

INFLIGHT

ISSUE 01 | 2018 **MAGAZINE**



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THE SEA

CULTURAL CASTAWAYS



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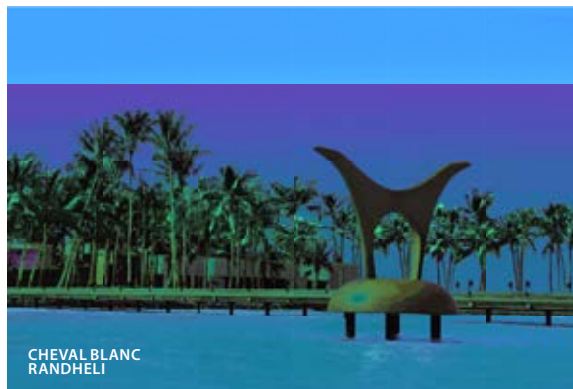
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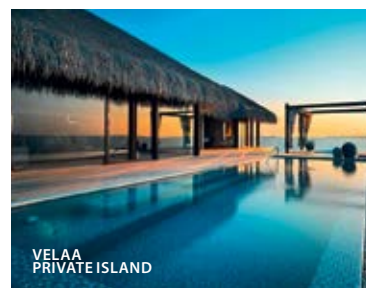
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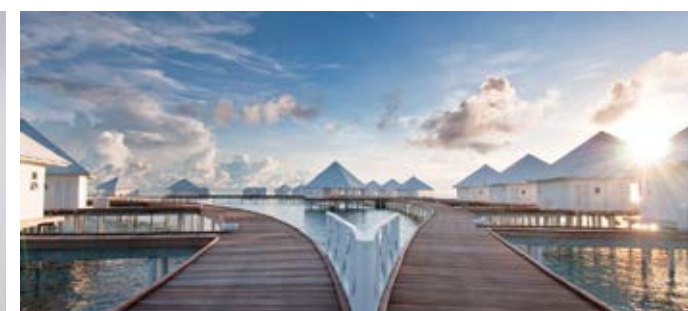


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EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to the newest edition of Inflight.

It's a new year with new beginnings and we wish you the best for the year. If you have just arrived here in the Maldives let me also wish you happy holidays.

Even for those who have arrived here for the first time, you would have noticed by now that the Maldives is different.

The country has its own unique qualities that makes it so special for travellers and holidaymakers arriving here from around the world.

Located right in the middle of the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is in the crossroads of major ancient trade routes. Hence its culture has been shaped by influences from around the Indian Ocean fused with the country's unique marine environment. 'Maldivian Tidbits; flavours to savour' provides an interesting read about some of the many traditional bites that Maldivians enjoy and is being enjoyed even today.

Maldives is made up thousands of coral reefs, each one of them important not only for its marine inhabitants, but also in terms of the role each of them perform in protecting the atolls and islands from the ocean. Our article 'More than Seeing the Sea' explores the conservation efforts made in Lhaviyani Atoll.

The article 'Pelagic Maldives' offers interesting facts about the Maldivian seas and 'Cultural Castaways' looks at some of the wrecks not from a diver's point of view as they are most often looked at, but from a historical point of view. It also offers an insight into how the 'accidental visitors' from these wrecks contributed to shaping our history.

We wish you have a pleasant flight.

Adheel Ismail

Editor

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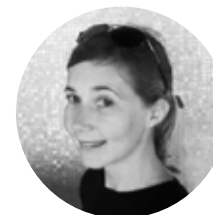
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WELCOME ON BOARD



Greetings of the New Year 2018!

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Maldives and on board Trans Maldivian Airways! Please fasten your seat belts, and brace yourself as this would be one of the most awe inspiring flights you would have taken in your lifetime. This would be an experience second to none, as you would be feasting your eyes on the beautiful islands of Maldives, nestled upon the mighty Indian ocean, while up in the air.

As the New Year begins, we march down memory lane to reminisce some of our past achievements since our humble beginning in 1989. We have grown and developed to become the largest seaplane operation in the world with a fleet of 49 De Havilland Twin Otters, operating over 200,000 flights and transferring over 1 million passengers a year to more than 65 resorts in this island nation. Apart from resort transfers, our services have progressed to cater for various requirements of our customers which include photo flights, private charter, excursions and medical evacuation flights. Over the years, we have become the backbone of the tourism infrastructure in the Maldives.

Our continued efforts to strive for excellence in all that we do and the trust we have built with our customers over the decades have led us to be recognised and rewarded within the tourism sector. In 2017, we were awarded the Indian Ocean's Leading Seaplane Operator for the fourth consecutive year and World's Leading Seaplane Operator.

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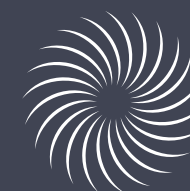


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Maldives

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 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



Photo by Nashiu Naeem

CAPITAL ISLAND

Male', with a total area of 5.8 km², 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.

