

# The islandchief

your trusted independent travel news

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Email : [news@islandchief.com](mailto:news@islandchief.com) | Hotline : +960 7980088



## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with **TERRY STAMATAKOS**

GENERAL MANAGER, GULF CRAFT MALDIVES

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Personality of the Month

### **DEVEEKAA NIJHAWAN**

Cluster Director - Public Relations & Communications  
Anantara Dhigu, Anantara Veli, Naladhu Private Island  
Maldives & Niyama Private Islands Maldives

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### 10 INCREDIBLE BATHS IN THE MALDIVES THAT HARDLY SEEM REAL

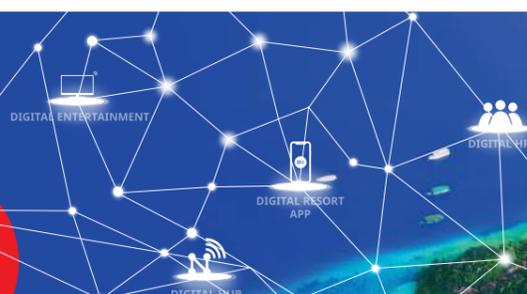
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**REDISCOVER**  
Maldives ...the sunny side of life

## Digital Resorts

Innovation drives  
experiences



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Richard Mendonca

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## Consultant

Ahmed Ijaz

## Official Photographer

Mohamed Azmeel

## Cover Photography

ONE Online

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Ahmed Fazeel

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Dear Readers,

*It's an exciting month for the Maldives as the country breaths new life into its world-class tourism industry. This revival comes hand-in-hand with the new normal that the entire globe has had to embrace. Taking in this new normal with our brand-new fashion accessories – the masks – we really have to applaud ourselves as a nation for understanding the changes that we needed to make, and following through with them. Our acceptance of what needed to be done to curb the outbreak as much as possible is what led to our numbers being so much lower than what had been predicted.*

*During an official address to the nation on June 23, H. E. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih announced the government's decision to open up the Maldivian borders for tourists on July 15, 2020. Many of the airlines, our airports, and most of our private island resorts are ready with completely enhanced SOPs put in place throughout the country's tourism industry. To commence the reopening of borders for all nationalities in Maldives, Maldives Marketing & Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) launched a new campaign aimed to strengthen the country's market presence to welcome back tourists once again. All marketing activities will be carried out under one campaign tagline; "Rediscover Maldives...the sunny side of life" for the rest of 2020.*

*On this positive note, this month, we had a very enlightening conversation with the General Manager of Gulf Craft Maldives, Terry Stamatakos about the core principles and the continuous success behind the world-renowned company, as he has been working directly with the stakeholders of the Maldives and the UAE Gulf Craft Team since 2013 (p. 12).*

*On page 8, our Personality of the Month Deveekaa Nijhawan is the Cluster Director - Public Relations & Communications of Anantara Dhigu, Anantara Velu, Naladhu Private Island Maldives & Niyama Private Islands Maldives. She let us in on how she oversees the PR work of all four prestigious resorts in the Maldives.*

*One last thing, do you happen to have a weakness for luxuriating in bathtubs and taking relaxation to another level? If you do, then we have the perfect list for you. Head over to page 18 and check out our ultimate list of 'Ten Incredible Baths in the Maldives That Hardly Seem Real!'*

*As we emerge from the unforgettable hibernation of 2020, we know that it's a new day for our new ways. Now unplug yourself from those Zoom meetings and start planning. A trip to somewhere you wake up to the sounds of the gentle waves lapping against the sandy shores. Somewhere you can feel the salty breeze blowing across the beach. Somewhere you step outside your villa and take in the spectacular views of the ocean. Somewhere that will revive and recharge you in moving forward. Are you ready to kickstart your soul with an adventure on the Sunny Side of Life?*

*Till the next edition, God bless.*

*The islandchief Team*

*Maldives, The Sun Will Shine Again*

## DISTRIBUTION



120+ RESORTS



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60+ LIVEBOARDS



20+ AIRLINES



100+ COMPANY  
EXECUTIVES



5 UNITED NATIONS  
AGENCIES

# Travel Safely to Maldives With Your Preferred Airline

First South Asian Country to reopen the borders amid COVID-19

To ensure travelers can plan their travel with peace of mind, Airlines have extended its booking policies to offer more choice to their passengers. Travelers can fly safely to Maldives with their preferred airline from July 15, 2020 onwards. As per the official Airport operations schedule of MACL Summer 2020; below are the Airlines commencing to Maldives:



**EMIRATES**  
Commencing from:  
16th July 2020

**Routes:**  
DXB-MLE-DXB



**ETIHAD AIRWAYS**  
Commencing from:  
16th July 2020

**Routes:**  
AUH-MLE-AUH



**QATAR AIRWAYS**  
Commencing from:  
15th July 2020

**Routes:**  
DOH-MLE-DOH



**SRILANKAN AIRLINES**  
Commencing from:  
1st August 2020

**Routes:**  
CMB-MLE-CMB



**SINGAPORE AIRLINES**  
Commencing from:  
1st August 2020

**Routes:**  
SIN-MLE-SIN



**TURKISH AIRLINES**  
Commencing from:  
1st October 2020

**Routes:**  
IST-MLE-CMB



**GULF AIR**  
Commencing from:  
2nd August 2020

**Routes:**  
BAH-MLE-CMB



**SILK AIR**  
Commencing from:  
1st August 2020

**Routes:**  
SIN-MLE-SIN



**INDIGO**  
Commencing from:  
10th August 2020

**Routes:**  
BOM-MLE-BOM  
COK-MLE-COK



**HONG KONG AIRLINES**  
Commencing from:  
1st August 2020

**Routes:**  
HKG-MLE-HKG



**EDELWEISS AIR**  
Commencing from:  
24th September 2020

**Routes:**  
ZRH-MLE-ZRH

## CREDIT SCHEME AVAILABLE

FOR



**RESORTS**



**GUEST HOUSES**



**SAFARI VESSEL OPERATORS**

**UP TO  
3 MONTHS**



## ACROSS THE SKIES

# Restarting Maldives Tourism

As part of the planned activities outlined by the government of the Maldives to further ease the existing precautionary measures against the spread of COVID-19 and accelerate the country's economic recovery, H.E. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih officially announced that all international airports in the Maldives will be opened for international travel and Maldives Tourism will restart from July 15, 2020. Official Air Transport Circular of Maldives Civil Aviation Authority was circulated to all industry stakeholders on June 27, 2020, focusing the below guideline published by the Ministry of Tourism and MPRC.



## Booking Accommodation



- A confirmed booking in a tourist establishment registered with the Ministry of Tourism, prior to travelling to the Maldives is mandatory.
- Tourist Resorts, Liveaboard Vessels and Hotels located on uninhabited islands are open for bookings starting from July 15, 2020.
- Guest Houses and Hotels located on inhabited islands will be open for bookings starting from August 1, 2020. However, Guesthouses and Hotels located on inhabitant islands will be allowed to accommodate transiting passengers waiting for domestic transfers under special permits. Transit arrangements can be made through the primary facility where the stay is booked.
- Tourists are advised to directly check offers and operational status with the preferred tourist establishments on their websites and mobile apps.
- Tourists who are visiting the Maldives on Phase 1 of opening shall book their entire stay on registered establishments. Stays at multiple resorts and hotels are not permitted during this period. However, exemptions will be made for transit arrangements.



## On Arrivals

### FOR TOURISTS

- Tourists travelling to the Maldives will be provided a free 30-day tourist visa on arrival.
- All arrival passengers should complete their online Health Declaration Forms before arrival (but not exceed 24 hours before arrival time).
- Tourists will not be subject to any quarantine measures upon arrival to the Maldives.
- Tourists will not be required to submit any medical test results for entry to the Maldives. However, travellers presenting with symptoms of COVID-19 upon arrival will be subjected to a PCR test at the traveller's cost. Additionally, local health authorities may conduct random testing, at no cost to travellers.

### FOR AIRLINES

The following announcement should be made inflight:

"The following are health measures requested by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) of Maldives.

If you have developed any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Breathing difficulty

Please stay in your seat and inform the cabin crew. You are advised to wear the face mask at all times during the flights.

If you develop any of these symptoms upon arrival, please inform the Immigration desk or the Border Health desk.

If you develop any of these symptoms after arriving in Maldives: Please call the COVID-19

HOTLINE: 1676 and inform them of your symptoms."

Airlines must ensure that the following measures are taken onboard an aircraft by passengers during a flight into Maldives:

- that every passenger on board wears a mask unless he or she:
  - is less than 6 years old,
  - is having a medical reason for not wearing facemasks,
  - is eating, drinking or taking oral medication,
  - is removing the mask under a crew member's direction,
- passengers must be advised to replace face masks when it becomes wet or soiled.

All arrival passengers should report to the immigration counter if they have fever, runny nose, cough or breathing difficulties, or report directly to the International Border Health counter.



## On Departures

### FOR TOURISTS

Testing services are available in Maldives for Tourists who require COVID-19 test results to return to their countries of origin or another destination.

### FOR AIRLINES

- It is the responsibility of the passenger and crew to fulfil the health requirements for the country of departure.
- Passenger must carry the required test results with them when arriving at the departure check-in counter.
- All departure passengers and crew must report to the COVID-19 hotline: 1676, if they are

having any of the following symptoms, within 24hrs of their departure time;

- Fever, sore throat, runny nose, cough, or breathing difficulties.
- They must verify with the COVID-19 hotline if they need to cancel their current booking.
- All departure passengers / crew must complete the online Health Declaration form for departure. The Health Declaration form for departure must be filled before the time of departure but not exceed 24hrs before the time of departure.



