

GILTEDGE

BEACH COMPARISON GUIDE





SEYCHELLES

Always warm and without extremes, Seychelles is a go-to island-hopping destination, with travellers usually spending a couple of days on the main islands. Bigger towns on these islands are great for visitors who want to explore the French culture of Seychelles – and get a taste of its cuisine, nightlife, hiking and market shopping. Once you've had enough of the crowds and fully immersed yourself in the nation's culture, you can hop to a private island where you can swim or snorkel to your heart's content.

Seychelles is a top choice for a beach honeymoon or romantic break. The service is superb and there are plenty of intimate resorts and secluded coves to choose from. Temperatures generally fall between 24°C and 32°C and the rainy season typically occurs from January to February, with calm seas and the warmest weather gracing the beaches from October – March.



MALDIVES

The Republic of Maldives is a small island nation located south of India and Sri Lanka. It boasts a hot, tropical climate, fairly consistent year-round temperatures averaging at 30°C, and is made up of around 1000 islands. It's best known for its barefoot luxury, its iconic aquamarine waters, thriving coral reefs and powder white beaches, making it the ultimate beach holiday destination for families and honeymooners alike.

The Maldives' main appeal is the "one island, one resort" offering. The islands of the Maldives archipelago are coral islands and are only about two metres above sea level. Here, you'll find diverse diving sites, and the crystal-clear waters promise high visibility. If diving is not your thing, you can just as easily experience the magic of the ocean by grabbing a surfboard and riding some gigantic waves or delving beneath the surface on a snorkelling adventure. Much to travellers' delight, the Maldives is home to a number of house reefs within swimming distance of the beach, always alive with sea life of all shapes and sizes.

The island is at its busiest from December – February. Low season takes place from May – October, which is also monsoon season, although the rain rarely lasts for long periods before the sun comes out again.



MAURITIUS

Mauritius is famed for its beaches and turquoise waters teeming with marine wildlife. World-class holiday resorts are scattered along the island's coastline offering fantastic service, abundant facilities, endless water sports, and shaded sun loungers by the sea. The island is a favourite for family holidays and honeymooners. Sunny, safe and with a never-ending list of activities, it caters for every member of the family, making it a top choice for multigenerational travel.

Thanks to its mild tropical maritime climate, Mauritius's weather is fantastic year-round, but the best time to go is from May – December when it's cool, dry and sunny. Mauritius can experience tropical storms during the summer season, particularly from mid-December through to March.



MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique's palm-lined beaches, remote islands and untamed national parks offer the perfect combination for a beach and bush safari. The country experiences a tropical to sub-tropical climate with two dominant seasons, a chilly, dry season from April – September and a hot, humid season from October – March. September – November is considered the 'best' time to visit, especially if game viewing is on the agenda.

The most appealing thing about this destination lies offshore: two clusters of postcard-perfect islands – the Bazaruto Archipelago in the south and the Quirimbas Archipelago near the Tanzanian border in the far north.

The warm water of the Indian Ocean is a paradise for marine life, hence Mozambique's reputation for being one of the best scuba-diving destinations in the world. Days can be spent diving with enchanting whale sharks and humpback whales or sailing on a traditional dhow between islands.



MADAGASCAR

Madagascar, the largest island in the Indian Ocean, draws in travellers from far and wide – particularly those who are keen to make the most of its pristine beaches and wildlife. Think lemurs vaulting from tree to tree, gigantic humpback whales, colourful chameleons and much more. The towering baobabs are another enticing aspect for nature lovers (of the nine species of baobab on earth, six are found only in Madagascar), and the locals are always happy to tell you a tale or two about how these magnificent goliaths are intricately woven into African folklore.

From a water sport perspective, the island country is a firm favourite amongst surfers, promising some impressive waves at its southern and northern tips from May through to October. Scuba diving is another go-to, which is unsurprising considering that Madagascar boasts a whopping 4,800 km worth of coastline chockfull of coral reefs and breath-taking marine life.

Holidaymakers can look forward to mild, dry weather from April – November and hotter, slightly wetter weather from December – March.



ZANZIBAR

Aquamarine waves lapping at the shore, blissful year-round sunshine with temperatures ranging between 28°C and 32°C during the day, snorkelling at Mnemba Atoll and the Chumbe Marine Park, and the opportunity to embark on a sensory spice tour. These are just a few of the exciting things to look forward to ahead of a holiday to tropical Zanzibar.

Aside from idyllic beach life, countless travellers visit with the intention of exploring historic Stone Town, a traditional trading town and the cultural heart of Zanzibar. It's awash with local vendors and beautiful stone architecture, making it the perfect place for a few memorable Instagram photo ops. Be sure to order a hot cup of chai tea from a street vendor and wander around wherever the winding pathways take you.

High season takes place from July – September, but no worries if you're keen to avoid the crowds – Zanzibar is a year-round destination perfect for sun-seekers.