

# INFLIGHT

ISSUE 02 | 2017 **MAGAZINE**



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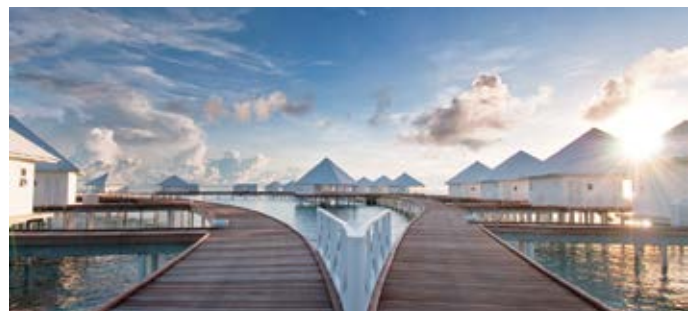
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# EDITOR'S NOTE



There is a question that I have been often asked over the years. Do people read your magazine? I can understand where this question is coming from. How do I get your attention, in spite of the obvious “distractions” you have on this once in a lifetime seaplane journey? As an editor who spends months seeking the finest writers and selecting the best articles, this question usually ends up with me answering “YES”, albeit in an incredulous manner.

As confident as my reply may sound it doesn't mean I am convinced. Let's do a reality check. First and foremost, this is a very short flight taking you to your chosen destination. Most of you are already exhausted from a long journey from your homes faraway. You are filled with anticipation and excitement over the impending holiday that you have been waiting impatiently for months. Moreover, as you have just settled into your seat, can I expect you to turn the pages of a magazine at your disposal, be it how informative it may be? Because above all, my biggest competition is nature itself. Yes, I repeat nature.

As magical seascapes of this tiny island nation unfold literally right beneath your feet, putting you under a mesmerizing spell, let's be honest. Anyone who have caught even a tiny glimpse of this dramatic sight would understand the utter impossibility of trying to tear their eyes away from it. That includes even myself, even though I have travelled as a passenger on these flights many a times.

You are reading this because you are turning the pages already, congratulations! It appears the spell is broken – at least for you, for now! If you spare a few minutes going through the pages, you would learn about the fun you could have in the clear crystal waters of the Maldives. We have also presented an interesting article for plant lovers on the unique flora of the Maldives, that you may see during your excursions. If you are a social media enthusiast, there is a wonderful article by our regular contributor Sarah Harvey, offering great tips on how to achieve the best Instagram results in the Maldives.

My hope is that these articles would enlighten you with insights of the Maldives. For, once you disembark from this flight, the Maldives would likely put you under an even stronger spell. Many who have visited Maldives say so. They say that on these islands; time ceases to exist.

Enjoy!

**Adheel Ismail**  
Editor

# Explore the sunny side of life

EXPLORE THE SERENE BLUE LAGOONS AND PRIVATE BEACHES ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF LIFE. WATCH THE DAWN BREAK TO THE SOUND OF WAVES DASHING ON A SHALLOW REEF, SERENADING YOU TO A RELAXING HOLIDAY IN PARADISE. THE MORE ADVENTUROUS SORTS WILL DELIGHT IN THE PLETHORA OF ACTIVITY OUR ISLAND RESORTS OFFER; AND THOSE SEEKING A TRANQUIL HAVEN, WILL DISCOVER SERENITY AT ITS BEST IN PARADISE. STAY WITH US AND RENEW A PROMISE BOUND TO THE ISLAND AS YOU DISCOVER YOURSELF.



  
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MAGAZINE

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# GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear Guest,

Maruhaba! Welcome to the Maldives, its idyllic islands in the Sun, Sand, Sea and Seaplanes!

We are grateful that you have made Maldives your preferred destination for this holiday and we are sure that you will go through an experience like no other, especially beginning and ending with a breath-taking flight on our seaplane.

You may not know that you are flying with the largest seaplane airline in the world (our fleet size is 49 Twin Otter seaplanes). You and your dear ones probably fly on airlines frequently and we want you to know that, as you fasten your seatbelt, you are flying on one of the safest airlines in the world. Safety, reliability and quality are the foundations on which this organization was built and remains our top priority.

We perpetually work behind the scenes, to strengthen all aspects of safety, engineering, maintenance, flight operations, ground operations, passenger / guest experience etc. through rigorous initiatives, in close collaboration with the authorities and our customers.

With humility, we wish to claim that what TMA has done for Maldives is what highways and railroads did in the early stages of development in developed economies. We have been the glue that held the economy together, we helped open up and connect isolated islands in a unique and reliable manner. We continue to knit together all corners of this country which in turn strengthens the backbone of the country's economic development.

All this would not have been possible without the huge support and goodwill we have received from the Government, our partners, and you. This connect with the government, customers and above all you, our loyal guest, has been the bedrock of our lasting association with and the positioning of Maldives as a preferred tourism destination.

Thank you once again, for choosing Maldives for your special holiday. We hope you will truly enjoy yourselves.

Have fun and be safe!

Best wishes,

**Richard B. Saldanha**



# WELCOME ON BOARD



Welcome to paradise!

We take great privilege in welcoming you to Maldives and on board Trans Maldivian Airways.

Your choice to travel with us presents an opportunity for you to view the breathtaking beauty of Maldives from the top. As you enjoy gazing your eyes on the many shades of blue enveloping the pristine whites and lush greens of this tiny island nation, we would like to express our thanks, for giving

us the opportunity to serve you to a standard comparable to none.

We started as one of the first air service operators of its kind in the Maldives, but in time we have developed to become the largest seaplane operator in the world. Currently we serve to fulfill the transport requirements of more than 65 resort destinations, operating more than 200,000 flights a year.

Since our inception in 1989, we have been recognized and rewarded for our services within the tourism sector. In July 2017, we were awarded the Indian Ocean's Leading Seaplane Operator for the fourth consecutive year now.

