



THE INDIAN OCEAN DESTINATION INSIGHTS



Cast away to faraway islands, underwater worlds and the most luxurious hotels on our Indian Ocean holidays

Fly by seaplane over the astonishing Maldivian atolls for your first glimpse of endless white sands, watch the sun rise over the Edenic islands of the Seychelles and chase waterfalls through Sri Lanka's lush green interior. There's an Indian Ocean holiday for every impulse, whether it's journeying over lapis-lazuli waters by wooden dhoni, picnicking on deserted sandbanks or zoning out under the gentle sway of coconut palms in an oversized hammock.

This is castaway life but with all the high-end comforts included. Lavish suites suspended over the water, infinity-edged private pools, enticing underground wine cellars and glossy spas promising a tropical glow. Everywhere you go there are visual rewards – jewel-like waters, rainbow coral reefs and jungle-clad interiors. Everyday life feels so gloriously far away.

Indian Ocean holiday highlights

Fashion crowds and honeymooners retreat to the Maldives for stylish vibes and private island escapes. Isolated beaches are shared with cute hermit crabs; late-night cocktail bars spill out onto soft sands and the deep blue seas here are the best on earth for snorkelling and scuba diving. Expect personalised service and experiences; think candle-lit seafood dinners on the beach and cruising under the stars.

French island La Reunion's extraordinary Jurassic-like volcanic landscape suits those with a wandering spirit. Visit unique villages built inside spectacular craters, stroll through the manicured colonial capital of Saint-Denis – the largest French city that's not actually in France – and climb the Piton des Neiges. Now's the time to visit as it's still beautifully underdeveloped, has a distinctly



French flavour – expect sweet patisseries and French cheese – and of course, there's that astonishing sapphire blue lagoon.

We understand that sometimes you just want to escape with your nose in a good book and a cocktail for company. Our hand-picked Mauritius and Seychelles Indian Ocean holidays are standout destinations for such pursuits – luxury beachfront hotels, creamy sands and turquoise waters surrounded by a barrier reef. And if you do fancy a little adventure, you can take a seaplane flight from Mahé to Praslin or a helicopter to the protected reserve of Silhouette and experience two islands in one. You'll find world famous beaches like Anse Source' d'Agent as well as seasonal sea turtle nesting, Giant tortoises, and the chance to see the coco de mer palm in its only natural habitat.

Where is the Indian Ocean?

There are hundreds of irresistible islands strung like lily pads throughout the Indian Ocean. Located between Africa and Australasia and the Southern Ocean and Australia, the Indian Ocean covers 20% of the Earth's surface and some of its best known islands include the Maldives, Seychelles, Mauritius and Sri Lanka.

Indian Ocean islands

The Indian Ocean has some of the most beautiful islands in the world.

Maldives

Made up of 26 atolls and over 1,000 tiny islands, is the Maldives, one of the most popular honeymoon destination. You can combine two different islands on a multi-centre holiday or simply stay put in ultra-luxurious bliss at your chosen resort.

Mauritius

Sitting east of Madagascar, in the southern Indian Ocean, and with a year-round subtropical climate, the east coast is home to exclusive beachfront hotels and glitzy restaurants and the west coast has perfectly calm waters for snorkelling and swimming.

Seychelles

Made up of 115 beautiful islands scattered across the Indian Ocean, many are uninhabited and dedicated to nature reserves. Mahé and Praslin are home to some of the best beaches in the world with sea turtles feeling so safe here that they come up and nest on the shoreline.

Sri Lanka

One of the Indian Ocean's most unique islands, with a history dating back 3000 years. Alongside beautiful beaches and warm waters, you can discover heritage, temples, wildlife and jungle.

La Reunion

Just east of Madagascar and southwest of Mauritius, the remote island of La Reunion is still French owned, making it a delightfully distinct destination. You'll find volcanic cliffs, pretty coastal towns, a still active volcano and crater-villages to explore.



Excursions

Indian Ocean holidays offer so much opportunity for adventure whether you're sunset cruising in the Maldives, boarding a magical train through the lush tea-growing highlands of Sri Lanka, island hopping in the Seychelles to La Digue and Curieuse or exploring the wild south of Mauritius with its breathtaking Seven Coloured Earths. In the shadows of Sri Lanka's beautiful coastline join a wildlife jeep safari through the southeast's grand National Parks, castaway to a private uninhabited island for the night from a luxury Maldivian resort or fly by helicopter over the phenomenal canyons, craters and waterfalls of La Reunion.

