, dhobis wash peoples' clothes – we saw many pairs of jeans laid out to dry on the steps of the ghats.

Boatmen ply their trade, ferrying people and pilgrims up and down the busy river. Vendors in little boats come alongside your boat and try and sell you CDs of the evening 'aarti', offering you a sneak peek via the laptops on the boat. Children sell you marigolds and little candles to float down the river. Foreigners, dressed in approximations of Indian sadhu-like clothes offer their own versions of puja. We watched, fascinated, as a group plunged into the river, immersing themselves, fully clothed.

Of all the temples in Varanasi, the Kashi Vishwanath temple is one of the most important. It is well worth a visit, though non-Hindus are not allowed inside the sanctum sanctorum. The crowds, the constant washing of the sacred idols in milk (beware, the marble floor is super slippery!), the sounds, the scents – it is a heady, slightly overwhelming experience.

We got lost a myriad times, wandering up and down the narrow gullies, but that is half the fun. If we hadn't got lost, we'd never have found a tiny, dusty shop selling carved wooden toys. One gorgeous wooden parrot and one even more gorgeous wooden cow and calf later, we left, and tried to remember where we'd been heading in the first place.

Be sure to visit a workshop where the famous Benaras silk saris are woven. Sit on the floor with the workshop staff, on a spotless white sheet, and watch as rainbow-hued silk cascades in front of you.





1. Varanasi Ganges river ghat near the ancient city.
2. Prayers (aarti) at Dashashwamedh Ghat.
3. Famous Vishvanath temple devoted to Lord Shiva.
4. Sadhu at the ghats of Kashi.
5. Drifting down the Ganges River.
6. Handcrafted Benaras silk saris.



The best way to explore this truly extraordinary city is slowly and without any fixed agenda.



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Call into the charming 19th century Ganges View Hotel for a welcome cold drink on their pretty flower-filled terrace, and watch the hustle and bustle happening below you. Varanasi – clichéd as it might sound – a microcosm of India: religion, commerce, faith, foreigners, flowers, music, rivers, boats and, if you're lucky, even a glimpse of Bollywood. The best way to explore this truly extraordinary city is slowly and without any fixed agenda. Drift down the river. Wander the back lanes. Buy flowers for pujas. Stop for fabulous lassi, served in tiny clay pots. Let the centuries' old magic of the city guide you. 🌸



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# Live like a local in Mauritius

WORDS: SELINA PERIAMPILLAI



ave you ever wondered what it might be like to live on a tropical island? Once a harbour of pirates, Mauritius is now synonymous with honeymooners and luxury resorts: a perfect paradise in the great Indian Ocean. This tiny island is surrounded by clear turquoise waters and boasts some beautiful scenery, including botanical gardens, grand Hindu temples, volcanic mountainous landscapes amidst vast sugarcane fields and coasts flanked by swaying palm trees, rich with coconuts. A far-cry from your typical city, taking a break on Mauritius offers the tourist a chance to bask in the equatorial sunshine with the vitality of a culture steeped in colonial history. The temptation of the flat lowlands of the east coast with stretches of azure waters and white sand counters the 'wilder' rugged nature of the south that is perfect for treks, so that the island can appeal to all kinds of travellers.





Born in London to Mauritian parents, I frequently visit the island. As soon as my face feels the warmth of the sunshine, life immediately slows down. There is a sense of well-being and calm and I'm immersed in the culture. My first stop is always the beach, where I savour the sweetest pineapple flecked in red chilli and sea salt from one of the sea-side stalls, whilst listening to the soothing waves breaking on the shore.

This multicultural island was discovered by the Dutch but it was the French and British who settled here, creating sugar plantation colonies worked by slaves at first, and then paid labourers after the practice was abolished in 1835. The result was a myriad of Creole, African, French, Indian and Chinese people living on the island, the fusion of which is reflected in the melting pot of food on offer from street food vendors. Stalls sell paper thin dhal puris flatbreads, similar to Indian rotis, filled with *cari grois pois* (butterbeans) and decorated with fiery chillies and colourful pickles, alongside the many Chinese restaurants serving boulettes or dumplings in warm broths and mine frite fried noodles. French-style bakery stands can be found hidden in markets or the larger shopping malls, displaying light-fluffy genoise sponges, crumbly buttery biscuits and flaky puff pastry custard desserts. Locals grow many of their own spices in their gardens,

including *cari pile* (fresh curry leaves) and green papayas plucked off trees to be grated into tangy pickles. You will see cars stop on hilly roadsides as locals search bushes, excitedly plucking handfuls of goyave de chine, small jelly-like fruits ideal for an afternoon snack.

The island used to be all about five-star luxury resorts but recently a change is emerging, targeting the curious well-rounded traveller. Tourists now want to speak to the locals, see how they live, taste local food, learn about the history and be immersed in its culture. For those who find this an attractive proposition, start by looking at alternatives for accommodation. There is a growing number of Airbnb lodgings and local guest house providing affordable places to stay. Mauritians are known for their warm smiles and generous hospitality, but it's important to check reviews and recommendations before booking. If you'd prefer to stay in a hotel, try the new SALT of Palmar on the east coast of the island, a small eco-conscious boutique hotel that makes you feel at home with its ethos for sustainability, organic produce and no plastic.

The best way to get around the island is to hire a car. Take it along the zig-zag coastal roads, with pineapple farms on one side and the sparkling ocean on the other. Just driving around can lead to some truly awe-inspiring moments, as you experience the island in its natural entirety. Stop by one of the many sellers on the roadside and pick up the sweetest ripe watermelons or unusual fruit salads made up of chopped cucumber, mangoes and pineapples. Perhaps you'd prefer the tart with tamarind and red chilli flakes. Alternatively, you can hire a taxi or use the buses,





1. Le Morne Brabant, UNESCO World Heritage Site.
2. Fresh vegetable market in Port Louis.
3. Quick lunch at the Central market.
4. Fresh red and green peppers.
5. Soft chapati with condiments of pickles.
6. Traditional Creole spicy meal.
7. Selling crepes made of Tapioca root.
8. Rum with different flavours.

although these tend to be slow and crowded, but offer a great way to get to know the locals.


