Sland Skies



TRANS MALDIVIAN AIRWAYS MAGAZINE



It's always the right time to visit Maldives

Island Spirit Discovering Maldivian Cuisine Turtle Hospitals of Maldives





THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT THE SUN SIYAM IRU FUSHI MALDIVES

- Endless white sand beach
- House reef with colourful corals and fishes
- Ideal for couples and families and why not, even the singles!
- 15 top level restaurants and bars (endless options)
- World Luxury Spa Award for 4 consecutive years
- World Luxury Restaurant Award 2017
- Leading Family Resort 2018 by World Travel Awards





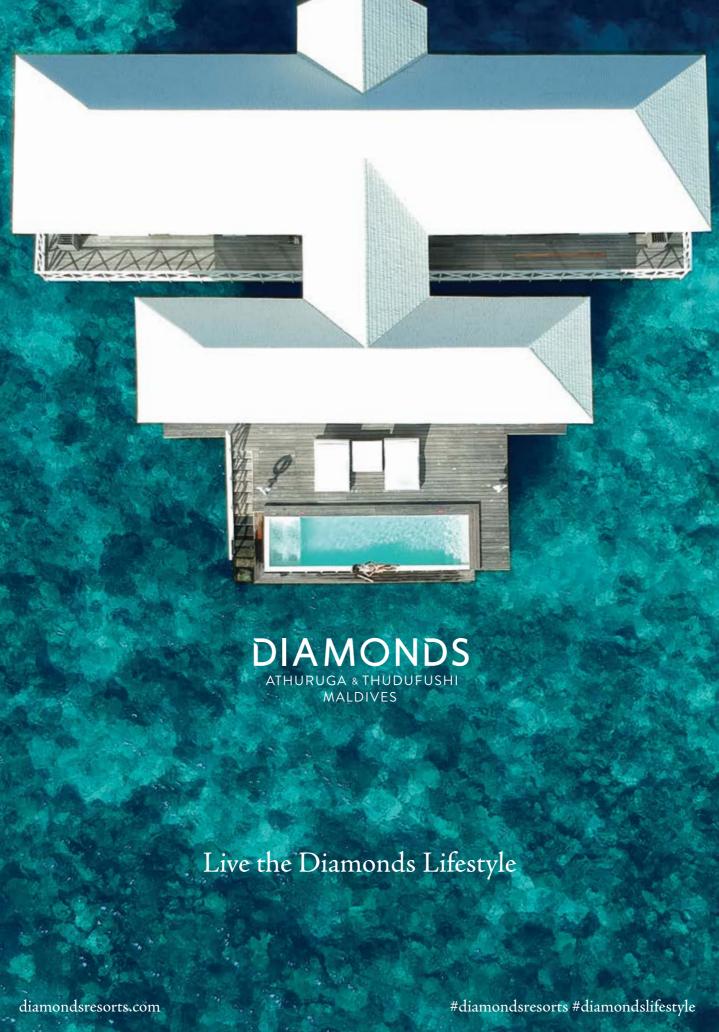




DEDICATED PASSION

www.thesunsiyam.com











OPENING 1ST JUNE 2019



Malè Office:

H.Shibaan, 20002, 5th Floor, Karankaa Magu - Malè - Republic of Maldives Phone: +(960) 300 8844 - Fax: +(960) 300 4848 www.emerald-maldives.com bookings.maldives@emerald-collection.com



VILLA OWNERSHIP

A return on life... Own your little piece of paradise. Invest in a water villa or island villa in the Maldives to enjoy a world of exclusive privileges.

For information or to arrange a viewing, write to residences@soneva.com

soneva.com

Rare Life

THE SMALL MALDIVES ISLAND Co

EST. 2012





Born to Play

Unique, unexpected and totally memorable, our chic, retro-inspired getaway guarantees glamourous indulgence on an unspoiled Island nirvana.

Baa Atoll, P.O. Box 2123, Republic of Maldives T +960 660 8800 **E** wonder@finolhu.mv www.finolhu.mv



A LOYALTY PROGRAMME FOR MALDIVES AFICIONADOS

We are proud to present the Maldives Aficionado programme to our valued guests. It is our goal to craft truly memorable experiences for those who stay with us, and we developed this loyalty programme as a way of saying 'thank you' for your belief in TSMIC. We hope to join you in creating many more special memories at our resorts.

For more information, please visit http://www.tsmic.mv/aficionado or scan the QR code to download the Maldives Aficionado app.











Contents

7

Editor's Note

14

Maldives: Beyond sun, sand & sea

36

Turtle hospitals of Maldives

54

TMA products & services

Contributors

20

It's always the right time to visit Maldives

42

Sneak Peak: Suraj Panda

58

Your Pics

11

Welcome on Board

28

Discovering Maldivian Cuisine

48

Island Spirit

64

TMA Destinations



Some experiences LEAVE YOU RICHER

Cast away all stress and crinkle your toes in the sands of a tropical island haven where the Real You can rejuvenate. Discover Maldives culture with a cooking class, traditional massage or local village encounter. Or simply hide away in secluded luxury on an uninhabited island.

Explore the layers of island life. Soar above the scenery by seaplane and make landfall on a pristine beach. Step underground for a decadent tasting experience amidst lava stone and dive under water to meet colourful sea life. Swim, spa, play and indulge as you muse over the magic of JA Manafaru.

For bookings and more information, please call +960 6500 456 or email reservations.manafaru@jaresorts.com



Editor's Note



Greetings

Welcome to the first issue of the inflight magazine of Trans Maldivian Airways under its new name Island Skies. The name Island Skies evokes a feel of the tropical splendor of the Maldives and the sense of freedom that you get as you glide over the expansive turquoise waters, the magnificent reefs and emerald isles of the Maldives.

Over the years we have presented you insights of the Maldives that spark the interest in holidaymakers. These insights have always offered a peek at Maldives through a lens that's not always accessible for holidaymakers who often stay in the resorts. We have also brought you articles on how you can add action and adventure during your stay in the Maldives.

With the change in our name we have also changed the scope of what we present to our readers. With the new content design, we would continue to offer you the deep insights that we have presented to you in the past. However, we have added new content that would take you inside the operations that make the world's largest seaplane operator fly and continue to offer you the experience of a lifetime taking you over the glorious seascapes of the Maldives.

As always, in this issue we present to you some unique insights into the life, environment, and culture of the Maldives as seen and presented by seasoned writers who have lived and experienced life in the Maldives.

Have an enjoyable stay in the island destination of your choice.



