



**MALDIVES
MADE EASY**
The Compact Guide
for Travel Agents



An Introduction



Liyelaa jehun — traditional lacquer art

The Maldives, a picture-perfect destination where every atoll offers crystal clear turquoise waters and powdery white beaches, is more than just a tropical paradise. Beneath the waves and beyond the shores lie an extraordinary underwater world and untold cultures awaiting to be discovered. Maldives' underwater realm offers the chance to encounter 2,000 coral species and a vibrant array of more than 2,000 fish species, creating a breathtaking kaleidoscope of marine life. From majestic manta rays, gentle whale sharks, to colourful tropical fish, every plunge into the pristine waters promises an unforgettable adventure. Many resorts provide opportunities for guests to explore this marine wonderland responsibly, offering guided snorkelling and diving experiences, as well as participation in environmental conservation projects.

Meanwhile, the Maldives' rich heritage and history reveal untold stories for travellers seeking more than just sun and sand. Ancient coral stone mosques stand as enduring symbols of the nation's deep Islamic roots, while traditional arts, crafts, dance, and music offer glimpses into a unique cultural tapestry woven from African, Arab, and South Asian influences. Exploring these cultural treasures adds a fascinating layer of intrigue, showcasing the Maldives' vibrant identity beyond its idyllic shores. For those seeking ultimate luxury, the Maldives' overwater villas offer an unparalleled retreat, complete with direct sea access, private pools, and breathtaking views. These accommodations promise unforgettable sunsets and a truly magical stay. When it comes to relaxation, Maldivian spa treatments are infused with a unique mix of regional and local essences, providing a soothing escape rooted in the islands' natural beauty. The dining experience is equally remarkable, blending exquisite local and international flavours into a culinary journey that delights every palate.

With such extraordinary offerings, it's no wonder the Maldives tops many travellers' bucket lists. Often described as a "once-in-a-lifetime experience," a trip to this island paradise offers memories that last forever, giving you the perfect opportunity to create a holiday that exceeds your clients' highest expectations. This is where our sales guide comes in; we'll help you craft memorable itineraries, from selecting the ideal resort to curating unique excursions and activities. For those looking for a deeper cultural experience, we can also arrange stays on local islands, offering an authentic glimpse of the Maldives beyond the luxury resorts.

Dhivehi Raajjeveri Hahdhuvaa! (Explore the Maldives with us!)

Important Basics for Travelling in the Maldives



Dress Like a Local

Staying on a local island provides an authentic glimpse into Maldivian life. Here, modest attire is essential — women must cover their shoulders and legs, while men can wear shorts. On resort islands, however, there is more flexibility, and swimwear is perfectly acceptable.



Respect Religious Traditions

Though often not talked about, the Maldives is a Muslim country, and it's important to respect certain customs. Avoid noisy activities during prayer times, and if travelling during Ramadan, be mindful that many restaurants on inhabited islands may be closed during the day. Refrain from eating, drinking, or smoking in public at this time. These restrictions don't apply in resort areas, where services operate as usual.



Protecting the Paradise

With tourism at the heart of the Maldivian economy, protecting its natural beauty is vital. Encourage your guests to minimise the use of single-use plastics — even many resorts have banned them entirely. When snorkelling or diving, advise your guests to maintain a respectful distance from marine life, including turtles and dolphins, and avoid touching or stepping on coral reefs. Collecting coral, shells, or sand as souvenirs is strictly prohibited.



Show Appreciation in Dhivehi (The Maldivian Language)

Although resort staff hail from diverse countries, Maldivian law mandates that at least 55% of employees must be local. A simple thank you in their language — "Shukuriyaa" — is a meaningful gesture that shows your respect for Maldivian culture. The word is pronounced exactly as it is written.



No-Go Items

Due to religious regulations, importing alcohol, drugs, pork, religious materials for distribution, and dogs into the Maldives is strictly prohibited. While alcohol is available at all resort islands and pork at most, they are not allowed on inhabited islands, which is home to the local Maldivian community. This distinction exists because inhabited islands are residential areas for locals, the majority of whom practice Islam, whereas resorts operate on the one-island, one-resort model, housing only staff working on the premises. This approach ensures that local customs and traditions are respected.