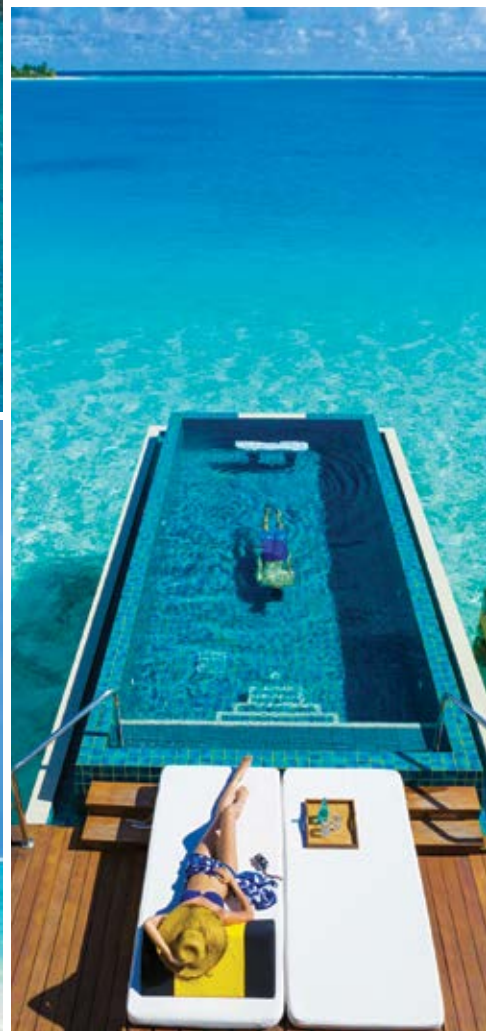
These prestigious recognitions, along with the trust that we have built with our customers over the decades, are strong deciding factors that assists us in remaining vigilant in our effort. We strive tirelessly to meet the challenges posed by the developing tourism sector of this country. Recently, we have expanded our fleet, foreseeing a greater need for our services, as new direct flights from Europe begin to operate in Maldives. This expansion would likely continue, as we aspire to accommodate the transport needs of the numerous resorts opening across the country in the future.

We stand determined in our mission to connect our esteemed guests to their chosen destinations, while offering uncompromised experiences that we are renowned for.

As you inch closer to your island resort, we wish you a wonderful stay in Maldives and hope you can create delightful memories of your Sun, Sand, Sea and Seaplane holiday.

**A.U.M. Fawzy**

CEO



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MALDIVES



MALDIVES  
BEYOND THE SUN, SAND  
AND SEA



## 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 cultures 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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.





Photo by Nashiu Naeem

### 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 98% 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 Indira 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 facility 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 0800 to 1400 hours and the private sector from 0900 to 1700 hours. Most offices in the private sector open for business on Saturdays. Weekend falls on Friday and Saturday.



Photo by Nashiu Naeem

## COMMUNICATION

All resorts offer IDD telephone services. Mobile telephone services in the country are offered by Dhiraagu and Ooredoo Maldives. 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 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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complimentary selection of nonmotorized watersports and unlimited snorkeling excursions during stay. Other services include an in-villa minibar replenished twice daily with beer, wine, soft drinks and other goodies.

Kanifushi offer guests a number of food outlets, each with it's own atmosphere and culinary journey. The main restaurant The Spice hosts a variety of theme nights and offers guests expansive buffets, grills, and live cooking stations. The Liquid, the main pool bar offers an array of exotic cocktails and beverages along with mouth watering snacks and light meals during the day. The Sunset – home to the resort's Adults Only Pool bar, offers stunning infinity pool views and in the evening converts into a Mediterranean Asian fusion restaurant in it's left wing. Kanifushi's culinary experiences expand onto the resorts authentic Japanese restaurant Teppanyaki Grill, and the award winning Gourmet Vegetarian Restaurant 'Just Veg by Atmosphere' open for lunch and dinner.

Other services include a PADI Certified Dive & Watersports center, with a team of multi-lingual professionals ready to take you exploring the magical waters of the Maldives, and a blissfully tranquil Garden Spa Complex – Akiri Spa by Mandara.

**For More Info: [Atmosphere-Kanifushi.com](http://Atmosphere-Kanifushi.com)**



An underwater scene featuring two divers in the upper left, a large orange and white clownfish in the foreground, and a smaller clownfish near a sea anemone on the right. The background is a vibrant blue ocean with various coral and marine life.

# ADVENTURING WITH KIDS IN A TROPICAL WONDERLAND

by Thomas Pickard

For families and their kids, the Maldives is an ideal destination to get out on the water, learn some new skills and explore the stunning underwater world. Writer and parent, Thomas Pickard looks at some of the more adventurous options available to parents.

Given the Maldives is more water than land, it is no surprise that a lot of the adventure activities you can do with your kids are water based. Blessed with year round warm water temperatures, stunningly beautiful turquoise waters and favourable wind conditions, the following activities are a must try for any adventurous kids on holiday in the sun soaked Maldives.



### SCUBA DIVING

With water visibility often described as 'gin-clear', an abundance of sea life and more dive sites than you could complete in a lifetime, it is little surprise that the Maldives is well known as one of the world's premier dive destinations. For budding young divers, this makes the Maldives a fantastic place to learn the basics of scuba diving.

The best course for young divers, is the PADI Bubblemaker Course. Designed by The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI), this course is offered at a variety of resorts throughout the Maldives. Kids need to be eight-years of age, competent swimmers and ready to learn and have some fun. Under the tutelage of a PADI Instructor, kids will learn to take their first breaths using scuba gear designed specifically for kids, in water no deeper than two-metres. Once certified, kids 10 to 12-years old can dive to 12-metres.

