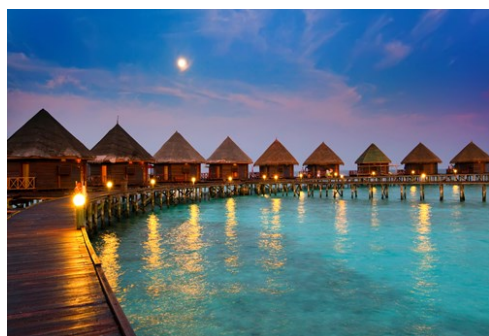




Maldives

Photo: silvae/Shutterstock.com



KKulikov/Shutterstock.com



dotshock/Shutterstock.com



Brian Kinney/Shutterstock.com

The iconic white sand island archipelago washed by crystal-blue waters of the Indian Ocean firmly holds on to its reputation of a sought-after luxury holiday retreat for vacationers the world over. Earlier heralded as primarily a honeymoon destination, the Maldives now draw a mixed crowd of travelers to its growing number of backpackers' inns and longstanding upscale resorts.

NOTE: This Guide has been limited to 20 points of interest per section. For the full guide, please visit ArrivalGuides.com

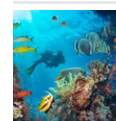
Go where no one has
VENTURED BEFORE!

5 Off the Beaten Track
Destinations in Asia

ArrivalGuides

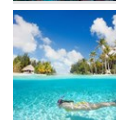
Foto: WhitefoxChen / Shutterstock

Top 5



Scuba Diving

Crystal-blue waters surrounding the Maldives harbor extraordinary marine wil...



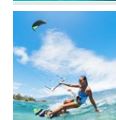
Snorkeling

For those not quite ready to descend underwater, snorkeling provides a great...



Seaplane Flights

One of the best ways to grasp how truly stunning the islands are is by looki...



Water Sports

The Maldives are known as a hub of tranquility and relaxation, but active tr...



Manta Point

For experienced divers, the Manta Reef (also referred to as Madivaru) is a m...



THE ISLANDS



Romolo Tavani/Shutterstock.com

The Maldives make up a total of twenty six atolls, with many (otherwise uninhabited) islands being occupied by a single resort hotel. Vacationers usually spend much of their time on hotel premises, so picking the right island is a matter of relative importance. Staying at upscale resorts, however, isn't the only option available to visitors. Since recently, the Maldives have appeared on the radars of budget travelers - a few inns and guest houses have opened up on the larger, inhabited islands (Guraidhoo and Maafushi, to name a couple). This has given start to breaking down the age-old conception of Maldives as an exclusive, luxury destination solely for honeymooners and the world's rich and famous.

Global warming, and - consequently - rising sea levels have brought about alarming news and heated discussions about the future of these pristine islands, and whether the nation is doomed to go underwater in a few decades' time. Do try and take advantage of the islands' beauty and marine riches now, while tourism in the area is booming like never before, and the Maldives are becoming economically accessible to an an increasing number of travelers.

DO & SEE



toey19863/Shutterstock.com

Travelers flock to the Maldives in search of pristine waters and crisp white sands, and most activities available revolve in and around the two. At sea, diving and snorkeling top the list of sought-after pastimes - marine life here is incredibly vibrant, and the colorful reefs and corals, as well as unique diving spots (such as the Banana Reef or the remains of a ship sunken in the 20th century) continuously attract marine explorers to the area. On land, exclusive golf courses, beaches, high-end restaurants and spas provide plenty for water-shy guests to indulge in, while the capital city of Male holds a variety of shopping opportunities and a few cultural haunts.

Scuba Diving



Crystal-blue waters surrounding the Maldives harbor extraordinary marine wildlife and underwater seascapes dominated by vibrant coral gardens, reefs and caves; one would be hard-pressed to find better diving spots anywhere else in the world.

Countless Dive Centers scattered around the islands provide the necessary training and gear. Qualified instructors follow divers every step of the way to ensure a safe and enjoyable

experience.

Prodivers Pvt. Ltd:

Photo: Tischenko Irina/Shutterstock.com
Address: Champa Building, Male, Maldives
Phone: +960 662 0343
Email: info@prodivers.com
More Info: Kuredu, Komandoo, Lily Beach and Vakarufulhi Resorts

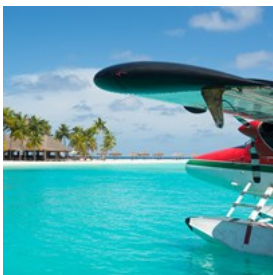
Snorkeling



For those not quite ready to descend underwater, snorkeling provides a great alternative. A mask and breathing pipe are all the equipment necessary to see fascinating marine life unfold before your eyes as you swim through the dashing clear waters.

