YOUR HANDY TOUR GUIDE.
Travel well

Official Publication of Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation
www.visitmaldives.com
Welcome to Maldives

Welcome, welcome traveller. Welcome to a land that has granted many a fatigued, stressed and over-worked souls inner bliss, solitude, peace and tranquillity. If this is your first time coming to the Maldives, then get ready to be enthralled by our lush white sandy beaches, the serene turquoise lagoons, the richly colourful coral reefs renowned the world over for their great bio-diversity, the radiant flora and fauna being host to the mother of all tropical trees - the Maldivian Coconut Palm and most importantly the friendly and hospitable Maldivian people. You’ll love that rapturous feeling of swimming with dolphins, gazing at the majestic Manta Rays underwater, catching a gnarly wave, dancing the night away at a beach party, indulging on the scrumptious tropical and multi-cultural food on offer or just plain lounging on the beach sipping on a refreshing cocktail.

Recurrent visitors would know exactly what we are talking about and to them we first wish a hearty welcome back and remind them of the fact that they’ll always discover something new and wondrous about these pearl-like islands on each different visit. Sit back, relax and let our island and sea spirits give your mind, body and soul that heavenly high you’ve come seeking for once again.

In a more serious note, we would like to remind all visitors to become and function as environmentally conscious and aware tourists on your visit. Global warming, pollution and other man-made crimes against nature the world over are devastating the natural eco-systems of various countries including ours. We are a rather small island nation being host to a rather fragile and vulnerable environment and marine eco-system. Help us protect our coral reefs and shores so that we can preserve them for future generations. Please keep our beaches clean and adhere to responsible diving and snorkelling practices such as refraining yourself from touching the corals and marine life or extracting them for personal use (more information will be presented to you by the relevant resort/liveaboard that you are staying in).

All in all, we wish you a pleasant and sunny stay in our beautiful country and look forward for more and more visits from you. As we locals say ‘Majaa Kollah Chey’ (Translation: Have fun)
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LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY

The Maldives consists approximately 1,190 coral islands clustered in a chain of 26 atolls in the Indian Ocean. The atolls are scattered along the north-south direction with an area covering roughly 90,000km². However, only 1% of this surface area consists of land. The nation lies between latitudes 07° 06’S and 08° 00” N, and longitudes 72° 32” and 73° 46” E.

ENVIRONMENT WEATHER & CLIMATE

Land wildlife and vegetation in the Maldives are limited in terms of bio-diversity. However, this aspect is overshadowed by the abundant marine flora and fauna to be found in the Maldives. The month of June 2011 even saw Baa Atoll of the Maldives being declared a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. The Maldives is home to over 2,000 species of fish ranging from reef fish to mantas, rays, Eels, reef sharks and to the majestic whale shark. These marine eco-systems are both extremely vibrant and extremely fragile at the same time. Their vulnerability was made clearly evident by the nation-wide coral bleaching incident caused by the El Niño (An unusual warming of the surface water) of 1998. Furthermore, global warming and rampant pollution are becoming greater threats to the environment of the Maldives.

The Maldives enjoys a tropical climate and has two distinct seasons; the dry season, known as the “Iruvai” Monsoon (Northeast Monsoon) - April to December, and the wet season or “Hulhangu” Monsoon (Southwest Monsoon) - May to November. The dry season, as the name suggests, is a period of regular sunshine with little or no rain showers. This is also the best season for scuba diving. The wet season is a period in which the whole of the Maldives experiences torrential rain showers which includes thunder storms. This is the best season for surfing due to good swells and wave generation. The wet season does offer periods of sunshine similar to balmy days you would experience during the dry season, as the Maldives enjoys year long sunshine. The temperature normally ranges from 23°C - 31°C.
Ancient Maldivian history is rich and diverse in events infused with mythological elements and folklore. Archaeological records also reveal that people had settled in the Maldives over 5000 years ago most probably being of Indian, Sri Lankan and Arab origin.
1. Gained Independence from the British

2. First Constitution Enacted

3. Establishment of the first Republic (Election of Mohamed Amin Didi as the President)

4. Failed Coup attempt by hired Tamil mercenaries (PLOTE) lead by 2 Maldivian businessmen

5. Failure of the first Republic, Sultanate Resumed with Muhammad Fareed Didi taking the throne

6. Tsunami Disaster

7. El Nino, Widespread destructive coral bleaching

8. Inception of the Maldivian Tourism Industry, first island resorts developed, arrival of first tourists

9. The third Republic (Election of Maumoon Abdul Gayyoon as President)

10. End of the 853 year old Monarchy, start of the second Republic (Election of Ibrahim Nasir as President)

11. First Republic (Election of Mohamed Amin Didi as the President)

12. Failed Coup attempt by hired Tamil mercenaries (PLOTE) lead by 2 Maldivian businessmen

13. Establishment of the first Republic (Election of Mohamed Amin Didi as the President)

14. End of the 853 year old Monarchy, start of the second Republic (Election of Ibrahim Nasir as President)

15. Inception of the Maldivian Tourism Industry, first island resorts developed, arrival of first tourists

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18. Tsunami Disaster

19. El Nino, Widespread destructive coral bleaching

20. The fourth Republic (Election of Mohamed Nasheed as the President)
Photography | Ahmed Shiuu

The Maldivian people are a friendly folk that has ancestral roots of Sri Lankan, African, Indian, Arab and Portuguese origin. The Maldivian culture is heavily influenced by Sri Lankan, Indian and African elements. For example, "Bodu Beru" - a form of Maldivian folk music consisting of drumming is linked to African tribal drumming rituals. Folk music, dance, arts and crafts though being similar to those of our immediate neighbours and the African and Arab world, has a unique Maldivian tinge and twist to it.

Language

The official language of the Maldives is Dhivehi, an Indo-Aryan language having some similarities with Sinhala. The first known script used to write Dhivehi is "Eveyla Akuru" script which is found in historical recording of kings. Later a script called "hives Akuru" was introduced and used for a long period. The present-day written script is called "Thaana" and is written from right to left. Thaana is said to be introduced by the reign of Thakurufaanu. English is considered the second language and the Maldivian education system has been following the British Standard since the 1960's. It can be said that most Maldivians are quite fluent and adept at the English language.

Above from left to right:
| Couple relaxing in their traditional Maldivian hut
| Ohvalhu gondi - A game played by two people using a board carved from wood and cowrie shells
Opposite page from left to right:
| Women in the islands get together outside their homes to prepare food while socializing with the neighbors
| Men making coir rope from coconut husks. Children come to help and participate with the process
LIFESTYLE

The traditional Maldivian family consisted of a patriarch who earned a living primarily by fishing. Carpentry, seamanship, tapping toddy and boat-building are also traditional professions some men pursued. The woman normally stayed at home and took care of the children and other household duties. She was also responsible for activities like drying the fish and smoking the fish for commercial use. Some women also engaged in activities like mat weaving and making coir rope. There was very much a close-knit communal atmosphere to the islands.

However after the 1970's which ushered in a new era of rapid modernisation, urbanisation, industrialisation and the growth of tourism had brought about significant changes to the lifestyle and professions of the locals. Most Maldivian people now pursue modern professions in both the private sector and public sector. Employment in the construction industry, tourism industry and the service sector has boomed with higher concentrations in Male’ (capital), commercial and business centre of the nation.

CULTURAL MUSIC & DANCE

The Maldivian people are a friendly folk that has ancestral roots of Sri Lankan, African, Indian, Arab and Portuguese origin. The Maldivian culture is heavily influenced by Sri Lankan, Indian and African elements. For example 'odu eru' - a form of Maldivian folk music consisting of drumming is linked to African tribal drumming rituals. Folk music, dance, arts and crafts though being similar to those of our immediate neighbours and the African and Arab world has a unique Maldivian tinge and twist to it.

- **Dhandi Jehun** Similar to Langiri, in which each dancer holds a 90 cm long stick. The sticks are beaten against those of a partner while continuously dancing to the rhythm of the music. Performers commonly wear sarongs, t-shirts, white head cloths, a sash around their waist and white under-garments.