The purpose of the Circular was to officially advise and inform the airlines, aircraft operators operating to and from Maldives and the relevant airport authorities to adhere the health measures taken by the Government of the Maldives relating to the entry of passengers and crew effective from 15th July 2020 and the tourists to planned their trip to the Beautiful Sunny Side of Maldives. Regular official updates on travel to the Maldives are provided on the websites of the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Maldives.

# Iti Maafushivaru Opened After Year-Long Renovation with Enhanced Health & Safety Protocols



Luxury Maldivian resort Iti Maafushivaru Maldives opened their shores on July 1, 2020 after a year-long renovation.

Having joined DER Touristik Hotels & Resorts' Iti brand, the freshly refurbished Maafushivaru is the first long-haul Iti hotel to launch in 16 years and will do so across Germany, Switzerland, Austria and the UK. Maafushivaru will be exclusive to DER Touristik's tour operator brands: DERTOUR, Meiers Weltreisen, ITS Reisen, JAHN Reisen, Kuoni UK and Switzerland as well as Manta Reisen in Switzerland.

The continued health and safety of guests, employees and business partners are top priority for the resort's management, and has opened with enhanced health and safety guidelines to combat the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. These enhanced guidelines have been implemented strictly throughout the resort, adding to the resort's current extensive cleaning protocols. Iti Maafushivaru will be following a substantial guide of protocols set by the Iti brand and government recommendations to ensure compliance with the Maldives Safe Tourism regulations.

### Highlights of the newly implemented protocols include:

- Introduction of a healthcare management team within the resort and thorough hygiene protocols and checks of the resort premises including a routine disinfection process of all resort premises and use of PPE.
- Social distancing protocols to be encouraged by all team members and guests.
- Implementation of contactless techniques throughout the resort operation including check ins and check outs.
- Hand sanitizer deployers to be placed all around the resort and face masks to be available for guests and team members.
- New and enhanced food and beverage production and service standards.
- Educational seminars for all team members to increase their awareness of COVID-19 and best practices.

Iti Maafushivaru aims to create safe havens for guests to enjoy their Maldives getaway experience and reassure guests with their new hygiene and safety guidelines. The resort's opening offer includes discounts of up to 40%.

Located in the pristine South Ari Atoll, Maafushivaru is just a 25-minute seaplane journey from Malé and offers guests the idyllic island experience epitomising all that one dreams of when thinking of the Maldives. At just over 350 metres in length, Maafushivaru cocoons guests in lush vegetation, encircled by powder white-beaches, and a fringed by a house reef that a myriad of fish call home. 81 villas spread on the land and over-water offers a choice of 5 different categories for guests to choose from for their unique Maldives experience. Maafushivaru provides an array of diverse dining options on the island with multiple meal plan options. Experience the true romance of the Maldives with Iti Maafushivaru Maldives idyllic island adventure.

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# Personality of the Month

## How are you finding the Maldives?

Working in the Maldives is a once in a lifetime experience. I thought having lived in cosmopolitan cities for most of my life, making the transition to calling an island my home would take some time. However, within a few weeks I realized why the Maldives is so special. The beauty of working against a backdrop of the calming turquoise waters, white sandy beaches and seeing the sky at sunset being painted with shades of gold, orange, red, pink, and purple; makes you realize the enchantment of natural beauty.

While I do miss home, the island and its people have enveloped me with love, friendship and happiness, making me proud to call this paradise my home. It has also allowed me to maintain work life balance and enjoy time to myself, which was a very different experience for me, given I had grown accustomed to the hustle and bustle of working in cities.

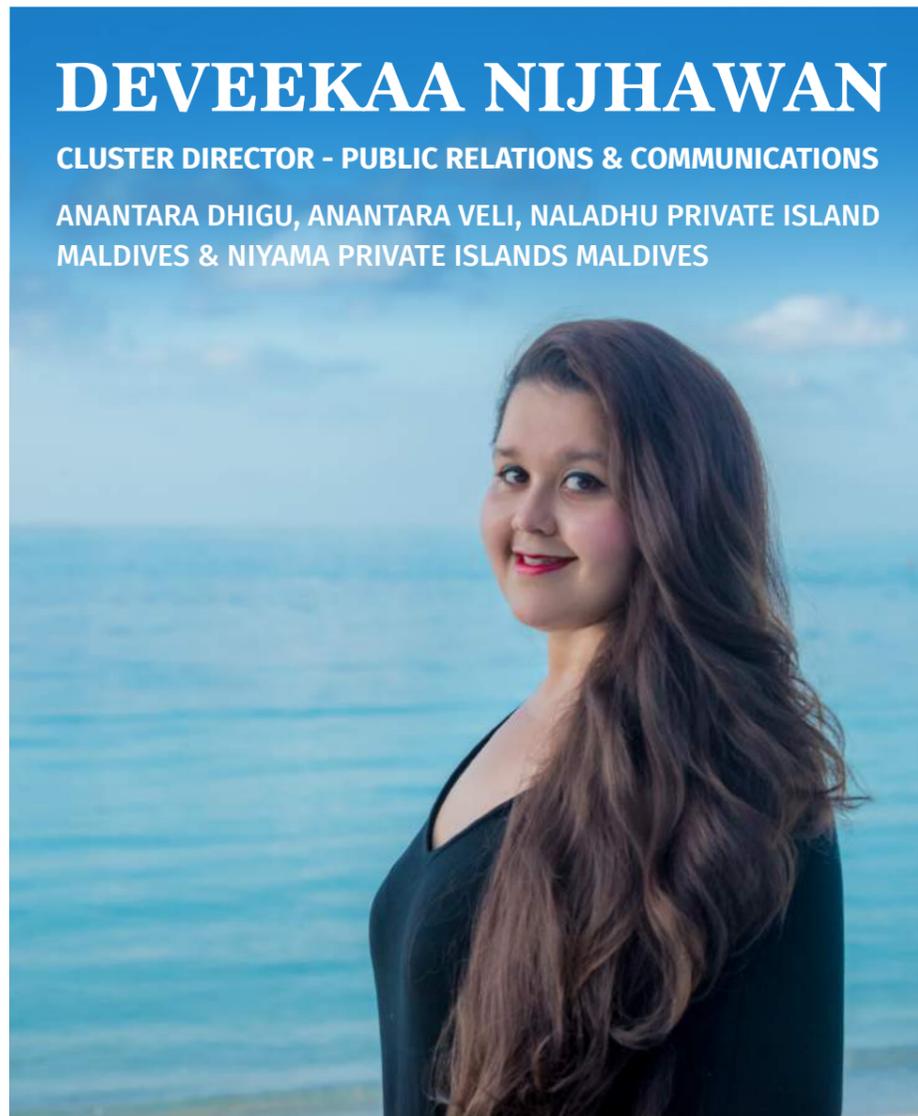
My current state of mind is best represented by the brand ethos of 'Welcome to Paradise at Nature's Playground' for Niyama Private Island Maldives and 'Life is a Journey' for Anantara Dhigu and Anantara Veli.

## You oversee the PR functions at Anantara Dhigu, Anantara Veli, Naladhu Private Island Maldives, and Niyama Private Islands Maldives. Which one is your favourite and why?

It would be impossible for me to choose between the four resorts, as I am very proud of my achievements at each of them and feel honoured to be given the opportunity to be responsible to drive the PR and communications strategies for each one. Each resort has a portfolio of distinctive USPs, which I have successfully leveraged to create unique collaborations, take advantage of synergies and maximize PR opportunities for the group. Thus being able to capitalize on the idiom of 'one for all and all for one'.

## What do you like most about your work?

I am extremely passionate about my job, so I love brainstorming, corroborating stories, competition ideas, to the media and developing PR strategies. I also enjoy interacting with hotel guests to learn about their experiences and do my little bit to make their stay at the resort unforgettable.



## DEVEEKAA NIJHAWAN

CLUSTER DIRECTOR - PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

ANANTARA DHIGU, ANANTARA VELI, NALADHU PRIVATE ISLAND MALDIVES & NIYAMA PRIVATE ISLANDS MALDIVES

## If you can change anything in your life, what would it be?

I wouldn't change anything about my past, because it has made me who I am today. I believe I am destiny's child and have always looked at life positively and embraced challenges and opportunities wholeheartedly. From a humble beginning of having no hospitality experience 8 years ago to a journey of discovery, learning and immense hard work, I am very proud of the way my career has evolved in such a short space of time. I feel privileged to be in such a prestigious position of being the Cluster Director of PR and Communications for four esteemed resorts in the Maldives.

## Tell us about how you started your journey in the PR field?

I happened to join the industry by chance and it didn't take long for me to realize how much I loved it and wanted to continue pursuing it. To an outsider, the industry seems to be very glamorous and fun and don't get me wrong it is – and that's why I love it so much, but it is a lot of hard work as it's a

24/7 job and basically your social life is non-existent. However, I have managed to make it work for me, as my friends are all in the industry so work doesn't seem like work!

## Were you always interested in hospitality?

I was born in the hospitality industry as my father was the General Manager with Oberoi Hotels & Resorts. As he took over different hotels, we travelled a lot and I learnt to embrace different cultures early in my life. I loved meeting people and interacting with different nationalities, making me fall in love with this industry. When I was very young, I had told my father, I would follow his footsteps and join the industry as well. At that time no one took me seriously and now I am here... life does come full circle indeed!

