

PRESS KIT

FRENCH OVERSEAS TERRITORIES: SEVEN JOURNEYS IN THE HEART OF BIODIVERSITY

**A T O U T
F R A N C E**
Agence de développement
touristique de la France


**MINISTÈRE
DES OUTRE-MER**
*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

A WORD FROM ATOUT FRANCE

Following more than a year and, still, a fragile business environment, it's essential to support the French Overseas Territories severely impacted by the COVID-19 sanitary crisis.

The overseas territories are a source of diversity with a mixture of French and European culture, reflected in all aspects of health and safety, combined with a touch of exoticism expressed by the strong and often ancestral local culture.

The French Overseas Territories harbour a wealth of biodiversity spanning all over the planet. These territories are home to more than 13,000 endemic species, five areas of biodiversity listed as world heritage, and unique skills that are also recognized worldwide, such as the art of tattooing in French Polynesia.

This unprecedented crisis might have allowed us to refocus on the basics and to consider tourist destinations with a different perspective, enabling us to move forward and prepare the future of travelling with the aim of achieving greater sustainability and genuine connection with the inhabitants who are proud and respectful of their ecosystems and traditions.

MAP	4
INTRODUCTION	6
MARTINIQUE	8
GUADELOUPE	12
GUYANE	16
SAINT-MARTIN	20
FRENCH GUIANA	24
NEW CALEDONIA	28
THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI	32
USEFUL INFORMATION	36

FLIGHT TIMES TO FRENCH OVERSEAS TERRITORIES



FRENCH OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

SEVEN JOURNEYS IN THE HEART OF BIODIVERSITY

France is the world's leading tourist destination and its overseas territories offer diverse experiences in the four corners of the world.

These destinations delight tourists, who take advantage of their year-round sunshine, natural and cultural assets, and, despite being far from France, "French touch". Visitors are also reassured by the health and safety structure and transport systems that meet European standards. The great variety and diversity of each of these territories are major strengths.

This dossier invites you to discover French Overseas Territories via seven destinations that are exceptional for both their biodiversity and their preservation of their unique natural areas. They all have strong ecotourism and sustainable tourism values.

A UNIQUE RESERVE OF BIODIVERSITY

97% of French maritime areas

80% of French biodiversity

13 000 endemic species

GLOBALLY RECOGNIZED NATURE CONSERVATION SCHEMES

17 nature reserves in French Overseas Territories. 59% of them have been classified for less than 12 years. Three national parks: in French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Réunion. Three marine nature parks: in Mayotte, Glorieuses and Martinique.

5 natural areas listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Fakarava Atoll and Raiatea's Taputapuatea marae in French Polynesia; New Caledonia's 15,000 km² of lagoons; Réunion's "Pitons, Cirques and Remparts"; the Guadeloupe archipelago biosphere.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS, LINGUISTIC AND ARCHITECTURAL DIVERSITY, CRAFTSMANSHIP ...

These territories are the source of **tangible** and **intangible heritage** that constitutes **undeniable wealth** for French culture.

- Guadeloupe's **Gwoka music** and Réunion's **Maloya music**, both listed as intangible cultural heritage of humanity by UNESCO.
- **Guadeloupe's Mémorial ACTe**, the only place of its kind in the world, which illustrates the different facets of slavery in the West Indies and the Caribbean.
- **Tahiti's art of tattooing**.
- **Réunion's Victoria pineapple** farming, which has received the Label Rouge.
- **Martinique's AOC-designated rums**.
- **French Guiana's Amazonian honey**, which has won several awards at the Concours Général Agricole.

AN ATTRACTIVE RANGE OF SUSTAINABLE ACCOMMODATION

Very few large hotel complexes are located in the overseas territories. The accommodation offer is fully invested in sustainable development policies. Visitors can choose to stay in modestly sized hotels, private homes, gîtes, bed and breakfasts or magnificent ecolodges surrounded by nature.

Thus the seven overseas destinations presented in this press kit offer undeniable potential to attract European visitors as well as holidaymakers from nearby markets such as the United States, China, Japan, Australia and Brazil, among others. They have real advantages over other destinations in the sustainable tourism segment, hence the potential to attract visitors, and would benefit from greater recognition of the values that are part of their DNA.

AIRLINE COMPANIES' ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INITIATIVES

Only by plane can visitors reach these territories, given they are islands or relatively isolated. However, airlines are increasingly committed to reducing their CO₂ emissions.

For example, the "Air France Horizon 2030" program aims to reduce CO₂ emissions per passenger/km by 50% by 2030 through the purchase of lighter aircraft, the implementation of eco-piloting practices and the offsetting of carbon used via environmental projects.

Just visit the websites dedicated to these programmes to learn about each company's efforts (see list on page 36).

🔗 Official website: martinique.org

MARTINIQUE



A LUSH GARDEN BETWEEN SEA AND VOLCANO

The world's top emerging destination of the year according to Tripadvisor, Martinique is a true natural tropical paradise. It's one of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots. Its richness is unique owing to the endemism of many species and the rarity of the natural habitats that host them.

The fragrances and colours of red-flowered flamboyants, white-flowered frangipani trees and yellow-flowered

purging cassias brighten up visitors' strolls. Thus it's no surprise that Martinique was officially designated a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve on 15 September 2021.

The island's scenery is impressively diverse. The volcano of Mount Pelée in the north, the magnificent landscapes of the Caravelle Peninsula, and the cliffs of Anse Couleuvre Beach in Le Prêcheur are all remarkable, must-see nature areas.

ESSENTIAL

IN MOTION

BATHING IN MOUNT PELÉE'S HOT SPRINGS

Known as the Grand Dame of the North, Mount Pelée is the highest point on the island, at 1,397 meters. At the foot of this majestic volcano is the town of Saint-Pierre. Mount Pelée's summit offers hikers a panoramic view of the island and its turquoise waters. The hike is fascinating for nature lovers because they can take in Martinique's high-altitude savannah and its unique vegetation. For history buffs, the ruins of Saint-Pierre are worth a visit to imagine the awesome power of the last volcano eruption, in 1902.

It's best to plan on a day's hike, in order to take the time to bathe in a hot spring on the volcano's eastern side. During Mount Pelée's formation, several groundwater reservoirs were created. The proximity of these reservoirs to hot earth layers makes the hot water rise. Bathing here is a real treat for the body and mind!



HIKING IN THE HEART OF BIODIVERSITY ON THE CARAVELLE PENINSULA

The Caravelle Peninsula is located on Martinique's Atlantic coast, in Tartane Commune. It's a nature reserve of nearly 400 acres, managed by the Martinique Regional Nature Park. It has two hiking trails, of 90 minutes and three and a half hours, respectively, both accessible to beginners or families with children.

The dry climate and volcanic soil have attracted a large number of endemic and rare animal and plant species. Between forest and mangrove, the peninsula is home to many tree varieties, such as the grape tree, the courbaril, the bois rouge, the white acomat and the mangrove. On the fauna side, one can find land crabs, mantou crabs or touloulou crabs, and a multitude of birds such as the crested hummingbird, the bananaquit, the didine (yellow warbler), the pipiri, the kayali (green heron), the gangan (manioc cuckoo), the blackbird and the white-throated mockingbird, which is endemic to the island.



NATURE VIEWING

ADMIRING FLOWERS AND BANANAQUITS IN BALATA GARDEN

This private botanical garden owes its existence to a botanical enthusiast, Jean-Philippe Thoze. A horticulturist by profession, he made a neglected family property a home for all the flowers and plants he discovered during his travels.

Orchids, hibiscus, anthuriums, porcelain roses and other rare, fragrant flowers make this garden an exotic paradise. Hummingbirds and yellow-bellied bananaquits complete this idyllic picture. Lovers of lush gardens should visit the Domaine d'Emeraude, in Morne Rouge, where nature has remained king and thrives undisturbed.



MARINE ADVENTURES

NIGHT DIVING TO THE NAHOON SHIPWRECK

This dive is one of Martinique's most beautiful! It takes us into the bowels of a 35-meters, three-masted ship lying at a depth of 36 metres. It was deliberately sunk in 1994 to make an artificial reef.

The boat was built in 1911 and is still in good condition. The deck, holds and cabins are easily recognisable. The beauty of this dive lies mainly in the colourful fauna and flora that have settled on and around the wreck. Barracudas, angelfish, crabs, lobsters, kingfish and Javanese moray eels frequently surprise us.

While the Nahoon shipwreck night dive is indeed magical, it's reserved for experienced divers. For beginners or snorkelers, the Pointe de Salomon dive is also amazing. The reef gradually descends to a depth of 40 meters and reveals exceptional marine architecture. Moray eels and sea turtles are frequently seen here.



EXPLORING BEACHES, MANGROVES AND SEABEDS BY KAYAK

The Martiniquan mangrove is a real forest that stands in the water and forms a rich and fascinating ecosystem. To discover it, there is nothing like a sea kayak excursion. It's also the best way to discover the sublime protected beaches, which are accessible only from the sea.