The best place to sample the island's street food is at the market. Here you will find delicacies such as gateaux piment (fried split-pea chilli balls), large vats of chicken biryani and bakers rolling out fresh floured rotis before smearing them in cari and pickles. Marvel at the rainbows of chillies, bredes, Chinese leaves, dwarf bananas hanging from the rafters and ground spices such as turmeric and cinnamon with aromas that will tease your senses. Refresh with some creamy alouda, a Mauritian style milkshake with vanilla, rose, agar jelly and basil seeds or smooth coconut water straight from the fruit.

History buffs should head for tour companies My Moris or Taste Buddies, whose expert guides will take you around the island, allowing you to discover the nooks and crannies of the past. You will discover Port Louis, the bustling capital once famous for its trade ships, and organise for you to cook with a local and learn how to make a proper Creole cari.

For me, the ultimate sensory experience is when I get to sit down at the Mauritian table and dine with the locals and my family. This is a long

tradition adopted over the islands that brings with it a sense of community, family spirit and togetherness. The table is covered in bowls of steaming curries, fricasseed vegetables, unctuous dhal or lentils. Rice is a staple addition, as well as soft chapatis alongside the island's famous condiments of pickles and marinated chillies in oil, piment confit. Everyone digs in, going back for seconds and thirds, telling stories, sharing food and sometimes enjoying a glass or two of rum arrange (local rum steeped in spices like vanilla or ginger). The ancient traditions of the island shine through in the warm people; I love that I get to call this place my second home. 🇻🇺

Selina Periapillai is the author of 'The Island Kitchen' to be published in May 2019.

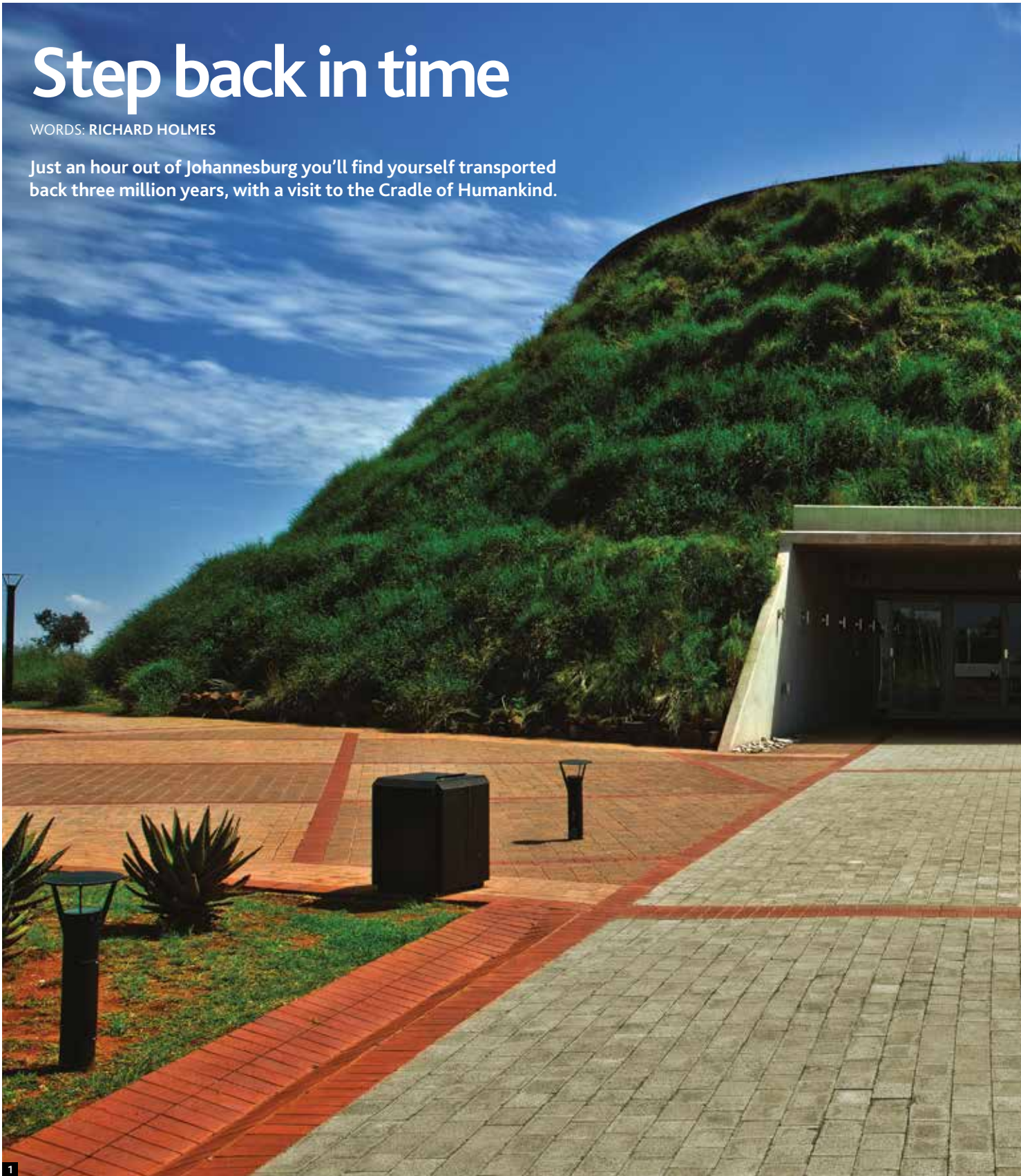


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# Step back in time

WORDS: RICHARD HOLMES

Just an hour out of Johannesburg you'll find yourself transported back three million years, with a visit to the Cradle of Humankind.



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**J**ohannesburg is, in many ways, a young city. Before the late-1800s there was little to be found in the region now known as the Witwatersrand; the 'ridge of white waters'. That all changed one afternoon in 1886, when gold was discovered on Langlaagte farm, an area today covered by the suburbs of Mayfair and Fordsburg. As the historian C.W. de Kiewiet put it, the region soon became home to "the greatest gold mines of all history, ancient and modern. From 1886 the story of South Africa is the story of gold." But the story of South Africa – and, indeed, humanity – begins long before that. While the towering skyscrapers of downtown speak to the rich seams of gold that built Johannesburg, to the north-west of the city there are equal riches to be discovered below ground.

An hour's drive from the city centre you'll find the region that's become famous as the 'Cradle of Humankind', offering a remarkable glimpse into the origins of our species.