### SNORKELLING

Requiring less instruction than learning to scuba diving, snorkelling is just as much fun and requires very little in the way of equipment - just a mask / snorkel and some flippers. First time snorkelers should be competent swimmers and be accompanied by an experienced snorkeler / scuba diver. The best place to learn is in the shallow lagoons that surround most resorts. Once the basics have been mastered, it is time to hit the deeper water. Most resorts have a great house reef just off the beach, and this makes for an exciting adventure snorkelling along, counting the different type of fish your kids will inevitably see.

If your resort doesn't have a house reef, see if your resort has scheduled trips to a nearby snorkelling spot. Sign up for the morning trips, as your kids will be full of energy and conditions on the water are usually calmer. It also means your kids can return in time for lunch, before chilling out in the afternoon.



## CATAMARAN SAILING

With shallow lagoons and a plentiful supply of warm winds, the Maldives is an awesome place to try catamaran sailing. Just about every resort has a catamaran on the beach and with a minimum of instruction, you and your kids can be out sluicing across the turquoise coloured lagoon in no time.

Sailing is more about finesse than physical strength and is an enjoyable way to get away from the island you are on, for a whole new view of your surroundings. Unlike single hulled yachts, catamarans or cats, are twin hulled, meaning they are a lot more stable and forgiving - ideal for beginners.

If you are familiar with sailing, then choose a day when the sun is high, the wind isn't too strong (rarely a problem in the Maldives) and the lagoon is sparkling. It won't take much to get your kids into sailing a cat under some parental tutelage. If you have never sailed before, complete an hour-long course to learn the basics. Your classroom is paradise and if you get too hot, you can always have a quick dip to cool off.

## EVENING FISHING

Fishing trips are a great evening excursion and an easy way to introduce your kids to the world of fishing. Fishing trips generally head out in the evening, when conditions on the water are really calm and the fish are out feeding, which means you have a great chance of catching something.

Fishing is pretty much a national past time in the Maldives and under the tutelage of one of your crew members, it won't be long before your young one understands the basics of baiting a hook (watch those fingers), casting a line and slowly reeling it back in, using an old fashioned hand reel. Once they have caught a fish, they will be hooked for the rest of the evening.



## WHALE SUBMARINE

The whale submarine is a chance to give your kids a more of a Jacques Cousteau inspired adventure. For a kid, few things are cooler than hopping into a submarine and descending beneath the waves to explore the underwater world.

Ideally suited to families and children, a trip on the Whale Submarine lasts for 45-minutes. After taking a dhoni to the floating dock on the western side of Male', you will be provided with a short safety briefing, before descending into the deliciously cool submarine and taking a front row seat in front of an oversized port hole. With the pilot and crew on board, the lights will be dimmed and the submarine will quietly leave the floating dock for one of the nearby reefs, before descending to around 30 metres depth.

With powerful lights illuminating the reef, the true colours of the corals and fans are clearly

seen, while a variety of tropical fish, including surgeonfish, blue-striped snapper, one-spot snapper and unicorn fish may be seen. Keep a sharp eye out for sea turtles and Napoleon wrasse.

## BLACK TIP SHARK SPOTTING

The beauty of the Maldives is that you don't have to take your kids far to get them engaged in the wonders of the outdoor world. Shark spotting is a great example. Many resort lagoons are home to juvenile Black Tip Sharks, which can be found slowly cruising the lagoons or zipping through the water hunting smaller fish. All you need to do is to go for a walk along the lagoon beach or an overwater boardwalk. It won't take long before your kids are counting up how many Black Tip Sharks they have seen.



## HANGING POOL SIDE

No holiday would be complete to the Maldives, without some time spent pool side. As any parent will know, most kids love hanging out in the pool all day. Having said that, if you have young kids, make sure the resort you are staying at has a kid's pool, which tend to be shallower and easier for kids to get into and out of.



## KID SAFETY

As any parent will know, your kid's safety is paramount when exploring the outdoors. The reality of the Maldives is, it is a water based nation and this means you need to take some precautions.

- Always ensure there are lifejackets on any vessels you are travelling on
- Never let your child swim alone, even if it is a placid, shallow water lagoon
- Avoid all the water hazards of an overwater bungalow and opt for a beach villa instead
- Avoid sun burn and be sun smart - slip on long sleeves rash vests in and on the water; slap on sun hats and slop on sunscreen.

Lastly, be flexible with your kids. Some days your kids will be invincible, trying anything and everything. Other days, their energy and bravery for new experiences might not quite be there. Don't push your kids. Be flexible and don't be afraid to change plans part way through the day. There will always be another opportunity to experience an activity and it is more important that your kids are having fun and enjoying themselves. This is a holiday after all.



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MALDIVES

story of a small island

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MALDIVES  
GARDEN OF EDEN

by Verena Wiesbauer



Tropical vegetation on a Maldivian island, as seen when flying above in a seaplane (Photos: Above and far left)

As you are flying over the Maldives on board your seaplane, you will be looking down on pristine coral reefs, tiny islands that are scattered over the vast ocean and sandy beaches. But you cannot miss the lush green vegetation on nearly every island that has grown past the stage of a little sand bank!

Even though the island nation consists of about 99% water, we shall not forget the remaining one percent: the flora of the Maldives - from uninhabited “jungle” islands with dense vegetation, to the modified resort islands, where most of the introduced plant species are found.

Only a few meters above sea level, the coral Atolls of the Maldive Islands are a hostile ground for plants with hardly any nutrients in the sand and freshwater available only during the rainy season.



Fruit bats disperse seeds as they are strong mammals that can fly in between islands.

Thus, it is no wonder that there are no indigenous plants in the Maldives, but that all plants arrived from neighbouring continents, and even from as far away as the Polynesian Islands. They were transported either by seabirds, carrying seeds sticking to their feathers or by sea currents, washing partial or entire plants - like the ubiquitous coconut - ashore. All plants landing on the islands had to be salt-water tolerant or capable of extracting freshwater from the surrounding seawater like the mangroves do. Over time, some 300 plant species have colonized the islands, and an equal number had been introduced by man for food, timber, building material or simply because of their beauty.