Island Skies Issue 01 | March 2019

Trans Maldivian Airways (Pvt) Ltd. Velana International Airport P.O. Box 2023 Male' Republic of Maldives www.transmaldivian.com

Published for



TRANS MALDIVIAN AIRWAYS

Published by





Without only holidays

ELEGANT TRAVEL IS YOUR **EUROPEAN PREMIUM PARTNER**

FOR THE MALDIVES WITH MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND AN INCOMPARABLE RANGE OF **EXCLUSIVE SERVICES**

VIP ARRIVAL SERVICE

We pick you up directly at the plane and do all the immigration formalities for you, while you relax in our private VIP arrival lounge

UPGRADES on availability

TOP VIP STATUS & BEST VILLA LOCATIONS

CUSTOMIZED HOLIDAY EXPERIENCES



ELEGANT TRAVEL

Contributors



Eleonora Fiorini

Restaurateur and founder of Maldivology, is an enthusiastic traveler and has been in love with the Maldives since her honeymoon in 2007. When not serving clients at her restaurant in Italy she is planning perfect holidays for first time Maldives adventurers.



Sarah Harvey

Sarah Harvey is a professional journalist who splits her time between the Maldives and the French Riviera. She is the founder of Manta Media and has a speciality in luxury travel and tourism.



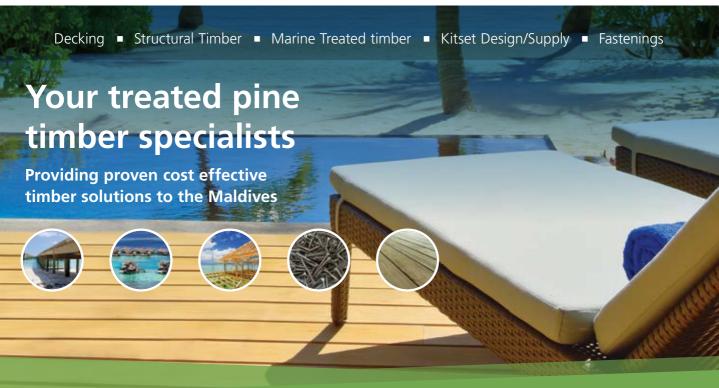
Verena Wiesbauer

Verena Wiesbauer is a marine biologist and environmental consultant who founded an educational brand "Oceanoholic" and started Mermaiding in Maldives. She is currently consulting the solar energy company "Swimsol Maldives"



Fathmath Ijaza

Ijaza is a Maldivian writer who now resides in Sri Lanka. Being permanently based in Sri Lanka, she now gets to travel in the Maldives once in a while as a 'visitor' enabling her to see local culture, customs and traditions from kind of an outsider's perspective.







A true 'Adults Only' paradise capturing the essence of the Maldives through memorable experiences.



Welcome On Board



Welcome to the paradise!

We take great privilege in welcoming you to Maldives and on board Trans Maldivian Airways. We are delighted to be a part of your vacation and strive to make your journey a wonderful experience. Your choice of traveling with Trans Maldivian Airways presents us with an opportunity to showcase the breathtaking beauty of Maldives from the top. We consider this a great privilege and thank you for choosing us.

Unrivalled luxury, stunning white-sand beaches and an amazing underwater world make the Maldives a top choice for a true holiday of a lifetime. The Maldives has perhaps the best beaches in the world and they're on almost every one of the country's nearly 1200 islands. The "one island one resort" concept in Maldives guarantees supreme privacy and lets you be at ease and soak in the tranquility.

This year is going to be an exciting year for Maldives as we look forward to the completion of the largest development project of Velana International Airport ever undertaken in its history. As you made your way to the TMA Seaplane terminal from the International Airport, you would have observed a lot of construction activity and development work being carried out. The new runway is already completed and we are looking forward to the completion of other associated facilities as well. Once completed, we envision an even better experience for everyone coming to Maldives on their dream holiday!

We now fly to over 70 resorts in Maldives and the latest additions to our destination list are Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru in Noonu Atoll, The Westin Resort in Baa atoll, Carpe Diem Beach Resort & Spa in Raa atoll and Sun Agua Iru Veli Resort in Dhaalu atoll. Furthermore, we are excited to be welcoming few more resorts as we progress in 2019. With excellent customer service and our passengers' safety being our utmost priorities, we endeavor to uphold our title as the World's Leading Seaplane Operator and Indian Ocean's Leading Seaplane Operator for the fourth consecutive year.

Thank you for choosing Trans Maldivian Airways and allowing us to serve vou. We wish you a pleasant holiday in the Maldives and we hope this visit will provide you with lasting memories of sun, sand, sea, and seaplane.

Have a safe flight.

A.U.M. Fawzy CEO





...amidst the powder-soft sand, by the cerulean waves and under the tropical shade of the Maldives; our premier villa resort presents curated experiences in an all-inclusive offering.

A sneak peek in to our offerings here, www.heritancehotels.com/aarah







Maldives Beyond sun, sand & 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 atleast 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

The Maldives has been a melting pot of different cultures as people from different parts of the world came here and settled down

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 Minicov 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 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, vou 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.

Maldives boasts
one of the
highest literacy
rates in the
world with 98%
of the country's
population being
able to read and
write

Country Dialing Code

Electricity
240 Volts AC

Local Time +5 GMT









milaidhoo island

MALDIVES

story of a small island



A MYRIAD OF INDULGENCES IN CHEVAL BLANC RANDHELI



On the unspoilt Noonu Atoll, 40-minutes north of Malé by seaplane or speedboat, Cheval Blanc Randheli is a journey for the senses to enjoy during a day trip or for a longer stay.

Cheval Blanc Randheli is the expression of creativity and pure celebration of taste pampering. In this Maison encircled by quiet blue waters and bright white sands, every craving is absolutely satisfied. French tradition and colourful island accents envelop the palate and enrapture the tastebuds.

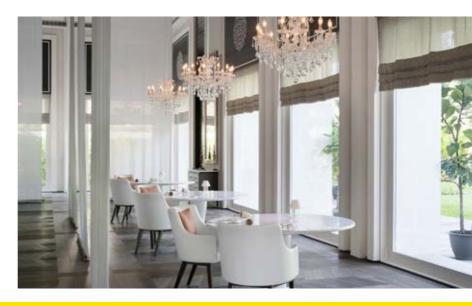
Straddled between vast ocean views and a lush tropical garden, the White serves island-inspired flavours from dawn to dusk in airy relaxation. Perched on the turquoise waters of the lagoon, the Deelani offers an escape to lands afar. Named after a Maldivian breeze, it celebrates flavours of the Italian Riviera

with flair. The Diptyque serves the finest Japanese and Southeast Asian Cuisine. Open kitchens encourage lively interactions with our Chefs. Every evening, guests sit upfront at the counter top to see the culinary teams demonstrate their talent and passion. Le 1947 fine dining pays tribute to French cuisine, interpreted with delicacy and creativity in a Maldivian

setting. To celebrate the art of gathering in a more exclusive way, guests can enjoy La Table de Partage experience. The Maison's chefs design a family-style menu tailored to guests' desires.

