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New 'unique island' hotel

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A NEW ultra-luxury hotel has recently opened in the Maldives.

Jumeirah Dhevanafushi Maldives, designed by Blink Design Group (BLINK), has lifted intelligent and environmentally-aware luxury to a new level.

Offering guests the choice of ocean over-water villas and beachfront villas in two very different locations, the design challenge was creating two distinct faces of paradise while retaining a cohesive theme, a private island spirit and touches of glamour.

Guests would expect the requisite level of luxury, yet it was vital that environmental sensitivities and sustainable practices prevailed. And the nearest proper island offering any semblance of logistical support was over 10km away.

Jumeirah Dhevanafushi, which means "unique island" in Sanskrit, is located on the Gaafu Alifu atoll in the Maldives, 400 km south of the capital city of Malé. It's another short hop by light aircraft then a 15-minute luxury speedboat ride to arrive at the resort that takes the tropical island escape to an intriguing new place.

BLINK founder and creative director Clint Nagata said: "From the moment you arrive by a luxurious private speed boat and are greeted at the 4.5m high arrival pavilion wrapped in carved lace-like screens, guests are given a hint of what lies ahead.

"We approached this design with the idea of one brand, two resorts' with absolute privacy for guests paramount. And when the resort's name means 'unique', well, that speaks for itself.

"Nestled within the lush tropical foliage of the atoll, the 206sqm and 306sqm beach and island villas have been fitted out in warm natural earth tones, with honey-coloured timber flooring, space to really spread your wings, and soaring ceiling heights. We have also been inspired by traditional Maldivian architectural elements, touches the knowledgeable traveller will appreciate," Mr Nagata said.

Strung out like pearls floating on a turquoise sea, the ocean villas - aptly named The Ocean Pearls - perch above pristine waters and reef-wreathed sandbars and make the definitive statement in escapism. Over half a kilometre offshore, these 270sqm and 340sqm villas are conceived to take every advantage of one of the world's most idyllic settings.

"When you have a natural environment this breathtaking luxury isn't about opulence and ostentation. True luxury at this level is about sensitivity to the landscape, or in this case, the seascape, and seamlessly integrating guests into another world.

"We've gone for subtle touches, like three-metre-wide beds you can get lost in, an outdoor soaking tub positioned near the vanishing edge pool to play on the idea of horizons, and a glass shower room with floor to ceiling glass that allows endless views of the sky as it melts into the sea."

In contrast to the villas, the main dining room, bar, and library are what Mr Nagata describes as "a modern statement in simple luxury" with wood columns, terrazzo floors, and hand laid bamboo ceiling strips help to create warmth while complimenting the natural beauty of the island.

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Jumeriah Dhevanafushi Maldives.

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