



GOLDEN GRANDER

The famed waters off Mauritius produce the fish of a lifetime for Capt. Victor Pelletier and Golden Wave Charters

BY CAPT. VICTOR PELLETIER

● Although we have caught many impressive fish over the years, nothing prepared us for what happened on November 7, 2025—a day that marked a turning point for all of us.

It was the first fishing trip of our season, which always brings a special kind of energy on board. Early in the morning, the air felt clean, the sea calm, and the boat—our 42-foot sport-fisher, *Golden Wave III*—was in perfect condition. My crew, Ludovic and Damien, had tuned every reel, checked every crimp and sharpened every hook. Everything felt aligned. Our clients for the day, Sergei and his two sons (who visit Mauritius twice a year), were fishing with us for the first time. They were excited, relaxed, and ready for a half-day

charter. None of us could have anticipated that we were about to hook a lifetime dream fish.

Not long after setting our spread, the atmosphere shifted. We were trolling about 2 miles off Le Morne Mountain on the southwest corner of Mauritius when the shotgun rod suddenly screamed—that deep, violent sound that every big-game fisherman knows instantly. At first, we didn't think marlin.

The strike was powerful but clean. It wasn't until the fish erupted from the water in a massive, explosive leap that we truly understood what we were dealing with. I looked at Ludovic and Damien, and they looked at me. We all knew it was a big one. Still, even after seeing its size, we weren't thinking 1,000 pounds. We knew it was a serious fish, but not a

On the first trip of their season, with first-time clients aboard, *Golden Wave III* hooked into destiny—an unforgettable fight that turned opening-day optimism into a once-in-a-life-time grander blue marlin.

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Mauritius—and remote Rodrigues Island—remains a “sleeper” destination for grander marlin. The stunning Indian Ocean paradise, where both blue and black marlin can eclipse the 1,000-pound mark, also boasts some of the most breathtaking scenery on Earth.

grander—not yet.

Sergei settled into the fighting chair as we cleared the lines. The fish didn't dive directly; instead, it made several huge jumps before taking off on a blistering run, peeling around 800 meters of line in a matter of seconds. We immediately went into reverse to regain as much line as possible. After that first run, the marlin held roughly 100 meters behind the boat, refusing to rise no matter how much pressure we applied.

Our setup for the day was strong: a 130-pound-class Shimano curved butt rod and a Tiagra reel. The reel is spooled with a braid backing and 130-pound mono top shot attached straight to the swivel. Our lures are rigged with 8 meters of 500-pound leader. The lure was the Flashabou Bullet #40 from Tropic Lures, a local Mauritian brand that has produced many of our best fish. It was rigged with a single-hook (Fudo Sta-Stuk) stiff rig. This simple setup was the perfect combination to inspire confidence. After the first hour, the fish changed behavior. It rose slightly, then dived again, holding deep with a weight that felt unlike anything our clients had ever fought before. It stood out, even for us.

Then came the hardest moment of the entire fight: The marlin settled about 15 meters behind the boat, deep but stable, refusing to rise despite our best efforts. We stayed in reverse for nearly 20 minutes, throwing water everywhere, trying to lift it meter by meter. The battle became a physical challenge, for not only for the angler but also the entire crew. After two and a half hours of intense fighting, the fish finally surfaced. The blue marlin's body seemed endless, its bill wide and battle-scarred. We knew it was a huge fish. Even when the marlin was secured alongside the boat, we remained skeptical. Yes, it was clearly massive—but we didn't dare call it a grander. It was only once we returned to the Le Morne Anglers Club in the Black River Bay and hoisted the marlin onto the official scale that reality hit us: 1,072 pounds. Our first grander, a milestone that every captain dreams of achieving, particularly in Mauritius, where the history and legends of giant marlin run deep.

For Sergei and his sons, it was an emotional moment they will remember forever. For us, it was the reward for years of work, discipline, preparation,



and respect for the fish we pursue. As an IGFA captain, I have always believed that everything should be done with professionalism, proper rigging, ethical handling, and a deep understanding of the ocean. This fish symbolized all of that. We are proud to be supported by Garmin Mauritius, Tropic Lures and Fudo Fishing—brands that help us maintain the highest level of performance on the water. Without reliable equipment, a battle like this one can be lost in seconds.

Looking back, what strikes me the most is not only the size of the fish but also the circumstances: the first trip of the season, the right conditions, the right crew, the right lure, the right family on board. Everything aligned perfectly.

Catching a grander isn't just about luck. It's about preparation, countless early mornings, maintaining gear to perfection, respecting the ocean, and recognizing when opportunity appears. On November 7, 2025, Golden Wave Charters lived a moment that will stay in our memories forever.

Our first grander—and hopefully not our last. ☺

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Capt. Victor Pelletier is a 32-year-old IGFA-certified captain from France who has been based in Mauritius for the past 12 years. He runs Golden Wave Charters alongside an experienced crew, guiding anglers to Indian Ocean gamefish, like blue marlin, with professionalism, local knowledge and a commitment to IGFA standards.



ISTOCK (TOP LEFT), COURTESY GOLDEN WAVE CHARTERS