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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WHERE THE SEA TOUCHES THE SKY

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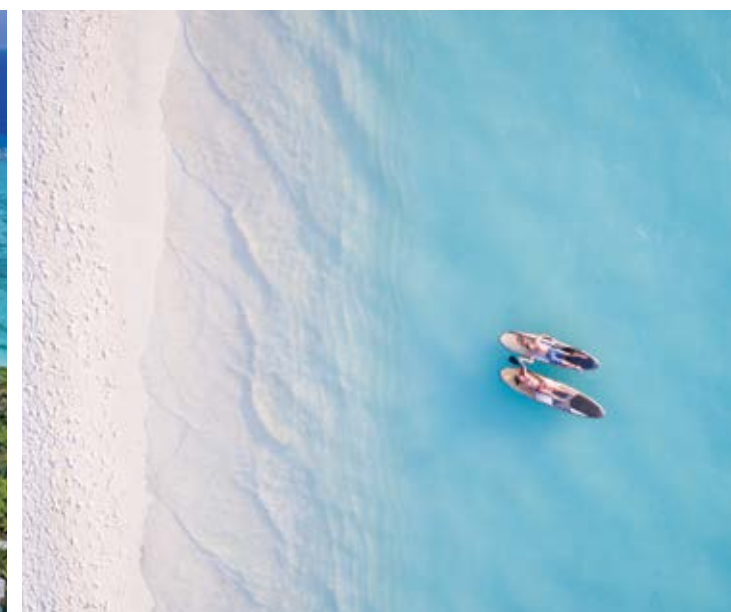
Le Carrousel kids' club and Le Paddock teens' lounge host nourishing activities for the little ones. Cheval Blanc Randheli invites passionate, sun-seeking epicureans to experience a moment of pure bliss on an island alone.

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a convivial meal prepared by the villa's private chefs and Majordomes. The private spa treatment room, fitness room, ivory beaches and lush gardens provide a much needed retreat from

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Maldivian Tidbits

FLAVOURS TO SAVOUR

by Fathmath Ijaza

If you were to explore Maldives, without restricting yourselves to a resort and had time in your hands before you have to head home, what would you do? You could travel from one island to another exploring how they differ from each other? You might have sat down with an old lady sitting under a shady tree on the beach; mindlessly separating ekels from palm leaves and asked about her life. You might even have learned a bit of the local language so that you wouldn't have to rely on a translator to understand what she says to you. Or perhaps you may have asked someone to introduce you to the local food that would be unlike anything else you have tasted, and carry that memory with you for the rest of your life.

Food is often the best way of getting intimately involved in a culture. Local food is an adventure on its own. Today there are a lot of travelers who believes that the best way to experience food from a destination is to try out its street food. It is the ideal way to taste the exotic flavors held in high regard by locals, in its most original form.



Photo by Nashiu Naeem

If you've booked your holiday in a resort, you could try out these "displaced-home style" delicacies if you can convince the resort chefs to prepare them for you. They would probably conjure up a westernized version of it, suited for what they believe is familiar with your palette. However, if you happen to hop on an island on an excursion, there is a chance you may just be lucky enough to let the locals give you a taste of some of the flavors they would probably feel nostalgic for if they were tucked somewhere away from their homes. If you are in Male' visit one of the street carts lined up on the southern side of the island, that sell some of these ethnic food items Maldivians may pass as street food or quick bites. Here are some of the items that can be found sold by these vendors.

ANBU MAJAA (SPICY MANGO RELISH)

An extremely popular dish among Maldivians, that even the sound of it would make them drool. It is a tradition among many Maldivian families to carry a large bowl of this relish when they head out to the beach on weekends. The dish consists of young green mangoes and sometimes half-ripe papayas and scotch bonnet chilies cut into tiny pieces, (the number of chilies that goes into the dish depends on how spicy they want it to be). All these ingredients are mixed together with a thick fish paste called “rihaakuru” that is made by simmering fish broth over fire for a long time.

The name of the dish literally translates into ‘mango fun’ but the funniest part probably is to watch the effect that this tangy-spicy dish has on its consumers. Once they eat it you can see their faces flushing and sweating profusely, tears rolling out from their eyes and nostrils, as they snort loudly in an attempt to control the effect. Regardless of the extreme sensation caused by this dish, it is said to be highly addictive, as the requests for second helpings would seem to go on and on. Perhaps they eat this dish as a way of literally warming themselves up, so that they can dip into the sea to cool themselves. It is something to wonder about.



Photo by Mohamed Waheed



Photo by Mohamed Waheed

MASKAASHI (DRIED TUNA CHIPS AND COCONUT BITS)

This can be described more as a snack than a dish. It is usually served during friendly gatherings and is an excellent way to keep the fun chatter rolling. Traditionally this used to be served during dusk hours in the veranda of the house, as the family gathers to celebrate the end of the day. The beauty of this dish is that the ingredients of this dish are not mixed together but served separately most of the time, on a round metallic tray. This way the consumers can adjust the flavors to their liking, bite by bite. The medley for maskaashi consists of dried tuna chips, bits of coconut flesh, green ripe mango cut into small bits, black peppercorns, sliced garlic cloves and sometimes bits of onions. If you are to try out maskaashi, be careful when you bite the dried fish chips; it can be really hard on the teeth.



