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# INFLIGHT

ISSUE 01 | 2016 **MAGAZINE**



## ARTS & CRAFTS IN THE ISLANDS

THE MALDIVES'  
MAJESTIC MANTA RAYS

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MERMAIDS  
A LITTLE FANTASY NEVER HURTS

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TOP TEN THINGS TO  
DO WHEN VISITING MALE'

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

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Welcome to this new edition of Inflight!

Take some time away from the mesmerizing views as you fly over the emerald isles and the turquoise lagoons of the Maldives to take a peek into the history, culture and activities that you can enjoy during your stay.

As always, in this issue we bring you pieces written by well-heeled writers, who are sharing their first-hand experience having lived here.

In our first article, Donna Richardson flies over to Baa Atoll to get a glimpse of the "Arts & Crafts in the Islands". For our second article, Barbara Tori looks at the exhilarating experience of going close and personal with Maldives' majestic Manta Rays.

Meanwhile, Verena Wiesbauer looks at the mythical history and existence of Mermaids – and the fantasy that evolves around them. Back from the fantasy, we take a tour together with Thomas Pickard on the "Top Ten Things to do" in the capital Male'.

We hope you have a memorable holiday in the Maldives and look forward to seeing you again.

Enjoy your flight!

*Adheel Ismail*  
Editor

# AUTHORS

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Thomas Pickard is a freelance photographer and writer who lived in the Maldives for two-years, producing over twenty articles on the country.



Barbara Tori is a copywriter and web editor at Theconcept. When she's not crafting persuasive, take-me-there content to help market Maldives' resorts, she likes to return to her beloved Lhaviyani Atoll where she was working for three years.



Verena Wiesbauer is a marine biologist and environmental consultant with Eco Islander Maldives based in Hulhumale. She established "Fenuparee – Mermaiding in Maldives" which provides mermaid costumes for photo shootings and swimming classes.



Donna Richardson is a travel journalist and has worked in the Maldives. Founder of Backpack Maldives, she has made several publications on Maldives and also on esteemed publications such as MSN Travel and Wanderlust.

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**INFLIGHT**  
MAGAZINE *ISSUE 01 | 2016*

## Published for

Trans Maldivian Airways Pvt. Ltd.  
Male' International Airport, Republic of Maldives,  
Phone: +960 331 52 01, Telefax: +960 331 52 03  
[www.transmaldivian.com](http://www.transmaldivian.com)



Please address all enquiries to:  
**Ahmed Fazeel,**  
Business Development Manager  
Email: [fazeel@transmaldivian.com](mailto:fazeel@transmaldivian.com)

## Published by

Think Associates Pvt. Ltd.  
3rd Floor, M. Chaandhanege, Majeedhee Magu, Male',  
Republic of Maldives, Tel: +960 334 2640, Fax: +960 334 2642,  
Email: [info@thinkmaldives.com](mailto:info@thinkmaldives.com), [www.think.com.mv](http://www.think.com.mv)



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# GREETINGS FROM **THE CHAIRMAN**

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Welcome on board!

We are delighted to have you flying with us. As this is the first issue of Inflight for 2016, I wish to take this opportunity to extend our best wishes to all of our passengers for a peaceful and prosperous year ahead.

This year, we celebrate the “Visit Maldives Year 2016” which brings promise of significant growth to the tourism sector of the Maldives. As the world’s largest seaplane operator, we revel in this opportunity to connect with our visitors and offer the extraordinary travel experience in our seaplanes.

With your safety, security and satisfaction being our utmost priority, we promise to strive to exceed expectations always. Our pride is our people; highly motivated and trained in the highest standards to make each and every interaction with our passengers commendable. We are also fortunate to have a Board of Directors with unmatched wisdom, pioneering spirit and global expertise. We are committed to deliver the best-in-class service on the ground and in the air to make your holiday in the Maldives truly memorable.

Our accomplishments in the year 2015 had been noteworthy with additional routes and increased our scale of operations to new destinations. Whilst we celebrate, I wish to extend my gratitude to our partners, individual resorts across the nation and the Government of Maldives in their unwavering support extended in our growth and to make seaplane flights accessible nationwide. We look forward to the bright future ahead as we continue our life journey in the splendour of this beautiful country.

Thank you for flying TMA and we look forward to welcoming you always.

*Best wishes,  
Richard B. Saldanha*





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# WELCOME ON BOARD

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As you embark the Sun, Sand, Sea & Seaplane journey in the paradisaical Maldives, it gives us great pleasure to welcome you to the incredible experience of flying Trans Maldivian Airways.

