

# The islandchief

travel news

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# AISHA FAIZ

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT SUN SIYAM GROUP

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# Publisher's Note



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Dear Readers,

As Beyonce Knowles once said, "Who run the world? Girls!" that's who. From the new wave of young women in the Maldives' military having been promoted as the first female officers in the country's history as Lieutenant Colonels, to the women and girls standing up for what they believe every single day, in this much male-dominated sphere – we, at The islandchief, are proud to witness the progress taking place in the country in terms of women's empowerment.

In honour of International Women's Day, let us praise all the strong, powerful and hardworking women out there and in our very own lives – not just today, but every day. Here's to the women of the past, the present, and the future, and all of the women breaking barriers and paving ways for the next generation of confident, independent women. May we know them, may we encourage them, may we be them, and may we raise them.

The islandchief is thrilled to be celebrating women's day by featuring none-other than Aisha Faiz, Chief Operating Officer of Sun Siyam Group, to grace our March issue. She is ambitious, and inspiring to all. At just a young age she achieved her goals and built a name in the world of Tourism and Hospitality. Read Aisha's exclusive interview where she discusses with our editorial team; her role in the repositioning of Sun Siyam Group, her opinion on women's empowerment in the Maldives, and more interesting insights (p. 12).

It's also an exciting time for South Asia's tourism and hospitality industry as the 5th Edition of South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) 2021 has announced that they are now open for nominations (p. 16). Don't forget to also check out 'In a Nutshell', to get the latest scoop on tourism establishments in the Maldives (p. 8).

According to the Peace Corps, guaranteeing the rights of women and giving them opportunities to reach their full potential is critical not only for attaining gender equality, but also for meeting a wide range of international development goals. Empowered women and girls contribute to the health and productivity of families, communities, and countries, creating a ripple effect that benefits everyone. Most importantly we should never forget that empowerment begins when you have the confidence and belief in yourself.

Wishing all our readers a Happy International Women's Day 2021.

Until next month,  
The islandchief Team  
#ChooseToChallenge

DISTRIBUTION



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60+ LIVEABOARDS



20+ AIRLINES



100+ COMPANY EXECUTIVES



5 UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

# Trans Maldivian Airways to Commence Domestic Flight Operations

Trans Maldivian Airways (TMA) – the world’s largest seaplane operator – has revealed major expansion plans formulated to support the Maldives’ tourism infrastructure and aid the country in remaining as the leading tourism destination.



As part of its expansion, the seaplane operator plans to commence wheel-based domestic flight operations in the Maldives. TMA confirms the intent of introducing ATR aircraft to the existing fleet of twin-otters. As seaplanes are operated during

daylight hours, TMA hopes to provide a 24-hour transfer solution to all resorts with this new operation.

Additionally, with soon-to-open Maivaru Airport

designated as the base, TMA will carry out wheel-based operations later this year with the addition of its ATR aircraft to the company’s existing fleet of twin-otters.

TMA further informs that four twin otter aircraft will be delivered by the third quarter of 2021, increasing its seaplane fleet to 60 twin otter aircraft – strengthening its position as the World’s largest Seaplane Operator.

Trans Maldivian Airways has served the nation for over 30 years and currently operates over 150 flights daily, serving more than 80 resorts in the Maldives. Over the years, TMA has played a pivotal role in ensuring that tourism in the Maldives grows beyond Malé Atoll, and continues to serve as one of the most vital tourism stakeholders in the country.

# LOT Polish Airlines Commence Direct Flights from Poland to Maldives

Poland’s national flag carrier – ‘Polskie Linie Lotnicze LOT’ - LOT Polish Airlines – has commenced direct flights from Warsaw, Poland, to Velana International Airport (VIA), Maldives, with the first direct flight landing on Friday morning, February 19, 2021, with 294 passengers.

The Airline has confirmed five scheduled chartered flight until the end of March and is planned to continue until April 2021. LOT Polish Airlines’ charter flights are arranged via local travel agency Sun Ocean Maldives, joined with Poland’s Itaka.

According to Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL), the commencement of LOT Polish Airlines’ chartered flights will open up a new market to the Maldives, and will support the recovery of the country’s tourism industry.



LOT Polish Airlines, legally incorporated as Polskie Linie Lotnicze LOT S.A., is the flag carrier of Poland. Based in Warsaw and established on December 29, 1928, it is one of the world’s oldest airlines in operation. LOT Polish Airlines combines tradition and modernity, as one of the 12 longest existing airlines in the world, and have been connecting

Poland, Central and Eastern Europe with the world for over 91 years. Every year, the airline hosts millions of travellers on board aircraft, carrying over 10 million passengers in 2019. With over 120 regular connections to nearly 100 airports around the world, LOT Polish Airlines offer the most convenient and comfortable travel conditions.



## ACROSS THE SKIES

## GoAir Commences Malé–Hyderabad Direct Flights

GoAir, India's most trusted brand, has commenced scheduled direct flights between Malé and Hyderabad under the Air Bubble agreement effective February 8, 2021.

The Air Bubble initiative is one such step in the direction towards building confidence in air travel amongst travellers in the current situation. India has been expanding their air transport bubbles through bilateral agreements aimed at restarting commercial passenger services. As such, the Maldives signed on to establish an Air Bubble with India, becoming the first South Asian country to do so.

Flights via the new route will be operated 4 days a week; every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday:

- G8 4033 MLE - HYD 1430 1730
- G8 1533 HYD - MLE 1130 1330

The airline resumed direct flights to Malé, Maldives on November 1, 2020 after borders reopened with the implementation of various precautionary measures. The airline offers flights to Malé at affordable fares from Bengaluru, Delhi and Mumbai.



Customers can also take a number of connecting flights from India to Malé through various cities across the country.

Go Airlines (India) Ltd. is an aviation foray of the Wadia Group. It operates under the brand GoAir. In November 2005, GoAir launched its operations as a low-fare carrier to commoditise air travel and offer airline seats at a marginal premium to train fares across India. The airline currently operates across 32 destinations – 28 domestic, and 4 international

destinations including Dubai, Sharjah, Malé and Abu Dhabi. The GoAir route network spans across prominent business metros as well as key leisure destinations across the Indian subcontinent.

For bookings or inquiries:



## Qatar Airways to Become the First Global Airline to Offer Passengers 100% Touch-Free 'Zero-Touch' In-flight Entertainment Technology

Qatar Airways has announced plans to become the first global airline to offer passengers 100 percent Zero-Touch technology for its award-winning Oryx One in-flight entertainment system across the A350 fleet as part of the airline's latest COVID-19 safety measures.



The Zero-Touch technology, introduced in partnership with the Thales AVANT IFE system, will enable A350 passengers to pair their personal electronic devices (PEDs) with their seat-back IFE screen by connecting to 'Oryxcomms' Wi-Fi and scanning a QR code displayed on the screen. They can then use their PEDs to navigate and enjoy over 4,000 options on offer through the airline's award-winning Oryx One in-flight entertainment system, limiting the frequency of on-board surface contact and providing greater peace of mind throughout the duration of their journey.

Qatar Airways is also set to become the first airline in Europe and the Middle East and North Africa region to offer passengers in Business and Economy the option to pair their personal Bluetooth headphones with the on-board seatback IFE system in all cabins on the Boeing 787-9 fleet.

Oryx One, Qatar Airways' in-flight entertainment system offers passengers up to 4,000 entertainment options from the latest blockbuster movies, TV box sets, music, games and much more. Passengers can also stay in touch with their friends and family around the world by using the

award-winning airline's on-board Wi-Fi and GSM service.