Photo: BlueOrange Studio/Shutterstock.com
Address: Maldives

Seaplane Flights



One of the best ways to grasp how truly stunning the islands are is by looking on from above, while on board a seaplane. Seaplanes are commonly used as a local means of transport, and provide the perfect angle for memorable photographs of the iconic archipelago and its endless white beaches.

The two largest companies in operation are:

Maldivian Air Taxi
+960 331 52 01
www.maldivianairtaxi.com

Trans Maldivian Airways
+960 3315 201
www.transmaldivian.com

Photo: Yongyut Kumsri/Shutterstock.com
Address: Maldives
Phone: +960 331 52 01
Internet: www.maldivianairtaxi.com

Water Sports



The Maldives are known as a hub of tranquility and relaxation, but active travelers will surely not find themselves at a loss. Some of the available pastime options include water-skiing, wind- and kite-surfing, wake-boarding and parasailing. You can even try out one of the latest X-Jetpacks and feel like a real-life action hero soaring above the water.

Extreme Maldives Private:

Photo: EpicStockMedia/Shutterstock.com
Address: Halaveli Magu Hulhumale, Maldives
Internet: www.extrememaldives.com
Email: watersports@extrememaldives.com
More Info: At Sheraton Maldives

Manta Point



For experienced divers, the Manta Reef (also referred to as Madivaru) is a must-visit diving spot not to be missed. Once underwater, divers will find themselves at arm's length from the majestic Manta rays, some reaching 3 meters in size. Visitors to the area must carefully follow instruction given to them, so as to minimize the damage done to the reef.

Photo: Khoroshunova Olga/Shutterstock.com

Address: Ari Atoll, Maldives

More Info: Tours available from Baros. Recommended visiting time - June to November.

British Loyalty Wreck



This world famous oil tanker was torpedoed in the 1940s, and has remained under water ever since. The site is now a popular attraction

frequented by divers drawn by the ship's mysterious flair.

Photo: Richard Whitcombe/Shutterstock.com

Address: Addu Atoll, Maldives

National Museum

If you happen to be in the capital city during your stay, do not miss the National Museum's collection of artifacts offering insight into Maldivian (at times turbulent) history. The museum building was curiously designed and given to the island nation by China.

Address: Sultan Park, Male

Phone: +960 332 2254

Grand Friday Mosque



The Grand Friday Mosque is a monumental religious site, the largest Muslim place of worship in the Maldives. You have to belong to the religion of

Islam to get inside, but travelers of any convictions are welcome to explore the surrounding premises.

Photo: nattu (image cropped)

Address: Ibrahimee Magu, Male

More Info: Corner of Medhuziyaarai Magu

Banana Reef



Banana Reef is a favorite local diving and snorkeling site in the North Male Atoll that has shallow and deep areas for both novice and

experienced visitors. The underwater world here holds a wealth of treasures, and is guaranteed to leave a lasting impression.

Photo: USFWS - Pacific Region (image cropped)

Address: North Male Atoll, Maldives

Golf



Connoisseurs and beginners alike will thoroughly enjoy engaging in the noble sport of golf at one of the many Maldivian golf

courses. Several resorts provide guests with access to golf courses and facilities located in scenic locations swarming with palm trees.

Kuredu Island Resort and Spa:

Photo: Wojciech Kulicki (image cropped)

Address: Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives

Phone: +960 662 0337

Internet: www.kuredu.com

DINING



KKulikov/Shutterstock.com

Seafood (tuna fish in particular), coconut and rice constitute the bulk of Maldivian dishes, many of which are heavily influenced by Indian and Sri Lankan flavors. Much like Indian cuisine, Maldivian food may prove a bit too fiery for some, so make sure to request the desired level of spiciness prior to ordering.

As a rule, island resorts house a number of cafes and eateries, offering guests plenty of dining options to choose from. To explore further possibilities, travelers may opt for a boat ride (or even a short seaplane flight) to a nearby island (the Niyama Per Aquum Resort, with its themed restaurants, could be an interesting choice), or plan for a meal out at one of the unique Maldivian underwater restaurants.

