

# The islandchief

your trusted independent travel news

VOL 44 | March 2020 | [www.islandchief.com](http://www.islandchief.com)

Email : [news@islandchief.com](mailto:news@islandchief.com) | Hotline : +960 7986626



333-7055 / 7907057

[marketing@vamco.com.mv](mailto:marketing@vamco.com.mv)



## JENNY: Beyond Boundaries

DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR AT ISLAND AVIATION SERVICES LIMITED

PAGE: 12

PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

**Nasreena Ali (Natti)**

Sous Chef | Dhigali Maldives

PAGE: 08

IN CONVERSATION WITH

**Sarah Forster**

Director of Sales | JOALI Maldives

PAGE: 18



## Digital Resorts

Innovation drives experiences



**ooredoo**  
business

Digital  
Resorts



Scan for more details

[ooredoo.mv](http://ooredoo.mv)

# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

## Managing Editor

Maaesa Zaki

## Director Marketing & PR

Ismail Hameed

## Director of Finance

Mariyam Niuma

## Managing Director

Ismail Shifraz

## Director of Operations

Mohamed Shamin

## Director of Sales & Marketing

Mariyam Maaisha

## Design & Layout

Naafee Ibrahim

## Accounts Executive

Yusra Naseer

## Content Executive

Mariyam Zeena

## Consultant

Ahmed Ijaz

## Cover Story Photographer

Mohamed Azmeel

## Distribution Support

Shahid Uddin



Dear Readers,

It gives us great pleasure to address you – our readers – for the very first time in this special edition of The Islandchief. Our team has curated the March issue, keeping in our hearts all the inspirational and strong women in our lives who are breaking barriers, paving ways for the next generation, while struggling every day with gender bias – in one form or another.

We can't deny that the Maldives has made some progress on gender equality in recent years – we now have 7 female Ministers out of the total 20 breaking the country's record! We've got women on the Supreme Court bench and for the first time in the country's history we have introduced a Temporary Special Measure by reserving 33% of the seats in the local councils for women. Although at a slow rate, it is clearly visible that there is a steady increase of Maldivian women joining the country's male-dominated tourism and hospitality industry, as well as women rising up the corporate ladder.

But then again, we have a long way to go. Women and girls still continue to face discrimination, particularly when it comes to childcare and domestic chores. To top it all off, there are only 4 out of the whopping 87 parliament members in the Maldives who are women.

Let's just say that International Women's Day (IWD) is a day that's both empowering and exasperating. On one hand, it is a day celebrating the social, political, economic and cultural achievements of women, while on the other hand, it is a pressing reminder that the fight still goes on. Baby steps are great, but when they're being taken at an excruciatingly slow pace, perhaps it's time to shake things up.

In keeping with this month's vibe, our team has been busy interviewing some of the hard-working women in the industry. This month we spoke to Ms. Aishath Jennifer, Deputy Managing Director of Island Aviation Services Limited (IAS), about her inspirations, gender equality in the work place, the company's environmental goals, and plans for the future (pg. 12). We also had a chat with Ms. Sarah Forster, the Director of Sales & Marketing at Joali Maldives, where we spoke about what makes or breaks guest-experiences, the unique features of Joali and what the resort has in store for IWD 2020 (pg. 18).

We're also very excited to introduce a new segment to The islandchief called 'Personality of the Month' (pg. 7) – this month we have Chef Nasreena Ali (Natti), the first and only Maldivian female Sous Chef in the country's resort industry. Known for her magic in the hot kitchen, Chef Natti is well-loved and personally requested for by many of the repeater guests at Dhigali Maldives. That's not all from the culinary scene as Executive Sous Chef, Marek Koucky from Kuredu Island Resort shares his mouth-watering recipe for Lobster Ravioli.