Qatar Airways recently became the first global airline in the world to achieve the prestigious 5-Star COVID-19 Airline Safety Rating by international air transport rating organisation, Skytrax. This follows HIA's recent success as the first airport in the Middle East and Asia to be awarded a Skytrax 5-Star COVID-19 Airport Safety Rating. For full details of all the measures that have been implemented onboard and in HIA, please visit [qatarairways.com/safety](https://qatarairways.com/safety).

The national carrier of the State of Qatar continues to rebuild its network, which currently stands at over 130 destinations. A multi-award-winning airline, Qatar Airways was named 'World's Best Airline' by the 2019 World Airline Awards, managed by Skytrax. It was also named 'Best Airline in the Middle East', 'World's Best Business Class', and 'Best Business Class Seat', in recognition of its ground-breaking Business Class experience, Qsuite. The Qsuite seat layout is a 1-2-1 configuration, providing passengers with the most spacious, fully private, comfortable and social distanced Business Class product in the sky – available on flights to more than 45 destinations. It is the only airline to have been awarded the coveted 'Skytrax Airline of the Year' title, which is recognised as the pinnacle of excellence in the airline industry, five times.

# Market Recovery Continues with Increased Arrivals

According to the Tourism Status Update 25 February 2021 by the Ministry of Tourism, "Tourist arrival increases gradually surpassing 150,000 for the year. As of 24th February, the total number of arrivals for the month was 173,483 with a daily average of 3,154 tourists per day. Markets are recovering with impressive results. As of 24th February 2021, the Central/Eastern Europe and South Asia region both surpassed pre-COVID levels, posting above average growth rates of +76% and +36.5% respectively. Individual markets within the Central/Eastern European region are also performing with outstanding results as new markets emerge from this region and making it to top 10 list."

## Markets

From 1st January to 24th February 2021

	Arrivals		Growth (%)
	2020	2021	
Uzbekistan	275	1,657	502.5
Kazakhstan	2,066	7,692	272.3
Ukraine	3,637	11,767	223.5
Lithuania	532	1,484	178.9
Romania	3,333	6,887	106.6
Russia	20,487	37,308	82.1
India	27,327	40,045	46.5
Czech Republic	3,164	4,619	46.0
United Arab Emirates	922	1,296	40.6
Bulgaria	1,851	2,422	30.8
Brazil	1,887	2,346	24.3
Central/Eastern Europe	47,802	84,151	76.0
South Asia	30,956	42,265	36.5

## TOP 10 MARKETS FOR 2021

As of February 24, 2021

Market	Arrivals	Share (%)	Rank
India	40,045	23.1	01
Russia	37,308	21.5	02
Ukraine	11,767	6.8	03
Kazakhstan	7,692	4.4	04
Romania	6,887	4.0	05
Germany	6,621	3.8	06
France	5,169	3.0	07
Switzerland	4,643	2.7	08
Czech Republic	4,619	2.7	09
United Kingdom	4,238	2.4	10

Source: Tourism Status Update 25 February 2021 by Ministry of Tourism

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## IN A NUTSHELL

## Stay in Paradise for 3 Months or More with Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru Maldives' Newly Launched Long Stay Offer

Guests can spend their days in tropical luxury, with Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru Maldives' new long stay offer with a minimum stay of three months.



Luxurious private villas, pristine coral sand beaches, wellbeing and fitness, dining, diving, and watersports, all await sun-seekers in this slice of tropical haven. Guests are invited to enjoy the beauty of Maldives both above and below the ocean surface, and embark on a gastronomic journey all around the world with the Mövenpick brand's seventy years of culinary heritage and

expertise.

Each of the resort's 105 Overwater Pool Villas and Beach Pool Suites come with a spacious outdoor lounging area and a private plunge pool. With endless outdoor activities coupled with delicious cuisine and relaxation options there is plenty to explore at Mövenpick Kuredhivaru.

Guests can dive into the crystal ocean, with its diverse array of wildlife, ranging from tiny clown fish to mammoth whale sharks. Being an ocean-locked nation, the majority of the wildlife in the Maldives is aquatic and there is an incredible diversity of sea life from numerous corals to over 2,000 species of fish, ranging from tiny, colorful reef fish, moray eels, turtles, and rays, to giant pelagic fish, such as tuna, sharks, dolphins, and whale sharks. Other marine life in the waters surrounding the island includes octopus, squid, giant clams, various kinds of anemones and jellyfish.

Activity seekers can make the most of the afternoons by enjoying some active sports – guests can grab some balls and racquet for a game of tennis on the resort's floodlit court, or if new to the sport, guests can take up some lessons from the resort's resident tennis coach. If sports are not of interest, guests can indulge in a relaxing spa treatment at

Sun Spa by Healing Earth. Globally award-winning wellness and beauty brand, Healing Earth has treatments carefully and exclusively curated for the resort and inspired by the healing potential of Africa's rich natural resources. Guests can decide whether they prefer an overwater or jungle treatment room some ultimate rejuvenating.

Scan the QR code below to see what is included in the package for two people:



For more information, pricings and bookings please reach out to the **Mövenpick reservations team via email [Resort.Kuredhivaru.Reservations@movepick.com](mailto:Resort.Kuredhivaru.Reservations@movepick.com)**, or call **+960 656 3000**.

## Escape to the Chic Islands of Coco Collection with 10% Off its Coco Romance Package

Coco Collection offers ten percent off its Coco Romance Package for bookings from February 13 to April 30, 2021.

To secure a ten percent discount off this romantic getaway package, enter the code **XOXO21** when making an online booking, or scan the QR codes below:

### Coco Bodu Hithi -



### Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu -



Upon entering the beautifully designed villas, guests will be greeted by a bottle of Champagne and a platter of strawberries dipped in chocolate. Additionally, guests can feel rejuvenated with a luxurious couples' massage, sail across the Maldivian sea at sunset and savour a sumptuous private pergola dinner on the beach. Moreover, couples will get to

experience their very own Coco Cinema screening on the beach, under the stars with cosy seating perfect for snuggling.

All features included in the package are for two adults.

Bodu Hithi Island, in North Malé Atoll, is only 40 minutes away from Velana International Airport. The rhythm of life here is serene. The essential tropical mood stimulates and refreshes the senses. And the mystery of the House Reef meets the open elegance of pristine palm-fringed beaches.

Dhuni Kolhu lies in the stunning southern waters of the Baa Atoll. The 30-minute journey by seaplane from Velana International Airport gives guests a stunning start to their holiday – a bird's eye view of the azure lagoons and curling atolls. It's a taste of the natural reality that comes with your Maldives vacation. As you land, you are entering one of the world's essential havens – a designated UNESCO biosphere reserve and home to incredible marine life and reefs.