We believe your journey in the Maldives truly begins once you witness the picturesque scenery viewed from our seaplanes. Sit back, relax and savour this moment.

Reminiscing the year 2015, it had been a challenging yet exciting year for TMA. Despite the economic challenges the Maldives faced in the year, we have continued to improve our performance and provide the best travel experience to our passengers.

Most outstandingly, Trans Maldivian Airways has won two titles in the 22nd annual World Travel Awards: World's Leading Seaplane Operator 2015 and Indian Ocean's Leading Seaplane Operator 2015. This is the second year in a row that we had won the award and we are proud that the success of our seaplane operation in the Maldives is being acknowledged across the globe.

Furthermore during the year, we welcomed the candidates who returned after successfully completing the Pilot Scholarship Program in Canada and joined TMA as Pilots. This is the first program initiated under Zuvana the TMA Youth Development Program exclusive for Maldivians. We continued to extend our Corporate Social Responsibility by being actively involved in supporting the Thalassaemia community of Maldives in providing thalassaemia patient transportation service, on complimentary basis, to and from local islands. TMA has been proudly assisting the local community in their transportation by actively opening up more than 60 of its destinations at very nominal price. TMA is the most covered network in Maldives and the most convenient transfer service due to remote locations of islands.

We are headstrong in our commitment to remain as the world's leading seaplane operator and provide you with the high level of service to make your holiday in the Maldives memorable.

*A.U.M. Fawzy*  
*Chief Executive Officer*

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# MALDIVES

## BEYOND THE SUN, SAND AND SEA

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### **Geography**

The Maldives consists of approximately 1,190 coral islands grouped in a double chain of 27 atolls, spread over roughly 90,000 square kilometers, making the country one of the most unique destinations in the world. The islands stretch over a distance of 800 km from north to south.

### **Climate**

The temperature of Maldives ranges between 24°C and 33°C throughout the year. Although the humidity is relatively high, the constant sea breeze helps to keep the air moving. The average sea temperature is around 26°C.

### **Population**

The population of Maldives has increased rapidly during the last few decades. However with a population of approximately 400,000, the country still remains one of the smallest independent nations in the world.

### **Religion**

Maldivians are devout Muslims and rigorously follow the basic tenets of Islam. The Islamic Center which accommodates more than 5,000 worshippers dominates the skyline of the capital city Male' with its shining golden dome and minaret. Several mosques are dispersed throughout the capital and each inhabited island is graced with at least one or two mosques where the people attend

to their daily prayers.

### **History**

Archeological remains excavated in different parts of the country prove that people were living here as early as third century BC. The Maldives and its people are mentioned in several mariners' logs and records of naval expeditions by the Chinese and the Arabs and later the British and other European explorers.

### **Culture**

A proud history and rich culture evolved from the first settlers who were from various parts of the world travelling the seas in ancient times. The Maldives has been a melting pot of different culture as people from different parts of the world came here and settled down. Some of the local music and dance for instance resemble African influences, while other cultures and traditions reflect East Asian and South Asian characteristics and traits.

### **Language**

Dhivehi, spoken throughout the Maldives, is a language belonging to the Indo-Iranian group of languages. The language is spoken only in the Maldives and Minicoy Island in the Lakshadweep Atoll (India) to the north of the Maldives. The present script, Thaana was introduced in the late 16th century and is written from right to left. English is widely spoken by Maldivians and visitors







can easily make themselves understood getting around the capital Male'. In the resorts, a variety of languages are spoken by the staff including English, German, French, Italian, Japanese and Chinese.

### **Capital Island**

Male', with a total area of 5.8 km<sup>2</sup>, is the capital of the country. It is the center of administration and the hub of trade and commerce. More than 150,000 people live in Male'.

### **Economy**

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, the economy changed from the age-old traditional system based on fisheries and agriculture to a modern economy that rode on the success of the newly established tourism industry and a modernized and mechanized fishing industry. Maldivians enjoy the highest GDP per capita in South Asia today.

### **Currency**

The local currency is Rufiyaa. At the time of publication, the exchange rate is pegged at MVR 15.42 to a US Dollar. If you are heading to a resort, you need not worry about local currency as all your bills at the resort can be paid by US Dollar, Euro or any other European currency. All major credit cards are also accepted at the resorts. However, if you are visiting Male' or any of the local islands, you may need to hold local currency for purchases you may wish to make.