### SO WHERE DO PLANTS GET THEIR FRESHWATER FROM?

Well, the answer is simple: from rainwater, stored in a so-called “freshwater lens” in the centre of the island. Imagine this as an underground reservoir, where the freshwater from seasonal rain floats on the denser saltwater that is present in deeper layers. Before the introduction of Reverse-Osmosis plants, which produce freshwater from seawater, Maldivians dug wells up to this lens and got a continuous supply of freshwater for drinking, showering and cooking purpose. Many people still use these wells in their daily lives. Unsurprisingly, changes to aquifer resources due to high density human populations have affected the carrying capacity many islands with respect to vegetation, both natural and agricultural crops.



Collection of nuts and flowers cut from treetops: the brown sheath of the flowers (Dhivehi: iha), the small green fruits (gobolhi) and the slightly bigger yellow fruit (miri) can be seen here.



A “Kurumba” or young coconut. In the opened fruit you can see the outer fibrous coat, the thin hard, dark shell and the layer of white meat. The glass contains the coconut water.

### PLANTS MAKE THE WORLD GO ROUND!

You will be encountering a lot of different plant species on the Maldivian island of your choice. Plants are not only useful, but they are beautiful too! If you are staying in a resort, in fact only 20% of the island is built, while the remaining 80% have to be left as wilderness.

Certainly you will know the Coconut Palm (*Cocos nucifera*), which feeds humans, clothes them and provides shelter. When you talk to Maldivians about “the coconut”, you have to be a bit more specific! Being their livelihood, the Maldivian language uses different words for the various development stages of this palm tree:





The young coconut seedling grows outside the hard nutshell. It develops an edible, sponge-like, foamy, light tissue that protrudes into the nut, filling the entire interior.

Pick up a fallen coconut from the ground, shake it, and if you hear nothing, you found an unripe fruit (Dhivehi: kurumba), that is, however, full of delicious coconut water. If you hear the sound of a liquid sloshing around inside, then you have a ripe coconut (Kaashi), good for eating the meat contained within the brown shell. A ripe coconut, if left on the ground, will eventually germinate and the young coconut seedling (mudi) climbs out of the hard nutshell and develops an edible, sponge-like, foamy, light tissue that protrudes into the nut, absorbing the coconut water, degrading the whole meat and supplying the young plant with essential nutrients.

To prevent accidents on tourist islands, nuts and flowers are cut from treetops overhanging public walks. Then, you may get the rare chance to see the coconut flower (iha), or the small green (gobolhi) or slightly bigger yellow (miri) fruits.

### Did you know...

... that the “Maldives Coconut” actually never grew in the Maldives?

Before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the Seychelles were uninhabited, coconuts resembling a woman’s buttocks fell from trees in the Seychelles, were drifted eastwards to the Maldives and there gathered from the beaches. They were given the name “Maldives Coconut” (*Lodoicea maldivica*) and valued as an important trade and medicinal item. Until the true source of the nut was discovered in 1768, it was believed by many to grow on a mythical tree at the bottom of the sea. Now we know that the “Coco de Mer” is rare and endemic to the islands of Praslin and Curieuse in the Seychelles, but never grew in the Maldives.



The box-shaped seed of the Fish poison tree can be ground to a powder and used to stun fish.

In order to identify plants on your island, you should look for flowers or fruits and if the tree is too high, you might find them shed on the ground. The leaves of many trees have a similar size and shape and look pretty much alike in the tropics. You certainly won't miss the seed of the "Fish poison tree" (*Barringtonia asiatica*). It is the plant that has caused most "wow" reactions among Maldives visitors who I have taken on nature walks through the resorts I worked at during my career. All parts of this up to 25m high tree contain poisonous saponins. The seeds of the box-shaped fruit may be ground to a powder, which can be used to stun fish. The powder-puff like flowers open at night and drop in the morning!



The Screwpine is a tall tree up to 10 m heights and forms impenetrable thickets because of its saw-edged leaves and the walking-stick like adventitious roots that stabilize the slender trunk.

Walking along the beach, you will find a variety of tropical plants that are able to cope up with saltwater intrusion: The "Fan flower" (*Scaevola taccada*) or the "Tree heliotrope" (*Tournefortia argentea*), or the much taller "Screwpine" (*Pandanus* sp.) with its walking stick-like roots that stabilize the trunk, just to mention a few.



The Bougainvillea with its beautiful pseudo-flowers can climb, aided by its thorns over high walls.

In the centre of islands, particularly in resort hotels, you can discover beautiful ornamental plants with colourful flowers, like the “Frangipani” (*Plumeria* sp.), the “Bougainvillea” (*Bougainvillea glabra*) or the “Cat tail” (*Acalypha hispida*) with its foot-long, pendent, red flower clusters.

If I had to name the most striking plant of Maldives, I would go for the Indian mulberry, also known as “Noni” or “Cheese fruit” (*Morinda citrifolia*) due to its unusual flavour and smell. I must admit when I first tried the juice and the pulp of that fruit, I couldn’t even finish the can it came in. However, be brave and you will benefit from its medicinal properties, because the fruit is touted as a “magical cure-all”. It has traditionally been used for colds, flu, diabetes, cholesterol, parasitic diseases, pain associated with tumors, anxiety and high blood pressure.



The beautiful Frangipani produces a fragrant scent to attract pollinating insects and contain a poisonous milky sap.



The Bougainvillea with its beautiful pseudo-flowers can climb, aided by its thorns over high walls.



The Noni or “Cheese Fruit” – a magical cure-all medicinal plant used to treat illnesses.



The Fan Flower (*Scaevola taccada*) can be found on every Maldivian beach and is, besides the Coconut, probably the most common plant on the islands.