Coco Bodu Hithi



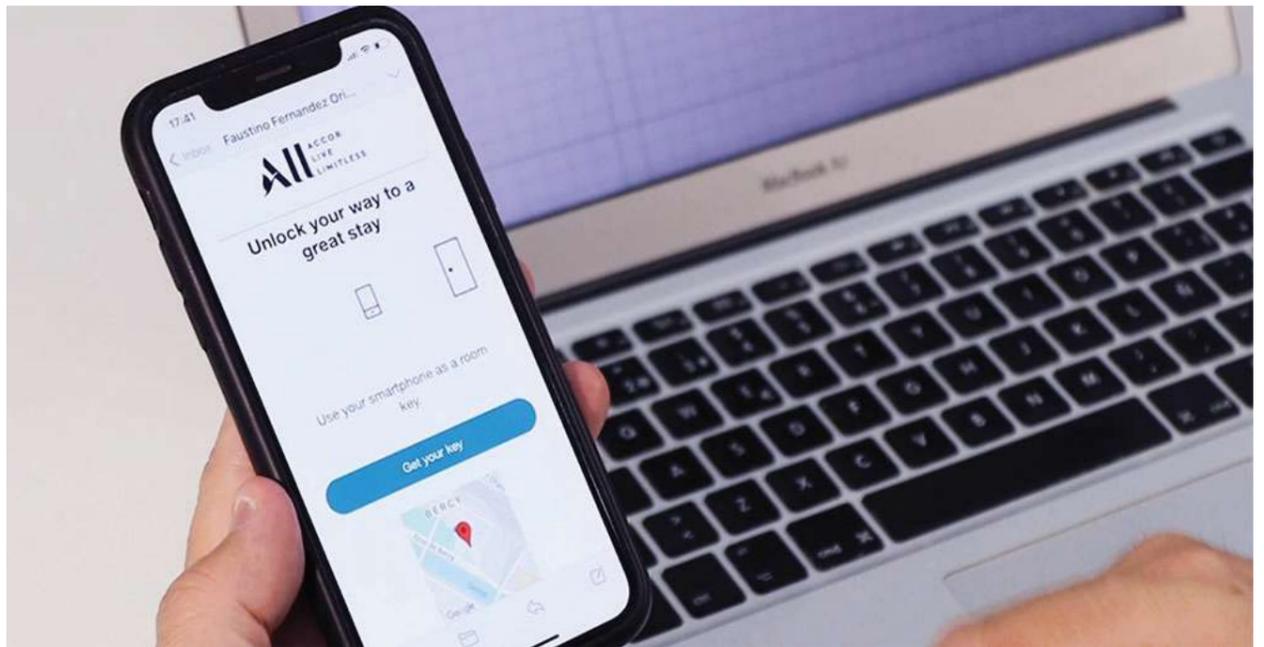
Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu

# Accor Announces the Global Launch of “Accor Key”, a Digital Key Solution

**Accor has announced the global roll-out of its digital key solution, “Accor Key”, in line with the Group’s strategy to provide a contactless guest journey in its facilities.**

This exciting new step for Accor supports the Group’s ambition to innovate and invest in high-quality technological solutions to deliver the very best and most convenient experience for its guests. The roll out will focus on providing customers with a keyless door entry solution, while ensuring that hotels do not lose the human touch that guests require. On arrival at their destination, customers will receive their room key virtually upon downloading Accor’s digital key app. Customers will then be given access to rooms, entry to meeting rooms and floor access via lifts using their smartphone. Once departing the hotel, the mobile key will automatically be deactivated.

The Accor key programme will be delivered through a partnership with STAYmyway. Faustino Fernandez, Founder & CEO of STAYmyway commented: “We are honored to be working with such an innovative company at such a critical time in our industry. A recent Deloitte study shows that sixty percent of



travellers are more likely to stay at a hotel that allowed contactless check in and the ability to use a smartphone as a room key – sixteen percent even say it’s a “must have”. The demand is even higher for frequent travellers.” Following successful pilot programmes in North America, Europe and Asia, the roll out will start in all new Accor hotels opening in 2021 and extend to existing properties with an

objective to equip 500 hotels with Accor Key this year, and at least fifty percent of all rooms across the network within the next five years.

By providing customers access to their rooms without a physical key, Accor will further help reduce the amount of plastic used for traditional key cards and cardboard for the key holder.

# An Easter Eggstravaganza of Family Fun Awaits at Seaside Finolhu

**With a whole host of fun-filled activities lined up this April, Seaside Finolhu invites tropical holiday seekers to treat their loved ones to an Easter Eggstravaganza of family fun at the perfect Easter getaway.**



As the excitement builds, the Easter Bunny will be paying a visit to get the festivities underway. Guided by the playful Easter Bunny and his team of helpers, kids of all ages are invited to join in the Great Finolhu Easter Egg Hunt with lots of special surprises just waiting to be found as they explore the island

playground.

Aside from all the special Easter events planned, the Oceaneers Kids Club will be the epicentre of fun and games for all younger guests throughout the Easter period. Supervised at all times by its professionally

trained staff, Finolhu’s Oceaneers are encouraged to explore the enchanting world that awaits them and express their creativity in a selection of interactive Easter-themed games and craft-based pursuits.

There are lots of fun activities for all the family to join in together, too. A family trip on the Penguin semi-submersible boat is a great way to explore the vibrant reefs and all the exotic marine life that call them home without even getting your feet wet. For those who prefer to get more up close and personal—and definitely wet—there are supervised snorkelling trips to the best spots on the local reefs.

While younger guests will surely enjoy hunting for their Easter Eggs, there is so much more to the Easter Dining Menus; from a fun seafood lunch in the Crab Shack or some tasty treats from Milk Lab to a feast of flavours in Beach Kitchen, countless opportunities will be provided to indulge all tastebuds in quite a range of delightful dining experiences.

Whether choosing to stay in one of the resort’s spacious two-bedroom beach or water pool villas, or treat the family to the resort’s extravagant flagship two-bedroom Rockstar villa, an Easter Eggstravaganza of family fun awaits at Seaside Finolhu.

## IN A NUTSHELL

## Iiti Maafushivaru Introduces Mobile App to Enhance Guest Services and Extends Complimentary PCR Test Offer

Launched in January, Iiti Maafushivaru's new official mobile application gives guests the opportunity to make the most of their idyllic and unique island experiences right at their fingertips.



The specially built, easy-to-use app is available on both, the App Store and Google Play. Once downloaded, guests can simply log in with a complete name and email address. It gives the guests easy access to everything on offer at Iiti Maafushivaru, both before and during their stay. Some key features of the app include the resort gallery, a directory of facilities and services, daily

and weekly weather forecasts, information on dining outlets (operating hours, menus), important resort updates, a direct link to the resort's website, special offers and packages, plus instant messaging services with the resort team, available 24/7 for any general inquiries.

One of the most helpful features of the

Iiti Maafushivaru app, is the COVID-19 Alert which can be found under the 'Directory' page. It has all the information about COVID-19 measures and guidelines, free PCR tests for in-house guests and a direct link to the Online Health Declaration Form – mandatory for all guests prior to entering and exiting the Maldives.

In line with this update, Iiti Maafushivaru has further announced the extension of their offer for complimentary PCR tests until March 31, 2021. Should guests require a negative PCR test to board their flight back to their home country, the resort provides one PCR test per person free of charge.

Due to widespread concerns of the pandemic, the continued health and safety of guests, employees and business partners has been top priority for the management of Iiti Maafushivaru. The luxury tropical resort aims to create a safe haven for guests to enjoy their Maldivian getaway experience, keep them safe and secure, and stay up-to-date with all the island-happenings throughout their stay on their own mobile device. For more information, visit [www.maafushivaru.com](http://www.maafushivaru.com)

## Hurawalhi Invites Guests to Become a Marine Scientist on Seagrass Sundays

Hurawalhi Maldives' Marine Biologists, Lara and Aline, invite guests to join them on Sundays to monitor the resort's beautiful seagrass meadow. Guests will get to learn about its importance for species such as sea turtles and other marine life, while having fun applying scientific methods to collect valuable data.

