



Seychelles Events Newsletter

*Welcome to the Seychelles...
destination of Events*



Issue 1

The Seychelles destination is more than we once remembered it to be.

Lush palm trees, turquoise blue seas, long stretch of white sandy beaches and the sun that never stops shining – these are pictures that are synonymous to the group of islands that have longed been heralded as the Garden of Eden on earth.

But over the past two years, the islands have been admirably promoting a new niche and one which is increasingly gaining popularity and building new business the world over – events.

Perhaps one might wonder why this new venture when the destination has everything to woo the world over to its doorstep. Apart from being a new marketing strategy to raise its profile on the tourist market and also diversify its attractions for visitors, it is good to note that Seychelles has its roots in culture. The Seychellois people is a blend of individuals with different ethnicity, customs and ways of life. Throughout its history and to this day, Seychelles has been a melting pot of people who have contributed in different ways to this rich culture.

Thus, it is no surprise that with such a background, Seychelles now wants to turn into an events destination which has a lot more to offer its visitors than what we know it for already.

From carnival to sea regatta, marathon to underwater festival and tourism ball to beauty pageant, Seychelles is now more than ever, a new destination to discover and appreciate.

It is a fact and one which the world has come to respect us for, that Seychelles created a major buzz with its first 'Carnaval International de Victoria' in March this year. Many looked at it as a gamble and thought it would be on a much smaller scale than we were trumpeting it to be. But alas, the carnival countries of the world descended on Seychelles and the local business community supported us in droves as we staged one of the biggest events ever to take place in our islands. It was an event which not only unified the countries of the world in the tiniest capital on earth but brought a powerful patriotic feeling (too wonderful for words) in every Seychellois home.

Residents and visitors swarmed every nook and



The Events Team of the Seychelles Tourism Board

cranny of the capital to delight in the carnival fun during the three days of non-stop celebrations in Victoria.

It was a bold step to enter the world of carnivals when the islands are better known for its enviable sun, sea and sand, but Seychelles came out with a feather in its cap. The friendly countries who participated as well as those who did not, gave Seychelles the thumb up. It was a successful event so why not have a second one and plenty more down the line, everyone asked. The Seychelles Tourism Board is now busy working on the second edition which will take place in March 2-4, 2012. More countries are



The Seychelles Carnival 2011

now registering to take part and a lot more are also sharing their experience on how to make the event better. The carnival is definitely worth a ticket to Seychelles but other events on the tourism calendar also keeps the destination busy and on play mode.

Every June, renowned sailors of the world pack up and fly to the islands for the Seychelles Regatta, a week-long sailing competition between the most beautiful islands of the archipelago. Whilst the participants compete for prestigious positions, they also get to enjoy and appreciate the destination for what it is – pure, idyllic and breathtaking.

Visitors also get to race on land – in the Eco Healing Marathon – which pulls over 500 runners in every single edition held at the beginning of the year. It is not only a race for glory, as overseas marathoners can attest, but one of the most desirable as the course takes them along the sublime coast of the northern part of the Mahé Island. Overseas participants book early for this marathon and travel all the way from Italy, South Africa, UK, France and South Korea to feature in the line-up.

The Seychelles Festival of the Sea, or SUBIOS as it was previously called, has matured and retained its fans over 20 years. Now, the activities have been broadened and become a real celebration of our marine life.

Adults, school-children and visitors all look forward to this event where they get to see the beauties and creatures which make up the rich and vibrant marine world of Seychelles.

A number of new events have also made its way on the tourism calendar of events, which will be further outlined in this newsletter, dedicated



The Seychelles Destination

purely to events. The Seychelles Ball is taking over from the Tourism Ball this year and has grown into a bigger event where both government and 'la crème' of the tourism trade can socialise and network. This is aptly organised during the Tourism Week. The Miss Seychelles beauty pageant makes its comeback in July next year and this time under the capable hands of the Events team at the Seychelles Tourism Board. Young girls are being encouraged to join the line-up and help bring back an event which was once a 'must see' in Seychelles.

