

THE MALDIVES



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Experience The Maldives



Fast facts

Country name: Maldives

Population: 448,605

Currency: Maldivian Rufiya , however most of resorts are Cashless preferring credit card Or USD/Euro

Time zone: 5 hours ahead of GMT

Electricity: Current is 230vPlug is 3 point rectangle-pin adaptor or a 3 point round pin adaptor

Language: Dhivehi, but English is widely spoken

Visas: A 30 day visa is issued on arrival (Conditions apply)

The Maldives are, quite simply, perfect. Absolute paradise created entirely by nature, they make up a chain of almost 1200 individual coral islands peppering the Indian Ocean. Although only about 200 islands are inhabited, they're divided into ring shaped atolls flushed with incredible places to stay. Quite remarkably, every resort sits on its own island, so privacy is everything. Just imagine sitting on an almost desolate stretch of champagne sand; an irresistibly blue sea lapping at your feet. It's the very definition of utopia. You could compare the Maldives to a collection of Victoria Secret models because not one is considered blemished. From the beaches, arguably the best in the world, to an underwater world of spectacular marine beauty, we're told the Maldives are the ultimate tropical holiday, and the truth is, they are. From over-water bungalows scattered across azure waters, vibrant reefs and an average sea temperature of 27 ° C, they live up to every expectation. And while man made the resorts which bring all of these splendors together, the real magic is the Maldives' back-to-nature tranquility. Warm waters are perpetually inviting and the sea life is such a kaleidoscope of color, divers venture from across the world for a dalliance beneath the waves.

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Located in the Indian Ocean, the Republic of the Maldives has a geography and topography that is not matched to the same extent anywhere else in the world. Covering an area that is similar to Portugal, but with land about the size of Singapore, it means that water makes up 99% of the country. This archipelago area is blessed with water that shimmers in the almost year round sunshine it is dealt. The warmth of the climate transpires to the Maldivians who are friendly and hospitable to the large number of visitors that turn up year after year for luxurious holidays in the paradise they call home



FEW TIPS FOR YOUR HOLIDAY

EVERYONE'S WELCOME

Traditionally, the Maldives were the go - to for honeymooners, but with all there is to do, from parasailing and snorkelling, to hammerhead diving, island visits and boat trips, you can really make the Maldives your own. With so many resorts on their own atoll, the water is calm, warm and the sandbars are shallow - perfect for kids. Most resorts also have their own "house reef" allowing for shallower, inner reef snorkelling. While Dolphins, of which the Maldives have four different types ,are present year - round. If you 're a couple, there's no better way to spend a balmy evening than outdoors at the flicks; drink to - hand, a classic playing on the big screen and the sea gently lapping in the distance. Various resorts host outdoor cinema experiences. complete with beanbags, cocktails, and a dreamy ocean backdrop



WEATHER WATCH

Albeit more expensive, high season falls between December and February, with the best weather commonly experienced in November and through to April. From May the weather gets a little less predictable and the rain comes, but downpours rarely last long and the temperature remains warm. If you'd like to add a little surfing to your Maldivian adventure, you can catch the surf season (and the waves) between March and October

DIVE AND SNORKEL

With visibility smashing the 30 - metre benchmark, dip your head beneath the water and you'll discover one of the most dazzling ecosystems on earth. Diving and snorkelling at protected marines such as Banana Reef offers a riot of color and exceptional clarity, whereas experienced divers will love the wreck of the Maldivian Victory. The ship (which sank in 1981), sits 35 meters deep and rewards visitors with rich sealife. Of course, if you choose to stay in an overwater bungalow, sublime coral exists at the end of your bed

OVERWATER BUNGALOWS

This is what you came for, right? The quintessential overwater bungalow, with turquoise water and stilts firmly bedded into golden seabed. Yes, paradise exists - from the top of private steps leading into crystalline water and hammocks lazily swinging in the breeze. Luxury bungalows feature everything from sunken glass bottom bathtubs to private infinity - edge swimming pools, not forgetting the 24 hour butlers, interior glass floors and outdoor rainforest showers.