Seagrasses are the only underwater flowering plants on the planet and unlike seaweed, they possess complex root structures to anchor the plant and take up nutrients and reproduce via flowers and seeds. They grow in shallow temperate and tropical waters and provide a home and nursery ground for many marine species, as well as food for endangered green sea turtles which eat up to 2kg of seagrass per day. It's no coincidence that the Maldives' largest community of green sea turtles thrive on the reefs of Lhaviyani Atoll which has large, healthy seagrass meadows – 4 hectares of seagrass was found to support a green turtle population of 76 individuals at Kuredu Resort Maldives, nearby Hurawalhi Maldives. Despite the many benefits of seagrass meadows, globally, like coral reefs, they are under threat by dredging, trawling, pollution and even removal.

Seagrasses in the Maldives have been undervalued in the past and mainly been seen as a nuisance by



the tourism industry in general. Hurawalhi is fortunate to harbour a large seagrass meadow, located between the back jetty and ocean villas, supporting a vast variety of marine species such as green turtles.

**Scan the QR code below to Join Hurawalhi's Seagrass Sunday and learn a lot more about this fascinating marine ecosystem:**



The 90-villa, adults-only luxury resort, Hurawalhi Maldives, is as brilliant as the ocean that laps against its beaches, providing guests with a beautiful blend of barefoot bliss and contemporary design. The stylishly conceived 60 ocean villas and 30 beach villas feature soothing décor and private terraces with panoramic views. The resort is also home to the glorious 5.8 Undersea Restaurant, dazzling diners with a tasting extravaganza, garnished with a spectacular location. The resort can be reached during daylight hours by a scenic, 40-minute seaplane flight from Velana International Airport.

# VIP TERMINAL OPENING SOON



# REINVENTING



# SUN SIYAM with

# AISHA FAIZ

## CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT SUN SIYAM GROUP

“ *Sun Siyam already has women in powerful positions now and they are considered pillars of this company as they have put in so much work and determination to ensure that this company stays on top.* ”

In light of International Women's Day 2021, a day marked out to recognise and understand the challenges that women face, as well as to celebrate the achievements and successes of women everywhere, we sat with Chief Operating Officer of Sun Siyam Group, Aisha Faiz, to ask a couple of burning questions. In this exclusive interview she gave us some amazing insights into her role within Sun Siyam Group, her background, plus career and life lessons as a mother, and what she hopes to achieve at Sun Siyam.

***In December 2020, you were appointed as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Sun Siyam Group, a brand that is resolutely part of the luxury segment. What role will you play in its repositioning?***

A key focus for me is to ensure the Sun Siyam Group operates in a way that is efficient, cost effective and successful. I am mostly involved in Finance, HR functions, and purchasing operations of the day-to-day activities at Sun Siyam Group. Similarly, developing our staff is a top priority. When customers speak to a representative of Sun Siyam, if the staff has little experience, poor training, or are not happy with the company, it shows in service. So, we want our staff to be well trained, to have the adequate knowledge. I also believe we have a large talent pool in our local community, and giving opportunities and development for our people is key in the success of our company. Employees are our biggest asset.

***What are some defining moments or pivotal points in your career that reflects on stepping into your new role?***

I was working alongside the Managing Director of Sun Siyam

when the travel agency first opened its doors in 1990. Once Sun Travels & Tours became an established travel company, I wanted to focus on personal growth and development. So after successfully completing my BSc Degree from Marymount Manhattan College in New York; and while finishing my MBA, I also worked in a Travel and Trade company in Singapore for about 11 years as a Director.

I had spent more than 20 years living and working overseas, so I wanted time with my family and loved ones, especially during this difficult time. I wanted to give back part of my experience to my country, and to the company which I was a part of from its inception.

***What is your opinion about women's empowerment in the Maldives? Are women provided with adequate liberty and opportunities at workplaces, especially within the tourism industry?***

We as women, have what I like to call an abundance of emotional intelligence in addition to our capabilities and knowledge. Because of this, we tend to know how to create and maintain relationships, empathize with people, and make well-informed decisions. I think women have come a long way and



Siyam World, Maldives



Sun Siyam Vilu Reef, Maldives



Sun Siyam Iru Fushi, Maldives



Sun Siyam Iru Fushi, Maldives



Sun Siyam Olhuveli, Maldives



Sun Siyam Iru Veli, Maldives

now you see more and more women in leadership roles. I do believe that the tourism industry has changed significantly and you see more women in male-dominated roles which is a big step forward. We still have a lot to accomplish and I am sure we are paving the way for the future by showing the younger generation that there are no longer gender specific roles in any work place.

**Do you think the tourism and hospitality industry in the Maldives is a gender-dominated vocation?**

Back in the day, we might have said this is true. However, I do not think that this is a statement we can repeat now. We see women in powerful positions in this industry now.

**How do you achieve work-life balance?**

I am a very organised and meticulous person. Work-life balance is essential, especially when you are in a position as this. I practice efficiency; when I wake up and go to the office, I make sure I complete everything that I need to do that day without interruption or distraction. Focus, organisation and structure are key. By the end of the day, I have my work planned and organised ahead, so I know exactly what needs to be done when I arrive at the office the next day. This way I am able to go home at the end of the day, take time for myself, and spend time with family.

**Is it (still) necessary as a woman nowadays to decide between career and children, and what advice would you give to young women in this regard?**

I do not think it is necessary. I think we women are so strong. We are masters at multi-tasking, we can do anything; be a mom and a powerful business woman at the same time. I raised my daughter, I worked, studied, cooked and cleaned – I did it all. It's all about the will to achieve things. If you train your brain right, sky is the limit!

It took a lot of experience, hard work and sacrifice to get to where I am in my life. Being a mother and a passionate cook myself, I don't think having children and family responsibilities should hinder women in any opportunities for growth.

Our society needs improvement in balancing work and life. I want that stability for working women, so I always tell my team to be as efficient as you can, by managing time.

Sun Siyam is fortunate enough to have the support of

seasoned female employees who have been with us from the start and are now in top-level positions of the group. I hope to see more women and local women filling up top positions in the industry.

**How is Sun Siyam Group empowering women?**

Sun Siyam has been giving a lot of opportunities for women. There is no discrimination and no limit as long as they are right for the job, and have the knowledge and capability. Sun Siyam already has women in powerful positions now and they are considered pillars of this company as they have put in so much work and determination to ensure that this company stays on top. We do not have gender specific roles in Sun Siyam and I think in the future, we will see more women in powerful positions.

**What are you most optimistic about for the hospitality industry in the years to come?**

It is great to see young people showing interest in working in the industry. Inevitably, the future of tourism lies with the up-and-coming youth of the country. I'm excited to see what they have in store for us. We are also seeing a lot of local talent in middle management and in high-ranking positions of the industry.

This is where hiring and having local talent present at our resorts prove as an advantage. Apart from giving young people the opportunity to learn, it gives guests the chance to interact with a local, who is showing their home to a foreign visitor – it brings a layer of authenticity. For a tourist, a conversation with a proficient local, tops one with a foreigner every time.

**What is your overall goal for Sun Siyam? What do you hope to achieve?**

Sun Siyam is a company dear to my heart. My hope for the future is that Sun Siyam becomes one of the most successful and leading companies not only locally, but also recognised internationally. We are diversifying, expanding, and I believe we have a bright future. Growth and success are never by mere chance, it is with dedication, passion and an unbreakable team willing to take risks and work together. That is what I hope to accomplish – to build this company up together with our loyal and dedicated people.

