



Settling Down in Reunion

Louis Armstrong once said “When you’re **smiling** the whole world smiles with you”, clearly Mr. Armstrong had never been on a Parisian metro before. Unlike Paris, in Reunion if you smile at a **passerby** they almost always smile back, in Paris they quickly look the opposite direction. After eight long months living in Paris and with winter right around the corner I got that **itchy** feeling that I had become used to after 6 years of **travelling** from place to place.

What exactly was I looking for? Well, for starters I was enjoying the life of a traveller; living out of a **backpack**, seeing the world, as soon as I got **bored** packing everything up and choosing another country or even another continent to live for a few months. The longest I had stayed in one place was the year and a half that I spent in Japan... Until I got to Reunion Island.

I have been here for a little over three years now, which is a record for me! I have a garden, two cats and even a little baby boy, I am in every sense of the word, **settling down**. So, why did I decide to stay in Reunion? **First of all**, as I mentioned before I was struck immediately by the different energy between here and Paris, I really liked the **laid back** attitude, the **willingness** to help, and the overall **friendliness** of the Reunionnaise people. It kind of reminds me of Canada.

But **on the other hand**, it is nothing like Canada, the second biggest country in the world. I am from Toronto, which is the biggest city in Canada with three times more inhabitants than all of Reunion Island. Reunion is **tiny**! After three years of living here, I run into someone I know whenever I go to the beach, supermarket, even the bakery! I love this about Reunion, it is one of my favourite things about living here. I feel like I **belong** to a little community, but it’s still big enough not to get boring!

Of course, I can’t forget to talk about how I fell in love with the weather. I don’t miss waking up an hour earlier to **thaw** out the car and **shovel** the snow out of the **driveway** just to get to work. I also don’t miss the five months of cold, on the contrary, I love the sun and warm weather, I love wearing sandals all year and my feet feel claustrophobic in socks and shoes now, I love snorkelling in the lagoon, and eating fruit and vegetables from the garden.

Reunion is a little piece of paradise in the Indian Ocean. I am happy to be here and I don’t have plans to leave any time soon.





Vocabulary

to smile - sourire
passerby - passant
itchy - qui démange
to travel - voyager
backpack - sac à dos

to get bored - s'ennuyer
to settle down - s'installer
first of all - tout d'abord
laid back - décontracté
willingness - enthousiasme

friendliness - gentillesse
on the other hand - d'un autre côté
tiny - minuscule
to belong - appartenir
thaw - faire fondre

to shovel - pelleter
driveway - parking

