

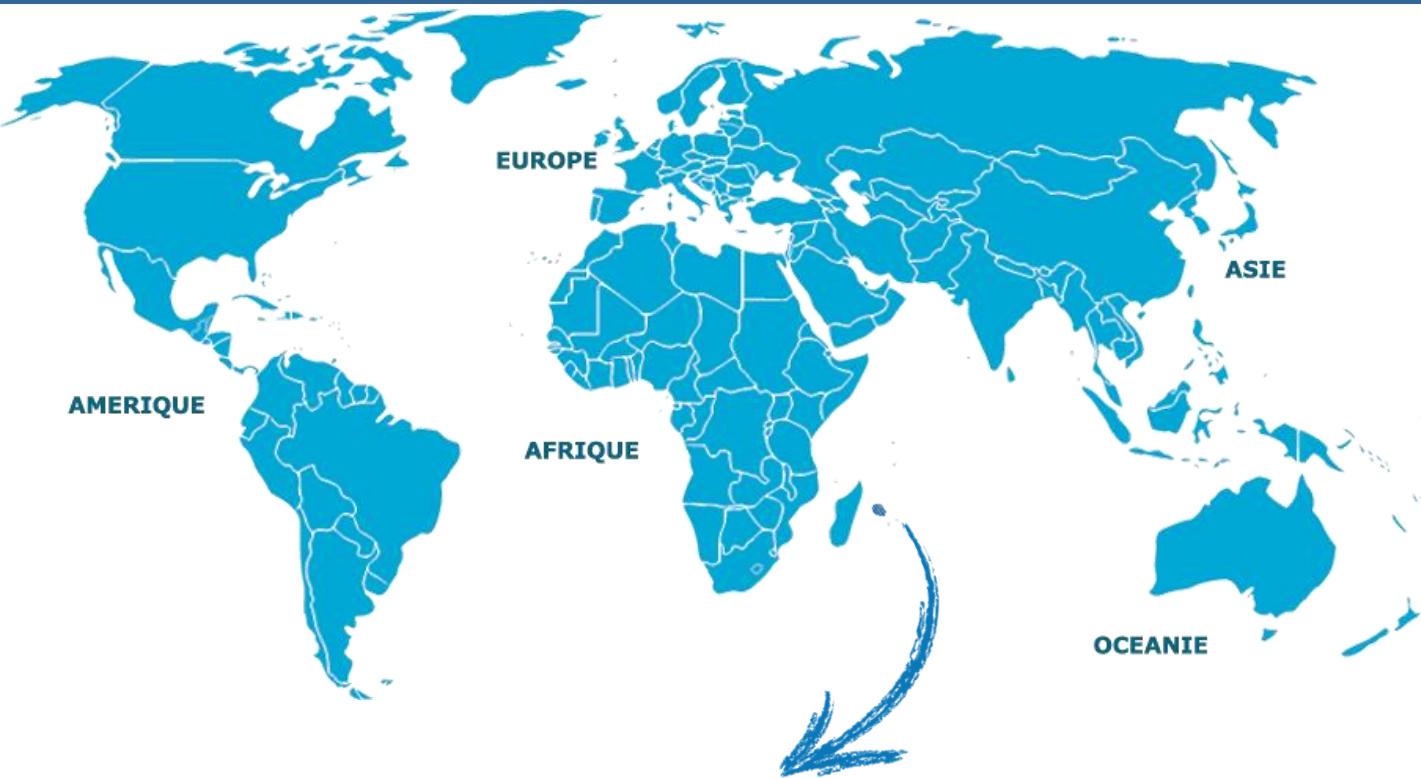
Reunion Island, your tropical destination rich in color



BOURBON
TOURISME



Reunion Island, a tropical island in the Indian Ocean...



Reunion Island, a volcanic island...

A volcanic and tropical island (2500 km²) shaking up the cliché of a languid island under its coconut trees and white sand.

Indian Ocean and its palm trees always present, are overshadowed by the peak of Piton des Neiges (3071m), the volcano Piton de la Fournaise, but also by the cirques of Mafate, the hikers' paradise, Cilaos, the craggiest, or still Salazie with its luxuriant vegetation and its waterfalls.

Nature here makes itself pleasant to welcome outdoor activities such as canyoning, rafting, hikings, in the air or underwater explorations and many other different ways to explore the island and its multiple treasures.

The diversity of cultures allows to discover in the corner of a same street: a Chinese temple, a mosque, an Indian temple, a catholic church and also to meet the colorful, warming, smiling population living in harmony.

The tropical climate offers to Reunion Island numerous gardens, plantations, fields and other cultures presenting in particular endemic plants of the island.

Lovers of true sensations, strong feelings and authentic traditions, come to discover all this in Reunion Island.