## How would you differentiate between the consumer profile of your resorts?

All four resorts have distinctive USPs which appeal to varying customer segments:

- Niyama Private Islands Maldives - with

its unique twin islands Play and Chill concept, appeals to adventurous honeymooners, surfers, active couples as well as to those seeking tranquillity and relaxation. It offers a variety of adrenaline pumping water sport activities, it is the only resort in the Maldives with its own wave breaking right onto the shore, has luxurious overwater villas and pavilions, pristine white beaches and renowned spa services.

- Naladhu Private Island Maldives - is perfect for the jet set elite due to the exclusivity and privacy it offers with 20 elegant houses with individual pools, secluded pristine white beaches and kaleidoscopic reefs, in-spa residence and tailor-made VIP experiences.
- Anantara Dhigu - provides the ultimate family holiday adventure with its luxury family resort villas, variety of water sports activities including surfing and renowned Dhoni Kids Club.
- Anantara Veli - caters to honeymooners and couples as it's an adults-only island and a tropical destination for surfing.

## What is it like living in the Maldives during the pandemic?

It's surreal to be in an almost deserted island with limited activity and I miss interacting with guests and colleagues. However, being an optimistic individual, I have used this as an opportunity for self-reflection, to work on my health and wellbeing and participate in meditation against the backdrop of turquoise blue waters and white sandy beaches. In fact, with no movement in and out of the resorts, there couldn't be a safer place to be isolated.

## How do you stay productive during these times?

There is no doubt a lot of uncertainty at these times, however being an optimistic person, I always focus on the positive. I focus on activities which are in my control and identify ways in which I can make a difference, rather than getting stressed and worried about things which are dependent on external factors. Work is an escape for me and helps me divert my attention.

## Who are you listening to at the moment?

Dance Monkey (Tones and I)

## Favourite motto or saying:

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." – Oscar Wilde.



Anantara Dhigu



Anantara Veli



Naladhu Private Island Maldives



Niyama Private Islands Maldives

# Shangri-La Hotels Introduces Enhanced Hygiene and Safety Protocols

Shangri-La Group has introduced the “Shangri-La Cares” commitment, elevating its already rigorous hygiene and safety protocols for all properties worldwide.

As people look to travel in the future, health, safety and sustainability remains top of mind, particularly as the world continues to react and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. “Shangri-La Cares” reinforces the Group’s commitment to caring for people, and its distinctive Asian hospitality as it begins welcoming guests back to the hotels and resorts.

“The health and safety of our colleagues and guests is of utmost priority. At Shangri-La, it is in our nature to look after people, to anticipate their needs and go above and beyond to ensure they have a memorable experience. We remain humble and true to our founding ethos with this commitment that will ensure we do our best to take care of people” said Lim Beng Chee, Chief Executive Officer of Shangri-La Group. “To meet new challenges and evolving customer expectations, we are focusing on enhanced hygiene protocols, elevating

our standards and safeguarding our guests and colleagues’ well-being. We would like to convey our heartfelt care by creating a safe environment where everyone feels comfortable and trusts in our ability to ensure their safety and health - so that they can focus on moments that truly matter,” he added.

All new procedures and protocols introduced globally in June 2020 will ensure guests have complete confidence and peace of mind during their stay. Shangri-La has followed recommendations laid out by the World Health Organization or more stringent local directives where appropriate, to ensure its operational protocols are comprehensive.

These protocols include:

- Increased frequency and full attention to deep cleaning of all high-touch surfaces and areas used by guests throughout the hotels;
- Use of medical grade sanitisers and



disinfectants which are approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency;

- Increased cleaning frequency of air filters and air-conditioner systems to ensure optimal air quality;
- Safe dining, meetings and events with extra precautions to respect physical distancing and enhanced food safety practices.

The Group has enhanced training, learning and development resources for colleagues on essential preparatory and prevention measures, including direction on cleaning and sanitisation frequency. This training is certified by long-term partner of the brand and global hygiene solutions provider,

Diversey. As a leading global hygiene and cleaning company, Diversey specialises in developing cleaning and hygiene technologies across industry sectors, such as health care, hospitality, retail and food services.

Staff will also be equipped with personal protective equipment where necessary. As the situation continues to evolve, the Group has been reviewing and elevating standards and practices to prepare for a “new normal”. This includes enhanced operational guidance, safety and sanitation protocols on infection prevention and outbreak readiness programmes that are developed in close cooperation with Diversey.

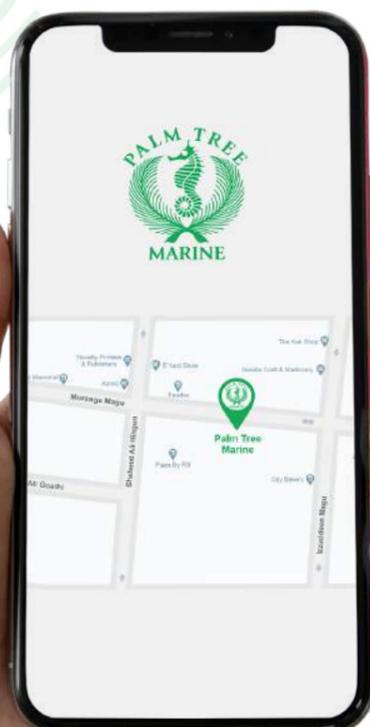


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## IN A NUTSHELL

## Vakkaru Maldives Introduces Elevated Hygiene Procedure 'Vakkare'



**In preparation for its reopening on August 1, Vakkaru Maldives has introduced an elevated hygiene procedure, 'Vakkare', which means Vakkaru cares for guests, team members, associates, and the community.**

The resort's dedicated teams are being trained to deliver the highest attention possible to hygiene, providing guests with the confidence to enjoy an exceptional vacation in the safest surroundings.

A statement by the resort read: "Whether you are travelling as a couple or in a family, you will be in

our 'Kare', the moment you arrive at the arrive at Velana International Airport. Our dedicated team will ensure the right escort until you embark on your scenic journey to our timeless sanctuary."

The elevated practices of hygiene and sanitation will be reinforced in all public areas, production outlets

and housekeeping. Proactive sanitisation and social distancing measures will be observed, particularly in restaurants, buffets and other common areas such as the gym, pool and beach. The resort further informs that they will encourage many activities, such as diving, excursions, fishing and snorkelling, which can be privately enjoyed with limited contacts. Giving guests a complete peace of mind, all team members of Vakkaru Maldives will have been through all necessary medical checks prior to being back on duty. In the event of an emergency, the certified Resort Doctor has all the necessary equipment and accessories in place, together with an isolation room, in line with the WHO and local authorities' requirements.

Vakkaru Maldives has further extended their cancellation policy for all bookings, except for those confirmed in July 2020.

Vakkaru Maldives is set in the pristine waters of Baa Atoll, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. A scenic thirty-minute seaplane ride from Velana International Airport will take you to an island haven, offering a truly unique experience.

## Kandima Maldives Unveils State-of-the-Art Virtual Platform D.I.V.E

**Kandima Maldives has unveiled its first, fully immersive 360-degree virtual platform as it warms up to welcome guests to the island destination.**

The completely immersive, state-of-the-art virtual platform – D.I.V.E (Digitally Immersive Virtual Experiences) is a multi-sensory journey through an interactive virtual world that takes customer engagement to a whole new level. It is available for viewing on any device including VR headsets, desktops, smartphones or tablets, with a multi-dimensional sound experience. D.I.V.E also has the feature to host live guided tours with a real-time interactive mode to answer queries of guests at any time.

Brett Castleman, General Manager of Kandima Maldives said: "We have been the first mover in terms of new and innovative lifestyle experiences in the destination. D.I.V.E. is yet another remarkable virtual platform that will help our trade partners to be future-ready. Our partners can experience and conduct the virtual tours remotely throughout the property. They not only navigate through the resort showcasing an immersive 360° view but also have a



fully interactive session with an ability to see the host and converse with everyone joined on the virtual tour."

Kandima Maldives is a new game-changing destination with 266 stylishly designed studios and villas, 10 extraordinary dining venues and plenty of fun-packed activities to choose from. This stylish resort caters for guests of all ages and on different budgets: families,

couples, groups of friends and honeymooners. Whether you seek romantic escape, aquatic adventures, fitness activities, spa getaways or just family time, Kandima Maldives has something for everybody. Situated in the Dhaalu Atoll, the island is just a thirty-minute flight from Velana International Airport, which is followed by a twenty-minute boat ride to this private island getaway.

# PALM TREE MARINE

## Your Trusted Marine Partner



Since 1997, Palm Tree Marine Pvt Ltd has emerged as an undisputed market leader in the field of trading in Marine, Industrial & Power Generation Sector in the Maldives. Over the years, they have set the benchmark in the market by launching brand new quality products and providing their customers with the opportunity to experience state-of-the-art technology in marine & industrial engines, accessories and equipment.

The company is stringent in delivering Genuine and Quality products to their customers, building immense brand loyalty and satisfaction. Known for valuing and giving close attention to their well-established relationships with boat builders, repairing companies, fishing vessels and local transportation systems, Palm Tree Marine holds a good market share for Engines and Generators, proving top quality products promising the delivery of optimal solutions, as your most Trusted Marine Partner.