- **Bandiyaa Jehun** This dance has roots in India and is performed exclusively by women. The dancers keep time to the rhythm of a metal pot with the metal rings on their fingers. cowadays, drums, harmonicas and other instruments are utilised.
This "Neshun" (translation: Dance) is similar to Langiri, but is performed by women wearing the national dress. This is a group dance in which women dance in two rows of ten. Each dancer has a 1 meter long semi-circular string decorated with artificial flowers. They hold these strings and dance in different style in small rows or groups of two or three.

Bodu Beru is a form of folk music with roots stretching as far as East Africa. An ensemble consisting of 15 - 20 people performs odu eru which includes 3 - 4 drummers and a lead singer. Some members also play a bell and an “onugandu” (a small piece of bamboo with small grooves which produces sharp sounds). This is the most popular form of traditional Maldivian music with recent annual national competitions also being held in the month of Ramazan. Any resorts have weekly odu eru nights so that visitors can also take part in this tradition.

Maafathi Neshun This “eshun” (translation: dance) is similar to Langiri, but is performed by women wearing the national dress. This is a group dance in which women dance in two rows of ten. Each dancer has a 1 meter long semi-circular string decorated with artificial flowers. They hold these strings and dance in different style in small rows or groups of two or three.

TRADITIONAL FOOD

The traditional food of Maldivians not surprisingly is based around fish, tuna to be more specific and coconuts. White rice and “roshi” (a flour based flat-bread) are staple items. Fish is normally consumed smoked, fried, barbequed, roasted, etc. One of the most popular local dishes “aruudiya” is also a soup made from tuna. Oreover tuna is also consumed in the form of a curry along with the staple items. Other items include “rihaakuru” which is a fish paste made from cooking “garudhiya” over a long period of time and “mas huni” - diced smoked tuna mixed with lime, onions, pepper and coconut. for local consumption. Sweets range from “addu bondi” - think bounty without the chocolate, “dhiya hakuru”, “karu hakuru”, etc which are all coconut based sweets. Traditional beverages include “Toddy” - aged coconut sap and plain coconut sap. Maldivian snacks consist of fried breadfruit and a range of fried spicy and sweet items called “edhi Kaa” - short-eats. Popular items include “gulha”, “bajiyaa” and “boakibaa”.

Do look forward to savouring and sampling some of these items at your selected resort or liveaboard.
ARTS & CRAFTS

The Maldives is famous for its intricately designed and crafted lacquer works. The majority of these pieces are now produced in Baa Atoll, Thulhaadhoo. These pieces which include jewellery boxes, containers, and vases are crafted by moulding and hollowing out pieces of wood which is locally known as Liye Laa Jehun. Colours consist of strands of red, black and yellow resin and patterns are normally of a floral nature.

Additionally, mat weaving (thundu kunaa), coir rope making, pyrography and calligraphy are well known traditional Maldivian arts. However, their prominence is at a decline in recent times due to rapid modernisation and urbanisation and simply a lack of demand.

FESTIVALS

- **Ramadan** This is the holiest month of all for Muslims and normally falls on the ninth month of the lunar calendar. This is a month consisting of 29 or 30 days of fasting. The normal flow of life is altered with working hours altered being cut short significantly. Traditional games also take centre stage at night with an increase in camaraderie between neighbours and households.

- **Kuda Eid (Eid-UI-Fitr)** This day marks the end of Ramadhan and begins with an early "Eid" morning prayer. Feasts are prepared at each household with neighbours, friends and family being invited. The eid lasts for 3 days with celebrations, dances, music and traditional and modern sports being played. This includes the national "Aibalaa" (a sport similar to Kabaddi) tournament being played in the capital.

- **Bodu Eid (Eid-UI-Adha)** The longer of the Eids, this occasion falls on the holy month when Muslims are completing the "ajj" ayers. This is a time for celebrations and feasting for those staying back. Traditional sports, music and dance go hand in hand with modern sports and music at this time.

Above from left to right:
| A man performing the traditional dance ‘handi Jehun’
| Women performing the traditional dance ‘handi Jehun’
| Vases crafted and designed by using the method known locally as ‘Liye Laa Jehun’
| Cooking ‘rihaakuru’ in the old style kitchen
Indepandance day The 26th of July 1966 marks the date in which Maldives was liberated (from protectorate status) from British rule. This day is now marked annually with floats (exclusive to the capital), parades and celebrations across the nation.

RELIGION
Maldives is a 100% Islamic nation. However, the country was a Buddhist state prior to mass conversion in 1153 AD. Archaeological evidence also confirms the existence of sun worshippers and other pagan practitioners in ancient times.

Conversion to Islam is linked to a mythical story which the locals refer to as the “Rannamaari” story. The tale speaks of a sea monster, which the locals refer to as “Rannamaari” that terrorised the capital every full moon. The people in order to appease the monster and to prevent rampant killings offered a sacrificial virgin maiden to feed on.

A travelling Moroccan Islamic scholar named Abu-al-Barakaath-Ul Barbary was responsible for slaying the “Rannamaari” through the recitation of verses from the Quran. The legend states that Abu-al Barakaath made a stop-over in Maldives during a routine voyage and stayed with a local family. He was made aware of the “Rannamaari” and the sacrifices along with other local traditions by the family. He was also informed by the family that their daughter was chosen for the next upcoming sacrifice which made Abu-al Barakaath formulate a plan to save her.

In the sacrificial day he disguised himself as a girl taking the place of his host’s daughter and stayed at the altar near the beach built for the sacrifice. He started to recite the Quran upon seeing the monster surface from the ocean. The vibrations and spiritual power of his recitation killed the “Rannamaari” sending it back to the depths of the ocean. The King along with the locals arrived the next morning to the altar only to find the Moroccan still reciting the Quran. This miracle astonished and bewildered the King and after listening to Abu-al-Barakaath’s story issued an official decree ordering all Maldivians to convert to Islam. Abu-al-Barakaath’s body now rests in the tomb known as “Medhu Ziyaariay” which can be found in the capital Male’.

Sufic sects have also been known to have existed and operated after conversion and they have been linked to the construction of tombs next to mosques. However, no such sect exists in the modern day and the country comprises of solely Sunni Muslims.
It is no secret that the Maldives has a significant chance of submerging in the future due to rising sea levels caused by global warming. Sadly, the need and mechanisms of industrial and technological development has contributed immensely to the great environmental catastrophes which have occurred and are currently taking place across the world. The Maldivian eco-system is no different with man-made activities such as over-fishing, pollution, coral mining, etc posing as great threats to its longevity and sustainability. With unavoidable destructive natural phenomena such as the El Niño of 1998 which lead to widespread nation-wide coral bleaching and the Tsunami of 2004 which internally displaced thousands of people, there is an ever greater need to minimise man’s negative impact on the environment. Natural disasters cannot be avoided, but man-made ones can be.

Therefore we respectfully call upon all visitors to respect our natural eco-systems and to become environmentally pro-active and conscious tourists. Help us preserve this paradise-like land for future generations.

We are only recommending that you follow simple guidelines during your stay. These include abstaining from throwing rubbish onto the beach, lagoons and the open sea (especially cigarette butts and plastic bags), following responsible diving and snorkelling practices such as not touching or removing the corals for personal use and refraining from chasing or touching the marine life as well (in essence being passive divers and snorkelers), conserving water and electricity, etc.