These rocky hillsides have been home to our ancestors for over three million years, and this year marks the 20th anniversary of the 'Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa' being listed as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

And that's no surprise: the 'Cradle' is widely acclaimed as one of the world's paleontology hotspots, and excavations here have produced nearly half of all the human fossils ever discovered.



The best place to learn about this ancient history is at the Sterkfontein Caves, where a state-of-the-art visitor's centre will introduce you to the lady affectionately known as 'Mrs. Ples'. This landmark skull of *Plesianthropus Transvaalensis* was unearthed nearby, along with over 500 hominid fossils and 9,000 stone tools, and remains one of the world's most important paleontological discoveries.

In 1996 Mrs. Ples was joined by a discovery dubbed 'Little Foot', an almost complete skeleton of *Australopithecus* dating back more than three million years. Their story is richly told in the guided tours (daily, USD 12 per person) that walk visitors through parts of the cave complex.

Younger travellers may not grasp the full importance of these fossil discoveries, but the Cradle of Humankind has plenty to offer visitors of all ages.

A short drive from the Sterkfontein Caves brings you to the other highlight of the Cradle, Maropeng Visitor Centre. Meaning 'returning to the place of origin' in the local seTswana language, Maropeng (USD 8.30) is an interactive centre that's ideal for children and the young at heart.

Here, innovative visual exhibitions explain how the Sterkfontein caves were formed, while 'The Path to Humanity' manages to compress four-billion years of human development – from prehistoric *Australopithecus* to *Homo Sapien* – into a digestible '12-hours' of history.

While discovering the life and times of our ancient ancestors is certainly the highlight of the Cradle of Humankind, it's not all that the region has to offer. Though the Cradle makes an easy daytrip from Johannesburg, you could easily while away a few days in the lush hills here.

If you want to extend your visit, you'll be spoilt for choice when it comes to accommodation.







1. Entrance to the Maropeng Visitors Centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
2. View over the rocky hillsides.
3. Wall at Maropeng Visitors Centre.
4. The Sterkfontein Caves in the paleoanthropological site.
5. Hot air balloon tour.
6. Skulls in the Maropeng Visitors Centre.
7. Excavation site at the Sterkfontein Caves.
8. Heading out into the Magaliesberg.



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Excavations here have produced nearly half of all the human fossils ever discovered.







For starters, the Maropeng Boutique Hotel is just a five-minute walk from the visitor centre, with 24 rooms offering superb views out over the Cradle. If you're staying the night, consider booking your place at one of the monthly stargazing evenings.

Through a series of themed presentations, resident astronomer Vincent Nettmann takes visitors on a time-travelling journey through our solar system, linking the first Africans with our ancient connection to the stars. After the presentation, and an included dinner, there's the opportunity to gaze heavenwards through a powerful 24-inch telescope.

Another excellent overnight option is Forum Homini Boutique Hotel, which offers an array of 'cave-chic' suites that blend neatly into the surrounding landscape. A highlight here is Roots restaurant, where Executive Chef Francois Esterhuizen offers a creative menu of dishes inspired by local ingredients.

With your bed taken care of you'll want to get out and explore.

A memorable way to see all that the area has to offer is to sign up with Ural Sidecar Tours. Using vintage Soviet-era motorbike-sidecars, their five-hour Cradle of Humankind tour takes guests on an engaging ride around the area.

You'll stop at Sterkfontein and Maropeng of course, but also head further out into the Magaliesberg for a visit to The Black Horse craft brewery. There are detours along little-known backroads, and the chance to stretch your legs in small towns en route.

While the sidecar tours are a fine way to discover the area, for a bird's eye view you'll need to be up before dawn.

Bill Harrop's Original Balloon Safaris have been offering hot air balloon tours over the region for more than 30 years, and his early-morning flights out across the Magaliesberg and Cradle of Humankind are a fine way to take in the hills Mrs. Ples once roamed. Flights depart at dawn and last roughly an hour, and end with a glass of sparkling wine to toast a memorable view over the Cradle.

If you'd rather keep your feet on terra firma, make a stop at Kloofzicht Lodge & Spa. While the boutique hotel and spacious spa may tempt you to settle in for a while, it's the glistening waters outdoors that draw many visitors here. With six well-stocked trout dams, and the lower reaches of the Blaauwbankspruit River, on offer it's a haven for fly-fishing fanatics. While overnight packages allow plenty of time to cast a line, day visitors are welcome if you want to drop in, ahem, on the fly. All equipment is available for hire.