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Generator Sets



Zinc Anodes



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NEW SHOWROOM LOCATION:  
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**H. E. MOHAMMED H. AL SHAALI**  
CHAIRMAN, GULF CRAFT



**ABEER AL SHAALI**  
ACTING CEO, GULF CRAFT

*You starting off your career as the Project Manager at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in the US, until you moved to the fibre division at Drago Boats in Greece, after which you worked as a Project Manager at Al Shaali Marine, and now you are the General Manager at Gulf Craft Maldives. What inspired you to become a part of the Boating Industry?*

I have always loved the sea; it gives you a sense of creation and freedom like it does in the Maldives. In my native country Greece, we were born by the sea. The boats always fascinated me from a very young age.

*What is your principle role as the General Manager of Gulf Craft Maldives? Please tell us a little bit about the story behind your move to the Maldives.*

My principal role is to lead the local company so it performs to its full potential. This covers key aspects such as maximisation of productivity while adhering to Health & Safety, as well as to boat design and boat-building quality standards in addition to keeping the cost affordable to the local market. I am also very keen on increasing the market potential through effective sales, tailoring innovation to reflect the local market conditions and to produce the right product for the right use, and of course, offering great customer service. I seek to ensure that Gulf Craft actively contributes to the local community as a key partner in Maldives, and I always try to inspire my team through setting the example.

Now, back in 2013 His Excellency Mohammed Hussain Al Shaali, the Chairman of Gulf Craft, invited me and he suggested that I “temporarily” move to the Maldives to create a new production system and to restart the company afresh. I did not hesitate to accept; after 7 years of “temporary” stay, I have not regretted it for even a single minute!

*What are the major challenges you have faced throughout your time with Gulf Craft? How did you overcome them and what are the lessons learned?*

What I basically encountered was the difference in mentality and market conditions compared to other places and people. It didn't take long to understand the difference and uniqueness at all levels. The tactics we needed to follow had to be unique. When I first arrived here, our customers were mostly the resorts and large companies. However, my daily life brought me much closer to ordinary people with dreams, creativity and willingness to succeed – not just the wealthy.

Therefore, along with the administration, we made the decision to open our doors to all ordinary people; to give them the opportunity to setup their own business, and thus, prove to them that a boat is not just a dream, but well within reach of ordinary people. I strongly believe that our success story to date in the Maldives has greatly depended on this very move - building trust between us and our customers is the key to success for both our customers as well as for Gulf Craft. To this day, even in these difficult months of COVID-19, we support, standby, work and move forward together with our customers smoothly and without problems.

I really want to thank our customers from the bottom of my heart for the way they treat not only myself, but also Gulf Craft and our entire team. I also wish to add that we all live in a rather small place and as such, we are all like one big family. I am proud to be greeted on the streets by customer and friends; I am proud to see them growing and expanding their businesses, and really, the image of seeing Gulf Craft boats everywhere in the country fills you with pride. I truly thank them all!

*What are the key areas that need to be focused on before designing and building a brand-new yacht or boat?*

I will only answer on behalf of Gulf Craft Maldives because in Dubai there is a whole team comprising of the CEO,

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

# TERRY STAMATAKOS

GENERAL MANAGER, GULF CRAFT MALDIVES



**“ We at Gulf Craft have proposed to the government and it has been approved to establish a school in the Maldives that will train Maldivians as boat builders, mechanics, electricians – everything that has to do with the manufacturing of boats. ”**

With 125 Vessels and 9 Bareboat Charters registered and operating in the Maldives, Gulf Craft has consistently catered to the majority of the market with absolutely no compromise on Quality, Standard and Safety. As the UAE's pioneering shipyard set up in 1982, Gulf Craft continues to enthrall the world with the finest luxury yachts and leisure boats for touring, passenger and multipurpose transportation vessels. We spoke about the core principles and the success behind the company with the General Manager of Gulf Craft Maldives, Terry Stamatakos, who has been working directly with the stakeholders of the Maldives and the UAE Gulf Craft Team since 2013.

Operations Manager, Naval Architects, Draughtsmen etc. that provide input to design and creation of a yacht.

As far as the Maldives is concerned, I can say that our individual customers, resorts, and even the army and the navy work closely with us to develop and create models that fulfil their exact requirements and answer their needs. We have ferry designs, as well as VIP designs as per the needs of every resort for luxury transportation.

This approach of catering for the exact needs of key customers resulted in the legacy models developed specially for MNDF, the Coast Guard and the Police. All of which were created through close co-operation and synergy between Gulf Craft and each of the above institutions.

It's not that easy to design a boat; one needs to know exactly what the market wants, what the customer wants and to never underestimate or ignore the individual sea and weather conditions that the desired boat will operate into. In general, there are many factors that need to be considered to successfully design a boat – the above mentioned are just a few.

Here at Gulf Craft, we have both the required depth and width of experience, as well as the operational capability to design vessels in accordance with the needs of each market.

**How would you describe the success behind Gulf Craft?**

If you look at the Gulf Craft website, you will see that our boats are recognised worldwide and have been awarded many times with top recognition for their design and shipbuilding standards. I don't need to add more as our awards speak for our boats, and as I have mentioned earlier, a great team of highly talented professionals is leading this effort and is already planning and designing the next generation of boats.

**Gulf Craft builds ocean-going crafts ranging from 31 to 175 feet in length at the company's state-of-the art shipyards in the UAE and is backed by a strong global network spanning Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. What is the strength of Gulf Craft in the global market?**

It's true that Gulf Craft is supported worldwide by a network of professional partners; our Head Office in Dubai is doing a great job and Gulf Craft today is among the top ten boat and yacht companies in the world, with aspirations to climb even higher.

This is where the Maldives plays a key role due to their

strategic positioning on the world map. Our presence here gives us the opportunity to expand and to grow our business worldwide. You will soon hear about our ambitious plans that will benefit both the Maldives, and also our customers. Please be patient as His Excellency Mohammed Hussain Al Shaali, Chairman of Gulf Craft, and the dynamic and creative CEO Abeer Al Shaali are working on this direction – official announcements will be made soon.

I also wish to stress that another key innovation beyond the technically innovative design of our boats is the appointment of Madam Abeer Al Shaali as CEO of the company, a brilliant mind for the future of our company.

**What's the difference between the Majesty Yachts, Nomad Yachts, Oryx Yachts, Silvercraft and Utility Series? Which models are most suitable for the Maldives' shores, and what are the main challenges you face in the Maldivian market?**

Each boat is designed to address different needs and uses. Majesty and Nomad are mainly yachts for pleasure and VIP transportation, whereas the models Oryx, Silvercraft and Utility were designed to perform exceptionally in a variety of activities, such as fishing, diving, transportation, entertainment, taxi and more. They are truly boats for all tastes and purposes.

The most common boats in the Maldives are ferries and VIP ferries. However, we are opening the market soon for yachts and for bigger boats, plus as I have already mentioned, we will soon announce our plans for the future and our new models.

**In your opinion, what is the most effective marine or boating event in terms of networking, exposure and return, which you believe boat owners and industry professionals should definitely not miss out on?**

The Boat Show of course. Although any event associated with the sea and tourism is also related to the boating

industry, thus, together we must promote and support all these exhibitions as they are directly connected to our work. I must point-out however that a well-organised boat show in a Marina not only facilitates exposure and networking, but it also promotes other services related to the Maritime industry, as well as the host country.

I believe a local but very well organised Boat Show here in the Maldives would positively reflect everything great that the country has to offer. It would boost not only local boat-building, but also Maldivian Tourism, Supply Chain, Maritime Maintenance Support, etc. – in other words, a whole range of services that work in tandem with the Maritime industry.

Last but not least, it would ultimately raise the profile of Maldives worldwide even more as a maritime hub in the Indian Ocean.

**With your extensive background and experience in the field, working with many industry giants and professionals, does it help and has it influenced your sales strategies?**

I dare to say that everything I knew before coming to the Maldives has been almost useless here! As I have mentioned earlier, the uniqueness of the market and of our local people and customers pushed us to new tactics. I can admit that I have learned a lot in the 7 years that I have been here, and I have given my best to offer our customers better and safer boats, with more options.

I believe we have succeeded thus far, and continue to do so. We still have a long way to go for what we are yet to present in the future.

**What advice do you have for the new generation looking to start a career in boat building or as boat operators?**

My advice to our new generation is to be patient and to work with specific goals in mind. They will be achieved through time consistently when working with a plan in mind and with resilience.

We at Gulf Craft have proposed to the government and it has been approved to establish a school in the Maldives that will train Maldivians as boat builders, mechanics, electricians – everything that has to do with the manufacturing of boats. This is another great offer of Gulf Craft to the country that hosts us and that we love. We also love and support the community, and giving local people with dreams the ability to make them a reality is our greatest satisfaction.



Touring 48



Nomad 55 (FLY Collection)



Nomad 65 (FLY Collection)



Nomad 75 (FLY Collection)



Majesty 62



Waveshuttle 56



SilverCat 34HT

EVENTS & AWARDS

# SATA Successfully Hosts 10 Episodes of South Asian Digital Travel Conversation

The South Asian Digital Travel Conversation is a virtual conversation with leading industry stakeholders organized by the South Asian Travel Awards (SATA), and the organizations has successfully concluded the first 10 episodes of the series.

The key goals of the series are to discuss in-depth, to create awareness and to voice the challenges that are being faced in the Travel Trade & Hospitality Industry of the South Asian region. The conversation has been purposefully designed as a webinar series, spread across multiple episodes of 45 minutes each, with special guests from South Asia's Travel Trade & Hospitality Industry. Each episode highlights a specific topic, and industry professionals share their voice with regional factual data.

The discussions are guided by two moderators who ask questions based on the day's topic, and the guests have the opportunity to share their views, experiences, opinions and

hindrances. Each episode presents by a diverse panel of industry stakeholders.