We would also wish for you to check with the resorts and liveaboards whether they are following environmentally friendly practices such as proper waste management, sewage management, recycling, etc and if not to discuss it with them or at least bring to their attention that you would prefer such systems being put in place.
SUSTAINING AND CONSERVING THE FRAGILE ECO-SYSTEMS OF THE MALDIVES HAS BEEN BOOSTED BY OFFICIAL GOVERNMENTAL RECOGNITION WHICH HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN ISLANDS, MARINE AREAS, DIVE SITES AND SPECIES AS BEING PROTECTED.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ARE BANNED AT THESE AREAS:

- Anchoring (except in an emergency)
- Coral and sand mining
- Dumping Trash (applicable to the whole of Maldives)
- Removal of any natural object or living creatures
- Fishing except if the traditional live bait fishing method is utilised
- Any other activity which may cause damage to the area or its associated marine life
PROTECTED ISLANDS:
- Hanifu (Baa Atoll)
- Hithadhoo (Gaafu Alif Atoll)
- Hurashdoo (Alif Alif Atoll/Ari Atoll - North)

PROTECTED MARINE SPECIES:
- Prohibited from killing, catching and collection, extraction and exportation:
  - Triton shells
  - Dolphins
  - Berried Female Lobsters and those less than 25cm in total length
  - Hales
  - Turtles
  - Napoleon Wrasse
  - Whale Shark
  - Giant Clams
  - Lack Coral
  - Sharks
THE 35 PROTECTED MARINE AREAS (INCLUDES DIVE SITES):

ALIFU ALIFU ATOLL (ARI ATOLL - NORTH)
- Faruhruvahaki eyru (l adivaru)
- Karibeyru Thila
- Kudarah Thila (f ink Shark Thila)
- f aaya Thila (f agau Thila)
- f ushimasmigili Thila (Fishily ead)
- f rimas Thila

ALIFU DHAAL ATOLL (ARI ATOLL - SOUTH)
- f aamigili

BAA ATOLL
- higalili aaf orubadhoo Thila
- l anifaruu ay
- Anga Faru
- l endhoo (f iligiga Area)
- o idhoo Koaru
- l aahuravahli
- f athalaa
- l athufaru uraa
- Corbin Shipreck

DHAALU ATOLL
- Fushi Kandu

FAAFU ATOLL
- Filitheyo Kandu

KAAFU ATOLL (MALE ATOLL)
- hekunu Thilafalhige iyurvani (Lion’s ead)
- Emboodhoo Kandu lahi
- (Emboodhoo Channel)
- aathugiri/Ad’dhashugiri (f anana eef)
- iraavaru Kudaa
- ulhifalhu/Kollavani (f an’ass
- lace, Kik Leef, f ragan’s outh)
- uraidhoo Kandu lahi (f uraidhoo Channel)
- Lankan Thila (f assimo Thila/
- aradise Lock lue Caves/Virgin Leef/
- lue Shadow)
- l akunudhoo Kandu lahi
- (l akunudhoo Channel)
- l asfari Faru
- Thamburudhoo Thila (f l eef)

LHAVIYANI ATOLL
- Fushifaru Kandu
- Kureddhoo Kandu lahi
- (Kuredu Express)

MEEMU ATOLL
- Lhazikuraadi (f aka Thila)

RAA ATOLL
- Vilingili Thila (Anemone City)

VAAVU ATOLL
- l iyaru Kandu ( f hevana Kandu)
- Vattaru Kandu
BANNED FISHING METHODS:

- se of dynamite or explosives
- se of guns or any other such devises to catch fish
- se of chemicals to collect or catch fish
- se of scuba gear to collect sea cucumber and lobsters

PROTECTED BIRDS:

- White tern
- Himbrel
- Lossy ibis
- Yellow-tailed lapwing
- Tree-sapipit
- Red-Throated pipit
- Cattle egret
- Ludy Turnstone
- Red-graded lover
- Common Langed
- Kentish lover
- Lesser Sandpiper
- Red Sandwich supporter
- Acacia Olden lover
- Lacke Red
- Alas’sull
- Curlew Sandpiper
- Common reenshank
- Lack-Tailed odwit
- Arsh Sandpiper
- Jack Snipe
- Lack-winged Stilt
- Crab lover
- Western Reef Egret
- Yellow itern
- Lack-crowned lighty eron
- Aldivian Little eron
- Aldivian ond eron
- Central Aldivian eron
- Asked ooby
- Rowno ooby
- Led-footed ooby
- Arganey
- Ferruginous ochard
- Orthern Shoveler
- Urple eron
- Lack-eared eron
- Eurasian Spoonbill
- Lesser olden lover
- Spot-billed elican
- Reater Flamingo
- Wilson’s Storm-petrel
- Watercock
- House Sparrow
- Audubon’s Shearwater
- Flesh-Footed Shearwater
- Saunders’s Tern
- Hite-Tailed Tropicbird
- Asian Koel
- Frigatebird
- Reat Frigatebird
- Ull-silled Tern
- Lack-aped Tern
- Lesser oddy
- Rown oddy
- Ridled Tern
- Roseate Tern
- Common Tern

BANNED FROM EXPORT:

- Eels
- Lobster eat
- Trochus shells
- Igote scad under 6"
- Skates and rays
- Pearl oysters
- All types of corals (except organ pipe coral)
- All types of bait fish
- Uffer fish
ARRIVAL & IMMIGRATION

No prior visa arrangements are required but each visitor must have a passport valid for more than six months.

The airport of your arrival to the Maldives is Ibrahim Nasir International Airport. You will need to fill in a landing card, which should be distributed by the crew of your flight. Alternatively, you can find the cards immediately before immigration booths. To obtain immigration clearance, it is a requirement to indicate [in the landing card] an address or provide proof that you have a booking at a hotel/resort.

TO & FROM AIRPORT

The capital city (Male’) is located on a separate island from the airport island. You will need to take a small (local ferry) called “dhoni” across to the capital, which takes around 15 minutes, to arrive from the airport to Male’. These Ferris’s arrive and depart every 15 minutes. These local ferries charge Rufiyaa for a one-way crossing and accept both USD ($) and local currency just in case you haven’t changed currency at the airport. Taxis are normally available at the jetty of your arrival and will charge a flat fee of 200 Rufiyaa per trip (though from 12.00 midnight to 06:00am it is raised to 250 Rufiyaa per trip, plus an additional 50 Rufiyaa if you place bags in the boot).

LOCAL CURRENCY

The Maldives has a non-convertible currency; therefore, Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR) cannot be purchased beforehand. Major international currencies can be changed at the airport on arrival or in the capital. The USD is accepted as legal tender and its exchange rate fluctuates between 12.75 to 15.42 to a dollar. The exchange rates for other currencies vary daily (visit http://www.bankofmaldives.com.mv/Information/Pages/rates.aspx for latest updates on exchange rates).

The currency exists in the following bank notes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 500 and in the following coins: 1 & 2 MVR as well as 25 & 50 laaris.

CUSTOMS

In accordance with the Law of Customs of the Maldives, the following items are:

PROHIBITED

- Religious materials offensive to Islam
- Idols (for worship)
- Pornographic material
- Narcotics and psychotropic substances
- Live pigs

RESTRICTED (FOR PERSONAL IMPORT)

- Arms and ammunition
- Alcohol and spirits
- Pork and its by-products
- Dogs
- Dangerous animals
MAIN CULTURAL CONSIDERATION

The prime advice is: listen and observe. Any of the Western concepts lack reality once you are in Maldives, and likewise many views held in the West need to be carefully considered before embarking on major discussions.

Maldivian government officials dress rather formally in the office, with men wearing long sleeve shirts and ties, and ladies wearing long sleeve blouses and trousers. Shorts that expose the leg above the knee are to be avoided by both men and women, as are revealing dresses, halter-tops, see-through gear, minis, etc. Although you will see plenty of them in Male', worn by tourists, such attire is still not accepted by the older generation or island communities. Therefore, comfortable but not too revealing style of clothing is recommended.

The capital is long used to Western tourists passing through en-route to the luxurious resorts.

People in Male' show a lot of tolerance to the often scantily dressed foreigners who spill off tour boats, but as in any Islamic country these displays are offensive and tend to attract a lot of unwanted attention from local men. The same tolerance cannot be assumed on the islands, where more care must be taken, especially by female delegates and visitors, to avoid causing offence and unconsciously provoking unwanted attention from male islanders.

For women, a more conservative approach to clothes (blouses or t-shirts that cover the shoulders and skirts or shorts that cover the knees) attract far less attention on the streets than miniskirts and vest tops, and for this reason the latter should not be worn, apart from when visiting resort islands.