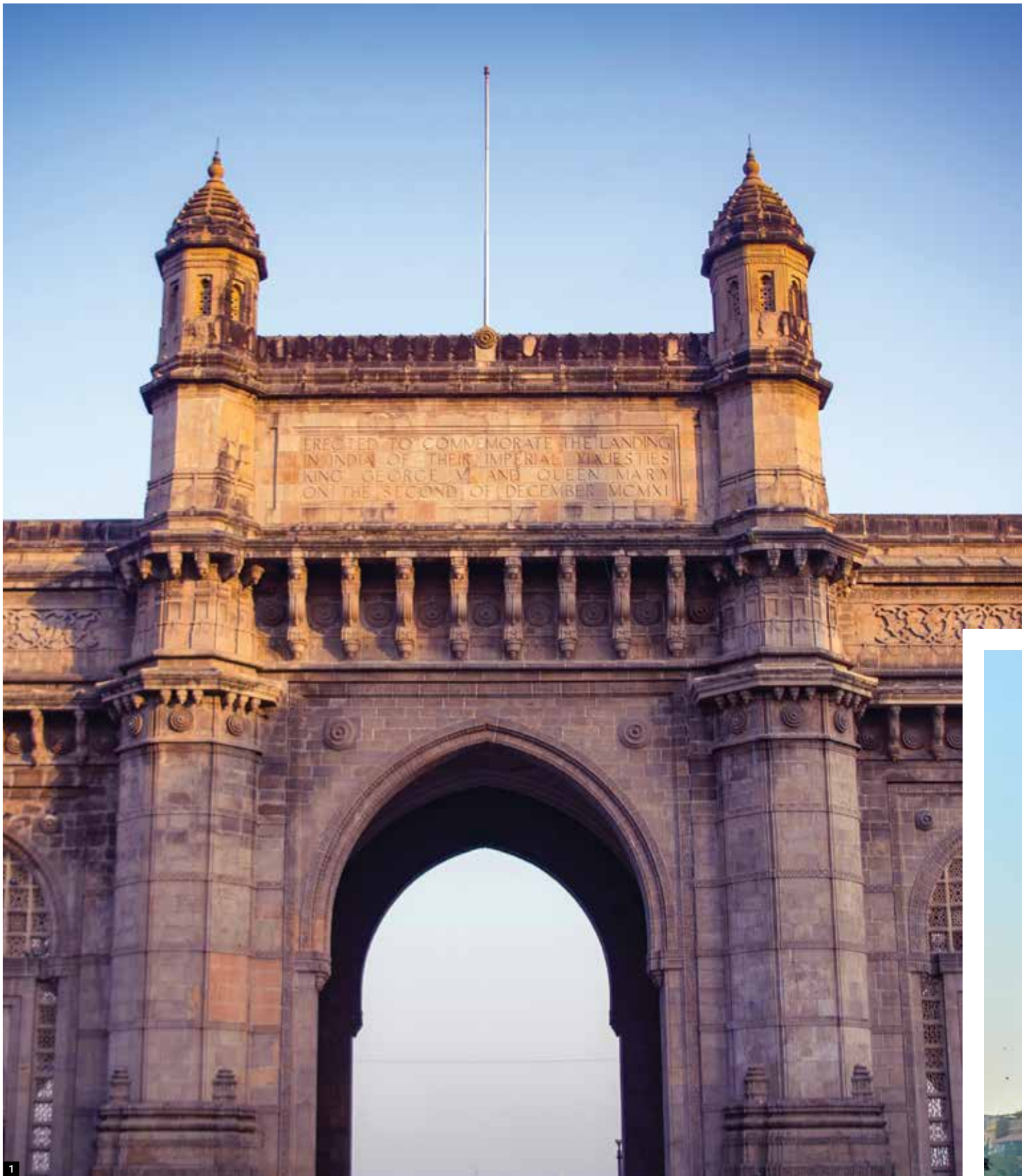
Sterkfontein isn't the only cave worth a visit either. Since 1991 Wonder Cave has dazzled visitors with its subterranean rock formations, reached by an elevator that takes visitors 60-metres underground. The 125-metre-long cave is worth any claustrophobia, with spectacular rimstone pools, stalactites and stalagmites to admire. Entrance is by guided tour only, with tours (45 mins, \$10 - \$17 per person) offered daily.

Wonder Cave is situated within the Rhino & Lion Nature Reserve, a popular option for travellers looking for a safari experience close to the city. While far from being a natural environment for the reserve's resident lion, cheetah and wild dogs, the opportunity to get up close to wild animals make it a popular option for day-trippers from the city. Aside from the furry residents there's a full roster of activities to keep visitors entertained, from snake displays to botanical gardens, hippo pools to 4x4 routes.

It's all a far cry from when these were empty hills waiting to be 'discovered' by the gold miners who laid the foundations of the city just over the horizon. Today the Cradle of Humankind is brimming with quaint country restaurants, luxury hotels and endless activities to educate and entertain visitors. One wonders what Mrs. Ples would have to say about it. 🦖



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 \*Daily flights from 2 June 2019



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**T**he architecture of Mumbai (formerly Bombay) is a potpourri of different styles, from Victorian and Indo Saracenic to Gothic and Art Deco, with spires, gables, arches and domes. Mumbai's rich architectural heritage is largely due to its having been a British trading outpost. Mumbai, after Miami, also happens to have the highest concentration of Art Deco buildings in the world.

History echoes down every corner of the city. A good place to start exploring the city's architectural offerings is the Fort area. Mumbai's Fort neighbourhood was the first part of the city to be developed by the British and gets its name from Fort George, which was constructed in 1769 by the British East India Company and later demolished. Walking through this historic area you can witness a timeline of Mumbai's past, showcased through its varied architecture.

Start at the Gateway of India – the city's most iconic structure, built from yellow basalt and concrete, featuring a blend of Islamic and Hindu elements in Indo-Saracenic style, built to commemorate the 1911 visit of King George V. Balloon sellers mingle with snack vendors and pigeons in a mesmerizing *melée*. This ceremonial entry point of British governors and viceroys also saw the march of the last British military force when they left India in 1948.

Spread over a huge area, the University of Mumbai buildings with the University Library and the Convocation Hall are an example of French Gothic style. The University Convocation building was designed by the architect, Sir George Gilbert Scott. Look at its large circular windows with stained glass skylights showing the various zodiac signs. Don't miss the Rajabai clock tower set atop the Mumbai University building, built from local Kurla stone and modelled after the Big Ben tower in London. It's a fusion of Venetian and Gothic styles with beautiful stained glass.

# Mumbai's architectural treasures

WORDS: KALPANA SUNDER

**Throw a stone anywhere in the city of Mumbai and the chances are that it will fall on a stunning building.**





The design is said to be inspired by a 14th century tower in Florence, Italy, and took 10 years to build.

The architectural extravagance of the British period is best found in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai's crowded main train station (formerly known as Victoria Terminus, or VT). Built over 10 years from 1878 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, it is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Look at the fusion of different influences: vaulted ceiling with stars, Gothic arches, gargoyles and turrets, Minton tiles, Indian motifs and Mughal domes. The entrance hall is a sensory feast with columns covered in vines and tropical wildlife.





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1. Gateway of India, an arch monument in Colaba, built around 1911.
2. The iconic Taj Palace hotel.
3. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, a historic railway station built in 1878 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
5. The famous Rajabhai Clock Tower.
6. Horniman Circle Garden.
7. General Post Office, built in 1886.
8. The Asiatic Society State Central Library, built in 1833.
9. David Sassoon Library, built in 1870 was a creation of Albert Sassoon.
10. The Dr. Bhau Daji Mumbai City Museum is the oldest museum in Mumbai.
11. Royal Opera House, India's only surviving opera house.
12. Statue of Buddhas at the Prince of Wales Museum.
13. Kamalnayan Bajaj Mumbai Gallery.



