

# ASK THE OPERATOR

Laura French seeks advice for couples after a dream honeymoon



PICTURES: Jeremy Peters; Sakis Papadopoulos

## 1 MAURITIUS

### WHAT'S THE BRIEF?

A couple are looking for an affordable honeymoon in Mauritius at an intimate, adult-only resort. They want a romantic stay with a variety of activities on site, but also a chance to explore the island and experience the local culture and food.



**Premier Holidays**  
Nikki Hain, product manager  
for the Indian Ocean

### WE SUGGEST

For a good-value honeymoon, I'd recommend the four-star Veranda Paul & Virginie, set in a fishing village on the northeast coast of Mauritius.

A romantic, couples-only property renovated in 2017, the hotel is all-inclusive and offers activities specifically for couples, such as tandem-biking in the village, private cruising on a traditional pirogue (canoe) and dining under the stars. It also has a honeymoon deal offering up to 40% off for those staying five nights or more.

Guests can choose from three room styles, and there's a Seven Colours Wellness Spa, as well as two restaurants – one serving seafood by the beach, the other specialising in Mauritian cuisine.

Capital Port Louis is only 30 minutes away, and I'd highly recommend an excursion there. The Pamplemousses Botanical Garden is also spectacular, while the village of Grand Baie offers the likes of speedboat tours and rum tasting.

One of our most popular honeymoon itineraries is a twin-centre with South Africa – it ticks all the boxes for an unforgettable holiday.

**Book it:** Premier Holidays offers seven nights' all-inclusive at Veranda Paul & Virginie from £1,239 per person, including flights from London and transfers, valid from September 1-30. [premierholidays.co.uk](http://premierholidays.co.uk)

## 2 THE MALDIVES

### WHAT'S THE BRIEF?

Two young honeymooners want a modern, luxury island resort in the Maldives, with an emphasis on good food and the option to stay in a beach or overwater villa. They'd also like the opportunity to dive or snorkel.



**Kuoni**  
Linda Pedler, product and purchasing  
manager for the Maldives

### WE SUGGEST

My top recommendation would be Baros, located in the North Malé Atoll.

It's possibly the most picture-perfect of all the Maldives' islands, with a real focus on providing a personalised service in everything from private dining options to tailored packages at the Serenity Spa.

There are 75 villas, each with extra touches such as wine chillers, yoga mats and dedicated villa hosts, and food is a big deal, with three restaurants, including The Lighthouse, which serves gourmet seafood. There's also a dive school and marine centre with a marine biologist, and a glorious house reef that is ideal for snorkelling.

More generally with the Maldives, it's important to match the resort to your clients' needs, as all of the islands are different. Recommend all-inclusive for the best value, and for the ultimate wow factor, suggest booking an overwater villa or seaplane transfer.

**Book it:** Kuoni offers seven nights in a Deluxe Villa at Baros from £2,299 per person, with breakfast, Emirates flights from Gatwick and transfers, on select dates in June and September. [kuoni.co.uk](http://kuoni.co.uk)

## 3 THE SEYCHELLES

### WHAT'S THE BRIEF?

Clients are looking to go all out with a luxury honeymoon in the Seychelles. They want the privacy of a villa with their own pool but the facilities of a resort, as well as the option to get active and go sightseeing to nearby islands.



**Caribtours**  
Rebecca Bryson,  
head of sales

### WE SUGGEST

I was lucky enough to spend my own honeymoon island-hopping around the Seychelles, and among the standouts for me was Raffles Seychelles.

It's a stunning resort set on Praslin island, and it's the only private, all-pool-villa resort in the archipelago. The villas are strategically scattered across the hillside, offering sensational views over the turquoise ocean and lush gardens.

There are plenty of dining options, with four restaurants serving everything from fragrant curries to artistic sushi, and there's a gorgeous spa with open-air treatment pavilions, plus a fantastic beach service.

I'd recommend exploring the island too. We cycled to the famous Anse Lazio beach one day for a picnic, and also explored Vallée de Mai national park, a Unesco World Heritage Site.

The island of Mahé is great for immersing yourself in local culture with arts, crafts and food markets, while La Digue is a beautiful, natural island. I'd also recommend visiting Denis Private Island, which has a Robinson Crusoe feel about it.

**Book it:** Caribtours offers seven nights' B&B in a Garden View Pool Villa from £4,175 per person, including flights, private transfers and UK lounge passes, valid between August 1 and December 20. [caribtours.co.uk](http://caribtours.co.uk)