**The International Women's Day is around the corner and if you had one piece of advice to give someone starting a career in tourism and hospitality, what would it be?**

Hard work, determination and passion are the keys to success. Be efficient, productive and strive to be the best and nothing can stand in your way! Be the example of success and integrity. Time is of the essence. Don't lose sight of time!



Sun Siyam Pasikuda, Sri Lanka

## MOVERS &amp; SHAKERS

## The Atmosphere Group appoints a trio of General Managers

Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts has appointed; Philippe Claverotte as Vice President Operations for 'The White Label Set' by Atmosphere and General Manager of 'VARU by Atmosphere'; Mei P. Pun as the General Manager of 'Atmosphere Kanifushi'; and Monica Suri as General Manager of 'OBLU SELECT' at Sangeli.



### Philippe Claverotte

Philippe Claverotte will lead operations for 'The White Label Set' sub-brand and serve as the General Manager of VARU By Atmosphere. The White Label Set by Atmosphere offers classic Indian Ocean luxury resorts with a distinct character. Philippe Claverotte has been serving as the General Manager of Atmosphere Kanifushi since March 2020 and has a deep understanding of the company philosophy - Joy of Giving. A veteran in the hospitality industry, Philippe has worked for luxury hotel groups across twelve countries, including holding General Manager positions in leading resorts in the Maldives, Bora Bora, and New Caledonia.



### Mei P. Pun

At the helm of the other 'White Label Resort', Atmosphere Kanifushi, is the newly appointed General Manager Mei P. Pun. With over 22 years in the hospitality industry, Mei has worked in elite hotels and resorts in the Caribbean, Mauritius, China, France, and South-East Asia. She has extensive experience in the Maldives, having held the positions of Food and Beverage Manager, Resort Manager, and General Manager. Mei boasts a strong background in food and beverage operations.



### Monica Suri

Monica joined as the General Manager of VARU by Atmosphere in October 2019, during the crucial days leading up to the resort opening, and successfully managed the team for a grand launch. Monica brings more than a decade of experience within the hospitality industry and knowledge from human resources, training, and core operations. A graduate from the Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Bangalore, Monica has previously worked as the General Manager of a prestigious resort in India. She has also completed a Leadership Program from Cornell and is a passionate traveller who has visited thirty-six countries.

Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts continues to increase its portfolio with the finest resort products that cater to specific demands of the modern-day 'Global Traveller'. The brand offers a wide range of four-star, five star, and luxury holiday experiences - coupled with the highest standards of guest service to meet the discerning traveller's expectations. Properties of the brand include: OZEN by Atmosphere (North Malé Atoll), Atmosphere Kanifushi (Lhaviyani Atoll), OBLU Select Sangeli (North Malé Atoll), Varu by Atmosphere (North Malé Atoll) and OBLU by Atmosphere (North Malé Atoll).

## Rahaa Resort Appoints Anusha Zubair as Sales & Marketing Manager



**Bringing with her almost two decades of experience in the tourism and hospitality industry, Anusha has worked with several luxury and four-star properties of renowned brands.**

Anusha has previously been involved in pre-openings, expanding her knowledge and understanding of the field, ready to make efficient decisions in any faced situation. Prior to her new role, she has held sales and marketing-related roles at Bandos, Huvafen Fushi, Amari, Fushifaru Maldives and most recently, The Nautilus Maldives.

Rahaa Resort – the four-star lifestyle resort located in the jaw-dropping Laamu Atoll in Southern Maldives – is a 35-minute domestic flight transfer from Velana International Airport, followed by a 20-minute speedboat ride. Once instrumental when

the nation was a Kingdom, Laamu Atoll retains its regal wonder nestled within the turquoise water. Rahaa itself means 'Kingdom' or 'Throne' in the local language of Dhivehi, making Laamu the perfect backdrop for the Rahaa brand. Rahaa promotes accessibility to all travellers seeking the luxury of the Maldives at affordable rates, supporting its belief that everyone should have access to the magic of the Maldives. The approximately 150,000-square-meter island with its very own lagoon is surrounded by a powder-soft, sandy beach and has a total of 150 intricately designed villas with high quality furnishings and fittings.



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## EVENTS &amp; AWARDS

## South Asian Travel Awards Opens Nominations for 2021

South Asia's most anticipated tourism and hospitality recognition award has opened nomination for the year 2021. The awards which was launched in 2016 recognizes the best of South Asia's hospitality and travel industry. The prestigious annual event honours stellar organizations and individuals in a wide array of categories.

SATA opened the nominations with over 52 categories for properties and brands to compete, in addition to Visitors Choice Awards and Special Recognition Awards.

SATA has been endorsed by over 15 International and government agencies for its work to elevate tourism and hospitality in the region.

- Association of Professionals in Tourism (APT)
- Association of Tourism Trade Organizations, India (ATTOI)
- Association of Travel Agents (ATA)
- Colombo Chamber of Commerce (CCC)
- Confederation of Accredited Tour Operators (CATO)
- Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL)



- Hotel and Restaurant Association of Bhutan (HRAB)
- Kerala Hotel General Manager Club (KHGMC)
- National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM)
- Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators (MATATO)
- Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation (MMPRC)
- Nepal Tourism Board (NTB)
- Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO)
- The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL)
- Bangladesh International Hotel Association (BIHA)
- The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)

This year SATA celebrates its 6th year in recognizing regions Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Industry. Despite all the challenges, SATA 2020 was held virtually. The previous editions being held at Amari Galle, Sri Lanka (2019), Taj Mahal Palace, India (2018), Equator Village, Maldives (2017) and Mount Lavinia Hotel, Sri Lanka (2016).

The SATA Team believes that a nation must go on. The travel industry, especially, must prevail by working together during one the most difficult times the world is facing. The market would be tough, however, lifting ourselves up and standing strong will only speed up recover. The impact is global and how we act locally would benefit the tourism industry of South Asia and around the globe.

Properties can now nominate online via [www.southasiantravelawards.com](http://www.southasiantravelawards.com) until 10th April 2021.

### South Asian Travel Awards

The South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) has been recognizing the best of South Asia's hospitality and travel industry since 2016. The prestigious annual event honors stellar organizations and individuals in a wide array of categories.

E: [secretariat@satravelawards.com](mailto:secretariat@satravelawards.com)  
T: +960 7980088

## New Dates Announced for Dubai International Boat Show

Dubai International Boat Show has rescheduled its 2021 edition to take place from March 8 to 12, 2022 to be held at Dubai Harbour. This decision was made after consultation with its clients and stakeholders, stated the organizers of the event.

The deferment is made in consideration of the evolving regulations and logistics on the movement of yachts internationally, and its continued commitment to provide the maximum diversity and choice of global brands to regional customers. The event will be delivered with strict standards of health & safety precautionary measures including social distancing, contactless transactions and hygiene protocols at all times.

Abeer Alshaali, Acting CEO of Gulf Craft said: "Diversity of choices for visitors and safety are always the key considerations for Gulf Craft so we fully support the decision to postpone the Dubai International Boat Show. While we were looking forward to taking part in this leading industry event, we respect and value the focus of the authorities in ensuring the wellbeing of all participants, visitors and staff."

Michael Breman, Sales Director of Lürssen Yachts said: "We are delighted that the organisers of Dubai Boat Show consulted us on the global leisure yachting developments. It is certainly the best decision for yacht



builders globally for the event to take place at a more opportune time."