Likewise, men should try and wear ‘Bermuda’ type shorts and shirts that cover the shoulders on the islands and in the capital.

CLOTHING

Given the limited variation in temperature, only lightweight clothing should be brought to the Maldives. We also recommend that you dress modestly and refrain from wearing bikini’s and bathing suits while in the capital and other inhabited islands as the Maldives is a 100% Islamic nation.

PERSONAL HEALTH

Sensible precautions should be taken to avoid sunburn and dehydration. In arrival and when travelling in the Maldives, stick to bottled mineral water.

Though infectious diseases are under control, dengue fever is common, especially on the islands. Most medicines are available in Maldives, there are two hospitals on the main island, Male’. The hospitals can treat non-trauma injuries, but any severe injuries requiring specialist attention would need to be referred abroad. There are also dental facilities available and you can seek advise on the ones for specific needs.

IF MEDICAL ATTENTION IS REQUIRED ON REACHING MALDIVES, GO TO ADK HOSPITAL (+960-331-3553) OR ICMH (+960-333-5335)

BANKING

All major credit cards can be used (and are often preferred) at resorts, hotels, shops, travel agents, etc. The Maldives has maintained a fixed exchange rate against the dollar. Most restaurants and shops will accept $ in payment, providing change in local currency.
COMING HERE

With the recent opening and operation of an International Airport located in the southernmost atoll of the Maldives, visitors now have a choice of arriving either at this new airport or at Ibrahim Nasir International Airport located on the island of Hulhule'. However, we recommend that you choose Gan International Airport only if your selected resort such as Shangri-La’s Villingili Resort and Spa (just minutes from the airport) is located in the Southernmost Atolls. We recommend that you choose Ibrahim Nasir International Airport as your flight destination if you're going to stay in a resort located in the central and northern atolls. Furthermore, this airport should also be your flight destination if you've selected a liveaboard (safari) and opted to cruise instead as these vessels normally dock nearby.

European travellers can choose to arrive on frequent charter flights operating from major European cities or on scheduled flights which normally connect to Male via Doha and Dubai.

Travellers from South-east Asia can catch daily flights from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Regular flights also operate from cities like Bangkok and Jakarta.

1 - 3 flights operate daily from our nearest neighbour Colombo. Frequent flights also operate from Trivandrum and Bangalore if your place of origin is India.

GENERAL SECURITY

Male’, is a relatively crime-free city. However, petty crime does exist though minimal as it may be – so it pays to be careful. Females may find themselves stared at very often: in the marketplace, tourism spots, etc. Avoid taking offence to this: in all likelihood (unless you are not observing the standard dress code), it may be out of curiosity.

TRANSFER

Getting to your selected resort or liveaboard is a pretty straightforward affair. Almost all of the resorts and liveaboards offer an airport welcome and collection service. You can either
take a sea plane or a speedboat to get to the resort (such arrangements will normally be taken care of by the resort). However, if you prefer to fly on a sea plane, you could request the resort to make such a booking. Liveaboards are normally docked at Ulhumale’ (a reclaimed island) north-east of Male’ International Airport. It takes just 10-15 minutes by boat to get to your selected vessel.

COMMUNICATION

Maldives has a very efficient landline and mobile telephone system that operates effectively throughout the country. The office and hotel telephone lines have Subscribers Trunk Dialling (STD) / International Direct Dialling (IDD) facilities. There are two major private telecommunications and internet providers in the Maldives named “Dhiraagu” and “Wataniya”. You can purchase a pre-paid SIM from either one on your visit to make cheap local calls. Re-paid internet cards are also available, but most resorts and hotels facilitate broadband internet access to visitors.

RESORT OR LIVEABOARD?

Visitors can either choose to stay in a resort or cruise on a liveaboard (safari) during their stay in the Maldives. Depending on your financial resources, you could even opt to spend half of your trip in a resort and the other half on a liveaboard (safari).

Note that prices for resorts vary depending on their size, facilities, luxury status, etc. Bookings can be made from travel operators and travel agents to capitalise on package deals. Direct bookings can also be made with the resort either through website or by communicating directly with them. Prices for cruising on liveaboards also vary but are more uniform across the spectrum than resorts. Liveaboards offer either surfing or diving packages that can be booked from a tour operator/travel agent or even direct from the liveaboard operators.
Useful Numbers

DIVE RELATED EMERGENCIES
HYPERBARIC CHAMBERS
- Bandos Hyperbaric Chamber (Mr. Ahmed) ............................................ 7771392
- Sun Island Hyperbaric Chamber ..................................................... 6680088
- Kuramathi Island Resort ............................................................... 6660160
- Kuredu Island Resort (Dr. Ahmed) ............................................. 7901754/6620337
- Kandoludhoo Island Resort ........................................................... 7773485
- Shangri-la Villingili Resort and Spa ........................................... 6897888

SEA PLANE SERVICE
- TIA - Trans Maldivian Airways .................................................... 3315201
- IAT - Maldivian Air Taxi ............................................................. 3325708

SPEEDBOAT SERVICE
- Sirius Speedboat Service ............................................................. 3315333
- Souvenir Marine ............................................................................ 3317449
- TCC .............................................................................................. 3322025
- X-Speed Marine ........................................................................... 7932534
- Sun Travels and Tours ............................................................... 3325977
- Sharu Launch ................................................................................ 3318808

BANKING
- Bank of Maldives .......................................................................... 3322948
- State Bank of India ....................................................................... 3312111
- Sri C .............................................................................................. 3330770
- Habib Bank .................................................................................... 3322948
- Bank of Ceylon ............................................................................. 3323045
- Mauritius Commercial Bank ....................................................... 3305656
- Maldives Islamic Bank ................................................................. 3325555

MEDICAL (HOSPITALS)
- IGMH ................................................................. 3336658
- ADK Hospital ................................................................. 3320436

Transportation
- Taxi Service - (cost = Rf. 20 per trip, Rf. 5 extra for luggage carried and Rf.25 per trip between the hours 12.00am - 6.00am)
- Dial Cab ............................................................. 3323131
- Dial Services ......................................................... 3313130
- Fine Taxi .................................................................. 3321414
- JR Taxi ............................................................................... 3321919
- Kulee Dhuveli ............................................................ 3322122
- Loyal Taxi ................................................................. 3325656
- New Taxi ............................................................................... 3325757
- Rasal Taxi ........................................................................ 3329292
- Regal Taxi ................................................................. 3321313

BUSINESS DIRECTORY
- Yellow Pages ........................................................................... 3336658
**SNORKELING**
Snorkelling in the Maldives does not require you to possess any specific qualification. Snorkelling is perfect for exploring the house reefs of resorts at a leisurely pace; however, the dive centres also provide boat trips to different spots if you want to see and explore different sites. Liveaboards, though mostly offering dive and surf packages also offer snorkelling trips, so check with your tour operator/travel agent for rates, timings and other details.

**WATER SPORTS**
- para-sailing, jet-skiing, wake-boarding, water-skiing, catamaran sailing, canoeing, wind-surfing, kite surfing, etc are all fun-filled water based activities to indulge in at your selected resorts.
- any resorts have water sports centres with professional instructors and guides that also offer courses of different levels for water sports requiring skill and ability such as wind-surfing and wake-boarding.

**SURFING**
The Maldives boasts of a number of good surfing spots which includes the famous “Ihaga Thila”, “Honkys”, “Sultans”, “Jailbreaks”, etc found in the North Male Atoll and “Shangri-la”, “Zubair’s”, “Kottey”, etc found in the Addu Atoll (Southernmost) as well as spots like “Tiger Stripes”, “Love Charms”, etc found in Uvaadhoo Atoll. Thaa and Laamu Atoll are also home to good surf spots. If you wish to explore a wide range of surf breaks, we suggest that you book a surf package from a liveaboard (safari) as they will normally cruise to different spots per trip. However, if you wish to stay in a resort and want to catch a good wave, resorts such as “Chaaya Island Resort”, “Honvelaa Resort” (home to “Ihaga Thila” and “Udharanfushi Island Resort” (home to “Lohi’s”) among others are perfect destinations. Surfing season begins in May and ends in December.