FAQs: Answering the Most Important Questions to Travel Smart



Patina Maldives

Are there different types of resorts for every traveller?

Definitely! With a plethora of resorts across the Maldives — many of which may be open every month — it's essential to understand the unique offerings each category provides. We've put together a handy guide to help you navigate the most common resort types and their key features, ensuring you can expertly advise your clients.

Luxury Resorts: For the most discerning travellers, these type of resorts offer an indulgent experience with opulent overwater villas, private pools, exclusive beaches, and gourmet dining that fulfil every desire.

Family-Friendly Resorts: These resorts feature engaging kids' clubs, spacious family suites, a variety of activities, and babysitting services to ensure both parents and children have a memorable vacation.

Environment-Friendly Resorts: Recognising the importance of nature, many Maldivian resorts prioritise sustainability with eco-friendly accommodations, conservation programs, and activities that protect the stunning environment.

Affordable Resorts: Travellers on a budget can still enjoy the beauty of the Maldives with these resorts, which offer gorgeous beaches and comfortable accommodations without breaking the bank.



Ellaidhoo Maldives By Cinnamon organic farm



Sun Siyam Olhuveli — an affordable resort

How expensive is a stay in the Maldives?

Many guests worry about the potential for sky-high prices when it comes to the Maldives. As with any destination, the actual costs depend on the category of resort selected. Luxury resorts can range from €2,000 to €3,000 per night, while mid-range options typically fall between €400 and €700. For those on a tighter budget, affordable accommodations often start around €250 per night, providing access to the stunning beauty of the Maldives while keeping it budget-friendly.



FAQs: Answering the Most Important Questions to Travel Smart



Local neighbourhood in the Maldives

Is a stay on a local island worthwhile?

The Maldives are known for their “one island, one resort” concept, where each island typically hosts only a single hotel, and the island is primarily home to resort guests and employees only. However, for travellers seeking an authentic experience, staying on a local island offers a fantastic opportunity to immerse themselves in Maldivian culture and daily life. We encourage your adventure-seeking explorers to consider spending a few nights on a local island inhabited by locals for a deeper connection to the community. If you'd like to learn more or get recommendations, feel free to reach out to us — we're here to help!



School of manta rays in Hanifaru Bay

Speedboat or seaplane – what's the best way for my travellers to get around?

For those heading to the more accessible atolls near Malé International Airport, such as North and South Malé Atoll, a quick speedboat transfer is the way to go. While seaplanes may come at a premium, the breathtaking aerial views and unique experience make them a popular option among travellers.

For travellers venturing to the more remote atolls like Ari, Raa, or Baa — known for their stunning diving spots and vibrant underwater life — domestic flights or seaplanes are the ideal choice. However, domestic flights reach farther atolls and regional airports where seaplanes typically can't operate.

It's important to note that both speed boats and seaplanes can experience a bit of turbulence due to weather conditions. Encourage your guests to take precautions against potential travel sickness to ensure a smoother journey.

The Real Maldives: Expert Tips from Our Team

Beyond the Beaches

Our director, Howard, who has spent many years living on the islands and has experienced each atoll's distinctive offerings, provides valuable insights into the rich cultural fabric of the Maldives. In Malé Atoll (Kaafu Atoll), he highly recommends visiting the **Malé Friday Mosque**. "Built in 1658, this impressive mosque is not just a religious site; it's an architectural masterpiece. Its simple yet elegant design, complemented by ornate coral carvings, stands as a stunning testament to our history." Another must-see is the **Hukuru Miskiiy**, the old mosque of Malé. "Adorned with intricate decorations made from ancient coral blocks and remarkable wood carvings, this UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognised since 2008, offers profound insights into the Maldives' religious and cultural history."