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# SURFING IN THE MALDIVES

by Maria Eleonora Fiorini



Until the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Maldives Islands was not a popular surfing destination. While the exciting waves and beautiful beaches were present, the islands themselves were off the beaten path which meant that traveling was expensive and time-consuming compared to many other surfing destinations.

However, that started to change as access to the Maldives became easier and cheaper to visit. Once word got out that many of the islands in the Maldives were perfect for surfing, the number of people interested in the sport began to arrive which in turn spurred new accommodations, surfing schools, and more.

I remember the first time I heard about surfing the beautiful turquoise Maldivian waters from a friend, who had just come back from a week on a surf safari boat. "I was surfing with turtles next to me!". There was only one boat that arranged cruises specific for surfers, with new spots to surf on every day back in the year 2000. Surfing is now much more popular in these amazing islands but the beauty of the location hasn't changed.

The history of surfing in the Maldives goes back to the 1970s when Australian surfers who were looking for new challenges, visited the island chain. For the next quarter-century, the surfing scene in the Maldives was relatively small, although there was a growing interest that helped to further educate surfers on what the islands had to offer.

By 2000, the growth really exploded thanks in large part to the increase in tourism combined with the opening of surfer schools that helped beginners learn how to ride. Plus, there were international surfing competitions that are still being held today which draw professional surfers and plenty of attention to the Maldives. With the number of tourists growing every year, the number of surfers who visit the islands will continue to expand, creating even more opportunities for international recognition of the Maldives as a great place to surf.



Photo by Mike Shihaz



Photo by Mohamed Fahad Shiham



Photo by Mike Shihaz

## SURFING CONDITIONS

The best time to visit the Maldives for surfing begins in April and runs through October. This is because the strong storms present in the Indian Ocean causes large swells to appear off the coast of the Northern and Central atolls during June, July, and August. However, the best time to surf in the Southern atolls is March and April because of their location.

The nature of the swells is perfect for surfers who are looking for workable corners, long rides, and fun pockets to do some maneuvering. The waves themselves roll up like typical point breaks that you find in many other parts of the world. While there is a reef, surf spots usually are well protected and the

presence of a reef does not present a danger to surfers except at low tide.

There are many places to surf along the islands, some accessible from hotels while others will require transportation, such as the newly opened ferry in Male' Atoll which is one of the most popular places to surf. Recently, over 120 professional surfers competed at Pasta Point on Male' Atoll where many of the largest waves are present.

So in addition to the many water activities you can engage in when visiting the Maldives, surfing can now be considered as one of the most fun and exciting water sport available... and not just for professionals!



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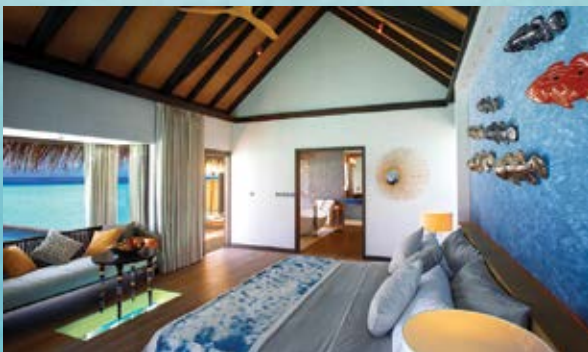
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A vibrant tropical beach scene. In the foreground, a white sandy path leads from the bottom center towards the ocean. The path is flanked by lush green foliage, including large-leafed plants and several tall palm trees with green fronds. The ocean is a brilliant turquoise color, transitioning to a deeper blue further out. The sky is a clear, bright blue with scattered white clouds. The overall atmosphere is serene and idyllic.

# THE MALDIVES & THE POWER OF INSTAGRAM TIPS, TRICKS, & SOME SURPRISING TRENDS...

by Sarah Harvey



Photo by Sarah Harvey (Above & far left)

Whether it's #throwbackthursday, #fridayvibes or #mondayfunday, you can be sure that on any given day of the week hundreds of shots of tropical paradise are being uploaded from the Maldives to Instagram.

The turquoise lagoons and white sand beaches are capable of inspiring a photo-snapping frenzy even amongst the most jaded of the jetsetters. So it's no surprise that the Maldives is now one of the most Instagrammed locations in the world.

Since Instagram's launch in 2010 it has blossomed into the biggest social media platform for travel. The biggest percentage of users are millennials (people aged 18 to 33 years old), who make up 55% of Instagram accounts. And funnily enough, a recent survey has found the number one criteria for millennials when selecting their next holiday

destination is 'how Instagrammable' it will be. In total, 1,000 millennials were quizzed for the survey, which was conducted by a British insurance company.

There are endless 'Instagrammable' photo opportunities in the Maldives. The coral reefs, iconic coconut-thatched water villas and dazzling amber sunsets are some of the most popular #maldives images on Instagram.

Several canny resort owners have also already created some 'Instagram-friendly' spots on their islands, too. Some of the most popular are large concrete statues of the brand logo (for guests to drape themselves over in whatever manner they choose!) and enticing-looking hammocks slung between wooden posts in the lagoon. The wow-factor of glass underwater restaurants are always popular on Instagram too.

Here are our top tips for getting the best out of your photography and Instagram feed:

- Try shooting horizontally. Do this instead of shooting in the 'square' frame setting. This way you don't limit yourself in the editing process because it gives you scope to easily crop and frame an image later exactly how you want it.
- Good photos take planning. Take some time to scout good locations (or ask the resort staff for their advice), test the angles and plan around the light. For example, the best time to capture the turquoise luminescence of the lagoons at their best is when the sun is directly above, or filtering directly onto them from a height. If you try it too early in the morning or when the sun has moved, it's likely that the shade will look a lot more muted and flat.
- Use the native camera on your mobile phone, rather than the Instagram camera. If you're using the Instagram camera you just have one shot then have to delete it if it's no good but you take multiple shots on your Android or iPhone much faster then choose the best.
- Use creative and concise hashtags if you have a public Instagram profile. When you're trying to reach a lot of people, a few good hashtags work better than 12 spammy, random ones. Research some cool ones, or maybe start some of your own.
- The type of content you post on Instagram really matters too. Personal experiences, such as travel, get 22% more 'likes' than any other images posted by the same accounts. Animal snaps are the second most popular, followed by scenery such as sunsets and beaches.