Those who wish to admire the seabed from the surface can choose an eco-excursion in a transparent pirogue or a solar boat.

LEARNING ABOUT THE ROUND YOILE, THE TRADITIONAL MARTINIQUAN BOAT

A true work of art owing to the precision of its construction and assembly, the round yole ("yawl") is intimately linked to Martinique's heritage and naval history.

The Martiniquan yole was officially listed as UNESCO World Heritage in December 2020. This typical boat of the island is traditionally used by fishermen, and its origin goes back several centuries.

The boat is honoured each year with a sporting event, the Tour de Martinique des Yoles Rondes, which includes a week of festivities during which the competing boats sail around the island in front of many passionate spectators. Organisations offer lessons on how to sail this traditional and atypical boat.

LOCAL DELICACIES

TASTING A "FÉROCE" AT THE COVERED MARKET

The large covered market in Fort-de-France is the island's largest. The building and its metal structure were designed by architect Pierre-Henri Picq, who also designed the Schoelcher Library and the Saint-Louis Cathedral.

The market should be visited for its typical, joyful atmosphere, to discover tropical fruit and vegetables and local spices (vanilla, roucou, colombo), and to taste tasty traditional cuisine. The "féroce" ("ferocious") is a must-try: a dish of crushed avocado mixed with desalted and shredded cod meat, with manioc flour and chili—an intense concentration of Martinique's flavours!

Also available: fruit punches and liqueurs made with the famous AOC Martinique agricultural rum, the only AOC-labelled rum, which is recognised as one of the world's best.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. The island's great diversity of protected bird species and the Saint-Anne Islets National Nature Reserve, a true jewel of ornithological biodiversity.
2. The rare natural phenomena of shallow waters in open ocean miles away from the coast. The best known is La Baignoire de Joséphine ("Josephine's Bathtub").
3. With a nature reserve covering two-thirds of its territory, Martinique is committed to earning a UNESCO World Heritage listing for its volcanic and forest areas.

AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

MANGO LODGE:
mango-lodge.fr

Four lovely lodges in typical West Indian style: Mango Lodge, Coco Lodge, Papaye Lodge and the Creole hut Calebasse Lodge. They are located in the heart of tropical vegetation, in the shade of 100-year-old mango trees or surrounded by coconut and cocoa trees. Enjoy the garden fruit—limes, mangoes, avocados, and bananas—as well as the birdsong. A real favorite.

LE DOMAINE DE ROBINSON:
domainederobinson.com

This is the rare place where the soul finds adventure in a bungalow, a beach hut or even in the trees. All accommodation overlooks the protected beach of Anse Noir. It's an atypical place in Martinique, reached by a long staircase. It's dedicated to peace and quiet.



GUADELOUPE



AN ARCHIPELAGO OF FIVE ISLANDS WITH EXCEPTIONAL NATURAL HERITAGE

Guadeloupe's islands form a butterfly-shaped archipelago of five islands renowned for their dreamy landscapes and breathtaking natural diversity. Basse-Terre Island is where La Soufrière, the highest volcano in the Lesser Antilles, is located; on its steep slopes, rivers and waterfalls flow through rainforest and offer an astonishing natural spectacle. La Désirade is an island which lives up to its reputation thanks to its two magnificent nature reserves: a geological reserve of semi-precious stones and the Petite Terre Islets National Nature Reserve. Les Saintes is an archipelago within an archipelago,

where life revolves around the sea and fishing, with famous diving spots such as Sec Pâté, an underwater mountain 185 metres high. On the more agricultural Marie-Galante Island, discover sugarcane fields and the rural way of life. Finally, Grande-Terre Island offers local entertainment and many water sports.

Guadeloupe National Park, created in 1989, was the first French overseas national park. In 2009, the Grand Cul-de-sac Marine Nature Reserve and the Pigeon Islets were added to it, making it both terrestrial and marine.

ESSENTIAL

MARINE ADVENTURES



DISCOVERING THE BREATHTAKING DIVES OF LES SAINTES

The dives in Les Saintes are the most beautiful in the West Indies. Experience unforgettable moments immersed in marine biodiversity, regardless of your diving level.

The Sec Pâté site is home to one of the Caribbean's most extraordinary dives. At a depth of 40 meters, divers discover an underwater mountain covered in coral and gorgonians, while a multitude of angelfish, barracudas, moray eels and groupers go about their business. Note that the strong swell and current require an advanced diving level.

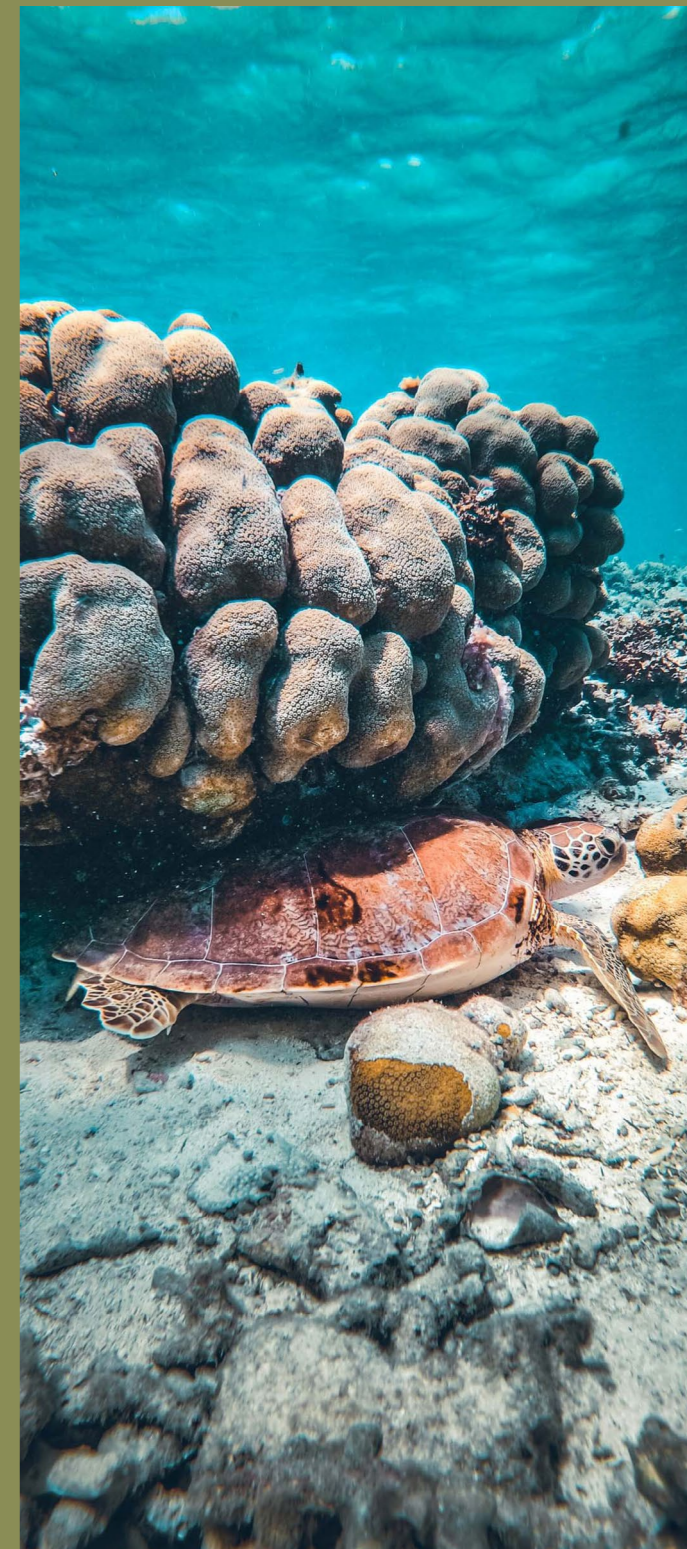
The Jardin Japonais ("Japanese Garden") dive is much more accessible. It offers an incredible wealth of biomarine life from a depth of four meters. Faults, arches and small caves reveal numerous endemic Caribbean species such as the blue-striped grunt. This spot has been preserved because it's not often visited by diving centres. It provides a genuine moment of peace among anemones and colored sponges.

TAKING A CATAMARAN FROM SAINT-FRANÇOIS TO THE UNINHABITED ISLANDS OF PETITE TERRE

Protected from mass tourism, La Désirade Island is Guadeloupe's best kept secret.

It's the only place in the world where the Lesser Antillean iguana, an endangered small reptile with a striking dragon-like appearance, can be observed in its natural habitat. In the dry scrubland along the coastline, observe the caramel glow of the skink, an endangered lizard which was recently discovered on the island.

A catamaran excursion from Saint-François to the uninhabited Petite Terre Islets is incredibly beautiful. You sail over clear waters for one hour before docking at the two-islet archipelago, which was classified as a nature reserve in 1998.



IN MOTION

CLIMBING LA SOUFRIÈRE VOLCANO

Nicknamed "The Old Lady", La Soufrière is an active volcano whose summit is at 1,467 metres. The volcano's current activity is marked by fumaroles, sulphurous fumes and hot springs at various points on the summit.

