



Seychelles

Photo: alpinenature/Shutterstock.com



Pavel Korotkov/Shutterstock.com

European explorers took what today is Praslin Island's nature reserve to be the original Garden of Eden, and no wonder — the primeval forest of Vallee de Mai has changed little over millions of years, and giant Aldabra tortoises still roam the archipelago populated by an incredible diversity of endemic plant and animal species. Out of the 115 islands that make up the Seychelles, only 12 are inhabited by humans, making for splendidly pure natural landscapes, unspoilt beaches, and some of the world's most fantastic diving spots.



dibrova/Shutterstock.com



Dmitry Laudin/Shutterstock.com

Featured



Silhouette Island
The volcanic island of Silhouette is significantly younger than its nearby s...



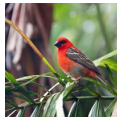
Curieuse Island Tortoise Farm
Organised tours take visitors to the Giant Tortoise Farm on Curieuse Island ...



Takamaka Rum Distillery
The country's own small rum distillery offers a popular guided tour that las...

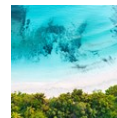


Tea Factory
Perched on a scenic mountainside along the way to Morne Seychellois National...



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Mahe Island's spectacular national park is one of the archipelago's unmissab...



Vallée de Mai
The UNESCO-listed Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve is another one of the Seychel...



THE ISLANDS



IndustryAndTravel/Shutterstock.com

The overwhelming majority of visitors to the Seychelles stay on one of the archipelago's three main islands: Mahe, Praslin, or La Digue. Mahe, the largest, is also the liveliest, with the most generous offer of shopping and entertainment. The capital city - Victoria - is also located on Mahe, many flocking to its Sir Selwyn Selwyn-Clarke Market (often simply referred to as "Victoria Market") for produce and souvenir shopping. Mahe is most often any traveller's first point of entry to the Seychelles, for it is on this island that the nation's only international airport is located.

Praslin, albeit much smaller, has plenty in the way of nature escapes - the UNESCO-listed Vallee de Mai reserve makes for some incredible hiking through primeval mangrove forest, where the endemic (and rather wacky-looking) coco de mer grows undisturbed.

La Digue, the smallest of the three, will please those looking for seclusion - the only means of transportation here is cycling, which means no vehicles or other disturbances - just you, picture-perfect beaches, and star-dotted night skies.

Day-trips and private excursions can be arranged to nearby islands like Curieuse or Silhouette, as well as some of the more remote outer islands.

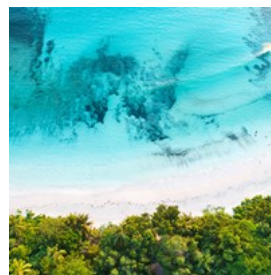
DO & SEE



iko/Shutterstock.com

The Seychelles' incredible biodiversity is an attraction in itself, with ample opportunities to get close and personal with the islands' most famous inhabitants - the giant Aldabra tortoises - as well as a countless other animal and plant species (most notably among the latter indigenous coco de mer). The archipelago's luxury hotels are the ultimate relaxation retreats, and active pursuits are available in the way of hiking through thick mangrove forests, diving and snorkelling.

Beaches



The Seychelles' 115 paradisiacal islands are home to some of the world's finest, most stunning beaches, many offering unparalleled seclusion. Some of the islands' best include Anse Lazio and Volbert on Praslin; scenic Anse Cocos, private Anse Marron and Anse Source d'Argent on La Digue; and Anse Takamaka on Mahe Island.

Photo: Jenny Sturm/Shutterstock.com

Wildlife Observation



Many of the archipelago's islands are populated by giant Aldabra tortoises, and bird species number 250, 12 of those being unique to the islands.

Mahe Island's Port Launay Marine National Park is the place to head for whale shark sightings, and Praslin Island is home to the country's national bird - the Seychelles black parrot.

Cousine Island is where visitors are encouraged to take part in wildlife conservation projects (and spot free-roaming giant tortoises and rare bird species along the way). A mere 3km away from there is Fregate Island, known especially for its chelonian inhabitants.

