

Words Behiye Hassan

Private paradise

Perfect for the rat-race escapologist needing scenic solitude and serenity, Shangri-La's exclusive resort on Mauritius shows that castaway levels of seclusion don't have to mean a break from luxury and world-class service

Despite arriving after dark, *Director* could still see why they call it paradise. A stately banyan tree, bedecked with fairy lights, stands guard at the entrance of the lobby at Shangri-La's Le Touessrok Resort & Spa, overlooking the twinkling waters of the lagoon beyond. The doors to our suite opened to a king-size bed, a free-standing bathtub and the sounds of the Indian Ocean beneath the balcony. We couldn't wait for sunrise to see it in all its glory.

Dawn didn't disappoint, revealing the dazzling white sands and turquoise waters of Trou d'Eau Douce Bay, Mauritius. Sprawling along 34 acres of beachfront, Le Touessrok is the ideal retreat for those seeking seclusion and superb service. Its design is inspired by the island nation's eclectic cultural mix and dramatic landscape of lush rainforests, volcanic mountains and limpid lagoons, while also acknowledging Shangri-La's Asian heritage.

Every one of the resort's 200 rooms and suites has an ocean view. The Frangipani suites, where *Director* stayed, provide a great sense of privacy. They are set on their own islet, accessible via a footbridge. Le Touessrok's three beach villas, meanwhile, are even more secluded, forming arguably the most exclusive address in Mauritius. Each nestles in a separate enclave, offering an infinity pool, private beach access and a 24-hour butler service.

If that's still not enough of a castaway experience for you, there's Îlot Mangénie. This stunning little private island, a 10-minute boat trip away, is open

only to guests. There you can ensconce yourself in your own cabana for the day or enjoy a private lunch by the ocean, your solitude broken by a butler only when you want to it be.

While you're clearly not obliged to emerge from your shell for the entire stay, should you wish to be a little more active, you can wander through the resort to spot its century-old giant tortoises or go snorkelling among the sea turtles that frequent the bay. The Chi Spa, meanwhile, offers a broad selection of therapies in its eight treatment rooms. Golfers are well catered for too: a visit to Île aux Cerfs can be arranged, where you'll find a superb 18-hole championship course designed by Bernhard Langer, twice winner of the US Masters.

Dining options are bountiful here: the Republik Beach Club & Grill offers al fresco dining on the shore; Kushi, the resort's stylish Japanese restaurant, has *yakiniku* grills at each table and employs a dedicated sushi master; Le Bazar offers a mix of Asian and international dishes with lovely views of the lagoon; and fine-dining restaurant Safran features classical Indian cuisine with Mauritian influences.

For those hankering after a nightcap, the Sega Bar offers a generous range of Mauritian rums. Its signature drink is an eight-year-old rum served over a filtered ice ball with an orange twist in a tumbler that's been exposed to mango wood smoke. But whatever's in your glass, you'll be wanting to raise it to a beautiful place that truly offers paradise, uninterrupted. **D**

Accommodation

A night for two at Shangri-La's Le Touessrok Resort & Spa in one of its Frangipani ocean view junior suites starts at €431 (£395), plus 15 per cent VAT on bed and breakfast. The price includes a bottle of champagne on arrival, evening cocktails, minibar drinks and à la carte breakfast in the Republik Beach Club & Grill.

shangri-la.com/mauritius/shangrila

Getting there

Emirates serves Mauritius from both Heathrow and Gatwick. Business-class return flights start at £3,672.

emirates.com



Clockwise from top: the main resort of Le Touessrok hugs the beachfront of Trou d'eau Douce Bay, but guests also have exclusive access to Îlot Mangénie, which can be seen in the background; Kushi restaurant serves Japanese cuisine in stylish surroundings; the resort can arrange a catamaran cruise to Île aux Cerfs, home to an 18-hole golf course; several suites open directly on to the beach; turtles frequent the shallow waters around the resort