Diving and snorkelling

The Maldives has one of the best house reefs in the world. With warm waters and high visibility year round, this jewel-like archipelago is home to luxury resorts offering day and night dives as well as amazing snorkelling adventures. The entire island of Mauritius is encircled by a barrier reef, with beautiful, calm conditions for swimming and snorkelling. You'll find neon coral-filled lagoons, historic dive sites and caverns to explore, with visibility on a clear day reaching 50 metres. Mauritius is a fantastic diving and snorkelling destination for beginners.

Food & drink

Expect fresh seafood feasts everywhere you go, flavoured with lots of spice on Mauritius and Creole influences throughout the Seychelles. You'll be sipping juice fresh from a coconut, biting into tropical fruits and having an obligatory pina colada on the beach. Luxury hotels are home to award-winning restaurants whether you're dining 16 feet under the ocean at an Island, tucking into red snapper overlooking the ocean at Le Méridien Fisherman's Cove on the Seychelles or dining waters edge at a chic open-air restaurant on Mauritius.

Private dining experiences are top-of-the list in the Maldives – take a wooden dhoni and picnic hamper to a deserted sandbank in the middle of the ocean or book an in-villa private chef a la carte dinner in your over water bungalow. Many resorts also feature indulgent wine cellars and sommeliers creating bespoke tasting menus to accompany your evening meals.





Mauritius is an island of tranquil shores, backed by mountains cloaked in vibrant shades of green

For a relatively pint-sized tropical island hidden away in the southern Indian Ocean, Mauritius packs a whole lot in. Travellers first come here for the picture-postcard coastline, but scratch below the surface and you'll discover what draws visitors back time and again. Mauritius holidays can be lazy days on the beach, but they can also be marine adventures and island explorations.

The island's diverse yet relatively short history has created a remarkably varied culture; quite something for a country that is just a bit smaller than the county of Devon. The descendants of European, African, Indian and Chinese immigrants make up the majority of the population and each group has made their mark on the island. Where else can you take Creole language courses, visit beautiful Hindu temples and grand sugar plantation houses, and dine on cuisine inspired by a melting pot of culinary traditions?

Mauritius holidays - perfect for...

- We know Mauritius well and have a great range of hotels, many with exclusive offers
- Beautiful beaches and turquoise lagoons that are excellent for watersports
- A melting pot of Creole, French, English, Indian and Chinese cultures
- Snorkelling and diving in the coral-filled lagoons – the island is surrounded by a barrier reef
- World-class golf courses, with green fees included as part of a handful of all-inclusive packages.

Imagine private white-sand islands fringed by crystal blue waters... the Maldives is the ultimate luxury island escape

The speedboat slows and it comes into sight. A tiny speck of an island surrounded by a turquoise lagoon and the whitest sand you've ever seen. It's better than the pictures – the Maldives is where colour comes to life

Expect to lose all sense of time and what's going on elsewhere as you sink into your overwater villa's private pool and drink in the views. Here, working your way through the hand-crafted cocktail list is as strenuous as it gets. Need more? How about venturing beneath the ocean's surface to glide alongside turtles and whale sharks; sipping Champagne on a luxury cruise as the sun sets; or escaping to an uninhabited island, Robinson Crusoe-style, for an unforgettable evening-for-two under the stars.



Maldives holidays - perfect for...

- There's nowhere better for an away-from-it-all luxury honeymoon
- Don't just limit yourself to one island; a twin-centre Maldives holiday is easier than you might think
- Superb diving and snorkelling – many islands have their own house reef
- Great choice of island resorts where you'll find one perfect for you.



Captivating and enigmatic, this tropical tear-drop island is bursting with diverse and often unexpected treasures – Sri Lanka

Perhaps best known for the beach resorts that line its extensive coast, Sri Lanka is also a culture lover's paradise. There are rock temples and fortresses, ruins of ancient and sacred cities, and relics of a colonial age. And if that's not quite enough to tempt you, Sri Lanka also has a naturally spectacular interior that's home to rolling tea plantations, and wildlife-rich parks and reserves where elephants, leopards, crocodiles and sloth bears roam free.

Sri Lanka holidays take on a slower pace. This is an island where time takes on a different meaning; it may take a little longer to get from A to B, but that only adds to its charm. It gives you more time to take in your surroundings and discover the country from a local's perspective as your guide proudly regales you with tales of their homeland.



