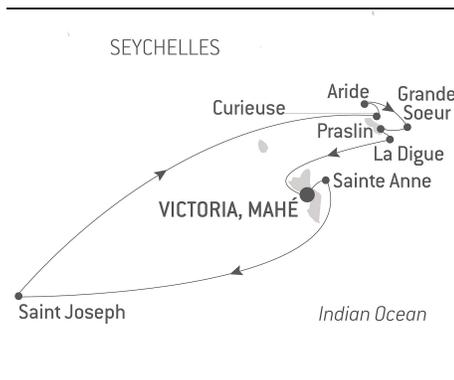


The Essential Seychelles

From **28/12/2020**
to **05/01/2021**

Ship: **LE BOUGAINVILLE**

From **Victoria, Mahé**
to **Victoria, Mahé**



On this itinerary, **PONANT** invites you to discover the must-see jewels of the **Seychelles**. On Mahé, you will board **Le Bougainville** for a **9-day expedition cruise** to the heart of this archipelago's Inner Islands for a glimpse of paradise.

The first stop on your cruise: **Sainte Anne Marine National Park**, whose coral reefs are home to stunning species, guaranteeing unforgettable snorkelling.

On **Curieuse Island**, reputed for its red earth and for the **Aldabra giant tortoises** that have taken up residence there, take an excursion to the heart of the **mangrove**. You will then discover Aride, an unspoiled delight of **the Indian Ocean**, home to thousands of birds including some endemic species.

In **Praslin**, don't miss the chance to visit **the Vallée de Mai** Nature Reserve. There you will find **sea coconuts**, gigantic endemic fruits with a very evocative shape, nicknamed the "love nut".

Palm trees, granite rock, **white sand and crystal-clear water** await you on **Grande Soeur** and **La Digue**. The beaches on these two stunning islands are each more beautiful than the next, guaranteeing moments of relaxation that will live up to your fantasies of the Seychelles.

The encounters with the wildlife described above illustrate possible experiences only and cannot be guaranteed.



The information in this document is valid as of 30/09/2020

The Essential Seychelles

YOUR STOPOVERS :

VICTORIA, MAHÉ

Embarkation 28/12/2020 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 28/12/2020 at 23h00

Discover **Mahé**, the main island of the Seychelles and also the largest of the archipelago, home to the capital, **Victoria**. Mahé has almost 70 beaches of fine sand, framed by the emblematic **granite rocks**, and whose crystal clear waters are renowned for their rich underwater life. The island is also famous for its **splendid mountain panoramas** accessible on hikes, such as the Morne Seychellois, which is 905 metres high and overlooks the Indian Ocean. Mahé is also an island full of history where fine colonial properties rub shoulders with **Creole houses** - and don't forget the marvellous **Botanical Gardens** in Victoria.

SAINTE ANNE MARINE NATIONAL PARK

Arrival 29/12/2020

Departure 29/12/2020

Lying off the coast of Mahé, the **Sainte Anne Marine National Park** has been protecting the natural riches and exceptional sea beds of **the verdant islands and turquoise lagoons** of Sainte-Anne, Longue, Ronde, Moyenne and Cerf since 1973. These dream islands with their white sandy beaches edged with granite rock, crystal-clear waters and coconut trees promise unforgettable moments of relaxation and discovery. These colourful reefs and granite rocks and their large swathes of seagrass are home to a multitude of **tropical fish** as well as **sea turtles, dolphins** and several species of ray, including the **manta ray**.

SAINT JOSEPH ATOLL

Arrival 30/12/2020

Departure 30/12/2020

In the heart of the Seychelles' Outer Islands, the coral islands located more than 200 km south of Mahé, the **Saint-Joseph Atoll** is a magnificent ring of coral islets surrounding a **splendid lagoon sparkling in turquoise and emerald green**. Since 2014, it has been an integral part of the "D'Arros and St. Joseph Atoll Special Reserve", a **national park and protected marine area** that preserve the unique biodiversity of these sites. This veritable nursery for **Hawksbill sea turtles**, juvenile reef fish, including several species of **ray** and **shark** (blacktip reef shark, sicklefin lemon shark) attracts big fish that swim up from the drop-off of the Amirantes plateau, located only two kilometres from the atoll.