To complete this variety of gourmet experiences, there are four bars and culinary journeys collaboration designed in with the Alchemists, who creatively imagine bespoke experiences. From guest picnics to private poolside barbecues, the choice of private dining venue is endless. Anywhere on the island, Cheval Blanc Randheli invites epicureans to enjoy a moment of pure bliss and more.

Cheval Blanc Randheli, Noonu Atoll +960 656 1515 info.randheli@chevalblanc.com www.chevalblanc.com/randheli











Paradise with Italian GRACE

Opening 2019

FOR INFO AND RESERVATIONS:

Ph. +39 02 36661966 reservations.maldives@baglionihotels.com www.baglionihotels.com/maldives









This experience fully contradicted the common saying that in order to enjoy good weather in the Maldives, you can only travel there in the middle of the winter.

What if I told you that you could actually travel to the Maldives in any season of the year, including the off season and enjoy a great holiday and good weather?

I can promise you that myself, having travelled to the Maldives for the very first time in the "rainy" month of September without having to experience more than 2 days of rain in a 2 weeks span.

Mr. Bruno de Giusti, an Italian telecommunications engineer and passionate researcher of the Maldivian climate, is here to explain to us in detail why the off season is actually a fine time to travel to the Maldives.

You see, Bruno's father used to visit the Maldives islands every year for a month in July, and every time, he never had more than just a handful consecutive days of rain.

This experience fully contradicted the common saying that in order to enjoy good weather in the Maldives, you can only travel there in the middle of the winter. And so Bruno began to study in detail the Maldivian climate, documenting everything with photos, satellite images and

After 4 years of data and scientific studies, he came to the conclusion that the Maldivian climate is extremely variable and basically nice, all year round.

spreadsheets, to better understand

the reason for this incongruity.

Well then, if the weather is always variable but with tendency to be nice, why not travel there in the summer, when the prices are lower and the resorts less packed? A time period that also coincides with most people's vacation time.

'Off season?' I know what you are thinking, the weather isn't as nice, it is rainy... MONSOONS! Here's the thing, it isn't.

And Bruno and I think it is about time we reset this information.

"The climate at the equator is like a boiling pot, and you have to guess where the next bubble will come up." This is how Bruno introduced me to the characteristics of the Maldivian climate, when I had the pleasure of











interviewing him for this article.

There are many myths to be debunked when it comes to the weather and Bruno has willingly made available his knowledge and his studies to better explain the Maldivian climate.

The Maldivian archipelago, which falls exactly on the equator, with atolls to the north and to the south of it, features, like all the equatorial climates, a constant low atmospheric pressure - first index of weather instability.

In addition, the Maldives is literally surrounded by hot water (around 29 degrees Celsius, which can become 32 in the lagoon ... a dream!) and is wrapped in a very humid atmosphere (with humidity between 60 and 90 percent all year round).

In short, there are all the ingredients for continuous instability: it is enough that the atmospheric pressure drops slightly, for the air around to raise enormous quantities of moisture from the ocean, dragging them into the atmosphere where they quickly condense, generating clouds and downpours in a short time.

But here is the good news! Since the Coriolis Effect is non-existent at the equator (which allows huge amounts of energy to be stored in the atmosphere), no hurricanes can occur in the Maldives, and bad weather doesn't last long. moving quickly away; exceptional weather conditions are very rare. The energy of every system created in the Maldivian atmosphere can only remain limited in space and time; therefore, even if some phenomena appears violent during the wet season (downpours, gust wind),

"The climate at the equator is like a boiling pot, and you have to guess where the next bubble will come up"

they are destined not to last. The atmosphere is not able to accumulate excessive amounts of energy and so the bad weather episodes cannot last weeks as in other parts of the world, like Europe for example.

Overall, this tells us that, year round, the climate is generally unstable. But let's not forget that, it is also basically good!

Another important factor to keep in mind is that the Maldives climate is strongly localized. This means that if it is raining on our island, chances are that the sun shines brightly on an island located two sand banks south of us, for example.

Speaking of monsoons, Bruno explains that the word monsoon really means "season". There are two monsoons in the Maldives:

the wet one, which runs from May to November, defined by a more meteorological instability, and not by torrential rains that last weeks, and the dry monsoon, which runs from December to April.

It is interesting to note that, during the wet monsoon season, the humidity (85%) is only 5% higher than the dry season, but in areas of unstable climate a 2% raise in humidity is enough to create changes in the weather.

In essence, the two monsoons are just defining a greater or lesser chance of instability.

The clouds in the Maldives form quickly, and just as quickly they can also dissolve. The typical clouds on nice days are small, short height clouds that, because of the daily pressure oscillation, tend to dissolve midday and midnight.













If you really wanted to avoid a specific month, we would suggest to avoid travelling in May. This is

Avoiding the peak season of the winter months has many advantages, as we said before, like better resort rates. fewer crowds, for a quiet, relaxed vacation because during this time there is a change in the monsoon, and the air is more turbulent, so more unstable. A patch of bad weather in May could last 45-56 days, wind can be stronger, the ocean can be rough and rain more intense.

Our tip is to consider the Maldives year round, including the wet season, possibly for a 2

weeks stay during the summer

months, and to not to get obsessed with weather forecast beforehand or even once there.

Avoiding the peak season of the winter months has many advantages, as we said before, like better resort rates, fewer crowds, for a quiet, relaxed vacation as the islands are less busy than during winter months. Also, keep in mind that winter is considered the high season for tourism to the Indian Ocean, largely because travellers want to escape the cold winter weather of Europe. Tourism booms from mid-December throughout April.

In the Maldives there is no wrong time to go! There is a high season and there is a low season, but it has nothing to do with the weather.

Enjoy maldives with the fastest 4G plus network









FREEDOM REIMAGINED

An authentic tropical expression of anything, anytime, anywhere.





Coconuts and sustainable yellowfin tuna form the backbone of Maldivian cuisine

The Maldivian diaspora is less than 6,000 and the entire population is only 444,259, so it hasn't spread around the world in the same way cuisine from countries with larger immigrant communities has. However, this makes Maldivian food even more unique - so why not read on to get some insider knowledge about this tasty, under-the-radar cuisine!