**DIVING**
The Maldives is renowned the world over as one of the top dive destinations in the world. The country is home to over a thousand beautiful reefs boasting of an abundant and diverse range of marine life and flora and fauna. Almost all of the resorts have PADI certified dive centres housing experienced PADI Instructors and PADI Divemasters that will cater to all your scuba diving requirements. Famous dive spots include “Mushimasmingili Thila” (Fish Head), “Maaya Thila” (Once voted as the best night diving spot in the world), “Lankan Manta Point”, “Banana Reef”, “Maldives Victory”, “Maalhos Thila”, etc.

**W A T E R S P O R T S**
- para-sailing, jet-skiing, wake-boarding, water-skiing, catamaran sailing, canoeing, wind-surfing, kite surfing, etc are all fun-filled water based activities to indulge in at your selected resorts.
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**Things to do in the Maldives**

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<tr>
<th><strong>W A T E R S P O R T S</strong></th>
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PHOTO FLIGHTS
These are aerial flights presenting you the opportunity to gaze over the islands from above by seaplane. Some selected resorts organize group photo flights and private flights upon request. You could also book your own photo flight by contacting either offices of the two sea plane carriers “Trans Maldivian Airways” or “Maldivian Air Taxi”.

BIG-GAME FISHING
Maldivian resorts as well as private charter operations offer big-game fishing trips. Adrenaline junkies can savour that feeling of hooking a large yellow-fin tuna, wahoo, marlin or a majestic sail-fish on such trips. There are no local laws that stipulate the mandatory release of big-game fish after catching and often the catch are taken back to the resort for a Maldivian style BBQ.

NIGHT FISHING
Night fishing is a much more leisurely affair than big-game fishing. Almost all of the resorts offer regular night-fishing trips or you could even book a trip from a private charter operation. Red snappers (locally known as the tastiest reef fish around), groupers, grunts, etc are worthy and formidable catches. Do remember to release endangered species such as sharks if caught.

WHALE SUBMARINE
The whale submarine is capable of carrying a maximum of 50 passengers and reaching depths up to 150 metres though it normally goes and stays at depths between 10m - 40m as this is the range in which coral growth and fish life are abundant. The whale submarine operates from the capital Male' and is docked near to the capital. Reservations can be made directly from their office located in Male’ or from your selected resort. Rates for adults range around US$75 and US$38 for children. Discounts may be available for group bookings.

EXCURSIONS (ISLAND HOPPING)
An island hopping excursion lets you visit a set number of inhabited islands, uninhabited islands or resorts in a day for general exploratory purposes. Mostly package combinations of visiting one inhabited island, one uninhabited island and one resort per day-trip are offered by resorts. However, you could request a change in the itinerary from the resort to customise the excursion to suit your preferences. Some excursions are also specific to visiting the capital Male’ for spending the day. Excursion packages include lunches on the beach, fishing, etc.
Male’ is the capital of the Maldives. The city is home to over 100,000 inhabitants that includes both Maldivians and expatriate workers. It has a land area of approximately 4 sq km. It is 1.7 km in length and 1.0 km in terms of width. Therefore getting around is a pretty easy and straightforward affair (plan walking), though you will find quite a number of taxi’s, buses and motor vehicles such as cars and motor-cycles used by residents operating on the roads. The roads are made up of bricks unlike tar which you will find in most urban cities.
Male’ is the commercial hub of the nation and is home to the main governmental offices, private sector offices, multi-national corporations’ branches, main branches of banks, the port, etc. It is a vibrant and busy city which perfectly captures the transition of traditional Maldivian lifestyles into the modern era while retaining traditional family values and traditional elements of folk music, dance and recreation, traditional food, etc.

WHERE TO STAY

Male’ is home to quite a number of hotels, guest houses and inns. Budget conscious travellers can opt to stay at guest houses and inns such as the “Luckyhiya Hotel”, “Athama Palace”, “Champa Moon Guest House”, etc while those looking for mid-ranged prices and mid-ranged class accommodation can look towards booking rooms from hotels like “Mookai Hotel”, “Kam Hotel”, “Relax Inn” and the government owned “Nasandhura Palace Hotel” all located near the orth-East corner of Male’ close to the Hulhule’ Ferry terminal. If you’re looking for a pricier higher-end accommodation we recommend that you check out “Trader’s Hotel” and the ‘Ulhule’ Island Hotel” (located at the airport).
Getting around the capital is quite a straightforward affair considering the small size of it. We concur that you could completely encircle the island in an hour and thirty minutes time by walking at a brisk pace. However, if you’re a bit too tired and hot to walk cheap public transportation is on offer in the form of taxis and buses.

**Taxi**

The common norm is to usually call a taxi, though you could flag down one on the road. Taxis can be identified by the yellow license plates as well as by the TAXI sign printed on the car doors or sometimes attached to the top of the car.

Taxis cost Rf. 20 per trip, Rf. 5 extra for luggage carried and Rf. 25 per trip between the hours 12.00am - 6.00am.

**Buses**

Have only recently been introduced (June of 2011) and costs just Rf.5 for the entirety of the bus ride.

A total of 18 bus stops have been scattered across the capital with a total of 4 routes on offer. The roads covered include the capital’s outer road (‘Oduthakuruvaanu Magu’), “Ameenee I aju”, “I ajeedhee I agu”, “Fareedhee I agu”, “I rchid I agu”, “I edhuziyaraiy I agu” “Sosun I agu” and “Kan’ba I aisa I ani I ingun”.

**Airport Ferry**

Going to the airport costs just Rf.10 per person per trip by ferry and takes about 15 - 20 minutes. However, the price is increased to Rf.20 per person per trip after midnight. The jetty for taking such a ferry (dhoni) is located at Jetty 9, on ‘Oduthakuruvaanu Magu’ (outermost road) close to ‘I asandhuraa’I alace otel’. Ferries depart approximately every 10 - 15 minutes.

**MTCC Airport Express**

Is a speedboat operated service that costs Rf.20 per person per trip and Rf.30 per person per trip after midnight. It takes just 4 - 5 minutes to get to the airport. The terminal for taking such a speedboat is also located at the ‘I ulhumale’ Ferry Terminal’, ‘Oduthakuruvaanu I agu’ (outermost road) close to ‘I asandhuraa’I alace otel’. Speedboats depart every 15 minutes.
This ancient mosque was built in 1656 during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar I. The interiors and exteriors of this mosque are intricately carved with Arabic writings and ornamental patterns. Unfortunately non-Muslims are not allowed inside without prior permission. Ask your travel agent or tour operator to arrange this aspect. If you do not have one, call or go to the Ministry of Tourism for information. Call +960 3323224.

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE (JUMHOOREE MAIDHAN)

This is a little park on the north coast of the capital and is marked by a flagpole with a giant Maldivian flag. It’s also the central point of every political demonstration in the capital. The police headquarters is located in the Shaheed Hussain Adam building next door along with a premises used by the Maldivian national defence force (the army). The former presidential jetty is located in front of the park and the Islamic Centre is also nearby.

FRIDAY MOSQUE (HUKURU MISKIY)

This ancient mosque was built in 1656 during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar I. The interiors and exteriors of this mosque are intricately carved with Arabic writings and ornamental patterns. Unfortunately non-Muslims are not allowed inside without prior permission. Ask your travel agent or tour operator to arrange this aspect. If you do not have one, call or go to the Ministry of Tourism for information. Call +960 3323224.

MEDHUZIYA ARAIY

This is the tomb of the Moroccan traveller Abu-al arakaath-arbary, the scholar responsible for the mass conversion of the Maldives to Islam. This tomb is located near the Friday Mosque (Hukuru Miskiy).
**NATIONAL MUSEUM & SULTAN PARK**

Entering hours are from Saturday-Thursday 9 am-5pm. The national museum located inside the Sultan’s park houses a collection of traditional antiques, artifacts, royal regalia and old photographs. The museum costs US$3 or M 38. Entrance to the adjoining sultan park is free.

