# Walking on Reunion Island

Trip Code: SGRE

Version:

| WALK & TREK | SELF-GUIDED | MODERATE |
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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Trek in the dramatic cirques of Réunion and discover small remote hamlets only accessible on foot or by helicopter
- Hike through the mystical forest of Belouve to view the magnificent Trou de Fer waterfall
- Walk the lunar landscapes of Piton de la Fournaise, one of the most active volcanoes in the world
- Discover the Wild South Coast of the island where forces of nature collide

- Relax at the tropical beach resort of Saint-Gilles les Bains
- Immerse yourself into fantastic Creole culture and flavours

### AT A GLANCE

- 10 days walking and sightseeing
- Max altitude 2,896m
- Daily departures
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Join at Reunion Roland Garros Airport

### ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

# Introduction

Positioned in the Indian Ocean east of Madagascar, the volcanic island of La Réunion offers a wealth of stunning hiking trails in a variety of breathtaking tropical scenery. As a French overseas department, the island offers familiar elements of France seamlessly incorporated with the melting pot of Creole culture created at this crossroads of African, Asian and European civilisations.

On this self-guided drive and hike holiday, you will arrange your own hire car to explore all the very best highlights of Réunion at the freedom of your own pace. Our unique itinerary completes a tour of the island that ticks off the three cirques of Salazie, Mafate and Cilaos; the incredible lunar landscapes of the Piton de la Fournaise volcano; the Wild South Coast; and ends with some well-deserved R&R at the coastal idyll at Saint-Gilles les Bains. This is an enticing adventure playground of an island, full of surprises and just waiting for you to discover.

## Is this holiday for you?

This holiday has been specially designed to give you the flexibility to make the most of your holiday time and uncover all that this stunning island has to offer. You will need to arrange a rental car independently; there are numerous car hire agencies located at Roland Garros Airport.

You will walk between 4-5 hours a day on average, surrounded by endlessly dramatic and varied scenery on sometimes rugged and exciting trails. The nature of the terrain shaped by volcanic forces does mean that routes often have sharp ascents and descents on trails that can be slippery or muddy, where having a good pair of hiking boots and trekking poles would be advisable. There is little technical ground but a good level of fitness and surefootedness will make this holiday even more enjoyable for regular weekend walkers.

The many excellent hiking trails on Réunion are well marked and signed in the European GR convention. On Piton de la Fournaise the routes are waymarked by white paint, but the unique microclimatic conditions here can bring low visibility so having some map reading and navigational skills are essential.

There will be a two day, one night hike to a remote hamlet located in the Cirque of Mafate, inaccessible by car, so you will need to carry some overnight items with you. Accommodation for one night here is in

simple, off-grid hikers' gites with shared bathroom facilities. For the rest of the trip, you will stay in a carefully chosen range of comfortable hotels and guesthouses.

For safety considerations on the more remote mountain trails, this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers.

# Itinerary

Version:

# Holiday Information

## What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- GPX tracks supplied

## What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to/from Reunion
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tourist taxes may apply and are usually under 5 Euros per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Hire car and fuel for the car
- Any car parking charges
- Any additional transport
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

## Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit and the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook, and all your relevant documents, no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start-date. We will send your documents using a signed-for courier so that you can track your package and know that it is safely on its way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our Sales Team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker, so please remind them to pack it before setting off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start-date, please inform our Sales Team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

## Car Hire

This holiday has been designed to give you the ultimate flexibility and independence with arranging your own hire car.

There are numerous car hire agencies on Réunion with offices available at Roland Garros Airport. Arranging your car independently, you can choose the type of vehicle you prefer, the number of drivers required, and the level of excess protection desired. Car hire brokers such as Zest Car Rental are a good resource for comparing rental deals. We highly recommend that you pre-book your hire car so that it is ready to collect on arrival.

Our sales team would also be happy to provide you with a quote for car hire through our preferred partner, Zest Car Rental. If you choose to arrange your hire car through KE, you would benefit from financial protection of your full holiday package.

Rental conditions will vary according to the provider; these will be presented with your quote. General terms and conditions for hire can be found here: https://www.zestcarrental.com/terms/

As a minimum service level, car rental arranged through KE would come with:

- Excess protection
- Top-up insurance
- Unlimited mileage
- Breakdown assistance

Upgrades such as additional days' hire, automatic transmission, or electric or hybrid vehicles can also be requested (subject to availability).

You can also find answers to frequently asked questions and further information about car hire here

## Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking or cycling holiday for your family, a centre-based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a day's walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool, or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our Sales Team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The nearest airport for this trip is Roland Garros Airport with many connections from UK regional airports via Paris or Mauritius. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. There are numerous car rental agencies available at Roland Garros Airport – pre-booking your hire car is highly recommended.

## Meal Plan

This trip is arranged on a half board basis for 9 nights, while the 2 nights at the coastal resort in Saint-Gilles is arranged on a bed & breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility to choose from the many restaurants and cafes available here.

## Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets.  Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home.  If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice.  Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

## Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

Réunion has a melting pot of cultures and nationalities, which led to an intriguing fusion of cuisines from India, China, France, Madagascar and the African mainland. Eating is one of the favourite activities of Réunionese and dinners are hearty, typically consisting of three course meals.

The regional specialty is 'cari', a truly Creole dish in which many ingredients are simmered together. The cari is made using Indian spices and local ingredients like meat, poultry, fish or seafood and contains garlic, onion, plenty of tomatoes, turmeric, cloves and ginger. Caris are best eaten with boiled rice. The favourite special dishes of the islanders are carri bichique, carri tangue and wasp larvae served in a dish called rougail.

Traditional Indian, Chinese and French food is available at the many restaurants and cafes in Réunion that also serve good local and French wines. However, essentially being a part of France, much of the food will be familiar French fare including baguette at breakfast with butter and jam, and sandwiches for lunch. While at the coast, you will be sure to find the freshest of the day's catch - a real treat for the seafood lovers.

You will find the local beer 'Bourbon' ubiquitously available, which is affectionately called 'Dodo'. Be sure to sample the 'rhum arrangé maison' (rum infused with different flavours). Each establishment has their own special mix of flavours.

## Accommodation

On this holiday you will stay in a range of hotels, guesthouses and gites, with each location carefully selected to enable you to experience the astounding variety of landscapes on Réunion Island. Utilising small, family-run accommodations, you will be treated to a warm Creole welcome and your stay will directly benefit small businesses and the local economy.

Many hotels have lush gardens and outdoor spaces, perfect for sitting out with a rum aperitif. Some even have pools for cooling off at the end of your day of exploration.

When you stay in the remote car-free hamlet in the cirque of Mafate, only accessible on foot (or helicopter!), your accommodation will be simple family-run gites; these traditional huts are surrounded by incredible mountain views and impeccable night skies. Here you will stay in small dorm rooms for between 2 to 6 people, generally with shared bathroom facilities. Sheets and bedding are provided at the gites. Hot water is supplied by solar water heaters, therefore is limited and cannot always be guaranteed. You can usually find charging points for personal electrical devices in communal areas. At these remote off-grid locations, you can expect to disconnect from the modern trappings of WiFi and drink in the tranquillity of your surroundings. Single rooms are not available at the mountain gites.

In the popular seaside resort village of Saint-Gilles les Bains, you will stay in one of the modern, well-equipped hotels close to the beaches of this stretch of coast.

Having a supply of cash would be a good idea especially for more remote areas. Credit cards are useful and are accepted at larger towns and establishments.

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation in Saint-Denis or Saint-Gilles before or after your trip on Réunion if you wish for a little more time on this magnificent island. Please speak with one of our sales team for further information.

## Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline. Please also consider the luggage capacity of the type of vehicle you choose to hire, as you will transport your luggage with you when you change locations.

# General Information

## Passport & Visas

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

**The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.**

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates** *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

## Health & Vaccinations

**Vaccinations:**

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.**

**Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.**

**Severe Allergies:**

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

## Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

## Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 4-5 hours in mountainous terrain for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina.

## Climate

Réunion Island has a humid tropical climate with two distinct seasons. The austral winter season from May to October is generally cooler and drier than other times of the year, and is the best season for trekking in the mountains. From November to April it is hotter, more humid and wetter. January and February is the season for tropical cyclones so we do not offer our self-guided itinerary over these months. Coastal temperatures can vary from mid-20C in the winter months to over 30C in the austral summer months. In the mountains, conditions will be significantly cooler and night times can feel cold.

By its nature, mountainous terrains do generate their own microclimates, with sudden tropical downpours and storms occurring at any time of the year. The conditions also change very rapidly on Piton de la Fournaise, as clouds can come in obscuring visibility in the caldera. You should always be prepared for all eventualities.

### Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

### Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

### Books

Mauritius, Réunion & Seychelles - Lonely Planet

Don't Let Go - Michel Bussi

Island of Ghosts: Uncovering the Haunting Secrets of Réunion Island - Jean-Geal Reboul

### Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

# Equipment Information

### Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good grip soles

- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Long/short hiking trousers
- Hiking socks
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Rucksack (approx. 30 l)
- Small first aid kit inside your rucksack
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses
- Toilet paper

- Travel towel
- Swimwear
- Sandals
- Insect repellent
- Personal wash kit
- Ear plugs
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Tupperware for picnics
- Walking poles
- Headtorch & spare batteries
- Your self-guided route notes

### Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons in twin/double occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers - contact our Sales Team for a quote.

This holiday requires a hire car to be arranged independently. There are a number of car rental agencies available on Réunion with offices at the airport. Our Sales Team can also provide a quotation for car hire if required.

When considering your travel dates, you might like to investigate any seasonal opening times of attractions and points of interest.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights' accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our Sales Team to find out more about this.

Our Sales Team will be happy to provide you with a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

# Why Choose KE

### Why KE

Named as one of the best countries to visit in Lonely Planet’s Best in Travel 2026.We have designed this holiday to showcase the incredible and varying landscapes of Réunion Island. Travelling independently with your own hire car, you have the ultimate flexibility to discover the many charms of this spectacular island at your own pace.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 24/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change