Ahmad Musaed Al Ameer, CEO of Seas & Deserts said: "We fully endorse Dubai Boat Show's latest decision resultant of the continued challenges in boat movements regionally. We will continue our support to the show for the next edition in 2022"

Bogdan Borascu, Marketing Director of Ocean 360 said: "Ocean 360 supports the decision of the Dubai Boat Show and we're looking forward to welcoming the

yachting industry and enthusiasts to Dubai for the March 2022 edition"

Dubai International Boat Show is the premier and most established boat show in the UAE, GCC and Middle East. Whether you want to buy a boat, discover luxury yachts and superyachts, explore the latest diving and aquatic innovations or ride the sparkling waves, it's the definitive event for luxury and lifestyle. Co-located with Dive MENA Expo, the only dedicated show for the UAE and GCC diving community.

# Velana International Airport Receives ACI “Voice of the Customer” Recognition Award

Velana International Airport (VIA) has received the “Voice of the Customer” recognition award by Airports Council International (ACI) in gratitude of the continuous effort by VIA in prioritising passengers, and to its commitment in ensuring that customers’ and travellers’ voices were heard during the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020.

According to ACI World, this is the first time a recognition of this nature is granted. This recognition is given to airports that demonstrated significant efforts in gathering passenger feedback through Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Departure survey to help airports better understand customers during the pandemic. To qualify for the customer recognition award airports must have collected more than three quarters of data.

On receiving the award, Maldives Airports Company Limited’s (MACL) CEO & MD, Gordon Andrew Stewart said: “This achievement is recognition that our work is in alignment with the international best practices in delivering our services to the passengers travelling through our airport. I applaud our dedicated team’s commitment in delivering the kind experience that our passengers want.”



On September 2020, VIA became the 2nd airport in the Asia Pacific Region and 12th in the world to receive the “Airport Health Accreditation” certificate

from ACI, adhering to international health guidelines established by International Aviation institutions.

# Sun Island Resort & Spa Wins Several New Prestigious Accolades



Sun Island has achieved Agoda’s prestigious 2020 Gold Circle Award (GCA), denoting exceptional service. Agoda.com offers this prestigious award to hotels and resorts that have proven their place among the best, providing excellent value, service, and flexibility to guests.

And with a brilliant score of 9.1 out of 10, Sun Island has won Booking.com’s Traveller Review Award for 2021; an

award that exemplifies exceptional guest experiences. Sun Island has also received Hotel.com’s ‘Loved by Guests Award 2021’ for high guest rating scores, and the prized Holiday Check Award granted based on customers’ ranking of the world’s most popular hotels.

Sun Island’s General Manager, Abdulla Fathhey – who also recently received the title of the 2020 Best

General Manager of the Maldives by the World Luxury Awards in recognition of his commitment to excellence and outstanding achievement in luxury hospitality – said: “These awards, collectively, are an honour bestowed to us by our wonderful guests. I am forever grateful to all our guests for their loyalty to Sun Island and their appreciation of our staff for providing exceptional service at all times. For the past year and to date, especially throughout these trying times, our staff has been extraordinary in stepping up to ensure guest safety and comfort. I am fortunate to be a part of a winning team and will strive to merit these recognitions with the continued support and encouragement from our beloved guests”.

Sun Island Resort & Spa has 462 beautifully furnished rooms offering harmonious views. All rooms have mainstream amenities and accessories and are conveniently equipped for the modern tourist. Guests can cruise along the stunning sapphire lagoons by jet-ski, canoe or catamaran; explore the spectacular local scenery and unique culture with excursions to neighbouring islands; or, simply sway gently in a relaxing hammock. From invigorating activities to precious tranquility, this Maldivian resort will captivate the heart with extraordinary experiences and unforgettable memories.

## IN THE NEWS

# Scuba Schools International Partners with Lifeguard Academy Maldives to Provide Lifeguard Training Programmes for Tourist and Local Facilities



Since 2018 Scuba Schools International (SSI) has been working within the Maldives to train lifeguards and improve in-water safety for tourist and local facilities which offer in-water activities. Here the main goal has always been to improve in-water safety at beaches and public swim areas, as well as to provide additional career opportunities for the Maldivian youth.

The SSI lifeguard programme was created by SSI with the help of international training director Michael Schroeder. This programme has the highest level of training available and includes the most important skills required by most countries and is recognised in many countries at a national level.

Since the recently implemented regulation (nr. 2020/r-27) from the Ministry of Tourism, which states that all tourist facilities which offer in-water activities must have lifeguards on duty and emergency plans in place, SSI, together with Lifeguard Academy Maldives, have put together a plan of action to see that as many facilities can get their staff trained, ready to meet this deadline.

The SSI lifeguard programme includes a theoretical part, which although currently in English, this will be translated into Dhivehi along with the SSI React Right course which covers all emergency first and secondary aid training. With an easy-to-use app and high-quality training materials,

students can already start to learn at their own pace at home in preparation for the course. During the course there will be classroom learning and a lot of in-water practice and drills to make sure that each candidate is able to perform every skill at the highest standard. Students must pass all parts of the course in order to obtain the lifeguard rating and must continue to train throughout the year participating in an update to prove their fitness and rescue abilities every two years.

Lifeguard Academy Maldives is offering consultation for resorts and local tourist facilities to advise how they should position their lifeguard posts, where to locate the first aid kits, rescue equipment needed and assist

in creating an emergency plan specific to their island and atoll.

All training will be conducted using the latest technology in high quality rescue equipment, and additional rescue seabob and jet ski training can be taught for those facilities that use or require the use of rescue seabobs or jet skis to keep their visitors safe.

If you are in need of lifeguard training or lifeguards for your tourist facility, please contact the director of Lifeguard Academy Maldives, Mohamed Jalal (jerry@waterproofsports.org or call +960 7913450), or SSI Area Manager Maldives Martin Langenberg (martin.langenberg@divessi.com or call +960 7940774).

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# Mercury Marine Introduces the All-New V12 600hp Verado Engine – Redefining Outboard Performance



Mercury Marine, a division of Brunswick Corporation has introduced the new 7.6-liter V12 600hp Verado outboard engine. With this launch, Mercury continues to transform the high-horsepower outboard market, providing its most powerful and capable outboard, which includes several industry-first features for a wide variety of applications.

Chris Drees, President of Mercury Marine stated: “With boats continuing to grow bigger and performance expectations continuing to rise, boaters have been asking for a better, more capable high-horsepower solution to meet their needs. The V12 Verado outboard is Mercury’s answer. Using our advanced engineering and design capabilities, we completely redefined outboard performance. The V12 Verado outboard delivers boaters unrivaled freedom, luxury and power to pursue their passions on the water. This is a remarkable engine that will change the future of boating.”

The world’s first V12 outboard, the 600hp Verado engine features a naturally aspirated, large-displacement, quadcam powerhead that generates impressive torque to get heavy boats out of the hole and on plane quickly, and to accelerate up to rated speed rapidly. It is the industry’s first two-speed automatic transmission for an outboard optimises engine rpm according to workload, facilitating powerful acceleration and highly efficient performance at cruise. It is also the industry’s first steerable gearcase on an outboard pivot independently

underwater while the engine’s powerhead remains in a space-saving fixed position. This provides more room for multiengine configurations and a wider steering angle for agile handling. With help from contrarotating propellers, it also has better “bite” in the water for docking and other close-quarter maneuvering. Several enhanced Mercury technologies work in conjunction to enable the V12 Verado outboard to deliver exceptional fuel economy and range.