The supporting partners of South Asian Digital Travel Conversation include leading broadcasting partner – Raajje TV, and the leading tour operators in the Maldives - Capital Travel, Moodhu Holidays, Travel Connection Maldives and Resort Life Travel.

The South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) is the first ever regional travel award endorsed by multi-national associations providing the tourism sector of the South Asian Region with recognition towards their facilities and service excellence. The South Asian

Travel Awards aims to encourage and raise service standards within the region's tourism industry. The brand is one of its kind with affiliations from regional associations ensuring a smooth and transparent process. The judging panel consists of high-profile senior representatives selected from various regional destinations with vast knowledge and background in the industry assuring an accurate and fair process. SATA is a Highrise concept, and the SATA Team has proudly unveiled their platinum partner as Gulf Craft Maldives and Gold Partner as The Hawks Pvt. Ltd. The organisers look forward to host the prestigious South Asian Travel Awards Grand Gala in the Maldives by the last quarter of 2020.



HOST



**SURAJ KHAN**  
Vice President  
SATA- South Asian Travel Awards

SPEAKERS



**THOYYIB MOHAMED**  
Managing Director  
Maldives Marketing & Public Relations Corporation



**RAJEEV KOHLI**  
Former President  
The Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE)



**PUNEET DUTTA**  
General Manager - Amari Galle  
Onyx Hospitality



**H.M. HAKIM ALI**  
President,  
Bangladesh International Hotel Association (BIHA) and South Asia Tourism Federation (SATF), Bangladesh



**SUNIL SARYA**  
Chairman  
KGH Group of Hotels & Resorts, Nepal



**SANGEETA RANA**  
Executive Director  
Hotel & Restaurant Association of Bhutan (HRAHB)



**ABDULLA GHIYAS**  
Vice President  
Maldives Association of Travel Agents & Tour Operators (MATATO)



**ANEEES ADENWALA**  
Founder  
Orca Dive Club & Underwater Film Service India



**NISHAN PERERA**  
Co-Founder  
Blue Resources Trust Sri Lanka



**HUSSAIN RASHEED**  
First PADI Course Director of Maldives  
Inductee 2019 International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame



**ROBERT J SCAMMELL**  
Regional Manager  
PADI Asia Pacific



**AHMED YUSUF WALID**  
President & CEO  
Galaxy Group Bangladesh



**FAWZAN FAREID**  
Country Manager  
SriLankan Airlines



**HASSAN AREEF**  
General Manager  
Corporate Communications  
Maldives Airports Company Ltd  
the operator of Velana International Airport



**JYOTI MAYAL**  
President,  
Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI)



**NIKHIL SHARMA**  
Head of Wyntham Group for Eurasia



**DHEESHANA AMERESEKERE**  
Managing Director  
The Theva Residency and Theva Cuisine, Sri Lanka



**SURESH DISSANAYAKE**  
Asst Vice President Marketing  
Adaaran Resorts, Maldives



**SRIJAN VADHERA**  
General Manager  
Conrad Bengaluru  
Chairman  
Travel & Tourism (Karnataka), Bangalore Chambers of Industry and Commerce (BCIC), India



**ALI IHUSAN**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Happy Market



**AMIR MANSOOR**  
Managing Director  
Lily F&B



**KURIAN JOSE**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Meron Group



**PRATIK IYER**  
Director  
Vikas Laboratories



**JOSE JOSEPH**  
Founder & Managing Director  
Unimondo Travel & Leisure  
India



**RAMESH VIDANARACHCHI**  
Head of Sales  
Ramada by Wyndham Colombo  
Sri Lanka



**MURAD HASSAN**  
Director of Business Development  
Villa Hotels & Resorts  
Maldives



**MD TASLIM AMIN SHOYON**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Bizcon Holidays  
Bangladesh



**SCARIA JOSE**  
Director  
Spice Route Luxury Cruises  
India



**AHMED AFRAH**  
President  
National Boating Association of Maldives



**GAUTAMA DUTTA**  
Executive Committee member of the Indian Marine Federation, & Governing Council Member of the Royal Bombay Yacht Club.



**ALEXANDER BRYANT**  
Partner  
Emperor Divers Fleet



**NIDHI BANSAL**  
Chief Executive Officer  
India City Walks | India With Locals



**NIKHILA PALAT**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Katalyst Reputation Management



**AMAL GOONETILLEKE**  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Hotel Association of Sri Lanka



**DR MARIYAM SHAKEELA**  
Chief Executive Officer  
SIMDI Group



**AMIT MALHOTRA**  
Co-Founder & Director  
Events Solution



**NALINA WANASINGHE**  
Chief Impressionist  
Impress Events | Sri Lanka



**ADHEEL ISMAIL**  
Co-Founder & CEO  
Think Advertising



**NEELABH KAPOOR**  
Creative Director & Founder  
Studio Neelabh

TO WATCH ALL EPISODES:



# National Federation of Maldivian Employers (NFME) introduces a Webinar Series: Tailoring A New Reality – Employer’s Dialogue

The series discusses how to navigate in the new norm, focusing on different industries of the Maldives. The organisation stated that this is the time for all industries to lean on each other and move forward in unity with the goal of re-emerging stronger.

Episode 1, 'Safe Re-opening and Reviving of Maldives Travel and Tourism' discussed the recovery and resolution plans of the Maldives. Episode 2, 'Tailoring the Construction Industry Under the New Normal' was focused on construction and development in the Maldives, and Episode 3 was titled 'New Found Possibilities for the Fishing Industry'. Episode 4 discussed various financial solutions, with the topic 'How Financial Institutions Can Step Up and Facilitate Business Transformations'.

From June 3 onwards, the sessions take place weekly on Wednesdays at 1630 hrs Maldives (1100 hrs GMT). Eight episodes have been planned initially, with more to follow. Each episode of 60 - 90 minutes will be dedicated to a specific sector, with industry experts speaking as panellists. Once all panellists conclude their discussions, a Q&A session of maximum 30 minutes takes place. The webinar series is facilitated by the Federation’s President, Mohamed Ali Janah.

**TAILORING A NEW REALITY**  
Employer's Dialogue

Episode 1 : 3rd June 2020, Wednesday  
Starting time :  
1130 GMT  
1630 Maldives  
1700 India / Sri Lanka  
1930 Singapore

Topic : Safe Re-opening and Reviving of Maldives Travel and Tourism

Facilitated by:  
Mohamed Ali Janah  
President  
National Federation of Maldivian Employers (NFME)  
Industry Expert - Entrepreneur

**SPEAKERS**

Abdulla Ghyas Riyaz  
MD, Head of the Public Works  
PWA, Maldives Chapter

Sonu Shivdasani  
Chief Executive Officer  
and Founder  
Sona

Thoyyib Mohamed  
Managing Director  
Maldives Maldives B.B.  
PR (Cyprus) (Maldives)

Mohamed Khuseel  
Chief Executive Officer  
Marlin Air

Registration Link:  
https://bit.ly/2AR3Z60

**TAILORING A NEW REALITY**  
Employer's Dialogue

Episode 2 : 10th June 2020, Wednesday  
Starting time :  
1130 GMT  
1630 Maldives  
1700 India / Sri Lanka  
1930 Singapore

Topic : Tailoring the Construction Industry Under the New Normal

Facilitated by:  
Mohamed Ali Janah  
President  
National Federation of Maldivian Employers (NFME)  
Industry Expert - Entrepreneur

**SPEAKERS**

Saadulla Hilmy  
Managing Director  
Sona Engineering Pvt. Ltd.  
Former MD Thailand Sona Construction

Hassan Shameem  
Managing Director  
Wick PCL

Adam Azim  
Chief Executive Officer  
Maldives Transport &  
Construction Company

Suhail Ahmed  
Managing Director  
Housing Development Corporation

Registration Link:  
https://bit.ly/2Dyq603

**TAILORING A NEW REALITY**  
Employer's Dialogue

Episode 3 : 17th June 2020, Wednesday  
Starting time :  
1130 GMT  
1630 Maldives  
1700 India / Sri Lanka  
1930 Singapore

Topic : New Found Possibilities for the Fishing Industry

Facilitated by:  
Mohamed Ali Janah  
President  
National Federation of Maldivian Employers (NFME)  
Industry Expert - Entrepreneur

**SPEAKERS**

Mohamed Wassem Ismail  
Managing Director  
Eggs Fisheries

Ismail Fazeer  
Chief Executive Officer  
Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company  
(MIFCO)

Adnan Ali  
Advisor / Board Member  
Fisheries Maldives

Ahmed Shafiq  
Publisher  
Sri Lanka

Saud Hussain  
Member of Parliament

Shaha Hashim  
Project Manager - Maldives  
Maldives Recovery Ready Program  
World Marine Corporation

Registration Link:  
https://tinyurl.com/y8dswgnt

**TAILORING A NEW REALITY**  
Employer's Dialogue

Episode 4 : 24th June 2020, Wednesday  
Starting time :  
1130 GMT  
1630 Maldives  
1700 India / Sri Lanka  
1930 Singapore

Topic : How Financial Institutions Can Step Up and Facilitate Business Transformations

Facilitated by:  
Mohamed Ali Janah  
President  
National Federation of Maldivian Employers (NFME)  
Industry Expert - Entrepreneur

**SPEAKERS**

Dr. Fazeel Najieb  
Former General Manager Ministry of Supply  
MD - Maldives State Bank  
Founder Editor - Maldives Economic Review

M. Timothy Sawyer CBE  
MD and CEO - South of Maldives

Mr. Ahmed Garvish Adan  
Chairman - MFA  
Chief Executive Officer - Finance  
Ministry of Finance

Dr. Aishath Muneera  
Managing Director - MIFCO  
The Global University of Finance & Insurance

Mr. Hussain Hiyazi  
Assistant Public Director  
Public Service Office

M. Tommy Carlsson  
Investment SA, Export & Distribution

Registration Link:  
https://tinyurl.com/y8dswgnt

# Maldives First Virtual B2B Expo Kicks Off on July 1, 2020



Supply.mv launched the Maldives’ first virtual B2B Expo on July 1, 2020. The event is set to proceed till August 31, 2020. “With the current public health crisis disallowing physical events, we feel that this event is especially essential to businesses right now. As the economy reopens, and businesses try to get back on their feet we believe this event will give a helpful push towards increasing sales,” says Raidh Shaaz Waleed, CEO of Supply.mv. “There is also the added benefit of a

virtual event that our exhibitors will not have to bear any costs for bulky stand setups, we offer a turn-key solution to showcase your products.” The virtual B2B expo will be a 24/7 event held completely online, showcasing a variety of products from various companies in the Maldives.

