

# EXPLORE!

## Seychelles Island Hopping

11 days

Seychelles - Trip code TI



## Seychelles Island Hopping

Unwind in the beautiful islands of the Seychelles. Explore the palm-lined beaches of Praslin and visit the forest of Vallee de Mai, home to the famous Coco de Mer Palm. Hike along forest trails to Trois Freres peak to enjoy spectacular views over the island and its beach fringed shores. Cycle around the paradise island of La Digue, pedalling from one palm lined beach to another, stopping for a freshly caught seafood lunch or a gentle swim. The Seychelles are an iconic destination but it is possible to get off the beaten path and discover a different side to these tropical islands.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Mahé Island** - Join a tour which explores the lush rainforest, a tea plantation, beautiful beaches ending with a stunning coastal drive.
- ★ **Praslin Island** - Discover the UNESCO World Heritage Site Vallee de Mai and take an optional catamaran trip. Enjoy incredible marine life in the crystal clear waters.
- ★ **La Digue Island** - a characterful island with laid back charm and where two wheels is the way to get around.
- ★ **Walking** - Take beautiful island walks and encounter giant tortoises, tropical birds and superb Indian Ocean views.
- ★ **Victoria** - Explore the world's smallest capital city with its replica of Big Ben and tranquil Botanical Gardens.

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

#### TRIP PACE:

##### Relaxed

You can enjoy easy-going activities and experiences on these Relaxed pace tours, with opportunities to absorb the sights and immerse yourself in the local surroundings, but still come home feeling relaxed and refreshed.

#### GROUP SIZE:

##### 10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join trip on Mahe Island, Explore Victoria

Arrive at our hotel & check in. We spend our first afternoon exploring Mahe's capital, Victoria, on foot. Whilst it may be more of a capital town than a capital city, Victoria (population 25,000) is definitely worth a visit. Independence Avenue, the modern shopping area, is as charming and full of life as the old colonial quarter. The heart of the city is around the cathedral and famous clock tower, which is a perfect (smaller) replica of London's Big Ben. We include a visit to the market with its abundance of colourful fruit, vegetables and freshly caught fish before continuing on to the tranquil Botanical Gardens. Here we see the famous Coco de Mer nut, giant tortoises and a collection of rare exotic plants. Colonies of fruit bats roost overhead and regularly take flight across the giant palms. We return to our hotel which is located directly on Beau Vallon Beach, and where there are several restaurant choices for dinner within a short stroll.



**Accommodation: Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

### DAY 2 - Explore Mahe Island

Mahe is the Seychelles largest island and is the political and economic centre. Some 27km long and 8km wide, it has beautiful beaches with powder white sand, graceful palms and clear turquoise waters. The incredible diversity of the islands' scenery and vegetation is due in part to its' mountainous interior which reaches a height of 905m. Roads on Mahe are well maintained and provide good access to the many hidden coves and villages. Today you have the opportunity to take an optional tour of Mahe which

will provide an overall familiarisation of the whole island. Travelling by bus and on foot you will follow the short Glacis Trois Freres Trail, passing through lush rainforest and a tea plantation, ending at the factory where you may take a short guided tour or simply sit with a brew and take in the magnificent Indian Ocean views. We will also visit the Mission, a place of historic importance after the slave trade. Arriving at Baie Ternay Beach around lunch time there will be opportunities for swimming and snorkelling before taking a stunning coastal drive right around the island, stopping to take photographs and admiring the incredible scenery and vivid island colours.



**Accommodation: Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

### DAY 3 - Optional boat trip to the Saint Anne Marine National Park

An optional full day boat trip is available today for those who want to take to the water and explore other islands and the wonderful marine life. Our boat is glass bottomed and sails from Victoria to the St Anne Marine National Park, a cluster of islands off the north east coast. The calm crystal waters are perfect for snorkelling and sightings of turtles within the coral are very common. We land on one of the protected reserves and say hello to the giant tortoises who reside here. We enjoy a barbecue lunch before taking to the waters once more, swimming as we anchor alongside a beautiful beach. For those who do not participate in this activity our hotel has a lovely pool and access straight on to the beach. On many of the Seychelles beaches it is possible to wade out and snorkel straight from the shore line, this in part is due to the enormous granite boulders which dramatically rise out of the sea and appear to book mark the ends of each beach. These imposing rocks shelter the waters, and are what differentiate the Seychelles beaches from those found elsewhere in the Indian Ocean. Tonight the Beau Vallon Beach hosts its weekly night market. A short walk from our hotel it provides a great opportunity to sample creole street food, mingle with the locals, buy handmade crafts and enjoy a magnificent sunset.