POPULATION

Wasteland when the occidental settlers discovered the island, nowadays, the island presents an original diversified mix of populations: an absolute representation of its cultural wealth and its creole art of living. The most important community is the Creole one (40 %) descendants from the oldest families implanted on the island, the other communities are from the Indian subcontinent, from China or from Africa, or still from metropolitan France.

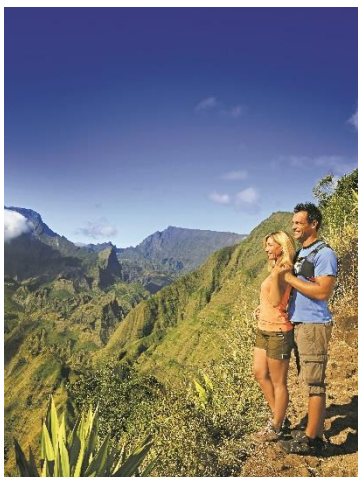
ECONOMY

The island is a French overseas department. It benefits from all the harbor, airport, road facilities and from telecommunications of European level. The local economy is characterized by a primary sector dominated by the culture of the sugar cane. The island produces besides small quantities of vanilla as well as essences of vetiver and geranium. Fishing also has a small part in the local economy.

A secondary sector whose main added value is supplied by the food-processing industry, and a tertiary sector which is the main employer of the island (administrative and trade departments) finally complete the face of the economy of the island.



DELIGHT FOR THE TASTE BUDS



Creole cuisine is rich in flavors mixing Indian, Chinese, Malagasy and African influences. The traditional dish is called "cari", made up of meat or fish simmered in a sauce with garlic, ginger, onions, turmeric and tomato. The traditional accompaniment consists of rice and beans (generally lenses or peas) without forgetting "rougail" (very spicy condiment served apart from main dish). Other dishes look like cari and are also very frequent: it is the case of massalé (mixture of spices), some smoked meats called "boucané", and also the rougail (different from the rougail-condiment but having the same name). This non-condiment rougail is a preparation almost identical to "cari". The difference is that the cooking of spices, onions, etc., is made over a brisk heat and without turmeric. The most famous is the one with sausages. There are also other variants.

FORMALITIES

For French people or people from the European Union (SCHENGEN area), an identity card or a valid passport is required.

For foreigners, a valid passport, visa when required. Please contact your embassy.

CUSTOMS

Tipping is not an habit in Reunion. All prices indicated in shops, restaurants or elsewhere are all included. However, feel free to give any tips if you had a very good service. It is always appreciated.

A TROPICAL CLIMATE

Reunion Island benefits from a tropical climate with trade winds which bring some sweetness. The year is divided into two different seasons:

- Dry and fresh season from May to October. "Winter" from June to August (colder close to the peaks).

- Humid and warm from November to April (raining period).

HEALTH

For the passengers from endemic countries, vaccinations against yellow fever and cholera are required, otherwise no necessary vaccination. There is no malaria in Reunion Island.

Intend to bring mosquito repellent and protect yourself against the sun.



Température	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Littoral	29°	32°	30°	29°	28°	27°	26°	25°	26°	27°	28°	29°
Montagne	20°	23°	21°	20°	19°	18°	18°	17°	18°	19°	20°	20°



To SEE

- **St-Denis**, , the capital city of the island. Various monuments remind the visitor of the rich past of this city. The “Rue de Paris” is lined with impressive houses in colonial style. A walk in the State Garden gives you the chance to appreciate the tropical flora of the island.
- **Cirque of Salazie**, the most humid and the greenest place of the island. The cirque is known for its beautiful and numerous waterfalls (incl. the famous “Veil of the Bride”). The village of Hell-Bourg will charm you with its private creole houses.
- **Niagara Waterfall**, one of the most famous of the island.
- **St-André**, cradle of the Tamil culture, abounds in temples and reminds that it has been the land of welcome of dozens of thousand Indians hired for the culture of the sugar cane.



To DO

- **Water activities:** canyoning, rafting, aqua biking.
- **Outdoor activities:** via ferrata, hiking.

To VISIT

- **Carrère House** in St Denis, one of the colonial style houses of Rue de Paris.
- **Vanilla plantation** in St André, to discover the Bourbon Vanilla, one of the best worldwide
- **Savanna's rum Distillery**, near Ste Suzanne, to learn the long process from sugar cans to rums. In sugar period (from July to December), possibility to visit the sugar factory just beside the distillery.
- **Tropical plantation “Mélissa”**, in St Benoît, where tropical flowers and fruits are grown.



TO SEE

- **Notre Dame des Laves**, church spared by the lava during the 1977's eruption.
- **Region of Grand Brûlé**, where most lava flows during biggest eruptions.
- **St Pierre**, city, its marina and its market on Saturdays morning.
- The **Wild South** and its charming areas like Cap Méchant, Langevin river, Manapany, Grand-Anse.
- **Volcano, Piton de la Fournaise**. Possibility to organize treks with mountain guides.
- **Cirque of Cilaos**, its wine, its lenses, its embroidery and its hiking trails; that you will reach by the famous 400-curves road.