CURIEUSE ISLAND

Arrival 31/12/2020
Departure 31/12/2020

Situated off the coast of Praslin, **Curieuse** has a distinguishing feature: its red earth. Discovered in 1768 by the French explorer Marc-Joseph Marion du Fresne, it was ravaged by a fire in 1771 and then home to a leper colony of which a few vestiges still remain. Declared a **national marine park** in 1979, it is home to many underwater species, which can be discovered while scuba diving or snorkelling in the idyllic waters of the Indian Ocean. But above all, Curieuse is renowned for the **hundreds of Aldabra giant tortoises** that live there. It is highly likely that you will get the chance to meet these fascinating reptiles. Along with Praslin, it is also the only island on which the **sea coconut** grows wild.

ARIDE ISLAND

Arrival 01/01/2021
Departure 01/01/2021

Aride is an island in the Seychelles situated a few kilometres north-west of Praslin. Listed as a **nature reserve**, this pearl of the Indian Ocean will seduce you with the beauty of its landscapes of **wild cliffs and fine-sand beaches**. Protected from human impact and sometimes called “bird capital”, it is home to several endemic plants as well as exceptional wildlife. Most notably, it is the refuge of an impressive number of **seabirds** (Seychelles magpie-robins, terns, noddies, and more), and reptiles, such as Wright’s skinks, which can be found in the island’s wooded areas. Sea turtles can also be observed on the island’s beaches.

GRANDE SŒUR

Arrival 02/01/2021
Departure 02/01/2021

Located 6 km north of La Digue, **Grande Sœur Island** is renowned for its two sumptuous beaches and its translucent waters, protected by a coral reef. An ideal spot for **snorkelling** and observing the **sea turtles** that co-exist here with the many multi-coloured fish. The pristine Grande Sœur Island is considered to be one of the most beautiful islands in the Seychelles.

PRASLIN ISLAND

Arrival 03/01/2021
Departure 03/01/2021

Situated some forty kilometres away from Victoria, **Praslin** is the second largest island in the Seychelles. Its idyllic beaches where granite rocks nestle in immaculate sand correspond perfectly to how we imagine the Seychelles to be. They invite visitors to dive into the **turquoise waters**, which are ideal for snorkelling. In the centre of the island, hidden in the heart of a stunning tropical rainforest, lies the **Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site**. In this veritable plant sanctuary, several endemic species of palm trees can be observed, as well as the famous sea coconut, which can weigh up to 20 kg and is sometimes called “*coco fesse*” because its shape calls to

mind a pair of buttocks.

LA DIGUE ISLAND

Arrival 04/01/2021

Departure 04/01/2021

La Digue Island is a veritable concentration of all the beauty of the Seychelles. Located 6 km south-east of Praslin, this small piece of land that looks like paradise is the third-largest island in the Seychelles, despite its modest size (5 km by 3 km)! Turquoise waters just asking you to swim in them, lush vegetation sheltering **giant tortoises**, beaches of fine sand fringed with coconut trees and surrounded with those emblematic **large granite rocks with their pink highlights** like at the famous Anse Source d'Argent: the perfect picture postcard... **Authentic and preserved**, the island follows a peaceful rhythm, with the only means of transport along its little roads being bikes or traditional oxcarts.

VICTORIA, MAHÉ

Arrival 05/01/2021 at night

Disembarkation 05/01/2021 at 05h30

Discover **Mahé**, the main island of the Seychelles and also the largest of the archipelago, home to the capital, **Victoria**. Mahé has almost 70 beaches of fine sand, framed by the emblematic **granite rocks**, and whose crystal clear waters are renowned for their rich underwater life. The island is also famous for its **splendid mountain panoramas** accessible on hikes, such as the Morne Seychellois, which is 905 metres high and overlooks the Indian Ocean. Mahé is also an island full of history where fine colonial properties rub shoulders with **Creole houses** - and don't forget the marvellous **Botanical Gardens** in Victoria.