Thila



Located at the Kurumba resort on Vihamanafushi island, this restaurant offers some of the most iconic dining experiences in the Maldives. Enjoy an exquisite champagne breakfast or a dinner featuring excellent Maldivian seafood while seated on deck hovering over the crystal clear waters.

Photo: Sven Hansche/Shutterstock.com

Address: Vihamanafushi Island, Maldives

More Info: Kurumba Resort

Just Veg by Atmosphere



Maldivian cuisine is (naturally) all about seafood, but vegans and vegetarians will enjoy a wonderful dining experience at this

restaurant that serves a vast selection of plant-based dishes. Meat-eaters will be pleasantly surprised by the masterfully crafted animal-free dishes served in a breathtaking waterfront setting.

Photo: Kiian Oksana/Shutterstock.com

Address: Kanifushi Island, Maldives

Phone: +960 662 0066

Ithaa Undersea Restaurant



Speaking of unique, the Ithaa Undersea Restaurant lays claim to offering a truly one-of-a-kind dining experience to patrons.

Diners will be seated underwater, free to observe the natural marine wildlife through the restaurant's transparent walls.

Photo: fischers/Shutterstock.com

Address: Conrad Maldives, Rangali Island, Maldives

Muraka Restaurant



This Maldivian restaurant is hard to miss on the tiny island of Mirihi - the seating is superb, with front-row seats to the spectacular show of the

setting sun. The main emphasis here is on

seafood, and the Lobster Dinner is highly recommended.

Photo: 10 FACE/Shutterstock.com

Address: Mirihi Island, South Ari Atoll, Maldives

Internet: www.mirihi.com

More Info: Located at the Mirihi Resort

Epicure



Epicure is a restaurant adjacent to the Per Aquum Resort. It serves buffet-style breakfasts and dinners (with a-la-carte options

available as well), which often have an international theme, such as "Italian night". Dishes on offer carry a heavy emphasis on seafood.

Photo: nuu_jeed/Shutterstock.com

Address: Niyama Maldives Per Aquum Resort, Maldives

Phone: +960 676 2828

Tribal



This themed restaurant brings African flair to the Maldives, and the staff wearing Zulu Warrior costumes will perform traditional dances, as well

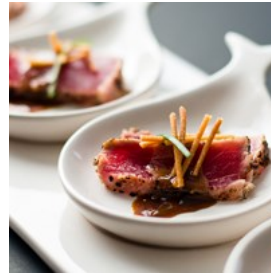
as see to that all diners have a highly enjoyable experience. The menu is divers, with an emphasis on proteins.

Photo: Debbie Aird Photography/Shutterstock.com

Address: Dhaalu Atoll, Maldives

More Info: Niyama Maldives Per Aquum Resort

Origami Japanese Restaurant



Origami is a dinner-and-a-show kind of establishment, with teppanyaki chefs showing off their culinary craft right before the diners'

eyes. Japanese is the restaurant's specialty.

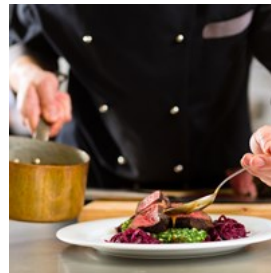
Photo: Louno Morose/Shutterstock.com

Address: Kaafu Atoll, Veliganuhuraa Island, Maldives

Internet: veli-maldives.anantara.com

More Info: Anantara Veli Resort & Spa

The Kitchen



This restaurant offers a high-end dining experience, with an open kitchen where dishes are crafted right before the patrons' eyes. The setting

is majestic, with waterfront seating and glass walls providing unobstructed views of the ocean. The menu is varied, with an emphasis on seafood.

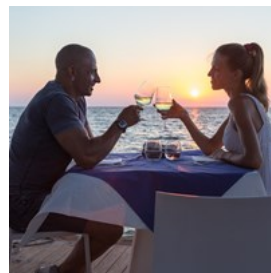
Photo: Kzenon/Shutterstock.com

Address: South Male Atoll, Maldives

Internet: www.maldives.holidayinnresorts.com/dining/dine-in-the-kitchen

More Info: Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma

Edge



A restaurant unlike any other, Edge is located on an artificial island out in the ocean, with access by boat only. Most tables are outdoors, so that diners

can enjoy the fresh evening breeze and watch the stars slowly light up above. Cuisine served is international, with an emphasis on seafood.

Photo: Evgeniya L/Shutterstock.com
Address: Dhaalu Atoll, Maldives
More Info: Per Aquum Resort Niyama

Belle Amie Bistro



Belle Amie serves Asian food with a heavy emphasis on Indian flavors. The bistro is located in Male, so stop by if you're looking to dine while exploring the Maldivian capital.

