

ELITE

TRAVELER

SUPERYACHTS

FALL/WINTER 2014/15



PURE PERFECTION

The Seychelles are not just for honeymooners—they are an aquatic playground for superyachts, too. Dip your toes into their waters and discover the ultimate island adventure.

BY MIRIAM CAIN



LEMURIA RESORT / SEYCHELLES

A drift in the Indian Ocean, the 115 postcard-perfect islands that make up the Seychelles are the perfect cruising ground for an alternative charter. Split into two groups, the Inner Islands consist of 40-plus granite islands clustered around the capital island of Mahé, while the Outer Islands are formed of low-lying coral and, due to their outlying locations, are relatively deserted.

The Inner Islands of the Seychelles are ideal for family charters. Through the eyes of a child, a cruise through the archipelago is the ultimate tropical island adventure. Here, even the smallest natural wonder—a flying fish, say—is mesmerizing. You will find less in the way of watersports and shore-side activities than the ever-popular cruising grounds of the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, but that’s what makes the Seychelles so appealing. The emphasis is on exploring to locations where you will often be the only vessel in the area. The following itinerary takes you from the capital of Mahé to the main outposts of Praslin and La Digue, through marine national parks, and ashore to a host of exclusive resorts on private islands.

DAYS 1 & 2

MAHÉ

On arrival in Mahé many visitors will head straight to the outlying islands, but for those with a few days to spare, Mahé itself has some of the archipelago’s best beaches and plenty of culture ashore. It also has some world-class resort hotels like the Banyan Tree, the Four Seasons, and Maia.

Mahé is the capital of the archipelago and life here revolves around the capital city of Victoria. Here you will find daily markets and the island’s Botanical gardens—the latter offering a perfect introduction to the islands’ flora and fauna. Once you’re acclimated to the pace of life, explore further inland. Track down insect-eating pitcher plants in **Morne Seychellois National Park** and watch white-tailed tropic birds as they swirl above the island’s forest-clad mountains. For a taste of the real Seychelles, sample spices and fruits at **Le Jardin du Roi**—a plantation-style highland retreat offering cool respite from the heat.

Mahé also has two superyacht marinas, the **Wharf Hotel & Marina** and **Eden Island Marina**, as well as a commercial quayside where superyachts can berth in the inner harbor. Step aboard your yacht in the marina and familiarize yourself with the new surroundings on board as your yacht cruises to **Marine National Park**, a small group of islands just off Mahé that are perfect for swimming, snorkeling, and a picnic lunch ashore.

Don’t Miss

The restaurant at Le Jardin du Roi is one of the best Creole restaurants on the island with spectacular views over the turquoise waters below. Try bananas stewed in cinnamon flavoured coconut milk or steamed red snapper wrapped in banana leaves and coated in spices from the gardens.

Contact: Proprietor Micheline Georges, [248] 437-1313; brymich@seychelles.net; www.seychelles.travel

DAY 3

MAHÉ TO PRASLIN

| 23 NAUTICAL MILES |

A few hours northeast is the popular island of Praslin. Anchor off Anse Lazio (one of the world’s most photographed beaches) and snorkel amongst the large granite boulders that are scattered along the shoreline. Lunch at **Bonbon Plume**, a small, secluded restaurant on Anse Lazio offering traditional Creole cuisine. Those looking to stretch their legs with a round of golf should head to the **Lemuria Resort**, which features an 18-hole championship golf course.

Contact: Golf Manager Gary Pouponneau, [248] 428-1230; golf@lemuriaresort.com; www.lemuriareort.constancehotels.com

Don’t Miss

Take the tender ashore to discover the famous pelvic-shaped coco-de-mer palm, which grows in the **Valée de Mai**—a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



LEMURIA GOLF COURSE / LEMURIA RESORT



FRÉGATE ISLAND / SEYCHELLES

DAYS 4 & 5
PRASLIN TO LA DIGUE
| 4 NAUTICAL MILES |

Praslin has a number of satellite islands including the twin islands Cousin and Cousine. The islands were heavily cultivated for their spices and coconuts by the French, which severely depleted the diverse populations of indigenous birds and other native species of wildlife, flora, and fauna. Cousine is currently being restored to its primal state with the planting of indigenous trees and the re-introduction of endangered wildlife, including magpie robins and giant tortoises. As you cruise past you will notice both a distinct lack of palm trees (they are not indigenous to the islands) and an abundance of birdlife as the island seeks to return to its original ecological state. An example of the finished result can be seen towards the end of your itinerary on Frégate Island, which has already been through the conservation process.

Just a few miles south of Praslin lies the small island of La Digue. Spend the afternoon discovering the nine miles of stunning coastline, including another of the world’s most photographed beaches—the scallop-edged shoreline of the much-hyped Anse Source d’Argent. Accessible only by tender or bicycle, the nearby reef means the calm waters that lap the shoreline are great for families. Don your flippers and mask and swim with the turtles.

Don’t Miss

Cycle through the island’s interior to the bird sanctuary, and try to catch a glimpse of the Black Paradise Flycatcher—one of the rarest birds in the world.

