

MAURITIUS

Mauritius is a small mountainous island in the Indian Ocean to the east of the African continent. Mauritius has a coastline of around 150km in length and is located 500 miles from the island, Madagascar. The island was created by volcanic activity more than 8 million years ago. There are many beautiful scenic waterfalls especially in the south west of the island along with sugar-white beaches and aquamarine lagoons!



CAPITAL: Port Louis is the capital city of Mauritius. It is the most popular city with roughly 150,000 residents.

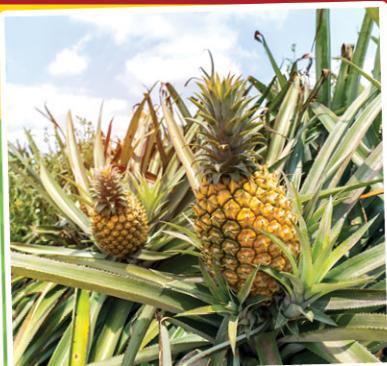
POPULATION: An estimated 1.2 million people live on the small island of Mauritius



CULTURE: Mauritians are warm, friendly and welcoming people. The Mauritian people form a multiethnic society which means they are mainly of mixed races. Mauritians have ancestors of Asian, Indian, French, British and Chinese backgrounds. Most Mauritian people are descendants from India and are referred to as Indo-Mauritians.

LANGUAGE: French, English and Creole are the main languages spoken in Mauritius. English is considered by many as the main language, however newspapers, TV and radio news are mainly spoken in French. In fact, most people only speak Mauritian Creole at home.

NATIONAL ANIMAL: The legendary extinct 'Dodo' bird is the island's national animal. Dodo birds couldn't fly due to their small wings, but they could certainly run!



PRODUCE: Sugarcane is the main farming product in Mauritius. Pineapple plantations can also be seen all over the island. Traditional Mauritian cuisine contains: fresh vegetables, fruits and fish. The cuisine is well known for its freshness and exotic spices.



RELIGION & TRADITIONS: Almost half of the Mauritian population practise Hinduism, other main religions are Roman Catholicism and Islam. Mauritians love to celebrate their religious traditions and also are famous for their love of dancing 'The Sega'. The Sega is a dance which originated from the ritual music of Madagascar and the mainland of Africa, and it is the Musical Expression of the Mauritian Way of Life: Joy and Liveliness! The Sega is traditionally sung in Creole.

THE COLOURFUL NATIONAL FLAG OF MAURITIUS: Also known as "The Four Bands" the national flag consists of red, blue, yellow and green bands representing a different meaning for each colour:

RED: Self-determination and independence

BLUE: The Indian Ocean surrounding the island

YELLOW: The new light of independence shining and the bright future

GREEN: The beautiful vegetation of the island