**Accommodation: Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

### DAY 4 - Walk to Anse Royal Beach

Today our Tour Leader will take you on a walk and beach excursion. Travelling by public bus to Anse Royal Beach we swim and snorkel and enjoy a relaxing day. You could also of course choose to simply find your own place in paradise and soak up the laid back island life or cool off in the inviting waters of a hidden cove. The Seychelles beaches are incredibly clean and free from litter, they are also all open to the public so there are no beaches off limits - you can lay your towel wherever you choose.



**Accommodation: Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 5 - Take a catamaran to Praslin Island

This morning we leave Mahe and take the one hour crossing to Baie Saint Anne, Praslin, the second largest island in the Seychelles archipelago. Keep a look out for dolphins on the journey as they are regularly spotted in these waters. We check into our hotel before taking a short walk to the local village to get our bearings and check out the facilities. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the beautiful surroundings. Our hotel is located right on the beach front and also has a lovely pool. Local restaurant choices tonight are a short stroll away.



**Accommodation: Palm Beach Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Walk and take a local bus to Anse Lasio Beach

We make our way back to the village this morning where we catch the local bus to the start of our walk. After disembarking we descend slowly along pathways, taking our time as we stop to look at the endemic fauna, listen out for birdlife and take in the stunning panoramic views. We cross to the other side of the island and arrive at our first beach and swim and snorkel before continuing on towards the headland. The scenery is magnificent as we look out across the ocean and other islands. Anse Lasio is our final destination, arguably the most beautiful beach in Praslin. Here we spend some time enjoying the crystal clear waters and soft white sand. Again we swim and snorkel enjoying the marine life right from the shore. After our day of exploration we take the local bus back to our hotel which follows either a coastal or mountainous route.



**Accommodation: Palm Beach Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Visit UNESCO site Vallee de Mai

Praslin is home to one of the Seychelles two World Heritage Sites - the Vallee de Mai. It is a primeval rainforest containing the famous coco de mer palms that have the largest, heaviest and most suggestively shaped nuts in the world. Local folklore has it that at sundown the male coco de mer tree leans over to the female tree and no human onlooker ever lives to tell the tale of what follows. The result of all of this nocturnal activity is the curious double hulled nut that resembles the female pelvis. Vanilla orchids, a variety of lizards and some of Earth's rarest birds also reside here. The walk follows a designated pathway and is shaded almost throughout as the trees provide an enormous rainforest canopy offering a welcome relief from the hot sun. Your entrance ticket is valid for the

whole day so you can spend longer here if you wish. To return to our hotel it is a simple downhill walk back along the road.



**Accommodation: Palm Beach Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Chance to take a catamaran trip to Three Islands

Praslin is an ideal place from which to visit many of the other smaller islands off the coast. You have the option to board a full day "Three Island" catamaran cruise today which visits the islands of Cousin, Curieuse and St Pierre. Cousin Island Special Nature Reserve is of particular interest to nature and bird lovers. It provides a true sanctuary for over 52 species of birds and with no predators here they nest on ground level allowing you to walk right amongst them. Birds flourishing here include the Seychelles Warbler, Bridled Terns, Madagascar Fody and the Brown and Lesser Noddy's. The birds nest in huge numbers, with up to 100,000 pairs recorded. After a walk around the island we sail on to Curieuse where we are greeted by giant tortoises who amble freely, close to the waterfront. An hours' walk takes us across boardwalks above the mangrove swamps. Hundreds of large mud crabs scuttle into their holes as we approach. As you walk close to the water's edge listen out for splashing; small sharks and rays are often sighted here. The conditions may be hot and humid but the majority of the walk is flat and in shade. A delicious barbecue lunch is served back on board the catamaran before continuing to St Pierre Island, a pristine snorkelling area with coral, colourful fish and the occasional turtle. Should you choose not travel on this excursion you may like to relax at the hotel or take a local bus to one of the many coves nearby.



