

Discover Mauritius

Trekking in the south east brings the participants in close contact with nature that offers them plenty of pleasures that are felt through the blood and the senses. The participants will never feel let down as at no moment will they find themselves out of tune with the tapestry of spectacular landscape that unfolds itself to those who keep their eyes and ears open.

BY JWALA KALLEE



Trekking in the south east

Such a trek leads the participants into the heart of nature and lets them enjoy the various delights to their heart's content. Hiking, running, jogging, mountain climbing, archery, cycling and even equitation are the activities within the reach of the average visitor. The excursion may be undertaken with family, friends and even in groups to derive the maximum pleasure. The environmental conscience is awakened, there is a struggle for a good cause in the sense that the public becomes aware of what it means to preserve our ecology and fauna and flora. It's all this and more, especially the Ferney trail that passes through the heart of Bambous mountain and three domains namely L'Etoile, Le Vallon and Ferney. It's not so easy as it is beset with various levels of difficulties all along. The unevenness is at places positive and titillates the altitude at Le Vallon.

SPECTACULAR SOUTH EAST

Spectacular domains and lush green vegetation compels a stop at Domaine de L'Etoile while coming from Trou d'Eau Douce and borrowing the road that goes towards BelAir, then Montagne Blanche then the way to the domain is indicated a little further. It's a vast domain with its lush green vegetation, streams, rivers, hills and valleys. It's a natural sanctuary where nature has been protected in a wonderful fashion. Indigenous forests, lush valleys, crystalline sources and rivers stretch towards distant mountains, with the Indian Ocean as a backdrop in a ballet of changing light and shade as the hours go by. It has the oldest sugar factory, Ferney, and it extends towards the south of Mahebourg until the historic encampment of the red cliffs that overlook the lagoon of Vieux Grand Port. It has an area of 2000 hectares. It has a spectacular flora and fauna. Stags, wild pigs, monkeys, bats as well as species of birds such as the cateaux verts and the kestrels on the point of extinction. Besides, its English garden on the banks of the river grow a large variety of plants and trees including ebony trees and other endemic plants. The undulation of the hills and the valley of the domain offers several panoramic views spanning over half of the littoral of the island from the Central Plateau to Lion Mountain passing through the Moka Range mountains.

IMPRESSIVE DOMAIN

Visitors can practise a wide gamut of activities. Hiking, trekking, VTT, QUAD, 4x4, horse and bike



riding, archery, admiring the birds, deer and other animals like monkeys and boars that roam in that vast expanse of land. The journey can be rounded up by a good rest on the riverbank watching the 'millions', the 'cabots' and other tiny insects that add to the beauty of aquatic life and the exquisiteness of the cool and shady environment. The camera cannot remain insensitive to the exoticism of the domain. The birds hovering overhead, the butterflies flying from plant to plant, and the beetles that keep on humming and align it to the sweet sound and music that fills the place with a certain charm. It looks as if one is in Elysium where all the senses are taken care of. The sweet fragrance of the flowers, the smell of mellow fruits wild and consumable are sure ingredients to please the most difficult taste.

Le Domaine de L'Etoile is also reputed for being an exclusive site for cocktails, lunches and dinners that can be enjoyed in the open restaurant in the tropical gardens.

WEIRD POINTE

The trek can be pushed further south if one feels like. It's equally enriching and enjoyable. In continuing towards the south the trekker will pass by Pointe du Diable. It is so called maybe because of cannons that face the vast open sea from where danger might emanate. It is said to have been the site of a naval battle. The picturesqueness of the surrounding area withholds the step. Lovers of nature cannot help stopping and pay tribute to Dame Nature for pampering them with such visual delights. It's also an occasion for stretching one's legs and tasting the culinary talent of the locality.

A little further away may be seen a huddle of old houses made of big grey stone reminiscent of colonial days. Also there is an old military bungalow of the governor transformed into a restaurant called Le Barachois. It is superbly located and offers a specialized service comprising Chinese cuisine, top Mauritian delights with fish and venison curry, fresh crabs and lobster that can be chosen from its own fish pond. The tables overlook the water in an environment with Mauritian style huts, bungalows built on piles with terraces bridging on the mangrove.

The trek reserves suspense and surprises and strong emotions that many like. Daredevil adventures likely to daunt even the most intrepid are in store. Try it if you feel like. At the end of the day you may be proud to call it a day.