



SEYCHELLES

Seychelles



General information about The Seychelles

The Seychelles islands lie nearly 1,000 miles east of mainland East Africa in the Indian Ocean, there are 115 islands in total, many uninhabited. The only international airport is on Mahe, the largest and most populated island, it is near Victoria the capital and the only town of any size. The second largest island is Praslin lying 27 miles north east of Mahe, the island is a popular tourist destination and can be reached by internal flights or fast ferry from Victoria, Mahe. The third largest inhabited island La Digue can be reached by ferry from Praslin and is another popular destination and visitors make use of bike hire to get round the small island.

Unlike other Indian Ocean tropical islands, the Seychelles does not focus on all inclusive hotel resorts and there is a wide range of accommodation meaning that it attracts a wider range of visitor than some other similar places.

The beautiful beaches and the weather may well be the first thing attracting visitors, but in addition the Seychelles are leaders in sustainable tourism and there are great opportunities to see the varied wildlife of the islands. Marine life, bird population and other types of wildlife are



a highlight for many visitors, there are several national parks and marine parks which can be visited. There are of course opportunities for diving, snorkeling and fishing.

Web sites seemed to indicate that Euros were widely used even though ATM's dispense Seychelles Rupees, we found that hotels required to be paid in Euros as did some transfers arranged by hotels but that food and drink in restaurants, cafes and hotels were charged in Seychelles Rupees. Costs were reasonable given how much has to be imported to the islands, there is great fish and seafood and local Creole dishes should be tried.

Mahe

We chose to stay close to Beau Vallon on the north western coast of the island, it is probably the most popular beach area on the island and therefore there is a variety of accommodation types and also restaurants close to the beach. When choosing where to stay you should check whether the beach is affected by seaweed and is suitable for swimming at the time of year you are planning to visit.

Another reason for choosing Beau Vallon is that there is a good local bus network to Victoria, Glacis and other places, the buses are used by many visitors and are cheap costing 5 Seychelles Rupees for any journey, around 25p. Many visitors of course hire cars but some of the roads particularly across the centre of the island are scary drives.



Praslin

Cote D'Or is the stunning beach area around the bay of Anse Volbert, we chose to stay there as it has more choice in restaurants within walking distance of most of the accommodation than other beaches on the island. The beach is stunning and looks over to some of the smaller islands that can be visited on organised trips. There is also a good local bus service with which you can visit other beaches. Again you need to choose your area carefully checking on weather and seaweed conditions for your visit as we saw beaches on the other side of the island which were not suitable for swimming. The island has the Valle de Mai nature reserve and UNESCO heritage site in the middle of the island home to the Coco de Mer palm and various species of wildlife which can be reached by bus

Hotels in The Seychelles

Mahe – Beau Vallon

Check out the usual booking sites such as www.booking.com or www.hotels.com, we chose to stay at Jessie's Guest House, the accommodation is simple but adequate and the owner and staff very friendly. The walk to the beach area for restaurants etc. is not great at night and if we returned we would look for somewhere nearer.

Praslin – Cote D’Or

Check out the usual booking sites such as www.booking.com or www.hotels.com, we chose L'Hirondelle www.hirondelle-seychelles.com and were delighted with our choice. The self catering apartments are beautifully appointed, the staff lovely and the location overlooking the beach was fabulous.

Restaurants & Bars

Mahe – Beau Vallon

There are a number of good eating places near the beach and also a couple of good places for a drink during the day or at dinner. There is also an area of stalls close to the beach some of which do grilled fish and other meals to take away although a couple of places have some stools and tables, Wednesday and Saturday are the main days for these places.

Le Perle Noir, stands out for both food and service, although not on the beach the garden terrace is a lovely setting and booking is essential. All the dishes we tried were excellent, the owners, two Italian brothers from Milan, are delightful and make a point of talking to the customers. The complimentary limoncello or grappa at the end of the meal rounds of a lovely evening. It is reasonably priced for the quality.

La Plage has the best setting on the

beach and is a good place for either a light lunch or the full dinner menu. There is also a bar area although anyone just popping in for a drink usually managed to get a table on the main terrace. The food both at lunch and dinner was good and there was a wide choice of dishes.

