

MALDIVES



State of the Mahal Dhibiyat

- ✓ Tropical islands with soft sand beaches fringed with lofty coconut palms leading into turquoise lagoons where house reefs teem with marine life...
- ✓ Welcome to the Maldives, where 1,192 coral islands set within 26 atolls are spread across 35,000 square miles of Indian Ocean. Some islands are now dreamy tourist resorts; others are home to local villages; while many are still deserted and untouched. The lowest country in the world, at no point do any of these islands rise to above six feet!
- ✓ Every resort in the Maldives is set on its own island offering a little slice of tropical heaven and a total escape from everyday life. There's as much or as little to do as you desire. A world-class diving destination, spend days diving or snorkelling among turtles, rays and sharks. Take a boat out island hopping and dolphin spotting. Chill out and relax with a good book. Pamper yourself with a blissful spa treatment. Or dine in style on your very own private island. The wonderful year-round warm weather and white sandy beaches of the Maldives provide a stunning barefoot retreat.



Capital
Male



Population
530,000



Language
Divehi



Time Zone
GMT+5
(Indochina Time Zone)



Electricity
220V to 240V, 50Hz



Currency
Maldivian
Rufiyaa

When to Go

SEASONS

As a tropical monsoon climate, the Maldives has two dominating seasons: a dry season and a wet season. The dry season has little rain and lower humidity; it lasts from December to April. The wet season is characterised by stronger winds and rain, and lasts from May to November.

WEATHER

The Maldives is hot and sunny all year round, with average temperatures of 22 – 31°C. The best weather is between November and April. The high season falls between December and March. The monsoon runs from May to October, peaking around June. The northern atolls have the highest rainfall from May to November; the southern atolls from November to March.



WHAT TO BRING

It's a tropical destination so swimwear, sunhat and flip flops! Most islands have a small shop but they can be expensive so bring plenty of sun lotion and your favourite toiletries.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Don't be put off that May to September is the wet season. Humidity and rain do increase over these months, but as the islands are so low-lying, rain clouds blow over very quickly. Lower traveller numbers and excellent "low season" offers mean it's a great time to visit.

Customs & Traditions

ART & ARCHITECTURE

In a traditional Maldivian village, houses are made of coral-stone joined with mortar, and usually line the sides of the roads. Many homes will have a shaded courtyard in front that serves as an outdoor room. Most houses have an open-air bathroom.

The architecture of resorts is more eclectic, ranging from wooden structures with thatched roofs to minimalist and stylish stark white walls and contemporary furnishings and artworks.

DANCE & THEATRE

The best-known form of traditional music and dance is the bodu beru, which means a big drum. To the pounding of drums, dancers begin to sway and swing their arms, becoming more animated as the tempo increases, finally finishing in a rhythmic frenzy

ETIQUETTE

As tourists stay on separate islands, local laws and customs do not apply. But do be aware that topless sunbathing is not permitted. When visiting local inhabited islands, it is recommended that you dress modestly by not showing too much flesh.

PEOPLE

The people in the Maldives are often referred to as Maldivians or Maldivian Islanders. They are an ethnically diverse group native to the Republic of the Maldives and the Minicoy Island in the Union Territory of Lakshadweep, India. Typically, Maldivians share the same culture and speak Dhivehi, which forms part of the Indo-Aryan Languages.

RELIGION

Buddhism is the faith of 95 percent of the population, 4 percent are Muslim, and the remainder are Christians, Hindus, Sikhs and other religions. Religion plays a very important role in Thai life and is considered an essential pillar of society. Theravada or Hinayana Buddhism is the national religion of Thailand but there is total religious freedom. Temples can be found in virtually every village and they play an important role. Their prime function is to aid aspirants in their search for Nirvana, however they also serve as schools, hospitals, community centres, and as a place of safe deposit and refuge for the needy. At some point during their lives most Thai males will spend some time in a monastery.