Photo by Mohamed Waheed

RUKURAA (COCONUT TODDY)

This is one of the most refreshing drinks that one could come across. You either instantly like it or dislike the pungent, sharp taste of this drink. This drink is the sap that is gathered from coconut palm. Traditionally, a toddy-man would go around with his toddy taps, on the roads in the early morning hours selling this drink. The largest consumers of this drink would be little children who run to fetch their mothers away from whatever they are doing, the moment they see the toddy-man approach their homes. Although the drink was traditionally sold fresh out of the toddy-taps in small glasses, these days it is even sold in bottles in shops. If you happen to come across this drink take caution to make sure you smell the content of the bottle before buying it. It naturally has a pungent smell to it but if it has an overpowering smell of sourness to it, it means the toddy is not fresh and has started fermenting already.

BILEIY GANDU (BETEL NUTS AND BETEL LEAVES)

From all the foods mentioned in this article this is perhaps the most controversial of them all. It can be questioned if this could even be considered a food. Most of the Maldivians would describe it as a breath-freshener to make the aftertaste of meals go away. Nevertheless, it seems this is a habit that a lot of Maldivians have not been able to kick off. They acquire the habit when they are very young because so many people around them seem to be doing it. Even now many elderly people and even the not so old, are seen carrying a bag full of the ingredients wherever they go, so that they can chew on it. If you happen to go to a restaurant in any island and ask for a bileiygandu, they would bring you a container filled with betel leaves, betel nut cut into thin slices, some cloves, sometimes cardamom and cinnamon pieces and a small container consisting of slate lime made into a

INFLIGHT

thick paste. These ingredients have been considered to have a slightly intoxicating and slightly addictive effect due to the various substances that are present in it. Street cart vendors in the capital sell a more elaborate and garnished version of this, to which they add colored coconut pieces, dried papaya pieces soaked in sugar, rose jam, and minty fruit powders, apart from the other ingredients previously mentioned. If you are trying this out, make sure to ask them to go lenient on the lime paste. Too much of this paste can bruise your mouth.



Maldivian tidbits are sometimes very localized, only prepared in certain atolls. People would bring tin-fulls of such bites when they visit friends and family in other islands. Young or old there is a craving for these sweet and savory items that have been made from local fruits and vegetables. Try them out if you ever get the chance to do so. Who knows you may want to take some as a gift to your friends and family at home.



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LANDAA GIRAAVARU

More Than Seeing the Sea

EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL

by Barbara Tori, Lisa Bauer

Photo by Barbara Tori & Lisa Bauer



Photo by Barbara Tori & Lisa Bauer

'The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever.'

Jacques Cousteau would take his red hat off to the sweeping ocean conservation efforts that are making a splash in Lhaviyani Atoll. Tapping into a broader trend that sees travellers embrace a mindset that values immersive, life-enriching experiences over superficial 'I came, I saw, I left' holidays, visitors are encouraged to turn their wonder at Lhaviyani's marine life into greater good.

The Maldives' islands are an undisputable eye candy: 1,192 polka dots of perfection, sprinkled across seemingly infinite expanses of sea; sights of pearl-white beached and inviting lagoons; palm trees swaying in the breeze. If there were a beauty pageant for the world's aesthetically most pleasing destination, the Maldives would be the uncontested winner. Wow moments extend beyond the islands, though some of the holidaymakers' most cherished experiences, those that leave a warm glow long after the tan has faded, are to be had in the sparkling sea.

For those with newly awakened passion for diving and snorkelling as well as for those with

an expert badge, Lhaviyani Atoll has a lot to offer. It might be one of the less talked about atolls, but it is steadily gaining recognition as being one of the country's top places where one can experience the full range of Maldivian marine biodiversity. Especially the narrow *kandus*, channels between reefs in the north of the atoll attract a whopping variety of marine megafauna; the ocean's giants, particularly sharks and rays.

Yet there is more to Lhaviyani Atoll than seeing the sea life. Scratch below the surface and you will find that many resorts as well as local and international organisations are working hard to try to ensure that this real-life paradise gets preserved for generations to come. While a systematic, atoll-wide conservation framework is regrettably not in place (there are however two marine protected areas within the atoll), things are looking promising thanks to joint ocean conservation efforts undertaken by the following stakeholders: the sibling trio of resorts and their Prodivers dive centers - Hurawalhi, Kuredu and Komandoo; Manta Trust - the world's leading manta ray research and conservation entity; Olive Ridley Project - NGO that actively, through research, removal and awareness, fights ghost nets in the Indian

Ocean; Naifaru Juvenile – local NGO that brings together good-hearted volunteers who run the island's Atoll Marine Centre and within it a turtle sanctuary. Maldives SharkWatch and Maldives TurtleWatch programmes, initiated by the Marine Research Centre in Male', are also instrumental in monitoring the shark and turtle populations. In November 2017, a Marine Center with a resident Turtle Biologist and Educator opened at Kuredu.