The ascent typically begins at the Bains Jaunes ("Yellow Baths"), which are warm water pools fed by the volcano's hot springs. Bathing here is extremely pleasant and also very healthy. The ascent proceeds through a humid forest of succulents and palms to the viewpoint of La Savane à Mulets ("The Mule Savannah") at 1,142 metres, which offers a splendid view of the volcano and valley below. The last part of the hike is more difficult. The lush vegetation gives way first to short grass, then to rocks tinted with the yellow of the volcano's sulphur.

ENJOYING THE MAGNIFICENT CHUTES DU CARBET (CARBET FALLS)

Located at the foot of La Soufrière, the three Carbet Falls are loaded with sulphur and change color and odour as they fall down the volcano's side. From Capesterre-Belle-Eau, it takes three hours to hike to the waterfall that has the greatest drop, and another 45 minutes to reach the second, which plummets 110 metres. The hike, through a humid forest, reveals gum trees, mapou barrel trees, yellow mangroves and numerous epiphytic plants.

The third waterfall, also an hour's walk away, has a drop of only 20 meters, but its water flow rate is impressive. After passing among acomat trees and crossing the carefully placed duckboards, hikers reach a waterfall which flows into a large pool where they can take a refreshing swim.



NATURE VIEWING



EXPLORING THE GRAND CUL-DE-SAC MARIN, A UNESCO WORLD BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Protected by its 39-km-long coral reef and classified as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve since 1992, the Grand Cul-de-sac Marin is an exceptional nature reserve. Over an area of nearly 15,000 acres, several major ecosystems are found side by side: mangroves, swamp forests, seagrass beds and an immense coral reef.

Standup paddle-boarding is the best way to navigate the lagoon's crystal clear waters or discover the mangrove's rich ecosystem. Paddle-boarders can paddle right up to the trees and observe the many birds such as the little tern, a species endemic to the Caribbean.

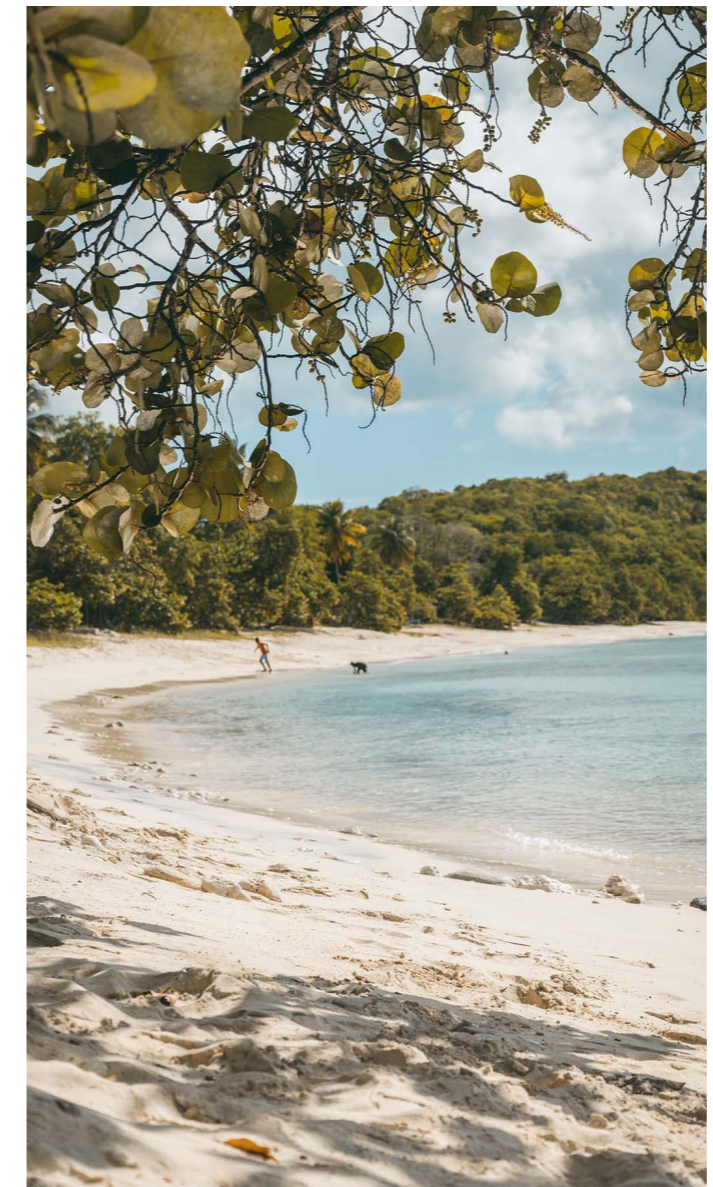
You should also put on your mask and snorkel to the waters of the Grand Cul-de-sac Marin to see starfish, long-spined sea urchins, butterfly fish and sea anemones. On the seabed the motionless and harmless upside-down jellyfish points its tentacles towards the light.

LOCAL DELICACIES

SAMPLING THE DELIGHTS AND PEACEFUL LIFE OF MARIE-GALANTE

When you arrive in Marie-Galante from Grande-Terre, you feel the calm harmony of the place. Here there are few people and little movement; relax and adopt the island's leisurely lifestyle. The beaches are magnificent and the diving spots numerous.

In terms of restaurants and specialties, enjoy lobster and ouassous (large freshwater prawns) flambéed with aged rum and finished with mango mousse at La Playa Restaurant opposite the superb Feuillère Beach. Also try the king mackerel au gratin with aioli and mashed yams at La Table du Père Labat, a warm restaurant that welcomes diners in the shade of its pergolas. To end on a sweet note, order the "caca bœuf", a typical Marie-Galante pastry made with gingerbread, cane juice syrup and coconut filling—a genuine delight despite its surprising name.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. The Réserve maritime protégée Cousteau ("Jacques Cousteau Marine Reserve") is a beautiful coral reef integrated into Guadeloupe National Park, home to sponges, gorgonians, hundreds of species of tropical fish, turtles, lobsters, moray eels, seahorses, and more.
1. The Mémorial ACTe in Pointe à Pitre is an essential place of memory on slavery. The impressive architecture, the location facing the sea and the museum's scenography invite reflection and meditation.
1. The tourist label "Marque de confiance du Parc National de la Guadeloupe" ("Guadeloupe National Park Seal of Approval") brings together Guadeloupean tourism and sustainable leisure actors and facilitates the choice of places to visit.

AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

HABITATION TENDACAYOU:
tendacayou.com

This unusual ecolodge is located not far from Deshaies and surrounded by large tropical trees: courbaril, mahogany, angelica. It offers cabins perched in the mango tree tops, Creole huts and bungalows. Stone, bamboo and wood painted in bright colours line the footbridges running from branch to branch. It's a genuine lost paradise.

AQUALODGES:
aqualodge.fr

A dreamy place for all those who like to fall asleep to the rhythm of the waves and enjoy the turquoise blue sea from their room. Aqualodges are floating villas of 80 square metres, autonomous and respectful of the environment—an ecological innovation!

Choose between two locations: in Saint-François Lagoon or Saintes Bay.

FRENCH GUIANA

PROTECTED BIODIVERSITY IN THE HEART OF THE AMAZON

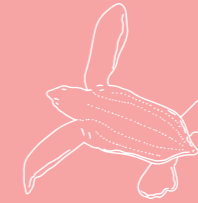


French Guiana is a green and preserved paradise with 20 millions acres of virgin forest and more than 5,000 animal and plant species. It's the largest French overseas territory, with an invaluable natural heritage which represents more than 80% of French biodiversity. It's home to many rare animal species such as the tapir, anteater, jaguar and sloth, and an incalculable number of tree species and flower varieties.

French Guiana is an unforgettable place. Amazonian forest hikes, canoe trips, meeting locals, colourful markets, visits to the Marais de Kaw (Kaw Marshes) and the îles du Salut (Salvation Islands)—all these experiences remain with the visitor for life.

ESSENTIAL

NATURE VIEWING



ADMIRING LEATHERBACK SEA TURTLES LAYING EGGS ON CAYENNE AND RÉMIRE-MONTJOLY BEACHES

French Guiana's beaches are beautiful, although the sea's colour surprises visitors because it's closer to beige than blue. It's safe to swim, as the colour is simply sediment from the Amazon's river mouth 500 km from French Guiana's coast. The beach atmosphere is family-oriented, especially at weekends; it's a friendly place where French Guianese meet in good spirits. Every year, from April to August, leatherback sea turtles lay eggs on French Guianese beaches, a fabulous spectacle and an unforgettable moment in the natural cycle. The leatherback sea turtle is the largest of the seven species of marine turtles, weighing an average of 500 kg and measuring about 180 cm in length.



EXPLORING FRANCE'S LARGEST WETLAND AND NATURE RESERVE: THE KAW MARSHES

South-east of Cayenne is a wide swampy strip, the largest flood zone in France. These marshes are home to many birds: herons, egrets, hoatzins, kingfishers, jacanas, snipes and moorhens. Batrachians and caimans can be observed at night.

