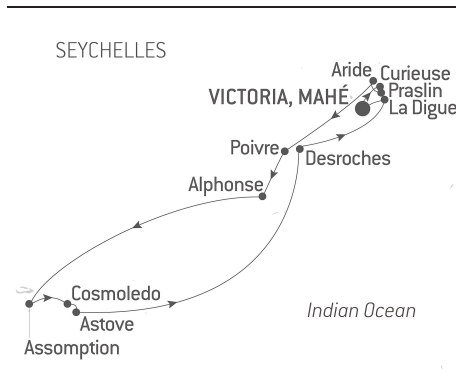


# Secret Seychelles islands

From **3/2/2022**  
to **15/2/2022**

Ship: **LE BOUGAINVILLE**

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



Embark with PONANT on an **expedition cruise** to discover the most beautiful islands of the **Seychelles**. This 13-day itinerary aboard *Le Bougainville* will be an opportunity to discover little-known places of breathtaking natural beauty and an original fauna and flora.

Leaving from **Victoria**, the archipelago's capital, fall under the spell of the idyllic landscapes, with their **exceptional flora and fauna**.

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

You will discover the **island of Aride**, an unspoiled delight of the **Indian Ocean**, home to thousands of birds including some endemic species.

During your cruise, you will have many opportunities to **dive or snorkel**, notably in **Poivre, Assomption, Astove**, and at the heart of the sublime coral reef in **the Alphonse lagoon**.

Another highlight of your trip will be the port of call at **Cosmoledo**. This magnificent atoll owes its nickname, the **Galapagos of the Indian Ocean**, to the beauty of its unique underwater world. Diving in this paradise lagoon becomes an extraordinary experience.

Before you return to **Mahé**, *Le Bougainville* will chart a course for **the coral island of Desroches** and the sublime beaches of **La Digue**, some of the most renowned 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 8/3/2021

# Secret Seychelles islands

## YOUR STOPOVERS :

### VICTORIA, MAHÉ

Embarkation 3/2/2022 from 21h00 to 22h00

Departure 3/2/2022 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.

### CURIEUSE ISLAND

Arrival 4/2/2022

Departure 4/2/2022

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.

### PRASLIN ISLAND

Arrival 5/2/2022

Departure 5/2/2022

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.

## ARIDE ISLAND

Arrival 5/2/2022

Departure 5/2/2022

**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.

## POIVRE ISLAND

Arrival 6/2/2022

Departure 6/2/2022

At some 200 km south-west of Mahé, discover **Poivre Atoll**, a small paradise that is part of the **Amirantes archipelago**, in the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. Consisting of two **coral islands**, Poivre Island and Ile du Sud, separated by a small **lagoon**, it owes its name to Pierre Poivre, the Mauritius intendant who introduced spices to the Seychelles in the late 18th century. Once used for coconut plantations, Poivre Island is now focused on tourism. Visitors come here for scuba diving or big-game fishing in waters that are particularly rich and clean, where the marine life includes sea turtles.

## ALPHONSE ISLAND

Arrival 7/2/2022

Departure 7/2/2022

**Alphonse** Island is located off the Seychelles archipelago. Discovered in 1730 by the Knight Alphonse de Pontevez, this island, specialised in coconut processing in the past, is now a veritable **natural reserve**, home to different species of marine mammals, sea turtles and many birds. Alphonse Island is also renowned for its rich **underwater life** and **coral**, among the best preserved in the Indian Ocean. A marvellous spectacle that can be admired with just a mask!

## AT SEA

Arrival 8/2/2022

Departure 8/2/2022

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

## ASSUMPTION ISLAND

Arrival 9/2/2022

Departure 9/2/2022

**Assumption Island** is part of the **Aldabra group** (Outer Islands), situated in the south-west of the Seychelles. Discovered in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century by the French captain Nicolas Morphey, this bean-shaped island covered in **dunes** and **shrubs** is relatively flat. A handful of people live there, in a small village in the island's west. The island's beaches are a **major egg-laying and breeding site for sea turtles**. The surrounding waters are ideal for scuba diving. This is where Jacques-Yves Cousteau filmed some of the scenes for his famous documentary film "The Silent World", released in 1956.

## COSMOLEDO ATOLL

Arrival 10/2/2022

Departure 10/2/2022

The Cosmoledo Atoll owes its nickname, the **Galapagos of the Indian Ocean**, to the beauty of its underwater world, which attracts the most experienced divers: parrotfish, giant rays and clams inhabit the reefs of its crystal waters. The fascinating marine life comes alive as the multi-coloured fish, making the most of the protection of the extraordinary **coral reef**, come together to feed in the currents formed by the sweeping movements of the tides. Exploited in the past for coconut and agave, the atoll is now uninhabited, apart from an eco-resort in the heart of the **nature reserve**, which shelters green turtles and significant colonies of sooty terns and red-footed boobies.

## ASTOVE ISLAND

Arrival 11/2/2022

Departure 11/2/2022

Closer to Madagascar than to Victoria, **Astove** is the **southernmost island** in the Seychelles. It is part of the **Aldabra group**, in the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. Now uninhabited, this **coral island** covered in coconut trees was once home to the employees that worked on the coconut plantations. Renowned for the richness of its seabeds, Astove Atoll is now a top destination for fishing enthusiasts. It also attracts experienced divers, who visit the atoll to explore the "**Astove Wall**", where the sea floor drops to a depth of about 40 metres. The wall is **covered in coral** and many fish and green sea turtles can be found there.

## AT SEA

Arrival 12/2/2022

Departure 12/2/2022

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

## DESROCHES ISLAND

Arrival 13/2/2022

Departure 13/2/2022

Coconut trees, she-oak, white-sand beaches, warm and clear waters: everything here is conducive to daydreaming and relaxation in an intimate setting where the blue sky completes the picture postcard. You are on **Desroches Island**, the largest in the **Amirantes group** in the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. This 6 km long **coral atoll** covered in lush vegetation is surrounded by spectacular seabeds where encounters with sharks and manta rays are not uncommon. On the beach, you may be lucky enough to observe sea turtles, there to lay their eggs. In the island's north, a lighthouse that is still in operation stands guard, and the small village is home to a chapel and a cemetery.

## LA DIGUE ISLAND

Arrival 14/2/2022

Departure 14/2/2022

**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 15/2/2022 early morning

Disembarkation 15/2/2022 at 07h00

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.