Photo: Pavel Korotkov/Shutterstock.com

Diving & Snorkelling



The Seychelles' unique marine biodiversity and appealing crystal-clear waters create the perfect conditions for underwater discovery. For

snorkelling, head to one of the best sites of the Indian Ocean - Sainte Anne Marine National Park - or take advantage of the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to swim alongside whale sharks on Mahe. Diving is another way to get close and personal with reef inhabitants (humphead parrotfish, octopus, various types of sharks - including hammerhead, if you're in luck).

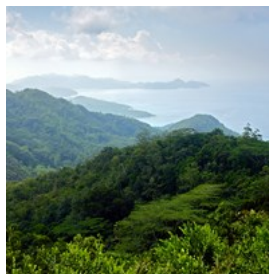
Seychelles Underwater Centre

Photo: Jag_cz/Shutterstock.com
Address: Beau Vallon, Mahe Island
Phone: +248 4 247 165

Internet: www.diveseychelles.com.sc

More Info: At the Coral Strand Hotel

Morne Seychellois National Park



Mahe Island's spectacular national park is one of the archipelago's unmissable attractions. Hike up Morne Blanc, the highest peak in all of the

Seychelles, along the Morne Blanc Hiking Trail (which cuts through lush mangrove forest), and be duly rewarded by the spectacular views unfolding from the observation deck at the top.

Photo: lidian Neeleman/Shutterstock.com

Address: Mahe Island

Vallée de Mai



The UNESCO-listed Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve is another one of the Seychelles' must-dos. Take a guided tour through the primeval

forest (free tours are given at 9am and 2pm daily) and see endemic trees, the curious fruit of coco de mer palm (the trees only grow in two places in the world, and nuts grow up to 42 kilos heavy), and a plethora of rare bird species.

Photo: Tatiana Popova/Shutterstock.com

Address: Praslin Island

Takamaka Rum Distillery



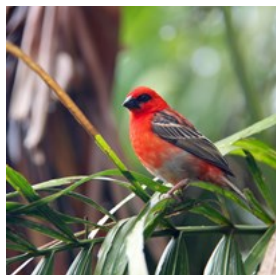
The country's own small rum distillery offers a popular guided tour that lasts just under an hour, and includes a rum tasting at the end. Bottles

of rum may be purchased at the on-site shop.

Stay for a meal at the adjacent restaurant (one of the island's best).

Photo: Brandon Bourdages/Shutterstock.com
Address: La Plaine St Andre, Au Cap, Mahe Island
Phone: +248 4 283 737
Internet: www.takamakarum.com

Bird Island



The now privately-owned Bird Island is the archipelago's northernmost, tellingly named after its incredible population of birds. The Bird Island Lodge provides eco-friendly accommodation and delicious meals, and further pursuits include snorkelling, dolphin-watching, and meeting the island's largest inhabitant - the 300kg tortoise Esmeralda.

Photo: Bety X/Shutterstock.com

Silhouette Island



The volcanic island of Silhouette is significantly younger than its nearby siblings, formed by a volcanic eruption 63 million years ago (compare to Mahe Island's venerable age of 650 million years). It is home to the archipelago's arguably most affordable luxury resort, Hilton Seychelles Labriz Resort & Spa. The island's reef is one of the best in the archipelago, with nature trails and diverse flora and fauna adding to the appeal.

Photo: Serge Vero/Shutterstock.com

Tea Factory



Perched on a scenic mountainside along the way to Morne Seychellois National Park is the Seychelles' own Tea Factory, which offers short tours taking visitors through all steps of the tea-making process. Try the islands' signature SeyTé tea, comprising flavours of vanilla, orange, mint, lemon and cinnamon. Other teas and herbal drinks are available for sampling and purchase.

Photo: voyata/Shutterstock.com
Address: Sans Souci Road, Mahe Island
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 7am-4pm
Phone: +248 37 82 21

Curieuse Island Tortoise Farm



Organised tours take visitors to the Giant Tortoise Farm on Curieuse Island (tours depart from Praslin and other islands). Upon seeing the Aldabra, visitors are free to explore the island further, and get the chance to see coco de mer palm trees, indigenous black parrot, the breeding ground for green sea turtles, and even more varied flora and fauna.

Photo: Matej Kastelic/Shutterstock.com

DINING



Ciurtin Ramona Georgiana/Shutterstock.com

Seychellois cooking revolves around the sea: fish and seafood play a central part, followed closely by chicken. The proteins are frequently offered as part of a curry, served with a side of rice. Fine dining is available at most upper-range hotels (which can get pricey), but plenty of affordable alternatives can be found at small independent eateries.