The other top considerations for picking a holiday destination according to the survey of millennials included cost of alcohol, which came in as the second most popular consideration (24%), followed by personal development (22.6%), a chance to try the local cuisine (9.4%), and sightseeing opportunities (3.9%).

When it comes to the Maldives, personal development and sightseeing experiences frequently overlap. Resorts are constantly expanding their repertoire in response to the demand, which has increased over the past five years.

On the personal development side of things, this can include activities ranging from yoga programmes and 7-day Ayurvedic packages to helping to clean up coral reefs or recording data on marine species such a shark and turtle populations for resort-based educational conservation projects.

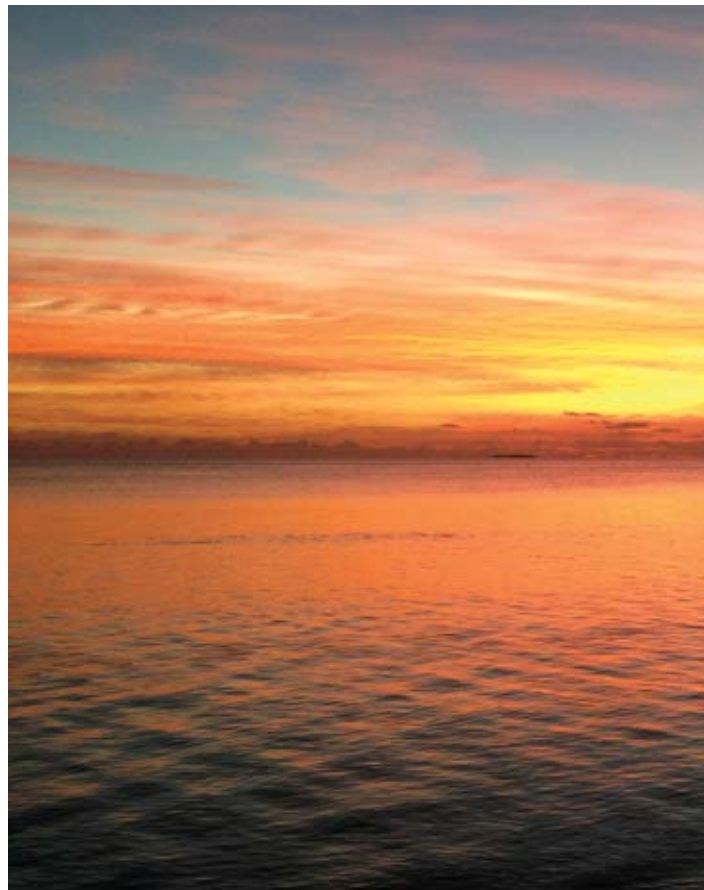


Photo by Sarah Harvey

When it comes to sightseeing, some resorts are getting creative with their repertoire. Once upon a time, the standard excursion to a rural island community meant a quick walk around the village. But now it can include authentic experiences whereby guests can get immersed into the local community.

While Instagram still remains king of the travel platforms, travel stories now make up 42% of posts on the average Facebook user's timeline, according to information from a US advertising agency. There's also wider scope for commentary to be incorporated into the photo captions. Whichever platform you prefer, the Maldives is out there waiting for you; from dolphin pods to idyllic beaches – get out there and get snapping!



