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# Mauritius Tourist Attractions

## Mauritius Botanical Garden

**The island is also known as The Star and Key of the Indian Ocean because of its geographical position, and a local nickname is The Island of Rainbows and Shooting Stars.**

Mauritius Botanical Garden, also known as Pamplemousses Garden and SSR Botanical Garden, is one of the most popular tourist attraction in Mauritius, and is located near Port Louis. It is the oldest botanical garden in the Southern Hemisphere.



The spectacular garden was built by Pierre Poivre in 1767, and covers an area of around 37 hectares. The botanical garden is most famous for its giant water lilies, spice garden and unique collection of 85 varieties of palms from Central America, Asia, Africa and the islands around the Indian Ocean.

## Black River Gorges National Park

Black River Gorges National Park is a national park stretching on an area of 6,574 hectares in the hilly south-western part of Mauritius.

It was construction in Mauritius Black River Gorges Nature Reserveorder to save the natural vegetation of the island and make it one of the most important Mauritius sightseeing. One can walk along the greenery and reach the highest point of the island, which is the Black River Peak.

Facilities for visitors include two information centres, picnic areas and 60 kilometers of trails.

The Black River Gorges National park protects most of the island's remaining rainforest, and is home to many species of wild animals and birds.

Many endemic plants and animals can be found in the park including the Mauritian flying fox, Mauritius kestrel, pink pigeon, Mauritius parakeet, Mauritius cuckoo-shrike, Mauritius bulbul, Mauritius olive white-eye, Mauritius grey white-eye and Mauritius fody.

## Île aux Cerfs Island

Île aux Cerfs Island, known in English as the deer island is an island near the east coast of Mauritius in the Flacq district. Ile Aux Cerfs is famous for its sandy beaches, beautiful lagoon and big selection of activities and facilities. In Ile Aux Cerfs you are sure to have a day of relaxation and fun on one of the picture-postcard beaches, and to enjoy a swim and snorkeling in the lagoon. This paradise island of Mauritius constitutes of around 100 hectares of land. Nowadays there are no more deers on the island, but you will find there some of the worlds beautiful beaches and as such it is one of the must place to visit and see in Mauritius.



## Port Louis

Port Louis is the capital city and main port of Mauritius, Port Louis was constructed in the year 1735 by the noted French governor, Mahe de Labourdonnais. Today Port Louis is the largest city in Mauritius.

Port Louis is surrounded by a mountain range, called the Port Louis Moka Range which makes it worth watching.Mauritius Capital Port Louis Port Louis has conserved many historic and colonial buildings through the years. One of them is a fortification named Fort Adelaide or La Citadelle, built by the British in 1835.

The latter dominates the city. The main tourist attractions in Port Louis include the Caudan Waterfront, Port Louis Bazaar, Police Barracks, the Mauritian Chinatown and the old Port Louis theatre. The capital has also three museums which are: the Blue Penny Museum, the Mauritius Natural History Museum and the Mauritius Stamp Museum. Also, the biggest and oldest post office in Mauritius is found in Port Louis near the Caudan Waterfront. At the city center there are number of French styled buildings, which enhances the charm of Port Louis. Port Louis is definitely a must place to see and visit during your visit to Mauritius.

## Grand Bassin

Grand Bassin, known also as Ganga Talao is a lake situated in a secluded mountain area in the district of Savanne, deep in the heart of Mauritius. It is about 600 meters above sea level.



Figure 1

The Grand Bassin is a holy lake for Mauritian of Hindu faith. It is said that the water inside the lake communicates with the waters of the holy Ganges of India. The Hindus of Mauritius declared the Grand Bassin as a Holy lake.

The Hindu community performs there a pilgrimage every year on the Maha Sivaratri/“Siva’s Great Night”, on this day they honor the Lord Siva. Beside the lake there a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva and other Gods including Hanuman and Lakshmi. Also, overlooking the lake is the statue of Mangal Mahadev (Shiva statue) which is of 33 meters, making it the highest statue in Mauritius.

## Trou aux Cerfs

Trou aux Cerfs is a 605 m high extinct volcano located in Curepipe, Mauritius. The crater has been alternately described as 300 meters in diameter, and is 85 meters deep.



Figure 2

Trou aux Cerfs is considered the main attractions of Curepipe. In the center of the crater there is a small lake. From the view point on the crater you will have a spectacular view of major part of Mauritius Island. The volcano is considered as a dormant volcano, which has been formed millions of years ago and was active until 600,000 to 700,000 years ago.

## Ile aux Aigrettes

Ile aux Aigrettes is a tiny coral island (25 hectares) just off the coast of the town of Mahebourg.



Figure 3

The island has been declared a nature conservation site and today is being preserved by the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation.

Owing to the remarkable work accomplished by the Mauritius Wildlife Fund, the island has become an international standard for the protection of natural resources and endangered species.

A few of the world’s rarest birds, including the kestrel, can be seen there.

You can also discover the extremely rare Pink Pigeon, the Green Gecko Phelsuma and the Aldabra giant tortoise.

Some of the plants found in Ile aux Aigrettes grow nowhere else in the world and they form the last remnant of a coastal forest that once surrounded much of Mauritius.

Eighteen Mauritian plant species which grow on the island are classified as endangered or very rare.

## Gabriel Island

Gabriel Island, known also as Îlot Gabriel, is located near the Round Island and the Flat island, at the extreme north of Mauritius, about 10 kilometers north of Cap Malheureux. The distance between Gabriel Island and Flat Island is only 750 meters. The size of the island is 42 hectares and the highest point is of 28 meters.



Figure 4

Gabriel Island is a protected natural reserve and is most famous for if its beautiful unspoiled beaches, with crystal clear water surrounding the entire island. It is a very popular site for snorkeling, it offers great dive sites, and is the ideal destination for a day of relaxation on the beach.

## Eureka Creole House

Eureka House is a unique Creole house built in 1830 in a magnificent garden surrounded by waterfalls of Moka River and the Moka Range.



Figure 5

Eureka House is reputed to be one of the largest houses on the island, with 109 doors and windows. The Eureka house was restored and opened to the public as a museum in 1986. The museum has areas dedicated to music, art, antique maps, Chinese and Indian house wares and quirky contraptions like a colonial-era shower.

## Most famous Waterfalls in Mauritius

* Chamarel waterfalls
* Alexandra waterfalls
* Tamarind waterfalls
* Rochester waterfalls
* Exil waterfalls

## Additional Tourist Attractions in Mauritius and Sights worth visit include

**Balaclava Ruins** - few meters away from Baie aux Tortues, can be found the ruins of the old Balaclava estate. Visitors will be able to see the sea walls, whose initial foundations were laid down by Mahé de Labourdonnais.

**Flacq Market** - Flacq is one of the most important villages in Mauritius. This meeting point for inhabitants of the East Mauritius, boasts the country’s largest open air market. The extremely colorful market attracts a large number of people.

**Mahebourg** - Mahébourg is one of the main fishing villages on the island. Built on the magnificent Grand Port Bay it was founded in. The main attraction of the city is the Monday markets which are one of the biggest and best on the island and can be found right next to the main bus station, and the Mahebourg waterfront area.

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