**ISLAMIC CENTRE (MOSQUE)**

Opened in 1984, this is Malé’s largest and best-known architectural landmark. The complex contains the largest mosque in the Maldives, topped with a golden dome and capable of accommodating 5,000 people. Visitors are welcome inside outside prayer hours, but no interior photographs are allowed. Entrance is free.

**VELAANAAGE**

The former residential address of the late president Ibrahim Nasir (The 2nd President of the Maldives), this premises is now a 15-storey office complex housing the administrative departments of major governmental ministries. This building is located in “Ameer Ahmed” Magu.

**THEEMUGE**

(The Former Presidential Palace & Current Supreme Court)

Located in “Orchid Magu”, Theemuge was the massive residence of the former president from 1998 onwards up until the year 2008. The current president Mohamed Nasheed transferred the Supreme Court of the Maldives and offices to Theemuge. This is a worthy sight with a design boasting of a magnificent mixed look of traditional and modern elements.
THE LOCAL MARKET
In the same area as the fish market, the local market boasts of indigenous fruits and vegetables grown in the Maldives. All vendors are locals stationed at small stalls. In addition to local fruits and vegetables you’ll also find yams, packets of betel nuts, readfruit chips (a traditional Maldivian snack), bottles of homemade pickles.

THE “RAALHUGANDU” (SURF BREAK)
Located in the south-east corner of the Male’, the Raalhugandu is home to the capital’s surf break. Frequent by local surfers, it is however not a locals only surf point. Expect minor scrapes and cuts if you’re planning on surfing as it is a shallow reef break.

THE “ALIMAS CARNIVAL” AREA
Home to coffee shops and café’s frequented by the youth of Male’. Popular hang-outs include coffee shops such as the Dine More Garden, Skippy, Lily’s, Dolphin view café, etc. The area also boasts of a stage used for different music shows and events.

THE FISH MARKET
Just west of Independence square (Jumhooree Maidhan) and with a group of fishing boats docked just opposite, this is where fish which includes mainly Tuna varieties such as skip-jack tuna and yellow-fin tuna are brought, gutted and sold for consumption of the locals of Male’.

THE “ARITIFICIAL” BEACH
Adjoins the Raalhugandu and located near the south-east corner of Male’. This is a beach built due to the fact that Male’ lost its natural beaches (due to land reclamation, rapid industrialization, etc), this is a popular swimming point and hang-out for local youth, families and children. In addition to a beach and “artificial” lagoon, the area boasts of volleyball courts, basketball courts and a Futsal turf pitch.
COFFEE SHOPS & CAFÉS
Coffee shops and café are popular hang-outs for Maldivians. Some coffee shops also function as restaurants offering quality food. Popular coffee shops for tourists include “Seagull”, “Shell Beans”, “Jade Bistro”, the “Sea House” (a 24 hour café), “ourse Café”, etc. They open around 8am and close at 1am except the “Sea House” which is open 24/7. udget: Rf50 - Rf100 per person.

MALDIVIAN STYLE TEA-SHOPS
These are traditional eateries serving “edhikaa” (traditional Maldivian snacks/fast-food) along with the most popular drink - a “Kalhu” (black tea). Food and drinks are pretty cheap and these eateries are mostly frequented by Maldivian local men. These tea-shops are pretty loud inside with various simultaneous banter. Famous tea-shops include the “Aarukeytu”, “Faseyha”, etc. They open as early as 5am and close at 1am. udget: Rf25 - 30 per person.

RESTAURANTS
There are quite a number of restaurants in Male’ offering different types of cuisines. Closed air-conditioned restaurants as well as open-air concepts can also be found. Popular eateries with tourists include “Sala Thai” (Thai Food), “Thai Wok” (Thai Food), “Sala Italia” (Italian Food), “Aioli”, “nce reeze”, “Salsa Royal”, “live garden”. They open around 8am or 9am and close around 12am. udget: Rf100 - 200 per person.
Almost all of the shops open around 9am or 10 am except those small neighbourhood convenient stores which might open at 7am or even 6am. All shops close at 11pm (except the “Fantasy” store located on “Fareedhee Magu” - a higher-end supermarket, which closes at 10pm) and two 24/7 convenient stores located on “Sosun Magu”. Do also note that all shops close for about 15 - 20 minutes for prayer times.

Most shops, except smaller convenient stores do accept credit cards nowadays, though we recommend that you take some cash for your shopping trips. Majeedhee Magu is the main street for all of your shopping needs and requirements. This is the longest road stretching across the capital.

Chaandhanee Magu is the place to go if you’re looking for souvenir items, local handi-craft items, scuba diving equipment, surfing equipment, tourist book guides, etc.

BEING THE CAPITAL AND THE MOST URBANISED, MODERNISED AND DEVELOPED ISLAND IN THE COUNTRY, THERE ARE A LOT OF SHOPPING OPTIONS ON OFFER. FROM UP-SCALE FASHION, JEWELLERY, HARDWARE, COMPUTER SOFTWARE, ACCESSORIES, MARINE EQUIPMENT, SPORTING EQUIPMENT, GROCERIES, SOUVENIRS, ELECTRONICS, SCUBA DIVING EQUIPMENT TO ITEMS FOR THE BUDGET CONSCIOUS SHOPPER, MALE’ DEFINITELY HAS IT ALL ON OFFER.
Local & Music Events

Fixed annual music events or festivals include the ‘Break-out’ Festival (an internationally recognised “battle of the bands” type completion) and the ‘oduberu Challenge’ (a traditional drumming competition) held every year in the month of Ramadhan.

Shows pop up from time to time, so check online, ask a local or check out wall posters near the “Artificial” beach area to get up-to-date information regarding up-coming shows and events.

Male’ has a thriving local music scene with many up and coming young local musicians. Most music shows are held at the stage located at the “Alimas Carnival” area located in the north-east corner of the capital near “Nasandhura Palace Hotel”. Shows are also held at the park near the “Raalhugandu” (surf break) area and at the open space near the “Artificial” beach.

Above:
| Local Maldivian rock show
SURFING
There is just one surf break located in Male’ called “Towns” and it is located at the Raalhugandu’ area near the south-east corner of Male’. It is a reef break so be prepared for minor scrapes and cuts. You and any local surfers can be found frequenting this site. However, this is not a locals only surf spot. If you don’t have a board you could buy one from the “Sea Sports” shop located at “Chaandhaneeagu” or ask a local if you could borrow his board (entice him with some money if you really don’t want to buy a board - hey it’s a cheaper option eh?)

DIVING
There are a number of PADI affiliated dive centres offering PADI certified scuba diving courses and boat-trips. These centres are equipped with quality equipment and certified professional and experienced local instructors. Stable local dive centres include “Maldive Explorers” and “Sea Explorers”.

BAIBALAA
Baibalaa is an annually held sporting competition held during the Eid ul-Fitr or Kuda Eid. It is similar to “Kabaddi” and to put it in a nutshell involves the raiding of a group of players in a circular playing surface composed of white sand. The objective of the game is to touch opposing players inside the circle and get out before being tackled. The competition is held at the open area located near the “artificial” beach.

GYMS & FITNESS CENTRES
There are quite a number of gyms and fitness centres located in the capital such as “Total Fitness”, “Eat”, “Male’ Fitness Club”, etc. There are even some ladies only fitness centres operating in Male’ such as “Male’ Fitness Club”.

FOOTBALL
Male’ is considered the “Brazil” of Asia due to its unabated love of football. Almost everybody plays it and locals can be found playing on the artificial turf pitches and hard-ground sand pitches can be found at the “Maafannu Stadium”. Locals can also be found playing at the artificial turf pitch and hard sandy area near the “artificial” beach. So grab a pair of boots and head over to these locations as the people are extremely friendly and will let you join in for a game or two if you just ask.

Football is the most watched spectator sport in Male’. There is a national football league comprised of 3 divisions. First division matches can be seen at the “Maafannu National Stadium” during season.