The Boat House, was our favourite place for a drink, there is a restaurant, café, gallery and a recently opened spa. The bar area comprises seat around a boat shaped bar and attracted both visitors and locals with a wide range of drinks. Dominic one of the owners is a great guy and made us feel welcome when we visited. They offer light lunch dishes and a buffet in the evening which seemed popular.

La Fontaine, is close to the Boat House and is a popular place for a pizza, they do other dishes but pizzas are the thing which can mean when it is busy that the service can be slow, The pizzas are however good and reasonably priced, we also tried a couple of pasta dishes which were of decent quality.

Mahek Indian Restaurant is part of the Coral Strand resort, we shared some small dishes and thoroughly enjoyed the food. The prices for the main dishes are on the high side but it is worth a visit.

Gecko is part of the Savoy Resort and it's setting overlooking the beach is lovely, they offer two margaritas for the price of one in the early evening and sipping mango or passion fruit drinks and watching the sun set is great. The service is very good and we tried some small

dishes at lunch time which were good.

Mahe – Victoria

Taste of Italy, Market Street, was a real find they offer a fantastic range of made to order sandwiches, pastas and ice creams as well as a variety of drinks. The lovely manager/owner from Naples is charming, excellent value and quality.

Market Restaurant, first floor of the main market seemed like a good place to try and they offer a buffet which may have been a better option as the a la carte dishes were overpriced for the size and quality.

Praslin – Cote D'Or

Les Lauriers offers a Buffet BBQ dinner at a set price and it is outstanding, the salad options to start are great, smoked fish, palm heart, at least a dozen different dishes and also soup. The main event the BBQ produced some of the best fish and meat dishes tasted during our whole holiday, tuna, job fish, sail fish, barracuda were all excellent, the tender beef was fabulous. There is ice cream and another option such as cheesecake or fruit salad to follow. The owners and staff are excellent hosts and this was so good we returned for a second night.

Le Pirogue has a lovely terrace which requires booking to secure a table, the service is friendly and they have a large choice of dishes. The quality of the cooking was variable and this seems to be reflected in the reviews.

Da Luca seems slightly out of place with its modern design but we thoroughly enjoyed the food and some dishes were very good indeed, the crab and prawn ravioli was very good as was a squid ink tagliolini with baby octopus, other were good though not outstanding but overall we thoroughly enjoyed eating there and also popping in for an ice cream after eating elsewhere.

La Goulue is a homely friendly place offering simple local dishes, the curry dishes were good, the staff are pleasant and it is definitely worth a visit. The layout of the tables is slightly awkward as those for two people mainly have a large pillar in the centre and the lighting is a bit harsh but decent food at a reasonable price.

Village du Pecheur is a hotel on the beach which has a rather cool design inside but needs someone to give it a wake up. We had lunch and the setting is lovely but the service is poor, the prices unlike most places exclude both tax and service. Although there were not many choices in Cote D'Or we were not tempted to return.

Drink

Seybrew, local beer is a larger type beer and is very popular and great in the heat after a swim or a long beach walk, available in shops and bars in bottles and also in some places on draft. There are some other local beers including Eku but Seybrew is the most popular.

Wine is obviously imported and French, Italian and South African varieties are

readily available in restaurants, bars and shops, the prices are reasonable given the cost of transporting things around the islands. Many restaurants offer wine by the carafe which is usually perfectly acceptable and very reasonably priced.

Beach holidays such as the Seychelles also means cocktails and most places offer a wide selection, many made with the local rum Takamaka which is also available as a coconut variety, well worth trying.

Culture

Mahe

Since most people visit for the beaches then visiting some of the dozens on the island is a must. Victoria the largest town is worth a visit for souvenir shopping in the central market. There are various boat trips on offer, make sure you book through a reliable operator.

Praslin

Praslin is a great base for visiting other islands including Le Digue, there are many people offering boat trips but book through your hotel or through a reliable operator. Barracuda owned by Edwin the owner of Les Lauriers offers various boat trips and big game fishing.

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