Photo by Sarah Harvey

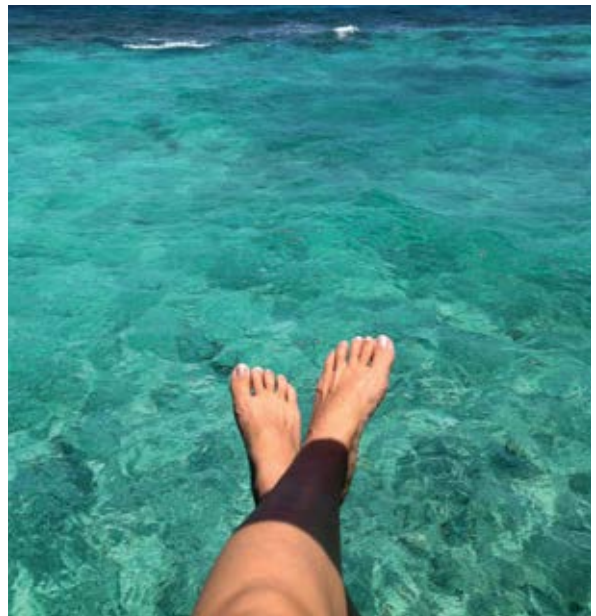


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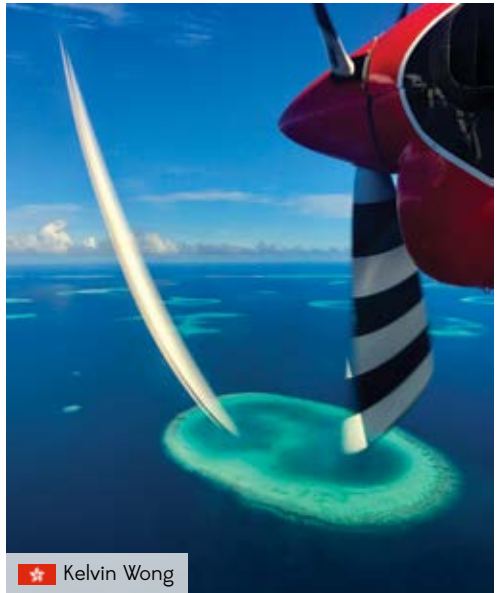
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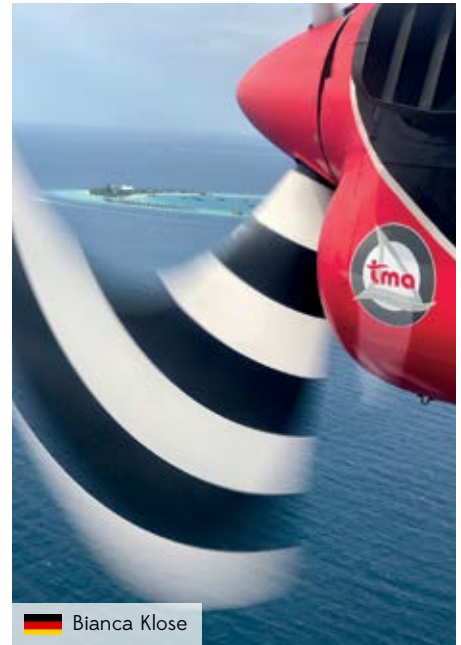
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# THE SEAPLANE



The DHC-6 Twin Otter is a Canadian 19-passenger STOL (Short Take-off 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.

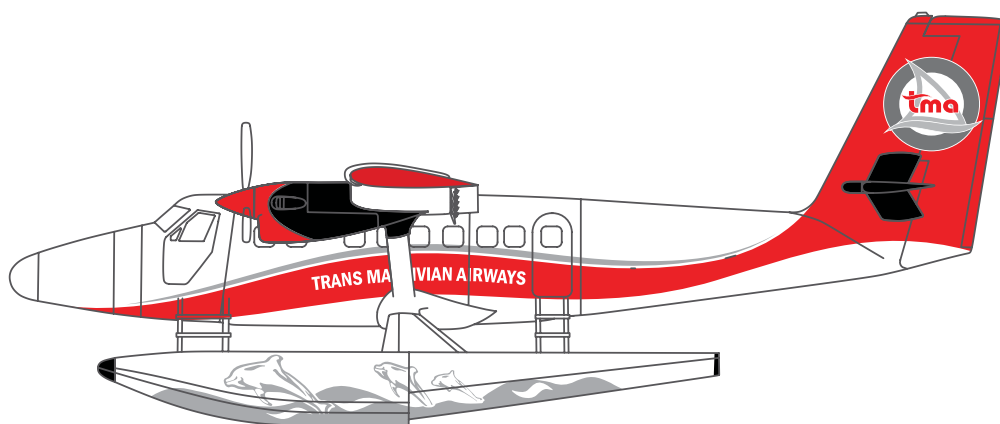
Development of the Twin Otter began in 1964, with the first flight on May 20, 1965 as a twin-engine replacement for the single-engine Otter had been planned by de Havilland Canada. Twin engines not only provided improved safety but also allowed for an increase in payload while retaining the renowned short take-off 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.