Photo: Alena Haurylik/Shutterstock.com
Address: Keneree Magu, Male, Maldives
More Info: Located at the Somerset Hotel

CAFES



TravnikovStudio/Shutterstock.com

Cafe culture is present in Male, where small eateries and coffee shops dot the city center and harbor areas. Outside of the capital city, travelers' will most likely find a pleasant location on their resort island of choice, with seating available on an outdoor hovering deck or even directly on the beach, with tables and chairs set right on the crisp white sand.

Kurumba Cafe



This classy cafe is adjacent to the Kurumba Resort on Vihamanafushi Island. The establishment caters to resort guests and not only, serves a variety of meals and light foods, and offers seating on a covered deck hovering over the ocean. Come for (champagne) breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Photo: SunKids/Shutterstock.com
Address: Vihamanafushi Island, Kaafu Atoll, Maldives
Phone: +960 6642324
More Info: Kurumba Resort

Shell Beans



Shell Beans can be found at two locations around Male and another one on neighboring Hulhumale. The cafe is a locals' favorite that mainly serves Western-style foods, including (but not limited to) sandwiches and shakes. Late working hours of the chain are a pleasant added bonus.

Photo: Oliveshadow/Shutterstock.com
Address: Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male, Maldives
Phone: +960 798 6907
Internet: www.shellbeans.com
More Info: Jazeera Building

Vani Coffee Shop



Feel the crisp sand beneath your feet at Vani Coffee Shop, whose tables and chairs are set outside in the shade of tall palm trees. The cafe serves a variety of drinks and refreshments, as well as quite a few meals and desserts.

Photo: Quinn Martin/Shutterstock.com
 Address: South Ari Atoll, Maldives
 More Info: Sun Island Resort & Spa

The Sea House



Sea House boasts a great location right next to the ferry terminal, and enjoys popularity among locals. Unobstructed views of the Indian Ocean might

be the establishment's main attraction, but reasonable prices and a buffet breakfast has secured the Sea House many a return customer. Local and international cuisine on offer.

Photo: Lolostock/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male, Maldives
 Phone: +9603332957
 More Info: 1st Floor Hulhumale Male, Ferry Terminal

Royal Garden Cafe



Inconspicuous from the outside, the Royal Garden Cafe is a venue not to be missed. Housed inside an old residential home, this cafe's stylish interior and

quality service draws repeat customers from nearby governmental institutions and upscale hotels. The main culinary emphasis here is on Indian and Sri Lankan flavors, but international foods such as pastas and grill are readily available.

Photo: Guy Mace Photography/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Medhuziyaarai Magu, Male, Maldives
 Phone: +960 332 0288
 More Info: Esjeji Gallery

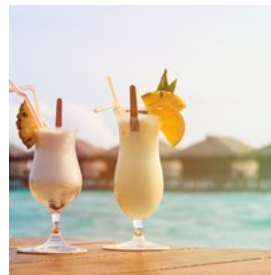
NIGHTLIFE



Mirelle/Shutterstock.com

Maldivian nightlife tends to be on the calm side, with most evening entertainment taking place on resort premises. With the paradise islands being heralded as primarily a destination for couples, one wouldn't expect much in the way of clubbing - however, some hotels have a number of bars and nightclubs on their premises. Standouts include the chic Fifteen Below at W Retreat and Spa, the unique underwater Subsix nightclub at Per Aquum Niyama Resort and the Reethi Beach Resort, which enjoys a reputation of a socialites' magnet.

Kurumba Beach Bar



Kurumba Beach Bar hosts regular live music sessions, and is a great choice for a low-key evening of sunset-watching.

Cocktails and drinks are served continuously after dinner time.

Photo: Nadezhda1906/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Vihamanafushi, North Male Atoll, Maldives
 More Info: Kurumba Resort

Club360



Do not be misled by the name - Club360 isn't much of a nightclub, but rather a sports bar and cafe, where spirits and non-alcoholic drinks enjoy equal popularity. There are several screens on the walls where major sporting events are frequently broadcast.

Photo: Khakimullin Aleksandr/Shutterstock.com
Address: Janavary Magu, Male, Maldives

Subsix



The world's first underwater nightclub was recently renovated to provide party-goers with an even more luxurious nightlife experience. With its location underneath the ocean surface, the establishment's glass walls allow visitors to observe marine creatures while sipping on elegant drinks and socializing.

