



TRAVEL SPECIAL

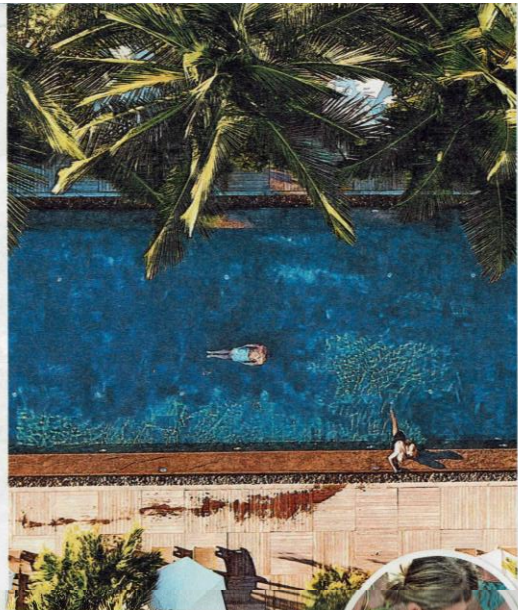
BBC star **Kate Silverton** discovers the joys of taking her little ones to Mauritius

# LONG-HAUL LUXURY? IT'S CHILD'S PLAY!



Lying face down on a soft towelling bed, eyes focused on the delicate yellow of the frangipani flower in a bowl of water beneath me, I realise it is the first time in six years I have switched off. That's what having children does to you, my husband Mike would say.

It's also the first time we have taken a family holiday in autumn half-term and the first time we have flown long distance – 12 hours direct – with the two small people. On the overnight flight to Mauritius, however, my three- and five-year-old fell asleep and we enjoyed an uninterrupted flight.



**KIDDIE HEAVEN:** The Trou aux Biches resort, top, and Kate, far left. Above: Clemency gets ready to go waterskiing

I knew little of this tropical island in the Indian Ocean other than everyone always seems to want to holiday there. It's not hard to see why, with year-round sunshine, clean seas and only a few hour's time difference. Mauritian resorts enjoy the reputation of offering luxury alongside the new family holiday must-have – a kids' club. As our children had not been old enough to enjoy them before, I hadn't appreciated them. But now I understand why an all-singing, all-dancing kids' club will have parents scrabbling for the 'book now' button.

And so we were at Trou aux Biches Resort & Spa, a serene five-star resort on one of Mauritius's best-sheltered stretches of sandy beach in the north-west of the island. It was here that the kids' club proved the making of the holiday for Clemency, who went up on water skis on our very first morning. Less than an hour after we had unpacked we were on the beach watching as our fearless five-year-old went up and over the surf steadying herself on a starter board.

Mike and I decided we should venture beyond the beach too. My diving instructor checked over my paperwork and observed that I had not dived since 2008 (kids again) and insisted that we do a refresher in the hotel pool.

Once confident, we set off across azure-coloured waters. The dive was wonderful, but I imagine it may have been a richer ecosystem prior to the vast influx of tourists Mauritius has welcomed in the past few decades.

We also visited the district of Pamplemousse and its botanical gardens. It's populated with more than 650 varieties of plants and our guide entertained the children (under-fives go free) inviting them to taste the spices and smell the flowers. Three-year-old Wilbur was especially enthralled by the vast lily pads that our guide said could withstand weights of 50lb being placed on them. There were also giant tortoises which Wilbur announced were 'as big as a car'.

Our next stop was in the south of the island to stay at the Heritage Le Telfair, a stunning resort styled in the form of 19th Century plantation houses. Again this was a resort complete with modern essentials: kids' club and a phenomenal spa.

For Clemency, the highlight of the trip came on another journey out to sea – to swim with wild dolphins. I was amazed at how much we managed to do in a week and still remain rested before our overnight flight home.

Would I dare do long haul with children again and go luxury? You bet.

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\*From price applies to Mauritius on 07/10/2019. Please note availability is limited for our best 'Value' prices. Prices were accurately quoted on 27/02/19 & are subject to change once going to print due to airline availability. Taxes and measurement calculations apply. Some selected flights available at 2019 regulated airfares after booking. See website for details, terms and conditions apply. Applies to stays 01/02/19-30/06/19. Limited availability. \*Savings applied to double price. All offers are subject to availability. It can be withdrawn without notice. Terms & conditions apply. Prices are per person based on 2 adults sharing. Our fares cover all flight charges. In-flight meals, taxes & airport fees.

**KEY DETAILS**

Trou Aux Biches Beachcomber Golf Resort & Spa

7 nights' bed and breakfast in a Junior Suite, economy class flights from the UK and private hotel transfers from £1,420 per person sharing. [beachcombertours.uk](http://beachcombertours.uk)

Heritage The Villas

Rates start at £482 per night for a two-bedroom villa with infinity pool. [heritagesorts.mu/mauritius-hotels/the-villas](http://heritagesorts.mu/mauritius-hotels/the-villas).