Perhaps the most shining example of how experiential travel – people's desire for their holiday to be transformative, rewarding and life-enriching – can work for the benefit of the environment is the Marine Biology Center at Hurawalhi Island Resort. The first of its kind in the atoll, the centre was set up in partnership among Manta Trust, the resort and Prodivers Maldives (the latter having a lengthy pedigree in ocean conservation of its own). Hurawalhi's resident marine biologist, a Manta Trust researcher is on site not only to accompany guests as they dive or snorkel on the atoll's coral reefs and to point out the varied marine life, but foremostly to encourage guests to awaken the scientist within them and contribute their bit to protecting the fragile environment.

While there's absolutely nothing wrong with sipping on a Lhaviyani Cooler by the pool, it has been established that it is once-in-a-lifetime experiences and connecting with the place that strike travellers' fancy more than excursions and indulgences per se. The team have become a star performer when it comes to pushing the notion that the best way to have guests adopt ocean conservation as a core value, one that will stick with them for good, is to offer them personal, rewarding experiences that resonate on a deeper emotional level. Guests not only get to observe the beauty of coral reefs, but become part of it; through manta, mobula ray and turtle photo identification projects they can actually contribute to research and make a



Photo by Barbara Tori & Lisa Bauer



Photo by Barbara Tori & Lisa Bauer



Photo by Barbara Tori & Lisa Bauer

difference, all while having the time of their lives. If they spot a previously unknown individual, they even get to name it!

At the time of writing this article, ninety-three green sea turtles and fifty-one hawksbill turtles have been identified in Lhaviyani Atoll, with the atoll being home to almost one third of the so far identified green sea turtle population in the Maldives. Thanks to guests' and team's efforts, more than three hundred manta rays have been identified in the atoll.

In addition to reporting turtle and manta sightings, guests at all three resorts can hop on a boat across to Naifaru to experience the rather eye-opening turtle rehabilitation facility, which currently takes care of fifty juvenile green sea turtles and four olive ridley turtles; the latter, not native to the Maldives, are only found in the nearby waters when entangled in ghost nets – lost or abandoned fishing nets that drift through the ocean, causing harm to the complete reef system.

All these intangible, inspiring experiences, where guests take delight in discovery rather than just display, inevitably result in one becoming more informed, more aware, more connected with nature. Be it adopting a turtle, swimming alongside a manta ray that you know the name of, rescuing a baby shark from a ghost net and the like, are all cases of special events after which a guest checks out as a different, more environmentally conscious person, and hopefully inspires their peers to get caught in the net of wonder that is the ocean themselves.

All proceeds from authoring the article will go to ocean conservation charity programmes in Lhaviyani Atoll.

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SONEVA RESORTS LAUNCH 'MAKER PROGRAMME' TO INTRODUCE PLASTIC RECYCLING IN THE MALDIVES

Soneva becomes first resort in the Maldives to recycle plastic on-site

December 13, 2017: Soneva, the world-leading luxury resort operator, has announced that it has started recycling plastic as part of the 'Soneva Maker Programme'. Beginning at Soneva Fushi, this programme will see Soneva join the grass-roots 'Precious Plastic' global initiative to increase plastic recycling, by fabricating their open source machines from locally available, low cost materials. In due course the programme will be extended so that Soneva resorts recycle plastic collected from neighbouring islands as well.

At Soneva Fushi's Eco Centro, the first machine has been constructed which remoulds plastic waste into fun, functional and artistic items. The Soneva Maker Programme is part of Soneva's plan to encourage guests and hosts (employees) to participate in recycling

initiatives, to educate younger guests about how things are made and to emphasise the 'Waste-to-Wealth' concept.

By joining the 'Precious Plastic' initiative, which has captured the imagination of people all over the world, Soneva is now the first company in the Maldives to recycle plastic into new products. Soneva already limits the amount of plastic used on-site, banning plastic water bottles since 2008, yet small amounts still arrive with food transportation and as guests' rubbish.

"We aim to change the perception of waste; plastic is precious and discarded items can be resources for a whole new range of useful products," said Sonu Shivdasani, Soneva's founder and CEO. "We are proud to be part of the conversation on plastic recycling and join the global 'maker movement'. Soneva has been recycling for a very long time, but we've taken it to the next level with these plastic recycling machines and we look forward to encouraging our skilled hosts and guests to work with us to create items of value from waste".