Photo: sibiranna/Shutterstock.com
Address: Dhaalu Atoll, Maldives
More Info: Per Aquum Niyama Resort

Fifteen Below



Dance underneath the sand at Fifteen Below, one of Maldivian most chic nightlife venues with resident DJs playing the hottest tunes. Lounge areas surround the dance floor, and the extensive drink list is guaranteed to entice even the pickiest of guests.

Photo: Poznyakov/Shutterstock.com
Address: Fesdu Island, North Ari Atoll, Maldives

Internet: www.wretreatmaldives.com/en/15below
More Info: Located at the W Retreat and Spa

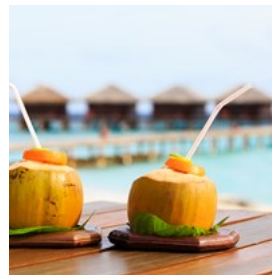
Club Med Kani



Club Med Kani places special emphasis on keeping resort guests active with "GOs", or "Gentle Organisers" putting on evening shows and providing all sorts of entertainment. The resort is known for its night time events.

Photo: Africa Studio/Shutterstock.com
Address: Kaafu Atoll, Maldives
Phone: +960 664 3152

Kuredu Island Resort & Spa



With its many bars and nightlife establishments, the Kuredu Island Resort & Spa has plenty of options to choose from. Babuna Bar is the island's main entertainment hub, Sangu Bar will perfectly suit couples, and the 'O' Bar is the place to be at sundown.

Photo: Nadezhda1906/Shutterstock.com
Address: Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives
Phone: +960 662 0337
Internet: www.kuredu.com/wine-and-dine/bars
More Info: Kuredu Island Resort & Spa

Reethi Beach Resort



The Reethi Beach Resort has quite a few bars located on its premises, so all guests, no matter their tastes, will find an evening venue to their liking. The resort has a reputation as a great place to go for socializing in a relaxed, laid-back

setting.

Photo: Chiyacat/Shutterstock.com

Address: Baa Atoll, Maldives

Phone: +960 660 2626

Internet: www.reethibeach.com

The Deck Bar



Located at the luxury Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma, the Deck Bar is another venue allowing guests to fully enjoy the Maldivian sunset and

fresh evening breeze in a luxurious setting.

Photo: IVL/Shutterstock.com

Address: South Male Atoll, Maldives

Phone: +960 664 0511

Internet: www.maldives.holidayinnresorts.com

More Info: Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma

SHOPPING



Rawpixel.com/Shutterstock.com

The Maldives do not offer much in the way of large malls or shopping centers; however, visiting some of the local inhabited islands may prove useful for souvenirs or necessities (resort-owned shops tend to overcharge customers, with prices being up to 80% lower elsewhere). For substantial shopping opportunities, make a day for Male and explore Majeedhee Magu and Orchid Magu - the two streets a savvy shopper wouldn't miss for the

world in the capital city.

Inhabited Islands



While resort islands might not offer much in the way of shopping, a visit to almost any inhabited island nearby (Maafushi, Dhigurah, Ukulhas or Thoddoo, to name a few) is great for stocking up on local crafts, souvenirs, authentic artwork and necessities.

Photo: MJTH/Shutterstock.com

Address: Maafushi, Maldives

Male Local Market

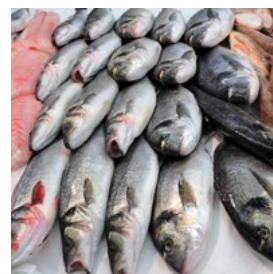


When in Male, do not miss the local fruit and vegetable market if you're looking to stock up on fresh produce. The market is very compact and sells items such as Maldivian dry fish, spices, green coconuts and snacks (made primarily with sesame seeds, rice and peanuts).

Photo: Goran Bogicevic/Shutterstock.com

Address: Male, Maldives

Fish Market



The Fish Market of Male is an experience before a shopping spot - vendors clean and gut the fish right on the spot, and visitors are certainly most welcome to purchase fresh seafood off the stalls.

Photo: Federico Rostagno/Shutterstock.com

Address: Male, Maldives

More Info: Located close to National Football Stadium

Majeedhee Magu



Male, the Maldivian capital, is the nation's commercial center - and Majeedhee Magu is its busiest shopping street. Lined with small stores,

gift shops and boutiques, the city's main artery is not to be missed when on the island. Prices are reasonable, and haggling is often welcome.