June is usually a packed month in Seychelles with three Public Holidays which are marked by activities in Victoria and at district level. 15 August or the Feast of Assumption is also a Public Holiday and many refer to it as the 'Lafet

Ladig' (La Digue festival). It is considered a homecoming event for all the sons and daughters of the island who have moved to other islands to work or settle. It would be unwise to organise any other activities during the month of October as it is dominated by the Creole Festival, even if it is held during the last week of the month. The momentum building up to the event practically occupies the whole of the month.

These are the main events but as it is outlined in an article on page 3, Seychelles has taken the lead in the region and is now as popular for its events as it is for its picture-perfect postcard. This newsletter will bring news and updates on all the tourism events as well as those at national level which has a positive bearing on tourism. Welcome to this first issue of the Seychelles Events Newsletter!

Bringing the best of UK carnivals to Seychelles

As Seychelles prepares for its second 'Carnaval International de Victoria' in March next year, it is also building its bank of experience so as to improve on the event and make it a better show.

The manager of the Events and Convention section of the Seychelles Tourism Board, Marymonde Matatiken, was in UK last month on a working visit to establish useful contacts for our own carnival as well as gather more skills on how to sustain such a big event on a small island like Seychelles. She came back happy with the results of her meetings, especially the ones with her counterparts Claire Holder, Stephanie Harwood and Professor Christopher Nortey.

Mrs Matatiken has also confirmed that a group from UK will be participating in the second Seychelles' carnival next year and would be giving us the taste of top Brazilian Samba dancing. The group will also consist of a steel band as well as participants with impressive costumes. There is even the possibility of a 'Diversity Group'.

According to Mrs Matatiken, the UK partners have also offered to assist Seychelles with the strategy for its carnival, including its five-year plan to help sustain the event and continuously make it bigger and better.

Furthermore, the UK group has also agreed to run a workshop in Seychelles to help train the organisers of the 'Carnaval International de Victoria', as well as teach local participants the art of making carnival costumes. The UK group has extensive experience in the realm of carnival, having worked with different carnivals of the world for several years now, said Mrs Matatiken.

"The group has decided to participate in our carnival not only because they love carnivals but partly due to the love they have developed for Seychelles and the charm of the Seychellois people," she added.

Mrs Matatiken described her recent trip as a great success as she managed to undertake a series of successful discussions that will strengthen the tourism board's working relationship with its UK counterpart.



While in UK, Mrs Matatiken also had the opportunity to attend a UK Carnival, held on August 29-30.

Seychelles celebrates Tourism Day over one week



This year, Seychelles celebrated the World Tourism Day on a much bigger scale with over one-week of dedicated tourism activities.

The day, declared by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), is marked annually on September 27.

The Seychelles' Tourism Week was celebrated from September 23-30, under the theme 'Tourism – Linking Cultures'. The theme, set by the UNWTO, emphasised on the tourism's role in breaking barriers across cultures and fostering tolerance, respect and mutual understanding.

The week started off with a tourism cocktail on the evening of September 23, which the local destination management company Creole Travel Services (CTS) hosted for its trade partners. The event was held at the enchanting Cap Lazare Nature Reserve at Baie Lazare, in the south of Mahé Island.

The evening was the ideal opportunity for members of the industry to learn more about CTS and its products, as well as enjoy the charms of this protected site. The Cap Lazare restaurant has recently been refurbished and was re-opened in February this year.

The activities rolled over on September 24 with the highlight event of the week – the Seychelles Ball – which was previously called the Tourism Ball. The ball was an evening of elegance and was held in the glamorous setting of the Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Resort & Casino.

The soiree brought together government and tourism stakeholders in a social atmosphere where they could mingle and network. The Seychelles Ball was also the platform where both the private sector and government made key tourism announcements.

On Sunday September 25, a number of Seychelles' leading four and five-star hotels opened their doors to the public, starting from 11 am. These hotels include Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Resort & Casino, Le Meridien Fisherman's Cove Hotel and Le Meridien Barbarons on Mahe as well as the Castello Beach Hotel on Praslin.

Some of these even offered special discounts on their services on that day.

The following day, the focus turned on education. A series of interactive presentations by various hoteliers of Seychelles were held at the Seychelles Tourism Academy. Guest speakers included Georges Gravé and Frederick Vidal of MAIA Hotel, Ken Choo of Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Resort & Casino, Ulrick Denis of Le Meridien Fisherman's Cove, Ben Karroo of Le Meridien Barbarons and Fulgère Morel of Castello Beach Hotel. They each presented a different topic on the industry.