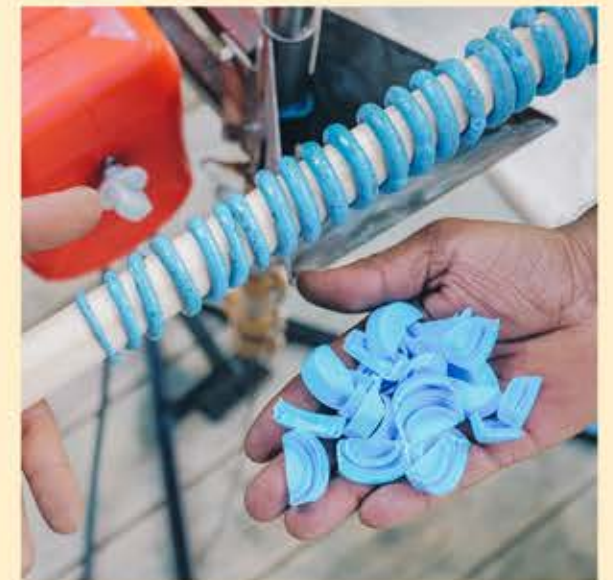
Soneva has a target of zero waste, and already recycles 90% of its solid waste, with glass, food waste, jungle trimmings and polystyrene all processed on-site. Now the focus is on tackling the last 10%, which includes small amounts of plastic, paper, cloth and Tetra Pak packaging.

Plastic waste is a well-documented issue in the Maldives, with ocean plastic regularly washing up on its pristine beaches. This global scourge was highlighted again last week at the UN Environment Assembly in Kenya, where representatives put forward a UN resolution to completely stop plastic waste from entering the oceans. Soneva believes that part of the solution is to demonstrate the value of plastic waste recycling to local economies, inspiring communities to collect and reuse plastic before it has a chance to enter our oceans.

Soneva already extends its Waste-to-Wealth efforts beyond the resort for the Soneva Art & Glass programme, upcycling waste glass bottles collected from neighbouring islands in the region. Every month, anywhere between 500 and 1,000 kilograms of glass is collected, washed, crushed and prepared for recycling by the Eco Centro team, with regular deliveries to Soneva's Glass Studio. It is then melted down in the company's state-of-the-art glass furnace. From there, a variety of techniques are used, such as blowing, casting, and slumping to create extraordinary pieces of art that are of a much higher value than the glass was in its original bottle form.

Inviting guests and resort hosts to get creative with plastic waste to make a range of products like flower pots, bowls and even children's toys is the first phase of the 'Soneva Maker Programme'.

For more information about Soneva, visit www.soneva.com





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Pelagic Maldives

FACTS, FIGURES & HISTORICAL NOTES ON THE WATERS SURROUNDING THE MALDIVES

by Thomas Pickard

1. MORE WATER THAN LAND

The Maldives covers an area of 90,000 square kilometres, with a land area of under 300 square kilometres, making it the ninth smallest country in the world. Of the 1,200 islands, 190 are inhabited and 211 are used as resort islands.

2. MAPPING THE MALDIVES

As any ship captain can tell you, the Maldives is a maritimer's nightmare when it comes to safely navigating the ocean in and around the Maldives. In November 1834 that all changed, when the Royal Indian Navy sent acclaimed captain and maritime surveyor, Captain Robert Moresby to the Maldives. His task was a daunting one: survey the waterways of the Maldives.

While it took Moresby two full years to complete the survey, the final charts (maps) produced by the Royal Navy's Hydrographic Office were so accurate, that they were used for the next 150-years.



3. THE RIDDLE OF CORAL FORMATION

While it is hard to picture today, aeons ago the Maldives was actually a very long string of volcanic islands sitting on top of an under sea plateau. The mystery of how this landscape evolved so dramatically to its present day view wasn't solved until 1842. The person responsible is the infamous Naturalist, Charles Robert Darwin. It was during Darwin's five-year voyage on the HMS Beagle, that Darwin first observed coral atolls and coral growth in the Pacific Ocean.

Darwin believed that coral reefs began along the outside edge of volcanic and non-volcanic islands, until such time that an external barrier reef formed. With time and natural sea level change, the island itself would slowly erode and sink into the ocean below. At the same time, the living outer reef edge continued to grow upwards towards the sun. Eventually an outer barrier reef was created, which allowed for the formation of a lagoon between the outer reef edge and the slowly sinking island. As the lagoon continued to grow and the island eventually became fully submerged, an atoll was formed.



4. PROTECTED MARINE AREAS

Protected Marine Areas were introduced in the Maldives in the 1990s, in an effort to reduce over fishing of sharks in and around popular dive sites. Today there are 48 Protected Marine Areas scattered throughout the country. The largest can be found in South Ari Atoll, a well known area for whale sharks' congregating and a hot spot for people wanting to swim with one of these gentle giants of the sea.