### **Education**

Maldives boasts one of the highest literacy rates in the world with 91% of the country's population being able to read and write. Educational standards are among the highest in the region and schools follow the British system of education.

### **Health**

The Indhira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) in Male' is the state run general hospital in the country providing a high standard of medical care. ADK Hospital is one of the private health care facilities in the country among several other private hospitals and clinics. Most resorts have a resident doctor and a decompression chamber is within easy reach in case of a diving emergency.

### **Business Hours**

The working week in Maldives begins on Sunday and ends on Thursday. Government offices are open from 08:00 to 14:00 hours and the private sector from 09:00 to 17:00 hours. Most offices in the private sector open for business on Saturdays. Weekend falls on Friday and Saturday.

### **Communication**

All resorts offer IDD telephone services. Mobile telephone services in the country are offered by Ooredoo Maldives and Dhiraagu. Both companies have roaming agreements with various operators across the globe, which will enable you to use your home number while in Maldives. All the resorts in Maldives offer Internet services. Some resorts offer broadband connections in the room while others offer Wi-Fi zones at key locations on the island.

### **Shopping**

The northern end of Chaandhanee Magu in Male' is the place to be if you are looking for souvenirs to take home. A range of batik sarongs and wraparounds, wooden handicrafts, candles and other knick knacks are available from the shops lining the street. You will also be able to find some souvenir items if you visit the neighboring islands near your resort. Lookout for genuine Maldivian hand painted t-shirts and lacquered boxes, miniature dhonis and reed mats if you really want to take a piece of Maldives with you as a memento.

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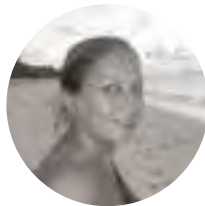
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# ARTS & CRAFTS

IN THE ISLANDS – BAA ATOLL

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*by Donna Richardson*

Traditional arts and crafts in the Maldives have evolved over the years and many islands have now forged their own successful cottage industries.

Most ancient Maldivian wood carvings are a wonder to behold. A Maldivian craftsman armed with a few rudimentary tools can carve smooth and finish master works in utmost dedication.



The Dhoni, a boat which provides transportation to islands, is one of the best examples of Maldivian carpentry. It is carved with intricate designs. Many mosques too have intricate wood carvings. More recent times, however, have seen a concentration on smaller hand-made wood carvings such as vases, jewellery boxes and ornamental dhonis (traditional boats), which can easily be packaged as gifts for tourists. While these may be smaller in size, these carvings, supplemented by lacquer designs have as much, if not more, artistic value.

Records show that the Chinese were the first to manufacture and trade lacquer, and in doing so, helped establish one of the Maldives' most important art-forms. Lacquer work, or "laajehun" in local tongue, was brought to the Maldives in the 17th century and its protective properties against atmospheric change that made it so popular among Maldivian folk.

Small wooden crafted containers and vases, and also buildings meant to stand the test of time, were decorated with lacquer painted intricate floral designs, in bold colours of red, blue, green and gold. However, recent times have brought into question the survival of this rich cultural heritage. This skill has always been preserved only in the island of Thulhaadhoo in Baa atoll but fewer artisans are taking up the craft.

At one time, lacquer works were a thriving industry and mostly the preserve of noble families in the country. Nowadays, the modern Maldivian craftsman has adopted ancient arts to create mass souvenirs true to Maldivian tradition, for gift shops throughout the capital of Male' and in the resorts.

Maldivians use wood to make these containers and vases. In recent times some of the wood used is not ideal for being exported to drier and colder countries as some of the lacquered wooden handicrafts cracked once in Europe. Each one beautifully crafted and layered with a lacquer finish.

The brightly coloured lacquered pots and vases that are made in this region can range in price from a USD10 for a small ornament to a foot high vase costing USD225! They come in all shapes, sizes and colours. Some are painted with a







traditional Dhivehi design hand-drawn and known as "Liyelaaajehun". The colours used on the lacquer ware are very basic usually a very bright red, yellow and black and traditionally these were made from the juices from trees and insects in the early days.

In the Maldives, lacquerworks are created according to tradition. Here is the process. First the materials, wood, lacquer and colours have to be sourced. The lacquer is softened with a hammer and filled with paint. Hammering it in turn heats up the varnish and enables the colours and lacquer to be mixed together. Then this lacquer is rolled out into a sausage shape and cut into small strips each around five inches. These later form the lacquer pieces which are soaked in water to soften them. The next step is to shape a block of wood to make the base for the wooden ornament. This is done on a lathe and then the lacquer is applied and the piece polished off with a palm leaf.

