

The islandchief

travel news

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Fairmont Maldives Collaborates with Private Jet Charter Specialist, Air Partner

Pg: 06



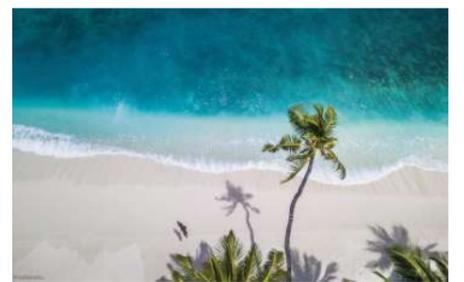
The Signature Collection by Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa

Pg: 16



'The Creek View' Condominium Launched in Hulhumalé

Pg: 18



World Tourism Day to be held in Addu this year

Pg: 21

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Dear Readers,

We've reached the height of summer, and thus the height of the sun's powers for the year. So, what better time, and what better ways to escape the heat, than a number of quick trips to some of Maldives' small, breezy offshore islands, where the cooling coastal waters beckon?

As we wait and watch in anticipation, prognosticators have been thrown for a loop over the past 18 months as the world has been turned upside down and everyone's been thrust into this "new normal." Not only were we blindsided by travel's shutdown, but predicting how business recovers and what the future holds becomes a difficult task when we're focused so hard on how we're going to make it to the next day.

The COVID-19 pandemic ushered a wave of economic decline across the world due to disruptions in the supply and demand chain for the travel market. Experts and analysts around the world continue to examine potential recovery pathways from the global aviation industry following the severe negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reports indicate the pandemic inflicted a heavy toll on global aviation, which resulted in ratings downgrades, liquidation and bankruptcy of several airlines and airports due to severe cash burn instigated by travel restrictions. Although the industry is opening up, the recovery process seems much slower than anticipated, which could see more jobs and airlines failing in the absence of relevant support.

For this month's issue, we have Abdulla Nashid, Managing Director of Flyme, operated by Villa Air, a subsidiary company of Villa Group, sharing his positive outlook on global aviation and tells us how he has led teams specialized in incident management, operations, mobility, compliance, policy, and business continuity in innovative and highly regulated environments across the Maldives aviation industry.

You'll be cooling down by different means in this month's Bon Appetit section, where Executive Chef Taylor Shearman from LUX* North Malé Atoll, has shared a divine recipe for Home Cooks to try at their homes. Besides that, to celebrate successful 5 years in publishing with 62 editions to this date, we are proud to bring to you our newest product, the Islandchefs. The Islandchefs will be the stepping stone where like-minded chefs from the hospitality industry come together to share, comment and debate the contents on social media platforms and the key food stories of the day. This platform will provide innovative ideas and insider tips seamlessly from various chefs working passionately in the tourism industry.

For Frankly Speaking, we have industry experts sharing their opinions on the changes needed to be brought to establish demand for direct flights to operate in airports outside Capital Male' City, Maldives. This discussion highlighted on p.23 will also include the issues faced by these airports due to lack of infrastructure and inadequate interest raised by the industry.

Get away. Seize the summer. Stay safe!

Until next month,
The islandchief Team



The Shipyard:

The Shipyard is one of the biggest dive attractions in Lhaviyani Atoll. There are two wrecks in this location which are 40 years old. While one of them sits upright, the other is on its side at about 30 meters below the water. They are home to a variety of fish and also a hangout for large pelagic, nurse sharks and grey reef sharks. This is another must-visit spot to add to your list.

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ACROSS THE SKIES

SriLankan Airlines Returns to Moscow with Direct Flights

SriLankan Airlines, the National Carrier of Sri Lanka and a member of the oneworld alliance resumes flights to the Russian capital, Moscow. SriLankan's new service is operating weekly scheduled flight between Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) and Moscow's Domodedovo Airport (DME) from 30th July 2021.

Accordingly, SriLankan would commence its flights to Russia every Friday using an Airbus A330 configured for 269 economy and 28 business class seats. The frequency of operation will be once a week, having a flight time of around 08 hours and 25 minutes. Flight UL533 will depart Colombo at 2220 hours, landing at Moscow Domodedovo Airport at 0430 hours, with the return leg UL534 leaving Moscow at 1915 hours the next day and landing back into Colombo at 0605 hours on Sunday.

SriLankan Airlines Chairman, Ashok Pathirage said, "The resumption of services connecting Colombo and Moscow is a link that will not only facilitate travel but will be the impetus for building closer bilateral business connections between the two countries. We believe flying back to Moscow would create a window of opportunity for both countries and travellers could experience the historic heritage

of the people of SriLanka and Russia."

SriLankan Airlines flew to 20 countries and 37 destinations before the pandemic and has gradually rebuilt its network following the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, with plans to increase the number progressively.

"This is a significant air link for SriLankan Airlines as we connect to the largest country in the world which is also known as one of the greatest cultural and historic destinations. This operation would offer a new and easy travel path in connecting the Russian Federation and surrounding countries. We are eagerly awaiting to welcome Russian visitors in Sri Lanka and passengers onboard our flights to Russia", stated SriLankan Airlines CEO Vipula Gunatilleka. Head of Worldwide Sales and Distribution, Dimuthu Tennakoon said, "SriLankan Airlines is resuming flights to the Russian capital after a break of 6 years. Restarting flights would offer leisure travellers convenient connections and flexible travel options as they discover the ancient aesthetics of the Russian culture and the world-renowned Sri Lankan hospitality. In addition, students from Sri Lanka and Russia will greatly benefit from this frequency with many offers



available for students travelling on SriLankan Airlines. As the National Carrier, we look forward to providing the best-in-class travel experience coupled with the highest safety standards for our travellers between the two countries."

SriLankan Airlines became the first carrier in the South Asian region to receive the 'Diamond' rating from the Airline Passengers Experience Association (APEX) and SimpliFlying, a standard received for the extra safety measures and comprehensive hygiene precautions adhered to since the onset of the global pandemic. SriLankan Airlines is an award-winning airline with a firm reputation as a global leader in service, comfort, safety, reliability, and punctuality.

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ACROSS THE SKIES

IndiGo Announces New Flight Routes Between India and Maldives



Indian low-cost carrier, IndiGo announced operation of new routes between India and Maldives starting from August 21, 2021.

According to the flight schedule launched by the airline, direct flights will be conducted from Maldives to Chennai and Hyderabad. These two

Indian cities are brand new additions to the destination portfolio operated by IndiGo from the Maldives.

From the commencement date, two weekly flights will be operated via the Chennai-Male' route while three weekly flights will be operated between

Hyderabad and Male'. Additionally, IndiGo informs to commence an additional flight from both Hyderabad and Chennai to Malé during October 2021.

IndiGo now connects Maldives and India via total 6 routes; Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad and Cochin, making it the only airline to have currently established the greatest number of flight routes between the two countries.

To celebrate fifteen successful years of flying, IndiGo announced a 3- Day Special Sale offering all-inclusive fares starting from INR 915 on its flights. The offer was live from August 04, 2021 till August 06, 2021 and announced that it will be applicable on travel between September 01, 2021 till March 26, 2022.

IndiGo is amongst the fastest growing low-cost carriers in the world. IndiGo has a simple philosophy: offer fares that are low, flights that are on time, offering a courteous, hygienic, and hassle-free travel experience. With its fleet of 275+ aircraft, the airline is operating over 1000 daily flights and connecting 68 domestic destinations and 24 international

Fly Emirates to Dubai and Visit the World in One Place with a Complimentary Expo Pass

Emirates, the Premier Partner and Official Airline of Expo 2020 Dubai, has launched an exclusive offer for customers to experience the excitement of the World Expo, the largest-of-its-kind event in the region.

Emirate's customers visiting Dubai, and travelling through Dubai, anytime during the much-awaited mega event running from October 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022, will be eligible to receive a free Emirates Expo Day Pass for every flight ticket booked with Emirates.

The special offer is valid on all return tickets that include a flight to or through Dubai, for travel dates during the event timeframe. The offer is applicable to tickets purchased in First Class, Business Class and Economy Class and extends to tickets booked through Emirates for flights on flydubai and customers travelling to anywhere on Emirates' global network with a connection time of at least six hours in Dubai. One-way ticket holders whose journey originates outside the UAE are entitled to receive the complimentary Expo Day Pass if travelling to Dubai or onwards to other destinations if the minimum connection time is met. To make the deal even sweeter, the special added-value offer applies to all fare types including Special, Saver, Flex and Flex Plus.

Whether exploring Dubai solo, as a family, or reconnecting with family and friends, there has never been a better time to visit Dubai than now. Besides being at the epicentre of the largest themed



event that promises to bring the world to one destination, visitors to Dubai during the six-month period can expect to enjoy a host of activities and special offers to celebrate the UAE's golden jubilee, marking the 50th anniversary of the country's formation.

Furthermore, travellers with upcoming travel plans and are already in the UAE, including UAE residents, will be pleased to know that they are also eligible to receive a complimentary Expo Day Pass as long as their itinerary includes a journey back to Dubai during the six-month period that coincides with Expo.

As Premier Partner and Official Airline of Expo 2020 Dubai, Emirates will soon launch various

Expo-themed packages to allow its worldwide customers to enjoy the excitement of the 182-day event and experience what its host city of Dubai has to offer.

Since it safely resumed tourism activity in July 2020, Dubai remains one of the world's most popular holiday destinations, especially during the winter season. The city is open for international business and leisure visitors. From sun-soaked beaches and heritage activities to world class hospitality and leisure facilities, Dubai offers a variety of world-class experiences. It was one of the world's first cities to obtain Safe Travels stamp from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) – which endorses Dubai's comprehensive and effective measures to ensure guest health and safety.

Kuredu Island Resort & Spa Launches a New Menu Inspired by 'Produce-to-Plate' Ethos



As part of its culinary offerings, the vibrant Kuredu Island Resort & Spa, located in the pristine Lhaviyani Atoll, has introduced a new seafood and plant-based menu at its sea-facing restaurant, Beach Shack.

Executive Sous Chef Marek Koucky, inspired by his culinary training in Mexico and travels around the world, and his talented team, have crafted a delightful menu that stays true to 'produce-to-plate' ethos. It features specially selected produce of the region, locally sourced seafood, and a daily harvest from Kuredu's expansive greenhouse and organic garden, bursting with fresh vegetables, fragrant herbs, and aromatic spices.