Marie-Antoinette (Victoria)



The set menu offered at Marie-Antoinette has barely change since the 1970s, and consists of a variety of traditional Seychellois Creole dishes,

which gives patrons a chance to sample several at once. The restaurant is set inside a former colonial mansion, which forges a distinctive ambience of olde.

Photo: Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock.com

Address: Serret Rd, Mahe Island

Phone: +248 4 266 222

Internet: www.marieantoinette.sc

Del Place (Port Launay)



Del Place is easily the best restaurant on Mahe Island's west coast: the cooking is excellent, centred around fresh seafood and Creole

flavours, the views are unbeatable (thanks to the restaurant's scenic waterfront setting), and the atmosphere tropical yet refined.

Photo: Ostancov Vladislav/Shutterstock.com

Address: Port Launay Rd, Mahe Island

Opening hours: Daily 11am-11pm

Phone: +248 2 814 111

Boat House (Beau Vallon)



This North Coast restaurant's main draw is the varied dinner buffet, held daily from 7.30 to 9.30pm. Dishes served are primarily Creole

specialities, with seafood (tuna steaks on grill), meat, and vegetarian dishes represented, along with a traditional salad buffet selection.

Photo: nuu_jeed/Shutterstock.com

Address: Mount Fleuri Road, Beau Vallon, Mahe Island

Opening hours: Daily 11am-11pm

Phone: +248 4 247 888

Cafe des Arts (Praslin Island)



Perhaps Praslin's finest restaurant, Cafe des Arts (at Le Duc de Praslin Hotel) offers beachfront seating and serves a wide variety of Creole dishes,

with a heavy emphasis on seafood (the menu even includes sushi and sashimi). During the daytime, it operates as a beach bar.

Photo: Romrodphoto/Shutterstock.com

Address: Cote D'Or Esplanade, Baie Ste Anne, Praslin Island

Phone: +248 4 321 555

Internet: www.cafe.sc

Les Lauriers (Praslin Island)



For those who still aren't converts, Praslin Island's Les Lauriers whips up an excellent Creole buffet, one that has repeatedly convinced even the most

discerning diners. The meal starts at the abundant salad bar, only to be followed by grilled meats and fish.

Photo: Michaelpuche/Shutterstock.com

Address: Anse Volbert, Praslin Island

Opening hours: Thurs-Tue 7.30-10pm

Le Combava (La Digue)



La Digue's Domaine de L'Orangerie resort contains the island's most refined restaurant - Le Combava. This one is the place to go if you intend

to splurge, for opportunities are ample - Le Combava lists lobster, giant prawns, and fine wines on its menu - among other dishes, all exquisitely presented.

Photo: Aimee M Lee/Shutterstock.com

Address: Anse Severe, La Digue

Phone: +248 4 299 999

Internet: orangerie.sc/dining

The Fish Trap (La Digue)



It's a treat to be entrapped by this cool waterside eatery serving Creole specialities, bucketloads of seafood and international classics,

such as burgers and pasta. The Fish Trap also serves excellent cocktails (try the local rum based ones). There is a separate children's menu.

Photo: vetrovamarina/Shutterstock.com

Address: La Passe, La Digue

Opening hours: Daily 7.30am-11pm

Phone: +248 2 636 100

CAFES



ayelet photography/Shutterstock.com

Many beach bars operate as cafes during the daytime; the archipelago's largest island — Mahe — offers by far the largest variety of cheap casual eateries, especially in and around the capital of Victoria.

Maria's Rock Cafe (Anse Gouvernment)



The curious jungle cafe is stylised with pirate-themed decor and paraphernalia, seating offered in the cavernous inside space or the

outdoor terrace. Meats and seafood are brought to and grilled directly at patrons' tables. There is

an adjacent art studio run by the cafe owner's husband.

Photo: PiggigFoto/Shutterstock.com

Address: Anse Gouvernment Rd, Mahe Island

Opening hours: Wed-Mon 12-9pm

Phone: +248 4 361 812

Baobab Pizzeria (Beau Vallon)



This genuine waterside eatery serves what is, many would argue, some of the best value Italian eats on the island. It is normally very busy, but service is fast and the atmosphere pleasantly animated. Most patrons go for one of the pizzas paired with an ice-cold beer.