As Calcutta grew as a trade hub connecting east to the Middle East and Africa, it became much easier to import these materials from India to the Maldives. From there, Burmese rice, the favourite staple of Maldivians, as well as the first Burmese lacquer ware, was imported into the Maldives. Now the colours can be bright pink, green, purple and

orange.

The lathe machine used to make the ornaments costs around \$450 and is able to make around five ornaments which are then hand finished in lacquer. It can be a consuming process. After manufacture, they are then transported to the tourist shops in Male'.

These island arts however, are sadly dying out due in part to an oversaturated local market and increased competition from foreign souvenir companies that can make and import them at a fraction of this cost. The actual handiworks are created on a machine and then painted by hand with bright colours or lacquer known as "laa" in Dhivehi.

Generally, the tricks of the trade are handed down through generations. There are around 20 families specialising in this craft currently on the island. Even more so than wood carving, stone carving brings to light the true depth of talent and creativity of the Maldivian craftsman of yesteryear – the intricate designs found on ancient burial stones and mosques stand as proof. Stone carving is considered by many in the Maldives as a dying art form, but recent works by emerging young artists,



using silicon blocks and other such materials instead of the endangered coral, indicates a revival.

Since there is no clay or ceramic industry native to the Maldives, due to the coral sand, Maldivians have become adept at working with coral and also lime stone as building materials. In fact many of the houses in the rural islands are made of coral. They have carved upon them intricate designs. Traditionally coral was used as the main canvas to work on.

Coconut thatch was once widely used in the building of the traditional Maldivian house. Fungi and panels of plaited palm fronds are traditionally used for fences, walls and for roofing – as I noticed on a visit to Meedhoo. In modern times this has been adapted to more ornamental uses such as decorating the exteriors and interiors of building.

All in all, indigenous arts and crafts still have a place in the Maldives, but the Maldivians need to be motivated to save their own heritage from market forces in order to preserve it for future generations. This will help to keep their ancient practices alive with the power of the tourist purse to sustain it – perhaps the backpacking market will help greatly.



## THE LOWDOWN ON THULAADHOO

### What to see:

The island is also famous for fishing and has a small population of 2,774 people, and of these 30 per cent work in the fishing industry, 25 per cent in the tourism industry, 2 per cent in other jobs, and eight per cent in the lacquer works.

Engage with local life as Thulhaadhoo is a thriving community with a health centre, two pre-schools and one primary school. It also has three mosques, 41 local shops. Cast yourself away on any of the surrounding inhabited islands scattered around Thulhaadhoo.

### How to get there:

There are three ways to reach the island, by speed boat, airplane or seaplane.

The speed boat leaves at 9am from Male' and reaches Thulhaadhoo two hours and 30 minutes later and returns from Thulhaadhoo at 1pm. There is a 17-minute domestic flight every day of the week from Male' to Dharavandhoo Airport - which is just 25 minutes away from Thulhaadhoo by speed boat.

TMA operates a seaplane transfer every day from Male' International Airport to Baa Atoll.



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# A MARVEL TO BEHOLD

THE MALDIVES' MAJESTIC MANTA RAYS

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*by Barbara Tori*  
*Photo Credit: Niv Froman*

Coming up close and personal with manta rays is an exhilarating experience. Due to their sheer size and inquisitive nature, these majestic creatures capture the imagination of ocean lovers everywhere. If your heart, too, skips a beat when you are picturing a manta ray gracefully gliding towards you before suddenly putting on a somersault, you have been warned: meeting these wonderful, friendly giants will have you skip more than a single beat.



And there is no better place to get to know the manta rays than the Maldives. Hosting the largest and the most studied population of reef manta rays in the world, why not dive a little deeper to find out some fascinating traits that will make your possible encounters even better.

What the Maldives lacks in the amount of terra firma, it makes up for with the vastness of the ocean that surrounds its tiny islands. These gigantic stretches of water, encircling the archipelago nation, are home to an estimated 5000-6000 reef manta rays (*M. alfredi*), according to Manta Trust and the Maldivian Manta Ray Project (MMRP), which have been studying the population for over ten years. With great excitement they observe that the mantas of the Maldives are quite a phenomenon when compared to those at hot spots elsewhere in the world.

