



Opening Hours

Monday to Friday: 9.30 – 16.00 hrs

Closed on week-ends and public holidays

The Bank of Mauritius Museum

Sir William Newton Street

Port Louis, Mauritius

Tel: +230 2023800



The Bank of Mauritius Museum

Guided Visits

Guided visits of The Bank of Mauritius Museum are available for groups and schools.

These visits of a duration of 20 minutes can be arranged by speaking to our Museum Officers on +230 2023800.

Our staff will be glad to help you visit and appreciate the currency heritage of Mauritius.

For more information on The Bank of Mauritius Museum, please visit the Bank's website on www.bom.mu

Please Share Your Views

The Bank of Mauritius Museum welcomes your feedback, suggestions and enquiries.

Queries pertaining to The Bank of Mauritius Museum can be sent by email to museum@bom.mu or by post to:

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Questions from the media or on the Bank's functions, publications and statistics must be sent to communications@bom.mu





The currencies collected and uncovered have shown that Mauritius was the star and key of the Indian Ocean as a thriving port and trading settlement. Various currencies were used at different periods of the country's history from the Dutch colonial period to the French and British colonial period.

With the vast collection gathered, The Bank of Mauritius Museum preserves and presents the rich history and evolution of currency in the country.



The Dutch period

In 1618, when Prince Maurits Van Nassau succeeded William V the Prince of Orange, he instructed to mint one more silver coin known as Ducaton. This Dutch-minted coin was the first ever item to bear the name 'MAURITIUS'.

The French period

In 1715, when the French assumed control of the island, the Governor Charles Decaen declared the Decaen piastre as the official currency of the settlement. The coin bore the French imperial eagle with "Isles de France et Bonaparte" engraved on the obverse, and on the reverse the denomination surrounded by olive and bay leaves. The Decaen piastre was the only coin minted in Mauritius at that time.



*Charles Mathieu Isidore Decaen
(13.04.1769 – 09.09. 1832)*

The British period

After they took possession of the island, the British decided not to make any significant change to the local monetary system. They continued using the predecessors' Decaen piastre and only brought a slight change by engraving CC for 'Crown Colonies' on the coin. It was not until the 19th March 1822, under George VI, that a writ was issued to instruct the minting of small denomination coins known as the Anchor coinage. Based on the Spanish dollar, the silver coins were struck only for British colonies and in four denominations.

The Mauritian Banking landscape in the 19th century

Prior to the creation of the Bank of Mauritius, it was the Board of the Commissioners of Currency that was responsible for the issue of currency in Mauritius. The Board of the Commissioners of Currency, the first such Board in the world, was established by British Imperial Government in 1849. The creation of the entity put an end to practice of 'free banking' that had prevailed throughout the 18th century and in the early part of the 19th century, whereby commercial banks competed with one another for the issue of banknotes. An Order in Council prescribed the rupee as the only legal tender in Mauritius as from 1876.

On the 5th of April 1966, the Sessional Paper on the establishment of the Bank of Mauritius was circulated in the Mauritius Legislative Council. The Bank of Mauritius Bill No. 33 of 1966 was voted on 12th of July 1966 and received the Governor General's assent on 28th of September 1966. The Bank of Mauritius was thus established on the 1st of September 1967 and has since the sole right to issue currency in Mauritius.

The story of the St Géran beyond the Paul and Virginie novel



The St Géran is intimately linked to the evolution of currency in Mauritius. In 1744, the vessel wrecked on the fringing reef of the island, sinking with its cargo of some 50,000 Spanish piasters. The loss resulted in a shortage of currency, even leading to the use of playing cards in lieu of currency.



Ducaton

1622



Piastre Decaen
10 livres

1810



Anchor coinage

1822



5 Rupees

1918



1000 Rupees

1954



50 Rupees

1967