This International Women's Day, The Islandchief looks to the future in hopes that one day we can look back on this day and breathe a sigh of relief as the world becomes a kinder, more equal place. This world is home for all of us to live in harmony, where no one gender is better than the other. So, here's to fighting for what we believe in, breaking glass ceilings and continuing to push for equality – each and every day.

## MALDIVIAN introduces an app to purchase tickets

**Maldivian, the national airline of the country, has introduced a brand-new application for passengers to purchase Maldivian tickets to their desired destinations.**

The app was officially launched during a special ceremony held on 11th February 2020 at the Maldivian head-office, and was launched by the Managing Director of Maldivian, Mr. Mohamed Rizvi.

The app is downloadable via Google Play and App Store. In addition to the booking of tickets, online payments can also be made with no hassle. Trips to interested destinations can be planned out and your previous travel history can be viewed via the app as well. Moreover, the app-users will be notified of special fares offered for various destinations by the airline. Maldivian informed that although the app

has been introduced, all travellers can still book their ticket through the call centre or Viber.

Maldivian, the national airline of the country is the leading domestic carrier in the Maldives. Maldivian currently operates to India, Bangladesh, Thailand and China from its hub, Velana International Airport. Maldivian is also the first operator in the country to offer both seaplane and wheel base flights in the Maldives. The nation's flagship carrier today operates daily flights to 13 airports within the country and offers competitive air transfers to all resorts across the country.



 **YAMAHA**  
*Revs Your Heart*

**WORLD'S  
LEADING  
OUTBOARDS**



SOLE DISTRIBUTOR

 **ALIA INVESTMENTS (PVT) LTD**

 (960) 300 9797

 [www.aliamaldives.com](http://www.aliamaldives.com)

## ACROSS THE SKIES

## Etihad Airways partners with Norwegian technology developer to launch TravelPass

Etihad Airways has announced a partnership with Norwegian technology developer Braathens IT, to develop TravelPass, an innovative travel solution initially aimed at corporate and frequent travellers which will launch later this year.

The new TravelPass technology provides a subscription-based travel solution, allowing Etihad to offer its repeat travellers complete flexibility and ease with their regular and recurring travel arrangements. Customers can purchase a TravelPass for a set number of trips or a particular travel period instead of purchasing flights one by one.

The airline informs that subscription-based travel provides customers with the choice between prepaid trips and pay-as-you-fly options, meeting the demands of flexibility, ease of booking and cost-efficient travel management.

Robin Kamark, Chief Commercial Officer, Etihad Aviation Group, said, "The innovative TravelPass technology offers a revolutionary booking experience for corporate and frequent

clients who will also be enrolled into our award-winning Etihad Guest frequent flyer programme. By simplifying the travel process to just a few clicks, our guests have a seamless transaction through a platform that holds all your details in one place, gives you the flexibility to make changes to your bookings without fees and gives you the choice to pay later. We know our corporate clients are time-poor and believe this innovative addition to our digital offering will improve the travel journey for subscribers."

The Etihad TravelPass will be available to book on the Etihad website, offering customers an enhanced digital experience that saves time by avoiding repetitive tasks involved in managing each booking, leading to improved customer satisfaction.



Founded in 2003, Etihad Airways is the national carrier of the emirate of Abu Dhabi, based at Abu Dhabi International Airport. Together with their codeshare partners, their network offers access to hundreds of international destinations in just one booking. Operating a fleet of narrow and wide-body Airbus and Boeing aircraft, Etihad provides a rapidly expanding network of services within the Middle East and to Europe, Asia, North America, Canada and Australia.

Braathens IT offers operation-critical software systems to the airline industry, such as TravelPass (subscription products), Internet Booking Engine (ticket and ancillary merchandising), Loyalty and Airport Self Service (check-in kiosks and speed-gates), running more than five million yearly transactions for its customers, including SAS, Brussels Airlines, Malmö Aviation and Sverigeflyg

## SriLankan Airlines strengthens presence in U.S. and Europe through Qatar Airways codeshare

SriLankan Airlines is strengthening its presence in the U.S. and European markets through the expansion of its existing codeshare agreement with Qatar Airways, with additional connections to serve various cities in these regions.