After the interactive presentations, the day continued with the special SENPA (Small Enterprise Promotion Agency) Tourism Fair, which started in the late afternoon in Victoria, from 4 to 6 pm.

The fair was held over five days, from September 26-30, where both visitors and locals were able to discover and purchase locally-made crafts. The closing of the fair on September 30 was even more interesting with the participation of a steel band and a fashion show.

As tradition, on every World Tourism Day on September 27, the Seychelles Tourism Board hosted a special welcome at the Seychelles International Airport for all arriving passengers. This is usually marked by entertainment from local musicians.

In the afternoon of September 27, the Seychelles Tourism Board together with the Government of Seychelles-UNDP-GEF Program Coordination Unit launched the Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Label Logo. This label is the first Seychelles' sustainable tourism certification programme that is being developed for tourism establishments in a bid to promote a more sustainable tourism industry for the islands.

The next day was marked by the official launching of the State House Tourist Day. Guests attending the launching were provided with a guided tour of the century-old State House and its gardens.

Also during that week, in a bid to emphasise on the educational aspects of the Tourism Week, the local TV Station - the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation – in partnership with the Seychelles Tourism Board worked on TV forum. The aim of the exchange between government and tourism partners is to help sensitize the public on the importance of the tourism industry and how to address the challenges the islands' today face.



The Tourism TV forum in the making



The interactive presentation at STA



State House launches its tourists' open day



Miss Seychelles 2012 banner and logo unveiled

The Seychelles Tourism Board's chief executive, Alain St.Ange has officially unveiled the colorful Miss Seychelles contest banner and its logo.

The unveiling took place on September 24, at the Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Resort & Casino during the prestigious Seychelles Ball, in front of former President James Mancham, Vice President Danny Faure, Ministers, government officials, individuals from the private sector, members of the Seychelles Tourism and Hospitality Association, partners from the tourism trade and friends of the tourism industry.

The launching of the banner was an opportune moment for Jimmy Butt, Seychelles' Tourism Ambassador based in Lusaka, Zambia to sponsor SCR20, 000 and stimulate the launch of the fundraising campaign for the event.

Mr St.Ange also announced that the Seychelles Tourism Board will now have the full responsibilities of hosting and organizing the beauty contest.

Speaking at the Seychelles Ball evening, Mr St.Ange said that the Seychelles Tourism Board will be taking the beauty pageant to another level next year. "The beauty pageant is meant to bring to the fore, the country's finest talents. The forthcoming beauty pageant now named 'Miss Seychelles Another World' is planned for July 2012 and is envisaged to attract beauty talents from all corners of the Seychelles Creole Islands. It would be recalled that the last Miss Seychelles competition was held in 2008, and since then, it has been dormant, prompting the Seychelles Tourism Board to bring back this much widely anticipated beauty contest," he said.

Mr St.Ange added that in the past the winning beauty queen participated in the Miss World Contest as part of her winning package, now the winner will also take part in the Miss Southern African International.

The CEO of the Seychelles Tourism Board said that the winner of the 'Miss Seychelles Another World' contest will also serve as an ambassador for the islands. He noted that it will be a unique opportunity for Seychelles to have its own beauty queen at some of the major international tourism trade fairs, with the aim of promoting the islands profile and in so doing help increase the visibility of Seychelles.

It must be noted that the Miss Seychelles banner has been designed by the Seychelles Tourism Board's own creative graphic designer, Eileen Hoareau and the logo designed by David Savy & Gilbert Pool.



Seychelles gets ready to celebrate marine world with Festival of the Sea



In less than one month time, Seychelles will be hosting another edition of its ever-popular 'Seychelles Festival of the Sea', formerly known as the SUBIOS underwater festival. The event has been well-established in Seychelles since 1989 and will this year come back with new activities that will take place from November 4-6 at the popular Beau Vallon beachfront. The events committee is working tirelessly to ensure that the activities do justice and truly celebrates the Seychelles' marine world. The activities are expected to pull large crowds of Seychellois and visitors alike.