“The V12 Verado outboard delivers everything boaters want and more in a high-horsepower outboard. This engine makes boats easy to maneuver near the dock and provides superior handling at all speeds. It’s incredibly fuel efficient, so boaters can go farther and stay out longer. It’s so smooth and quiet that you can have a conversation while the engines are running. It’s durable, reliable and easy to maintain. There’s nothing else like the V12 Verado outboard in the marketplace today,” Drees added. The development of the V12 Verado outboard is a product of Mercury’s continued commitment to investing in R&D and manufacturing expansion, which includes more than USD1.5 billion of investment since 2008.

“We’ve dedicated substantial investments and years of effort toward enhancing our ability to turn highly creative ideas into practical, functional and dependable solutions,” said Tim Reid, Mercury Marine vice president of development and engineering. “That work has

positioned us well to anticipate and respond to shifts in the marketplace. We listened carefully to boaters’ needs and wishes, and we created new product capabilities aimed at exceeding their highest expectations,” said Drees.

**The Mercury Marine V12 Verado outboard will be available this spring. For more information and full performance report:**



and



**V12 Verado product launch video:**



Headquartered in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, Mercury Marine is the world’s leading manufacturer of recreational marine propulsion engines. A division of Brunswick Corporation, Mercury provides engines, boats, services and parts for recreational, commercial and government marine applications. The company empowers boaters with products that are easy to use, extremely reliable and backed by the most dedicated customer support in the world. Mercury’s industry-leading brand portfolio includes Mercury outboard engines, Mercury MerCruiser sterndrive and inboard packages, Mercury propellers, Mercury inflatable boats, Mercury SmartCraft electronics, Land 'N' Sea marine parts distribution and Mercury and Quicksilver parts and oils.

## IN THE NEWS

## Ooredoo Maldives Partners with Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology for its Internet Safety Campaign



Ooredoo Maldives continues its efforts towards making the internet a safer place for all through its nationwide Internet Safety Campaign. As part of the campaign, Ooredoo Maldives partnered with the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology to continue educating and spreading awareness on the importance of cyber safety.

Minister of Communication, Science & Technology,

Hon. Mohamed Maleeh Jamaal stated: "Although the internet benefits us immeasurably, it also opens doors to certain risks, such as malware, spam, phishing, cyber bullying, blackmailing and many more. Hence, it is extremely important to educate our younger generations, parents, teachers and the elderly to be safe on the internet for a positive and enriching experience. We are thrilled to partner with Ooredoo Maldives and join their efforts in spreading the

much-needed awareness to ensure online safety to our communities."

Managing Director & CEO of Ooredoo Maldives, Najib Khan stated: "With all kinds of information at our fingertips and access to platforms for interactions with anyone across the globe, it paves way for malicious activities such as online grooming, cyber bullying, fraud and many more. Hence, it is extremely important to be aware on how to navigate through these risks. We are pleased to partner with Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology to ensure a safer internet for all. Likewise, we look forward to engaging with key stakeholders across industries to find solutions for existing social issues related to cyber safety, and create a safe space online for ourselves and our loved ones."

The Internet Safety campaign includes a number of initiatives such as; the introduction of security tools, webinars for parents, webinars for students, digital literacy programs for the elderly community and internet safety awareness videos. The aim of Ooredoo's Internet Safety campaign is to ensure that the internet is a safer and life enriching space for all.

## Maldives Signs Agreement with University of Milano-Bicocca to Protect Coral Reefs

**An agreement has been signed between the Government of the Maldives and University of Milano-Bicocca, initiating a coral reef restoration project in the Maldives.**

On behalf of the Government of Maldives, the agreement was signed by Minister of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture H.E. Zaha Waheed, and on behalf of the University of Milano-Bicocca, the agreement was signed by Rector of Bicocca University, Prof. Giovanna Iannantuoni.

At the signing event held virtually, Minister of Foreign Affairs H. E. Abdulla Shahid spoke of the importance of the ocean and the coral reef ecosystems to the livelihoods and economic development of the Maldives and highlighted the importance of protecting these environments. He expressed gratitude to the investment made by the University to conduct quality scientific research and cooperation programmes in Faafu Atoll Magoodhoo.

Further initiatives in the areas of marine research, capacity building, and renewable energy were undertaken by University of Milano-Bicocca. These



initiatives are expected to see a positive impact on the local students as well.

Concluding his remarks, Minister Shahid thanked the Government of Italy for the important role Italy played in the promotion of the Maldives as a

tourism destination and for the strengthening of the Maldives – Italy relations in recent years. He further noted the close cooperation between the two countries in areas of mutual interest such as climate change, sustainable development, democracy and human rights.

IN THE NEWS

# Aqua Vita Residences - An Insight into the Building's Construction Progress & Project Performance

**Aqua Vita Residences' company personnel have put themselves fourth to develop an exceptional crisis management plan, and to ensure the smooth and efficient progression of ongoing projects.**

The management team of Aqua Vita Residences has been working tirelessly to execute smooth and efficient construction progressions of the property. At present, eighty percent of construction work of the luxurious apartment complex located in Hulhumalé has been successfully completed; the entire structural work of Aqua Vita Residences was completed by the end of August 2020. All the masonry work of the building was concluded by the end of October 2020, along with twenty-eight percent of the building complex's paint work. Additionally, by the end of November 2020, forty percent of the waterproofing work was complete, totaling to eighty percent of the whole project being completed.

Aqua Vita Residences informs that its team has been executing the project with appreciable coordination and integrated efforts to ensure that the project is completed on time, within the

budget, along with the highest degree of quality and in a substantially, safe manner for the entire team.

After completion of the foundation work, columns, wall reinforcements and walls up to the first floor, the construction team has been progressively finishing the construction work from the first to the fourteenth floor. The team ensured proper execution of work to complete the slab formwork and slab reinforcements of each floor, and commenced the masonry work. After completion of the building works, the team then moved forward with plastering the internal walls of the building. The management of Aqua Vita Residences further unveils that the team has commenced work on; bathroom plumbing, main piping work, paint work, external plastering, ceiling work, window framework, window glass installation, glass fixing,



waterproofing, testing of the plumbing, electrical cable work and bathroom tiling.

The management's careful and close monitoring of progress has enabled the company to utilise maximum manpower and resources, resulting in the eighty percent completion of work by the end of January 2021. This reflects and validates the positive impacts and the cost-effectiveness of real-time,

accurate, close progress monitoring, which results in the overall success of the projects.

Regardless of the challenges faced due to COVID-19 by the entire team of Aqua Vita Residences, the team gives full assurance that the luxurious apartment handover process will start by the end of May 2021. For more information, please contact 7388866 or 7708866 during office hours.

# Maldives Breaks Record Again with Over 5,200 Tourist Arrivals in a Single Day

**The Maldives welcomed another record-breaking number for the year 2021, of over 5,200 tourist arrivals on a single day.**



The Ministry of Tourism disclosed that on February 21, 2021, the island nation witnessed a total of 5,268 tourist arrivals. The previously held record was observed on February 14, 2021, in which the Maldives observed a total of 4,856 tourist arrivals. The statistics published by the Ministry of Tourism reveals that a total of 176,394 tourists arrived in the Maldives

between February 1 and 25, 2021.