Coral block carvings on Old Friday Mosque

Travelling to Laamu Atoll, Howard suggests exploring the ancient Buddhist temple of **Laamu Gan Haiytheli**, where remnants lie beneath a stone pyramid. This site, dating back around 850 years, provides a fascinating glimpse into the Maldives' Buddhist past and is a treasure for history enthusiasts.



A copper plate with inscriptions in Isdhoo-Dhan'bidhoo

To further appreciate the Islamic era of the Maldives, Howard recommends the islands of **Isdhoo-Dhan'bidhoo**, where 900-year-old copper plates inscribed with historical narratives await discovery. **Utheemu Island** in the Haa Alifu and Haa Dhaalu Atolls is significant as the birthplace of Sultan Mohamed Thakurufaanu, a national hero. "Encourage your explorers to immerse in the Maldives' hidden history at the well-preserved residence of the sultan, now a museum showcasing his life and resistance against Portuguese rule." In **Addu City**, located in the southern atoll of the same name, visitors can enjoy a unique blend of history and nature. Once an important base for the British Navy during World War II, the city boasts numerous historical sites, including **Equator Village**, a popular hotel that reflects the region's history.

On **Meedhoo Island**, which has been inhabited for over 3,000 years, lies the oldest cemetery in the Maldives, **Koaganuu**. "This historic site showcases the extraordinary craftsmanship of the island's early inhabitants and is a significant part of the cultural heritage."

Uncharted Waters

The Maldives also boasts remarkable natural attractions beyond its stunning shores and lagoons. Our Sales Manager for FIT, Carmen, is well-acquainted with these highlights. In Laamu Atoll, the mysterious **mangrove pool Paree Fengan'du** on Laamu Gan is a must-visit. "Inspire your thrill-seekers to explore this natural wonder. Despite numerous attempts by divers, its depths remain a mystery, surrounded by dense roots and dark waters. The cold, salty layers contribute to its mystique." For cycling enthusiasts, the **18.5 km Laamu Link Road** on Fashion Island offers breathtaking views of the surrounding islands.



Mangrove pool in Paree Fengan'du

It's worth noting that many nature enthusiasts are drawn to the Maldives for its vibrant marine paradise, and Carmen is also an expert on the best diving spots. **Maaya Thila** in North Ari Atoll is renowned for its lively marine life, transforming into a playground for the elusive predators at night. "Here, white-tipped reef sharks, barracudas, and giant trevallies thrive in their natural habitat — an absolute must for divers." The **UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Hanifaru Bay** in Baa Atoll is the ideal location to witness the majestic manta rays. "From May to November, during the plankton bloom, your guests can encounter hundreds of manta rays dancing in perfect unison and even the occasional whale shark — truly a majestic and unforgettable experience!" **Fotteyo Kandu** in Vaavu Atoll is known for its dramatic currents and the vibrant marine life they support. "Diving here may pose a challenge but it's well worth it. Your guests will encounter schools of sharks and rays, while the colourful soft corals make every dive a visual delight." For experienced divers, **Kuredu Express** in Lhaviyani Atoll presents a thrilling adventure. Those who brave the strong currents may find themselves surrounded by large predatory fish like grey reef sharks and eagle rays. "The unique underwater landscape and challenging currents transform diving here into a true adventure!" Lastly, for those hoping to see manta rays up close, **Manta Point** in North Malé Atoll is the place to be. "With a bit of luck, your travellers can observe an intriguing symbiotic relationship between creatures called 'commensalism', exemplified by manta rays being cleaned by smaller cleaner wrasse." By sharing these insights, you can help your guests discover the diverse wonders of the Maldives, ensuring a trip that goes beyond relaxation to create unforgettable memories.



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We provide our clients with one of the highest insurance coverage rates in the industry. And our progressive approach ensures that we use the latest technologies to help streamline processes, facilitating faster turnaround times for our clients.

We have offices in 14 countries, including the Maldives, Thailand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Laos, Vietnam, China, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bhutan, and Japan. With over 65 years in the industry, DTH Travel is proud to have been repeatedly recognised as Asia's Leading Destination Management Company by the World Travel Awards for multiple years.

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Interested in more expert advice and learning about our services in the Maldives?
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