DAYS 6 & 7
LA DIGUE TO FRÉGATE ISLAND
| 15 NAUTICAL MILES |

Lying to the east of the Inner Island archipelago is Frégate Island. Home to the Seychelles’ original luxury eco-hideaway, **Fregate Island Private**, the island is worth a visit to witness the success of its conservation program, which began in the 1980s and has since involved the planting of over 75,000 trees. The island has a number of jungle walks leading to vast granite outcrops with spectacular views. Wander in the company of soaring birds, including the endangered magpie robin, and native animals, such as the giant Aldabra tortoise. Almost 50 percent of land in the Seychelles is given over to conservation zones and nature reserves, and the Seychellois government has adopted a concept of ‘tourism with a conscience’, which is a global inspiration when it comes to eco travel.

Don’t Miss

Enjoy a treatment at Fregate’s **Rock Spa** and dinner at the **Plantation House** restaurant.

Contact: *Costumer Service*, 49-7221-900-8071; spa@fregate.com.
Restaurant Manager Diego Guerreshi, [248] 262-0503; d.guerreschi@fregate.com; www.fregate.com



WHITE-SAND WOW / FRÉGATE ISLAND



WILDLIFE ADVENTURE / SEYCHELLES



TURQUOISE VISTAS / FRÉGATE ISLAND



REEF DIVING / EXUMA



YACHT TOYS / EXUMA

DESROCHES ISLAND

The diving in the Seychelles is of the highest quality, with an underwater visibility of up to 130 feet between November and April. There are myriad of dive sites around the archipelago where you will see reef sharks, turtles, shoals of jackfish, wrasse, eagle rays, and, during the right season, migrating whales, sharks, and manta rays. The Outer Islands, however, are the best for diving enthusiasts, with Desroches Island providing the perfect base camp.

Contact: General Manager Wicus Prinsloo, (248) 422-9003; gmi@desroches-island.com; www.desroches-island.com

EXUMA

The 120-foot Exuma is available for charter from \$65,000 a week for up to eight guests.

Contact: Charter Broker Tove Johnson at Fraser Yachts, 377-93-100-490; charter@fraseryachts.com; www.fraseryachts.com

PRINCESS K

The 131-foot Princess K is available for charter from \$135,000 a week for up to 12 guests.

Contact: Charter Broker Pierre Hurel at Camper & Nicholson's International, 377-97-97-77-00; phurel@camperandnicholsons.com; www.camperandnicholsons.com

RED DRAGON

The 170-foot Red Dragon is available for charter from \$240,000 a week for up to 10 guests.

Contact: Charter Broker Claire van der Vorm at Cecil Wright, 44-20-7408-1001; claire@cecilwright.com; www.cecilwright.com



SUMPTUOUS QUARTERS / RED DRAGON



ON-DECK OPULENCE / EXUMA



RED DRAGON

PRINCESS K





NORTH ISLAND / SEYCHELLES

DAY 8
FRÉGATE ISLAND TO FELICITÉ & THE SISTERS
| 17 NAUTICAL MILES |

Head west again for a peaceful anchorage at Felicité, one of the small islands encircling La Digue. Between the small islands of Mariana, Grand Soeur, and Felicité are a handful of large granite boulders and reefs that have become the most renowned spots for snorkeling in the entire archipelago. Snorkel hand-in-hand, floating over seagrass meadows and giant wrasse. Afterwards, step ashore and discover a wealth of flora and fauna, including delicate orchids and hibiscus flowers amidst thousands of coconut palms.

Don't Miss

Scheduled to open in 2015, **Six Senses Zil Pasyon** will be located on the northern side of Felicité and will be an exclusive resort with just 30 villas and 17 private residences, all with private pools. The resort will include two restaurants, a bar, and a Six Senses Spa. The hub of the resort will be the large marina and superyacht guests will be actively welcomed on shore.

DAY 9
THE SISTERS TO ARIDE ISLAND TO NORTH ISLAND
| 42 NAUTICAL MILES |

Cruise northwest towards the exclusive island resort of **North Island**. Following in the footsteps of Frégate, North Island is another conservation-oriented resort endeavouring to rewind the ecological clock. It is also where you will find the luxury island retreat known for its celebrity guest list. With only a handful of villas and four perfect beaches, North Island has become one of the most desired destinations for those looking for the ultimate in privacy. Step ashore and enjoy a sunset cocktail and meal at the rustic open-air restaurant amid old Takamaka tree trunk tables and chairs.

DAY 10
NORTH ISLAND TO SILHOUETTE ISLAND TO MAHÉ
| 16 NAUTICAL MILES |

Cruise back towards Mahé and anchor off Silhouette Island. Take the tender ashore to discover the island's volcanic terrain. Silhouette Island is the third largest of the Seychelles but limited access due to coral reefs that surround the island has left it undeveloped. There are guided walks up the steep slopes of the mountain for those interested in ancient forests and their indigenous species.

Following an afternoon of discovery, disembark in Mahé and spend a few days ashore gently re-acclimating to 21st century life. For an extended itinerary take an internal flight to Desroches Island in the Outer Island archipelago and discover the Aldabra, the Earth's second-largest coral atoll, a World Heritage site and home to the Aldabra giant tortoise.



EXOTIC EXPLORATION / SEYCHELLES



SWIMMING WITH SEA TURTLES / SEYCHELLES