Coconuts and sustainable yellowfin tuna form the backbone of Maldivian cuisine - after all, they're two things this small, geographically-isolated country has in abundance. Unlike in neighbouring India and Sri Lanka, there's not enough space to cultivate rice in the Maldives, so 'roshi' is commonly used instead (although some dishes do use imported rice). 'Roshi' is a flatbread that resembles a very thin tortilla. A few spices such as chilli also go into Maldivian dishes, but most dishes aren't too hot for foreign palettes, especially compared to many of the fiery Sri Lankan and Indian dishes.

Maldivian cuisine is so popular amongst quests that several resorts have created Maldivian cookery classes. This means you'll be able to learn how to recreate some of the flavours of the Maldives back at home. The good news is you don't need the skills of Gordon Ramsay to be able to be able to cook most of it!

If you're curious about learning the basics of Maldivian cookery, resorts across the country including Veligandu, Jumeirah Vittaveli, Amaya Kuda Rah, Milaidhoo, Fairmont, Four Seasons, Conrad Maldives Rangali Island and the Soneva resorts offer Maldivian cookery classes.

I chatted to some of the organisers of the classes to find out more. Food and Beverage Manager, Aurelien Gliozzo, enthusiastically oversees Maldivian cookery classes at Veligandu with Chef, Hussain Didi. According to Aurelien and Hussain, the two most popular Maldivian dishes amongst guests are 'mas riha' (tuna curry) and 'gulha' (fish balls).

Maldivian tuna curry is made from fresh yellowfin tuna, coconut milk, Maldivian curry blend, curry leaves, rampa leaves, tomato, turmeric and seasoning. Gulha is a type of fish kebab, with fresh coconut,



dahl, green chilli, fresh lime juice, ginger, flour and seasoning.

"Maldivian cooking isn't really difficult in terms of skills, as it mostly just requires you to be able to prepare all the ingredients first, then cook them in the right order. The only difficulty you might have (after leaving) is to find the right ingredients and spices, that can sometimes be difficult in western countries," says Aurelien.

Executive Chef, Christophe Waherung, agrees that tourists just can't get enough of Maldivian tuna curry. He has also noticed 'garudiya' (fish broth) and lobster curry made with local Maldivian lobsters are amongst some of the favourites.

"The dishes are very easy to make even at home, provided you have all the ingredients," says Christophe, who added that there was so much demand from guests that the resort designed "Food Play" cooking classes for guests.

"Food Play helps build a relationship

with the specialty chef and allows him to get to know the guests on a personal level. Guests can learn about a new culture based on the selected cuisine, learn new cooking techniques and create a memorable experience; learning while having fun in their holiday," he said.

Many resorts also have Maldivian cuisine theme nights and or have Maldivian dishes permanently on the menu. Sometimes, the Maldivian dishes are given an international twist to elevate them to gastronomylevel. Meet one of the foremost chefs working in the region, Mickael Farina, who has worked at Kandolhu resort in the Maldives for five years. The Frenchman has produced his own cookery/photography book named 'HIHsaa KURUN' (featuring Maldivian and international cuisine) and this year is opening MEĀNIMA restaurant in Colombo.

"Maldivian cuisine has its own signature style, different to India and Sri Lanka," says Mickael. "I'm personally a big fan of

"Maldivian cooking isn't really difficult in terms of skills, as it mostly just requires you to be able to prepare all the ingredients first, then cook them in the right order"



"Seafood is a key element, and we also use local ingredients from the garden like pumpkin, banana, chilli, curry leaves and coconuts"

Maldivian cuisine. My cookbook has around five Maldivian recipes – reinterpreted, but the main flavours are there - as our way to pay tribute to Maldivian cuisine.

"We saw more and more demand from guests at the resort for Maldivian dishes, so my team and I created some, with our own twist. For example, for the 'garudiya' - one of the most popular dishes in the Maldives - we decided to cure the tuna in curry leaves and salt instead of boiling it for a long time like what would traditionally be done.

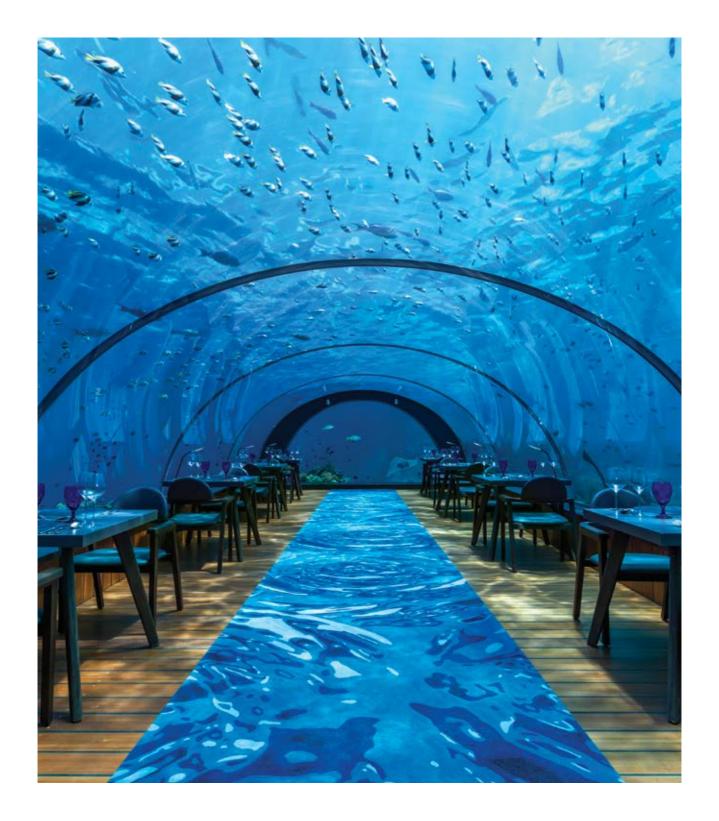
"Seafood is a key element, and we also use local ingredients from the garden like pumpkin, banana, chilli, curry leaves and coconuts," he said. And he'll be taking some of the knowledge he learned in the Maldives, as well as from working around the world (and exploring 40 countries in his free time) with him to Sri Lanka when he opens his new restaurant.

At present, there aren't many Maldivian chefs working in the industry, which is another reason why Mickael thinks it's important to share and preserve the knowledge about Maldivian cuisine.

"Unfortunately, there's a lack of Maldivian chefs but I currently have two strong ones in my culinary team who have been with us for over two years. They understood how important it is to carry on and represent their country's culinary legacy," said Mickael.