Throughout the event, the website will feature various promotions and giveaways, and visiting customers will be able to engage with suppliers via live

chat, request for quotations and place orders all within a few clicks. Supply.mv hopes to grant the opportunity for as many suppliers as possible to exhibit their products, and has set a very minimal listing fee. “We are sponsoring this event because we believe the future of B2B sales lies in digital platforms, and Supply.mv is a promising platform with a great audience,” says Shuaib Ilyas, Marketing Manager of Brotherhood Investments.

Brotherhood Investments is the main sponsor of the event while Ondhigo Maldives, Ooredoo Maldives, United Food Suppliers, Redwave and Coca-Cola are partnering as category sponsors. “We are expecting the event to gather an audience comprised similarly to our platform’s current customer base; resort and guesthouse purchasers, retailers, corporate procurers and even individual citizens wishing to buy wholesale goods,” says Sharaf, General Manager of Supply.mv. “We are very excited to be hosting this event, and hope it will turn out to be successful and profitable for all involved.”

Supply.mv is the biggest digital B2B marketplace in the Maldives. It enables wholesalers to list and sell their products on the marketplace while allowing customers the convenience to get quotations and place orders with multiple suppliers at once, all from one location. Supply.mv is a project incubated and powered by Ooredoo’s Niru Accelerator program.

For any queries regarding this event, please email [sales@supply.mv](mailto:sales@supply.mv) or call 9998651/9909901.

## IN THE NEWS

# MACL: Updates on Velana International Airport Refurbishment Progress

**Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL), operator of Velana International Airport (VIA) has revealed the latest updates of the airport's ongoing and completed refurbishment works under its major expansion project to meet the increasing passenger demand.**

According to the company, 35,000 square metres of refurbishment works at the existing west apron is ongoing. When completed this will have two Code F MARS stands which can accommodate parking spaces for two A380 aircrafts.

The airport's new Fuel Farm shows major development with its breasting dolphin structure and jet fuel tanks, diesel tanks, petrol tanks, and recovery tanks' structural works complete in addition to the airside dispensing station tank installed to increase safety and reduce service time for the airlines. The farm also consists of a fire fighting platform with its structural works completed.

Back in December 2019, VIA announced the completion of foundation works for the new passenger terminal under construction by Saudi Arabia's Bin Laden Group. MACL initially awarded the project to Bin Laden Group in 2016. However, the project was put on hold due to unforeseen circumstances. Later in June 2019, the project worth USD 350 million was reassigned to the Bin Laden Group, in hopes of commencing terminal operations in 2022.

With the capacity to accommodate over 7 million passengers a year, the 78,000-square-metre terminal will feature aero boarding bridges, baggage handling systems, retail spaces, food and beverage outlets, and lounges. A statement by MACL read: "Our new International Passenger Terminal is taking shape. The construction is on fast pace and we are hopeful that the project will be completed as per schedule by mid-2022."

Filling in on the updates of VIA's new Cargo Terminal scheduled to be completed by early 2021, MACL said that all the structural work and the roof are complete, while some drywall frames installation and MEP works are still ongoing. The company further informed that fire pump house wall and slab formwork installation are in progress.

MACL further provided details regarding the development of the new VIP/CIP Terminal Building to be unveiled at VIA. The first phase of the 4-storey building is reported to be approximately 2,200 square metres. "Its facade and interior works are in progress," commented MACL, with the construction of the building slated for completion in the second quarter of 2020. The second phase will begin work after the completion of the first phase, all together the total building will be more than 6,800 square meters.

Velana International Airport (VIA) has been serving Maldives as the main gateway for the passengers travelling to and from the mesmerizing chain of islands in the Indian Ocean. Today, VIA connects to over 35 international destinations and serves more than 30 international airlines. In total, VIA has a passenger traffic of more than 3 million. In order to revolutionize and establish the airport, the Government of Maldives planned an ambitious project worth more than USD 1 billion. The transformation includes a new passenger terminal building, a new code F runway, a new cargo terminal complex, a new fuel Farm, a new seaplane terminal with MRO, and a new CIP/VIP building.



VIA's new International Passenger Terminal is taking shape.



VIA's new Fuel Farm shows major development



35,000 square metres of refurbishment works at the existing west apron is ongoing

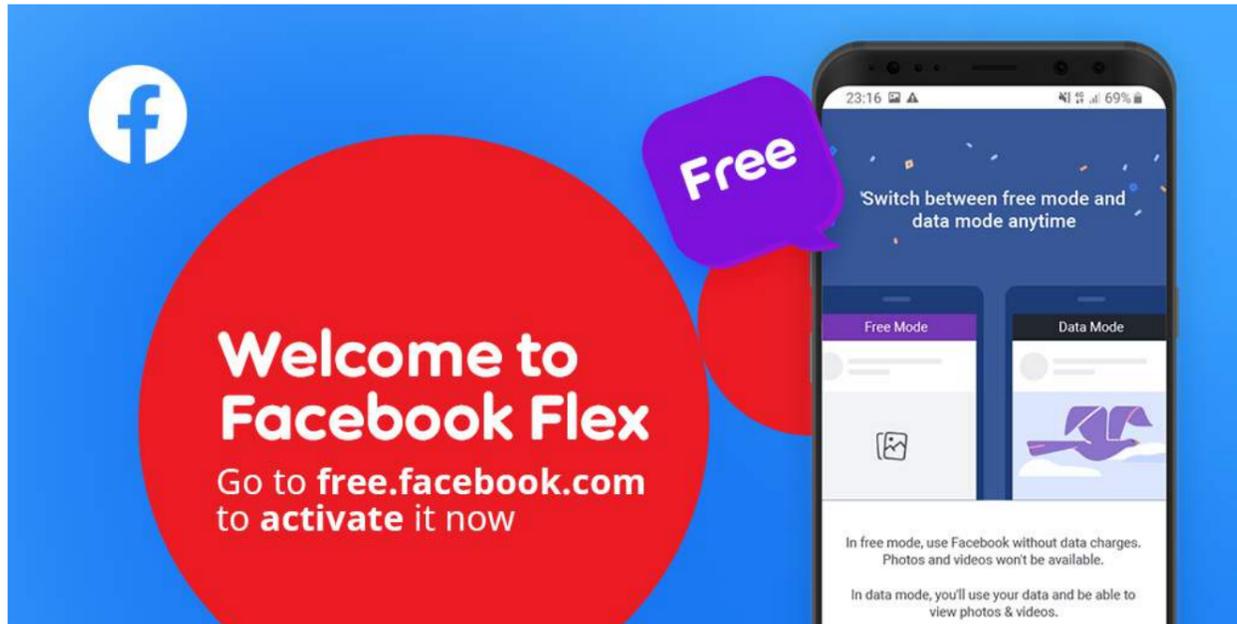


VIA's new Cargo Terminal scheduled to be completed by early 2021



Construction of VIP/CIP Terminal building slated for completion in second quarter of 2020

# Ooredoo Maldives in Partnership with Facebook Introduces Facebook Flex



In line with Ooredoo Maldives' vision to connect the people of the Maldives and enrich their lives through digital, on June 13, 2020, the company launched Facebook Flex, a version of Facebook that allows customers to connect to Facebook for FREE.

Ooredoo Maldives partnered with the world's leading social networking site, Facebook to introduce this free service to its customers as an effort to further reduce the cost to communicate, to stay connected with friends and family and to stay updated on the latest news and events across the globe.

Ooredoo mobile users with any data subscription,

are now able to access a basic version of Facebook and Facebook Messenger with zero balance and no data charge with a tap of a button. While all mobile users are able to use this feature by simply logging on to their accounts from free.facebook.com, Android mobile users can access the free Facebook version directly from Facebook and Facebook Messenger application. Facebook Flex also enables non-smart phone users to connect with their friends

and family and enjoy Facebook for free by logging in through their mobile browsers.

"At a challenging time like this, as we fight together to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, our biggest priority is to provide affordable access to information and to keep our customers connected. With the introduction of Facebook Flex, all Ooredoo mobile customers are now able to stay in touch with their friends and family and stay updated on the latest news without any charges. This new feature, allows our customers to control their data usage with a single tap of a button while browsing Facebook, enabling them to further reduce the cost of data," said Ooredoo Maldives Acting Chief Commercial Officer, Hussain Niyaz.

Ooredoo customers can now chat, post, like, comment and share as well as browse through text-based content on Facebook for free. The user can only see photos and videos on Facebook by switching back to the full version of Facebook. When the full version of Facebook is activated within Facebook Flex, the customer will be charged the usual data rate from their data balance, or from their existing Social Media packs.

