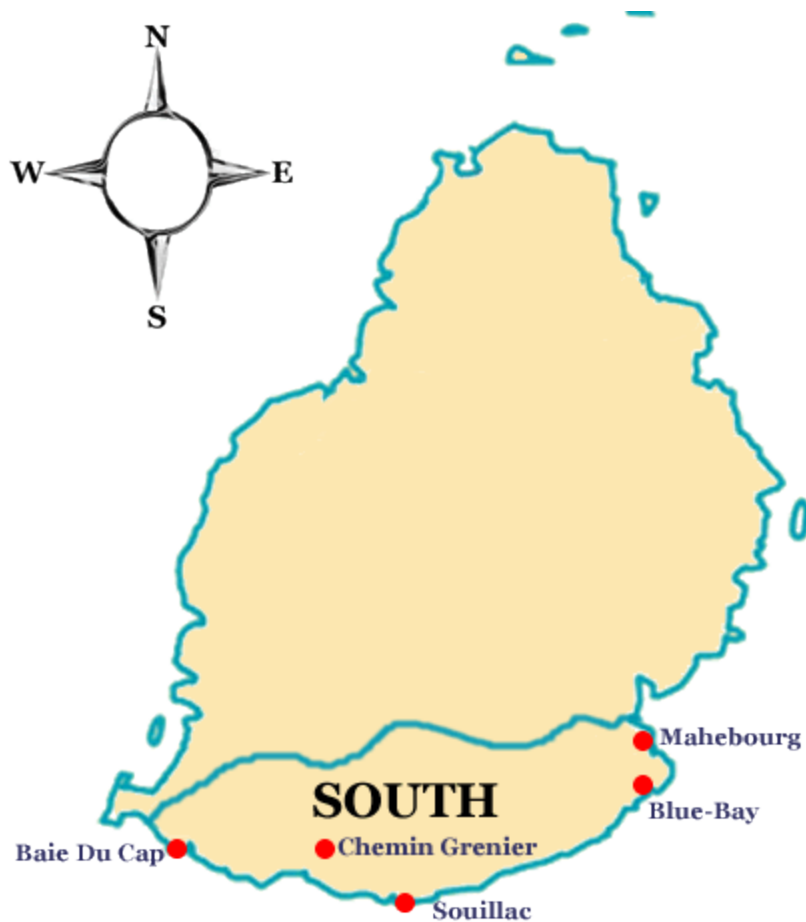


## PLACE OF INTEREST IN MAHEBOURG, MAURITIUS



### Mauritius Coastal South

The South of Mauritius bears the cradle of the islands history. With Vieux Grand Port " as the first landing station, the region around it was the first to be cultivated and developed. It was here, in the south - east, that the Dutch explorers built Mauritius ' first settlement back in 1638.

In 1735, the French Governor Mahé de Labourdonnais decided to move the main port to the opposite side of the island and declared Port Louis to be the main harbour and administration centre. This did not cause the region to lose much of its importance but it became a lot quieter and has remained that way ever since. The city of Mahebourg , to which he gave his name, is a historical landmark, a part of its' rich heritage on display at the Naval Museum.

It was not until much later, under the British Empire that this region was gradually left behind. Today, the South is the least developed and most authentic region of Mauritius.

# TOPOGRAPHY

Driving along the coast offers alternating sea and hill views and the temptation varies between sunbathing and hiking.

Due to the prevailing humidity, the vegetation in the region is very lush and unspoilt, harbouring many endemic trees and plants.

Along the South Coast , there are some shallow lagoons with crystal clear water but the South is one of the few places of Mauritius where the open sea comes straight in to break on rocky cliffs. In most places, bathing is considered as hazardous due to strong currents and dangerous waves.

Visiting the South is a twofold experience as its scenery and the omnipresence of its colonial history are both intriguing.

# MAHEBOURG

The atmosphere of Mahebourg is lively, cheerful and friendly. This is one of the few places where, it makes no difference to the people whether you come from Europe, Bombay or from Grand Bay .

The majority of Mahebourg's inhabitants are fishermen or field workers. Activities in the city start at daybreak to slowly fade out at dusk. Unspoilt by excessive development, smiles are still free of charge.

Like in all of the larger settlements, the population of Mahebourg is a thorough mixture of the ethnic groups and religions of the island. This is not necessarily obvious though, as former ethno-cultural specifications may have faded with time into the Mahebourg identity.

Relaxed, respectful, open-minded, quiet and fascinating, the people of Mahebourg and their surroundings are what we can call truly Mauritian.

# PLACE OF INTEREST

## NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM – MAHÉBOURG MAURITIUS.

A tree-lined drive off the Main Road, South of Mahébourg, leads to the National History Museum. The museum is housed in an old chateau that was home to French sugar barons, the De Robillard family. The fine colonial building served as an infirmary after the battle of Vieux Grand Port in 1810 when two wounded naval officers, the British Rear-Admiral Sir Nesbit Willoughby and French Rear-Admiral Victor Duperré, were brought here to recover.

The battle is described in the museum and there are numerous other relics from shipwrecks, including the wooden hull of the British frigate Magicienne, sunk in the battle. A newspaper cutting records the fate of the British steamer Trevesa, which sank hundreds of kilometres off the Mauritian coast in 1923. The survivors were washed up near Bel Ombre 25 days later, having survived on biscuits. Remains of the biscuits and the cigarette-tin lid used to measure their water rations bear witness to their ordeal.

## MAHEBOURG WATERFRONT.

Mahébourg Waterfront is a perfect place to walk along the sea and breathe the fresh air, enjoying the marvelous view around. You even have a pavilion to rest and enjoy the view.

## NOTRE DAME DES ANGES CHURCH.

You can also visit the Notre Dame Des Anges Church, built-in 1849 which has a beautiful architecture that has been modified and restored many times over the years.

## BLUE BAY – Marine Park

Blue Bay and the nearby Pointe d'Esny are the champions for best display of colour variety, changing constantly from sunrise to sunset. In the Blue Bay lagoon, the marine flora and is still alive and blooming. The newly founded Marine Park is the ideal spot for snorkelling and glass bottom boat tours.

## ROCHESTER FALLS \* *(not located in Mahebourg but around Souillac )*

The Rochester falls are one of the few easily accessible waterfalls. They are a nice sightseeing spot and provide an opportunity to leave the seaside behind and take a walk in the wild nature.