With effect from 8th February 2020, SriLankan Airlines has commenced codeshare with Qatar Airways to operate flights between Doha and Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston - Texas, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport also in Texas, Boston Logan International Airport, Dulles International Airport in the U.S. capital Washington D.C., Madrid-Barajas Airport in Spain, and Larnaca International Airport in Cyprus. Both airlines offer easy connectivity between Qatar Airways' hub in Doha's Hamad International Airport and Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport.

Vipula Gunatilleka, Group Chief Executive Officer of SriLankan Airlines said: "The expansion of our partnership with Qatar Airways is an important element in SriLankan's ongoing initiatives to provide seamless connectivity for our valued passengers across a wide range of destinations, apart from increasing the number of cities that we ourselves fly to."

With the addition of Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth and Boston as codeshare destinations, SriLankan's route network will span 116 cities in 51 countries. SriLankan already serves Chicago, Washington D.C, Madrid and Larnaca through codeshare



agreements with other partner airlines.

This is the second phase of the codeshare agreement's recent expansion between the two airlines, which are both members of the oneworld global airline alliance

that connects passengers to over a thousand cities in more than 180 countries and territories through 13 member airlines. Phase 1 was completed in the last quarter of 2019 and added a large number of destinations to the networks of both airlines.

**DRINK COKE,**  
GET A CHANCE TO  
WATCH UEFA EURO 2020™  
**LIVE**



LOOK UNDER THE CAP  
FOR A UNIQUE CODE



SMS THE UNIQUE  
CODE TO 2626



GET A CHANCE TO WIN 10 COUPLE  
TRIPS TO IRELAND OR EXCITING  
MERCHANDISE EVERY DAY



TASTE THE FEELING



OFFICIAL PARTNER



NEW OPENINGS

# Radisson Blu Maldives set to open its gates in May 2020

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group is scheduled to launch the Maldives' first Radisson Blu resort in May 2020.



Located on the southern part of Maldives' Alif Dhaal Atoll, Radisson Blu Resort Maldives is situated 105 kilometres from Velana International Airport, and is accessible by a 30-minute seaplane journey or by a domestic flight from the Maamigili Airport, followed by a 15-minute speedboat ride to the resort.

The resort will feature 128 villas including family villas, and a premium overwater villa; a sea sports and dive centre; a yoga pavilion and spa.

"As a global brand, Radisson Blu Resort Maldives will provide the international leisure market with a full range of innovative design-led products and services, delivering genuine and relevant guest experiences with Radisson Blu's distinctive 'Yes I Can!' service philosophy,"

said Thomas Hagemann, Vice President, Future Openings and Special Projects, Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group. "Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group continues our growth trajectory in Asia Pacific, and we are pleased to expand our footprint into the Maldives with an iconic Radisson Blu resort on the island."

Set amidst some of the most amazing coral reefs, the resort's first-class sea sports and dive centre will offer guests an array of activities, set for adrenaline-pumping action. For those seeking to rejuvenate and restore, the yoga pavilion and spa will be the ethos of wellness, as moves are practiced in the tranquil surrounds of the island. Dining at the restaurants and bar on the island promise to tantalize even the most discerning palate with unique cuisines and experiences.

# Gran Meliá Huravee scheduled to open in 2020



The Meliá Executive Vice President, Mr. Gabriel Escarrer Jaume, announced at FITUR, the leading trade fair for inbound and outbound markets in Latin America, that Gran Meliá Huravee is scheduled to open this year. The luxury resort will be the first for the company in the Maldives.

The upcoming Gran Meliá Huravee will be situated in Kalhudhiyafushi,

Thaa Atoll, an idyllic location in the middle of the Maldivian sea. Thaa Atoll is located 40 minutes from Velana International Airport via speedboat, although a combination of a short seaplane ride to Kaadedhdhoo Airport and speedboat ride option is also available.