The visit is made by pirogue in order to fully experience the fauna and flora unique to the marshes. Many rare or endemic animal species live here, such as the capybara, the largest rodent in the world, and the Kaw zebu. Passing the night in a floating ecolodge affords soaking in the night atmosphere and watching caimans during their late-night outings.



IN MOTION

NAVIGATING THE MARONI RIVER IN A PIROGUE

The Maroni River flows for 520 km, making it a great Amazonian river perfect for a lengthy excursion. Isolated peoples live on its banks, such as the Wayana and the Businengué. This is an opportunity to meet them and discover their way of life. The river allows you to observe the biological richness of the Amazonian forest and to visit nature reserves which are inaccessible on foot.

The trip up or down the river takes four or five days and is done in a locally built motorised pirogue adapted to navigate rapids. It's also possible to opt for a one-day trip.



SAILING AROUND THE ÎLES DU SALUT (SALVATION ISLANDS)

Located 14 km off Kourou's coast, the Salvation Islands consist of three islets: Île du Diable (Devil's Island), Île Royale (Royal Island) and Île Saint-Joseph (Saint Joseph's Island).

The natural beauty of these islands seems at odds with their tragic history. In the 19th and 20th centuries the islands were home to French convicts. One can visit their prisons to learn about who they were: political prisoners like Alfred Dreyfus or simple shoplifters like the hero of Les Misérables, Jean Valjean. Many of them were either forced or chose to remain in French Guiana after completing their sentences. Thus they became an integral part of French Guianese history.

Today, the islands' strategic location owing to the neighbouring space centre results in limits on the construction of large tourist infrastructure. Thus one can appreciate their exceptionally preserved environment.

CULTURAL IMMERSION

REVELING IN FRENCH GUIANA'S FAMOUS CARNIVAL

French Guianese Carnival is exceptional because it reflects French Guiana's great ethnic diversity. Observe how it's organised and learn its rites and customs and you'll discover a rich part of French Guianese culture.

For example, the custom of Touloulous (Carnival queens) is found only in French Guiana: during Carnival, women disguise themselves head to toe and take advantage of their anonymity to invite men to dance; they're the queens of the party!

Like the diverse and plural population, French Guiana's Carnival offers an emotional human experience. It's considered the longest-lasting Carnival in the world, starting at Epiphany in early January and ending on Ash Wednesday in February or March.

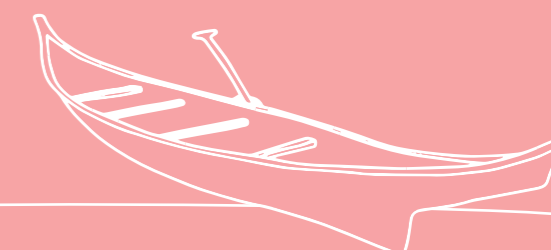
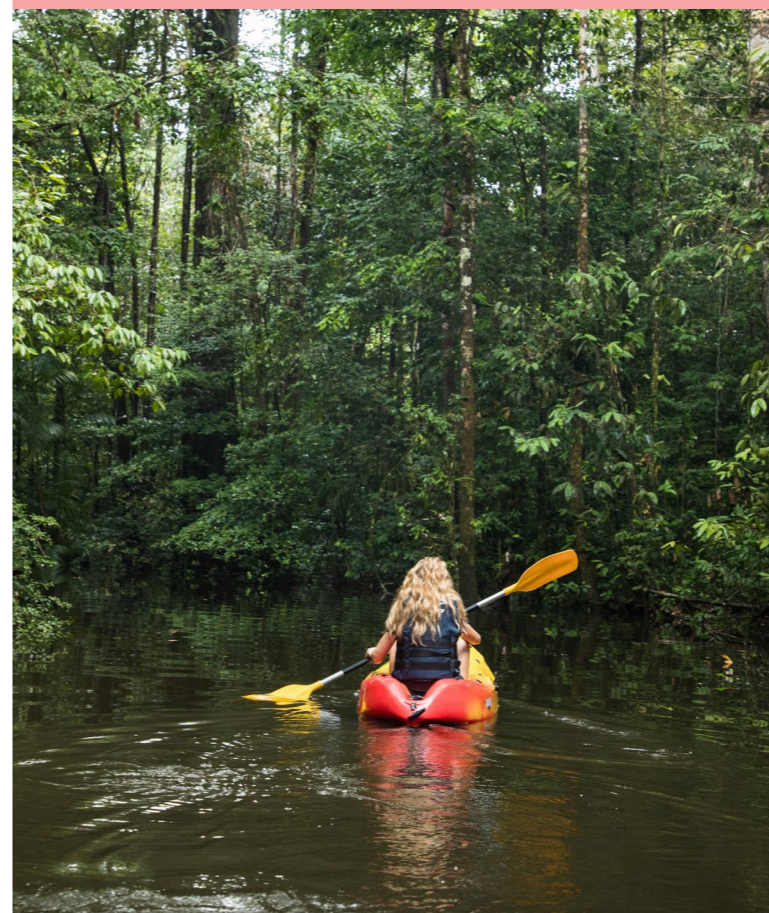


IMMERSING YOURSELF IN THE AMAZONIAN FOREST AND SLEEP IN A "CARBET"

A carbet is a typical wooden Amazonian forest house, equipped with hammocks and beds, where you can sleep under the stars. For the novice, a night like this is unforgettable! Absorbing the night atmosphere and hearing its sounds, smelling the scents of trees and flowers, gazing at the Milky Way are all rare experiences.

In the morning, a guide imparts Amerindian and Businengué forest living techniques while you simultaneously enjoy the spectacle of a forest home to 1,200 tree species. Accommodation such as Camp Cariacou and Camp Canopée Guyane offer stays in a carbet, as well as forest outings and other nature discovery activities.

Finally, take a refreshing swim in the pure fresh water of natural pools carved out by waterfalls—a moment of bliss.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. A culture that combines those of the Americas, Africa and Europe. French Guiana has a population of approximately 250,000 people from over 80 different countries. There are also Guianese-Amerindian communities.
2. The Cayenne and Cacao Markets feature the wide variety of colourful fruits and vegetables which grow in the territory, as well as the people of various ethnic origins who cultivate them. The French Guianese gastronomy born of these Amazonian products is remarkable for its diversity and flavour.
3. The Guiana Space Centre, near Kourou, is the only European space centre near the equator—an ideal location.

AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

CAMP CARIACOU
campcariacou-palmexguyane.com

Located on an inlet of the Kourou River, in a natural and flowery environment, this ecotourist camp is accessible only by pirogue. Hang your hammock in one of the four traditional Amazonian huts. During your stay, a guide from the Compagnie des Guides de Guyane offers walks and nature activities for learning about the Amazonian forest and its biodiversity.

ECOLOGDE OYACK
amazonelodgeoyack.com

On the banks of the Oyack River, at the gates of Cayenne, this complex consists of three charming ecolodges surrounded by nature. Under a canopy of palm trees and surrounded by abundant vegetation, the Ecolodge Oyack is admired for its private pontoon.

SAINT-MARTIN



A SUBTROPICAL PARADISE BETWEEN THE ATLANTIC AND THE CARIBBEAN

With its dry subtropical climate, Saint-Martin benefits from exceptional fauna and flora which it takes care to protect. The contrast between its arid and luxuriant vegetation is striking. Cacti, bougainvilleas, flamboyants, hibiscus, coconut palms and ferns mingle in idyllic landscapes.

Along the coasts and mangroves, terns, frigate birds, gannets, brown pelicans

and other bird species cohabitate, while hummingbirds and bananaquits are frequent visitors in gardens. Lizards and iguanas bask on sun-baked rocks.

In an effort to protect the environment, Saint-Martin emphasizes ecotourism. Hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, quad biking and kayaking are ways to discover the island without damaging its natural wealth.

ESSENTIAL

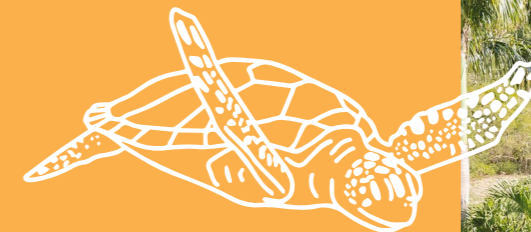
NATURE VIEWING

TAKING THE LOTERIE FARM CANOPY TOUR

At the foot of the 424-meter-high Pic Paradis ("Paradise Peak") lies Loterie Farm, a former sugar mill built in 1773 and closed in 1855. It's a tropical jewel where plant and animal species are listed and carefully protected.

Loterie Farm's canopy tour is inspired by biological studies of Costa Rica's tropical forest. It's an original approach that combines adventure with learning about the ecosystem.

Follow the hiking trails to explore Saint-Martin's biodiversity or take a dip in the pool and relax in the restaurant.