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Close by is the 116-year-old post office building and one of the oldest post offices in India. It was designed by the British architect John Begg. This Indo-Saracenic structure was modelled on the Gol Gumbaz in Bijapur, Karnataka. Built using black basalt mixed with yellow Kurla stone and white stone from Dhrangadhra, it took nearly nine years to build and is one of the city's most stunning buildings.

Walk around the stately Horniman Circle, inspired by London's Hyde Park, an arcaded ring of buildings around a botanical garden laid out in the 1860s. The green space, once called the 'Bombay Green', was where live music was played every evening after sunset. Just around the corner is the Asiatic Library with its triangular roof, built in 1833 in neo-classical style, with stones imported from England. With an imposing set of 30 steps which lead to a Greek portico adorned with eight Doric columns, the library has a dramatic wrought-iron spiral staircase and marble statues of people who contributed to the society. The library was originally built as a town hall for the walled city the British resided in.

In the arty Kala Ghoda area one can find many of the city's best heritage buildings. There is India's oldest cast iron building – the Watson's Hotel which was fabricated in England in the 1860s and assembled on site. Its cast iron frame, wide balconies and atrium make it a very attractive building though today it's on the 'endangered' list. It was here that the Lumière brothers screened the first movie shown in India in 1896.





Close by is the David Sassoon Library on Rampart Row built in 1870 in the Gothic revival style with gables, balustrades and verandahs, using local Malad stone. The building was the creation of Albert Sassoon, son of the famous Baghdadi Jewish philanthropist, David Sassoon. Your next stop in this area should be the Prince of Wales Museum (now called Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya). This Indo-Saracenic building, opened in 1922, and built from grey basalt with Moorish domes and Victorian towers, displays ancient items excavated from the Indus Valley: bronze sculptures, Buddhist sculptures, stuffed animals and weaponry. Its interiors have influences from different parts of India: tiled and inlaid flooring, a Maratha pavilion which forms an internal balcony taken from a traditional wada, and Jain temple pillars.

Many of Mumbai's educational institutions are heritage buildings, too. One of the oldest colleges in India, the Wilson College built in 1889, is a structure in Victorian Gothic style and is known for its elevated first floor classrooms, Minton tiles, teak staircases and overhanging verandahs. The Elphinstone College is another of the city's finest Victorian structures with its Gothic architecture built in the 1880s.

Now many of the heritage buildings of the city are being restored. The oldest museum of the city is the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, which is a combination of Palladian (after Andreas Palladio – an Italian architect) and Victorian design. This museum with its opulent interiors







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dates back to 1872. The high-Victorian arches, Corinthian columns, glass-and-gold interiors, intricate mosaic ceilings and Minton tiles are the results of a painstaking restoration between 2003 and 2007. Another great restoration is the Royal Opera House on Charni Road, built in neo Baroque style. It staged its first opera in 1916, and was closed for 23 years before being reopened in 2016.

Mumbai is famous for its Art Deco architectural style which developed during the 1930s with angular buildings and typical motifs like ziggurats, rounded balconies, tropical images, streamlining and Egyptian designs. Most of the Art Deco buildings are five storeys high and painted in bright candy colours such as yellow, pink and blue. Walking through Colaba and the palm fringed Marine Drive reveals many Art Deco gems, with rounded balconies, porthole windows and streamlined curves. Many of the city cinema halls like the Eros Cinema and Regal Cinema were also built in this style with flamboyant marble staircases and murals.

Mumbai is certainly home to many architectural jewels, which makes visiting this city such a great joy! 🇮🇳



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### UK TELEVISION CREW FLIES AIR SEYCHELLES

Air Seychelles recently hosted the presenters and crew of two popular British television shows.

The team of six arrived in Seychelles from London on 8 February 2019 to film material for the *Good Morning Britain* and *Lorraine* shows which focused on luxury lifestyles for a viewer giveaway. They travelled from Praslin to Mahé onboard an Air Seychelles Twin Otter aircraft.

The material was featured on ITV, one of the most popular television channels in the UK, from 11 to 25 February 2019.

Charles Johnson, Chief Commercial Officer of Air Seychelles said: "We are indeed delighted to welcome the *Good Morning Britain* and *Lorraine* crew to our archipelago and onboard our 19-seater Twin Otter DHC-6 400 aircraft.

"I am sure the team enjoyed the breathtaking bird's-eye view of the unparalleled beauty of the Seychelles during their travel from the second largest island in the archipelago in addition to featuring one of the world's coolest liveries on UK's top television channel".



### AIR SEYCHELLES TO OPERATE SEASONAL FLIGHTS TO ANTANANARIVO

Air Seychelles will operate seasonal flights between Seychelles and the capital of Madagascar, Antananarivo, from 3 July until 26 October 2019.

The twice-weekly service is to be operated by the airline's Airbus A320 aircraft on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Charles Johnson, Chief Commercial Officer of Air Seychelles said: "We have reviewed the market and have identified that during the summer season there is an increasing demand for travel to and from Madagascar.

"To ensure that we capture the business and to further meet the demands of the passengers, we have taken the commercial decision to bring Madagascar back into our network as a seasonal operation during the upcoming summer season."

The schedule for the flights is

Flight #	Origin	Destination	Depart	Arrive	Frequency Dates
HM0755	Seychelles	Antananarivo	1335hrs	1510hrs	Wed/Saturday 3 Jul 2019 up to 26 Oct 2019
HM0754	Antananarivo	Seychelles	1600hrs	1935hrs	Wed/Saturday 3 Jul 2019 up to 26 Oct 2019

### AIR SEYCHELLES AT SOUTH AFRICA'S TRAVEL EXPO

Air Seychelles has participated in one of the largest travel shows in South Africa, The Travel Expo.

Hosted by Flight Centre Travel Group, one of the world's largest travel agency groups, the event ranked as one of the leading business-to-customer travel exhibitions and provided an opportune platform for exhibitors within the travel and tourism industry to engage, educate and connect with the general public.

Air Seychelles was present at the Seychelles Tourism Board stand where visitors were able to learn more about the carrier's products and services including the amazing flights deals to the Seychelles and beyond operated by Air Seychelles and its codeshare partners.

Charles Johnson, Chief Commercial Officer of Air Seychelles said: "Participating in the Travel Expo alongside the Seychelles Tourism Board could not have come at a better time, since the airline will be operating additional flights between Johannesburg and the beautiful islands of the Seychelles over the Easter holidays.