The new à la carte menu offers a flavorful selection of seafood delights, with signature dishes including Jumbo Crab with spiced bisque, chicken wing, charred pineapple, and tapioca cracker and Lobster Medallions with young coconut, red curry, and pearl barley risotto.

Health-conscious and ethically-minded guests can enjoy tucking into a luscious array of inventive vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free selections. Chef's recommendations include Pumpkin Velouté served with mushrooms, smoked almonds, and truffle oil and Grilled Artichokes with marinated artichoke hearts, asparagus, and mustard seeds. All the plates are visually appetizing, delicious, and elevated with a locally inspired twist.

Complementing the refined dining experience are freshly-baked bread with special 'seaweed' butter, served before dinner service begins and a hand-picked selection of premium wines from Kuredu's very own wine cellar.

Sweet treats include Chocolate Rocky Road, Vegan Coconut Panna Cotta, and a Selection of Sorbets. Tasting menus are also on offer to provide diners with the opportunity to sample six carefully selected courses from the new seafood & vegan menu.

Guests are invited to dine healthily and organically, whether sea-facing or on the beach under the stars and explore the exquisite flavors of the Maldives and the Indian Ocean. Beach Shack is available for dinner, on request with 24 hours prior notice. To learn more, please visit: Beach Shack Restaurant at Kuredu

Kuredu Island Resort & Spa is renowned for its exceptional dining credentials, with an extensive portfolio of 14 restaurants and bars, including The Far East, offering a culinary journey to the flavour-perfect Japanese cuisine and other authentic Asian favourites; the all-day dining Franco's, featuring Mediterranean cuisine; Sangu Restaurant, serving delicious international and local cuisine in a romantic atmosphere, and various destination dining experiences. All share a commitment to using premium, fresh, and unique ingredients sourced via an outstanding network of local producers and suppliers in the Maldives and the region.

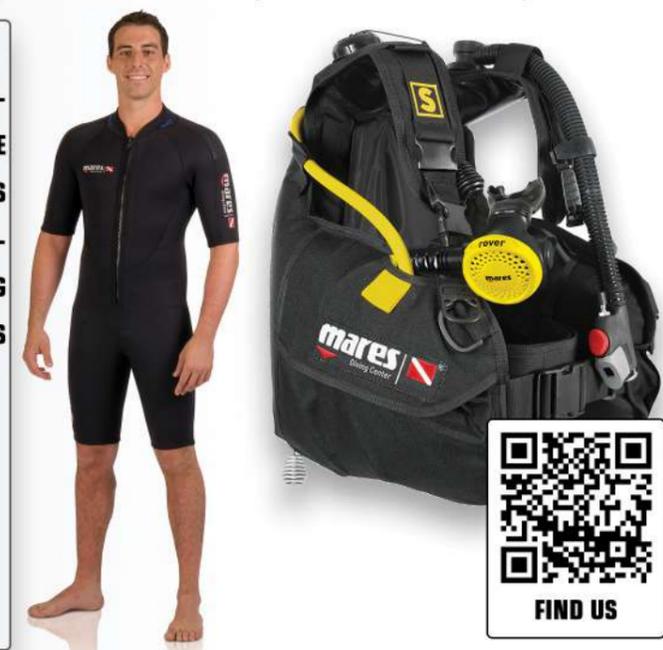
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IN A NUTSHELL

Fairmont Maldives Collaborates with Private Jet Charter Specialist, Air Partner



Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi – meaning ‘secret water island’ in the local language – is favored amongst jetsetters for its secluded villas, world-class wellbeing, and exclusive experiences.

Accommodations range from Deluxe Beach Villas, nestled in the island’s lush vegetation, to Overwater Villas boasting uninterrupted views and steps directly into the turquoise lagoon. Explore the 9km coral house reef and rub shoulders with tropical schooling fish, manta rays, and turtles before exploring the Coralarium – an underwater art gallery and coral regeneration project – on private tours with the resident marine biologist. Back on land, learn the art of meditation or practice yoga with private, in-villa sessions before indulging in bespoke private dining experiences; dine on fresh

from-the-ocean seafood on the sand with only the lapping ocean for company.

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Air Partner features a suite of private jet services that are tailored to suit travelers’ every need, including the unique pre-paid JetCard membership scheme and on-demand charter for up to 19 people. Founded in 1961, Air Partner has 17 locations across four



continents and a team of over 400 aviation experts operating 24/7. Listed on the London Stock Exchange, Air Partner is one of the world’s longest-established private aviation companies with a wealth of experience in helping its clients to travel around the world.

As the demand for privacy heightens amongst luxury travelers, Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi has announced its partnership with world-leading private jet charter specialists, Air Partner. Guests can now travel to the luxury resort completely privately, for point-to-point safety and security.

The new partnership offers a seamless and stress-free experience for travelers, as they fly from the private terminal in the UK to Malé on a choice of over 7,000 jets including the luxurious Falcon X, one of the world’s fastest long-range private jets, before boarding a private transfer to Fairmont Maldives. Choose between a regular or VIP seaplane for the short but scenic 55-minute flight over the azure archipelago.

Emerald Maldives Resort & Spa Offers Culinary Delights from Around the World

Emerald Maldives Resort & Spa offers a variety of different cuisines at its four restaurants, including Mediterranean to Japanese, Italian, Asian, Central and South American to Vegetarian and other additional unique dishes that is sure to satisfy its guests, even the most discerning gourmets.

With unique tastes from around the world, guests experience its authenticity, culinary traditions, and culture, as if teleported to a whole new reality. Each of these restaurants allow guests to take on an enriched gustatory journey.

Furthermore, the resort hosts a visiting chef every month, enhancing the experience. Guests can get to know their culture, recipes and cuisine. It also strengthens the resort’s culinary knowledge while

being introduced to new ingredients and flavors. Together with this spacing of cultures, traditions, aromas, spices and types, and cooking methods earned

Emerald Maldives the position as the Maldives’ best gourmet destination.

Emerald Maldives Maldives Resort & Spa located on the Raa Atoll in the northern part of the Maldives archipelago, is a new 5-star Deluxe All-Inclusive Resort surrounded by 1.5 km of soft white sand, on a lush private 20 hectares island with 120 villas. Built to blend in perfect harmony with the



surrounding environment, using materials such as bamboo, natural stones and Langhi Langhi leaves and a direct focus on energy efficiency and environment preservation, the Resort combines tropical scenery with modern design, creating atmospheres of natural and informal elegance, offering the ideal setting for guests to build new and memorable experiences.

Must-Experience Culinary Events at Hurawalhi Island Resort

Located in the pristine Lhaviyani Atoll in the Maldives, Hurawalhi Island Resort offers unforgettable experiences of swimming with mantas and turtles, indulging at a world-class spa and allowing you to fully embrace yourself in these moments. Hurawalhi also boasts spectacular culinary events that, once discovered, are sure to join other adventures and become features on your chic bucket list too.

Candlelight Dinner – Spoil your special someone with a luscious 5-course fine dining experience, with the menu created by our executive chef to your liking, served on a secluded area of the beach. Hurawalhi's romantic Candlelight Dinner is the epitome of special occasion celebrations, polished to perfection with the sweet and soothing sound of the waves lapping against the beach.

Dream Island Dinner – Spoil your nearest and dearest with a luscious 5-course fine dining experience,

served on a secluded island. The pleasant feeling of scrunching sand with your toes is complemented with your taste buds receiving their fair share of excitement. The Dream Island Veli Dinner is a group dining event, with the sand arrangement sitting about 10 guests, making it suitable for both solo travellers, couples, as well as larger parties of guests.

5.8 Undersea Restaurant – Experience the best of both worlds! Sate your appetite and dive into the pleasure of dining at the world's largest undersea restaurant during marine life's active feeding time. To experience 5.8 Undersea Restaurant in both daylight and at nighttime, book a table during the sunset dinner sitting to relish in the changing ambiance.

Teppanyaki – At Kashibo Teppanyaki grill you can sample some of the tastiest Angus beef fillet, scallops, salmon or prawns, among other, and be entertained by your very own, highly skilled chef. Don't forget to leave room for a treat from the outstanding



dessert menu here, and be sure to try some items from the premium saké list.

Lunch at Kashibo Taste of Asia – A sizzling fusion of Asian cuisine and incredible views! Enjoy a luscious set, 3-course lunch menu at this favourite hangout and keep your eyes peeled for eagle rays and dolphins passing by. The set menu is guaranteed to have your

mouth watering and is perfectly complemented by the impressive Shochu and Asian Inspired cocktail list that we recommend you try.

The experience made easy, guests can pre-book the experiences on your chic bucket list even before you leave home by using Hurawalhi's App.



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An All-inclusive Island Escape at Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa, Maldives



Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa, Maldives offers guests an enriching all-inclusive experience to indulge in this summer season. Unveiling majestic moments to revel in the signature Taj hospitality at its finest, the five-star resort on Hembadhu Island also spotlights an abundance of recreational activities suited for families, couples, honeymooners, and divers alike. Set away from the more commercial islands of the Maldives, Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa is an exotic escape that encapsulates the true essence of island life. Surrounded by crystal blue waters, the property is built on a small and compelling 1000-year-old Coral atoll and is a diver's paradise with its own house reef, private shipwreck, and bustling aquatic life to explore.

Considered as one of the most iconic resorts in the Maldives, Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa boasts modern and spacious contemporary accommodations. Their 62 sophisticated beach villas and luxurious water villas have been designed to capture the resorts locale, with mesmerizing views of the lagoon, pristine sandy beaches and coconut palms dotted along the shoreline providing the idyllic setting for a blissful island getaway.

Guests can unwind and relax as they are pampered by all-inclusive offerings from the hotel which include spa, watersports and diving activities. Dining is a lavish affair with guests spoilt for choice between the hotel's three dine around options showcasing

epicurean and mixology highlights. The Bokkura Restaurant is the resorts all-day multi-cuisine restaurant offering Contemporary Indian, Continental, Pan Asian and Western cuisine, while Pizzeria Restaurant offers a slice of Italy in the heart of the Maldives through their exceptional and authentic pizzas. For an alfresco and more formal dinner experience, Open the Grill Restaurant serves the finest South American cuisine, a true first for the Maldives. South and Central American cuisine are soulfully intertwined into a menu full of robust flavours classically inspired by wholesome ingredients and traditional culinary techniques. The all-inclusive concept also encompasses a wide range of premium beverages guaranteed to keep guests refreshed throughout their stay which also includes the in-room mini bar.

