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PROPERTY - RESIDENTIAL

# Pieces of paradise for sale

Those head over heels in love with Mauritius's natural beauty may despair. But there's not much they can do about the fact that parts of it will be building sites for years to come.

This follows the finalisation a few years ago of the government's Integrated Resort Scheme (IRS), among other programmes aimed at modernising the Indian Ocean island's economy. The IRS (see *FM Life* May 18) enables a limited number of foreigners to buy freehold title to a home in a resort at a minimum of US\$500 000.

Most of the land being developed was formerly used for sugar cane plantations. And a number of Mauritians who are losing jobs in the sugar industry will be

given work in these new projects.

Villas Valriche is the third IRS development to get off the ground. It's also the first to be undertaken by SA developers — sensible, since South Africans have a 20%-30% share of the holiday-makers market.

Nor have they been shy to lay claim to their pieces of paradise in the first two IRS developments — Tamarina Golf Estate & Beach Club in the southwest and Anahita on the east coast.

Villas Valriche, also in the southwest, is a joint venture between Mauritian and SA interests. The latter is made up of well-known developers who go by the name of Secondlifestyle Group. The company is led by Alec Bates, who developed northern Johannesburg's Fourways Crossing

Mall and Pecanwood Golf Estate in Hartbeespoort, and Ian Tod, who was involved in the Dainfern Golf Estate.

Set on a 200 ha mountainous piece of land, with indigenous vegetation and sea views, Villas Valriche will consist of 288 villas, many of which will border an 18-hole par 72 championship golf course. The development is a stone's throw away from two luxurious new beach front hotels, Le Telfair Golf & Spa Resort and Heritage Golf & Spa Resort. The development plans also include sports and beach clubs and a boutique-style shopping centre.

Conforming to a traditional Mauritian plantation style, the villas will be priced from \$800 000 for a two-bedroom villa to \$1,2m for a four-bedroom one. The development is to be delivered in two phases. Construction of the first phase, which consists of 130 villas, has begun and, Bates says, should be completed by mid-2009.

Timo Geldenhuis, the sales director of Hayes Matkovich & Associates, which handles sales, says SA buyers are expected to make up about 20% of the buyers.

**Sibonelo Radebe**

□ *The writer was a guest in Mauritius of Villas Valriche*

**FOR MORE INFO**

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Go to:

[www.villasvalriche.com](http://www.villasvalriche.com)



Villas Valriche Traditional Mauritian plantation style