"Only five hours from Johannesburg, the Seychelles is the perfect place for a quick getaway or even an extended break for those combining their trip to other islands within the Indian Ocean."







### AIR SEYCHELLES TO ADJUST ITS REGIONAL NETWORK

Air Seychelles, will introduce changes to its regional network as part of its business transformation plan to further strengthen and safeguard the sustainability of the airline.

Jean Weeling-Lee, Chairman of Air Seychelles, said: 'To sustain Air Seychelles' current and future growth it is important that we continue to review the operational and organisational efficiency of the business.

"In 2018 the airline embarked on a strategic transformation plan to restructure its business. Moving forward in 2019, to safeguard the long-term profitability and sustainability of the airline, we will continue to implement the transformation plan to meet the continuous challenges we face in the environment in which we operate."

The airline will consolidate its regional network by suspending its Abu Dhabi service, effective 11 May 2019.

All guests scheduled to fly between Seychelles, Abu Dhabi and beyond past that date will be offered alternative travel arrangements.

As part of its network adjustments, the airline will concentrate on developing its operations in the region. Effective 12 May 2019, Air Seychelles will add a new Sunday service on its Mumbai route, increasing its frequency to six flights per week.

As from 3 June 2019 the airline will commence daily services to Johannesburg with a new flight to be operated on Mondays.

To meet the increasing travel demand over the upcoming summer season the airline will in addition operate seasonal flights between the Seychelles and the capital of Madagascar, Antananarivo for a period of four months as from 3 July until 26 October 2019.

As part of the plan to refresh its fleet and increase efficiency on its regional network, in mid-2019 the national airline will take delivery of its first new generation A320neo (new engine option aircraft). Air Seychelles will be the first

airline in the Western Indian Ocean to receive one of the world's most advanced aircraft. Equipped with 168 seats the new aircraft will enable the airline to increase capacities across its regional network while at the same time delivering significant fuel savings.

The developments across the entire network will be coupled by a number of revenue-generating initiatives and key projects in 2019, focused at strengthening non-airline areas of the business including the ground handling, cargo handling and engineering services which have been a major source of revenue for the airline over the past year, given the increasing number of customer airlines operating at the Seychelles International Airport.

Robin Kamark, Chief Commercial Officer of Etihad Aviation Group, said: "Etihad maintains a strong partnership with Air Seychelles and we continue to support the transformation plan of the airline. The aim is to optimise the network to ensure Air Seychelles is in a strong position for growth and long-term sustainability."

### INCREASED FREQUENCY ON MUMBAI ROUTE

Air Seychelles will increase its services between Seychelles and Mumbai to six flights per week starting from 12 May 2019.

The new frequency to be operated on Sundays by the airline's Airbus A320 aircraft will provide better network access to both business and leisure passengers travelling to Mumbai or the Seychelles and beyond.

The flight schedule has been carefully timed with convenient early morning arrivals, including departures from Mumbai, to allow seamless connection in less than three hours to Johannesburg and Mauritius with Air Seychelles via the Seychelles.

Charles Johnson, Chief Commercial Officer of Air Seychelles, said: "Air Seychelles has been serving the Indian market for over five years since the launch of this route in 2014."



## AIR SEYCHELLES ON A CONSERVATION MISSION

Air Seychelles, together with the support of Denis Private Island, has flown endemic Seychelles Paradise Flycatchers from Denis to Praslin to assist with conservation efforts to save the threatened birds.

The flycatchers, known locally as 'Vev', were transported on the airline's Twin Otter aircraft commanded by Captain France Anacoura and First Officer Ramados Prem Kumar inside specially-designed boxes with ventilation holes and branches for the birds to perch on.

After reaching Praslin, they were carefully taken by boat to the island of Curieuse by the Seychelles National Parks Authority, where they were released after being given energy and rehydration fluid.

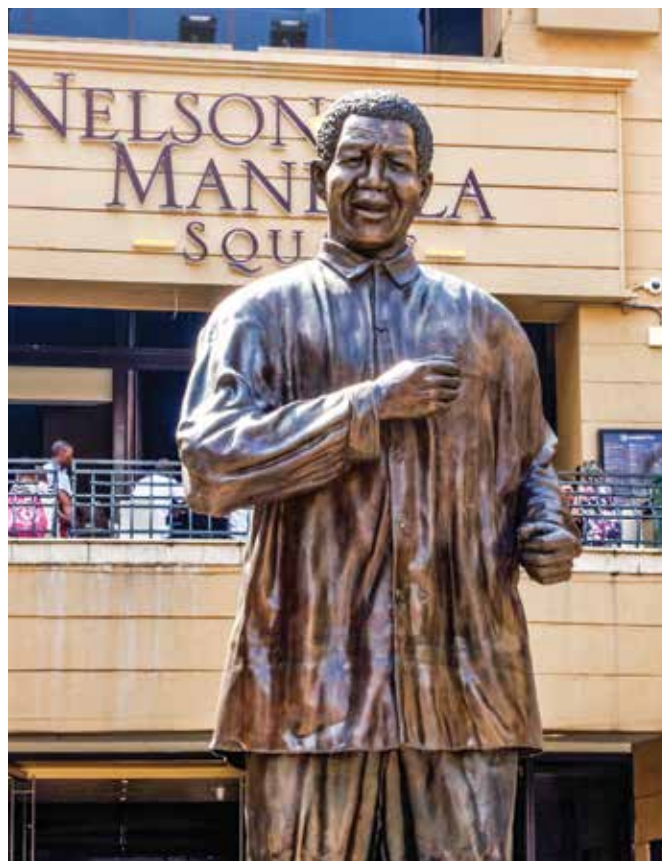
Being run in partnership with the University of Kent in UK and the Darwin Initiative, a UK-funded programme to conserve biodiversity, the aim of the project is to start a population of the threatened flycatchers on a third island in Seychelles.

The birds are currently listed as 'critically endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). They are native to the island of La Digue and can also be found on Denis Private Island, where they were introduced in 2008 as part of the national conservation programme to save the species from extinction. The number of flycatchers in the wild is believed to be in the low hundreds.

Sheryl Barra, Air Seychelles Head of Corporate Affairs said: "As the national airline, we care deeply about protecting the wildlife and the natural environment of Seychelles and are happy to help out in such endeavours whenever possible."