OTHER RECREATIONAL SPORTS
The “Artificial” beach and “Maafannu Stadium” has volleyball courts, basketball courts and a cricket pitch for public use while the “Ekuveni sports complex” located next to the “Maafannu Stadium” houses badminton courts, some basket-ball courts, table-tennis tables and a training area for cricket for public use.
The capital is home to the main branch of the Bank of Maldives (the national bank), Habib Bank, Bank of Ceylon, Mauritius Commercial Bank, State Bank of India, and HSBC. All of the banks except the Mauritius Commercial Bank located in "Orchid Magu" are located in "Boduthakurufaanu Magu" along the north-east corner of Male’.

There are a number of ATMs of Bank of Maldives and other banks located at key points of the capital (There is one State Bank of India ATM near the “artificial” beach and one near the Al K Hospital, there is also one Bank of Maldives ATM near Al K Hospital as well as one near “Olympus” theatre located in “Majeedhee Magu”.

These ATMs also provide credit and debit card services for major credit and debit cards (meaning you can withdraw money at these ATMs using your credit or debit card) while there are some shops on “Chaandhanee” offering this service as well.
Visiting Hulhumalé takes around 20 minutes costing just 5/- per trip and you’d have to visit the “Hulhumalé ferry terminal” located near the north-east corner of Male’ to get to this island. The island is slightly bigger than the capital and due to the planned nature of development boasts thicker vegetation and plant life. The roads are much wider than those of the capital and they are also constructed out of tar unlike the brick roads of Male’.

The expanded space of Hulhumalé had initially invited bike and car racers to hold illegal impromptu races. However, the government has now granted the “Maldivian racing association” the use of a track surrounding an industrial
area on Friday (afternoon - evening). You can head over to Hulhumalé on Fridays to catch a glimpse of local bikers train while pulling off the occasional stunt.

If you’re not a racing enthusiast, there is a lengthy beach, lagoon and a house reef on the eastern side of the island for your lounging, swimming, snorkelling and diving pleasure. Compared to Villingili this shore is huge and can accommodate a lot of people.

**IMPORTANT: WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU WEAR T-SHIRTS AND SHORTS AS BIKINIS AND REVEALING SWIM-WEAR ARE NOT ALLOWED IN HULHUMALÉ.**

There are a number of beach-front hotels and guest houses which you could book, if you plan to stay for longer periods. There are also one or two PADI affiliated scuba diving schools operating in Hulhumalé offering PADI courses, house-reef dives and boat dives. You could even head over to the fishing spots to do some fishing (ask a local for directions to the best spots) and set up a BBQ at one of the many pits located on the north-west corner to prepare your catch for consumption.

If you wish to explore the island by foot, we recommend that you do so in the evenings as it gets really hot (much more than Male’) due to the roads being composed of tar. However, you could take the beach route even in the morning or afternoon as cooling off is just a dip away.

There are many restaurants, cafés and local tea-shops in-store if you wish to grab a bite or a cup of coffee. All in all, Hulhumalé is worth a visit if you get a chance to spend a few days in the capital before you head off to your chosen resort or liveaboard.
The island has a beautiful house reef located on the north-east side which is frequently visited by scuba and snorkelling enthusiasts of Male’. There is also a scuba diving school called “Diver’s lodge” in Villingili which offers PADI certified scuba courses and boat trips for locals, tourists and expatriates alike.

Villingili also has an excellent right-hand surf break, though the water is much shallower than the surf break found in Male’. Local surfers are regularly seen at this point, but it is recommended for experienced surfers only.

Aside from diving and surfing, you could even spend the day exploring the various facets of the island on foot or just plain lounge about on the beach.

Food including traditional items are on offer at various café’s for a much cheaper price than to be found in Male’. Fresh coconuts are also much cheaper and quite abundant throughout the island. Villingili, though being the 5th ward of the highly urbanised and modernised capital has managed to retain substantial elements of the Maldivian past.
Tune up your Dhivehi
(Useful Basic Local Words & Phases)
### COMPASS DIRECTIONS

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### TIME & DATE

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<tr>
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<td>.digest::companion_guide_1827f894-b94a-4b3b-9b22-75743ef9d6c0 Today</td>
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<td>TOMORROW</td>
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<td>NIGHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATURDAY</td>
<td>.digest::companion_guide_1827f894-b94a-4b3b-9b22-75743ef9d6c0 Saturday</td>
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**Environment**

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<tr>
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<td>Reef</td>
<td>A41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>A35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coconut tree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Channel</td>
<td>A37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atoll</td>
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<tr>
<td>Island</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea</td>
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<td>Fish</td>
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**Useful Words**

<table>
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<td>Bank</td>
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<td>ATM</td>
<td>A37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrance</td>
<td>A38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit</td>
<td>A39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
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<td>Shop</td>
<td>A42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>A43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
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**For Divers & Surfers**

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How's the surf?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are the waves big, small?</td>
<td>A46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How's the visibility?</td>
<td>A47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the fish life abundant?</td>
<td>A48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you tell me the name of a good dive site?</td>
<td>A49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long does it take to get to the dive site?</td>
<td>A50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Important numbers

ISLAND AVIATION SERVICES LTD
Tel: +960 3335566 / Fax: +960 3314806
E-mail: sales@island.com.mv
Website: www.island.com.mv

MALDIVES SWIMMING & WATERSPORTS ASSOCIATION
Galolhu Stadium, Male'
Tel: +960 3323429

TRANS MALDIVIAN AIRWAYS
Male' International Airport, P. O. Box 2079
Tel: +960 3348400 / Fax: +960 3348409
E-mail: sales@tma.com.mv
Website: www.transmaldivian.com

MALDIVIAN AIR TAXI (PTE) LTD
GMR Male' International Airport, P.O.Box 2023
Tel: +960 3315201 / Fax: +960 3315203
E-mail: sales@mat.com.mv
Website: www.mataxi.com

MALDIVES ASSOCIATION OF YACHT AGENTS (MAYA)
2nd Floor, Lets Go Tower, Male'
Tel: +960 3347755, Fax: +960 3307755
E-mail: info@mayamaldives.com
Website: www.mayamaldives.com

MALDIVES GAME FISHING ASSOCIATION
PO Box 2034, Fasmeeru Building, 6th Floor, Male'
Tel: +960 3322432, Fax: +960 3324009
Email: contact@mgfa.org.mv
Website: www.mgfa.org.mv

LIVEABOARD ASSOCIATION MALDIVES (LAM)
M. Ibrahimee Abaadhu - 4A, Majeedhee Magu, Male'
Tel: +960 3300640, Fax: +960 3300360
E-mail: admin@liveaboardassociation.mv
Website: www.liveaboardassociation.mv

MALDIVES ASSOCIATION OF TOURISM INDUSTRY (MATI)
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Male', Tel: +960 3326640, Fax: +960 3326641
E-mail: mati@dhivehinet.net.mv
Website: www.mati.com.mv

WATANIYA TELECOM MALDIVES PVT LTD
Fax: +960 9611001
E-mail: sales@wataniya-maldives.com
Website: www.wataniya-maldives.com