The theme for this year – 'Wonders beneath the waves' – focuses attention on the marine realm, its potential as well as the challenges.

Reinforcing the theme's in the past years have been the guest speakers, who once again this year will boost up the festival with their expertise and whose various films and presentations will serve to enhance public knowledge of Seychelles' marine world. Over the years, presentation talks and film shows conducted throughout Seychelles' schools have ensured that the youth have become increasingly aware of their marine environment, while their participation in the writing and painting

competitions have also enlightened them on the challenges facing the surrounding ocean and its inhabitants.

The Seychelles Festival of the Sea will keep certain traditional elements of SUBIOS such as the popular film and image competitions. The popular Beau Vallon beachfront will also be graced by a flotilla of decorated boats whilst there are also plans to import a giant inflatable whale and octopus to add to the ambiance.

Other activities include a school rafting-building competition and race, amidst a choice of floating eateries as well as food stalls with a seafood theme. Other entertainment options and live music shows will complement the ambiance and help to add more flavour to the activities.

In a bid to give the festival greater international publicity, four high profile magazines of the Geo group have become official partners of SUBIOS. They are Asian Geographic, Asian Passport, Asian Diver and Scuba Divers.

It is to be noted that the Seychelles Tourism Board and the Seychelles Round Table have agreed to team-up and merge their respective 2011 events – SUBIOS, the Seychelles Festival of the Sea and Regatta – for better impact this year.

Packed calendar of events for next year

Seychelles is one of the most sought-after destinations in the Indian Ocean with the promise to surround you with warmth and hospitality. But there is also another reason why people are flocking to the islands.

The destination is now organizing a plethora of activities for its visitors in a bid to diversify the attractions on the islands. A new calendar of events for 2012 has been released and potential clients can now plan their holidays according to the event of their choice.

Definitely the biggest event on the calendar is the internationally-renowned Seychelles' Carnival International de Victoria, whose first edition was held in March this year and which was an overwhelming success.

The lively event is the ideal forum for the participating countries to raise their profiles by showing off their individual colours, cultures and people to the world press, and also contribute to the new melting pot of cultures, as it is highly promoted in the carnival.

A number of top international events such as the Eco Healing Marathon, Seychelles Regatta and Seychelles Festival of the Sea are featured on the calendar.

The 2012 calendar will kick-off with the Eco Healing Marathon in February, where international and local runners attempt different courses of the marathon. The activity is held jointly with a Korean Night. Then comes the carnival of all carnivals on March 2-4 where once again the tiny capital of Victoria will come alive with non-stop celebrations during three days.

There are no events planned for April and May 2012 but the momentum picks up again in June which is usually a busy month in Seychelles.

The fourth edition of the Seychelles Regatta will take place from June 2-9. This annual event is a semi professional race which combines the competitive edge of a serious sailing event with the beauty of the

Seychelles islands. The other two events for the month are the National Day of Seychelles on June 18 and the Independence Day on June 29.

New on the events calendar next year will be the Miss Seychelles Contest and it will for the first time be falling under the responsibilities of the Seychelles Tourism Board. The beauty pageant will make its return in July 2012 and the island's beauty queen is expected to take her place in the Miss World Contest after that.

That month also will see another new event called the Samoan Circus. World Tourism Day is celebrated on September 27 and starting this year, Seychelles will celebrate the occasion over one week of activities. The Seychelles Tourism Ball has become another fixed point on the annual calendar of events and will be called the Seychelles Ball from this year on. The ball will take place on September 24 and will bring together the government and all tourism stakeholders in a social atmosphere.

October is dominated by the coveted Creole Festival, a week-long celebrations marking the islands' cultural heritage. It is organized by the Seychelles Ministry of Culture along with other partners, such as the Seychelles Tourism Board, and will take place from October 25-31. SUBIOS, the Seychelles Festival of the Sea, will take place from November 2-4.

This is a platform to showcase the islands' magnificent marine heritage through a range of marine-oriented activities. But the highlight remains the image and film competitions. The event is set to get more visibility on the world stage now that the Asian Geographic Magazines and its group of publications have become the event's official partner publications.

The events calendar for next year culminates with the Christmas Classical Music Concert on December 22.