Rachel Bristol, Project Officer for this Darwin Initiative project, said: "We are very pleased that Air Seychelles was able to provide an efficient and comfortable air transfer for these special birds to reach their new home. The support of our partners is crucial to save the most-threatened bird in Seychelles."

The male birds have an all-black plumage with a deep blue sheen and two long central tail feathers that can reach up to 30 centimetres in length. The females have reddish brown wings and tails, and lack the elongated central tail feathers.



## DAILY FLIGHTS TO JOHANNESBURG

Air Seychelles will fly daily between Seychelles and the capital of South Africa's biggest city, Johannesburg, from 3 June 2019.

An additional frequency will be operated on Mondays by the airline's two-class Airbus A320 aircraft, featuring 16 Business and 120 Economy Class seats, to boost the available capacity on that route to 1,904 seats per week.

Charles Johnson, Chief Commercial Officer of Air Seychelles said: "Johannesburg is a key market for Air Seychelles and expanding our frequency from six per week to daily services shows our commitment to offer greater choice and more flexibility.

"Besides catering to the strong growing demand, strengthening air access between the two capital cities will support the growth of trade, including commerce, which is vital for the airline's cargo business as well as for the development of each country's respective economies and tourism industries.

"This great news will also benefit guests travelling from Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town with our codeshare partner South African Airways, or from Gaborone, Francistown and Maun with interline partner Air Botswana because, as from June, they will now have more flexibility and better access to our connections to the Seychelles and beyond."





Salon Vallée de Mai  
Premium Lounge

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)

\*Please confirm your eligibility with your frequent flyer program.







# The best way to island-hop

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

With over 20 domestic flights a day, getting there and back has never been easier.

We also offer charter services and scenic flights over Mahé.



Book your ticket with your travel agent, call us on **(248) 439 1000** or visit [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com)



## Air Seychelles global offices



India

Capital: New Delhi  
Languages: Hindi, English  
Currency: Indian Rupee  
Area: 3,287,590 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 1,263,830,000  
Air Seychelles destination: Mumbai

Jet Air Pvt. Ltd  
2-A Stadium House  
Veer Nariman Road, Churchgate  
Mumbai 40020, India  
Tel: +91 22 22040685/82  
Email: hmsales@jetair.co.in/hmres@jetair.co.in



Mauritius

Capital: Port Louis  
Languages: French, English, Creole  
Currency: Rupees  
Area: 2,040 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 1,243,000  
Air Seychelles destination: Plaisance Airport

Rogers Aviation Ltd  
2, Gardens of Bagatelle  
Bagatelle Office Park  
Moka, Mauritius  
Tel: +230 2026665  
Email: olivia.malepa@rogers-aviation.com



Seychelles

Capital: Victoria  
Languages: Seychellois Creole, English  
Currency: Seychelles Rupee  
Area: 456 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 95,235  
Air Seychelles destination: Mahé & Praslin

Air Seychelles Ltd  
Seychelles International Airport  
P.O. Box 386  
Mahé, Seychelles  
Tel: +248 4391000  
Email: callcenter@airseychelles.com



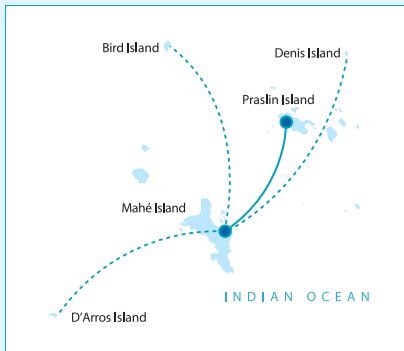
South Africa

Capital: Pretoria  
Languages: English, Afrikaans  
(11 official languages)  
Currency: South African Rand  
Area: 1,221,037 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 45,919,000  
Air Seychelles destination: Johannesburg

Border Air Pty Ltd  
Lu Dowell Representations  
280 Oak Avenue, Randburg  
Johannesburg, South Africa  
Tel: +27 11 3264440/4443/4483  
Email: isla@border-air.co.za

# Route Network

## Air Seychelles Domestic Network



### MAP KEY

- Air Seychelles Flights
- Air Seychelles Chartered/Seasonal Flights
- Codeshare Flights
- New Codeshare Flights