Manta rays are regularly seen across the Maldives throughout the year, and as of today, over 3,900 individuals have been identified by the MMRP. Admiring the infinite shades of blue through the seaplane window, you will agree that they couldn't

possibly have settled in a more stunning place. But stunning views don't suffice if you are a manta: the largest living rays are here to feed on the ocean's smallest—plankton.

Being plankton feeders, manta rays undergo lengthy migrations in search of the ultimate snack, the location of which is subject to the country's weather patterns, particularly the monsoonal winds. As the Maldivian Atolls are part of a massive underwater mountain chain, they act as a barrier to the underwater currents, set in motion by the Monsoon. When these currents hit the Atolls, they get things rolling and push nutrient-rich water up the reefs to the water surface where plankton can bloom under the constant sun. Plankton accumulates around the Atolls' sheltered sides, giving manta rays loads to munch on.

And it is in these shallow lagoons where most manta sightings occur; it is not uncommon to see up to 20 individuals enjoying a zooplankton feeding frenzy. What is fascinating is that as mantas follow the seasonal shifts in the abundance of food, they keep returning to particular sites. Take



Ping-Pong (MV-MA-0012): this mature manta, first photographed in 1989, used to be seen at the very same feeding spot for many years. When the Monsoon changes direction (usually in April and November), mantas make a move and travel to their other favourite places. They head to the opposite side of the Atoll or to another one, often hundreds of kilometres away, hoping to arrive just in time for the seasonal delicacies there.

Not only are manta rays beautiful, they have brain, too—in fact, the largest brain of all fishes! They have adopted various intelligent feeding techniques that allow them to maximise the amount of plankton soup running into their mammoth mouth. You may find them somersaulting backwards, looping around patches of plankton for hours and putting on an underwater show unlike any other. As plankton becomes thicker, mantas may begin to forage in groups, forming chains of several individuals swimming head to tail, one behind another, enjoying the plankton bowl in a cooperative, sharing-is-caring manner. The most spectacular of all, only observed in the Baa Atoll so far, is the famed cyclone feeding: a chain of dozens

of mantas spins into a vortex, resulting in a chaotic dining feast.

Another enthralling manifestation of the manta rays' sophistication is their brilliant post-lunch routine. To keep their bodies healthy and clean, mantas head to their favourite cleaning stations: reefs outcrops where resident cleaner fish set up shop and do the dirty work of removing parasites and bits of food leftovers from the mantas' gills and mouth. When a manta visits a cleaning station, it swims into the current and hovers effortlessly over the coral, making full use of the free beauty and medical care. While you can see both male and female mantas getting cleaned—and this may not come as a surprise—one Manta Trust study has shown that it is females that visit the underwater spa far more frequently.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**We can tell manta rays apart by a unique pattern on their bellies.**

Average wingspan: 3-3.5 metres, 2.2 times the length of the body  
Birth rate: slow, one pup every 2-5 years  
Threats: Fishing lines and nets, boat propellers, Chinese medicine trade in gill plates  
Protected species in the Maldives.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR MANTAS!

**Take pictures of mantas' bellies and submit them via [www.mantatrust.org](http://www.mantatrust.org) to receive a rich feedback of your encounter while providing important data for the manta ray research.**





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# MERMAIDS

A LITTLE FANTASY NEVER HURTS

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*by Verena Wiesbauer*

If you put on fake fairy wings, you won't fly. But if you put on a mono-fin and swim properly, you can follow your fundamental human desire to return to the sea and physically embody a mythical creature when the tail is on: The Mermaid.



In singer Ahmed Fathy's (Fathey) 2001 - song "Fenuparee" (Fenuparee means Mermaid in the local language Dhivehi) he plays with the fantasy of a shipwrecked man being rescued on a small island by an attractive and unattainable woman emerging from the sea. That was, perhaps, one of the first occurrences of a mermaid appearing in the Maldives. After several quiet years following the song, professional Mermaids such as "Mermaid Kat" (Kat Felton) and "Mermaid Hannah" (Hannah Fraser) have come to the Maldives in recent years to swim with turtle, whale shark & co and conduct underwater photo shootings. Since mid-2015 it is possible to rent or purchase Mermaid tails suitable for swimming from the "Fenuparee" mermaid tail supplier based in Hulhumale' (visit Facebook 'Mermaiding in Maldives - Fenuparee' for more information).