IN MOTION

HORSEBACK RIDING AT THE RANCH DU GALION

At the Ranch du Galion, 12 horses live in virtual freedom on a natural site of several acres between the mountains and the sea. The association which manages the ranch offers a second chance and a haven to horses which have been mistreated or abandoned by their owners.

A naturalist leads walks in the Saint-Martin National Nature Reserve. Enjoy the sea air, walk in the water with the horses and discover the local fauna and flora with a specialist.

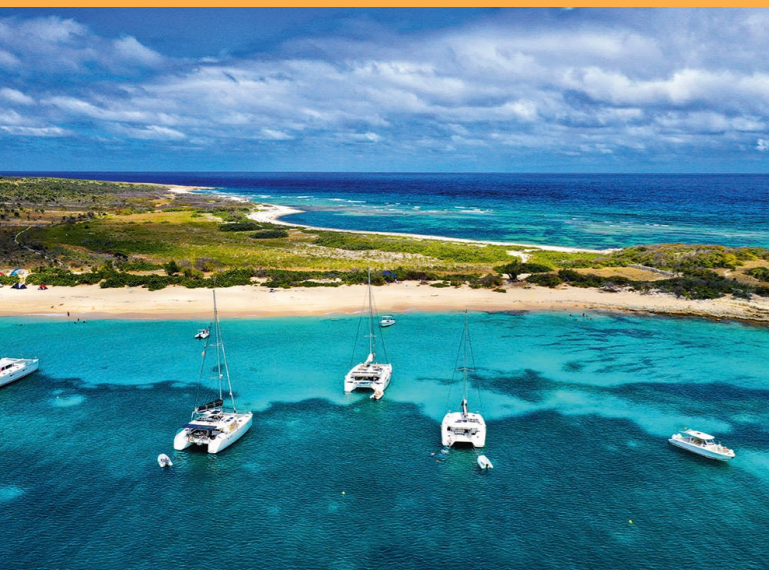


MARINE ADVENTURES

SAILING THE WATERS OF THE SAINT-MARTIN NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

The Saint-Martin National Nature Reserve was created in 1998 and covers 7 600 acres? in the north-east of Saint-Martin. The marine part of the reserve, covering 7 200 acres, encompasses the island shelf areas between Anguilla, Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy. Rich in large ecosystems such as mangroves, marine phanerogam meadows, coral reefs, coastal forests and ponds, the nature reserve is home to a diverse range of marine and terrestrial fauna and flora, including several protected species.

Although hunting and fishing are prohibited, you can observe the seabed by diving at Rocher Créole. To navigate the reserve's waters and admire its landscapes, the best thing to do is to use a paddle-board or kayak. You can also walk through the mangrove to observe its birds and insects.



GOING WITH A CATAMARAN TO THE VIRGIN ISLAND OF TINTAMARRE

A one-day catamaran trip allows you to enjoy the wild beauty of the virgin island of Tintamarre off Saint-Martin's north-east coast. This national nature reserve is a calm, harmonious place, protected from all human activity. A gaiac forest (protected trees) covers a large part of it. Historical ruins include the remains of the airfield established by the pilot and adventurer Rémy de Haenen.

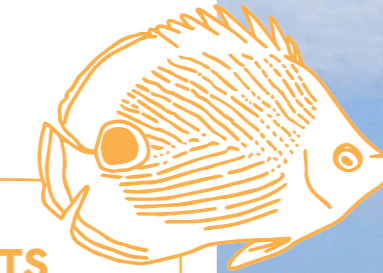


LOCAL DELICACIES

DISCOVERING THE VIBRANT GASTRONOMY OF THE CHARMING VILLAGE OF GRAND CASE

Grand Case is the island's gastronomic capital and has retained all its authenticity. This is the place to taste all the flavours of the local cuisine. Dozens of traditional huts called "lolos" line the main street. An unpretentious gathering place, people eat from paper plates at picnic tables, amidst the scent of smoke and barbecue.

In these open-air huts ribs, a Saint-Martin speciality, are grilled and the chicken is eaten with the fingers. Every week from March to June, "Les Mardis de Grand Case" (literally, "Grand Case Tuesdays" but known as "Harmony Night") are an opportunity for the population and visitors to gather around gastronomy, local crafts, art or culture to the rhythm of jazz and Caribbean bands.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. Baie aux Prunes Beach is authentic but not very busy. It perfectly meets the expectations of the traveller searching for tranquillity and nature.
2. The breathtaking view from Fort Louis over Marigot, Simpson Bay Lagoon, Anguilla, Terres Basses and Baie Nettlé.
3. The unspoilt beauty of Pinel Island is part of the Saint-Martin National Nature Reserve. Have lunch on the island before heading north to a magnificent little cove.

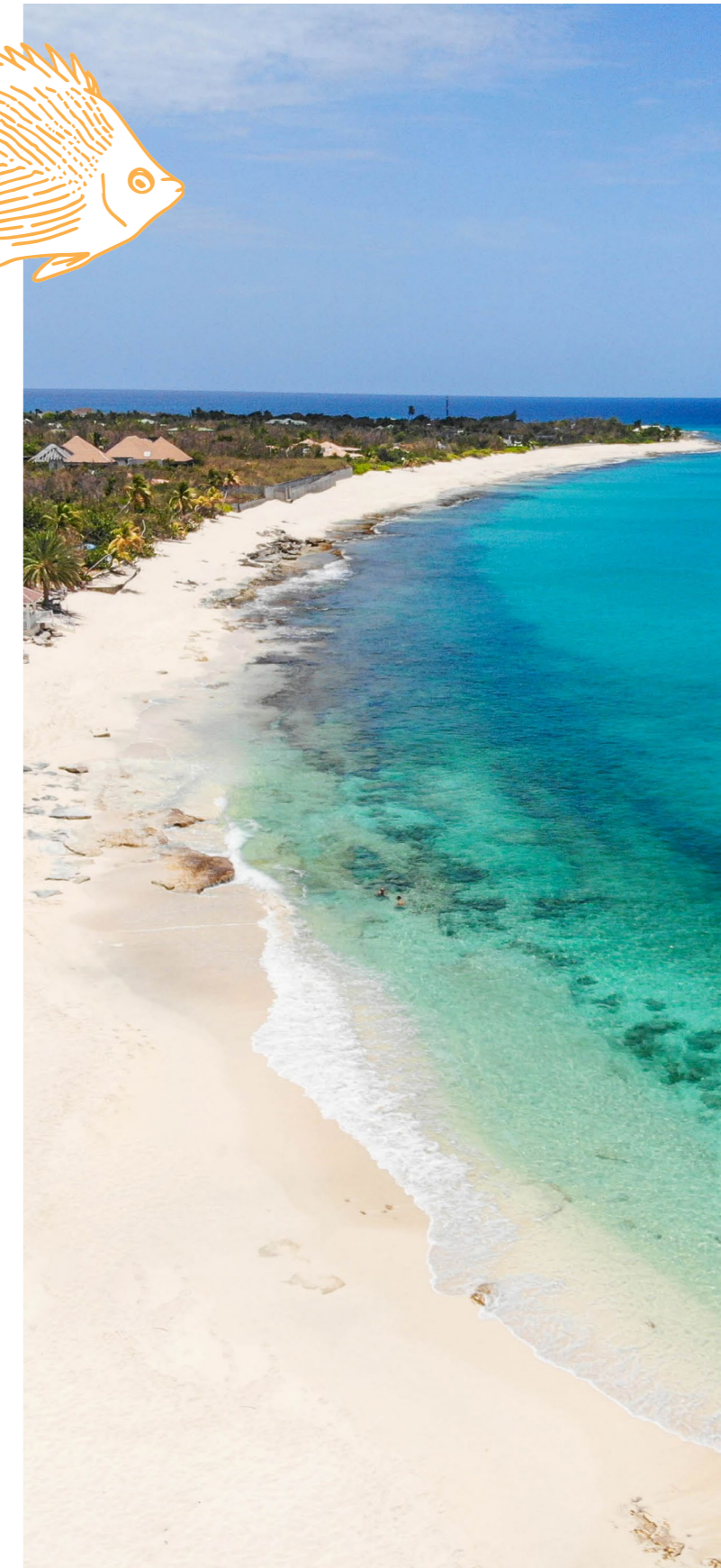
AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

THE PARADISE PEAK
staypicparadis.com

This charming hotel is nestled in lush flower gardens on Saint-Martin's highest point, close to the towns of Grand Case and Marigot. Enjoy the mountain's tranquillity and cool temperatures.

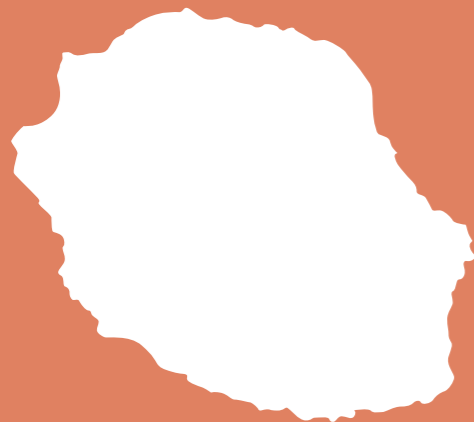
LOVE BOUTIQUE HÔTEL
love-sxm.com

Ideally located on the beautiful sandy beach of Grand-Case, a charming little fishing village in northern Saint-Martin. Surrounded by inlets with a Creole ambiance, bordering a crystal clear sea, this charming wooden hotel has a panoramic view of Anguilla Island and of the sun setting over the peaceful bay.