Photo: jukkrit disto/Shutterstock.com

Address: Main Road, Beau Vallon, Mahe Island

Phone: +248 4 247 167

Paradisier (Praslin Island)



The breezy restaurant with a patio covered by a palm-thatched roof serves quality Creole, French and Italian cooking. Pizzas are by far the most affordable choice (a moderately hungry party of two could share a single one), but the menu extends to include pricier meat and seafood.

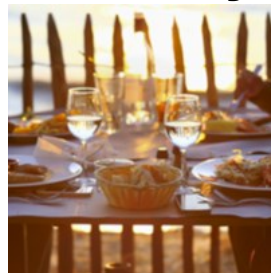
Photo: Ariadna Nevskaya/Shutterstock.com

Address: Grand Anse, Praslin Island

Opening hours: Tue-Sun 12-9pm

Phone: +248 4 237 537

Chez Jules (La Digue)



One of La Digue's best casual restaurants hides in a secluded location on Anse Banane, in a place that's nearly impossible to accidentally stumble upon. Try the seafood offerings of octopus salad and grilled tuna while taking in direct sea views, and follow-up with a freshly squeezed juice or smoothie.

Photo: Eo naya/Shutterstock.com

Address: Anse Banane, La Digue

Opening hours: Daily 9am-6pm

Phone: +248 4 234 287

Loutier Coco (La Digue)



The honest eatery on La Digue's beautiful Grand Anse must certainly be any visitor's lunch spot of choice: the daily lunch buffet offering is generous, and includes a continuous barbecue (the grilling starts at 12.30, arrive early). The dining area is set directly by the water.

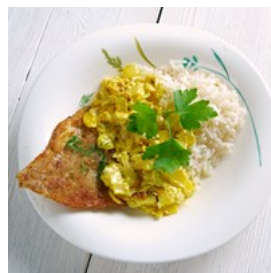
Photo: converse677/Shutterstock.com

Address: Grand Anse, La Digue

Opening hours: Daily 9am-5pm

Phone: +248 2514762

Snack Bellevue (La Digue)



The unbeatable panoramic views make this La Digue establishment one of the top contenders to the title of the archipelago's finest. Specially organised transfers bring diners part of the way to the establishment; the hike all the way up is just as steep as the prices, but

surely worth the investment.

Photo: Fanfo/Shutterstock.com
Address: Nid Aigle, La Digue
Phone: +248 2 527 856

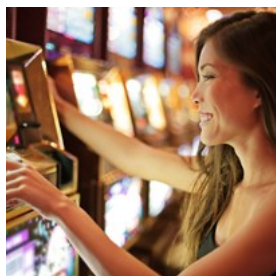
BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Ed-Ni Photo/Shutterstock.com

Those planning to explore local nightlife must head to Mahe Island's Beau Vallon or the capital of Victoria. For low-key evening drinks, most hotels will have an on-site bar, often with live music put on a few times a week. There are also a couple of clubs on Praslin Island. Another popular form of evening entertainment is taking a sunset cruise.

Club Liberté Casino (Anse Soleil)

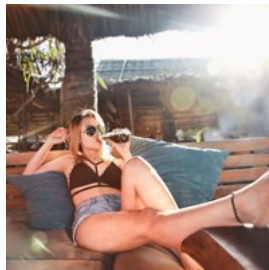


Worry not if this is your first time contemplating a visit to the casino: Club Liberté is exceptionally newbie-friendly, with staff ready to walk anyone through the basics of each game. It's a great place for a nice night out, too, with a surprisingly affordable (despite being adjacent to the Four Seasons Hotel) on-site restaurant and live music and entertainment every Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

The casino even offers its own pick-up and drop-off service (call to arrange).

Photo: Maridav/Shutterstock.com
Address: Petite Anse, Anse Soleil, Seychelles
Opening hours: Open till 4am
Phone: +248 2 605 462
Internet: www.casino-liberte.com

Honesty Bar (Anse Lazio, Praslin Island)



Once run on the honour system, the bar had, unfortunately, discovered that the concept might not quite work out the way it was intended to.

Luckily, this wasn't the end for the business, and the now-attended establishment continues to welcome in anyone looking for laid-back drinks at (what might just be) the world's best hideaway bar.