Photo: MJTH/Shutterstock.com

Address: Majeedhee Magu, Male, Maldives

STO Trade Centre



STO Trade Centre is one of Male's biggest shopping centers. Do not expect to find international boutiques,

but the building houses a large supermarket along with a few smaller shops.

Photo: Ingrid Balabanova/Shutterstock.com

Address: Orchid Magu, Male, Maldives

Sea Sports



This boutique specializes on sporting attire, and offers some invaluable accessories for water sports enthusiasts - waterproof phone cases,

for example - and more.

Photo: Aquarimage/Shutterstock.com

Address: Chandhanee magu, Male, Maldives

Lucid Dream



Lucid Dream is a small boutique that specializes on women's clothing and accessories. The shop is popular with locals and gets regularly re-stocked

with newest fashions.

Photo: Blend Images/Shutterstock.com

Address: Lonuziyaarai Magu, Male, Maldives

Phone: +960 778 6432

Sonee Sports Lifestyle



This relatively large store sells sporting attire of well-established international brands, such as Nike, Quiksilver, Rip Curl and others. Find

anything for your vacation needs, water sports and more here.

Photo: Aleph Studio/Shutterstock.com

Address: Chaandhanee Magu, Male, Maldives

Phone: +960 332 5995

LeCute



LeCute is a reputable international brand cosmetics retailer. Perfumes, make up, creams and lotions and various body care items

are all in stock here.

Photo: Kzenon/Shutterstock.com

Address: Orchid Magu, Male, Maldives

Asrafee Bookshop



This Maldivian bookstore offers a selection of English-language books, along with a variety of stationery items. Come here to find the perfect holiday read.

Photo: connel/Shutterstock.com

Address: Chaandhane Magu, Male, Maldives

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



DD (image cropped)

Ibrahim Nasir International Airport



Also known as Male International Airport, this air hub is the largest in the archipelago and serves multiple locations worldwide. The airport is

located on Hulhule island and is the main point of entry to most Maldives' visitors. Most travelers will switch to connecting flights to reach further locations in the Maldives or use private transfer services.

Speedboat and seaplane (Trans Maldivian Airways, Maldivian Air Taxi) transfers are available from the airport to nearby and far-lying

islands and resorts. The airport ferry connects the airport to Male City. The ferry runs at regular intervals from early in the morning till late into the night.

Photo: Juan Garces

Address: Airport Main Rd, Maldives

Phone: +960 332 3506

Internet: www.maleairport.com

Public Transport



The fastest, but most pricey way of getting around the Maldives is on board a seaplane (which comes with an added bonus of enjoying

birds-eye views of the archipelago). Seaplanes operate during daylight hours only. The two largest companies in operation are:

Trans Maldivian Air Taxi

+960 3315 201

www.transmaldivian.com

info@transmaldivian.com

A cheaper means of transport is speedboat - some are used as public transport and connect the airport to the inhabited islands, but run very infrequently. Speedboats are available for hire, so prior arrangements of your transfer by the hotel may be beneficial.

Post

Maldives Post Office



Photo: Andy Fuchs

Address: 26 Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male, Maldives
Opening hours: Sun-Thurs 8am-4.30pm
Phone: +960 331 5555

Pharmacy



Most resort islands will probably have a pharmacy/first aid center on their premises.

Pharmacies in Male: Dial Pharmacy Orchid Magu,

Malé

Phone: +960 331 3130

STO Peoples Choice Pharmacy

Indhira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH)

+960 334 4242

Photo: Gemma Garner

Address: Orchid Magu, Malé

Phone: +960 331 3130

Telephone



Country code +960, followed by area code (if necessary).

Photo: Jardson Almeida

Electricity



20V to 240V, 50Hz AC

Three-pin sockets are common, so an adapter may be necessary.

Photo: Stirling Tschan

Population

345,023

Currency

10 Maldivian rufiyaa = 0.60 Euro

Opening hours

Most shops in the capital city of Male stay open till as late as 11pm, but are closed for prayer times. Opening hours for resorts and in-house establishments may vary, but most tend to be open late.

Newspapers

Haveeru
Maldives Independent
Maldivian Digest

Emergency numbers

Police 119
Medical 102
Fire 118

Tourist information

Maldives Marketing & Public Relations Corporation
4th Floor, Velaanaage, Ameer Ahmed Magu
Malé, 20096
Republic of Maldives
Tel: +960 332 3228
Fax: +960 332 3229
info@visitmaldives.com