




REUNION ISLAND



It's a way
of life &
you'll love it!



A collection of traditional musical instruments is displayed against a dark, textured background. In the upper left, a large, shallow drum with a light-colored, mottled skin head is visible, with two thin wooden sticks resting against it. To its right is a smaller, round drum with a similar skin head, mounted on a wooden frame. In the foreground, a long, cylindrical bamboo instrument, possibly a shakuhachi or a similar flute, is positioned horizontally. It has a woven bamboo cover over its body and two wooden mouthpieces. The lighting is warm and focused, highlighting the textures of the wood and skin.

Experience Reunion by
immersing yourself in its
culture: care, emotions,
discoveries and,
put simply, happiness
await you!



LOOKING FOR SUCCESSFUL INTERMIXING AND “LIVING TOGETHER”?

Reunion Island wears its name remarkably well. Here, “living together” is what people do every day. Long deserted and known only to those who plied the “Passage to India”, Reunion received its first inhabitants, French and Malagasy, in 1663. Coffee farming in the 18th century saw the introduction of slavery with labour from Madagascar, the African coast and India. In the 19th century, coffee was replaced

by sugar cane, and in 1848, the abolition of slavery resulted in massive recruitment of Indian workers.

Subsequently, Muslim Gujarati traders, Chinese from the Canton region and mainland officials would travel to the Island. Today, it's a real rainbow population with its cultural mix that warmly welcomes visitors to the island!





LOOKING FOR “KILTIR”?

The culture, or “kiltir” in Reunion Creole, is like the people of Reunion – multiple and mixed. It is also a reflection of its history in the image of the Maloya, ranked as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. Combining music, song and dance, Maloya was born to express the pain and rebellion among the slaves of Malagasy and African origin in the sugar plantations. At the border of ancestral worship and handed down from generation to generation, Maloya has today become an integral part of the cultural identity of Reunion. Sega, the other major musical genre in Reunion, is more of a festive dance music. Sega and Maloya both remain strong in the heart of Reunion culture, and the latter sometimes

combines with other musical styles such as jazz, reggae and dancehall ragga.

The Creole language remains at the heart of everyday life and artistic expression, and there are many live shows (storytelling, theatre, comedy...) in Creole; there are even translated versions of albums of famous comic strips like Tintin and Asterix.

The visual arts and dance are also very much present and particularly rich, and there are many sculptures that dot the towns and their streets; as for the dancers, they express themselves in both the traditional and contemporary fashion at shows and festivals like the Deepavali dance festival, the festival of light of Reunion’s Tamils.





LOOKING FOR STORIES OR HISTORY?

The human history of Reunion, though it's a relatively short time since the first inhabitant landed in the 17th century, is very much present throughout the island through its culture, architecture and artistic expression. Rue de Paris in St Denis and its beautiful colonial houses, the village of Hell-Bourg with its "change of air shacks*", the embroidery of Cilaos, the fishing district of Terre Sainte, the small shacks of Mafate, the Creole villages of La Plaine des Palmistes or Tévelave, the marines** of St Philip and St Rose... every town, every village has its own proud history.

As for the stories, or "zistwar" in Creole, they are still part of everyday life with traditions

still very much alive of the folk tale and "fonnkèr", the poetic expression that could be likened to slam before its time!

*The change of air shacks are houses located in the highlands of the island that allowed the rich from the coastal towns to escape the intense heat of the southern summer.

**Marines are mostly ports reduced to their simplest form as a basic slipway.





LOOKING FOR SOMETHING GOOD TO EAT?

Reunion cuisine is a reflection of its population: mixed! Each new influx of people brought its own culinary tradition with it, and today, Reunion's menu reflects this every day!

There's one common element: the rice that accompanies almost all dishes! Indulge in curries that mix meat and fish in a sauce made with tomatoes, turmeric, garlic, onions and thyme, chop-suey that combines shrimp, meat or fish with sautéed baby vegetables in oyster sauce, massalés made of goat or poultry in their spicy sauce with a coriander, pepper, cumin, cardamom, nutmeg, clove, cinnamon, fenugreek and chili base ... not to mention rougail sausage or vanilla duck, and many more!

Everywhere, "truck stops" await you at any time of the day to satisfy your appetite with

curries, sandwiches (whose size will impress you!), bouchons* and samosas, sodas and Dodo beer, the local beer** which has just celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

And to finish off your meal, a neat little rum is usually offered, mixing rum from the local sugar cane with a little honey or sugar and various fruits or spices!

*Small steam dumplings with pork or chicken.

**Alcohol abuse is dangerous for health; drink in moderation.





YOU WANT TO GO EVEN FURTHER?

There are lots of museums where you can discover the depths of Reunion culture. Visit the Léon Dierx Museum and its incredible collection of works of the famous merchant by the Impressionist who hails from Reunion: Amboise Vollard; the Natural History Museum of St Denis and its collection of fauna from Reunion and the Indian Ocean; Volcano City in Plaine des Cafres to journey into the bowels of the earth; the Botanical Conservatory of Mascarin in St Leu to learn all about our flora; Villèle Museum in the former sugar

estate; Makes Observatory for astronomy enthusiasts to explore the skies of the southern hemisphere; Stella Matutina Museum to learn all about cane and sugar; Madoi, the Museum of Decorative Arts of the Indian Ocean in St Louis...

There's a variety of museums covering all aspects of Reunion's life and history; choosing between all these exciting places is the hard part!



Whatever your heart desires, Reunion and its inhabitants with their generous and genuine hospitality will open their doors to what looks remarkably like paradise!

Tour operators specialising in the art of living, partners of Reunion Island Tourism, offer different types of stays.



Find these deals at
reunion.fr



REUNION ISLAND Tourism Board

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DISCOVER THE MANY FACETS OF REUNION ISLAND

Live, feel and move to the rhythm of Reunion Island with our 360-degree video
that takes you to the heart of the action



Download the new
mobile VR app,
available on Android