In addition to this, users can also browse content from Accuweather, BBC, Wikipedia, and many more free sites by visiting the free basics feature available from Facebook Flex. For more information on Facebook Flex, visit: <http://www.ooredoo.mv/>

# The Hawks Pvt Ltd Acquires Dharavandhoo Fuel Shed



**The Hawks Pvt Ltd has acquired the Dharavandhoo Fuel Services located in Baa Atoll – the first fuel shed established for the northern atolls of Noonu, Raa, Baa and Lhaviyani.**

As one of the leading importers and distributors of high-quality fuel in the Maldives, The Hawks developed an extensive product portfolio through more than 13 years of experience in fuel supply. This new acquisition further expands its services across the northern region. The company also provides fuel services at its existing shed at Kamadhoo, Baa Atoll.

General Manager of The Hawks Pvt Ltd announced the news via twitter: "Dharavandhoo Fuel Services have been acquired by The Hawks Pvt Ltd. We are happy to inform all our valued customers in the north region that they can receive our services from B. Dharavandhoo. We also have our fuel services available in B. Kamadhoo."

With its large fleet of fuel supply vessels and storage sites, The Hawks is one of the leading importers and distributors of high-quality fuel products in the Maldives. With more than 13 years of experience in the area of fuel supply, the company has developed an extensive product portfolio. The Hawks' excellent customer service, on-time delivery and certified products provide an ultimate satisfaction to clients across the Maldives.

Services provided by The Hawks Pvt Ltd include fuel supply, fuel terminal, speed boat service, ferry service, tug boats, boat yard services, lathe workshop, bricks factory and construction. The company also operates the award-winning Airport Beach Hotel in Hulhumale' and leisure boutique property The Tropical Biosphere Hotel in Baa Atoll amongst its activities in the hospitality industry.

## SILHOUETTE

# 10 Incredible Baths in the Maldives That Hardly Seem Real



@discoversoneva

## SONEVA FUSHI

Nestled in the lush jungle, this Reserve comes with a spa suite, gym, library, wine cellar - the perfect home for the island life. The dramatic open-air bathroom surrounded by gardens (soaking in the sunken tub with only the stars over your head is something everyone should experience at least once in their lives). There's no better place to have some Bolly to enjoy in your rose petal bath.



@conrad\_maldives

## CONRAD MALDIVES

Discover a new perspective on life at THE MURAKA. Above water: living and dining areas fitting of one of the world's most exclusive residences featuring two bedrooms and a bathroom with an ocean-facing tub. Beneath the ocean: your private underwater aquarium and architectural masterpiece including the master bedroom with 180-degree curved acrylic dome. Just imagine stargazing, or documenting the vibrant reef beyond the underwater glass walls.



## ANANTARA KHAVAH MALDIVES

Okay, we're feeling pretty cozy. Like a peacock's plume over the ocean. We were offered these unmatched views. Imagine, sliding the open floor-to-ceiling glass doors, taking a dip into the infinity pool, or relaxing on over water hammocks, or soaking in a bathtub with views of both the ocean and the infinite horizon. Who needs a view?



@kisu

## AYADA MALDIVES

You'd be hard-pressed to find a better spot to reenergize and revitalize after a long day of baking on the beach. The freestanding tub offers the best seat in the house to embrace the endless ocean views. Our favourite part? The sundeck door opens, welcoming the salty breeze and lyrical crashing waves into the space for ultimate relaxation.



@jumeirahvittaveli

## JUMEIRAH VITAVELI

Talk about "wow factor," right? The symphony of ivory and lemongrass yields a cozy-yet-airy master bathroom design for this overwater villa. The luxurious soaker tub is a welcome sight after a long spa day and offers a prime perspective during sunset. Enjoy an uninterrupted scene of the rich, blue sea below before you prepare for dinner.



## FAIRMONT MALDIVES SUNRISE VILLA

For the deepest of relaxation, the Sunrise Villa at Fairmont Maldives is a perfect choice. These villas feature oversized indoor bathrooms, private plunge pools, and more. Experience the best of Maldives-relax to the sound of waves and delight in the endless views.

Holidays and baths intertwine perfectly. Both are about slowing down, involves a dash of indulgence and a dose of much-needed relaxation. Some hotels take their tubs more seriously than others: from soaking baths under a disco ball, to freestanding tubs out in the middle of a tropical island jungle or outdoor baths on private islands that overlook crystal seas.

*A sumptuous soak in one of these tubs is worth making a splash. It's definitely bath time...*



@anantarakihavah

**MALDIVES VILLAS**

Confident that we could fan out the brilliant lagoon, if we had ocean views. Just floor-to-ceiling doors and edge pool. Sunbathe in the deck in your glass-bottomed tub, take a look at the marine life below and the hairdryer anyways, right?



@michuttravel

**KANDOLHU MALDIVES**

Not only do the Ocean Pool Villas open to infinite views of the Indian Ocean, but is a sight to be seen at Kandolhu Maldives. The bathrooms of these villas are open and airy with shower, twin vanity and a bathtub, and features a sliding door which opens up to the outdoor deck. The expansive and completely private deck includes sun loungers, sun umbrella and a plunge pool. What more do you want?



**THE STANDARD, HURUVALHI MALDIVES**

For starters, there's a disco ball in the bathroom of each villa at The Standard, Huruvahli Maldives. It makes you want to pull out your phone and do a silent-disco Instagram post. Though it might be worth waiting till Friday night when there's an actual disco at Beru Bar, overhung with what the hotel claims is the country's largest disco ball.



@allabout\_lena

**SIRRU FEN FUSHI**

When you consider the Water Villas at the Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi, you're looking at waves of the Indian Ocean. The villas feature copper bathtubs, en suite relaxation decks, salas, and more. They are the epitome of luxury and the epitome of gently murmuring sounds of endless horizons.



@milaidhoo

**MILAIDHOO ISLAND**

The Maldives' island resorts are designed for lolling about and doing very little, so it is no surprise that most come with impressive baths in which to take long leisurely soaks. At Milaidhoo Island, the over-water villas have large custom-made tubs which look out over a private infinity pool and on to the azure sea. Plus, they come equipped with full-sized Aqua di Parma toiletries.



@claudejapswe

**SIX SENSES LAAMU**

Sinking into a tub full of bubbles and enjoying the ocean beyond sounds like an evening well-spent. These rustic-luxe Maldives villas are constructed of sustainable materials, and a sense fun and ingenuity pervade the design — from the novelty of watching. This luxurious overwater villa features a completely transparent glass bathtub with a see-through bottom.

## MOVERS &amp; SHAKERS

## MACL Welcomes New Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director

**Gordon Andrew Stewart is a British National with over 30 years of international management experience in Aviation and Transportation industry across Europe, MENA, Asia and North America, including 20 years at Executive and Board Level.**



Gordon will join MACL in July 2020 after international border opens. The company believes that his in-depth understanding of the business and recognized leadership will guide MACL to achieve greater success.

Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL) is a 100% government owned limited liability company incorporated under the Companies Act of the Rep of

Maldives. MACL is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Privatisation & Corporatisation Board of the Maldives. The Corporate Office of MACL is on the island of Hulhule', Republic of Maldives.

Maldives Airports Company is the operator of Velana International Airport and has been massively involved in destination marketing and bringing in new airlines to the Maldives to boost up the tourism industry. MACL has embarked on one of the biggest projects in the history of Maldives in developing the future Velana International Airport such as the development of a brand-new international passenger terminal, a new code F runway, a new cargo terminal complex and a new fuel farm along with hydrant system and major infrastructure developments at Velana international Airport.

## Ooredoo Maldives Appoints Assistant Manager Content & New Verticals

**Starting off his first role at Ooredoo Maldives as International Roaming Services (IREG) Executive in January 2012, Ahmed Numan appointed to the post of Assistant Manager Content & New Verticals at Ooredoo Maldives.**



Numan has worked with the telecom giant for over 8 years climbing the corporate ladder whilst filling the roles of Senior Executive VAS & Data in 2015 and Assistant Manager Content, Broadband and Devices prior to his most recent promotion.

Ooredoo Maldives provides a wide range of innovative voice, data, broadband, content and enterprise services tailored to the growing needs of today's consumers and businesses. Guided by its vision of enriching people's lives and its belief that it can stimulate human growth by leveraging communications to help people achieve their full potential, Ooredoo has transformed the communications industry for the people of the Maldives.

With the aim to open up the opportunities of the digital age to local communities and businesses, the company continues to invest in the most advanced technologies and innovations, providing the first and fastest nationwide 4G+ network in the Maldives.

## Janice Tan appointed as New Director of Sales & Marketing at Vakkaru Maldives

**Long-term veteran in the field of sales and marketing, Janice brings a wealth of experience, vision and connections, helping to define strategies that will ensure the resort is recognised as one of the world's preeminent retreats.**



Commenting on her appointment, Janice stated: "I am so excited to join the team at Vakkaru Maldives, a privately owned and managed resort where exceptional attention to detail and a passion for unsurpassed hospitality is integral to everything, and a commitment to ensuring loved ones can interact and reconnect in tranquility underpins every service and interaction."

Starting off her first luxury hospitality experience at Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok, Janice has filled various leadership roles whilst being instrumental in launching Maldivian properties including Anantara Naladhu during her tenure as Anantara Group's Cluster Director of Public Relations, Velaa Private Island and Accor's Raffles Maldives Meradhoo, where she served as Director of Sales and Marketing. She also worked with COMO Hotels and Resorts as its Regional Director of Sales and Marketing for COMO Maalifushi and COMO Cocoa Island.

