

# Let's go fly a kite

From kitesurfing to classy cuisine, Mauritius has it all, finds Emma Winton

@enwinton

I'd just managed a whole five seconds standing up on the board, desperately trying to keep the kite up in the air, before spectacularly belly-flopping into the water as the kite came crashing down with me.

Not quite the result I had hoped for, having just high-fived my instructor as he skimmed effortlessly past me along the water. Excited - and, in hindsight, far too optimistic - I had thought I would be flying across the ocean with the same grace and style.

This lesson came courtesy of a Mauritius Tourist Board fam trip, showcasing what the island has to offer in its low

season - kitesurfing being just one of the attractions. The sport has become hugely popular in Mauritius due to a combination of reliable winds, flat water and fantastic lagoons.

Hotels also offer a great selection of other water sports including windsurfing, snorkelling, paddleboarding and glass-bottomed boat trips.

Mauritius isn't all about water sports, though. The Pamplemousses Botanical Garden is famous for its giant water lilies, while Casela World of Adventures offers brave visitors the chance to zipline through the treetops.

Each coast offers a different experience: the north is a tourist hub full of relatively busy towns, the west is home to beautiful sunsets and favoured by families, while the east has those money-shot stretches of beautiful white-sand beaches. A fusion of French, Indian, Creole and Chinese nationalities also means there is a fantastic selection of food wherever you end up.

With UK tourists among the island's top-three source markets, and British Airways increasing its seasonal flights to five a week from October, demand is on the rise. So where should you recommend to clients in search of a stay that best suits them?

**BEST FOR... LUXURY**

**Hotel:** St Regis Mauritius Resort  
**Location:** Le Morne

**Vibe:** The resort is built around the old Manor House and has colonial-style elegance. Staff make a concerted effort to make you feel at home (albeit a very luxurious, very refined home). The resort has 144 suites, plus a villa with four spacious rooms. There are 12 suites in the Iridium Spa, while ocean-view suites also feature an in-room spa facility. The resort is home to five restaurants, serving Mauritian, Indian, Japanese, pan-Asian and seafood cuisine, showcasing the cultural influences around the island.

**TOP TIP**  
Look out for early-bird discounts at the 65 Mauritius hotels featured by TravelCube [travelcube.com/uk](http://travelcube.com/uk)

PICTURE: HARRY WINNINGTON PHOTOGRAPHY



3  
OF THE  
BEST

FOOD &  
DRINK  
HIGHLIGHTS

Sip a tot of rum

at Rhumerie de Chamarel Rum Distillery. Guided tours showcase the rum-making process and give visitors the chance to sample eight rums and liqueurs.

Spice up your street food

at Port Louis market. Options include dholl puri, a thin fried bread stuffed with yellow split peas and served with bean curry, atchar and chutney; or gajacks, deep-fried samosas and potato fritters.

Experience a flavour explosion

with cari poisson, a fish and aubergine curry that mixes the island's Indian influence with the best of its seafood. It's not to be missed!



LEFT:  
Botanical  
gardens

RIGHT:  
Maradiva  
Villas Resort  
& Spa

BELOW:  
St Regis  
Mauritius  
Resort



➔ **Agent verdict:** "The resort has a delightful old charm about it, but with all the modern amenities. It's in a fantastic location, with a view of Le Morne mountain as a backdrop, making it a desirable place to stay. The generously sized rooms set within the pavilions or scattered along the beachfront, all with a private butler, help make it feel like the height of luxury."

**Gunvant Kumpavat, Mina Travel**

**Book it:** A night's B&B in a junior suite starts at £350 in low season.

**stregismauritius.com**

► **BEST FOR... HONEYMOONERS**

**Hotel:** Maradiva Villas Resort & Spa

**Location:** Wolmar, Flic en Flac



**If you're seeking a resort where you can unwind, enjoy fabulous food and have your own space, Maradiva is a great choice**

**Vibe:** Set on the west coast, the resort has access to 750m of white-sand beach, with Le Morne mountain in the distance. A boutique-style hotel, it features 65 villas, each with its own pool, so it's well suited to

honeymooners looking for something a little more private. For an idyllic hideaway, the presidential villa comes with a chef and butler, as well as reserved sunbeds on the beach. Romantic dinners can be served under the Raj tents on the beach.

**Agent verdict:** "If you are seeking a resort where you can unwind, enjoy fabulous food and have your own private space, then Maradiva is a great choice. Its location is perfect for honeymooners wanting to relax on the fabulous beaches, but also keen to explore outside the resort, as it's close to towns such as Flic en Flac."

**Louisa Maynard, The Cruise Line**

**Book it:** A garden suite pool villa





→ starts at \$925 per night in low season, including breakfast and dinner.

**maradiva.com**

## ▶ BEST FOR... COUPLES

**Hotel:** Lux Le Morne

**Location:** Le Morne

**Vibe:** The resort is in a fantastic location, benefiting from the backdrop of Le Morne that protects it from the winds, the stunning sunsets of the west coast, and set right on a natural habitat for wild dolphins. Featuring 149 chalet-style rooms, this property has a tranquil and romantic ambience, making it ideal for couples seeking a relaxing retreat. There are five swimming pools, two bars and three restaurants, including the award-winning Thai venue East.

**Agent verdict:** "Lux Le Morne stood out among the hotels as effortlessly chic. The facilities and service impressed on all levels. The only issue was deciding where to eat - I found myself wishing they offered a smorgasbord of them all."

**Emma Clark, The Departure Lounge**

**Book it:** Doubles start at £312 per night on a B&B basis.

**luxresorts.com**

## ▶ BEST FOR... FAMILIES

**Hotel:** Outrigger Mauritius Beach Resort

**Location:** Bel Ombre

**Vibe:** This relaxed five-star hotel



**I was expecting a Polynesian-themed hotel, but found an ultra-modern complex**

features 37 deluxe family sea-view rooms that accommodate two adults and up to three children, with a connecting room containing bunk beds and a TV. Complimentary activities include snorkelling, sailing, paddle-boats and windsurfing - plenty to keep the whole family happy. Make use of the Coral Kids Club too, which has its own pool. The Plantation Club restaurant is well worth a visit, serving up a modern interpretation of Mauritian cuisine, with splendid results.

**Agent verdict:** "I was pleasantly surprised by the style of the resort, having expected a Polynesian-themed hotel, but being presented with an ultra-modern luxury complex. I would have no qualms staying there with my family. I particularly liked the natural lagoon where the resort is positioned, which is perfect for paddling and water sports."

**Anthony Blackmore, Cruise365**

**Book it:** A night's B&B in an ocean-view room starts at £134.

**outrigger.com**



PICTURE: TOM FALLON PHOTOGRAPHY

ABOVE: Lux Le Morne

## Tried & Tested

### LUX TAMASSA

Lux Tamassa is a young and vibrant resort with a party spirit that will suit fun-loving couples and young families down to a tee.

Featuring 214 rooms, the decor is modern, with bright splashes of colour. The beachfront rooms have fantastic views of the ocean and mountains, with beach access just a few steps from the room.

Mauritians are renowned for their hospitality, and it's no different here, with every member of staff greeting guests and creating a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Dining is a laid-back affair with a choice of two bars, one buffet restaurant and one à la carte, plus a street-style 'food truck' that serves delicious burgers.

Fun touches include a traditional red London telephone box that allows guests to phone home for free, and the signature 'message in a bottle', hidden around the resort and stuffed with prizes such as spa vouchers and bottles of champagne.

**Book it:** A night's B&B starts at £130 in low season.

**luxresorts.com**



ABOVE: Outrigger Mauritius Beach Resort

