



## The Fourth Cirque

Ask **anyone**, just ANYONE, the question: 'How many cirques are there in Reunion?' and **everyone**, I mean EVERYONE, will say 'three?'

**Wrong!** There are four. You have probably only heard of Mafate, Salazie and Cilaos. This is because the fourth cirque, or 'caldera' can **no longer** be seen as it was completely **filled up** one day by a massive eruption of lava. And what is its name? It is called Cirque Des Marsouins. Marsouin means 'porpoise' in English, but you won't find any of those here... And where is it? Well, it is **located between** Salazie and La Plaine des Palmistes.

**"Hang on"**, I hear you cry! *"That's the Forests of Bébouir and Bélouve!"* Exactly. Over 150,000 years ago, our lovely Piton des Neiges was **warming up** for her **swansong**, preparing to give one final explosion of sulphurous ecstasy! Turning the **taps** on full flow, the vast crater was filled up **to the brim** with **molten** rock, fire and **brimstone**. This explains why, when you come up to the Col de Bébouir, the wonderful panoramic view shows a forest which looks completely **flat!** And you're standing on top of what used to be a **towering** cliff!

It might seem like a long way to drive - but if you live in the south, it is only one hour from St Pierre, and if you're in the north and you fancy some exercise, the drive to Hellbourg only takes an hour from St Denis. From there you can **hike** up to the wonderful Gite de Belouve with its **stunning** view over Salazie, and the short walk to the famous Trou de Fer. While I'm on the subject of the Trou de Fer, I would formally like to invite everyone in Reunion to stop translating it as '*The Iron Hole*'. This means nothing! The French word '*fer*' here does not mean '*iron*', but '*horseshoe*', because of the U-shaped configuration of the many waterfalls. **Granted**, '*horseshoe hole*' doesn't sound much better, so why don't we go for '*Horseshoe Falls*'? Please pass this information on to EVERY helicopter pilot you know!!

**Anyway**, coming back from our horses to our porpoises, I have to admit that the Cirque des Marsouins is the one part of the island that I have explored the least, and just looking at the names of places and hikes to do there is enough to get my running shoes and camelback on! So, I'll see you in the Cirque des Marsouins - may the Fourth be with you!!





## Vocabulary

anyone = n'importe qui

everyone = tout le monde

wrong = faux

no longer = ne plus

to fill up = remplir

located = situé

between = entre

to hang on = attendre un instant

to warm up = s'échauffer

swansong = chant du cygne

taps = robinets

to the brim = à ras bord

molten = en fusion

brimstone = soufre

flat = plat

towering = gigantesque

to hike = randonner

stunning = éblouissant

granted = effectivement

anyway = (ici) bref