Known as the 'Keepers of the Reef' Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa, Maldives, also endorses coral propagation through a range of initiatives which visiting guests may participate in to make a difference to the ecological impact of the peninsula. Whether by sponsoring coral fragments with the resorts 'Coral Regeneration Initiative', or diving into the depths to visit an authentic shipwreck covered with corals, home to thousands of underwater flora and fauna, the signature experiences are one of a kind bringing guests closer to sustainability, nature and adventure. Finally, for those seeking a romantic spell with their significant other, the boutique magic of Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa, Maldives is the ideal destination for weddings or the renewal of vows. Tucked away from the hustle and bustle, the heart shaped island where the resort is located sets the scene for a spontaneous getaway to celebrate memorable moments, both big and small with those nearest.

Komandoo to Host a Music-Filled Jazz & Blues Festive Season

In this coming festive season, Komandoo Maldives has announced to host a perfect Christmas which involves white sandy beaches, cooling cocktails, mouth-watering food and a relaxed atmosphere.

With lots of live music, the theme for this year's festive season at Komandoo is Jazz & Blues. The resort reminds to make sure the camera is ready on Christmas Eve as not only a sumptuous spread at the Gala Dinner will grab your attention but just in case a certain man in red visits you from the North Pole.

Festive activities include traditional underwater treasure hunt organized by Prodivers, a beach party, two Dine Under the Stars Chef's Table events where foodies will think all their Christmases have come at once, along with plenty of sparkles in the form of champagne sipping opportunities.

The program continues right through to New Year's Day, ensuring the very best start to 2022. Spend your Christmas swimming with the fish, diving with sharks, snorkelling with manta rays and cruising at sunset looking for dolphins, the resort team



will make it the most unforgettable time you have ever had.

Relax and enjoy the anticipation of

what lies ahead – great entertainment, gatherings, and delicious dining, all in the relaxed Komandoo-like style.

Cora Cora Maldives Appoints Chanapach Khumkhur as Director of Spa and Wellness



Chanapach Khumkhur is a successful spa professional with over 17 years of experience with some of the world's leading luxury spas both in the Maldives and across the globe including S Hotel and Resorts: Lèn Be Well, Rosewood Phuket: Asaya Wellness, Conrad Maldives, Hilton Hotels & Resorts, Four Seasons Landaa Giravaru and Anantara Hotels and Resorts.

Most recently, Chanapach Khumkhur was at the helm of the award-winning spa at Crossroads Maldives where she conceived and implemented several key new concepts for the company. She has been heavily involved in spa and wellness events for World Spa and Wellness Asia and credits her daily meditation practice to her zen lifestyle.

"I am thrilled to work with a team that is dedicated and committed to relaxing the mind and enriching the soul of all our guests and embracing the Cora Cora Maldives freedom ethos. As a leading member of the spa industry, I pride myself on creating an employee culture that delivers an excellent standard of service, providing guests with a warm and welcoming experience," said Chanapach Khumkhur

Cora Cora Maldives announces the appointment of Chanapach Khumkhur as their new Director of Spa and Wellness, for Moksha Spa and Wellbeing Centre.

In her role, Chanapach Khumkhur will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Moksha Spa and Wellbeing Centre, with seven treatment rooms, a relaxation lounge, overwater yoga pavilion, gym, and expansive outdoor recreational area. She will also oversee the resort's partnership with Comfort Zone, a luxurious Italian skincare brand that is working exclusively with Moksha Spa and Wellbeing Centre.

Eddie Teh, General Manager at Soneva Fushi



Eddie joined Soneva in mid-2021 and has extensive hospitality experience in SE Asia, having worked across Malaysia, Australia, Laos, and Myanmar throughout his career. He is multi-lingual and is fluent in English, Bahasa, Hokkien, basic Mandarin, and French. In 2015 he graduated from Cornell University's General Managers Program.

While living in Australia, he rose through the ranks to take on the role of Regional Food and Beverage Director of the Orient Express in 2008. Then in 2011, he moved to Luang Prabang in Laos, to become General Manager of La Residence Phou Vao. He later moved to Yangon in Myanmar, to take on the role of General Manager for Belmond River Cruises and Tours until 2016 when he was promoted to Area General Manager of Belmond Myanmar.

While at Belmond, he helped establish the Belmond Free Clinic, which served over 300 patients weekly. This initiative was named the Best CSR Program for Belmond worldwide. In his spare time, Eddie enjoys the arts and design, learning about new cultures, rugby, reading, and music.



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MOVERS & SHAKERS

VARU by Atmosphere Announces Key New Appointments

The fifth property introduced under the brand, Atmosphere Resorts & Hotels, VARU by Atmosphere has announced key appointments to its team of talented and diligent individuals.



Sobah Solih was appointed as Human Resources Manager at Varu by Atmosphere on May 1, 2021. Sobah is a Human Resources professional with more than 16 years of experience in the Hospitality Industry. Sobah's career spans over brands such as Sun Island Resort & Spa, Angaga Island Resort & Spa, Constance Hotels & Resorts and LUX* Resorts & Hotels. His last assignment was at Riu Hotels & Resorts as Cluster Assistant Human Resources Manager looking after the HR operation of two properties in the Maldives. Sobah completed his Masters in Human Resources Management & Development from University of Salford, UK.



Ahmed Rifau was appointed as a Resort Manager on June 1, 2021. Rifau is well-rounded, motivated, and hands-on professional and 27 years of experience in the Hospitality Industry. He has led multiple teams to successfully deliver towards business goals and guest satisfaction.

Rifau's career spans over brands like Paradise Island Resort & Spa, Four Seasons Maldives Kuda Huraa, Four Seasons Explorer, Four Seasons Hotel Singapore, Four Seasons Resort & Club Dallas (USA), Four Seasons Resort Maldives Landaa Giraavaru, The Beach House at Manafaru Maldives, Shangri-la's Villingili Resort & Spa Maldives, Beach House Iruveli, Sun Siyam Iruvushi Maldives, Sun Siyam Olhuvveli Beach, and Spa Maldives. His last assignment was at Sun Siyam Vilu Reef as Resident Manager. Rifau has completed an MBA from the British School of Commerce.



Anand Kumar was appointed as the new Executive Chef at Varu by Atmosphere, on June 17, 2021. Anand has accomplished 18 years in Culinary and 6 years as an Executive Chef. He is a calm, pleasant, helpful, and hardworking individual who has a passion for great food and enjoys cooking mouthwatering dishes.

Anand's career spans over brands like JW Marriott Mumbai, Hyatt Regency Mumbai, and Hyatt Hyderabad. His last assignment was at Hilton Bangalore as Executive Chef. Anand has also completed a Bachelor of Commerce from The University of Burdwan.

The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort Appoints Amar Roy as Executive Pastry Chef



St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort has announced the appointment of Amar Roy as its new Executive Pastry Chef. He will oversee and elevate the pastry and bakery section which caters to six food and beverage outlets at the resort's already distinguished culinary scene.

Chef Amar brings with him over 13 years of experience in the hospitality industry. He began his career at the acclaimed Taj group of hotels in India as a Management Trainee. In 2015, he became the pastry chef at the internationally renowned Al Bustan Palace, A Ritz Carlton Hotel creating desserts with local flavors and mentoring new talents in enhancing their culinary skills. Additionally, Amar made stops at The St. Regis, W and Westin DUBAI as the Complex Pastry Chef managing 30 professional

chefs. Most recently, Amar was the Executive Pastry Chef at The Kempinski, mall of Emirates Dubai leading a team of 12 professional chefs.

Amar incorporates local products from the island into his mouthwatering menu items and continuously learns to connect the culture of the place with the food he serves to guests.

Nestled between verdant rainforest and white-sand beaches on a private island, The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort overlooks the alluring waves of the Indian Ocean. Explore the tropical beauty and rich marine life of this peaceful, eco-conscious setting. Its private lagoon, Iridium Spa and outdoor infinity pool promise nonpareil relaxation.

Maldives Tourism Recovers

As the Maldives recovers from the COVID-19 situation, tourist arrivals to the Maldives gradually picks up and bounce back. On 16th July 2021 with a total of 555,006 tourists arrivals reached and exceeded the 2020 annual total of 555,494. By 25th August the total arrivals to the Maldives exceeded 700,000 with an increase of 87% compared with that of 2020. Arrivals is gaining momentum in July as COVID-19 restrictions eased and borders reopened for South Asian markets. Daily average increased from 1,827 during the month of June to 4,800 as of third week of the August.

While major markets such as Russia and India made full recovery with strong positive growth rates, new markets emerged from the European Region and the Middle East. As of 25th August 2021, top ten source markets to the Maldives were, Russia with 21.5% shares, India with 19.9% shares, Germany with 5.7% shares, U.S.A with 4.0% shares, Ukraine with 3.7% shares, Saudi Arabia with 3.4%, Spain with 2.9% shares, Kazakhstan with 2.4% shares, United Kingdom with 2.4% shares and France with 2.0% shares.