Photo: Bromelia/Shutterstock.com
Address: Anse Lazio, Praslin Island, Seychelles
More Info: Uphill from the southern edge of Anse Lazio

Trader Vic's (Beau Vallon)



Although not unique to the Seychelles, Trader Vic's is a worthwhile location for an evening out on Mahe. Service is impeccable, dishes served

- varied and scrumptious, and live music plays most nights. The cocktails are an attraction in and of themselves. Seating available on the outdoor terrace.

Photo: cdrin/Shutterstock.com
Address: Bel Ombre Road, Mahe Island
Phone: +248 4 387 000
Internet: www.tradervicsseychelles.com
More Info: At the The H Resort Beau Vallon

The Boardwalk (Eden Island)



This bar set on a floating platform was Eden Island's first, and remains an attractive evening hangout spot to-date. The weekends see party vibes set in at Boardwalk, while any day of the week is excellent for drinks overlooking the water.

Photo: Marques/Shutterstock.com
Address: Eden Island, Mahe Island
Phone: +248 2 515 734

SHOPPING



Ruslan Guzov/Shutterstock.com

There are a few talented artists who call the Seychelles home; their work is showcased and sold in the studios they run, and these are normally open to visitors during the daytime (ringing ahead is recommended to make sure the locale is open at your planned time of visit). Shopping enthusiasts will also certainly appreciate the variety present in Victoria, the capital, where local produce mingles with crafts and exceptional jewellery exclusive to the Seychelles.

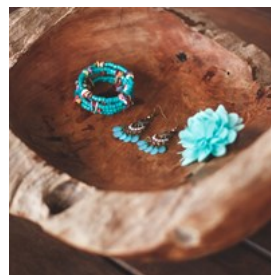
Victoria Market (Mahe Island)



The archipelago's largest and, perhaps, only market is a happening place that brings local vendors together Monday through Saturday (Saturday also happens to be the day when the market is at its liveliest). Those who arrive in the morning can see curious marine creatures fished out from local waters; produce, souvenirs, and handicrafts are sold all through the day.

Photo: Matej Kastelic/Shutterstock.com
Address: Sir Selwyn Selwyn-Clarke Market, Mahe Island
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 5.30am-5pm, Sat 5.30am-12pm

Kreolor



With outlets on Mahe (Camion Hall & Eden Island), Praslin (Grand Anse & Vallee de Mai) and La Digue (La Passe), Kreolor is one of the archipelago's best stores to purchase exquisite, unique jewellery and accessories. All pieces are made with natural materials and precious metals, and many draw design inspiration from coco de mer.

Photo: Studio Peace/Shutterstock.com
Internet: www.kreolorseychelles.com

Black Pearl Jewellery (Praslin Island)



Praslin's Black Pearl boutique sells exclusive jewellery made with authentic Seychellois pearls harvested in local waters, designed by world-renowned Australian jeweller Linneys. Designs are unique, which makes this a great

place to find one-of-kind pieces.

Photo: ChameleonsEye/Shutterstock.com

Address: Amitié, Praslin Island

Phone: +248 4 23 31 50

Internet: www.blackpearlseychelles.com

More Info: Next to Creole Travel Services

Camion Hall (Victoria)

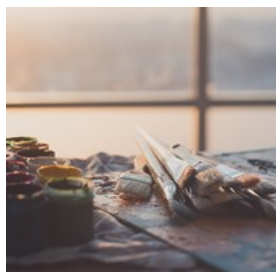


This shopping centre right across from the busy Victoria Market makes for a good stop to pick up souvenirs (oils, carvings, handicrafts, jewellery, etc.) produced locally in the Seychelles. Camion Hall also contains one of the boutiques of reputable jeweller Kreolor.

Photo: Casagrande/Shutterstock.com

Address: Albert St, Mahe Island

Michael Adams' Studio (Mahe Island)



The archipelago's most well-known artist calls the Seychelles home since 1972 (although his work has been exhibited worldwide), and

continues to create vivid watercolours exploring the theme of island living to-date. Call before your visit to confirm the studio is open.

Photo: Undrey/Shutterstock.com

Address: West Coast Road, Mahe Island

Phone: +248 4361006

Internet: www.michaeladamsart.com

Yellow Gallery & Sculpture Studio (Anse Gouvernment, Mahe Island)



One of the Seychelles' most well-known artists, Antonio Filippin, has a studio on Mahe Island's west coast (uphill from Baie Lazare). Adjacent to the studio is his spouse's quirky pirate-themed cafe, frequented by vacationers from the neighbourhood.