REUNION

A DREAM FOR ECOTOURISM AND HARMONIOUS DIVERSITY



A volcanic island with a thousand faces and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Réunion is a model of ecotourism. With magnificent beaches, two volcanoes, one of which is the world's most active, and mountainous landscapes suitable for long hikes, it's the ideal setting for lovers of sustainable tourism.

Additional natural highlights include Réunion's more than 230 endemic plant species, and its numerous birds and rare wildlife. The island is also very active in protecting sea turtles.

On a cultural level, inhabitants of diverse origins have learned to live together by mixing their African, Asian, French, Indian and Malagasy influences. Thus the island's lifestyle is truly unique and deserves to be discovered. Finally, the island has made the protection of its natural and historical heritage a top priority.

ESSENTIAL

MARINE ADVENTURES

WATCHING DOLPHINS AND HUMPBACK WHALES

Réunion enjoys a privileged situation where marine mammals don't hesitate to swim in direct proximity to the coast. It's a moving spectacle where observation takes place with respect for the animals and their protected environment.

Among these marine mammals, spinner dolphins and the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin can be seen year-round. Impressive humpback whales are present every southern winter, from June to October; they travel thousands of kilometres from Antarctica to the warm waters of Réunion to mate and give birth to their youngsters. Other marine mammals also come but more rarely, such as sperm whales, fin whales and even Risso's dolphins.

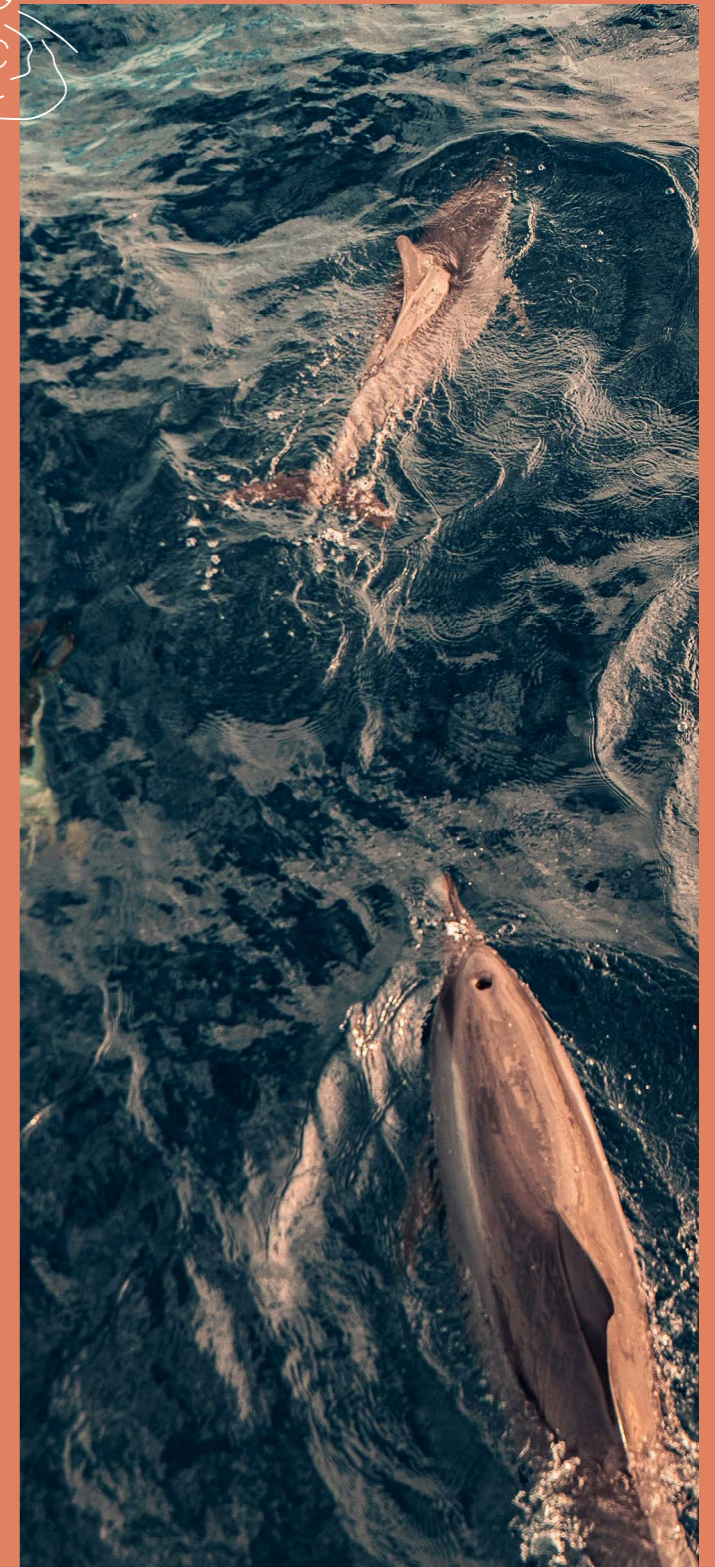
IN MOTION

ADMIRING THE SUNRISE FROM THE PITON DES NEIGES

Réunion is home to the Indian Ocean's highest volcanic peak, at over 3,000 metres: the Piton des Neiges ("Snow Peak"). Getting there is one of the island's most beautiful hikes. To reach the summit, you cross thick forests of guava and tamarind trees to reach the heart of Réunion's raw and wild nature.

From Cilaos Cirque, it's about a six-hour hike to the famous refuge de la caverne Dufour ("Dufour Cave Mountain Cabin"), where hikers spend the night. The next day, hikers leave before dawn to cover the last few kilometres to the summit and watch the sunrise.

The spectacle is dazzling! In the distance, the Indian Ocean and its turquoise waters merge with the sky. And further down are three cirques: Mafate (to the north-west), Salazie (to the north-east) and Cilaos (to the south), all three formed when parts of the Piton des Neiges collapsed.



VISITING THE LAVA TUNNELS OF THE PITON DE LA FOURNAISE

This exceptional activity is a journey into the heart of the active volcano of Piton de la Fournaise ("Furnace Peak"). Both adults and children can participate. Caves are explored via a maze of lava tunnels: discover volcanic traces, stalagmites, stalactites, "chocolate ceilings" and other impressive natural phenomena.

It's difficult to imagine such an underground spectacle. Among the Mascarene Islands, the experience is unique to Réunion.



LOCAL DELICACIES

TAKING IN THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE BÉLOUVE PRIMARY FOREST

The richness of the fauna and the beauty of the flora of Réunion astonish all comers. More than 1,000 plant species grow here thanks to the island's many microclimates, some of which exist nowhere else. Réunion is particularly renowned for its endemic bird species, with lilting names such as tuit-tuit (Réunion cuckooshrike) or paille-en-queue (straw tail). Observe them in their natural environment in Réunion National Park and especially the Bélouve Forest. The latter is a peaceful haven for the species it shelters, a unique forest that has several hiking trails and a forest road.

NATURE VIEWING

TAKING IN THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE BÉLOUVE PRIMARY FOREST

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EXPLORING MAFATE CIRQUE AND ITS AUTONOMOUS ISLETS

In Réunion, hiking the Mafate Cirque is a must. The cirque's landscapes are grandiose and hikes offer beautiful biodiversity and total isolation from civilization. Hikes are one to three days, depending on the itinerary, with the possibility of spending a night in Mafate, a highly recommended, beautiful experience.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. In 2010, 42% of Réunion, i.e. an area of 250 000 acres, was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List for the rarity of its landscapes and its endemic fauna and flora.
2. The diversity of natural landscapes means you can enjoy many outdoor activities: caving, hiking, horseback riding, canyoning, paragliding, paddle-boarding, diving, and more.
3. Kélonia is an aquarium, a museum and a care centre for sea turtles. Profits from tourism finance care of the turtles. A real favourite.

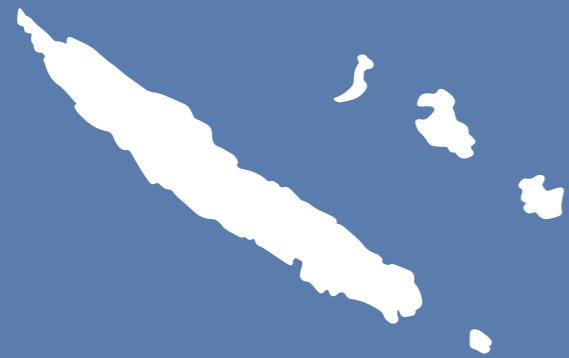
AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

TERRE ROUGE:
reunion.fr

Terre Rouge is a large tropical garden with three bungalows made of cryptomeria and basalt stone. The decor is a mix of antique furniture and objects, local creations and works of art. Here, there are no doors or windows, the boundaries between inside and outside are blurred and large curtains protect everyone's privacy. The paths meander through the abundant vegetation. Tec-tec (Réunion stonechats), quail, tenrecs and chameleons play hide-and-seek with the visitor. Just a stone's throw away are Cap Jaune, La Marine de Vincenzo ("Marine Vincenzo Beach") and the Langevin River.

