



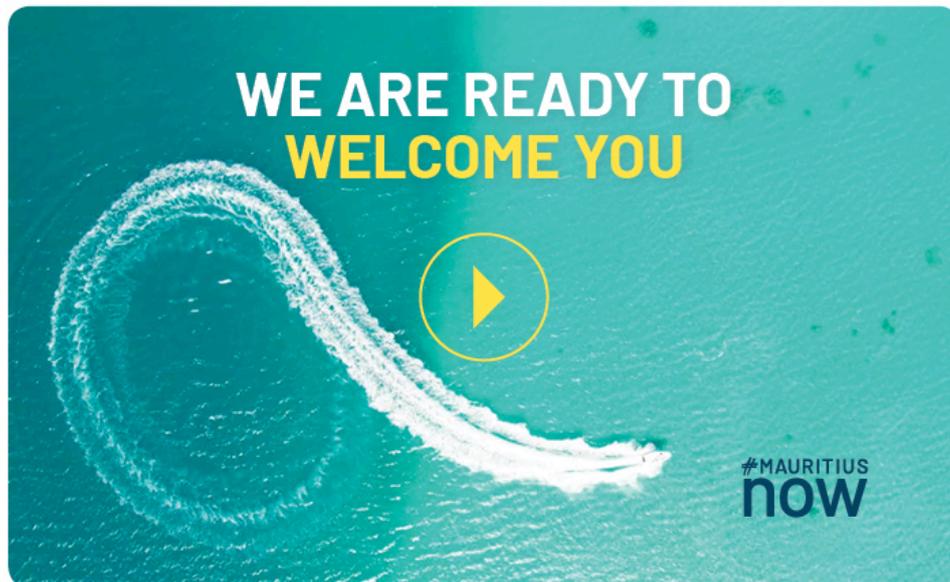
## Mauritius welcomes first wave of tourists after lifting quarantine restrictions

Friday 01 October 2021

The Republic of Mauritius officially reopened its borders today, as it lifted restrictions for fully vaccinated travellers. From today, visitors will be able to freely explore the paradise island's beaches, mountains, waterfalls and lagoons from the moment they land.

Mauritius has implemented one of the most successful Covid responses in the world, with 83 percent of its adult population now double-vaccinated. The paradise island is now seeing huge demand from international travellers who are choosing Mauritius for its stunning scenery, safety and security.

There were joyous celebrations at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam international airport this morning, as the first planeloads of tourists touched down. Deputy Prime Minister Steven Obeegadoo, who was there to greet the new arrivals, said: "This is a great day for Mauritius, and we are delighted to be able to welcome tourists back to our beautiful nation. Our global best practice strategy of vaccinating our citizens first before reopening has meant we can lift restrictions today with confidence.



"Tourism is crucial to our economy, but so is the safety and security of our citizens, and it is thanks to our world-leading response to the coronavirus pandemic that we are able to reopen our borders today as planned.

"Mauritius responded quickly and effectively to the threat of Covid-19 right at the start of the pandemic. By implementing an early lockdown and strict quarantine measures we were able to keep infection rates incredibly low and, by prioritising the vaccination of our tourism workers alongside healthcare staff, we were able to put our phased reopening in place right on schedule."

Nilen Vencadasmy, chairman of the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA), said: "Tourism accounts for more than 25 per cent of our nation's GDP and employs many thousands of people directly and indirectly, so we are extremely pleased to welcome visitors to our shores at the start of our busiest season. It was vital that we implement strict health protocols to protect our citizens, and we remain vigilant in maintaining all necessary safeguards to protect visitors and the local population.

“I’m sure that all of our hard-working staff tourism industry professionals will be so pleased to see holidaymakers visiting our country once again.”

Hotel and airline bookings for Mauritius have soared in recent weeks, and additional international flights have been added to keep up with demand. Many major airlines from around the world fly to Mauritius, including British Airways, Emirates, Air France, South African Airways, Air Austral, Air Seychelles, Turkish Airlines, Kenya Airways, Edelweiss, Austrian Airlines and Mauritius’s flagship carrier Air Mauritius.

Mauritius’ hospitality industry has recently invested millions of dollars in its hotels, infrastructure and visitor attractions, including refurbishing luxury hotels, spas and wellness centres, to provide holidaymakers and business travellers with the very best in accommodation and amenities.

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