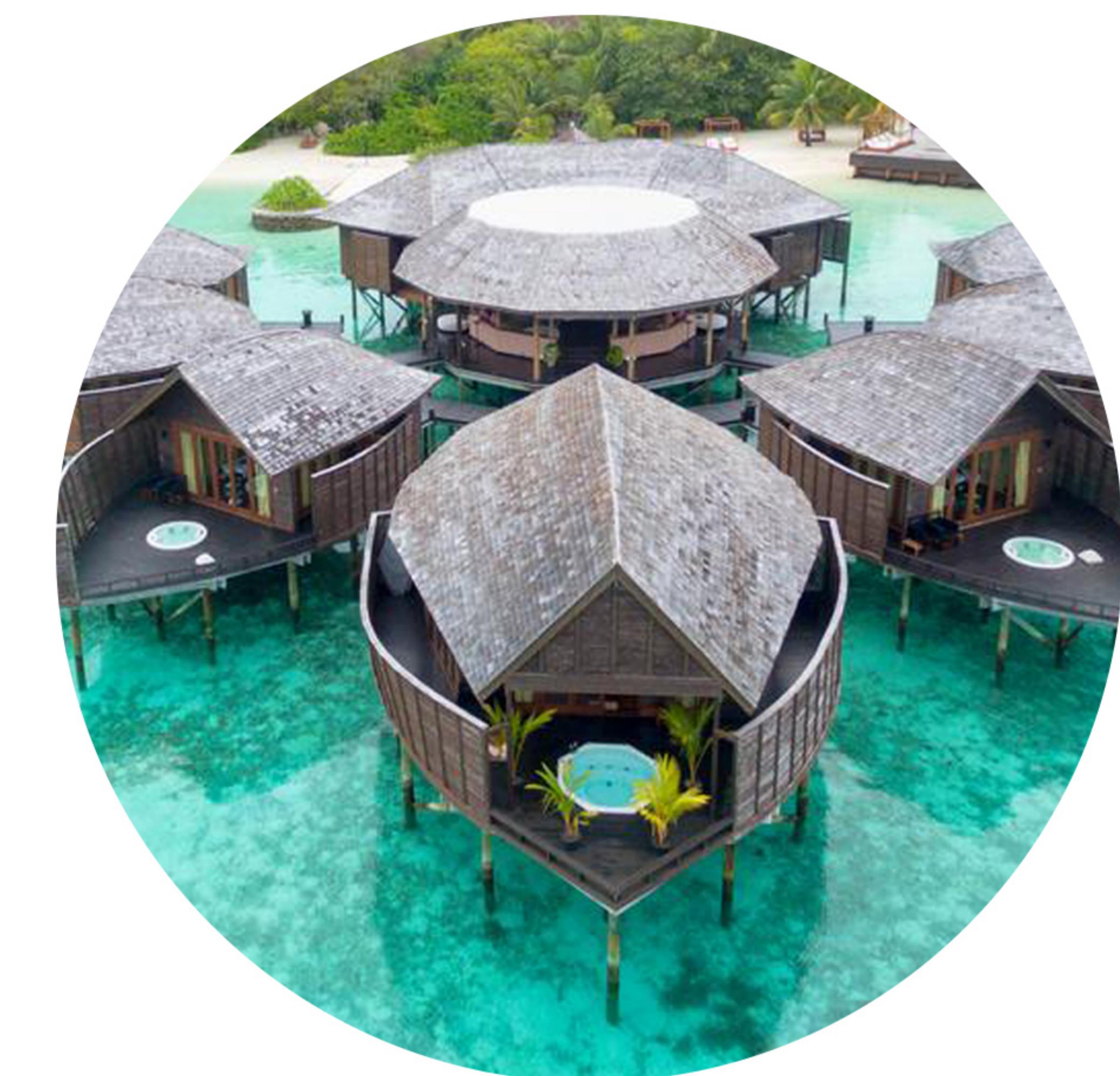
LOCAL ISLAND EXPLORATION


Male Island is the compact, island capital of the Maldives. Six square kilometres of urban - meets - Utopian chaos; imagine a nugget of new york sitting on its own tropical island. High rises and apartment blocks are crammed into every inch, until they meet brilliant blue sea. The island is a curious, cosmopolitan must - see and you can meander around it in just a few hours, visiting the fish market, fruit vendors and brightly colored buildings. Being a Muslim country, mosques are commonplace, with Male's golden - domed mosque (made entirely of coral) a highlight. Muslim rules apply, although they are not a requirement at any of the resorts. However, if you book a day trip to a local island, there won't be any alcohol available, public displays of affection are illegal, and women aren't advised to wear togs or revealing clothing.



GETTING AROUND

In the Maldives every resort is located on its own island. In fact, only about 200 islands are inhabited and 87 of these are exclusively resorts. Transfers are by domestic aircraft, by speedboat or seaplane, and if you're staying at a resort, all your transfers will be pre-arranged. The luggage allowance for seaplanes and domestic flights is usually 20kg, plus 5kg hand luggage per person, so don't overpack! If you're visiting neighboring islands, you'll need to catch a mixture of boats, ferries, planes and sea planes. The latter take off from the water and are like taxis, with no set schedules, but a regularity which responds to public demand. It's wise to rearrange any additional transportation with your agent before departure.



A photograph of a couple walking away from the camera on a light-colored wooden pier. They are holding hands; the man is wearing a blue t-shirt and grey shorts, and the woman is wearing a green and brown patterned dress. The pier leads to several traditional-style overwater bungalows with thatched roofs and white walls, built on stilts in clear turquoise water. The sky is a bright, pale blue.

*'Go in search of sunshine, and you'll
also find a new lease of life.'*

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