Perhaps it is the water's vastness, combined with its enigmatic nature that holds us in such thrall; certainly those qualities have made the ocean the inspiration for countless myths and legends. With their name meaning "woman of the sea" in Old English, Mermaids are thought of differently from one culture to the next with variations in traditions relating to their origins, their appearance and their nature.

The myth of a marine human extends as far back as 5,000 BCE, in Babylonian mythology, where there was a God name 'Ea' (who would later be called 'Oannes' by the Greek).

Ea was a water God and was depicted with the upper body of a man and the lower body of a fish. According to legends, Ea has been responsible for teaching everything that is human to Homo sapiens and was perhaps the first depiction of a merman in history. Also in classical antiquity, the fertility goddess Atargatis of Syria was depicted as a fish-bodied human, thus constituting the first known representation of a Mermaid.

Mermaids show up not only in Greek and Roman legends; even the Inuit have 'Sedna', while the Japanese have 'Ningyo'. The 'Yemaya', goddess of the living ocean, originates in Africa.

Two general schools of thought about these first-wave Mermaids suggest it is either a feminine saviour – a lucky, protective water spirit – or a terribly bad omen that will lure you to death and cause shipwrecks.

Therefore, contrary to popular belief, Mermaids have not always been depicted as having a woman's head and torso, a fishtail instead of legs and holding a mirror and comb, that live in the ocean and can take on a human shape and marry mortal men. 'Monkey Mermaids' made their way into western Mermaid lore in the nineteenth century. Apparently manufactured in Japan, these twisted Mermaid interpretations were created by combining a small monkey's head and torso with a dehydrated fish. In the 1840s, P.T. Barnum made a fortune by exhibiting what he claimed, and



successfully convinced many people, were the "remains of a Mermaid". Today it is famously known as the Feejee Mermaid.

After sailing out from Spain in 1942, Christopher Columbus spotted three "Mermaids" near the Dominican Republic in January 1943. He described them as being "not as beautiful as they are painted, since in some ways they have a face like a man." Mermaid sightings by sailors, when they weren't made up, were most likely manatees, dugongs or Steller's sea cows (which became extinct by the 1760s due to over-hunting). Manatees are slow-moving aquatic mammals with human-like eyes, bulbous faces and paddle-like tails. It is likely that manatees evolved from an ancestor they share with the elephant. Manatees and humans suffering from a rare condition known as 'sirenomelia', in

which the legs are fused together from birth, have also been included in several freak shows and circuses of the 1800s to show evidence that Mermaids existed.

Hans Christian Andersen's title character in the "The Little Mermaid" story (first published in 1837) is said to have been the inspiration for Walt Disney's animated film "The Little Mermaid" (1989): the tale of Ariel, a Mermaid princess who is fascinated by human beings. Ariel has a distinctive appearance with her long, flowing, bright red hair, blue eyes, green Mermaid tail and purple seashell bikini top and is perhaps the most famous and popular Mermaid for kids of the 1980s and 1990s.

Even though the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has denied the existence of marine humans, it doesn't stop people on from questioning whether Mermaids or Mermen actually do exist. After all, more of space has been explored compared to the ocean and there are so many things on this earth we don't know about – so could Mermaids be one of them? Maybe they just don't want to be found and hide living in the deep ocean? One day we may find out, and until then, a little fantasy doesn't hurt, so let's slip into our silicone tails and pretend to be one of them!





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# TOP TEN THINGS TO DO

WHEN VISITING MALE'

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*by Thomas Pickard*

The following is a list of ten things to see and do on a visit to the thriving metropolis that is Male'.





### **1. Visit the fish market**

Just two blocks west of the President's Jetty, the fish market comes alive in the late afternoon. Beautiful, multi-coloured fishing dhonis line the harbour's edge as men unload their previous night's catch and carry the fish by hand across the road to the market floor. Expect to see the commonly caught Yellow Fin and Skip Jack Tuna as well as more exotic, big game fish like Marlin. Be careful, though – the market floor is notoriously slippery!



### **2. Buy some fresh fruit at the produce market**

One block west of the fish market, the produce market is a great place to purchase some cheap, locally produced fruit and vegetables. Fruit supplies are season dependant - expect to see a mix of coconuts, mangoes, papaya, watermelon and bananas, as well as an exotic collection of local vegetables. To ensure you get the best deal, carry small notes of the local currency (Rufiyaa) and compare prices with at least two vendors before making your purchase.