Sri Lanka holidays - perfect for...

- Beaches, culture and natural beauty all combine to create one of the most diverse countries on Earth
- There are still largely off-the-beaten-track destinations that you can discover before many other travellers
- You can create your own unique itinerary and travel with your own private driver/guide
- Yala National Park has one of the highest concentration of leopards in the world
- A great family-friendly destination, especially on the quieter eastern coast.



Irresistible island escapes and some of the best beaches in the world combine with extraordinary natural beauty on a holiday to the Seychelles

With its dazzling white shorelines and hypnotic coral reefs, the Seychelles is a picture-perfect collection of tiny islands that are home to some of the most beautiful beaches and exclusive hotels in the world. From the rare coco de mer tree and its towering granite rocks to the giant tortoises, world-famous beaches and exotic jungle-clad interiors, this sun-drenched treasure in the Indian Ocean will leave you stunned at its outstanding natural beauty. About as close to paradise perfection as you can get, offshore this is an aquatic treasure trove of whale sharks, manta rays,

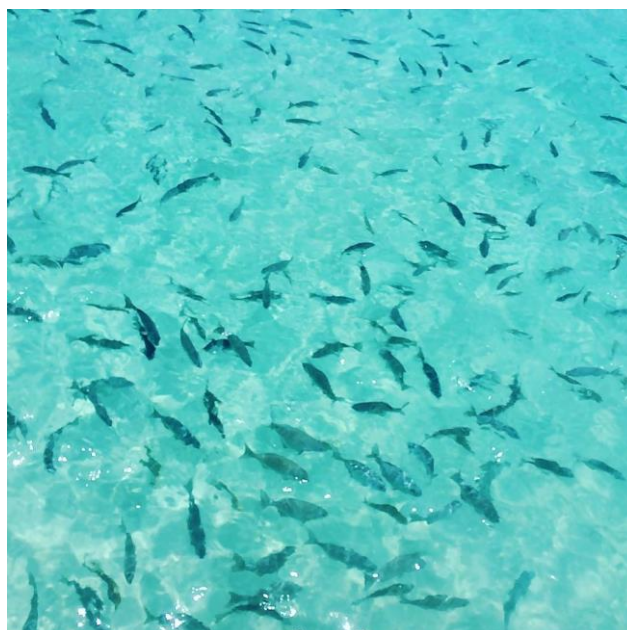


turtles and schools of exotic reef fish. On land, there's a charming slow-motion island vibe, and the sheer diversity of endemic birdlife and flora and fauna is just extraordinary.

Made for exploration, relaxation and spectacular island-hopping adventures, holidays to the Seychelles can range from sunbathing for days on talcum-powder sands, hiking through World Heritage-listed nature reserves and even going Robinson Crusoe on your own desert island. Whether you're dreaming of an exciting family adventure or a romantic honeymoon hideaway, on a Seychelles holiday you can take the time to explore as little or as much you like.

Seychelles holidays - perfect for...

- Some of the best and most beautiful beaches in the world
- Island hopping allows you to experience each island's unique personality, taking in the bustle of the larger islands and seeing the untouched wonders of the smaller islands
- A fantastic range of award-winning spas to soothe the soul
- The jungle-like interiors and colourful coral reefs are home to some of the world's most rare and captivating flora and fauna
- Adventure-seekers will be kept entertained with snorkelling, diving, hiking and a whole host of water sports on offer





La Reunion - A striking volcanic island deep in the southern Indian Ocean that's made for adventures

Dramatic volcanic peaks and lush tropical wilderness, with a French identity and a rich melting pot of cultures, beautiful La Réunion – a relative geological youngster – is quite unlike its neighbours. In fact it's more like a glorious scaled down Hawaii or an epic real-life Jurassic Park backdrop. There's still the chance to relax in coastal hotels, but with scenery so wonderfully diverse, you'll want to get out and explore.

La Reunion holidays - perfect for...

- The perfect pre-stay to a beach holiday in Mauritius, combining rugged and adventurous landscapes with beautiful beaches
- Helicopter flights are the best way to see the island and to make the most of the stunning Jurassic-like landscape
- From epic mountain peaks to volcanoes, canyons and cascading waterfalls, the scenery is simply stunning
- Get active with hiking, walking and biking or take a 4x4 trip.