India is currently the leading source market with 40,045 tourist arrivals for the year 2021, followed by Russia with 37,308 arrivals. The third top source market for the Maldives is currently Ukraine with 11,767 arrivals.

All visitors arriving in the Maldives are granted a thirty-day free on-arrival visa with a confirmed booking for a stay at any registered tourist facility within the country. While tourists are not required to quarantine or test on arrival, they are required to complete an online health declaration form within 24 prior to departure and produce a negative PCR test conducted at least 96 hours prior to their departure. The Maldives continues to gain recognition in its efforts to create a safe destination for travellers. The country received the SafeTravels Stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), in recognition of the efforts to implement enhanced health and safety measures, in line with the WTTC global Safe Travels protocols.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with Allied Insurance, has introduced the first COVID-19 Travel Insurance in Maldives. This policy covers charges for services including isolation costs, medical treatment and transportation costs to isolation/medical facilities and consists of two plans; "Allied Inbound" and "Allied Inbound Plus." The package covers seven or more days and can be purchased before arriving in Maldives through the Allied Insurance website.

BON APPÉTIT

# PROTEIN LEGÙ PASTA WITH CURRY & VEGETABLE PURÉE



Corporate Executive Chef of Cocoon Maldives, Giovanni De Ambrosis is an award-winning, progressive culinary professional with over 25 years of experience in world-class resorts, hotels and restaurants. He exemplifies professionalism and has the ability to drive clients' satisfaction and retention through the creation of quality food, while fostering a friendly and pleasant dining experience. With his extensive knowledge, he has strong business administrative insight, along with recruiting, training and interpersonal skills. His natural ability to both, create an enthusiastic, productive working environment, and maintain a reputation of quality, service and dedication, has brought him to where he is today; the Ambassador of Italian Taste.

*"I wanted to represent my vegetarian friends with a protein-rich, healthy dish. Considering their taste, I used vegetables, curry and legumes. This is a new nutritious dish with new international flavours. Also, Legù is not pasta! It is made from just legumes."*

## Ingredients

- 120g Legù Pasta
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp sesame seed
- 20g carrots
- 20g bell pepper
- 10g onions
- 10g leek
- 20g pumpkin
- 1 soup spoon extra virgin olive oil
- 5g salt
- 5g pepper

## Method

- Cut all the vegetables into cubes and place them in a pot. Add salt, pepper, curry powder and mix it up. Add water until all the vegetables are just covered. Cook the vegetables until soft, and blend them to form a purée.
- Boil the Legù Pasta in water with some salt for a maximum of 3 minutes.
- Compose the plate with the Legù Pasta, the vegetables purée, sesame seed and a touch of extra virgin olive oil.

Serves 2 pax



Courtesy of  
Giovanni De Ambrosis  
Corporate Executive Chef  
Cocoon Maldives



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# Frankly Speaking

**Do you believe that the Addendum to the Tourism Act with the mandatory service charge aimed at supporting the tourism industry employees will affect the industry in increasing the number of visitors? How will this bring a positive impact in terms of service and job satisfaction?**



**Donatella Telli - Dodi**  
General Manager  
Albatros Top Boat

*My opinion is concerning the Boats: The 10% service is a positive system provided that it is transferred weekly or monthly to the employees and there is a kind of control that the Company will not hold it back. However, I think that this is the wrong time to applicate it, due to the pandemic crisis that is affecting us this year and the little turnout of visitors.*

*The law is dated 1st January 2020, but still the regulation is not yet defined and it will therefore be impossible to apply it for the current year and even less for the past months. We already have published prices for 2021 and 2022 and I believe it is not the time to modify them. In our case, we already charge the guaranted tips amount of USD 8 per day per person + GST.*

*The new scheme will considerably affect the final sale prices and I repeat that it is not the most suitable time for application.*



**Abdulla Mufeed**  
Resort Manager  
Hard Rock Hotel Maldives

*It does not affect anything. I do not know why they are so keen on playing with service charge.*



**Shaaz Waleed**  
Managing Director  
Resort Life Travel

*I personally don't believe that this will help, service charge must be given by the will of the tourist, not by force. To sustain quality service, it shouldn't be mandatory. Now staff in the hospitality industry know that even without quality service, they still they get their chunk*



**Amjad Thaufeeg**  
Director of Sales  
Nautilus Maldives

*This will not affect the arrival numbers. It will positively improve employee satisfaction and motivation. in return, it will help with the overall growth of revenue.*



**Ahmed Ibrahim**  
Director  
Noo Rani Travels

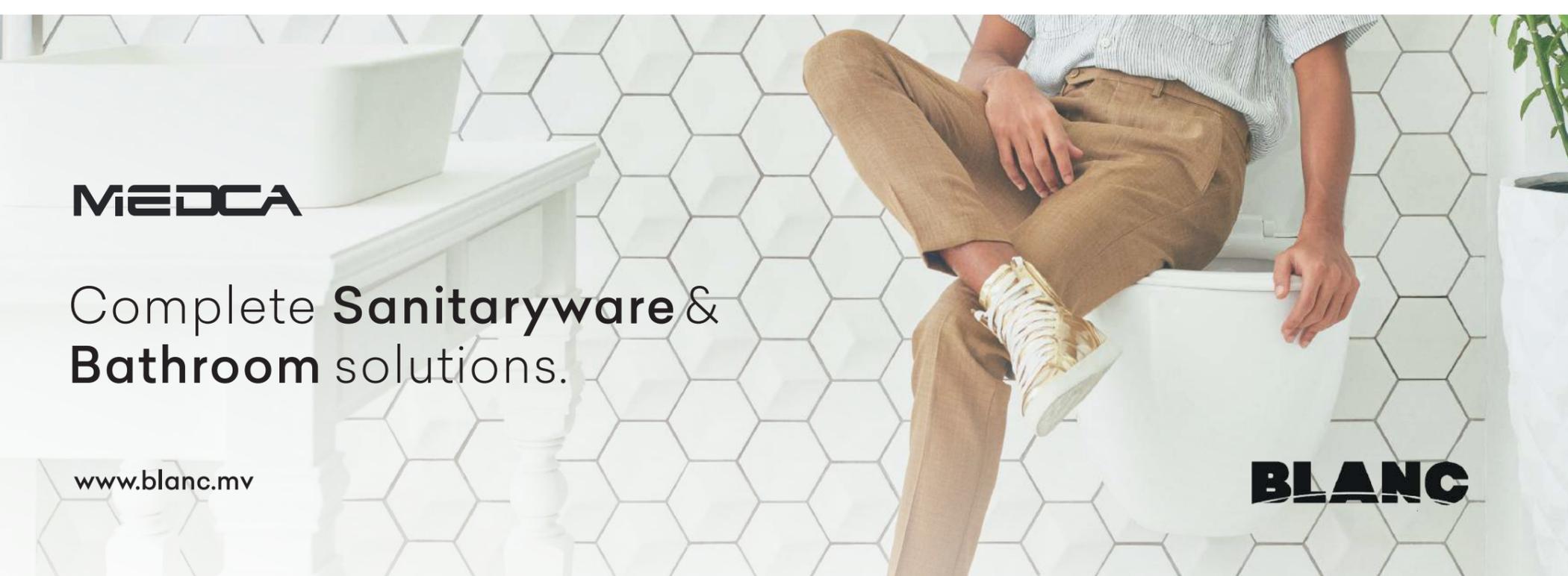
*I don't believe that it will increase the arrivals. Neither will it have have a significant impact on service or job satisfaction.*

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