Recovering Markets / Regions

From 1st January to 25th August 2021	Arrivals			Growth (%)	
	2019	2020	2021	2021/2019	2021/2020
Kazakhstan	3,238	2,876	17,334	435.3	502.7
Ukraine	8,378	4,814	26,920	221.3	459.2
Russia	52,721	29,388	157,876	199.5	437.2
Romania	5,947	4,060	12,397	108.5	205.3
Brazil	6,173	2,722	9,606	55.6	252.9
United Arab Emirates	7,075	2,663	10,708	51.3	302.1
India	102,200	34,971	146,205	43.1	318.1
Czech Republic	9,184	4,514	12,398	35.0	174.7
Saudi Arabia	18,512	7,393	24,844	34.2	236.0
Poland	11,772	5,652	13,823	17.4	144.6

Central/Eastern Europe	113,303	64,985	275,866	143.5	324.5
South Asia	119,017	39,691	157,582	32.4	297.0
Middle East	41,832	15,400	60,450	44.5	292.5
Africa	11,288	3,503	16,191	43.4	362.2
East Mediterranean Europe	12,576	3,777	12,629	0.4	234.4

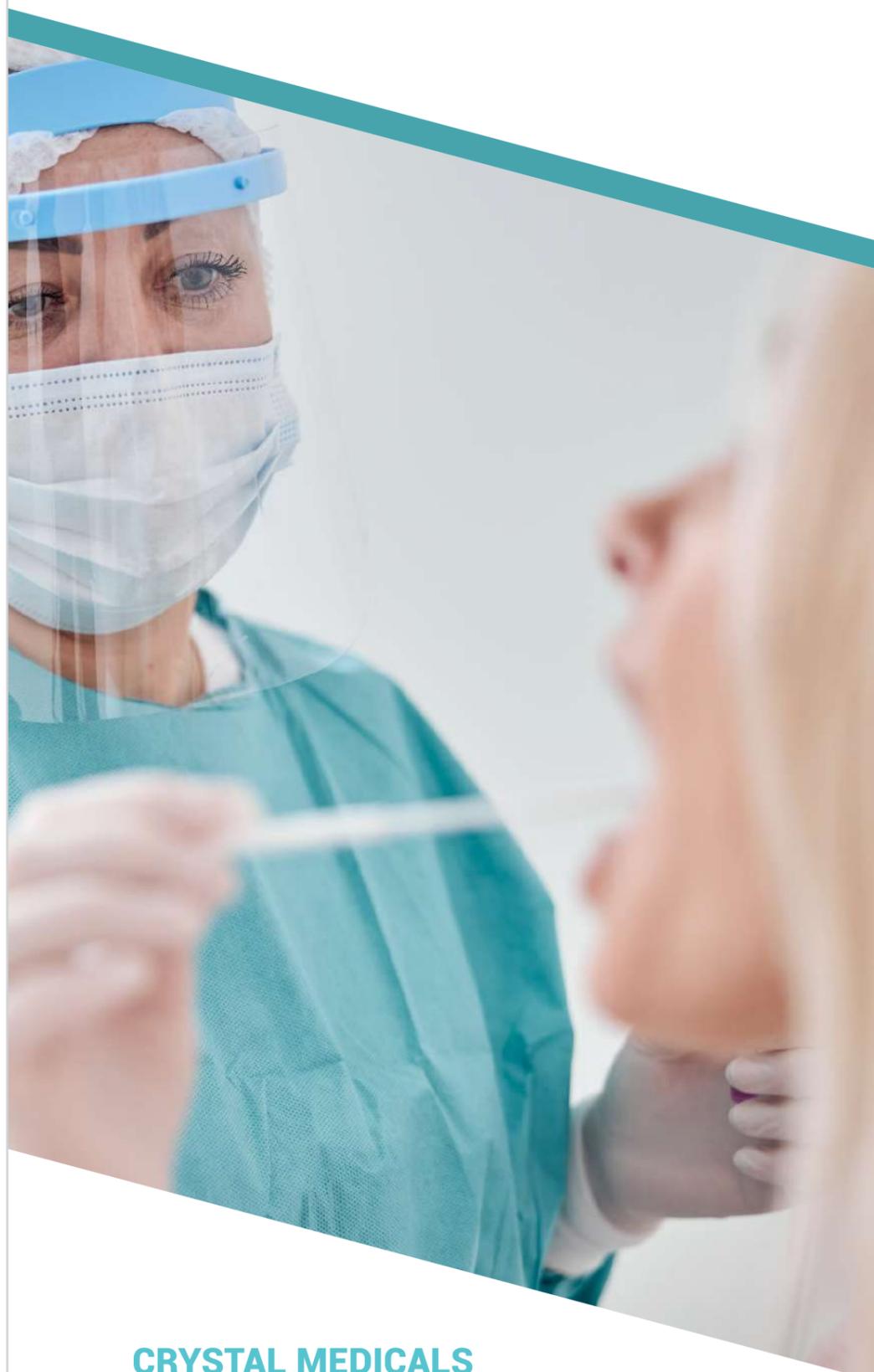
Source: Maldives Tourism Updates 25th August 2021 / Ministry of Tourism



REASONABLE PRICE

COVID 19 RT-PCR TESTING

- Results issued after lab receives the sample: within 6 - 12 hrs & 12 - 24 hrs
- Special rates for Resorts & Guesthouses



CRYSTAL MEDICALS

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TAKE-OFF

with

Abdulla Nashid

Managing Director, Villa Air



How did you get inspired to join the Aviation and Hospitality industry?

Before I start, let me thank The islandchief for the wonderful contribution to the travel and tourism industry in Maldives.

Coming from an aeronautical engineering background, I would have to say that my inspiration to join the aviation industry is my passion for the science of flight. As an eager young student, my physics teacher Dr. Hassan Hameed played a vital role in getting me engaged in the fascinating theories of flight. This inspired me to pursue a scholarship through the Commonwealth scholarship scheme (British Council) which allowed me to complete my Bachelor's and Master's in Aeronautical Engineering in City University, London. After this I came back to the Maldives and served at the Civil Aviation Department of Maldives for nearly five years. Since I wanted to experience the marvels of aviation firsthand, I went back to the United Kingdom to complete my Aircraft Maintenance Engineering modules and started working at various MROs in the United Kingdom before joining Villa Air.

Tell us your thoughts on how we could build a better aviation industry after COVID-19. How would you describe the current state of the aviation sector and what changes are you anticipating for the future?

Aviation has transformed ever since the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic began. Right now, we see tourist source markets picking up one month and going for a complete shut-down the next, even with the stringent measures and restrictions in place. It is critical for airlines to be flexible and quickly adapt to these unavoidable realities.

I believe the future of air travel will be very focused on health and hygiene measures for the foreseeable future. Innovations such as the IATA Travel Pass will help airlines coordinate our efforts to revive the global aviation industry. Something like this will in turn be adopted down the line by all domestic carriers.

It will be interesting to observe how the traditional big hub airport concept comes back to its pre-pandemic levels. I would imagine the best way possible for Maldives would be to make the atolls more accessible to direct international traffic and open these airports spreading out flights throughout the 24 hours in a day, rather than funneling everything through one congested airport where arrivals are mostly congested to daytime flights.

Considering the key challenges faced during these uncertain times, how do you plan to spin the wheel and expand operations with new aircrafts and routes in the domestic and international market?

Very carefully! I strongly believe that making the atolls in Maldives more accessible to direct international traffic is key to the immediate and long-term success of tourism expansion in Maldives. This will help us arrange the air travel portion of holiday makers coming to Maldives in a more conducive manner to the new normal. This would be the basis for any expansion that we will be undertaking in the near future.

Based on data available to you, what is your projection in terms of load factor for the next 12 months?

It will most likely mirror the patterns we saw throughout the past 12 months but with some growth as more countries open up after vaccination.

During the Pandemic, protecting the health of critical staff such as airline ground teams or pilots and cabin attendants has been a top priority for decision makers. The real solution is following strict protocols designed to maximize health and safety. Many innovative companies are working hard to eliminate the invisible enemy, and to help protect our real heroes from the virus. In this exclusive interview, we talk with Abdulla Nashid, Managing Director of Flyme, operated by Villa Air, a subsidiary company of Villa Group. Nashid joined Villa Air as a Director of Technical Services, after leaving Ryanair in 2010 and assumed the position of MD at Flyme in April 2017. He has built and led teams focused on incident management, operations, mobility, compliance, policy, and business continuity in innovative and highly regulated environments across the Maldives aviation industry.

You were compelled to make some difficult decisions a year ago – such as lay off over 200 of your employees in order to cut costs amid the financial regressions as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak in the Maldives. How does the economic picture look like for employees? What are some of the biggest obstacles in terms of bringing back jobs and then also just being able to find enough people to fill the jobs that are necessary for smooth travel?

The biggest challenge for an operator such as Villa Air is sustaining a good number of flights with a volume that makes these flights feasible. Therefore, the target is very clear. We need to attract more tourist to take our ATR aircraft option. The biggest obstacle to this is the COVID-19 related issues which we can do very little about. However, equally important and something very fixable is the experience tourists get when taking an ATR domestic flight after they arrive to the Maldives on a long

international flight. If this experience can be improved, I am confident that more passenger volume can be generated on ATR flights, enabling us to create more jobs.

You made news headlines earlier this year with the announcement of starting a Villa Air flying school, could you tell us more about the progress of this passionate project?

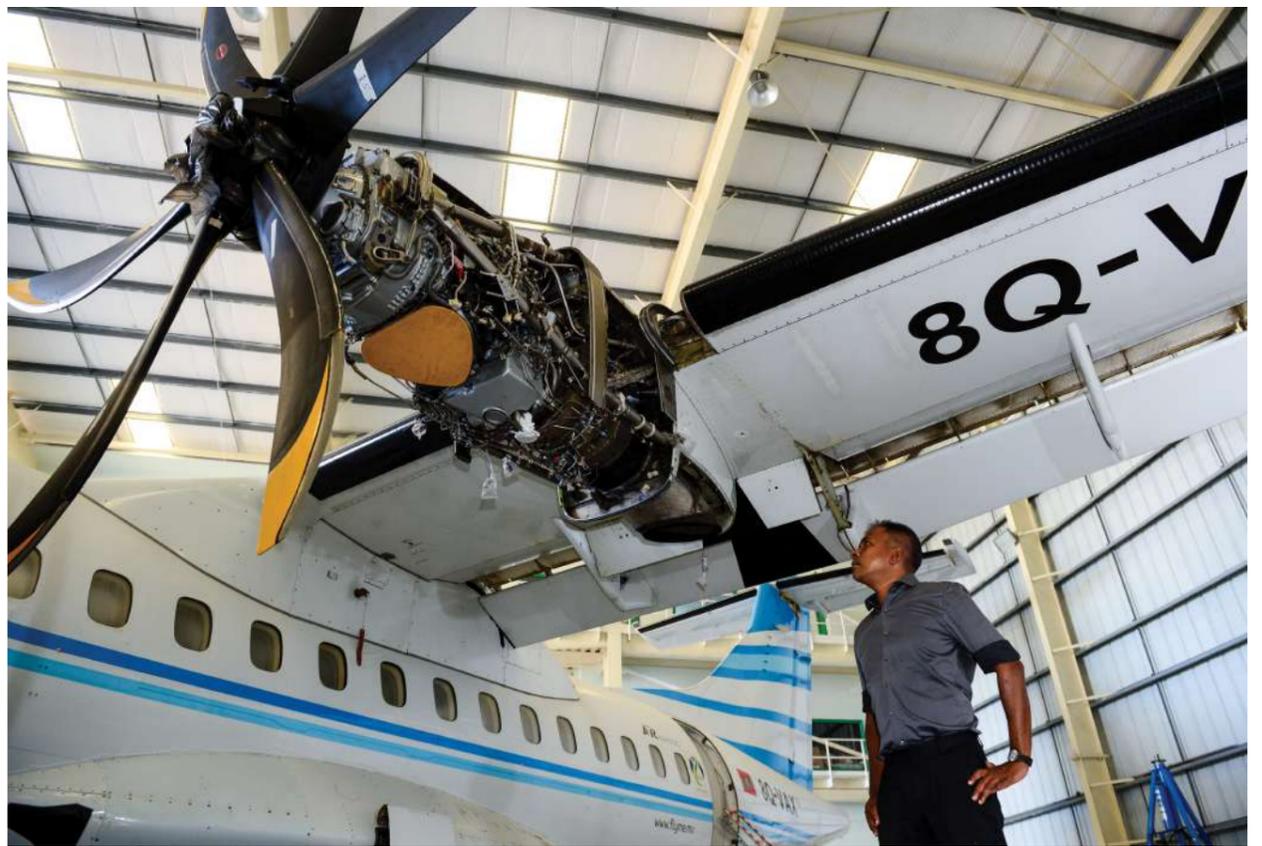
Development of Human Resource capabilities among Maldivians have always been a mission of our Chairman Hon. Qasim Ibrahim and Villa Group of Companies. We can see the evidence of this mission when we look at the work done by Villa Foundation and the staff working from the highest levels to the most junior staff at Villa Air. Villa Foundation has help create numerous Maldivian pilots and aircraft engineers. It has always been a vision of Hon. Qasim Ibrahim to start a flying school that will help further development of capabilities of young Maldivians and through them, the aviation industry as a whole.