TO VISIT

- **Garden of Scents and Spices**, in St Philippe.
- In St Pierre :
 - **Saga du Rhum**, museum, dedicated to sugar cans and rums in the island.
 - **Domaine du Café Grillé**, a garden retracing the island's history, with possible coffee tasting.
- **Cité du Volcan**, in Bourg Murat, brand-new museum on one of the most active volcano in the world.
- In Cilaos :
 - **Handcrafted Embroidery House**, which makes the renown of the cirque.

TO DO

- **Walk under lava flows**, in the natural tunnels formed by former flows
- **Canyoning** in Langevin River and in the cirque of Cilaos



To SEE

- **Piton Maïdo** and its panoramic view over the cirque of Mafate, the wildest one. Several treks possible with mountain guides.
- St Gilles-les-Bains' **marina**.
- **Markets:** (handcraft, fruits and spices): St Paul on Fridays all day and Saturdays morning, L'Ermitage on Sundays.
- The **lagoon** of L'Ermitage area and the beach of Boucan Canot.
- Etang Salé, its **forest** and black sand beach.
- St Paul's **landing stage**.



To VISIT

- **Kélonia**, the conservatory of sea turtles, in St Leu.
- **Jardin Botanique de La Réunion**, and its collections of tropical plants in St Leu.
- **Jardin d'Eden**, in St Gilles-les-Bains.
- The **aquarium**, in Saint-Gilles-les-Bains.

To DO

- **Treks** in the cirque of Mafate, the hikers' paradise, only reachable by feet
- **Mountain bike** from Piton Maïdo to the coast (for trained clients only)
- **Helicopter** flights (several itineraries and prices available), **Paragliding**, or **ULM**.
- **Boat** tours (sail or motor boats), **fishing**, **scuba-diving** departing from St Gilles' marina.



CIRQUE DE MAFATE

The loop of Marla by la Nouvelle

Take the car to the Col des Bœufs car park (secure parking, 12 € per day - price known at this date). From the car park, you will make a small walk of 10min to reach the beginning of the trail. Then start your way down to Marla.

Col des Bœufs/Marla : about 3h walking, +325m/-545m.

In early afternoon, return to Col des Bœufs via the Nouvelle (or same itinerary as in the morning).

Marla/La Nouvelle : about 2h30/3h walking, +300m/-360m.

La Nouvelle/Col des Bœufs: about 2h30 walking, +570m.

Return to the car park and get your car back, then drive to other adventures.



Way down Mafate



Crater Fomica Leo

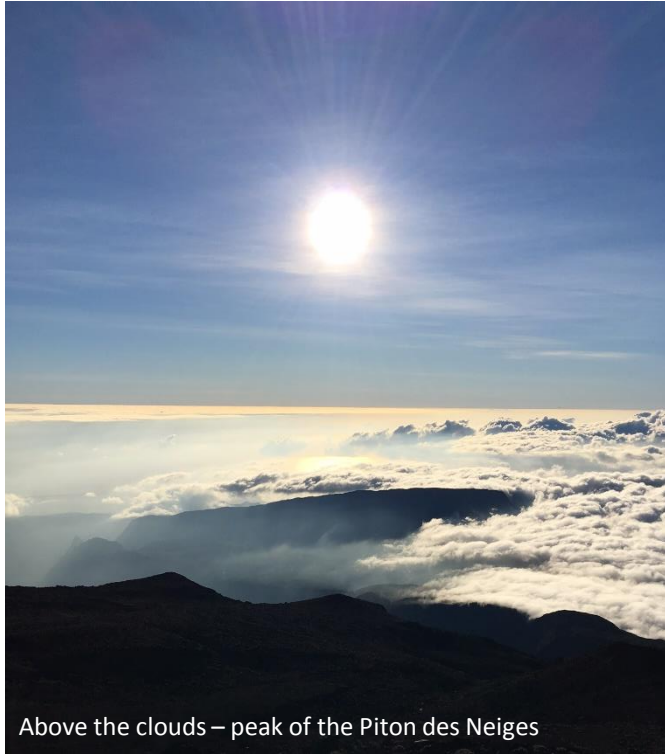
VOLCANO PITON DE LA FOURNAISE

Ascent of the Piton de la Fournaise

In early morning, drive to the Pas de Bellecombe via the forest road of the Volcano. Take the opportunity to stop and admire the landscape at Nez de Bœufs and at the Plaine des Sables before arriving at Pas de Bellecombe car park.

Ascent of the Piton (round trip) : 5h/7h walking, +/-680m.

We advise you to take with you a sandwich for the lunch break during the hike.



