

5-star west coast magic on paradise island

 By [Debbie Hathway](#)

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After a long-awaited return visit, there's no question that Mauritius is still my happy place.



©Beachcomber Resorts and Hotels.: Le Morne mountain

I fell in love with Mauritius during my first hosted visit in 2014, and have returned frequently to old haunts and new adventures. The transformative effect of this island and its people has inspired much of my writing, but after an almost three-year pandemic-induced hiatus I wondered if it would still have that revitalising effect.

I arrived at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport in late June, exhausted after a heavy bout of Covid and two failed attempts to reach the island thanks to borders closing amid Omnicron panic and a delayed connecting flight.

Sure enough, as I walked through the crowd at International Arrivals to my waiting taxi I felt like a tiny biodegradable travel towel that morphs into a full-sized wet wipe when submerged in water. Come rain or shine – the impact is the same. My spirits lift, my lungs fill with warm tropical air, and my smile returns – to stay.



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My regular driver, Noorani Beebeejaun, is a firefighter who has been known to take leave to escort me wherever I need to go. He drives his late father's taxi when he's off duty, and this time adopted a new role as concierge. I was pressed for time, travelling across the island on a tight itinerary, and he came to my rescue twice – to source a replacement computer mouse and retrieve my wallet that I'd left in a boutique during the excitement of a designer sustainable swimwear purchase.

Such are the relationships one builds with regular visits, so you can imagine how much I looked forward to returning to the five-star Dinarobin Beachcomber Golf Resort and Spa on the west coast.

Honestly, it's hard not to break into a run when I walk into that foyer. It's an instinctive response to the warm welcome from guest relations manager Audrey Cunat. Much like her long-serving colleagues (she's been there for 20 years), Cunat's passion for the Beachcomber brand is contagious.



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We reminisced over a Japanese-inspired dinner at Umami, which means “pleasant, savoury taste” – an understatement really. Think colourful, creative art on a plate. Whatever you order either melts in your mouth or erupts in an explosion of tastes and textures.

White-glove service makes this culinary experience extra special. I like Chef Singh's approach: “The secret ingredient is always love.” It shows in his combinations and presentation, which earned him a Platinum Medal from Best of Gastronomie International (an independent chefs and gourmets organisation based in France) this year.

A tip to future diners: arrive hungry. It's fair to say that food is the language of love for a Mauritius-based chef. Expect generous portions, all-you-can-eat buffets or multiple courses in a fine-dining environment.



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Typically, the Umami team was briefed in advance. Dinner had to be quick and early to accommodate my reunion with the Famous 9, who were performing that night at the adjacent Paradis Beachcomber Golf Resort and Spa. The dance band features some of the island’s best musicians and singers, who I follow around like a groupie. They can play anything from salsa to sega, Sinatra to Shaggy, Lady Gaga to Tina Turner. Request a song, and they’re likely to play it on the fly.

Kudos to management for ensuring outstanding acoustics, an undercover stage near the beach so the show goes on regardless of the weather, and a sound engineer who knows what he’s doing! It make all the difference for entertainers and audience alike.



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As I waltzed into the Paradis Beachcomber foyer, right on cue, I was delighted to see front office manager Yannick

Balance at reception. I received a similar albeit hesitant welcome, slightly unsure of each other as we were masked up as per Covid protocols. It was only when I announced the purpose of my visit that the penny dropped and he immediately greeted me by name. He remembered – almost three years after we last met.

Back at Dinarobin Beachcomber, the main entertainment continued in the piano lounge near the vast swimming pool that looks onto the ocean, separated only by a tree-lined pathway that traces the white sandy shoreline. The piano lounge has a wonderful mellow ambience, the waiters quietly attending to guests as they savour a digestif or coffee after dinner.

The atmosphere permeates the entire resort, reinforced by the charm of its renowned Le Morne Brabant backdrop and the enticing warm ocean just a few steps away from the suite-only accommodation. Spacious and luxurious, with ocean-facing balconies or terraces, the suites are furnished in dark wood – a signature of the resort's décor style.

This timeless design choice aligns with environmental psychology, which shows that nature-based materials have a significant impact on health and well-being. Studies have revealed the positive effects of wood on emotional states, stress levels and overall health and, in ancient times, wood products were seen to relieve fatigue, restore strength, enhance sleep quality, and reduce blood pressure. The end goal is central to the resort ethos.



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The suites are arranged in crescents. The sixth crescent, where I was fortunate to stay on both visits, features adults-only Zen Suites with an exclusive swimming pool, gazebos and deck chairs. The sega beats emanating from the nearby Butik Bar are as alluring as the Instagramable sunsets. As if that's not enough, a concierge is on hand to assist with restaurant and spa bookings while you're reclining on a bean bag sipping a sundowner on the beach.

The spa, which boasts a special wing dedicated to Ayurveda, is a haven of holistic well-being in perfect harmony with nature. This incredible space has an unforgettable aura largely attributable to the proximity of Le Morne, which looms above the outdoor relaxation area. Powerful and protective, the feeling is tangible at both Dinarobin Beachcomber and Paradis Beachcomber, personified by a dedicated and passionate team led by GM Frédéric Lebègue.

Ever-present but discreet, there is always somebody waiting to get you what you want before you know you want it!



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My best advice when you arrive is to leave your bags in the capable hands of the bellhops, and head for the beach. You don't want to waste a minute, but rather lose all notion of time. Swim, walk, laze and gaze at the magnificent environment that surrounds these properties. It's that special. And make a spa booking a priority. The sooner the highly trained therapists can banish stress and jetlag, the faster you can begin to absorb Beachcomber Resorts and Hotels' Art of Beautiful.

Air Mauritius relaunches its direct flights from Cape Town in November. Take advantage of Beachcomber specials to mark the occasion. Book by 30 August 2022 and save on airfare, accommodation and meals. Visit [here](#) for more information.

ABOUT DEBBIE HATHWAY

Debbie Hathway is an award-winning writer, with a special interest in luxury lifestyle (watches, jewellery, travel, property investment) and the arts.

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