To achieve this, Villa College in partnership with Villa Air have continued to work on this project throughout this duration. Villa Airport Maamigili is being prepared as a base for the practical portion of the flying school. We have studied the flying school project and identified areas that we need to focus to create a good product for the students that will be using our flying school services.

With your expertise knowledge in the international market, what are the future strategic plans for Villa Air?

Our strategic plan is to help Maldives tourism industry grow by contributing through our expansion into international routes. We intend to unlock and generate new inbound tourist traffic that will help the nation and help Villa Air grow at the same time to become synonymous with the Maldives tourism brand at a global level. This approach will help us strengthen the aviation industry in Maldives by providing additional opportunities for Villa Air and other Maldivian carriers operating domestically, opening more opportunities for all of us to expand our domestic operations within the Maldives. As the saying goes "success breeds success".

Villa International Airport Maamigili has been a testament of excellence for Villa Group's Chairman, Hon. Qasim Ibrahim. Today, we see a number of private jets taking advantage of parking at Maamigili Airport as an alternative for parking with



congestions at Velana International Airport, Male'. How do you see the future of Maamigili Airport? Please tell us more about the strengths and capabilities.

Villa Airport Maamigili has been a pioneer project that I like to believe had inspired the course of aviation policy and development in Maldives for the past nine plus years. We now see private companies actively developing airports to serve tourism establishments nearby. These nine plus years have helped the region build expertise and a local talent pool of young Maldivians eager to take this project to the next phase of its evolution. The airport now has the potential to make the leap into the international stage and start regular scheduled international operations, directly linking Ari Atoll to the rest of the world. I see the airport becoming a center for tourism related air travel, flying school and other industries forming around this ambitious project.

What precautionary measures have been implemented by Flyme for safe travel?

Our goal is to keep the momentum going for the Maldives as the leading tourism brand in the world after the borders opened on July 2020. The ATR aircraft that we operate are optimized for maximum air circulation and with the biggest interior among the domestic aircraft being operated in Maldives, it

is the best fit for health-conscious travelers in the new normal. We ensure that all our customer touchpoints are in compliance with the best practices and often take time to review these measures to try and improve upon them. Furthermore, our air crew and maintenance staff follow strict protocols designed to maximize health and safety.

During a time of a crisis for humanity and our industry, what is the business case of accelerating focus on an airline's sustainability strategy? Is COVID an opportunity to rethink, pivot and reinvent?

I cannot agree more that the COVID pandemic gave the whole of humanity many reasons to pause, rethink and reinvent. We see evidence of this all around in our day to day lives. The airline industry is no different. In fact, the aviation industry is the industry that had been hit the hardest due to the pandemic.

The new normal calls for flexibility and ingenuity to persevere. Creating a business environment within Maldives that is fair and equally laid out for all airlines will encourage these traits of flexibility and ingenuity to come to the surface and create models that foster sustainability in the airline industry in Maldives. This will help the Maldivian economy recover and grow even faster than expected.



EVENTS & AWARDS

CROSSROADS Maldives' Restaurants Win 2021 Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award for Top Restaurants in the World



CROSSROADS Maldives restaurants' Kinkao, Kebab & Kurry and Hard Rock Café Maldives has been recognized as a 2021 Travellers' Choice award winner in the world. This achievement celebrates businesses that consistently deliver fantastic experiences to diners around the globe, having earned great traveller reviews on Tripadvisor over the last 12 months. As challenging as the past year

know the past year has been extremely challenging for tourism businesses. What has impressed me is how businesses adapted to these challenges, implementing new cleanliness measures, adding social distancing guidelines, and utilizing technology to prioritize guest safety. The Travellers' Choice Awards highlight the places that are consistently excellent - delivering quality experiences

was, CROSSROADS Maldives restaurants Kinkao, Kebab & Kurry and Hard Rock Café Maldives stood out by continuously delighting diners.

"Congratulations to all the winners of the 2021 Travellers' Choice Awards," said Kanika Soni, Chief Commercial Officer at Tripadvisor. "I

time and time again even while navigating changing customer expectations and new ways of working. Based on a full year of reviews from customers, this award speaks to the great service and experience you provided guests in the midst of a pandemic."

Located just 15 minutes from Velana International Airport by speedboat, Indian Ocean's first world-class multi-island leisure destination CROSSROADS Maldives opened in late 2019 and features two lifestyle hotels Hard Rock Hotel Maldives and SAii Lagoon Maldives - Curio Collection by Hilton with direct access to The Marina @ CROSSROADS Maldives an 800-metre lifestyle area and beach walk offers exciting collection of restaurants and bars, boutique stores, leisure activities and more. The facilities include a 30-berth quay, complete with world-class amenities and exclusive concierge services, The Junior Beach Club and Camp, CROSSROADS

Event Hall, Maldives Discovery Centre, and Marine Discovery Centre - the project's environmental and educational hub. CROSSROADS Maldives was recently named "Best Leisure Development Maldives (Five-Star)" in the Asia Pacific Property Awards 2021-2022. A world-renowned recognition of excellence, the Asia Pacific Property Awards were designed to celebrate the highest levels of achievement in all sectors of the property and real estate industry.

The Marina @CROSSROADS Maldives have also recently announced the addition of the upcoming Maldives' first co-working space YOUR SPACE and the opening of Chinese restaurant Jiao Wu, retail fashion outlet COMPASS and Candy Shop with over 150 varieties of candies and delights. Several other restaurants and retail outlets are also expected to open soon, including Maldivian fine-dining restaurant Kalhu Odi and Thai street food kiosk, One Waan.

Ooredoo Maldives Wins Exciting Awards at Stevie IBA and APAC Awards

The leading telecommunication company in the Maldives has received a multitude of prestigious wins at the 18th Annual Stevie International Business Awards and Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards including:
Wins at the 2021 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards - Stevie Silver - Most Valuable Corporate Response for Covid -19 Response by Ooredoo Maldives
- Bronze Stevie - Excellence in Innovation in Consumer Product & Service Industries for Moolee & m-Faisaa services of Ooredoo Maldives

Wins at the Stevie International Business Award
- Bronze Stevie - Most Valuable Service for Covid -19 Response by Ooredoo Maldives

"As a community focused company, it is a great honor to be recognized for our crisis response initiatives to assist our employees, customers and our communities to navigate through the ongoing global pandemic. Despite the challenges faced due to the pandemic, with much dedication and hard work our team were able to achieve many milestones, improving our existing services and introducing first of its kind services enriching the lives of the people of the Maldives. I would like to congratulate the entire team who has been tirelessly working with enthusiasm and passion to transform our services to digital means and improve our overall customer experience. With the same spirit, our team will continue to improve, innovate and

provide new opportunities, advanced digital services to our customers and the people of the Maldives." Managing Director & CEO of Ooredoo Maldives, Najib Khan.

Ooredoo Maldives takes exceptional pride in the Stevie Award won for the 'Most Valuable Corporate Response' and 'Most Valuable Service' for measures taken within the company, for its customers and the community during the COVID 19 pandemic. Together with Ooredoo Group, Ooredoo Maldives contributed MVR 2.5 million to the Government of Maldives to acquire ventilators, personal protective equipment, and testing supplies to combat the spread of coronavirus across the nation. Ooredoo Maldives has been closely collaborating with government agencies to provide key measures of including critical connectivity support, mass awareness on Covid-19 prevention and relief, as well as digital solutions which enable online education, health services and enterprise. The company's strong digital policies enabled them to switch to remote working overnight upon the announcement of lockdown, with the majority of its team still providing seamless services to customers from home.

Guided by its vision of enriching people's lives, Ooredoo seeks to open-up the limitless opportunities of the digital age to local communities and businesses, while striving towards a Digital Maldives. Ooredoo Maldives' self-care app was



integrated with its mobile payment platform m-Faisaa and e-commerce platform Moolee into a single user interface, providing customers with an optimal end-to-end digital experience. While Moolee facilitated small business owners and online retailers reach a bigger customer base and still provide services during the pandemic, m-Faisaa's provided the convenience of making online payments for utility companies, popular online platforms, cafés, shops and more. It is this commitment towards enriching the

digital lives of its customers that has won the company the international recognition it is currently receiving on many respected platforms.

Ooredoo's connection to the people of Maldives will remain a priority for 2021 and beyond, and will continue to act as an enabler towards a transformational era of innovative technologies, driven by network enhancement. The company will continue to focus on digitalization and leveraging content solutions to drive further growth.

Highlights of FHA Virtual Trade Fair 2021

FHA Virtual Trade Fair 2021 commenced on August 15, 2021. The 5-day event featured over 40 exhibitor companies from Sri Lanka, Maldives, India, UAE, Australia, Taiwan, Thailand, and several other countries. Apart from that, 1000 buyers registered for this event mainly from Maldives, India, Sri Lanka and other countries. These buyers made appointments through Artificial Intelligence technology to attend the fair from August 15 – August 19.