"Every time we decide to cook some Maldivian classic old-school dishes, most of our Maldivian staff would get excited that finally they can access some of their classic cuisine which they rarely get these days. If nobody is learning it, Maldivian cuisine will be lost. This is a legacy which needs to be saved. Just like any other traditional cuisine, it's part of a nation's identity."

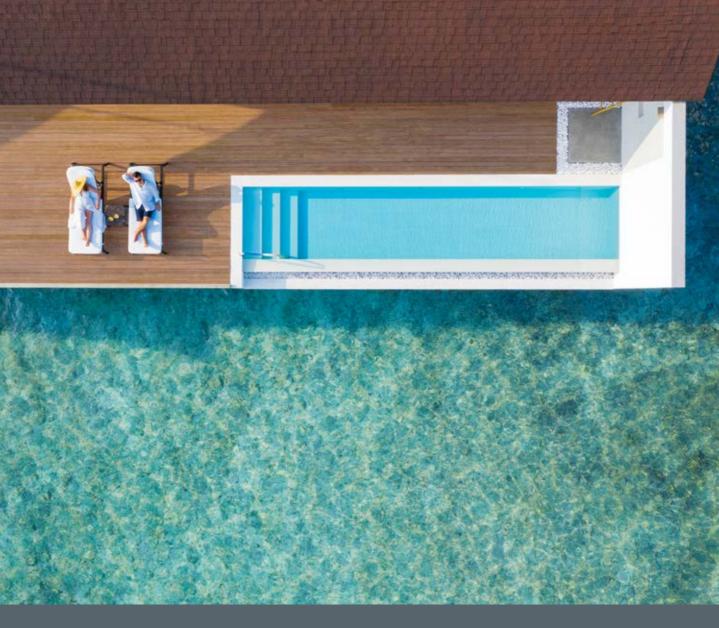






ADULTS' ESCAPE

A 5-Star, adults only island boasting a breathtaking undersea restaurant, a beautiful beach and some of the best snorkelling and diving in the Maldives. Stylish villas, restaurants, bars, combined with superb service makes this island paradise your best choice for an unforgettable holiday.



Where time ebbs, ever so gently.

Like the soothing infinity pool, kisses the tranquil blue oceans here; the marine inspired architecture, bears witness to the silence of the aqueous world underneath; the signature Heavenly®Bed, calms, as it revitalises; and the iconic Heavenly Spa pauses the clock with its regenerative therapies; it's time, you slowed some too, and soak the quietude in.

We offer:

- 70 private villas and suites, on island and overwater
- 3 restaurants and a rooftop bar
- 24-hour WestinWORKOUT®

- Westin Kids Club®
- Heavenly Spa by Westin™
- Dive Centre

To make a reservation, visit westin.com/maldivesmiriandhoo or call +960 660 4444

THE WESTIN

MALDIVES MIRIANDHOO RESORT



The turtle hospitals of Maldives

By Verena Wiesbauer



Human activities have tipped the scales against the survival of these ancient mariners. Slaughtered for their eggs, meat, skin and shells, sea turtles suffer from poaching and over-exploitation. They also face habitat destruction and accidental capture in fishing gear. Climate change has an impact on turtle nesting sites. It alters sand temperatures, which then affects the sex of hatchlings.

Two out of the worldwide seven species of marine turtles are commonly seen in the Maldives: The Hawksbill turtle – a critically endangered species - and the Green Sea turtle – classified as "endangered" by the World Conservation Union. Especially the Green sea turtle ladies seem to like Maldivian beaches as their nesting ground to lay their eggs both in local and tourist islands. Among these is the recently declared protected island of Gaadhoo in Laamu Atoll - one of

the most significant Green turtle nesting beaches in the Maldives!

Individual sea turtles can be photoidentified due to their scutes on the head behind their eyes. The number, shape and edges of scales on the left and right cheek can be recorded and compared on photographs in order to determine each individual, for which often names are given. Hence, if a sea turtle is identified from a resort and seen over and over again on the house reef, marine biologists often allow quests to name a turtle and its ID will be recorded in a national turtle database. Approximately 2,200 unique hawksbill turtles, over 470 green turtles, and over 25 Olive Ridley turtles have been ID'd in the Maldives so far.

Thanks to the possibility to identify individual turtles, marine biologists in Laamu Atoll, for example, could witness mating attempts of two of their local turtles – "Sapphire" and "Kaela". "Kaela" is known as a









young male who just reached sexual maturity within the past year, already testing his newly found strength.

When sea turtles become victims to ocean garbage and are found by rescuers, they often become patients. You may have already

When sea turtles become victims to ocean garbage and are found by rescuers, they often become patients

heard of Ghost nets, also known as the "silent killers of our oceans". Ghost nets are fishing nets that have been lost, abandoned. or discarded at sea. Every year, they are responsible for

killing millions of marine animals. In the Maldives, the turtle species most frequently found entangled in ghost gear is the Olive Ridley, even though it is rarely fond nesting in the country. Between 2011 and 2018, the 'Olive Ridley Project' - a UK

registered charity - has recorded 528 entangled Olive Ridley sea turtles, counting for 87.9% of all entangled turtles reported! Collected data from ghost nets suggest that when the wind blows from the northeast, ghost nets are likely to be coming to the Maldivian waters from Southeast Asian countries such as India, Sri Lanka and Thailand. During the Southwest Monsoon, pieces of fish aggregating devices (FADs) indicate that the ghost nets are coming from the western Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea, entangling turtles on their way to the Maldives.

Due to the frequent sightings of injured sea turtles caught in ghost nets, sea turtle rescue centres have opened across the Maldives in recent years with one being in North Male' Atoll, two in Baa Atoll and one in Lhaviyani Atoll. These four centres have holding tanks and resident marine biologists who can give medical treatment to their patients. One facility recently got a

brand new X-ray machine and has advanced surgery facilities with a resident veterinarian. Before the X-ray machine had arrived, sea turtles had to be taken to the nearest (human) hospitals by speed boat just to get examined to their bones! The facilities in Naifaru and in Landaa Giraavaru even got floating sea enclosures, called "turtle pens", to rehabilitate injured turtle patients directly in the sea, giving them

time stretching their flippers.

Turtle patients that have been brought to these rehabilitation centres are, for example, baby Olive Ridley "Eve", who was rescued on Christmas eve 2018 and initially sent to the Marine Savers Rescue Centre on the Four Seasons Resort. It was discovered she had a broken bone in her front flipper so was sent to the Olive Ridley Centre in Coco Palm

Dhuni Kolhu for further treatment. She has lost a back flipper from a ghost net and her front flipper was very badly damaged from the net as well. She had two broken bones and deep cuts around her whole flipper. The flipper was operated and she got a splint to stabilize the area whilst it healed. Interestingly, "Eve" made friends with baby Hawskbill "Lisle" while recovering, cuddling up to each



other in their tank, even though it is rather unusual for turtles to develop friendships or even a bond between different species!