CANA SUC:
reunion.fr

This charming accommodation consists of a bed and breakfast and two rural gîtes located at the foot of the volcano in a natural green setting near the Piton de la Fournaise. The vegetation is naturally lush and varied. In the surrounding area, Tour a vanilla plantation and a tropical flower plantation, and schedule guided tours of exceptional and historical sites. Several restaurants, snack bars, farmhouse inns and tables d'hôte offer their typical Creole menu of the island's east coast.



NEW CALEDONIA

NATURE'S DARLING AND ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL LAGOONS

New Caledonia is an archipelago whose main island is the mountainous Grande Terre, 400 km long and 50 km wide. Other islands, including Ouvéa, Lifou, Maré and Île des Pins (Isle of Pines), boast dreamy beaches. New Caledonia is one of the last places on earth where you can still enjoy pristine and sumptuous landscapes and avoid crowds.

The Heart of Voh was photographed from the air in the 1990s by Yann Arthus-Bertrand: a perfect heart shape nestled in a mangrove on Grande Terre's west coast. This astonishing image is now

world-famous; it perfectly expresses our powerful link with nature and has become the emblem of New Caledonia and its commitment to environmental protection.

With its cagous and columnar pines, New Caledonia is a biodiversity hotspot. Today, it's home to 3,261 plant species, 76% of which are endemic, meaning New Caledonia has the world's third-highest rate of endemism. This exceptional biodiversity continues to delight lovers of outdoor activities on land and at sea.

ESSENTIAL

MARINE ADVENTURES

SNORKELING THE BAYS OF THE ISLE OF PINES

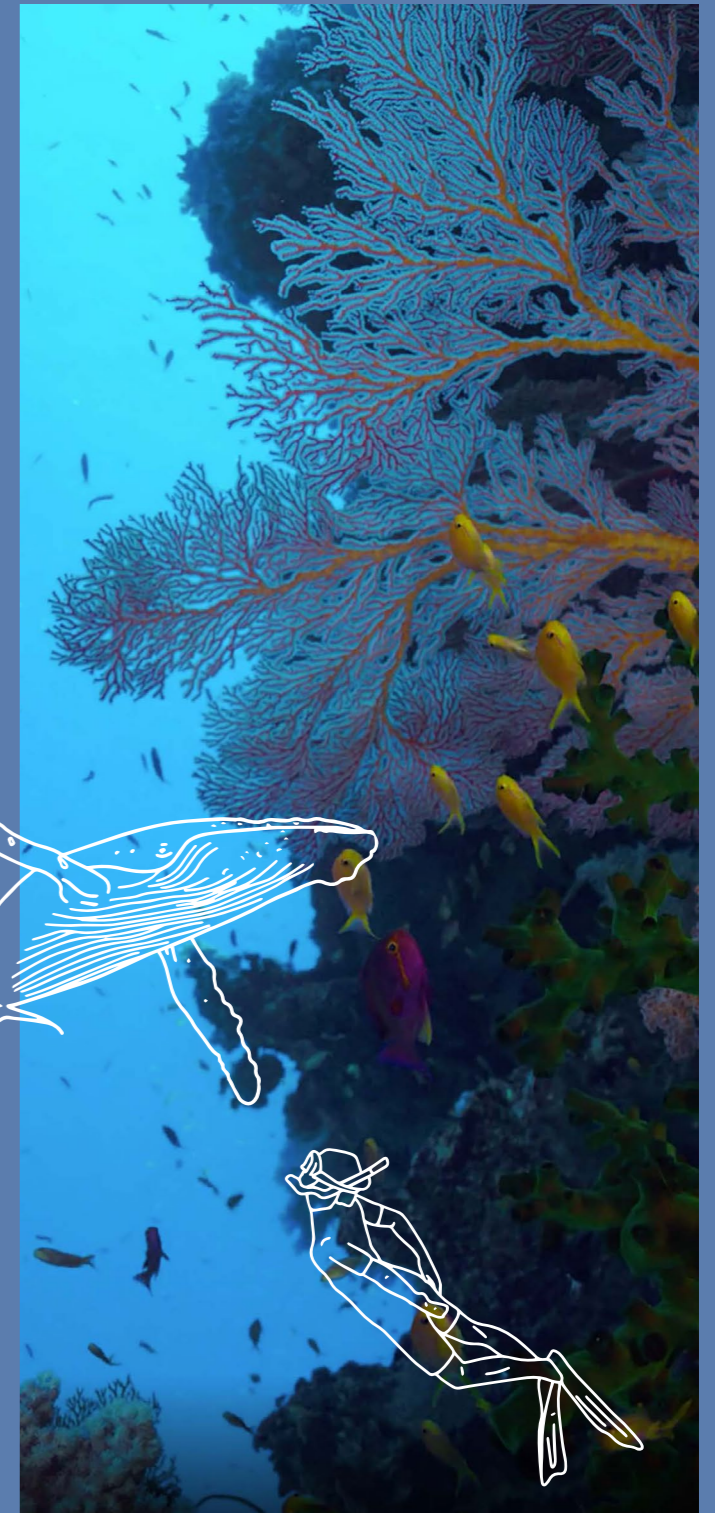
New Caledonia is bathed by the world's largest lagoon. The possibilities for underwater excursions are numerous and varied. If forced to choose a place for a snorkelling trip in the lagoon, it would be around the Isle of Pines, in Kanumera Bay, or in Oro Bay with its amazing natural pool.

The reefs are home to incredibly rich underwater life. Above the carpets of coral swim dozens of species of colourful fish, including angelfish, groupers, clownfish, and many species of damselfish. It's not uncommon to see turtles as well.

KAYAKING TO HIENGHÈNE'S BROODING HEN

Hienghène Commune is in the North Province, a five-hour drive from Noumea on New Caledonia's north-east coast. Hienghène Lagoon is criss-crossed by large black stone cliffs jutting from the water, a magnificent spectacle. In a tandem or single-seater kayak, you can float right up to the cliffs, which are up to 60 meters high.

One of the cliffs looks a lot like a giant hen, and the inhabitants of New Caledonian have a legend about it. It's said to have emerged from the water overnight and offered them an abundance of fish to feed their children. Since then, she has become a symbol of generosity for the whole of New Caledonia.



CULTURAL IMMERSION

DISCOVERING KANAK CULTURE DURING A STAY WITH A TRIBE

Kanak ancestral culture, through the rhythm of tribal life and traditional festivals, still permeates New Caledonia. There's nothing like a stay with a tribe to familiarise yourself with their customs, traditions and know-how. The local tribes' hospitality and generosity make such stays an exceptional human experience.

In a tribe, time stands still. Human relations are simple and generous. You sleep in a hut, help prepare meals in all their simplicity and taste traditional Kanak dishes. The island's east, where traditions are strongest, is the cradle of the Kanak soul.



NATURE VIEWING

MOUNTAIN BIKING THE BLUE RIVER PROVINCIAL PARK

The Blue River Provincial Park, one hour from Noumea, is a 9,000-hectare protected area in southern Grande Terre. Here, nature has been preserved for millions of years. The red earth contrasts with the green of the forests and the blue of the sky. The park is a fabulous camping and hiking spot, and visiting it by mountain bike is a must.

As for flora, kaori trees are endemic to the island, and the park is home to the Giant Kaori, a towering conifer over 1,000 years old. As for fauna, the park has an impressive population of cagous, New Caledonia's emblematic birds.

During the hike, you'll discover the Upper Blue River and its refreshing waterfalls. The unreal beauty of the Drowned Forest, its white tree trunks jutting from the water, and Yaté Lake, New Caledonia's largest freshwater lake, offer magnificent natural scenery.

EXPLORING MARÉ ISLAND'S NATURAL TREASURES

Maré, the southernmost of the Loyalty Islands, enchants the visitor with its astonishing geology. First of all, go to the "Natural Aquarium", a naturally formed, land-locked limestone pool connected to the sea by an underground cave. Home to many rare fish, it's a feast for the eyes.

Then go for a short walk to the Bone de la léproserie, one of the world's largest flooded caves: a 50-meter-deep well that leads to a 350,000-m3 underground freshwater lake. Finally, explore the grotte de Pethoen (Pethoen Cave) and its immense curtain of stalactites which overhangs a freshwater lake in which the locals and daring tourists enjoy swimming.