With her vast experience in luxury hospitality, Janice will play a key role in spreading the word about what makes Vakkaru so stellar and securing its position as the top resort in this quintessential luxury holiday destination.

Her lifelong love of travel and residency in countries around the world will provide invaluable insights as the Maldives redefine its approach to tourism and hospitality in response to the changing consumer habits and preferences following the recent global crisis.

Lying within the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of Baa Atoll, Vakkaru Maldives is a secluded reef island blessed with timeless ocean views, brilliant white sands, deep blue holes and a house reef with unique marine biodiversity. A scenic 30-minute seaplane flight from Velana International Airport transports guests into the serene paradise intuitively designed for guests seeking timeless experiences.



# THE NEW **CIP/VIP** TERMINAL

@ Velana International Airport (VIA) is under Development to meet the needs of today's modern traveller. The total transformation of CIP/VIP Terminal in terms of its infrastructure and services has made the Terminal stand out in terms of its services and ambience and takes care of all the airport formalities for its guests in an atmosphere of comfort and luxury.

## BON APPÉTIT

## FRESH CANNELONI PASTA STUFFED WITH MIXED VEGETABLES & RICOTTA CHEESE



Chef Tarique Aziz loves bringing out the freshest ingredients to prepare his tantalising dishes. His culinary journey starts at the Hotel Le Meridian-Bangalore at the mere age of 21 as a kitchen executive in 2006. After two years of hard work he was promoted to Chef de partie. The only direction Chef Tarique went from there was up, as he worked in a number of top-notch hotels such as the Hotel Sheraton Gambia and Resort as Executive Sous Chef, Hotel W Doha as Executive Chef De Cuisine, Sunset Beach Resort Marina and Spa as Executive Chef and more. Known for being a multi-cuisine master, Chef Tarique says that the culinary world is a never-ending learning process; with every country, region and culture having their own unique cuisine and methods of preparation, you learn something new every single day. Chef Tarique is now the Executive Chef of the luxurious and intimate private island retreat, Noku Maldives.

"I love to eat and cook Italian and French food and I have worked with some fantastic Michelin star chefs from both countries. Pasta is a dish loved by people of all ages. Besides, basil and truffle are my favorite ingredients for the Italian dishes I prepare."

### Ingredients

#### For the fresh Pasta

- 300 gm flour
- 6 egg yolks
- 1 whole egg
- Salt
- Olive oil

#### For the stuffing

- 250 gm baby spinach
- 100 gm zucchini (yellow and green)
- 50 gm eggplant
- 100 gm ricotta cheese
- 50 gm parmesan cheese
- 10 gm chopped white onion
- Olive oil
- Salt as a taste

#### For the Bechamel

- 200 ml fresh milk
- 20 gm flour
- 20 butter
- Nutmeg

#### For the tomato sauce

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 crushed garlic cloves
- 400 gm canned chopped tomatoes
- 40 gm chopped white onion
- Fresh basil leaves
- 3 tbsp sugar

### Method

- Drizzle some oil in a pan and sauté the chopped white onion and add blanched, drained and chopped spinach plus other vegetable. Sauté the mixed vegetable for a few minutes and transfer to a bowl with the ricotta cheese, nutmeg, parmesan cheese, and salt. Mix well.
- Form a well in the middle of the flour and drop egg yolk and break whole egg inside it with a pinch of salt. Add little olive oil. Begin to knead this mixture into a dough. Work the dough for quite a while, until it has a smooth and homogeneous texture. Form a ball, cover it with a sheet of plastic wrap and let rest in the fridge for an hour.
- Melt butter in a pot and add flour. Once the butter and flour are mixed together, add the milk – a little at a time. Cook over low heat until the cream thickens, stirring constantly to avoid any lumps. Add the nutmeg and salt. Set aside.
- Drizzle olive oil in a pot. Add the onions and sauté until golden brown and add basil leaves. Add canned tomatoes and cook for 25 minutes. Add salt as per taste. Set aside.
- Roll out the dough for a thin 2mm-thick sheet that will be cut into 8cm-long rectangles. Boil the pasta in a pot filled with water and then spread onto a cloth. Fill pasta with ricotta and mix in the vegetable mixture, and then roll them.
- Before plating, add a dash of agar-agar in tomato sauce cook and blend well.
- Add the tomato sauce to the centre of a plate. Place warm cannelloni top with bechamel sauce and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese then gratin. Before served drizzle homemade vegetable demi glaze.



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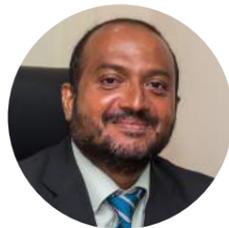
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Courtesy of  
**Chef Tarique Aziz**  
Executive Chef of Noku Maldives

# Frankly Speaking

The Maldives will be reopening its borders for tourism on July 15. Once tourists start to flock, how will the sector adapt to the pandemic in terms of products offered, travel and accommodation? And do you think the sector is psychologically ready?



**Mohamed Ali**  
Vice President  
Association of Travel Agents  
(ATA Maldives)

It is my opinion that the biggest challenge would be physiological in nature. It will take a while to adapt to this new normal. Except for the physical features, everything related to products offered, travel and accommodation would be different. Beach activities involving family members or those traveling in groups should not have any restrictions on beach activities. Overall, it will take a while to get adjusted to the new normal.



**Stefano Freschi**  
Founder  
Macana Maldives - Diving Tour Operator

Main problem is that Europe has not included the Maldives in its list of 15 countries that Europeans can go to without quarantine upon return. Furthermore, Italian citizens are not allowed to travel to countries outside of the EU.

Once this problem is solved, then we can start to think about the rest.



**Abdulla Suood**  
President  
Maldives Association of Travel Agents & Tour Operators (MATATO)

A new pandemic spread throughout the world, which makes traveling much harder. Unlike other countries we can offer a true Maldivian experience. Our tourist facilities provide peace of mind with complete privacy, and your stay would be uninterrupted by an excess of tourists. The rebound in leisure travel sentiments has so far been traditional. Tour operators report that travellers plan to take a leisure trip in the next few months and individual booking requests are more popular than group travellers. Guests may enjoy the hotel facilities like beach, restaurants, scuba diving plus spa & wellness facilities, but the re-opening hotels may not have routine activities available.

"Maldives, The Sun Will Shine Again" is the slogan chosen by MMPRC for its tourism re-launch campaign. As the Maldives readies to open its borders on July 15 and authorities and the tourism industry are showing a lot of optimism and self-confidence. We are eager to welcome tourists, in addition to preserving jobs and preparing businesses for recovery.



**Dr. Abdulla Zahir**  
Owner  
Fiyavalhu Maldives

Well, in terms of how the sector will adapt to the pandemic, my opinion is that even in the tourism sector, it won't be much different than other sectors. Most of the activities and processes will happen with the pandemic in mind. Which means more than normal cleansing measures, adequate physical distancing measures and less of large group activities to avoid inter-mingling, would have to be incorporated.

We will be targeting for the best possible occupancy with the best precautions. Most of the activities will be very private, exclusive and in smaller groups.

I strongly feel the sector is psychologically ready to welcome the guests.



**Corrado Scaburri**  
General Manager  
Top Class Cruising

Up to now, no tourists are allowed to travel yet; no Asians, no Americans, no European... so we still have to wait. I really hope Maldives is ready, but I am not sure about it at the moment. In any case, we want to start operations from August. Let's hope the world will help us.



**Suresh Dissanayake**  
Assistant Vice President - Sales & Marketing  
Aaaran Resorts

Maldives needs to learn from Bhutan; It's the only country in the world where forest cover area so much so that it is the only country that is carbon negative. That is because they limit development in these areas in addition to having a vision and a plan for the destination. On the other hand, Maldives loses coral reef cover every day with the developments happening in the country. This pandemic taught all of us a lesson: we need to be responsible of ourselves and our environment. I believe we will take this time as an opportunity and work towards a sustainable tourism plan for next 100 years.

We expect limited tourists during the first 6 months due to limited air capacity and the way the virus is spreading in some major source markets. We are welcoming guest for a holiday experience, all of whom have suffered in many ways during COVID-19. We don't want to remind them of the virus during their vacation. We have our guest-confidence protocols to make sure we provide a safe environment but our main aim is to offer a memorable holiday experience.

We will have our full offering, but in limited outlets until occupancy picks up. However, the guest will be able to have the full experience.



**Alvin Jacobs**  
Assistant Vice President, John Keells Group  
Head of Sales & Marketing (Maldives)  
Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts.

Initially it will be slow, we have to understand that tourists are here for their holidays. So, we cannot impose too many restrictions. As long as social distancing is maintained and staff are all face-masked, I feel things will be ok. The question is guest houses and hotels on inhabited islands. Initially there will be some limitations, but eventually we will have to adapt.

No country is ready in my opinion, but the sector has to start from somewhere. Starting now is good. Low arrivals will help resorts' staff adapt to the new normal through day-to-day operational experience. Eventually this would be the norm.

Anyway, all resorts in Maldives already adhere to high health and safety standards like ISO, HASSOP, etc. The new normal is only adding on a few extra precautions of disinfection and social distancing.



PHOTOGRAPHY



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Portrait | Fashion | Lifestyle

E: info@colourprofile.net, M: +960 9990555  
insta: doubledot.mv





# Daiya Devilled



*Fiery Goodness in a Bowl*