The resort will provide 48 double villas, 30 single villas, 12 beach villas,

6 familiar villas, 2 presidential suites and 1 private island villa for up to 12 guests. A wide range of dining options, spa and gym, as well as the luxury services characteristic of the Gran Meliá brand will also be available.

The project is being developed in such a way that it respects and harmonises with the surrounding environment. All the buildings and ramps are plot over

pillings to reduce the impact over the natural soil. In the same way, the pool will avail an existing rock reef and will use natural sea water.

At FITUR, Mr. Escarrer explained that Meliá will continue to grow internationally in both city and resort hotels, and currently has 51 new openings planned up until 2020. Asia and the Pacific coast will continue to grow strongly, with 16 openings planned up to 2020, three of them in Vietnam, two in China and also the Gran Meliá Huravee in the Maldives.

Gran Meliá evokes the essence of Spanish culture: simple pleasures, connection with the earth, respect for things well done and a discreet elegance perceived in every corner. This philosophy is materialized in each of the elements that shape the Gran Meliá experience. From the extraordinary architecture of the hotels and the quality of the cuisine evoking local flavours, to the warm and respectful nature of the service. Even the smallest detail is deeply rooted in the Spanish style.

**DRINK COKE,**  
GET A CHANCE TO  
WATCH UEFA EURO 2020™  
**LIVE**

LOOK UNDER THE CAP FOR A UNIQUE CODE

SMS THE UNIQUE CODE TO 2626

GET A CHANCE TO WIN 10 COUPLE TRIPS TO IRELAND OR EXCITING MERCHANDISE EVERY DAY



TASTE THE FEELING



OFFICIAL PARTNER





**31 - 36 - 40 - 48 - 56**

[www.gulfcraftinc.com](http://www.gulfcraftinc.com) | [gci@gulfcraftinc.com](mailto:gci@gulfcraftinc.com)

PASSENGER & CUSTOM BUILD

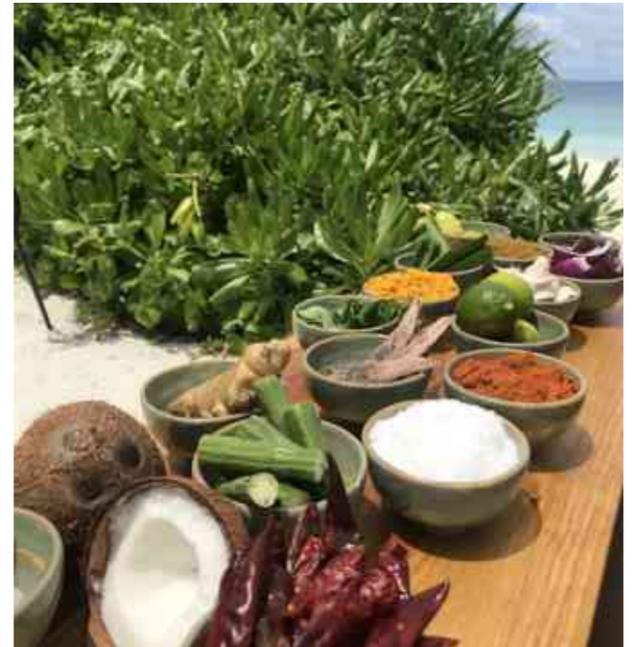


UTILITY SERIES

by *Gulf Craft*

# Personality of the Month

A quick chat with interesting people in the Maldives tourism and hospitality scene!



## NASREENA ALI (NATTI) Sous Chef, Dhigali Maldives

**What sparked your interest in cooking? And how did your decision to become a chef develop?**

Since I was a child, I have simply loved cooking. But I've taken various courses in my life. I studied tailoring, and I also have a Diploma in Cake Decoration.