5. A SCUBA DIVING HOTSPOT

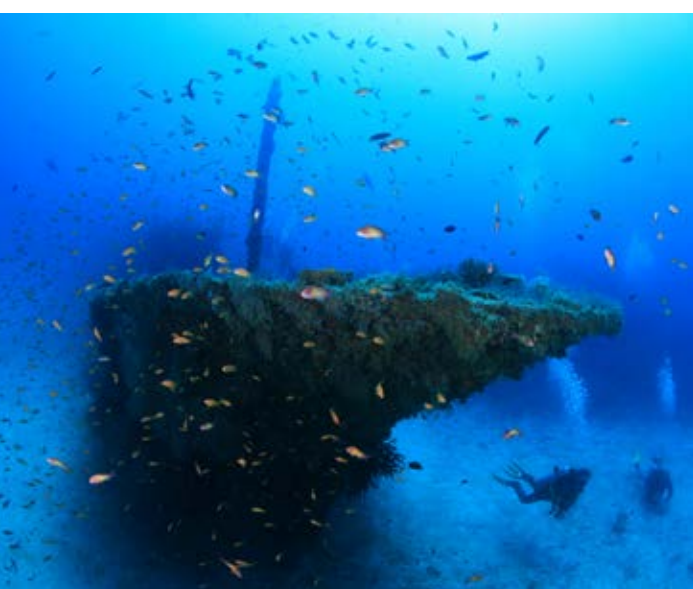
With 1,090 fish species, 40 species of sharks and the planet's largest population of Reef Manta Rays - coming in at around 10,000 individuals - it should come as no surprise that the Maldives is a mecca for visiting scuba divers and snorkelers. And while there are some 400 odd dive sites scattered throughout the archipelago, many more sites await to be discovered and explored.

6. SEA TURTLES

Found throughout the Maldives, turtles can often be seen floating on the ocean surface, resting between dives and also in and around popular diving sites. With eight species of turtles in the Maldives, the most commonly seen species are the Velaa (Green turtle) and the Kahambu (Hawksbill turtle), so named because of its distinctly shaped bill.

7. SHIPWRECKED

Historically the Maldives was an important stop for ocean traders plying the sea route from the New World to Sri Lanka and the Far East. Prior to accurate charts the Maldives presented a significant challenge to vessels and not surprisingly, many vessels ran aground. One of these vessels was the Corbin, captained by French Navigator Francis Pyrard de Laval, which in 1602 ran aground on a reef on the northern side of Goidhoo Atoll.



Despite making it to present day Fulhadhoo Island, both Pyrard and his men suffered starvation and sickness, with many of his men dying. Five years later, Pyrard escaped during a Bengali raid on the capital. Pyrard's book - The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil - contains a detailed account of his shipwreck and time held in the Maldives 'against his will' and today is regarded as a classic read.

8. A SURFING PIONEER

The founding father of surfing in the Maldives was Tony Hussein Hinde. Originally an Australian, Tony became shipwrecked in the Maldives while on route from Sri Lanka to the East coast of Africa. The year was 1973.

In the years' that followed, Tony explored and pioneered the country's first surf breaks, discovering such phenomenal waves as Jailbreaks, Honky's and Sultan's in North Male' Atoll. In 1989 Tony and his wife created the first surf tour operator in the country, Atoll Adventures, thus introducing the surf travel industry to the Maldives.

Despite Tony's tragic passing whilst surfing in the Maldives in 2008, Tony's legacy of introducing surfing to the Maldives will be forever remembered by visiting and local surfers alike.



Photo by Nashlu Naeem



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Cultural

CASTAWAYS

by Daniel Bosley

Photo by Naj

Flying over the Maldives - as perhaps you are at this very moment - is a breathtaking experience. A living atlas of greens, blues, and lots of strange shades you'd never before needed names for (azure, cerulean, etc).

Absolutely unmissable. Well, almost. From sea level, the beautiful reefs of the Maldivian atolls are in fact very easy to miss...until your boat runs aground, that is.

For today's visitors, two weeks beached on the sand is an essential part of the Maldivian experience, but it's been the steady stream of less enthusiastic castaways that played a traditional role in the development of Dhivehi culture.

The Chagos-Laccadive Ridge has acted as a 2,350km long filter for countless millennia, first snaring coral-forming creatures, whose gradations would grow above the waves to eventually collect passing flotsam & jetsam, flora & fauna, culture & civilisation.

The Maldives' double-chain of 26 atolls today consists of 2,045 sections of reefs spread over almost 100,000 sq km. Less than one percent of this territory breaks the surface of the Indian Ocean with any regularity, and usually no more than a few feet. Surrounding the tips of these tropical bergs, however, an extensive network of submerged reef means the Dhivehi dragnet is cast wide.

While the exact details of how the people first collected in the atolls are not fully known, it seems that the sporadic arrival of fisherman and political exiles from South Asia, as well as traders from the Middle East and beyond, played a greater role than any concerted mass migration.

However, the impact of shipwrecks must also be acknowledged as adding crucial elements to modern Maldivian culture. Exotic arrivals in isolated islands have always made waves, the ripples of which, still radiate even hundreds of years later. Close investigations still reveal the currents from French bloodlines in South Ari; of a young boy from Europe wrecked in Huvadhu 300 years ago; of Chinese in Mulaku, and Arabs in Addu.

Indeed, two of the biggest splashes in Maldivian history were made by men who found themselves in the islands completely by chance.

