

Life hacks



Travel, food, fitness... Because your Instagram feed won't fill itself

BEACH, please

Pssst! Discover the secret winter getaway the

celebs don't want you to know about...

If, like us, you're feeling reluctant to dig out your winter warmers after the hottest summer we can remember, then maybe it's time to book in a holiday before you put your flip-flops away for good. From September, Mauritius becomes one of the go-to destinations for famous folk looking to escape the chill – including Prince Harry, Gwyneth Paltrow and Kylie Minogue – so we took a trip to the sun-drenched island to find out what else it has to offer.

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Binky Felstead and JP are fans of the island



Stay

Feel the sand between your toes from the minute you step into the hotel reception at the 4-star Veranda Pointe aux Biches resort (Veranda-resorts.com), where rooms start from £84 per person, per night, based on bed & breakfast. An all-inclusive option is also available. If you want to bring the little ones, they have a great family-friendly atmosphere with a private beach and lagoon, and offer a variety of complimentary watersports and beach activities for everyone to enjoy. But if you're after some one-on-one time with your bae, the resort

Views from the restaurant



A perfect place to chill



also has an adults-only area with sea-view rooms and a separate bar, restaurant and idyllic infinity pool – perfect for all of those Insta-snaps. Also, don't miss the Seven Colours Wellness Lounge, and book in for a massage in one of the secluded spa cabins that overlook the beach, so you can de-stress to the sounds of the sea.

**RESET YOUR
SCREENSAVER**

The world's most gorgeous beaches to save as your wallpaper and get you through the rainy months...



EAGLE BEACH, ARUBA

Two stunning fofoti trees perch unapologetically on the white sands, making it the perfect spot to stare at when you should be doing spreadsheets.



ONEFOOT ISLAND, COOK ISLANDS

It's the kind of place you'd imagine as a kid when asked to draw a desert island - we'd happily stay shipwrecked here.



ELAFONISSI BEACH, GREECE

When the sun shines on the water here, it makes the pink-tinted sand sparkle. The levels of beauty at this beach are ridiculously high.



REYNISFJARA BEACH, ICELAND

Prefer a dramatic coastline? The basalt columns and moody atmosphere are straight out of a Game Of Thrones episode.

Relax

Take a break from laying on your sun lounger and unwind on a catamaran instead. We took a trip on the "Deep Into The Blue" catamaran, departing from the Veranda Paul et Virginie hotel, which took us to explore the Ilot Bernaches mangroves for a dip in the crystal-clear waters and a wander in paradise on the deserted Bernache Island. The crew have everything covered, so you'll be able to sit back, relax and pretend you're J-Lo while being treated to an on-board barbecue lunch and well-stocked bar. They even have snorkel gear available to borrow, and are happy to stop off at nearby reefs if you fancy checking out the vast tropical marine life that thrives in the island's irresistibly clear, calm waters.



The stunning Temple de Triolet



See

Pay a visit to the biggest and oldest Hindu temple on the island, Temple de Triolet (aka Maheswarnath Mandir), for an afternoon of culture. Founded in 1888, it's over 120 years old and houses statues of Hindu gods and goddesses inside the intricately decorated dome. You can reach the colourful temple via a cycling tour from Veranda Pointe aux Biches (approx. £5.53 per person), which takes you on a gentle ride through

local villages. It also includes a stop at the incredible Mon Choisy beach, where the lush forest meets crisp white sands and the most beautifully clear and turquoise seas we've ever seen. For those looking for some peace and quiet, Mon Choisy is a must as it stretches for two kilometres without a single touristy bar, restaurant or hotel in sight. Pack a picnic or stop by one of the local street food vendors to pick up a bite to eat.



Myleene stays Klassy

WORDS: LAURA MARTINDALE

"How spicy?"



Eat

What better way to explore the capital city of Port Louis than with a street food walking tour to sample the local cuisine? Try a tasting experience with Taste Buddies (*Tastebuddies.mu*), which not only includes several ridiculously delicious food stops, but also takes you to various places around the city to learn about Mauritian history and culture. We couldn't get enough of the traditional Mauritian napolitaines, which are shortbread cookies sandwiched with jam and covered in sugar icing. But if you really can't drag yourself away from the white sands and turquoise seas, then a beach-front cooking class at Veranda Pointe aux Biches resort (costing around £13.25 per person) will make you feel like you're filming your own travel cookery show. We each had our own individual barbecue cooking stations, complete with chef's whites, and learnt how to cook a traditional Mauritian prawn curry with fresh ingredients - spice levels optional!

Plenty of flavour



Drink

Forget the Keke Challenge. Get a bit of dutch courage to try your hand at traditional sega dancing by sampling some Mauritian rum. A local told us that it's good luck to drink rum after your evening meal, however anything less than five shots is considered unlucky! Many of the home-made rums are produced using sugarcane from the island, and then infused with passion fruit, coconut, pineapple, banana or even chilli, so they are a lot more palatable than a shot of Captain Morgan's down the pub. It's a definite must-try, even for those who don't usually drink the beverage, or just pop a bottle in your suitcase for your rum-drinking pals back home.



Cheers!

Bring on the food envy



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