Then there was "Phoenix", who had a large fishing hook embedded in her esophagus that needed to be removed, or "Lulu" – possibly a victim of a boat strike accident - who had to be dry-docked for two weeks on antibiotics and got her cracked shell fixed with dental cement. "Tao" that came to the Marine Savers last December, not only was missing the right front flipper, but had also been excreting many small pieces of hard plastic and fishing net!

Once treatment is completed and successful, turtles will then be released back into the ocean, such as in the case of "Nadia", a victim of a ghost net, who spent time in various rehabilitation centres for almost two years! She suffered from buoyancy syndrome which prevents turtles from diving down, spent a year in the Naifaru Atoll Marine Centre slowly recovering and was later transferred to the Olive Ridley Centre to undertake swimming lessons to make sure there were no more signs of her syndrome. The biologists swam with her for a while to ensure she wasn't popping back to the surface or floating, until she disappeared off

the edge of Baa Atoll, just in time to be back "home for Christmas".

If you find an entangled turtle, please keep the net as it can give some information about where it came from, and contact the veterinarian for emergencies at +960 955 2205.



Timeless Memories

Veligandu Island Resort & Spa | Tel +960 6660 519 | reservations@veligandu.com | veligandu.com











Sneak Peak: Suraj Panda

Ensuring quality, safety & security at TMA



"I am the eyes and ears for the regulatory authorities outside the Company"

TMA has remained the largest seaplane operator in the world for many years. It is a unique operation, conducted in as unique an environment. With more than a thousand staff in fifteen different departments one wonders how such a large operation is conducted with the mechanisms that would ensure quality, at the same time guaranteeing the safety and security of its clients and staff. Island Skies talks to the man in charge of ensuring that TMA remains at the top of the game when it comes to quality, safety and security.

Explaining the uniqueness of the operation Suraj says, "Flexibility is a great part of this operation. The operation has to be versatile to seamlessly accommodate changing variables such as delays in incoming international flights and changes in weather and make sure that the discerning customers who choose to fly with TMA are transferred to the resort of their choice within a given timeframe. As you may know TMA operates only from six in the

morning to six in the evening. So, we have to be versatile and flexible to achieve this on a daily basis".

As the Manager, Quality Systems & Compliance Monitoring, Suraj's highest priority is to make sure that the Company and its operations are in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Civil Aviation Authority of Maldives and other government institutions, and that all aspects of the operations are in compliance with the many international standards that the Company adheres to, in order to maintain the highest levels of quality. safety and security in its operations.

"I am the eyes and ears for the regulatory authorities outside the Company. That's an independent role. On behalf of the Civil Aviation Authority I have to monitor and make sure that the set standards are maintained at the highest level".

Talking about other standards that TMA maintains Suraj explained. "We have several other regulations that we follow as well. We are under the umbrella of several ISO standards which cover various areas of the Company's operations. We maintain four main industrial standards; ISO 9001 which is Quality Management Systems, ISO 14001 which is Environment Management System, then there is the BS OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series) and ISO 22301, Business Continuity Management System. These four certifications are meant for the nontechnical aspects of the Company's operations. These standards apply to all aspects of the Company such as human resources, IT, food and beverages, reservations and so on".

"Everyone in the Company works with written processes, no one deviates. If someone wants to deviate, there is a deviation procedure in place where they would need to offer a solid justification for such a deviation. Then we do a risk assessment, and if we find there is no risk we go ahead with the requested deviation".

The Quality Assurance Department Suraj heads, is staffed by licensed auditors in the various standards that TMA maintains. "I have eight auditors seven of them are specialized in technical regulations and audits and they are also specialized in some of the ISOs. Some are 9001 auditors, some are 14001 auditors and others 22301. These are what we call licensed lead assessors. Some are specialized only in quality management and others are specialized in food and beverages or on environment management systems. That's how they are trained, and their licenses are renewed every three years. I use them as and when they are required".

The Quality Assurance team has busy audit schedules, and they are the ones who will communicate with all the external regulatory authorities. Audits relating to the regulatory environment would include engineering, flight ops, ground ops, air navigations services, and other similar areas. Regular reviews on manuals are conducted, and all such manuals and standard operating procedures are reviewed and approved by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Maldives on a regular basis. Other regulatory compliances are also ensured by Suraj's team. This would include laws and regulations related to labor, environmental laws and regulations of the fisheries ministry, in relation to the water aerodromes of TMA around the country.

Suraj explained that they draw up a full calendar of audits for each year. "This way we audit fifteen departments of the Company in 365 days. In my quality department we finish an audit every third day and open another audit. That is

the kind of schedule we have".

"I monitor these audits on a regular basis. First and foremost, I ensure that all audits happen according to plan, on the dates published in the audit calendar. I make sure that proper feedback is received, and reports are published. If there are any non-compliances, they are corrected within the timeframe given by the auditor and agreed by the department in question. Then we have to follow up on the process and confirm that corrective action is taken so that it would not happen again. These corrective actions are checked during follow up audits".

For Suraj maintaining quality, safety and security is an attitude that needs to be impressed in the minds of the staff. "Setting up standards and SOPs is the easy part. As days



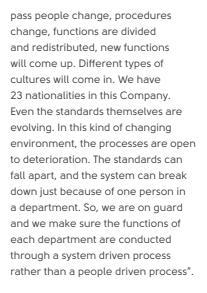


culture rather than brings in their culture to the Company.

In order to ensure that this culture is instilled in staff, standards training is an ongoing process. "Annually we have a staggered program for all safety sensitive staff. We look at different safety concepts evolving around the world and we keep on advancing our safety management systems accordingly. We bring those progressive changes and drill them down into our training program. Once it becomes a part of our training program it becomes a set culture in our organization. Last year we trained 170 staff in safety management systems through our team".

And training begins on the first day of work for anyone who joins the TMA team." On day one in the induction program, they will meet a quality and safety instructor. That's where we set the tone. This applies even if the new employee is a baggage handler or a new manager, a pilot or a ground ops staff. I will be there to tell them that these are the two prime areas that those guys have to ensure they follow; quality and safety standards. And then they have to go through multiple rigorous programs and trainings that follow". And that's not all. At the end of the training they are tested for their understanding of the processes and if they fail they have to go through their training before they become full members of TMA team.