**Accommodation: Palm Beach Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 9 - Take the ferry to La Digue

We depart Praslin and take a short fifteen minute ferry journey to laid back La Digue. This island is the smallest of the three on our itinerary and is the epitome of idyllic isolation. It has a real traditional charm about it with tumbledown plantation houses and dusty roads. Arriving here is like stepping back in time. Transport is very closely controlled and the most popular form of travel is by bicycle. The beaches are simply breath-taking and it is a pure photographers dream. The tropical beaches here have provided the backdrop to several well-known advertising campaigns over the years, such as Bacardi Rum & Cadbury's Bounty bars. These too are distinguished by weathered granite boulders that resemble modern pieces of art. The rest of the day is left free for you to explore this beautiful island or enjoy the hospitality and pool area of our characterful chateau hotel.



**Accommodation: Chateau St. Cloud** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 10 - Visit L'Union Estate Coconut Plantation

Our Explore Leader will conduct a walking tour to L'Union Estate, a working coconut plantation. We will be taken through the whole process from the coconut dropping from the tree to producing coconut milk and oil. The plantation sits in a lovely garden setting and the buildings offer great examples of Creole architecture. It is also located close to a succession of stunning beaches. The rest of the day is left free to enjoy this island tropical paradise.



**Accommodation: Chateau St. Cloud** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 11 - Free time to relax or take a snorkelling trip

La Digue is almost completely encircled by a coral reef allowing fantastic opportunities for snorkelling. An optional half day boat excursion to the nearby islands of Moyenne, Cocos and Felicite is available today. Moyenne is a protected reserve once owned by Yorkshire man Brendon Grimshaw. He lived here in blissful solitude and worked to safeguard the future of the giant tortoises. His efforts paid off and there are now over one hundred of these wonderful creatures roaming the island. Should you prefer another option today you could spend your time relaxing or hire a bike from our hotel and cycle around the island.



**Accommodation: Chateau St. Cloud** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 12 - Discover the hidden beaches of La Digue

Today our Explore Leader will take us to three of the most stunning beaches found on the island. These are off the beaten track and so we will enjoy these shores almost to ourselves. The start of the walk takes us past La Digue Vev Reserve. This is home to the Paradise Flycatcher, a bird endemic to La Digue which has quite remarkable colouring. The male is a blackbird with a bright blue bill and blue around its eyes; it appears to be wearing bright blue sunglasses! We will take a walk through here in the hope of spotting it. We then continue towards the beach and after half an hour or so will reach our first beach of the day, Grand Anse. We are greeted by an enormous expanse of white sand, turquoise water and huge boulders jutting from the sea. You may choose to stay put here and enjoy a refreshing drink or you may like to continue further to the second beach, Petit Anse. This walk takes a rocky path, shaded in places, providing glimpses through the vegetation of the incredible blue sea and white sand below. Our third and final beach, Anse Coco, is worth the effort of a further thirty minute walk. This beach not only has the powder sand and crystal waters of the others, it also has a hidden gem. A large secluded rock pool hidden behind a cluster of enormous boulders. It provides the most

perfect swimming spot. The afternoon is quite flexible, you can stay at the beach as long as you wish, relaxing, snorkelling and just taking in this incredible paradise.



**Accommodation: Chateau St. Cloud** (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Swimming pool available



Single room available



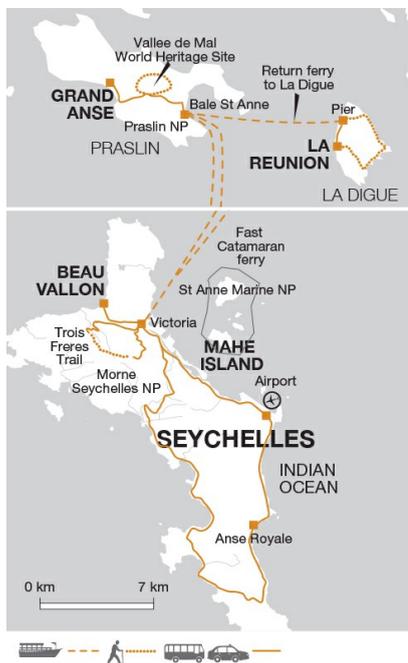
Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 13 - Take the ferry to Mahé Island where the trip ends