Seychelles sets stage for 2nd **CARNIVAL** INTERNATIONAL de Victoria

2nd-4th March 2012



The biggest event on the 2012 calendar of events will no doubt be the Seychelles' Carnival International de Victoria whose first edition was held in March this year and which was an overwhelming success.

The three-day celebration will take to the streets of Victoria on March 2-4, 2012 and serious planning is underway to make it even more vibrant and colourful.

The first day of this extravagant event will be the official opening of the carnival attended by both local and international dignitaries. This will set the tone for the carnival weekend with live music shows and entertainment as well as an array of international food stalls. On the second day, Seychelles will once again see a spectacular pageant of floats by many local and foreign participants through the streets of the capital. Crowds made up of local spectators, and visitors are expected to add to the spectacle, designed to surpass that of the first edition in terms of the quality of its displays and overall entertainment value.

Day three will be purely a family fun day full of colour, spectacles and activities planned to last the entire day and much of the night. Local hotels and caterers will make their culinary specialties available to the public through a variety of food outlets, while a succession of live bands both local and international will set the stage for an entire day and night of pure family fun.

This will be an unforgettable opportunity for the public to interact with the float participants and savor the carnival atmosphere to the full.

To make this happen, the Carnival Organizing Committee of the Event Section of the Seychelles Tourism Board is working round the clock to elevate this event to a higher level. Promotion of this 'carnival of carnivals' has started in earnest and colourful carnival posters adorn office windows both locally and overseas. The carnival brochures have already been distributed and participants are starting to register their participation.

In the coming months, the world will hear a lot about the Seychelles' carnival and this is because the Carnival Organizing Committee of the Seychelles Tourism Board has started their promotion campaign at all trade fairs and events across the world. Alain St. Ange, chief executive of the Seychelles Tourism Board has said that the organising committee are set to have another great event where the world will descend on Seychelles to participate in an event now known as the carnival of carnivals and staged as the melting pot of cultures.

The foreign participation to next year's event is expected to exceed expectations with delegations flying in from as far away as Indonesia, Hawaii, UK, France, Italy, Brazil and many African delegations. The Indian Ocean Islands of Reunion, Mauritius and Madagascar are also expected to manifest in the melting pot of peoples from the four corners of the world.

Seychelles is facilitating the registration process for countries and groups by increasing the registration points. Those wanting to register with the Seychelles' tourism head office on the island of Mahé, can email their interest to the Seychelles Tourism Board's CEO on alain.s@seychelles.com or with the Events and Convention Section, on marymonde.m@seychelles.com.



Seychelles Ball 2011:

A glamorous evening for Tourism Day

The tropical islands of the Seychelles has enjoyed an amazing evening of glamour and elegance on Saturday 24 September, 2011 with the Seychelles Ball, which took place at the Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Resort & Casino. The Seychelles Ball, which was previously named the Tourism Ball, had been organised by the Seychelles Tourism Board as part of the 2011 World Tourism Day celebration, which is marked annually on September 27.

The Seychelles Ball had been set as the most important event on the country's Tourism Week programme, where government officials and tourism stakeholders mingled and networked in an atmosphere of conviviality.

This year's ball was attended by the former Seychelles President, Sir James Mancham, Vice President of Seychelles, Mr Danny Faure, ministers and government officials, as well as representative from the private sector, members of the Seychelles Tourism and Hospitality Association, members of the tourism industry and partners of the industry.

Also present at the ball was the chief executive officer of the Seychelles Tourism Board, Alain St.Ange and his deputy, Elsia Grandcourt, along with their staff.

On arrival, guests were treated to a red carpet welcome, where they walked in glitz and glamour.

The Seychelles Ball, having gathered members of the trade and its stakeholders along with government officials and representatives, presented the Seychelles Tourism Board's chief executive, Mr St.Ange with the perfect stage to make key announcements in tourism.

At the opening of the evening, Mr St.Ange made the announcements that two new airlines – Etihad and Ethiopian – are set to start their operations to Seychelles in early November while the Seychelles national airline – Air Seychelles – has confirmed that it is keeping its London flights

"Seychelles has made significant achievement during its 40 years of tourism; however, there are challenges that we need to overcome in order for us to further consolidate our tourism industry. The Seychelles Tourism Board on its part will continue to work closely with the private sector so as to overcome these challenges whilst safeguarding the image



CEO of the Seychelles Tourism Board at the Seychelles Ball

of Seychelles," noted Mr St.Ange.