It was when I experienced the hot kitchen for the very first time that I realised this was for me. I'm happiest when I'm working in the hustle and bustle of the hot kitchen!

**Destination dining is becoming increasingly popular among many resorts across the Maldives. What are your thoughts on this unique concept whereby guests at resort islands are entertained exclusively in a variety of stylish and distinctly different settings, both on and off the island with creative menus and entertainment?**

It's always fun and exciting to entertain guests in special dining settings. I'm usually the chef at most of the private picnics at the resort.

Another special dining option we have at Dhigali is Battuta – named after Ibn Battuta, one of the greatest Moroccan travellers of the 14th century. At Battuta you'll get to experience cuisines from some of the nations that Ibn Battuta visited including Maldives as well as countries in North Africa,

Middle East and Southeast Asia, in the form of truly authentic Thale Dinners.

**If you are going to present Maldivian food to an international audience, what food would you present to them?**

It would have to be *Kandu Kukulhu*, which means 'chicken of the sea' when directly translated to English, is one of the most authentic out of all the Maldivian tuna curries. Along with it, I would serve onion salad, fragrant cumin seed rice and some papadam.

**Considering the relatively few Maldivian chefs in the hospitality industry, do you think there are enough opportunities available for locals to excel in this profession?**

Of course, there is plenty of opportunity. I always offer to train charismatic young people who are passionate about becoming chefs. Unfortunately, some Maldivian parents are still quite hesitant to send their children to work in resorts. But it's a great opportunity for them to learn and gain a lot of experience.

Also, you have to keep in mind that working in a hot kitchen is a very challenging job, and you will be competing with international chefs – you have to push through and keep working hard. I would really

like to see more women joining this industry. We, at the Chef's Guild of Maldives, always work towards creating awareness and giving equal opportunity for both young women and men.

**What were your key takeaways from last year's Food and Hospitality Asia Maldives Exhibition (FHAM)?**

As part of the organizing committee of FHAM, we see so much talent in the youth of today. Last year as well there were many talented young chefs, which made me very happy.

**Anything special that you are looking forward to in the coming years?**

I'm always thinking of doing something new or experimenting new recipes. Just recently I created a special noni fruit jam and the guests and everyone loved it. Who knows what I will do next.

**Any words of wisdom for aspiring chefs?**

I would say this is a very challenging career path. You have to be strong, never give up and work hard. Anyone who does so, can definitely get to this level and even rise higher. I am also still working to excel further in my field. It's not over yet.

# ANTHONEY'S

## launches HarithaHari Chicken



### SRI LANKA'S **FIRST** EVER CHICKEN WITH GREEN CERTIFICATION

It is proud to announce that, Anthony's Chicken has been awarded the prestigious "Greenhouse Gas Verification Statement", which was verified in accordance with ISO 14064-3-2006, from Control Union Certifications of Netherlands, for their commitment on advancing the haritha-ready produce of chicken. This proves over and over again adding another milestone to brand's world acclaimed standards, establishing it's chicken is produced under natural process with 100% assurance of "haritha-ready" chicken, "Anthony's "HarithaHari" Chicken, Sri Lanka's First & only Chicken brand so far.

New Anthony's Farms (Pvt) Ltd.  
No.13, Tiltapattara, Hanwella, Sri Lanka.  
Tel: +94 11 2406006 Fax: +94 11 2406558  
Sales Hotline: +94 11 2406559 / +94 75 9030303  
E-mail: [info@newanthoneys.lk](mailto:info@newanthoneys.lk) Web: [www.newanthoneys.lk](http://www.newanthoneys.lk)



# ANTHONEY'S CHICKEN

New Anthony's Farms (Private) Ltd, (NAF), is one of the leading chicken food manufacturing and poultry farming companies in Sri Lanka being in the business for more than 30 years. Since then NAF has advanced its production and has formulated a strategic expansion to accommodate ultra-modern development in the poultry farming and processing technology to stand above the world acclaimed standards. NAF is one of the largest exporters and the certified chicken meat food supplier to world's renowned franchise food chains. NAF's utmost endeavor is to cater the pain of hunger of the people to have the "right" food for nourishment which NAF is engaged in producing Anthony's "HarithaHari" Chicken.