Suraj Panda is a highly qualified Quality Assurance Manager with more than a decade of experience in Trans Maldivian Airways. His background is in aircraft maintenance engineering and he holds an Aerospace MBA from Toulouse Business School. France. Suraj is a member of International Register of Certified Auditors and holds several licenses and certifications in auditing and monitoring of several international industry standards in the area of aviation and other areas.



One safeguard against such deterioration is continuous monitoring of processes and rigorous training of staff on the standards of the Company. "While I emphasize on the process we also have to acknowledge that good processes in an organization does not make it safe or ensure quality on its own. So, we invest in training and we emphasize on establishing a culture that values processes and adherence to quality and safety standards. Furthermore, we make sure that when staff are recruited they adapt the Company's





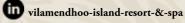


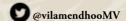
For best results we recommend vitamin Dive

Vilamendhoo Island Resort & Spa | Tel +960 668 0637 | reservations@vilamendhoo.com

vilamendhoo.com











Revel in serenity

Awe-inspiring views in an area of unrivalled beauty, Adaaran Select Meedhupparu showcases the very essence of Maldives through its beautifully designed water villas, delectable cuisine and exotic aqua sport offerings.

T: +960 664 0375

E: res.mir@adaaran.com.mv

www.adaaran.com/selectmeedhupparu







Life is so relaxed here, so unhurried, seemingly free from the stress and anxiety that are epidemic to the hustle and bustle of the modern, technology-driven, informationabundant life of the cities from which they hail. The sense of amazement and astonishment stems from observing a lifestyle so different to their own.

It is not uncommon to see the islanders seemingly in various states of rest, lying down outside their homes on rope woven joalis or simply engaging in a quite unexciting activity; a man unhurriedly mending a fishing net sitting on a bench under the coconut palms, as if he has all the time in the world to complete it, a woman separating ekels from a pile of palm fronds with no urgency on her face. Their movements are rhythmic, at one with the rustle of the palms, the soft breeze blowing in from the sea, and you would feel that they could sit there the whole day as if nothing else in their lives mattered. Although they may appear to be unperturbed, it is not that they have nothing to get done on that particular day. They are just not rushed about it.

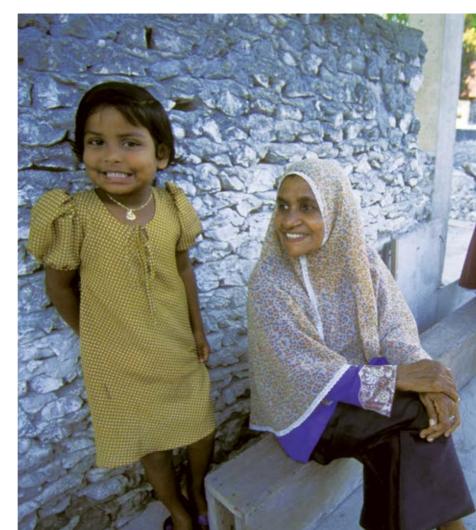
The admiration and sometimes bewilderment about the lives of the island folk is something that always existed, even during those times when merchants, explorers and travelers from various corners of the world frequented these shores. They are so amazed that many have written about this in their travel logs and memoirs.

As you walk on the soft powdery beach with the gentle waves kissing your toes, you too may wonder how life would be for these folks who are destined to live here forever. What would it be like to wake up to the cooing of the koels, with the knowledge that you are surrounded by the ocean just a few meters away? Does it stem from a secret desire

to escape reality and become part of a reality that seems to radiate from nothing but contentment?

The lives of Maldivians have been shaped by the elements since the first settlers put up camp in these islands thousands of years ago. Their lives and the lives of their descendants have been dictated by the vagaries of the weather, the whims and moods of the seas and the elements of nature which surround them. True, they would have learnt the patterns of weather, the monsoons and the currents, and they would have shaped their activities around them. However, on a given day, their lives would have been determined by what nature throws at them, be it nature's bounties or natures wrath. Being disconnected from the rest of the world and even from the rest of the nearest islands, they could not

The lives of
Maldivians have
been shaped by
the elements
since the first
settlers put
up camp in
these islands
thousands of
years ago.



complain but take what is offered.

One day they may wake up to find that a large shoal of mushimas (bigeye scad) has entered the shallows of the lagoon. The islanders instinctively hasten to get their rods and wade into the water and spend the whole day catching as many as they can. They didn't plan on doing it the day before nor they did think they would be spending the whole day waist deep in the lagoon, when they woke up that morning.

For millennia fishermen ventured out to sea in search of tuna leaving their fate at the mercy of the winds. The wind could drop, and they would find themselves rowing without complain. The skies turn stormy the wind blows too strong, and they had to bring down the sails and endure the splashing rain as they bob over the waves of the ocean. A

whole day spent roaming the seas in search of tuna, and they could return home empty handed. The next day, the sea could bestow them riches from its abundant bounty and they could be home with a boatful of tuna by midday.

The women folk would wake up in the morning and see off their husbands for fishing before dawn. They would have no idea when they would return. They wouldn't know at what time of the day or night they would be called upon to get their pots and pans out, clean the fish, light the fires and cook the fish, so they could preserve the blessings bestowed upon them. Be it noon or midnight they would do it as if by second nature.

That's the island spirit, and that's what has sustained life here. It's what has evolved from uncertainty

The women folk

would wake up

in the morning

and see off their

husbands for

fishing before

dawn. They would

have no idea when

they would return.







It's a spirit that has been instilled in them through being ready to make the best out of what has been offered. and the hardships of life, of living so close to and at the mercy of the elements. It's a spirit that has been instilled in them through being ready to make the best out of what has been offered. That's how life has sustained in these tiny islands.

So, when you see that island woman sitting under the shade of the breadfruit tree, her hand moving in graceful rhythm as she wove coir while seemingly lost in a thought, she is practicing what has been passed on through generations; calm mindful engagement, neither ruffled by

what happened before nor anxious about what may happen next.

She would have started the day before the break of dawn, to send her husband off for fishing. She would have prepared breakfast, swept the large white sandy front yard outside her own home. She may have gone to the forest to collect wood for fire, collected some fallen sea almonds to dry them and extract the tasty nut inside on another day when the time is right, and the nuts have dried. She might have also fitted coconut shells around the newly growing guavas in her backyard to protect them from bats and rodents. This is something she might have thought of doing while lying on the joali just the other day.

The rope she is weaving is a work in progress. Of course, the rope is important, and it will have many uses for her and others once she has produced it. But It's like a diversion that fills her time from her engagement in other matters that she may be called upon to attend. She would not have it in mind to complete making the bundle of rope before a certain time. If nothing else happens, she may be weaving until the afternoon prayer time. She may then bath her children and dress them up, sit them down to have a cup of tea with dried rusks while she picked the jasmine buds that grew outside in her yard, which she may use to prepare scented water for the desert she has in mind to prepare someday this week.