### OUR CODESHARE PARTNERS



Los Angeles

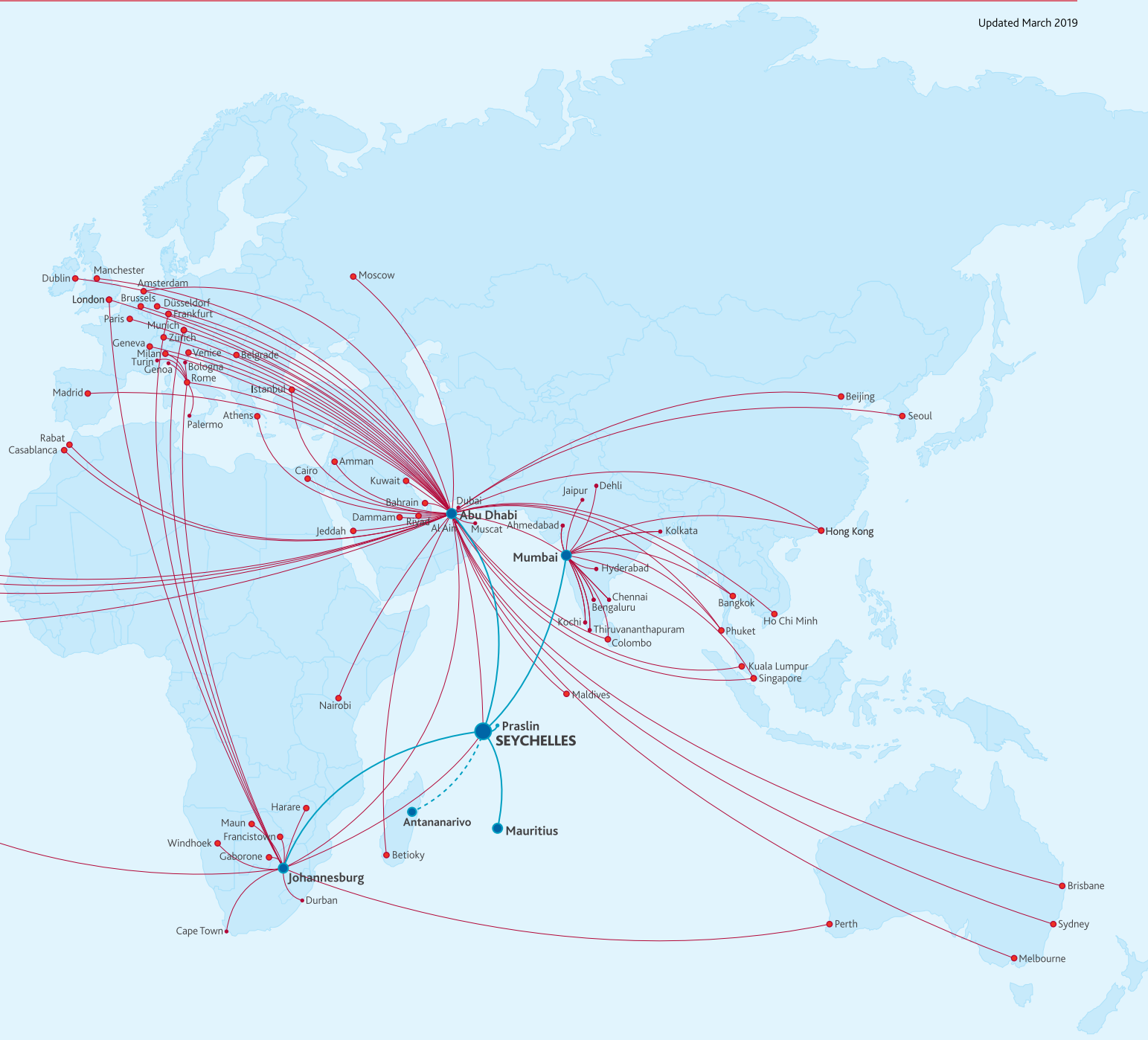
Chicago

New York

Washington







## Our fleet



### Airbus A320

(Amirantes, Silhouette)

**Aircraft:** 2

**Cruise speed:** 840 k/hr

**Business Class seats:** 16

**Economy seats:** 120

**Wing span:** 111ft 9in

**Length:** 123ft 3in

**Maximum range:** 2930 nm

**Seat Configuration**

**One aisle passenger cabin**

**Pearl class:** 2-2 four abreast

**Economy:** 3-3 six abreast



### DHC-6 (TWIN OTTER)

**Aircraft:** 5

**Seat Capacity:** Total 19

**Max. Gross Weight:** Take Off, 5,669 kgs

**Range:** 490 nautical miles (907.5 km)

**Engines:** Pratt and Whitney PT 6A-27

**Sea Level Thrust:** SHP 680



# Scenic Island Flights

Let us take you on a journey

Guests can now experience low altitude scenic flights on Air Seychelles.

Be enchanted by the magnificence of the spectacular views from the sky. Flights are 30 minutes, and guests can choose between a flight over the North or South of Mahé.

Bookings must be made 24 hours before departure.

For more information or to book, visit your local travel agent, [airseychelles.com](http://airseychelles.com) or call +248 439 1000.



EXPLORE

## 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 USD 10,000 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 0800hrs-1400hrs, and Saturday 0800hrs-1100hrs.

### Public holidays 2019

- New Year (1 January)
- Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Easter Monday (19, 21 & 22 April)
- Labour Day (1 May)

- Liberation Day (5 June)
- Corpus Christi (20 June)
- Constitution Day (18 June)
- National Day (29 June)
- Assumption Day – festival on La Digue (15 August)
- All Saints Day (1 November)
- Immaculate Conception (8 December)
- Christmas Day (25 December).

### Passport requirement

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

### Visa requirement

Visa is not required for entry into the Republic of Seychelles regardless of the nationality of the passport holder. Re-confirm before travel. [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. Seychelles Public Transport runs daily bus services from morning to evening. The bus usually passes by every 15 minutes.

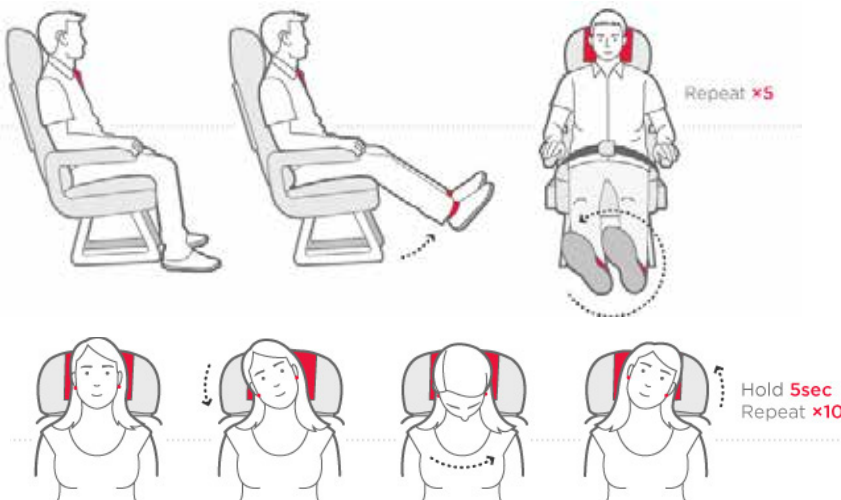
### Taxi service

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.



## Other tips for a comfortable flight

- For your comfort try and travel light.
- Wear loose clothing and elasticated stockings made of natural fibre.
- Increase your normal intake of water.
- Use moisturising cream to keep your skin from drying out.
- Take off shoes in the plane to prevent your feet from swelling.
- Avoid heavy meals during the flight.
- Short walks once every two hours are excellent for circulation.
- On arrival at your destination, have a hot shower or relaxing bath.
- Try to touch your toes when waiting in the aisle to stretch your hamstrings.
- On arrival a quick job, brisk walk, or a vigorous scrub will help stimulate your circulation.

### 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.



# MON ZIL, MON SEYBREW

*MY ISLAND, MY SEYBREW*



NOT FOR SALE TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18  
DRINK RESPONSIBLY · DON'T DRINK & DRIVE





A TRIP TO SEYCHELLES IS INCOMPLETE  
WITHOUT A VISIT TO EDEN ISLAND



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