IN A NUTSHELL

# The Fight against Climate Change meets Art Exhibition at Jumeirah Vittaveli Maldives



The White Fire exhibition was held in Jumeirah Vittaveli from 1st to 15th February 2020, showcasing a stunning new synergy of coral conservation and conceptual art. Special guest, Former President Hon. Mohamed Nasheed was in attendance of the opening night.

The exhibition showcased photographs by award winning photographer Mohamed Azmeel, aka Double Dot, in a venue that was turned into an experiential art gallery. The entrance was flanked by two large white coral walls, guiding the view to the centrepiece of a large table display of bleached corals, with eight oversized photographs encircled the venue, showcasing the artist's unique interpretation of the effects of global warming. The opening night saw a life model in a white custom-made coral gown enacting the plight of corals in today's warming oceans.

Ms. Shaheena Ali, a professional dive instructor and Executive Director of Parley for the Ocean in Maldives, kicked off the evening and spoke about the beauty of the ocean, her experiences as a diver, and how climate change is affecting the marine environment.

Jumeirah Vittaveli's General Manager Abhijit Ghosh stated: "We are proud to host this important exhibition at Jumeirah Vittaveli. Living in such a fragile eco environment, with the highest point of natural elevation only 2.5 meters in the Maldives, fighting climate change and doing our part to support eco-conservation efforts is close to our heart. We have implemented a range of initiatives in this regard, such as sustainable purchasing, working with local fishermen and agricultural islands to source fish and produce, operating our own water bottling plant, and creating artificial coral reefs to support the natural marine life surrounding the island. We look forward to further collaborations with Mohamed Azmeel in our constant pursuit to highlight the dangers of environmental pollution."

Eco-activist and former president of the Maldives, President Nasheed, explained how the title of the

exhibition, White Fire, eerily illustrated the devastating effect global warming has on the beautiful coral reefs in the Maldives. He commented: "We as Maldivians are the best people to alert the world to the dangers of climate change. We have been seeing its impact on our shores first-hand, and we understand the danger it poses to the planet. We need to ensure that international powers commit to limiting global warming and we all work together to fight climate change."

The artist, Mohamed Azmeel welcomed guests with a short speech: "This has been a vision of mine that I have been working on for the past few years. I am honoured to have the opportunity to showcase this exhibition to guests at Jumeirah Vittaveli. I am already working on my next initiative that will go a step further in highlighting the plight of our oceans. Now, I will let my artwork speak for itself."

Mohamed Azmeel, known in the photography community as "Double Dot" is an international award-winning photographer who began his journey in the early 2000's – a path that would lead him to eventually become one of the most sought-after photographers in the Maldives. What he began as a hobby lead to an obsession, and then to a profession. His photos are immensely creative – in addition to his out-of-the-box approach, his artistic touches distinguish him from his peers

A 20-minute boat ride from Velana International Airport, Jumeirah Vittaveli offers unmatched diversity, subtle luxury and personalised exploration. Whether beach-side or over-water, all villas feature stunning interiors with private pools and access to the sandy shores or glistening waters. A special highlight is the 5-bedroom Royal Residence, as well as the new Private Ocean Retreats and Infinity Pool Ocean Villas with Slides. An inspirational Spa, a well-equipped over-water gymnasium, a children's club and 5-star PADI dive centre mean guests are always able to try something new.



**COCO TANA**  
Coconut Products

100% Organic coconut products

Exclusive Distributor:  
**ONE MALDIVES**

# W Maldives invites local Maldivian Baker for Womens Day 2020

W Maldives, the luxury playground fuelling guests' lust for life, invites famed Maldivian baker behind Ginger Bakes, Fathmath Shaadhny (Shaa), in celebration of International Women's Day.