She may then walk her children down the road towards the beach where the islanders gather during the late afternoon. They would look serenely for signs of returning dhonis through the golden glow of the setting sun. The golden orb of the sun would sink beneath the horizon and as dusk falls they would walk home. Life would go on and they will take with an open heart what nature bestows upon them tomorrow.





HERE, LIFE IS EASY

- Best Escape Anyone Could Have -

Innahura Maldives Resort

reservations@innahura.com | innahura.com



innahura









Photo flights, excursions & more

TMA products & services

In addition to the air transfers we make for more than a million passengers each year, we offer exciting products and services on our aircraft that would enhance your holiday experience in the Maldives.



Resort Transfers

Travel from the airport direct to your resort, on a flight that you will treasure as one of the best parts of your holiday in the Maldives. With us you will be whisked away to your chosen destination once you arrive in the Maldives. We take you from the airport right to the beach of your resort. Flight times vary between 10 and 55 minutes, depending on the distance.

Excursions

A day trip or half-day excursion can take you to an uninhabited island, where you can snorkel, have a picnic and enjoy Maldives' pristine natural beauty. There are hundreds of islands that you can choose for your excursion, from the twenty-six natural atolls that make up the Maldives.

Private Charters

Chartering a Twin Otter is about

freedom and the chance to explore and experience the Maldives in a way few people have the opportunity; a charter gives you the freedom, the time, the privacy and space as you desire.

VIP Flights

For luxury seaplane travel look no further than our custom designed VIP Twin Otter aircraft'. Our airconditioned VIP aircraft comes with an eight-seat configuration with a variety of amenities and cabin services. Our VIP aircraft comes with a ten-seat configuration also with a variety of amenities and cabin services. This aircraft is configured to offer you more legroom and seat width along with comfortable seating. Cabin services on the VIP flights include refreshing towels, bottled water and soft drinks. Watch the incredible atolls slip by below while you use the spacious seats to stretch out and catch up on some rest.

Photo Flights

From the air it is magical and breathtakingly beautiful. Photo flights offer a golden opportunity for photographers to shoot their own pictures of the Maldives from the air. Wherever you look you will find a perfect frame for a shot that you can be proud of. Photo flights can be customized to suite your specific wishes.

Passenger Evacuation

We always wish our guests the safest, most enjoyable holiday ever! However, should there be a need or an emergency for passenger evacuation for urgent medical reasons, we do provide excellent passenger evacuation service.

























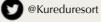


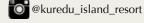
MORE
THAN JUST
A HOLIDAY

Kuredu Resort Maldives . Tel +960 662 0337 . info@kuredu.com . reservation@kuredu.com . kuredu.com













Your Pics

with TMA

Selection of pictures sent in by our readers

Please send in your pictures to islandskies@thinkmaldives.com with your name, address, date and the route on which the picture was taken.





Zahid Imran Jokhio from Pakistan





Praveen Cherukupally from Australia





Nassim from Lebanon

.



Maria Dixon from UK 80 K



Alessandra Fabi from Italy



Veronica Campana from Italy

Fathim Riyaz from Maldives





Dinaj Paranawitane from Sri Lanka







Steffi Haessig from Germany



Henar Romera Rey from Spain









Xiaoyi Peng from China



Ahmed Rasheed from Maldives



Azizul & Shazia from UK









Haruka Takahashi from Japan



Gerhard Krenn from Australia





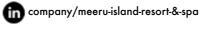


simply MALDIVES

Enjoy the Beach all around Meeru!

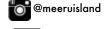
Meeru Island Resort & Spa | Tel +960 664 3157 | reservations@meeru.com | meeru.com





meeru.com/ru



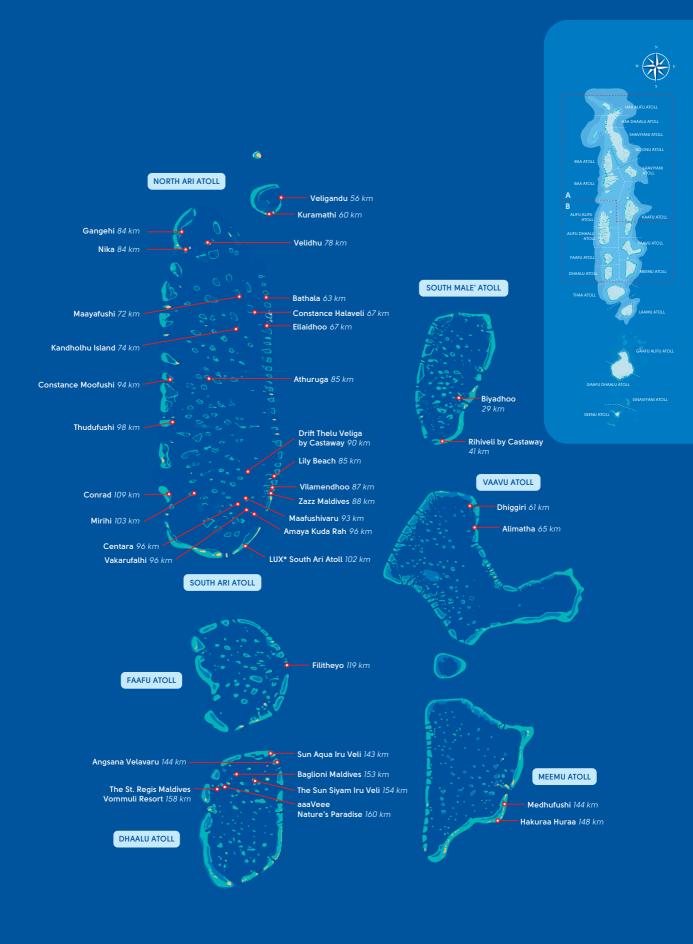






TMA Destinations





Barefoot in the Maldives is the greatest!

Anywhere and anytime else



FALKE

Finest German Legwear since 1895







Stay Exquisite

Experience a modern sanctuary in natural splendor at The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort. Nestled on a private island in an Indian Ocean atoll, this intimate retreat offers unparalleled access to the region's thriving marine life.

The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort
Vommuli Island, Dhaalu Atoll, Vommuli I3080, Maldives t. +960 676 6333 stregismaldives.com













SUN AQUA **PASIKUDAH** A SRILANKAN SUN



SUN AQUA IRU VELI A MALDIVIAN SUN