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PASSENGER CAPACITY

	NUMBER OF SEAPLANES	PASSENGER CAPACITY
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VIP Configuration Aircraft (9-seat)	2	9
VIP Configuration Aircraft (10-seat)	1	10
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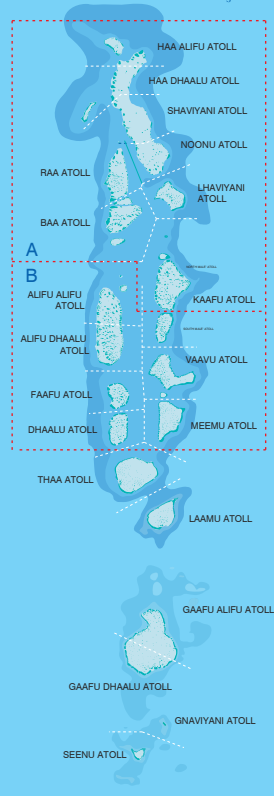
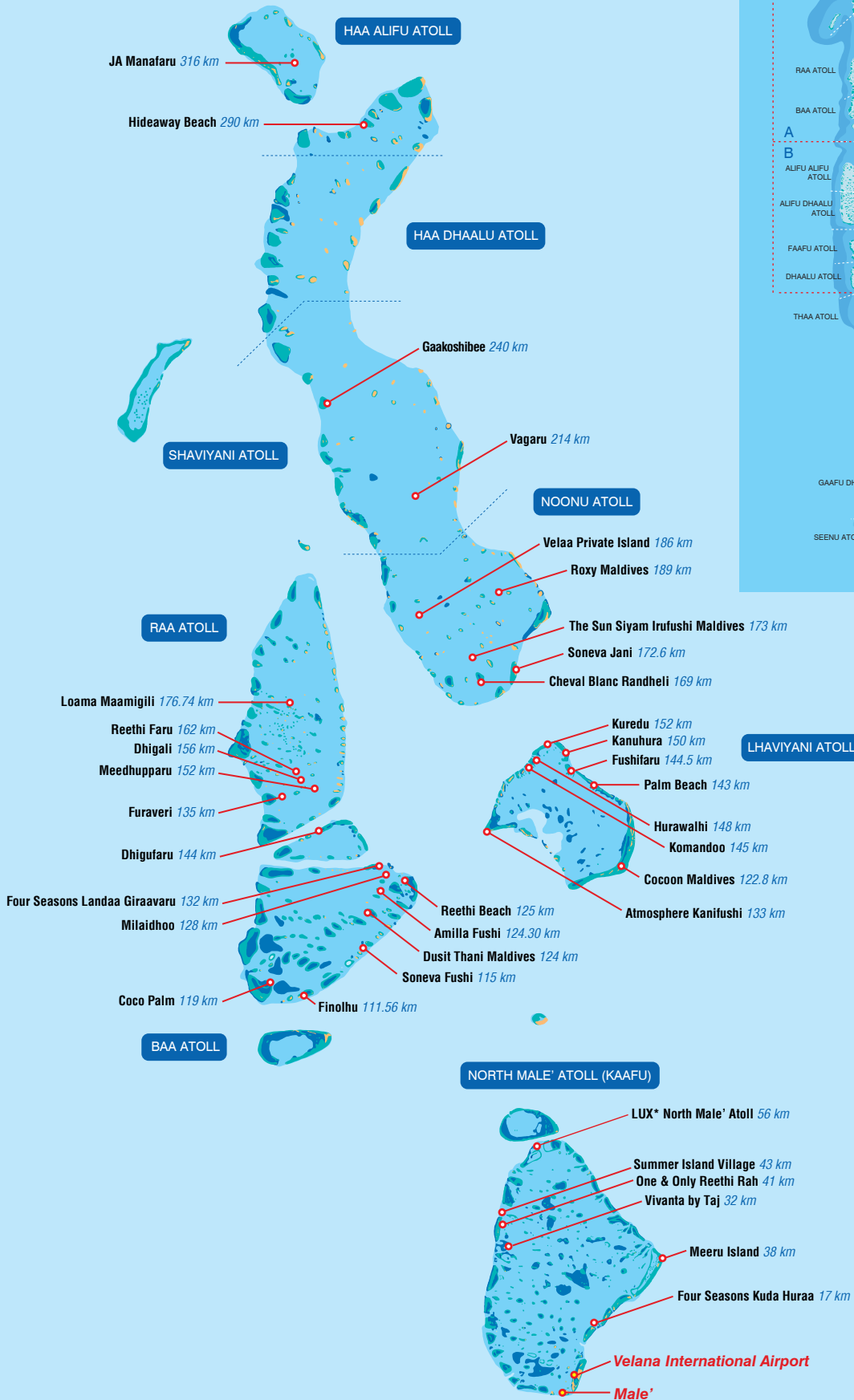
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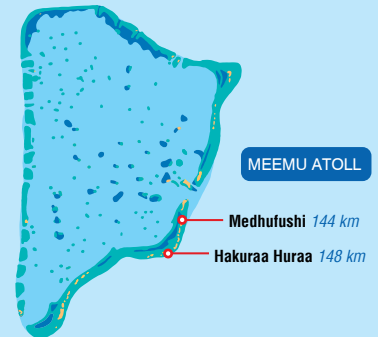
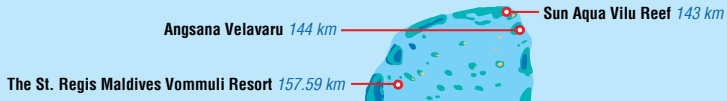
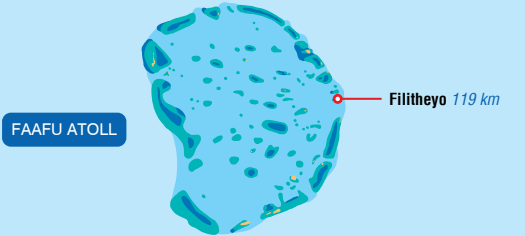
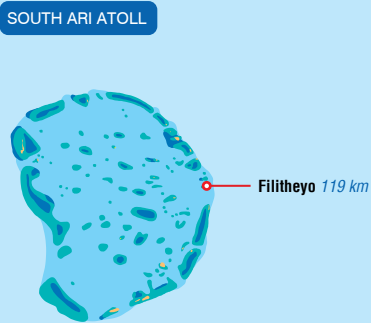
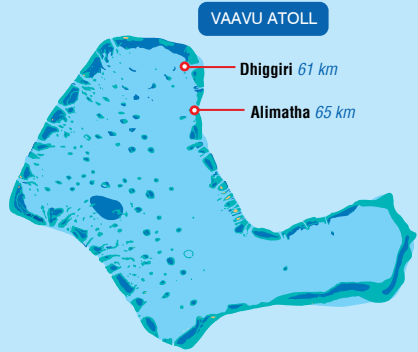
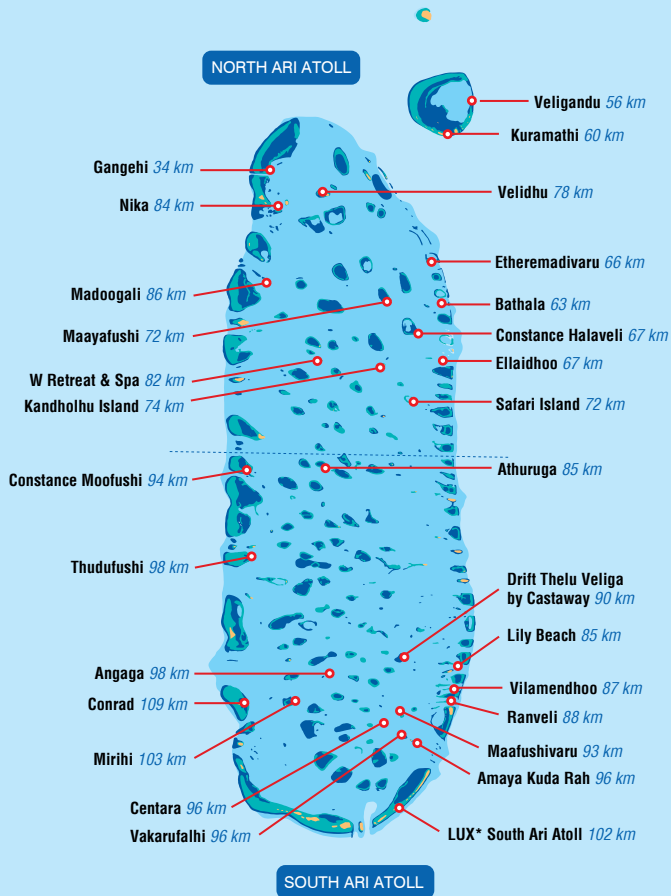




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