Take the Frenchman Francois Pyard; a 17th century sailor who produced the archetypal tale of wreck, ruin, and rescue in the tropics,

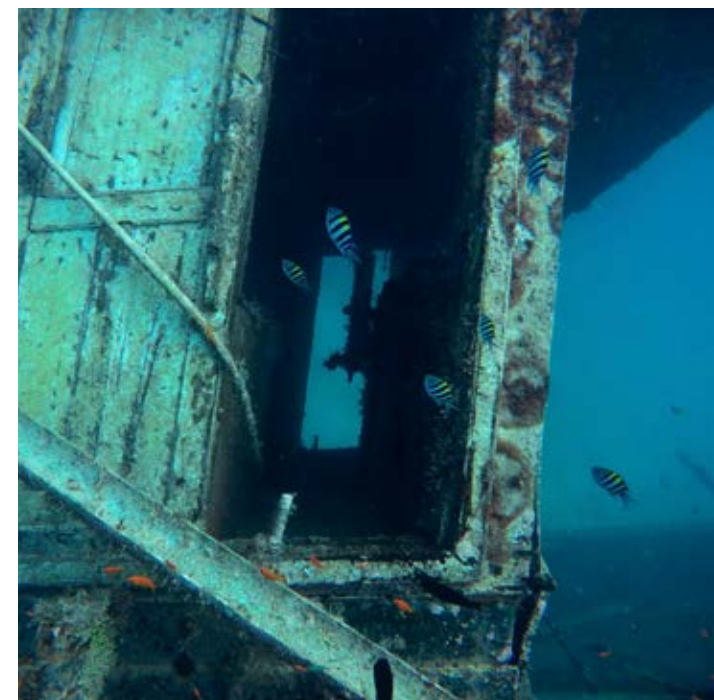




Photo by Naj

after his ship ran aground in Goidhoo atoll. Subsequent accounts of his stay have proved invaluable to the nation's heritage, with his vivid stories providing the world's only real glimpse into the island nation for a period spanning 500 years. What remains of his ship, the Corbin, can still be visited today in the shoals of Baa atoll.

Further south, the remnants of the Sea Gull, which found itself lodged on the reef of Gaafaru atoll in 1879, are long gone, but its legacy remains in the work of British civil servant and archaeologist H.C.P. Bell. A lifelong fascination with the Maldives began during his visit from Ceylon to investigate the incident, and culminated in the posthumous publication of his famed

monograph in 1940. As the first foreign scholar to seriously study the country, his many discoveries included the confirmation of the archipelago's early Buddhist history. Quite a cultural catch.

Fittingly, Bell's works also included a compilation of statistics on the number of shipwrecks occurring in the atolls, as the

British presence in the region brought ever greater volumes of traffic into, if not always out of, the atolls. He was able to count 28 shipwrecks between 1797 and 1880.

Today, as a nation reliant on its fragile ecosystem, the main contribution of those whose vessels crash on the coral is in the form of fines for environmental damage caused to the reef - which can often run into millions of dollars. With the country emerging from origins of isolation, tales of romantic wrecks are largely a thing of the past.

History is likely to consider the last great castaway to have been the Australian, Tony Hinde, whose yacht grounded on Helengeli reef in 1973. The young surfer had been headed for East Africa on a surf pilgrimage to find the perfect wave, before the reef intervened with a plan of its own. Unlike many who came before, Hinde was physically free to leave, but his dreams were now marooned in the Maldives. He would spend the rest of his life in the country, playing a major role in its new surf culture. Millions of like-minded tourists would soon follow.

It is the emergence of Maldivian tourism in the early 70s that has since opened the country to greater outside influences than ever before, as floods of commercial castaways have transformed the country into a luxury destination rather than an oceanic oddity.

Their arrival has also opened up a new legacy for their predecessors, with many stranded vessels offering recreational opportunities for divers and snorkelers seeking to investigate the marine lifeforms who were the very first to accompany the coral on the Laccadive Ridge.

Beyond this, the history of castaways can offer today's travellers an intriguing view of the Maldives' mysterious past and the rejuvenating wrecks that have added to its fascinating culture.

INFLIGHT



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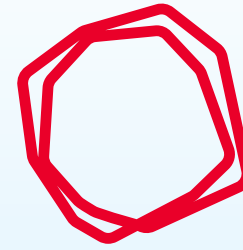
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The DHC-6 Twin Otter is a Canadian 19-passenger STOL (Short Take-off and Landing) utility aircraft developed by de Havilland Canada and currently produced by Viking Air.