We return to Mahe Island by ferry and enjoy our last day in this tropical paradise. Passengers with flights booked directly through Explore have access to our hotel until departure for the airport. So there will be a last chance to enjoy the pool and beach before heading home. Land Only passengers who have booked their own flights will end the tour on arrival in Mahe late morning.



Meals Provided: Breakfast



# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 12



## Transport

Boat  
Minibus



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Boat Crew  
Driver(s)



## Accommodation

8 nights standard guesthouse  
4 nights standard hotel

# Trip information

## Country information

## Seychelles Holidays & Tours

### Climate

The location of the Seychelles, almost directly on the equator, ensures the islands of the Mahé group have a relatively constant climate. Average daytime temperatures range from 24 to 30°C. Relative humidity hovers around 80%. Seasonal winds provide not only refreshment, but also a certain amount of climatic variation. The 'cooler' dry season between May and October is a result of the southeast trade wind. From December until mid-March the northwest monsoon is responsible for warmer, wetter weather. Between these two distinct seasons the islands experience intense heat occasionally aggravated by a complete absence of wind.

### Time difference to GMT

+4

### Plugs

3 Pin Flat

### Religion

Roman Catholic

### Language

Seychellois Creole

## Budgeting and packing

## Optional activities

Mahé Island - Island Tour €40.00-60.00 per person depending on group size; Tea factory tour €2.00 per person; Glass bottom boat trip (including lunch and snorkelling) €105.00 per person. Praslin Island - Full day boat trip including Curieuse Island and lunch €160.00 per person; La Digue Island - Bicycle hire €10.00 per person per day.

## Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight and ideally cotton all year round. Shorts and T-shirts are acceptable everywhere, although take long trousers/skirts for evening wear. Don't forget your swimming costume.

## Footwear

Lightweight walking bootshoes or trainers are useful for exploring the islands. Sandals for relaxing and beachwear.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

One main bag - either a holdall, soft bag or suitcase, plus a daypack. Please remember that you will have to carry your luggage on and off ferries, so try not to overload yourself.

## Equipment

Take a small torch, water bottle, sunglasses, sunhat, suncream, insect repellent, binoculars if planning to birdwatch and a beach towel. Snorkelling opportunities are endless so we strongly recommend you bring your own mask and fins. Bring a lightweight rainjacket just in case.

## Tipping

### Local crew

You should allow €20 for tipping local staff.

## Country Information

### Seychelles Holidays & Tours

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

##### Lunch price

£15

##### Dinner price

£20

##### Beer price

£3

##### Water price

£1.5

#### Foreign Exchange

##### Local currency

Seychelles Rupees.

##### Recommended Currency For Exchange

We suggest you take most of your spending money in cash (in small denominations). Sterling, Euros and US Dollars are all readily convertible. N.B. US\$ notes should be in good condition and not torn or marked. Notes prior to 2000 of any currency are often not accepted.

##### ATM Availability

There are ATMs, which accept major international cards, at the airport and at all the major banks in Victoria. You'll also find ATMs at Beau Vallon on Mahé and on Praslin and La Digue.

##### Credit Card Acceptance

Widely accepted, but the government does impose a levy which is passed on by the retailer, so check first.

##### Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Boat, Minibus

### Accommodation notes

#### Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

We stay in three locally-owned and run guest house/hotels in the Seychelles, which brings money into the hands of local people.

## Essential information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Visa Information

Seychelles: Most nationalities including citizens of the UK, EU, Australia, New Zealand, US and Canada do not require a visa. However, you will need to provide a valid flight ticket, have confirmed accommodation and have sufficient funds for the intended length of stay. Permit will be issued on arrival valid for 1 month.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

### Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

### Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

#### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

#### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Non refundable permits

## Seychelles Holidays & Tours

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, polio and diphtheria. Yellow fever is required if coming from S. America or Africa. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.