Also speaking at the event, the Seychelles Vice President, Mr Danny Faure said that the tourism industry continues to be an important revenue generator, offering a variety of employment and investment opportunities.

"Let us continue to put Seychelles first to maintain the industry's dynamism to be a model to the world and in the process, winning for our small nation," emphasized Vice President Faure.

The Seychelles Vice President wished the island's tourism industry players and all staff employed in the industry a Happy Tourism Day 2011. Following the Vice President's address, Mr St.Ange of the Seychelles Tourism Board spoke about the re-launching of the Miss Seychelles beauty pageant, which has been dormant since 2008. He subsequently unveiled the Miss Seychelles 2012 poster, after which 14-year old Darryl Joubert of the Anse Boileau Secondary School was announced winner of the tourism board's photography competition that was launched earlier this year on the occasion of the island's 40 year anniversary of tourism.

The competition was being held for school children between the ages of 12 and 16 years, under the theme 'Pictures of Seychelles ...to make you dream'. The talented Darryl was presented with his prize of SCR10, 000, sponsored by Seychelles Tourism Ambassador in Lusaka, Zambia, Jimmy Butt who during the ball made a surprise donation of SCR 20, 000 to the Seychelles Tourism Board for the Miss Seychelles 2012 event.

This was followed with Ken Choo, the general manager of the Berjaya Beau Vallon Beach Resort & Casino – host for the Seychelles Ball 2011, taking the podium to thank everyone present for their support.

"Tourism Week started yesterday with Creole Travel Services organizing a wonderful cocktail at Cap Lazare Restaurant. Today, it is Berjaya's turn to host an event for Tourism Week and I welcome you all. Tonight we have in-house not only every mover and shaker in our industry, but also every Ministry of the Seychelles Government. This active partnership between government and private sector is critical as we face the many challenges in this global industry," said Mr Choo.



Guests dancing the night away

"We welcome that strong and sincere partnership and we intend to see it develop. With tourism arrivals improving, it shows that together we have indeed moved on the right path. Let us continue to do so. I have no doubt that as the Seychelles economy improves, so will we. Ladies and Gentleman, one thing is for sure, with a FULL HOUSE tonight, it shows that the tourism industry remains united and we shall remain united for years to come," he stressed.

Mr Choo added that in October, Seychelles would celebrate Creole Festival 2011. He said that cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing segments of our tourism industry. As tourism and culture comes together, Berjaya is proud to host this year's 'Fon Lamal' event on 28 October. "This event is an opportunity for us in tourism to showcase the unique Seychelles culture to the world. Seychelles culture is an asset of the Seychellois people," said Mr Choo.

He then called on Minister Shamlaye, the Minister for Culture to accept a small contribution of SR75,000 from the hotel's Sales Manager, Erica Tirant.

"Let us together toast for the BRIGHTER FUTURE for our Industry, and to a BRIGHTER FUTURE for Seychelles. Cheers, in Chinese "YAM SENG". Thank you and enjoy your evening with us" concluded Mr Choo.

Louis D'Offay, the Chairman of the Seychelles Hospitality and Tourism Association also took to the podium to wish Seychelles a Happy Tourism Day and to table points for consideration by the government.

"I cannot miss this golden opportunity and feel it is my duty to firstly thank the government for the confidence they have in our industry and for standing with our industry, but I need on behalf of our association's members say that we need to do more to ensure our industry continues to succeed," said Mr D'Offay.



Darryl Joubert receives his prize at the Seychelles Ball

Following these announcements, guests at the ball enjoyed a variety of Creole and Asian buffet, after which they danced the night away with entertainment from local bands Fame and Zenith.

Upcoming Events

- **Creole Festival (22 – 30 October) Seychelles**
- **Seychelles Festival of the Sea, SUBIOS (4 – 6 November) Seychelles**
- **Seychelles Round Table Regatta (4 – 6 November) Seychelles**