Igniting a full day of women's empowerment with a focus on sourcing local ingredients into all her baked pastries, Shaa will spark two sweet experiences for all guests to savour. Get ready as she bakes a 'Pop-Up' for breakfast, holds a baking workshop and sugar coats the whole day through.

Shaa's love for delicate sugar flour and the magic of yeast giving rise to freshly baked bread fuelled with recipes from her grandma's kitchen, is how this sweet-smelling passion became her business in 2016. She will be remixing this playful appetite to W Maldives, in six varieties of her personal favourites with a Maldivian twist in each presentation and bite.

This rare island treat will be held with award winning Ilaria Forlani, Pastry Chef of W Maldives famous for her sushi gelato, ice stones and

collaborations with varies tourism boards, who will rock the night at SIP BAR with an exclusive dessert for Diva's night. With a pink bubbly in one hand and a secret treat in the other, Jennifer Dons, the only music curator in the Maldives will be spinning the night. Stealing the scene as she saves you a seat up close and personal giving you what's new and next in the world of music.

Escape to the private island of W Maldives in North Ari Atoll, located about 25 minutes from Velana International Airport via seaplane. Like all W Hotels around the world, the resort has an ultra-stylish atmosphere with contemporary and cutting-edge features, focused on lifestyle and design. With 78 villas in 5 different categories, W has created one of the most sophisticated and fun luxury playgrounds of the archipelago.

# Tastes of Nature kicks off at Joali Maldives



As a part of Bellinis' culinary journey, Michelin-starred chef Theodor Falser's outstanding dining experience "Tastes of Nature" took place at Joali Maldives from 2nd to 4th March 2020.

Chef Theodor Falser is a 6th generation wine farmer and has a successful culinary history. Throughout his remarkable career, which took him from his birthplace South Tyrol to Switzerland, Oman, Dubai, Ecuador, and Italy, he has discovered different tastes from a variety of cultures.

Chef Theodor loves creating dishes using fresh locally grown ingredients and is highly enthusiastic about combining Italian wild herbs and wine. His menus always incorporate modern techniques like specialised drying, brine and fermentation.

Using only the local and freshest ingredients, chef Theodor took guests into a 'seven

step' journey through nature, as part of an exceptional taste experience. The core of chef's Theodor's culinary art lies within the discovery of a variety of cultures blended perfectly with modern techniques.

"I want to bring the "Italianita" flavours, using only the finest local ingredients to the Maldives as possible." says the multi-award-winning chef.

JOALI's goal is to enlighten guests with incredible culinary experiences, while creating long-lasting memories.



# JENNY: Beyond Boundaries

*A little over a year ago, Ms. Aishath Jennifer took the helm of Deputy Managing Director at Island Aviation Services Limited, the parent company of the national airline, Maldivian. She's one of the few women in the airline industry who has made it to the top of the corporate food chain - an area that has been mostly dominated by men. We sat with her to learn more about her experiences and her passion for the national airline.*



**Jennifer, please tell us about your journey to Island Aviation Services (IAS) – how did it all begin?**

It has been a great journey where I had the opportunity to work in various departments of the company which operates the country's national airline. I began my career in the late nineties and when Island Aviation was formed in the year 2000, I was one of the few chosen in the transition. With the completion of my Masters in Business Administration (Edith Cowan University, Australia) in 2007, I shifted to a sales role in the Commercial Department. In 2011, I was promoted to Manager Sales & Customer Relations and later in 2012 was transferred to the Cargo Department as the Deputy Head and today I am here in my current role as the DMD of the company.