The event kicked off with an inauguration ceremony held on August 15, hosted by CEO of CDC Events & Travels Pvt Ltd and the head of organizing committee, Mr. Imran Hassan. Guests included Senior Business Development Manager of the principal sponsor Nestlé, Mr. Dishan Wijayawardena, and President of the Chefs Guild of Maldives, Mrs. Mariyam Noordeen.

During the ceremony, Mr. Imran Hassan said Nestlé has been a big support in the previous years during the physical events up until now. He further thanked the President of the Chefs Guild of Maldives, Mrs. Mariyam Noordeen and the Chief Judge Mr. Abdulla Sobah and his team also from the Chefs Guild of Maldives for helping with the virtual culinary competition held during the fair. 50 participants took part in the culinary competition from over 10 resorts and 10 countries, said Imran.

He also showed his gratitude to Mr. Dimuthu Kumarasinghe, the President of Chefs Guild of Lanka, his team and several other chefs for helping to put the event together. He added “I hope to continue several other trade fairs in this

line and I believe this is the opportunity for all the exhibitors to get into the markets that they want to, while the pandemic is ongoing. Specially for the Maldivian resorts who are thriving in tourism, probably the only country thriving as almost all the resorts are full. This will help them to manage their supply chain as we give a lot of options, over 10,000 products and services are offered these few days. The site will be on after the live expo also, for 3 months.” He concluded by thanking the software provider, Mr. Maash from O2 Events who has been around to help in all of their virtual events and helped them with this event as well. Finally, in October, CDC Events & Travels Pvt Ltd along with O2 Events will also be organizing the Boat Show with the Export Development Board of Sri Lanka.

Mrs. Mariyam Noordeen, shared a few words during the opening ceremony and mentioned that it is possible to have virtual events as successfully as physical events. At the same time, Chefs Guild of Maldives have shown their support to showcase skills of chefs working in the Maldives in such a competitive environment. She showed her appreciation to Mr. Imran and Mr. Dishan for giving the opportunity to the chefs to enhance their skills and knowledge, and compete with each other to show their skills to the world. She added, “Chefs Guild of Maldives will be working together with all the chefs to come up with various different kinds of virtual exhibitions and I hope and wish in next year, Imran and the team will also be enhancing in a better way to attract more, perhaps from the outside of the Maldives and from the international chef’s community as well. World Chefs is also introducing a new

virtual exhibition.” In addition to this, she mentioned that the World Chefs is looking to introduce a new class in the future, the vegan category which is an opportunity for chefs, as it is something that can be done from the variety of vegetables grown in the Maldives.

Speaking last, Senior Business Development Manager at Nestlé Professional, - Gold Partner of FHA Virtual Trade Fair –

Mr. Dishan Wijayawardena started off with thanking the CDC team for inviting him to grace the event and he commended the effort of the team for successfully kicking off this mega event while overcoming the challenges faced during the pandemic. Mr. Dishan said that in a time where we are forced to heavily rely on virtual platforms, though the situation is temporary, the changes are here as we have to adapt ourselves. Commenting on the relevance of the culinary aspect in hospitality industry, Mr. Dishan said, “As the largest industry in the Maldives, in tourism we believe that good food is the main factor that tourists always look for and it must be trusted as well as familiar products.” He further said, “This program has extended the young aspiring chefs in the Maldives to develop their skills which ultimately helps them to find employment globally.” In his ending remarks, Mr. Dishan wished all the exhibitors, the buyers and the culinary challenge participants the best of luck and a successful event for CDC.

The judging panel for the culinary competition consisted of Chief Judge Abdulla Sobah, Master Chef Dimuthu Kumarasinghe, Chef Ishaq Solih, Chef Aminath Shaanee and newcomer judges; Chef Maha Naseer, Chef Fathimath Umar, Chef Ismail Naseer, Chef Mariyam Shiuna and Chef Ibrahim Naeem.

The competition challenged participating chefs to bring out their best culinary skills in 6 categories: Dress the cake, Fruit and Vegetable Carving, Desserts, Hot Cooking – Seafood, Hot Cooking – Lamb/Beef/Poultry, Traditional and Modern Maldivian Meal.

Winners Of Fha Virtual Trade Fair 2021, Culinary Challenges

Class 1 Dress The Cake

BRONZE MEDAL
Fathimath Dhiyana of Daya’s Cake
GOLD MEDAL
Fathimath Nihan of Cake a Wish by Aani
A.M.DE Silva of UAE Abu Dhabi
Tran Thi Van of LTI Maafushivaru Maldives (1st Place)

Class 2 Fruit and Vegetable Carving

SILVER MEDAL
A.M.DE Silva of UAE Abu Dhabi
R.G.K.M. Gunathilake of Paradise Island Resort Maldives

Class 3 Dessert

BRONZE MEDAL
Tran Thi Van of LTI Maafushivaru
Selvaraj Ayavu of Paradise Island Resort and Spa
Abdulla Riza of Dreams Dinner
SILVER MEDAL
Karthik Nageswaran of UAE Abu Dhabi

Robin Kunwan of Four Seasons Resort Kuda Huraa

GOLD MEDAL
R.M.S.R Rathnayaka of Dhigali Maldives
A.D. Suresh Kumar of Dhigali Maldives
Venkatesh Bura of Four Seasons Resort Kuda Huraa
Lavish Metha of Dhigali Maldives
R. Vimarshana Pinmal of Dhigali Maldives (1st Place)

Class 4 Hot Cooking Seafood

BRONZE MEDAL
Mohamed Nabeel of Kiwi Bakers
Harish Kumar of LTI Maafushivaru Maldives
S.M.K.R Arachchige of Dreams Dinner
SILVER MEDAL
Raghuvveer Singh Rathure of Dhigali Maldives
A.Gayathri of LTI Maafushivaru Maldives
S.W.I. U. Wickramarathna of Dhigali Maldives
S.Suresh Raja of Four Seasons Kuda Huraa
GOLD MEDAL
Sanjay Pandey of Dhigali Maldives (1st Place)

Class 5 Hot Cooking Lamb/Beef/Poultry

BRONZE MEDAL
Mohamed Hanafiah of LTI Maafushivaru Maldives
Mohamed Nabeel of Kiwi Bakers
Vaibhav Dua of LTI Maafushivaru Maldives
Khajan Singh of LTI Maafushivaru Maldives
Truong Dinh Phu of Holiday Inn Kandooma
A.Gayathri of LTI Maafushivaru
SILVER MEDAL
Munal Sunar of Dhigali Maldives
Jimmy Sofyan of LTI Maafushivaru
A.S.K. Dezoysa of Four Seasons Kuda Huraa
S. Dimuthu Silva of Dhigali Maldives
GOLD MEDAL
C.G.C. Manoj of Dhigali Maldives
V.I. Abeysekara of LTI Maafushivaru

Class 6 Maldivian Meal

SILVER MEDAL
Raghuvveer Singh Rathure of Dhigali Maldives

Apart from this, during the FHA Virtual Culinary Challenge Award Ceremony today, The Islandchief launched their newest product, the Islandchefs. This community will be the stepping stone where like-minded chefs across the resorts will come together to share, comment and debate the contents on social media platforms and the key food stories of the day.

The Islandchefs will also be a platform where innovative ideas and insider tips will be shared seamlessly to provide an abundance of resources and media to all the amazing chefs working passionately in the tourism industry. According to the organizer team, the Virtual FHA Culinary Challenge 2021 was held this year to give an opportunity to all the chefs who are unable to compete in major live competitions such as the FHAM international culinary challenge and other global and local events.

FHA Virtual Trade Fair offers an unrivaled opportunity for interested trade organizations of the Hospitality Industry to display their latest products, services, and innovations. An all-inclusive web platform for whose objectives is to create an interactive forum for exhibitors and clients. More information can be viewed from www.fhavirtual.com

NEW OPENINGS

The Signature Collection by Hideaway | Redefining Luxury at Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa



Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa has announced the launch of an iconic brand for the world's most discerning traveller, seeking bona fide opulent experiences. "The Signature Collection by Hideaway" will offer secluded luxury and villa-style living on the far Northern Point of the 33-hectare island. It is a novel concept – a 'resort within a resort' – in one of the most sought after, award-winning destinations in the world: The Maldives.

The Signature Collection by Hideaway features nine ultra-luxurious villas, offering the sophisticated luxury traveller a unique sense of exclusivity and indulgence. All the villas have been designed with Middle Eastern influences and finishing touches with an enhanced signature architectural style inspired by 5-star villa living combined with 'barefoot luxury'.

Signature Beach Residence with Sunrise Pool.

The most luxurious single bedroom beach residences on the island. It offers opulent Middle Eastern interiors and finishes and is the exemplar of privacy and seclusion. At 350 sqm (just under 4000 square feet), luxury guests can indulge in the stylish, spacious interiors that are filled with wonderful inclusions like a king-sized marble bathtub, a handcrafted wooden private deck leading onto a private swimming pool, and direct access to the luminous white sandy beaches.

Grand Beach Residence with Sunrise Pool (Three-Bedroom Villa). The open-plan, unique villa offers an air of exploration, with a blend of Middle Eastern styles and textures, complimented by artisan-made furniture and enticing glass fittings. These villas are set at 700 sqm (just over 7500 square feet), offering sophisticated, signature designer-style living. The crowning glory of this villa is the recessed gazebo in the large curved private swimming pool, with an expansive wooden deck and direct private access to the classic Maldivian beaches and turquoise waters of the island's North Point.

Well-being is key, with private outdoor treadmill

and exercise bike located on the expansive wooden deck, offering spectacular ocean views, which is complimented with floor to ceiling mirror style television experience, which reflects the splendour of the natural surroundings. After which guests can indulge themselves in a relaxing sauna bath, conveniently located nearby in the villa, to feel well rested after the workout.

Sultan Beach Residence with Sunset Pool (Four-Bedroom Villa). At 1100 sqm (almost 12000 square feet), this villa offers an elite private luxury residence experience. Guests will enjoy contemporary designs, with floor to ceiling glass windows that provide a luminous interior and exemplary ocean views across the spatial and secluded Northern Atoll. Access is gained through a private entrance, which leads into a spacious living area and outdoor wooden deck – the ideal location for lounging at sunset.

A unique feature of this villa is the distinctive water slide feature that extends into the scintillating and ostentatious swimming pool with a Gazebo, truly a unique concept in the Maldives.