Above the clouds – peak of the Piton des Neiges

PITON DES NEIGES

Ascent of the Piton des Neiges

Drive to the "Bloc" 15 minutes from the city of Cilaos. Then start hiking from the Bloc to the Caverne Dufour hut.

Bloc/hut : about 3h walking, +14400m.

Small break around the hut (for occasional walker: night in Caverne Dufour recommended). Continue till the summit of Piton des Neiges.

Hut/Summit of the Piton des Neiges : about 2h30 walking, +600m.

Recommended: the arrival at the summit for the sunrise. Visual show guaranteed. Back to the Bloc by the same itinerary.

THE TROU DE FER

The Trou de Fer

From Hell-Bourg to Salazie, hike to the hut of Bélouve.

Possibility to drive to hut of Bélouve from les Plaines.

Hell-Bourg/Bélouve : about 6h walking, +700m/-200m.

Bélouve/Trou de fer : about 2h walking, +300m.

Enjoy the view, return by the same itinerary.

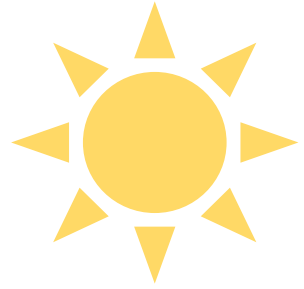


Path

Advices and useful numbers...

Never leave alone, the nature is unpredictable, especially in Reunion where the climate can change quickly at any time. You can be in full fog and in the cold in a few moments.

Pay attention also to the sun; it is not the same in the tropics. It can sometimes give severe unpleasant burns; avoid a prolonged exposure to the sun and use a high protection sun cream even during a hike; furthermore it is necessary to hydrate yourself regularly to avoid heat strokes.



HEALTH :

Hiking requires a good physical condition, a healthy lifestyle and a balanced diet. Consult your doctor before leaving to be reassured. If you make a trip without the service of a mountain guide, think of taking a first aid kit; this one has to contain at least: a bandage, sticking band aids, sterile gauzes, a disinfectant, a pocket knife, a lighter, a whistle, tweezers, analgesic, sugar cubes, some paper handkerchiefs. Tidied up well, all this equipment sets only half a liter and does not exceed 500g.

If you are with a mountain guide, do not forget to tell him any particular health conditions you can have.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS :

✧ ONF (Forest organization): +262 (0)262.37.38.39 – Before leaving, inquire about the state of paths; they can become impracticable (further to a mass of fallen rocks, streams in flood) and are then closed by order of the prefect.

For your safety, respect the regulations in force.

✧ METEO FRANCE : 08.92.68.08.08, to know the weather conditions.

✧ EMERGENCY SERVICE :

- PGHM (high mountain police service) : +262(0)262.930.930

- FIRE SERVICE : 18

- EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE : 15

- POLICE : 17

- EMERGENCY SERVICE (by mobile phone) : 112



PRACTICAL ADVICE:

- ✧ Never leave alone ! If you are alone, prevent somebody, transmit your route and take your mobile phone; the whole island is covered by SFR and Orange networks. Do not forget also to inform everyday the owner of your accommodation about your itinerary.
- ✧ Leave early in the morning to have time to return in case of bad weather and to benefit from magnificent landscapes before the arrival of clouds on reliefs. Nights fall early in the afternoon.
- ✧ Take with you an IGN (national geographic institute) map.
- ✧ Adapt your route to your level. The indications given in this document are given for a regular hiker, as information. Do not underestimate the uneven of the island!
- ✧ If you rent a car, do not leave it wherever especially at night. Prefer paid car parks.
- ✧ Never go out marked out paths.
- ✧ Do not drink the water of brooks or other springs of natural water.
- ✧ Food and drinks: you will find some in Mafate shops
- ✧ Hikers accommodations: sheets are supplied but not bathroom linen. Dinners and breakfasts are possible also; please book them at least 48h in advance.
- ✧ Some places can have no hot water by moment and no water or electricity in case of cut.



YOUR EQUIPEMENT:

- ✧ back pack
- ✧ 1,5 to 2 L of water per day (tap water is clean and potable in every accommodation)
- ✧ lamp
- ✧ walking shoes
- ✧ walking poles
- ✧ pull-over & fleece sweatshirt
- ✧ waterproof raincoat (k-way)
- ✧ gloves and hat (if you rise to Piton des Neiges and Piton de la Fournaise)
- ✧ cap, sunglasses
- ✧ high protection sun cream (lips and face)
- ✧ a plastic box to put your meal
- ✧ sleeping bag if you are afraid to be cold but accommodations give blankets
- ✧ medical kit (please refer to « health » paragraph)
- ✧ snacks (dried fruits, cereals...)

Bourbon Tourisme – Your DMC



We wish you a good stay on our island.

Bourbon Tourisme Team

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