INTER-RESORT AIR TRANSFER / TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES
TOURISM RELATED ASSOCIATIONS
<table>
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<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>AUSTRIA</td>
<td>Mr. Ali Noordeen</td>
<td>39 Orchid Magu, P.O.Box 20-15, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3332254, +960 3322678</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andeen@unient.com.mv">andeen@unient.com.mv</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>FRANCE</td>
<td>Mr. Ismail Wafir</td>
<td>H. Madhoo, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3317255, +960 3317254</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@frconsulate.com.mv">info@frconsulate.com.mv</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>RUSSIA</td>
<td>Mr. Ahmed Mahir Didi</td>
<td>39 Orchid Magu, P.O.Box 20-15, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3323080, +960 3322678, +960 3320274</td>
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<tr>
<td>TURKEY</td>
<td>Mr. Ismail Hilmy</td>
<td>2nd Floor, H. Aage, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 332 2719, +960 332-0850, +960 3323463</td>
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<td>ITALY</td>
<td>Ms. Giorgia Marazzi</td>
<td>4th Floor, Opera Bldg, Chaandhanee Magu, Male'</td>
<td>+960 3342071, +960 7786773</td>
<td><a href="mailto:honoconsital@dhivehinet.net.mv">honoconsital@dhivehinet.net.mv</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NEW ZEALAND</td>
<td>Mr. Ahmed Saleem</td>
<td>6th Floor, Fasmeeru Rd, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3322432, +960 3324009</td>
<td><a href="mailto:saleem@crowncompany.com">saleem@crowncompany.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>NORWAY</td>
<td>Mr. Abdullah Saeed</td>
<td>25 Boduthakurufaanu, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3315176, +960 3323523</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cyprea@dhivehinet.net.mv">cyprea@dhivehinet.net.mv</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ICELAND</td>
<td>Mr. Ibrahim Aniku</td>
<td>25 Boduthakurufaanu, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3315175, +960 3323523</td>
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<tr>
<td>DENMARK</td>
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<td>25 Boduthakurufaanu, Male', Maldives</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWEDEN</td>
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<td>25 Boduthakurufaanu, Male', Maldives</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3rd Floor, STO Aifaanu Building, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male', Maldives</td>
<td>+960 3323609, +960 3322380</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dutchcon@klm.com.mv">dutchcon@klm.com.mv</a></td>
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**Useful Numbers**

- Tel: +960 3322254, Fax: +960 3322678
- Email: andeen@unient.com.mv
- Tel: +960 3317255, Fax: +960 3317254
- Email: info@frconsulate.com.mv
- Tel: +960 3334400, Fax: +960 3334446
- Email: secretary@simdi.com
- Tel: +960 3322432, Fax: +960 3324009
- Email:saleem@crowncompany.com
- Tel: +960 3323609, Fax: +960 3322380
- Email: dutchcon@klm.com.mv
TROPICAL PARADISE
1st Floor, H.Hilhugali, Karankaamagu, Male'
Tel: +960 3337588, Fax: +960 3322437
E-mail: info@tropicalparadise.com.mv
Website: www.maldives-traveller.com

EURO DIVERS
E-mail: operate@euro-divers.com
Website: www.euro-divers.com

TOURIST SUBMARINE MALDIVES
H. Abadhahfehi Magu, 20-05, Male'
Tel: +960 3333939, Fax: +960 3333838
E-mail: tsub@dhivehinet.net.mv
Website: www.submarinesmaldives.com.mv

MALDIVES TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MTDC)
4th Floor, H. Aage, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male'
Tel: +960 3347766, Fax: +960 3347733
E-mail: info@mtdc.com.mv
Website: www.mtdc.com.mv

GMR MALE’ INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PVT LTD
International Airport, Hulhule, Admin 1st Fl
Tel: +960 3337181
E-mail: prasad.gopalan@gmrgroup.mv
Website: www.male.aero

SERENA SPA PVT LTD
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Tel: +960 3313866, Fax: +960 3331083
E-mail: admin@serenaspa.com
Website: www.serenaspa.com

MEGA GLOBAL AIR SERVICES (MALDIVES) PVT LTD
5th Floor, Sakeena, Anzil, 20127, edhuziyaarai, Male'
Tel: +9603006672, Fax:+9603006671
Email: ali.faiz@megair.net
Website: www.mgcharter.com

TOURISM RELATED PUBLISHERS IN THE MALDIVES
OTHER TOURISM RELATED COMPANIES IN THE MALDIVES

Useful Numbers
ISLAND PEARL HOLIDAYS
6th Floor, Champa Bldg - 4, Orchid Magu, Male’
Tel: +960 3325994, Fax: +960 3317840
E-mail: travel@islandpearl.com.mv
Website: www.islandpearl.com.mv

MALDIVIANA GROUP PVT LTD
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Tel: +960 3340555   Fax: +960 3340566
E-mail: ibrahim@maldiviana.com.mv
Website: www.maldiviana.com

JOURNEY MALDIVES HOLIDAYS
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Tel: +960 3346717, Fax:+960 3345717
E-mail: abdulla@journeymaldives.com
Website: www.journeymaldives.com

PARADISE HOLIDAYS PTE LTD
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Tel: +960 3312090, Fax: +960 3312087
E-mail: info@parahold.com
Website: www.parahold.com

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1st Floor, Lets Go Tower, M. Boaddu Male’ 20-025
Tel: +960 3347755, Fax: +960 3345717
E-mail: info@letsgomaldives.com
Website: www.letsgomaldives.com

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Tel: +960 3346004, Fax: +960 3332751
E-mail: info@reollo.com
Website: www.reollo.travel

SANDY ISLAND TRAVEL & TOURS
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MERIDIS MALDIVES PVT LTD
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Website: www.leisure.com.mv

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1st Floor, G. Vaaneege, Bodu Rasgefaanu Magu, Male’
Tel: +960 3356794, Fax: +960 3356796
E-mail: ahmed.waheed@loonahotels.com
Website: www.loonahotels.com

MALDIVE TOURS PVT LTD
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E-mail: sales@maldivestours.mv
Website: www.maldivestours.mv

RESORT LIFE MALDIVES PVT LTD
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Tel: +960 3345767, Fax: +960 3345766
E-mail: direct@dhivehinet.net.mv
Website: www.maldivesresortlife.com

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7th Floor, H. Aagadhage, Boduthakurufaanu I  agu, I ale'
Tel: +960 3002006, Fax: +960 3002005
E-mail: info@scaevolatravel.com
Website: www.scaevolatravel.com
ALIM&IYAR VT LTD
1 a.3 angufadige lthurubai, 1 ale'
Tel:+960 3002550
E-mail: sales@amphibiya.com.mv
Website: www.amphibiya.com.mv

AMPHIBIYA PVT LTD
Ma. Bangufadige Uthurubai, Male'
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E-mail: sales@amphibiya.com.mv
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VILUXUR PVT LTD
6th Floor, H. Thuniya Bldg, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male'
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E-TWO TRAVEL
Rohracketweg A7, 7352g Schwabisch Gmund
Tel: +49 747 4870 9800, Fax: +49 47 4654 3490
E-mail: info@e-two.de
Website: www.malediveninseen.de

MY TOUR TRAVEL
Unit 503 88 Caoxi Road North Shanghai, China
Tel: +86 215 489 2209
Website: www.my-tour.com.cn

GRANDEZZA
2nd Floor, Ocean Adventures, Bavana, Male'
Tel:+960 3325567, Fax:+960 3325567
E-mail: md.oceanadventure@gmail.com

YASAWA PRINCESS
4th Floor, 1. Thuniya ldg.8 oduthakurufranu 1 agu, 1 ale'
Tel: +960 3300797
E-mail: admin@viluxurholidays.com

BEIJING SUNSHINE HOLIDAY
Beijing, China
Tel: +86 106 518 9966, Fax: +86 106 518 8950
E-mail: reservations@sunshineholiday.net

MERRY HOLIDAYS / SHANGHAI
Rm.1404, 0525 Jianguo (E) Rd, Shanghai, 200025; 1 3 1
China
Tel: +86 21 6 387 4710
E-mail:merryholiday525@yahoo.com.cn
Website: www.merryholiday.com.cn

PARADISE HOLIDAYS & TOURS / HONGKONG
RM 701 Empress I laza, 17-19 Chatham Road South, TST
Kowloon, Hong Kong, Tel: +85 22 521 3633
E-mail: terence@paradiseholidayhk.com
Website: www.paradiseholidayhk.com

L’ALBATROS INTERNATIONAL
H. Finimaage Aage, Bodufungandu Magu, Male'
Tel: +960 3321837, Fax: +960 3321837
E-mail: info@albatrostopboat.com
Website: www.albatrostopboat.com

YASAWA PRINCESS
4th Floor, 1. Thuniya ldg, Chaandhanee agu, 1 ale'
Tel: +960 3308786, Fax: +960 3300609
E-mail: sales@yasawaprincess.com.mv
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