The captivating outdoor wooden deck boast a luxurious living area, with plush sunbeds and designer couches and Signature umbrellas on each side. The four-bedroom villa is comprised of private bedrooms, all offering a standalone suite with walk-in rain showers. Two of the bedrooms offer king-size beds, while the other two bedrooms feature luxurious double beds.

Well-being is also a key element of the experience in this villa as guests can enjoy a private indoor gym with modern, state of the art treadmill and designer equipment available, which is all complimented by an indulgent and relaxing steam bath right inside the villa. This is the ultimate restorative needed to rejuvenate after a strenuous workout while enjoying the experience together with loved ones.

The Signature Collection of villas are all complimented by the finest dining bar and lounge

area, found at "The Oasis". Here, guests will be invited to delight in al fresco dining experiences, with local and international culinary dishes, all prepared and hosted by world-renowned Chefs. The experience will be paired with personalised Signature Collection choice wines and rare champagnes.

The private library in The Oasis offers a comfortable spacious interior and contemporary furnishings, which is complimented with the 'Signature Collection' hand-picked selection of local Maldivian books, filled with inspiration, culture and history of the Maldives. Soak up the unhindered views across the Indian Ocean from the lounge area, whilst relaxing in comfort and style and enjoying the finest of drinks. Find a moment's reprieve to take it easy, relax, and recharge around a little pool shaped like 'an oasis in the desert'. In the evenings the space is turned into one where guests can socialise and trade stories and is purposed to become the 'best watering hole' at the resort.

A host of privileges accompany a stay with The Signature Collection, such as private check-in and check-out services, all Signature Guests will be hosted by private butlers during their stay, preferential reservations in the resort's restaurants, exclusive access to The Oasis, and many more.

Signature Collection Guests will be invited to choose from the list of activities that are available at Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa, whether it is world-class scuba diving, private sundowner cruises, or stand-up paddle boarding. Hideaway Spa is surely the most sought after; located just moments away from the collection, offering ultra-indulgent experiences with exquisite Asian treatments, combined with tailor made packages. In addition, there are multiple dining experiences and bars, a litany of wellness and fitness experiences in the sports complex (like yoga, golf simulator, basketball, and tennis), and a Water Sports Centre with a floating aquatic water park.

"The Signature Collection will offer the luxury 5-star discerning traveller an experience that exudes exclusivity and privacy, combined with the captivating and unspoiled beauty of Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa. The collection is the ideal escape for those who wish to retreat from the modern world in style", says Group Director of Sales and Marketing – Desislav Gospodinov. The Signature Collection is set to be unveiled in early November 2021. More detailed information will be provided over the coming weeks for the luxurious brand located at Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa.

Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa, which has been awarded The Best Luxury Hideaway Resort in the Maldives by Luxury Lifestyle Awards in 2021, offers a secluded and private villa style experience and is a mere 1 hour and 25-minute private seaplane ride from Velana International Airport, just a stone's throw away from the country's capital – Male'.

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IN THE NEWS

'The Creek View' Condominium Launched in Hulhumalé

The Creek View, a pristine spacious condominium project located in Hulhumale Phase-1 has been officially launched on August 3, 2021.

During the inauguration ceremony at Maagiri Hotel, The Creek View condominium was launched along with its official website, thecreekview.mv by Abdulla Sawad, Managing Director of SAS e Glut JV Pvt Ltd.

The project was briefed to the attendees by Saudulla Ahmed, Managing Director of SAS e Construction Pvt Ltd, in which he showcased and explained the structure and design, the complex's common facilities and other amenities.

He further highlighted that the condominium will be targeted for those who prefer breathable, open spaces and well-ventilated rooms.

As the ceremony came to an end, Ahmed Shiyam, Managing Director of Glut Investments Pvt Ltd extended his remarks, thanking all the participants of the event and parties involved in the project, especially the company's Managing Director Abdulla Sawad. On July 8, Housing Development Corporation (HDC) revealed that the development and sale of mixed-use residential complexes in plot S1-3, now named 'The Creek View' had been handed over to SAS e Glut Joint-venture Private Limited.

This new mixed residential apartment building is located at Lot 11445, Kuredhimaa Hingun and overseeing the creek separating phase-1 and phase-2 of Hulhumalé, where the complex was named after, said Saudulla.



The building comprises 114 apartments with 2 room, 3 room and 4 room units, each carefully designed to ensure the separation of spaces with special attention given to privacy and offer a homely feeling. Each apartment has a mini backyard with access from the kitchen. The kitchens are designed as enclosed spaces separated by masonry and glass partitions. 70 of these apartments are allocated as price-controlled apartments while the remaining 44 are luxury apartments. Price controlled apartment sold price per square feet has been announced to be MVR 2185.

The apartment units are designed to make the most of natural air and light ventilation with floor to ceiling high windows. These large windows are also placed with an offset from the periphery to prevent direct sun and rain exposure.

The access to the residential units is well separated from the commercial area on the ground and the first floor to ensure privacy and safety to tenants. In addition, the entrance lobby is designed with a waiting and meeting area for visitors, limiting visitors' access to apartment floors.

Parking is arranged at the basement, ground and first floor with the basement exclusively for car parking. Amenities such as the pool and playgrounds are at ground level. At the same time, all utility services are located at the service lobby to avoid direct contact with any service team member. A separate service elevator is set to be allocated for the use of the service team for transporting furniture items and trash bins.

First Phase of Generating Onsite Solar Energy Launched at Six Senses Laamu



MUI by Six Senses has announced the launch of the first phase of generating onsite solar energy at Six Senses Laamu. This project has long been under development and is vital in Six Senses Laamu's goal of having a minimal impact on the environment as possible. The total capacity of the solar energy is 350 kWh generated from 1,174 marine-grade photovoltaic panels, to be installed on 18 rooftops at the Heart of the House.

The property is currently generating 80 kWh of solar energy which has produced 24,100 kWh of clean energy since the beginning of June. With this milestone of reducing its carbon footprint, it has saved 6,914 liters of diesel that did not have to be burned, equivalent to return 7 flights from London to Maldives.

The Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI) is a multiple award-winning marine conservation initiative based at Six Senses Laamu, a 5-star resort in the Maldives. MUI consists of staff from the resort, as well as its three partner NGOs: The Manta Trust, Blue Marine Foundation and The Olive Ridley Project, all of whom work together to reach research, guest education and community outreach goals.

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IN THE NEWS

Delegates of United States Agency for International Development Meets HDC Team



Delegates from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has met with Housing Development Corporation Ltd (HDC) team during their visit to the Maldives.

On August 8, 2021; HDC revealed that representatives of USAID paid a visit to the company and looked over the Hulhumalé Development project. During the meeting, the project master plan was presented

to the visitors with the inclusion of a 3D model.

HDC further discussed its soon-to commence development plans in Hulhumalé with USAID delegates. The upcoming development projects is set to enrich the community and meet the changing needs of people.

A wholly state-owned enterprise established in

2001, HDC manages the overall planning and building of the reclaimed city of Hulhumalé – the Maldives' biggest and most ambitious urban development project. With its goal to make Hulhumalé the nation's first sustainable city, the corporation undertakes projects of hospitality, industrial, recreational, commercial and residential in nature, while introducing new opportunities for sustainable development.

Tourism Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom Meets Ken O'Flaherty, UK government's COP26 Regional Ambassador to Asia-Pacific and South Asia

Minister of Tourism Dr Abdulla Mausoom has met with Ken O'Flaherty, UK government's COP26 Regional Ambassador to Asia – Pacific and South Asia.

On August 10, 2021; Minister Mausoom met with Ambassador Ken O'Flaherty and shared updates of the tourism industry's ongoing and planned sustainable initiatives and projects related to environmental protection.

Following the fruitful discussion, Ambassador Ken O'Flaherty wrote in a tweet that he was pleased to hear "Maldives Fifth Tourism Master Plan will deliver a new framework for regulating sector and reducing its carbon footprint." He further emphasized that it will be crucial to ensure the delivery of Maldives' ambitious target of Net Zero by 2030, which is to reduce emissions by 26%.

The Regional Ambassador also met with Maldives' youth climate activists and tourism sector stakeholders during his visit. "The voice of youth is a powerful vector for change," said Ken. He



appreciated the efforts of the youth to deliver real progress in the cause.

COP26, the UN climate change conference is set to be held in Glasgow from October 31 to November 12, 2021. The summit brings worldwide parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of

the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The UK is committed to working with all countries and joining forces with civil society, companies and people on the frontline of climate change to inspire climate action ahead of COP26.

IN THE NEWS

Capital Travel Opens New Branch in Lhaviyani Atoll and Plans the Next One in Baa Atoll



Holiday Organizer, Capital Travel has extended the company's service to other parts than Malé City by becoming the first travel agency to open a branch in Lhaviyani Atoll. The company is also set to open a second agency in Baa Atoll in response to changes in service behavior brought on by Covid-19.

In July 2021, Capital Travel announced that it was to expand regionally, with approximately 4 regional offices playing roles of helping the communities to bring better impact to local tourism businesses with the support of these offices. The group has said that these new offices will remain in its network to connect with local suppliers and represent the brand, with sales and service team roles set to be created. The proposed office locations have been selected considering local market data, consumer trends and predictions on the future of travel.

Yoosuf Riffath, Managing Director of Capital

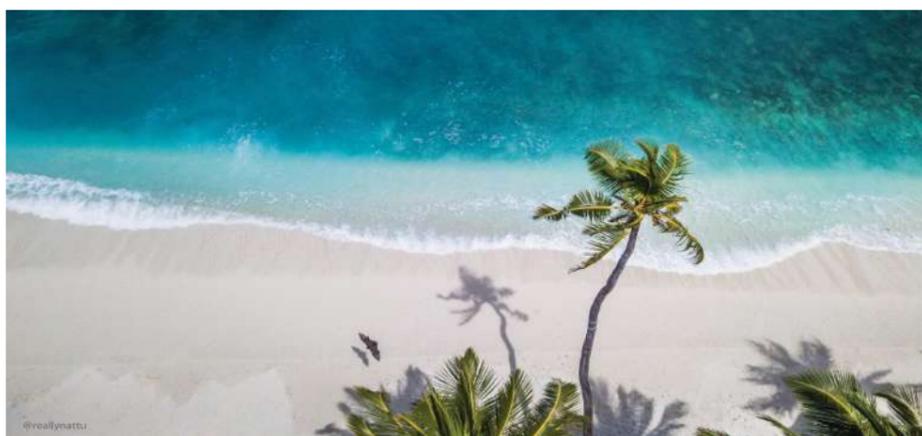
Travel said: "We want to be in the best position to provide good customer service, whether it's in a Male' City or a regional office, over the telephone or online, and will continue to put the customer at the heart of what we do."