LOCAL DELICACIES

TESTING KANAK CUISINE

Yam, taro, manioc and sweet potato are the basis of Caledonian cuisine. Simmered in coconut milk, they accompany the traditional bougna, a delicious meat, poultry or fish stew cooked in banana leaves. To learn about local spices, head for the Kô salt pans in northern Grande Terre, the Loyalty Islands or the Karikoué Valley, which are the production sites for seaweed salt, vanilla and pink peppercorns.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. Nouméa, New Caledonia's capital, offers visitors magnificent views and beaches, as well as a wide range of sporting and cultural events and activities.
2. Ouvéa Atoll, thanks to its lush vegetation and the natural beauty of its beaches and seabed, is called "the closest island to paradise".
3. Humpback whales appear every year, from July to September, off Prony Bay and can be approached by boat.

AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

GONDWANA HOTEL:
gondwanahotels.nc

For a stay in Noumea, Gondwana Hotel is perfect, providing a warm welcome, an artistic decor and respect for nature. It's the only hotel in New Caledonia to be certified "High Environmental Quality" and its owners have tapped the creativity of New Caledonian artists to decorate the rooms with frescoes which evoke life on the archipelago.

ECO-GÎTE DE LA OUATCHOUÉ:
destinationprovincesud.nc

This large house built with ecological materials is almost completely self-sufficient with respect to energy and water. It's a 1000-acres property located in Boulouparis Commune, a gateway to the bush and Caledonian forest and an hour's drive from Noumea. There are many activities on site, including crayfishing, river swimming and mountain hiking.

THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI

AN ANCESTRAL CULTURE IN AN IDYLIC ENVIRONMENT



French Polynesia, known as The Islands of Tahiti, is a collection of high volcanic islands and sea-level atolls. These 118 islands are spread over more than 2,500,000 km² in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. This overseas territory consists of five archipelagos that invite discovery and adventure: the Society Islands, the Tuamotu Islands, the Gambier Islands, the Marquesas Islands and the Austral Islands.

The inhabitants of Fenua (Polynesian territory) are imbued with mana, a vital energy that permeates everything. Their philosophy of life is expressed in every action and especially in their relationship with nature. Thus the natural environment is a source of inspiration and motivation for this people of an ancestral culture.

The Islands of Tahiti offers so many opportunities for encounters with the living and the natural elements that it's inherently a land of sustainable travel and ecotourism.

ESSENTIAL

MARINE ADVENTURES

SAILING ON A TRADITIONAL PIROGUE

The Polynesian pirogue, known in Mā'ohi as a "va'a", consists of an outrigger connected to the hull by two wooden arms. This unique vessel provides the stability required for long journeys.

Polynesians travelled the Pacific in these pirogues, using the stars and wind to orient themselves. Indeed, thanks to ancestral Mā'ohi navigation methods, Polynesians always knew where they were. Whether on an island or on a pirogue, they had their astronomical tools in the sky.

We let the waves guide us on a lagoon tour, a perfect time to indulge in the spirit of mana and intimately understand the connection between humanity and the elements.

DIVING INTO THE "MATISSE BLUE" OF FAKARAVA

Fakarava and its lagoon of infinite shades of blue inspired the French painter Henri Matisse to create the style for which he is famous. This atoll is located in the Tuamotu Archipelago, 450 km north-east of Tahiti, and has been classified as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Divers from all over the world dream of Fakarava, which means "beautiful" in Tahitian, probably because of the countless shades of blue that the landscape offers visitors. In addition to giant corals and multicoloured fish, dives are also well-known for shark-watching.

After viewing the seabed, viewing the island is a must: to experience the peaceful life of small villages, roads lined with bougainvilleas, bright coral churches, picturesque houses and more.



SURFING LIKE A TAHITIAN ON THE TEAHUPO'O

Surfing is a way of life and an integral part of Polynesian heritage. Whether you're a beginner, an amateur or an experienced surfer, there's a place for every level. The legendary Teahupo'o wave will delight seasoned surfers, while the calm of Papeno'o Bay is ideal for beginners. Between sessions, admire the seabed's preserved corals, shells of all sizes and thousands of colourful fish.

CULTURAL IMMERSION

LEARNING THE FOUNDATIONS OF MĀ'OHĪ CULTURE

The Tupuna, the ancestors of the Polynesian peoples, have left multiple heritages which are expressed in Tahitian customs. The year is punctuated by traditional sporting and cultural events such as July's Heiva festivities. Tattoos have also retained a strong presence in Polynesian society, as has the 'ori tahiti, the famous Tahitian dance. From an archaeological point of view, the Taputapuātea marae helps visitors understand the foundations of this beautiful spiritual culture. This is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is considered the cradle of Polynesian culture.

TRAVELLING THROUGH HISTORY AND TIME ON POINTE VĒNUS BEACH

Pointe Vénus is a cape on the island of Tahiti. The beach of silky black sand is a particularly harmonious place to soak up the gentle pace of life and the island's history. It takes its name from the mission of Captain Cook and astronomer Charles Green, who on this point in 1769 recorded the transit of Venus as it passed in front of the sun.

The Pointe Lighthouse is a beautiful 18th-century building which has been visited by many of the sailors who have anchored their ships in Matavai Bay. The Bounty arrived in this bay, where the crew enjoyed the Tahitians' warm welcome.

LOCAL DELICACIES

TASTING TAHITIAN-STYLE RAW FISH

Raw fish is the must-try dish, to be enjoyed with lemon and coconut milk. Mind you, in Tahiti fish is prepared in a thousand different ways: in the dish called fāfaru, for example, fish is marinated in a broth of sea water and freshwater shrimp heads.

Such dishes can be ordered at food trailers located on all the tourist islands of Tahiti. Polynesians fish by hand, with a small net, with a harpoon, by boat—it's a crucial activity for them.



IN MOTION

HIKING THE LA FARA'URA VALLEY

Tahiti's mountainous and hilly terrain is ideal for hikers and offers splendid panoramas. The La Fara'ura Valley hike is considered by many experts to be the island's most beautiful. There are four spectacular waterfalls, of which the longest falls 180 meters. It takes four and half hours to walk there and three hours to return.

There are many other hiking sites, some of which offer canyoning or camping possibilities. The Syndicat des Guides de Randonnée ("Hiking Guides Association") is a great resource for organizing an unforgettable nature excursion in The Islands of Tahiti.



TOP THREE HIGHLIGHTS

1. The warm welcome of the Polynesian people, who take the time to share their thousand-year-old culture with visitors.
2. The many associations working to protect Polynesian biodiversity, such as Te Mana o Te Moana, Mata Tohoro, Tetiaroa Society, Mokarran Protection Society, and many others listed on the Te Ora Naho Federation website.
3. The possibility of preparing your trip with travel agencies that work hand in hand with associations and local communities in Polynesia to offer trips that protect traditions and ecosystems (e.g. Nani Travels, an eco-responsible agency).

AUTHENTIC ACCOMMODATION SURROUNDED BY NATURE

LA PETITE HOTELLERIE FAMILIALE:
tahititourisme.fr

La Petite Hôtellerie Familiale refers to family-run accommodation, many of which are hidden gems that offer visitors a unique immersion experience. Choose them for an authentic and welcoming experience. Learn about these hotels on the destination's official website.

HOW TO GET THERE ?

These airlines offer the most direct flights to the above destinations in the French Overseas Territories.

MARTINIQUE

PARIS

- Corsair / Air Caraïbes / Air France

BRUSSELS

- Air Belgium / Air Caraïbes - Air France via Paris

GENEVA

- Air France via Paris

FRANKFURT (an others Dutch cities)

- Air France via Paris

MONTREAL

- Air Canada
- Air Transat

GUADELOUPE

PARIS

- Corsair / Air Caraïbes / Air France

BORDEAUX

- Corsair

LYON

- Corsair

BRUSSELS

- Air Belgium

GENEVA

- Air France via Paris

FRANKFURT

- Air France via Paris / Air Canada via Montréal

MONTREAL

- Air Canada / Air France / Air Transat

NEW-YORK

- Air France / Jet Blue

LOS ANGELES

- American Airlines via Miami

MIAMI

- American Airlines / Air France

FRENCH GUIANA

PARIS

- Air France

GENEVA

- Air France via Paris

FRANKFURT

- Air France via Paris

NEW-YORK

- American Airlines / Caribbean Airlines

SAINT-MARTIN

PARIS

- Air France

GENEVA

- Air France via Paris

FRANKFURT

- Air France via Paris

AMSTERDAM

- KLM

NEW-YORK

- United / Delta

REUNION

PARIS

- Corsair / Air France /
- Air Austral / French Bee

GENEVA

- Air France via Paris

FRANKFURT

- Air France via Paris

JOHANNESBURG

- Air Austral

NEW CALEDONIA

PARIS

- Air France via Tokyo then Aircalin towards Nouméa

TOKYO

- Aircalin / Japan Airlines

THE ISLANDS OF TAHITI

PARIS

- Air France via Los Angeles /
- Air Tahiti Nui / French Bee

LOS ANGELES

- Air Tahiti Nui / American Airlines

SAN-FRANCISCO

- French Bee / United Airlines

TOKYO

- Air Tahiti Nui

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