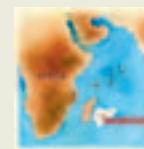


Mauritius



DUE to celebrate the 40th anniversary of its independence next year, the island of Mauritius can look back with satisfaction on four decades during which it has transformed itself from a poor country to one of Africa's richest, most developed nations.

A tropical paradise located in the Indian Ocean, 1,200 miles off the southeastern coast of Africa, the island has an international reputation as a high-end tourism destination. Currently playing host to around 930,000 visitors per year, its ambition is to attract two million per year. Sugar, textiles and financial services are the other pillars upon which Mauritius has built its economic success. Per capita income has risen from \$260 in 1968 to \$5,214.

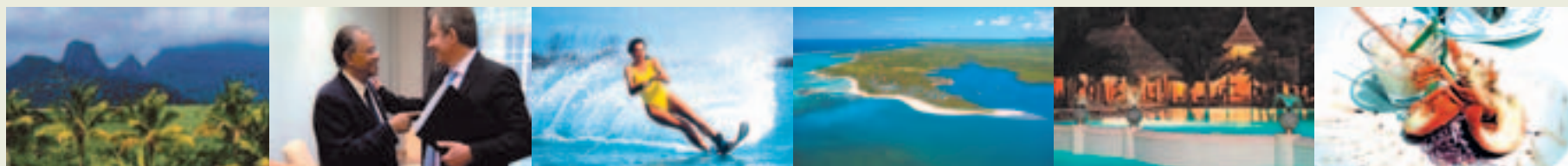
As the preferential trade benefits that the island has enjoyed come to an end, however, Mauritius is seeking to boost its economy by reinforcing its traditional strengths

Becoming a centre of excellence

and developing more knowledge and skills based activities. "We need to look at things from a different perspective and to develop other pillars of the economy in addition to the existing ones," says Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam. Particularly promising is the ICT sector, where there is rapid expansion of call

centres and business process outsourcing. Other growth areas include the seafood industry, the healthcare and biomedical industry and property development.

Mr Ramgoolam's aim is to turn Mauritius into a regional centre of excellence, a value-added services hub for Africa and India. The economy is forecast to grow by around 5.5 per cent this year and the island is ranked by the World Bank as one of the top countries for doing business. Finance Minister Rama Sithanen says: "There are a number of incentives being offered to international companies that come and invest here."



A life of luxury on a paradise island

A unique holiday destination of idyllic allure, Mauritius offers its visitors some of the highest quality hotels in the world

Nestling on a 60-acre private peninsula in a paradisiacal setting of coconut palms, white sands and the blue Indian Ocean, Le Saint Géran is often featured on lists of the world's best resort hotels. When they have had enough of the simple pleasures of the beach or sea, guests can play a round on the golf course, designed by Gary Player, be pampered in the Givenchy health and beauty spa or sample the delights of top chef Alain Ducasse's gourmet restaurant. In the evening, they can gamble at the resort's own casino.

Similar pleasures are to be found at Le Touessrok, a luxurious shoreline village resort in Mediterranean style, situated on the east coast. Here the golf course, designed by Bernhard Langer, is just a short boat ride across the lagoon to the Ile aux Cerfs, while five minutes away is the resort's retreat island, Ilot Mangénie.

Owned by Sun Resorts, the second largest hotel group operating on Mauritius, both Le Saint Géran and Le Touess-

rok are managed by Kerzner International under its deluxe One&Only brand. Kerzner owns 20 per cent of Sun Resorts and also manages its other three hotels on the island.

Arnaud Martin, Commercial Director of One&Only, agrees with Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam that Mauri-

tius has the capacity, socially and physically, to cater for two million visitors a year. "I personally think that the target of two million tourists will be attained in the medium term," he says.

Mauritius is a safe, high security destination, and probably one of the best islands in the world in terms of the quality of its hotels. It also has a good airport and excellent roads and telecommunications. The government is drawing up a new strategic plan for tourism aimed at achieving an annual growth rate of 10 per cent.

Mr Martin describes the island as a quality destination with many interesting things to offer its visitors. Above all, it is an exceptional destination because of its inhabitants, he says. "Mauritius is probably the most cosmopolitan island under the sun, with a rich cultural diversi-

ty, and this is reflected in the delivery of our service. The island enjoys a high literacy rate. Most of the people are fluent in both English and French and can communicate easily with Europeans."

Being a long haul destination far away from its source markets can be an advantage, he adds, as the island is able to offer its visitors a unique experience. "Most of the flights that come to Mauritius are night-flights and this suits our customers. Since we have little time difference for those coming from Europe, there is practically no jet-lag."

Mr Martin is keen to attract more British visitors. He says: "We are doing everything within our means to attract more British tourists to our hotels. Presently more than 30 per cent of our clientele is British and they are the biggest spenders."

"The British customer feels at home in Mauritius and we are well known for the quality of our food and the high level of our service delivery. For us, the most important asset is to ensure that there is an excellent delivery to our customer's needs and wants."

He says there is still plenty of scope for development at the One&Only resorts. "For instance, at Le Touessrok, we still have plenty of land that can be developed; we recently added three luxury villas."

"We have achieved a lot during the last few years," he adds. "We are consolidating our position as a leading hotel investor, not only in Mauritius but in the region."



ARNAUD MARTIN
Commercial Director of One&Only



Left: The charming and luxurious hotels fit right in with the landscape
Right: World-class golfing is just one of many activities available on this tropical island



One&Only

A delicious dilemma:
Barlen's Watermelon Coolers
at *One&Only* Le Touessrok
or Vinod's Mojitos at
One&Only Le Saint Géran?

Book into either of the unique *One&Only* resorts in Mauritius and enjoy the advantages of both, including golf at renowned courses designed by Bernhard Langer and Gary Player, a wide range of exquisite dining experiences, outstanding sports facilities and of course the best bartenders on the island.

One&Only Le Saint Géran and One&Only Le Touessrok are part of a portfolio of resorts, each distinctive and memorable, in The Bahamas, Dubai, Maldives, Mauritius and Mexico.

To book, contact your travel professional, email Info@oneandonlyresorts.mu, visit oneandonlyresorts.com or for a brochure call +44 (0)870 464 1005.