"It is therefore imperative that we make these decisions, especially during such unprecedented uncertainty to help the local communities and also offer a modern customer service to our tourists in these locations."

Mohamed Naseem, Lhaviyani Atoll Branch Manager, Capital Travel said: "Customer behavior has already changed in recent years, with 70 percent of all bookings taking place online. We believe COVID-19 has only accelerated this change in booking habits, with people looking to book online or wishing to speak with travel experts from the comfort of their own home. So, it's better when we have regional offices helping customers for the bookings based on those areas."

"We priorities and provide appropriate training to locals, as we hope many of them will become great Customer service personals in future and continue to offer the personalized service which our tourists will value."

World Tourism Day to be held in Addu this year



Ministry of Tourism announced to have World Tourism Day celebratory activities in Addu City, this year. Due to the restrictions induced by the ongoing pandemic, the celebrations for World Tourism Day 2020 were not as ebullient as previous years. However, the Ministry plans on having major celebrations for the 49th anniversary of Maldives tourism industry.

Celebrated on September 27 every year, the theme for this year's event is "Tourism for Inclusive Growth". Hence, from September 27 till October 3, many activities will be held in Addu City as per the Senior Policy Director, Ibrahim Farhad. "Although the agenda for this year's tourism day has been finalized, it is possible that it could change depending on the global pandemic" he added.

The event activities planned by the Ministry of Tourism for the World Tourism Day have been based on the COVID-19 situation in islands, which will take place under the new normal.

Agenda for the World Tourism Day 2021 in Addu City :

- September 27: Marathon
- September 28: Photo Competition
- September 28: Island Crossing Race
- September 29: Beach Cleaning
- September 30: Water Sports Carnival
- October 1: Job Fair
- October 2: Children's Festival
- October 3: Traditional Activities
- October 3: Tourism Mapping



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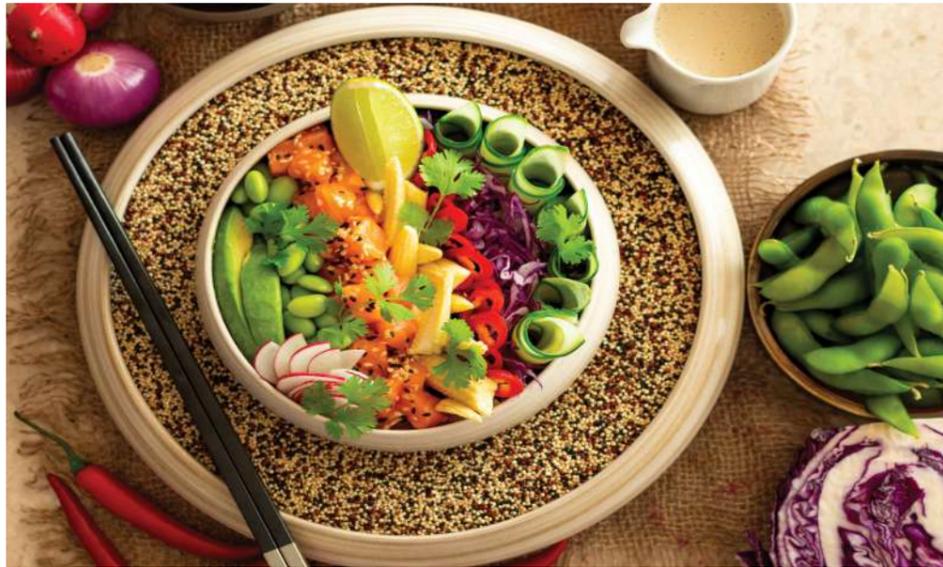
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BON APPÉTIT

Salmon and quinoa poke bowl with tahini dressing



Originally Australian Chef Taylor found her passion in the kitchen early in life. She worked her way up from an apprentice to Executive Chef over the last few years in different parts of the world.

“My inspiration comes from creating delicious food that is healthy and packed full of ingredients that keep your body full for longer.”

Ingredients:

- 90g fresh salmon fillet (skin & bones removed)
- 180g tri color quinoa
- 30g continental cucumber
- 60g corn on the cob
- 20g red cabbage
- 10g seaweed salad
- 40g edamame beans
- ½ avocado
- 10g red radish
- 2g black and white sesame seeds
- 10g coriander
- 20g lime
- To taste sea salt flakes
- To taste black pepper

Tahini dressing:

- 80ml organic tahini paste
- 1 clove garlic
- 10g ginger
- 10g coriander root
- 10g white miso paste
- 20ml tamari soy sauce
- 10ml raw honey
- 10ml rice vinegar
- 40ml filtered water
- To taste sea salt flakes
- To taste white pepper

Method:

- In a heavy based pan, add the tri color quinoa and 360g of cold water. Cook the quinoa over a medium high heat until the quinoa has absorbed all the liquid. Remove from the heat, cover with a lid and allow the quinoa to steam for an additional 5 minutes. You will know it is cooked when each quinoa pops open creating a fluffy pillow of quinoa. Set aside until ready to use.
- To prepare the items for plating:
 - Cut the salmon into 1cm cubed pieces
 - Cut the cucumber into a 10cm long piece. Using a peeler or mandoline slice the cucumber into thin ribbons on one side until reach the seeds. Then turn on continue on the other side
 - In a heavy based pot, fill with cold water and season with salt to taste like the sea. Bring to the boil and add in the corn on the cob. Cook for 3-4 minutes then remove the corn and place directly into ice water to stop the cooking process. Once cold remove the corn from the cob into individual pieces. Keep the boiling water for the edamame.
 - Using a mandoline or knife, finely shave the red cabbage as fine as possible. Place into ice water to allow to colour to leak for about 5-6 minutes. Remove from ice water and dry the cabbage on a clean tea towel
 - In the water used for the corn, keep it boiling and add in the edamame pods for 2 minutes. Remove and place directly into ice water. Once cool remove the beans from the edamame pods
 - Using a mandoline or knife finely shave the red radish into thin rounds
- Using a fry pan over medium to low heat toast the sesame seeds until fragrant and golden brown in colour
- Pick and water the coriander leaves
- Cut the lime into a nice round cheek ensuring there are no seeds
- To make the dressing: Place the tahini, garlic finely chopped, ginger finely chopped, coriander root finely chopped, miso paste, tamari soy, raw honey and vinegar into a blender. Blend until a smooth paste forms. At this point adjust the seasoning with sea salt and white pepper. The consistency will be too thick for a dressing so slowly add in the filtered water while blending to achieve the perfect dressing consistency
- To present and plate the dish:
 - In a bowl of your choice first place the cooked quinoa, seasoned with salt and pepper, into the base of the plate. Slightly press to ensure a smooth bed for the rest of the ingredients to sit on
 - Season the salmon with salt and pepper and arrange on the plate. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds
 - Arrange the cucumber, corn, red cabbage, seaweed salad and edamame beans in a visually appealing manner
 - Remove the skin from the avocado and ¾ of the way down make 3 slices, then fan the avocado and add to the plate. Season with sea salt and black pepper
 - Finish the plating with the red radish, coriander, and a lime cheek
 - Serve the tahini dressing on the side



Courtesy of
Executive Chef Taylor Shearman
LUX* North Malé Atoll



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Frankly Speaking

What immediate changes are needed to establish a demand for direct flights to operate to airports outside Velana International Airport in Maldives? What is your take on the issue here: is it held back due to lack of infrastructure of other airports or has there not been adequate interest raised by the industry?



Abdulla Nashid
Managing Director
Villa Air, Fly Me

- 1- Culture and mind-set needs to change at decision making level. With fair competition only demand and supply will reach its natural or economic equilibrium
- 2- Application of "Diversity Inclusion Approach" for Economic development has to be applied. At Political level de-centralization is happening. But this approach to cascade into economic development needs to be materialized
- 3- Recognition and appreciation that centralized distribution of traffic is costly and time consuming - it's bad for regional development of economy.
- 4- Need to stop thinking that 98% of all international traffic as to come to Maldives - At Policy level it's important to identify potential zones where you have adequate bed capacity where international air traffic can be justified
- 5- Destination markets need to be identified for selected zones
- 6- An assessment should be carried out to establish the capacity for traffic, potential demand for the traffic and destinations should be identified



Mohamed Ali Janah
President
National Federation of Maldivian Employers

Regional tourism and destination tourism would be the future direction of tourism in Maldives. Policies must be made to promote destination tourism regional wise. Our infrastructure investment must also be towards this direction. We already have some useful infrastructure including international standard airports in the country and investments for more such facilities must be encouraged. If we establish policies to independently develop destination tourism all else will fall in place and regional development could be fast tracked to meet the ever-growing demand and expectations of the local population. The mismatch in the current demand and supply could be overcome with the regions contributing effectively and positively to our economy.



Ahmed Arshad
Director
Avia Maldives

We need to focus on building international Airports in strategic locations throughout the country. And by International airports I am referring to full-fledged airports with basic handling abilities / fueling abilities and CIQ presence. One of the main difficulties in operating to current international airports is that apart from MLE and GAN and HAQ no other airport has fueling capacity, and apart from NMF no other airports has CIQ presence. These adds up to the operational costs for the operator resulting less attractive charter quotes to the client.

To summarize i can say right now changes needs to be made to the lacking of infrastructure and we'd see a very positive impact (as without the proper infrastructure we see keen interest and mild demand to operate to many stations within Maldives) our aim should be that tourists spends minimum amount of time to reach the hotel once they arrive to the Maldives.



Abdulla Ghiyas
Deputy Managing Director / Inner Maldives Holidays
Chair, PATA, Maldives Chapter

VIA is an established hub and proximity to various properties, versus any other airport that firstly lacks proper infrastructure and in most cases there isnt enough beds in various categories in close proximity for a viable operation in long term. So these two factors are key in creating demand and feasibility of another airport.



Abdulla Nasheed
President
Guesthouse Association of Maldives

Local communities in islands are not great travelers, need to have statistics of number of arrivals to resorts in different atolls throughout the year which only raise a demand.

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