### **3. Meet some of the locals at the waterhole**

With a lack of natural beaches on Male', the locals make do with what they have - the waterhole. Located on the southern side of Male', the waterhole is actually one end of a man-made harbour, closed off to water vessels. From mid-afternoon onwards, locals of all ages flock to this spot to escape the stifling heat. The waterhole seldom sees foreigners, which means it's a great place to meet the friendly locals. If you decide to get wet, ensure you leave your valuables with someone you trust and wear swimming trunks and a t-shirt so as not to offend the locals.



### **4. Watch surfers at the only surf break in Male'**

The one and only surf break in Male' is a short wave that grinds over a razor sharp reef, dotted with sea urchins and home to a resident turtle. The local surfers typically head out mid-afternoon - grab a front row seat along the seawall and watch them rip the waves apart. Swimming here isn't recommended unless you are a seasoned surfer - better to stroll down to the artificial beach.

## 5. Artificial beach

Ironically, Male' doesn't have a natural beach. To solve this problem, the government has constructed an artificial beach on the eastern end of the island. Especially popular with women and children, the beach is a semi-circular sandy area ringed with imported granite blocks. With change rooms nearby, it's a peaceful place to have a quiet dip with the locals. If you have a shower afterwards, make sure you pay the 5 Rufiyaa (\$0.39 US) for use of the shower water.

## 6. Snack at a local roadside stall

Dotted along the ring road around Male' are a number of small roadside stalls that look out over the ocean. Opening in the late afternoon the stalls sell everything from fresh coconut juice to a variety of small snacks. Chairs are typically provided, so pull up a seat, order a coconut juice, sit back, relax and let the chaos of Male' pass you by.



### **7. Meet Male' at night**

When the sun goes down and the temperatures finally begin to subside, the streets of Male' start to fill with locals shopping, eating and socialising. Go for a walk down Majeedee Magu, the main street that splits the island to see the variety of shops and to rub shoulders with the locals along the crowded footpaths.

### **8. See The Grand Friday Mosque**

Built in 1984 the mosque and minaret was once the tallest structure in Male'. With a main hall capable of accommodating 5,000 worshippers, the mosque is busiest on Fridays, when thousands of locals come to pray. Open to visitors daily from 9am to 5pm, it is well worth a visit. At night the mosque is beautifully lit with golden lights.

### **9. Visit the Hukuru Miskiiy**

Dating back to 1656, the Hukuru Miskiiy (Friday mosque) is the oldest mosque in the country. The interior is known for its elaborate carvings - one commemorates the introduction of Islam to the Maldives in the 13th century. A visit inside the mosque is by arrangement only, so speak with your local resort to arrange access before you visit.

### **10. Visit the Tomb of Abu Al Barakaath**

Across the road from the Hukur Miskiiy lies the tomb of Abu Al Barakaath, arguably one of the most important people in the history of the Maldives. He was responsible for bringing Islam to the shores of the Maldives in 1153.







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## WITH TMA

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# SERVICES

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## Excursions

A day trip or a half-day excursion can take you to an uninhabited island, where you can snorkel, have a picnic and enjoy the Maldives' pristine natural beauty.

## Private Charters

Chartering a Twin Otter is about freedom and the chance to explore and experience the Maldives in a way most people rarely do; a charter gives you the freedom, the privacy and space to relax as you desire.

## VIP Flights

For luxury seaplane travel, look no further than Zour custom designed VIP Twin Otter aircraft featuring a 10-seat configuration with a variety of amenities and cabin services. The VIP Twin Otters feature fifty percent more legroom and seat width, courtesy of the 10-seat configuration instead of the normal 15, comfortable leather seats and large foldout tables. Cabin services on the VIP flight includes refreshing towels, bottled water and soft drinks. Watch the incredible atoll formations slip by below or use the large cushions and the spacious seating to stretch out and catch up on some rest.







### **Passenger Evacuation**

We always wish our guests the safest, most enjoyable holiday ever! However, should there be doubts as to whether you can get expert medical and emergency help in time in case of emergency, do reassure yourself that TMA does provide excellent passenger evacuation service, should it be needed.

### **Resort Transfers**

From the airport to your resort, your flight with us will be one to treasure as one of the best part of your holiday in the Maldives. With us you will be whisked away to your chosen destination as soon as you arrive in the Maldives. We take you from the airport right to the doorstep of your resort. Flight times vary between 10 minutes and 50 minutes depending on the distance.

### **Photo Flights**

From the air it is magical and breathtakingly beautiful. Wherever you look you will find a perfect frame for a shot that you can be proud of. Photo flights can be customized to suit your specific wishes.