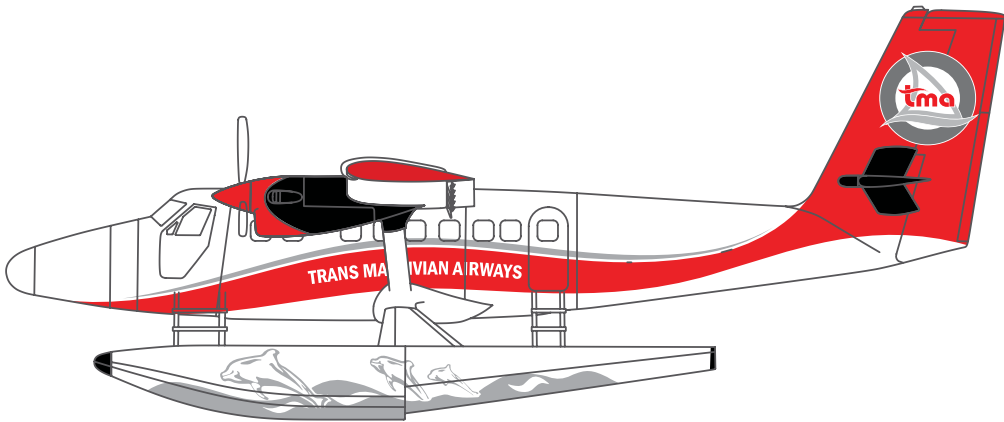
De Havilland has a history of more than 80 years; the first de Havilland Canada flew in 1925, piloted by none other than Geoffrey de Havilland. The aircraft was called the ‘Moth’ and was quickly followed by many variations – all of them highly successful.



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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VIP Configuration Aircraft (9-seat)	2	9
VIP Configuration Aircraft (10-seat)	1	10
DHC-6 Twin Otter 400 Series	3	15
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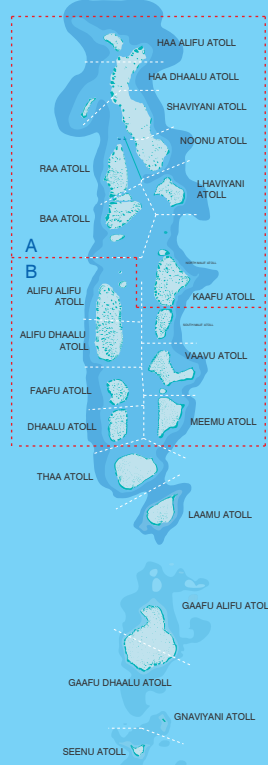
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Velaa Private Island 186 km

Noku Maldives 189 km

Movenpick Resort & Spa Kuredhivaru 190 km

The Sun Siyam IruFushi Maldives 173 km

Soneva Jani 172.6 km

Cheval Blanc Randheli 169 km

RAA ATOLL

Loama Maamigili 176.74 km

Reethi Faru 162 km

Dhigali 156 km

Meedhupparu 152 km

Furaveri 135 km

Dhigufaru 144 km

Four Seasons Landaa Giraavaru 132 km

Milaidhoo 128 km

Reethi Beach 125 km

Amilla Fushi 124.30 km

Dusit Thani Maldives 124 km

Soneva Fushi 115 km

Coco Palm 119 km

Finolhu 111.56 km

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Summer Island Village 43 km

One & Only Reethi Rah 41 km

Vivanta by Taj 32 km

Meeru Island 38 km

Four Seasons Kuda Huraa 17 km

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Male'

LHAVIYANI ATOLL

Kuredu 152 km

Kanuhura 150 km

Fushifaru 144.5 km

Palm Beach 143 km

Hurawalhi 148 km

Komandoo 145 km

Cocoon Maldives 122.8 km

Atmosphere Kanifushi 133 km

NORTH ARI ATOLL

Veligandu 56 km

Kuramathi 60 km

Gangehi 84 km

Nika 84 km

Velidhu 78 km

Madoogali 86 km

Maayafushi 72 km

Etheremadivaru 66 km

Bathala 63 km

Constance Halaveli 67 km

Ellaidhoo 67 km

Kandholhu Island 74 km

Constance Moofushi 94 km

Athuruga 85 km

Thudufushi 98 km

Drift Thelu Veliga by Castaway 90 km

Lily Beach 85 km

Conrad 109 km

Vilamendhoo 87 km

Zazz Maldives 88 km

Mirihi 103 km

Maafushivaru 93 km

Amaya Kuda Rah 96 km

Centara 96 km

Vakarufalhi 96 km

LUX* South Ari Atoll 102 km

SOUTH ARI ATOLL

FAAFU ATOLL

Filitheyo 119 km

Angsana Velavaru 144 km

Sun Aqua Vilu Reef 143 km

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DHAALU ATOLL

SOUTH MALE' ATOLL

Biyadhoo 29 km

Rihiveli by Castaway 41 km

VAAVU ATOLL

Dhiggiri 61 km

Alimatha 65 km

MEEMU ATOLL

Medhufushi 144 km

Hakuraa Huraa 148 km

LEGEND

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RESORT

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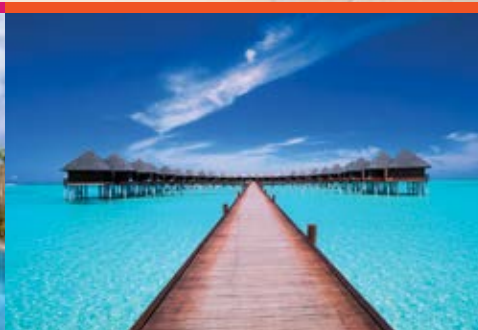
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