Photo: nata-lunata/Shutterstock.com

Address: Anse Gouvernment Road, Mahe Island

Phone: +248 4361812

TOURIST INFORMATION



haveseen/Shutterstock.com

Passport / Visa



The Seychelles is a visa-free country. Visitors are, however, required to produce a passport or travel document that remains valid until the individual's return to their country of origin.

Photo: TukTuk Design/Shutterstock.com

Best Time to Visit

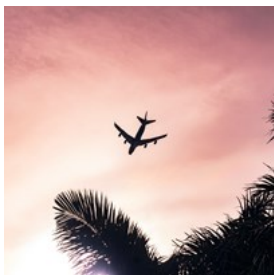


The Seychelles generally boast good weather all through the year, December through April being the hottest, while January and February

often see brief tropical rainfall. April-May and October-November are when the Seychellois waters are at their clearest, making for some incredible underwater visibility and thus excellent diving.

Photo: VectorA/Shutterstock.com

Seychelles International Airport (SEZ)



The Seychelles International Airport, a few kilometres away from the Mahe Island's Victoria, is the country's only international airport,

and main point of entry for the majority of visitors.

Taxis and rental cars are available for hire at the airport. There is a public bus stop just outside the airport; at the time of writing, the Seychelles public busses are not equipped with luggage storage compartments, which means no passengers travelling with luggage are admitted on board.

Photo: Eduardo Velazco Guart/unsplash

Address: Aéroport de la Pointe Larue,

Internet: seychellesairports.sc

Public Transport



The larger islands of Mahe and Praslin both have rather well-developed bus networks. A print-out containing all information

about schedules and routes can be picked up at the main station in Victoria (and at tourist offices in Praslin).

Bus destinations are usually displayed on the front window, fares are fixed regardless of travel distance and are paid to the driver upon boarding. To reach some destinations, a change at the capital's main station may be needed.

Ferry service connects the principal islands of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue. Privately arranged boat tours are necessary to reach other islands. On La Digue, cycling is the primary means of transportation, and bikes are widely available.

Air Seychelles operates 15-minute flights between Mahe and Praslin, and flies to other islands of the archipelago (some routes on request). Two charter companies (helicopter Zil Air and Islands Development Company (IDC)) also arrange transfers and excursions.

Photo: Pierre-Luc Auclair

Internet: www.sptc.sc

Taxi



Taxis can be hired on all three major islands: Mahe, Praslin, and La Digue. Cabs can be hailed off the side of the road, picked up at taxi stands,

or pre-ordered via telephone. Make sure the fare

is agreed upon before boarding if the taxi isn't equipped with a meter.

Photo: ArrivalGuides

Pharmacy



Most hotels employ a medical professional who is available 24/7.

Pharmacies on all three islands are located at hospitals. The one in

Victoria on Mahe Island operates Mon-Fri 8am-6pm, Sat 8am-12pm.

Victoria's main pharmacy is located at the Orion Mall.

Photo: Gemma Garner
Phone: +248 4 225 559

Post



Most hotels offer postage services to guests. The main Seychelles post office is located in Victoria on Mahe Island.

Photo: Andy Fuchs
Address: Independence Ave, Victoria
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 8am-6pm, Sat 8am-12pm

Telephone



Seychelles country code +248, followed by a 7-digit phone number

Photo: Jardson Almeida

Electricity

220-240, 50 Hz, three-pin British model plugs



Photo: Stirling Tschan

Population

100,447 (2022 estimate)

Currency

Seychellois rupee (SCR) = 100 cents

Opening hours

While general office hours in the Seychelles run from 8 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday, some tourist-oriented businesses will stay open longer or even open at the weekends.

Internet

www.seychelles.com

Newspapers

Le Nouveau Seychelles Weekly
Seychelles Nation — www.nation.sc

Emergency numbers

Police: 999
Medical: 151
Fire and Rescue: 999

Tourist information

La Digue Island Tourism Information Office
+248 4 23 43 93
STB.LaDigue@seychelles.travel
Open Mon-Fri 8am-4pm

Mahe Island Tourism Information Office
+248 2 72 64 42
info@seychelles.com
Open Mon-Fri 8am-4pm