## **TMA FACT FILE**

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**45**                      **No. of aircraft**

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**120,000+**      **Flights per year**

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**960,000 +**      **Passengers per year**

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**1,000+**              **Employees**



# TMA Destinations



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#### LEGEND

-  REEF
-  ISLAND
-  RESORT

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# THE SEAPLANE

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The DHC-6 Twin Otter is a Canadian 19-passenger STOL (Short Takeoff and Landing) utility aircraft developed by de Havilland Canada and currently produced by Viking Air.

De Havilland has a history of more than 80 years; the first de Havilland Canada flew in 1925, piloted by none other than Geoffrey de Havilland. The aircraft was called the 'Moth' and was quickly followed by many variations – all of them highly successful.

Development of the Twin Otter began in 1964, with the first flight on May 20, 1965 as a twin-engined replacement for the single-engined Otter had been planned by de Havilland Canada. Twin engines not only provided improved safety but also allowed for an increase in payload while retaining the renowned short takeoff and landing (STOL) qualities. Design features included double slotted trailing edge flaps

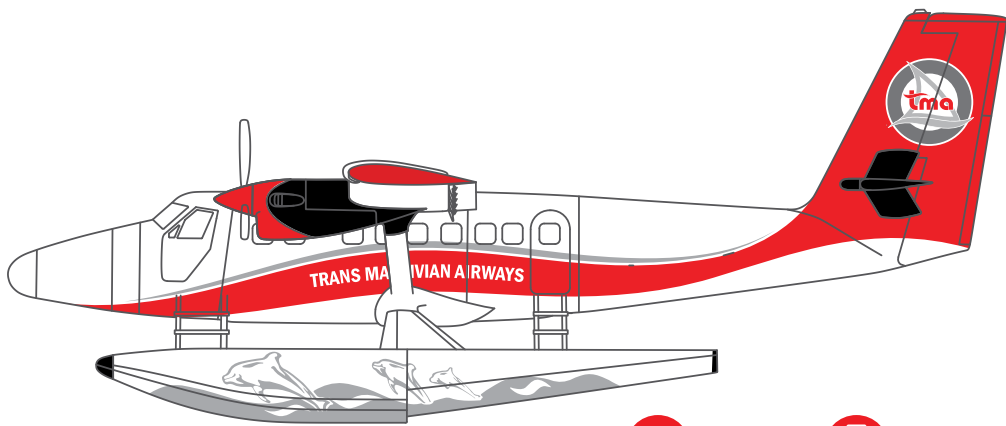
and ailerons that work in unison with the flaps to boost STOL performance. The availability of the 550 shp (410 kW) Pratt and Whitney Canada PT6A-20 propeller turbine engine in the early 1960s made the concept of a twin more feasible.

The Twin Otter proved to be an immediate success, and became immensely popular for short-haul commuter transportation. The Twin Otter is one of the most versatile aircraft ever produced and could come with floats, skis or tricycle landing gear depending on the needs of its users.

It is our belief that our success and the consolidation of our reputation as a safe and reliable seaplane operator in a country such as the Maldives is primarily due to the fact that the Twin Otter is the most ideal small aircraft to the aviation environment in which we operate.



# THE FLEET



Number of  
Seaplanes



Passenger  
Capacity

VIP Configuration  
Aircraft

2

10

DHC-6 Twin Otter  
400 Series

3

15

DHC-6 Twin Otter  
100/200/300 Series

40

15

**Total number of Seaplanes**  
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**45**

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# RECENTLY AT **TMA**

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It is with great pleasure that we announce that Trans Maldivian Airways has won two titles in the 22nd annual World Travel Awards: World's Leading Seaplane Operator 2015 and Indian Ocean's Leading Seaplane Operator 2015.

The World Travel Awards is the most prestigious, comprehensive and sought-after awards programme in the global travel and tourism industry. To be voted a winner is an accolade which many strive for but few achieve, so Trans Maldivian

Airways is extremely proud that the success of our seaplane operation in the Maldives has hereby been acknowledged across the globe.

We would like to thank everyone who expressed their support and helped Trans Maldivian Airways win these important awards, already for the second year in a row, and promise to provide even greater satisfaction to passengers travelling to and from the Maldives' resorts that use our seaplane transportation services.

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- Adults only pool
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- Main restaurant has a separate area for families (no disturbance for couples and joy for the kids)
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