

Maldives

Popular with both families and honeymooners, the Maldives islands are less than five hours from Dubai, making it an ideal place to put on your holiday hit list. You can stay at Conrad Maldives Rangali Island, Anantara Veli, JA Manafaru or the Kanuhura Maldives. flydubai is the most affordable option, while Emirates flies non-stop at Male three times a day.

OUTLET	Time Out Dubai	FREQUENCY	Weekly
COUNTRY	United Arab Emirates	CIRCULATION	41,486 Annually
LANGUAGE	English	IMPRESSIONS	226
SIZE	1,917 pages	AVE	\$12,523
PAGES	190, 192	SENTIMENT	Somewhat positive
		DISTRIBUTION	United Arab Emirates



Maldives A picture-perfect place to chill

Maldives

Beautiful beaches, palm trees and relaxation

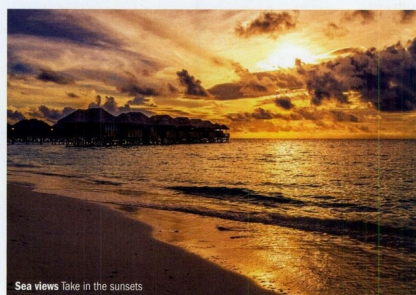
For the ultimate in holiday luxury, the Maldives is where you need to go. Palm trees, white sandy beaches and clear blue sea make this a destination to get away from it all. Popular with both families and honeymooners, the Maldives islands are less than five hours from Dubai, making it an ideal place to put on your holiday hit list. If you can tear yourself away from your beach towel or sun lounger, this Indian Ocean nation also offers some of the best snorkelling and diving in the world, guaranteeing unrivalled visibility and bath-warm waters teeming with life.

Highlights

Try watersports

If you're into diving then you'll be in your element. There are a plethora of watersports centres where you can rent equipment or take lessons. There are plenty of day trips to truly awesome dive sites including Nilhandhoo Kandu, Ekefaru Kandu, Vadhoi Thila and Maarehaa Kandu,

and die-hard divers can opt for a live-aboard experience, which is the best way to get acquainted with the abundant sea life that surrounds you. From June to September, the southwest monsoon brings with it large swells, adding surfing to the



Sea views Take in the sunsets

catalogue of watersports already offered in the Maldives. Expect waves ranging anywhere between three and eight feet tall, meaning there are activities to suit both intermediate and advanced wave riders.

See the capital

If you're looking for an experience beyond palm trees and sundowners, head to the Maldives' capital, Malé. It's where all of the islands' imports are received and bartered over, where the nation's politics and reforms are debated and where residents go

Medium-haul

about their everyday business far removed from the blissful existence of sun seekers and tourists. You'll find a decent number of restaurants as well as attractions including the National Art Gallery, National Museum and picturesque Sultan's Park with its vast array of flora and fauna.

Where to stay

Conrad Maldives Rangali Island

With seven restaurants (including Ithaa Undersea Restaurant, set underwater) and four bars, foodies will love this spot. There are two spas, making it a perfect place to relax and unwind, plus there's a kids club for families. There's plenty of diving to do, boat trips to take, and other watersports or snorkelling. Or you could just sit back and chill by one of the many pools. www.conradmaldivesrangali.com

Anantara Veli

While all the rooms at this island resort are beautiful, we recommend you check into one of the extra special Ocean Pool Bungalows. Perched on small cliffs, and all with ocean views, they have a bright, airy, open-plan feel and unlike most of the other accommodation options, they also have their own plunge pool and deck. Even the bathrooms have views from that look out through floor-to-ceiling windows to the ocean. www.veli-maldives.anantara.com

There are some truly wow-factor spots for diving

JA Manafaru

Set on its own tropical island, this resort will leave you feeling completely relaxed. Lounge about in hammocks on the beach, with the sea just a couple of footsteps away. There are seven restaurants serving food made with local ingredients, so you won't get bored when it comes to dining out. And there's a luxurious spa to add another layer of relaxation to a stay at this peaceful hotel. www.jaresortshotels.com

Kanuhura Maldives

Visit this beautiful hotel with villas looking out over the water. Laze in a hammock with a good book, soak up the sun or head to the KOKAA Spa for ultimate relaxation. Or enjoy a meal at one of the exclusive restaurants. www.kanuhura.com

Getting There

FlyDubai is the most affordable option at Dhs1,019. Emirates flies non-stop to Malé three times a day with flights costing Dhs2,800. Flights take around four hours and 45 minutes.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Maldives celebrates independence day on July 26. There are various festivities and parades to mark the occasion, as well as a huge celebration held in Malé's Republic Square.

Getting Around

Nowhere in the Maldives is more than a 90-minute flight from Malé, which makes seaplanes, or air taxis, the preferred mode of transport. Taxi boats are also common, especially if travelling to the North and South Malé Atolls. When you are on the islands you will be able to walk most places.

TRAVEL TIP

The perfect time to visit is between January and March, with the latter being the hottest months. Temperatures peak at around 29°C. In April prices are lower. September is the wettest month with 243mm of rainfall.



Conrad Maldives A stunning island retreat