**From where did you draw your inspiration in the airline industry?**

I was initially inspired by the vast travel opportunities that aviation in the Maldives had to offer making air transportation convenient and flexible for customers. It was exciting to see and be a part of this fast-paced industry and to have the privilege to contribute something to the country. Aviation plays a major role in the Maldives spreading tourism across the country and as our flag carrier extends its wings further, it also generates exponential growth to our economy and our nation as a whole. Also, the people I have met and worked with along the years have been a well of inspiration.

**Being a woman, how challenging is it to claim your position in the corporate sector of the Maldives?**

I am happy to say that this has never been an issue for me. Island Aviation has always fostered a culture that was driven by merit and not gender. We have always had women in senior and decision-making roles from the inception of the company. I also come from a family with a strong upbringing where all siblings were treated equally and therefore, when I joined the corporate world it was a smooth transition where I was accepted as a person and equal in all the roles across the company. The people



**Airline jobs are not going away at IAS. Even if you are not passionate about aviation, chances are that you will become zealous as this industry has a way of infecting everyone around it.**

in the industry are colleagues and friends I have known for over 20 years and they know me for my abilities. and I have never had to prove myself and I have always received the same respect as my male counterparts. A lot of people over the years have helped me along my journey but the most that stands out is our former Managing Director Mr. Bandhu Ibrahim Saleem who is a powerhouse of knowledge and a pragmatic leader who played a key role in shaping the person I am today. I would like to thank him for his strong leadership and pushing me to become the person that I am today.

**What is your opinion about empowering women in the Maldives? Do you think that women are being provided with adequate liberty and opportunities to work?**

Gender gap in public life is a global challenge. However, in Maldives we can see this tide shifting with 33 percent of the seats being reserved for women in the council. More than half the population is comprised of women and providing them with the necessary education, skills and experience will be effective - as undeniably; women play a key role towards the development of the nation.

**How is IAS empowering women? What is the percentage of working women in your airline and how do you empower your cabin crew to make them comfortable?**

As I mentioned, at IAS many key roles are held by women and we believe in empowering and advancing women based on merit. Currently our workforce comprises of about 24 percent female and 76 percent male. At IAS, we will nurture a woman's career the same way we would a man's.

**In a fiercely competitive market, how do you plan on remaining at the forefront in the battle for seats and fares?**

By staying close to both our individual and corporate customers and enhancing our 'Maldivian experience' to our patrons. We are on the right track in improving our service where we have moved our ticketing office to a new spacious, comfortable and central location in Malé. We have also extended our call-centre hours to provide ease of access to our customers during after working hours. Regular trainings including customer service are being conducted and we have launched our mobile application that will provide convenience to many in terms of purchasing tickets and reaching us. The ongoing cost efficiency gained through restructuring and review of our processes will ensure that the expenditure of the company is controlled. A higher margin will allow us to make decision within it - whether



it is towards dynamic pricing or invest in other services

**Could you outline the extent of the company's expansion plans in terms of new destinations, passenger numbers and additional aircraft?**

As the National carrier of the Maldives, our objective is to cater to all the airports within the country. I am happy to say that so far, we are catering to all the airports and our team is gearing up to cater for the upcoming airports and resorts that are scheduled to open soon in the Maldives. Our track record shows that all new resorts have been catered by Island Aviation through the expansion of our fleet correspondingly.

On the international front, we plan to further strengthen our current markets and we are continuously exploring new destinations. As the flag carrier we play a vital role in providing connectivity and supporting the economy of the Maldives. Given the geographical challenges we face; as the major air transport provider, we have partnered up with tourism, fisheries and agricultural sectors as well as trade sectors in assisting their travel requirements. Frequencies are provided for tourists traveling to resorts and guest houses across the country, while seats and cargo space are made available for local and international traders.

**This year, Island Aviation Services will celebrate its 20th anniversary. Whilst you have discontinued the use of plastic cups in domestic flights since last year, what sustainability goals do you have for this year?**

As a company we are committed to reducing single use plastic at IAS. Our oceans already contain more than 150 million tons of plastic and by 2050 there is a fear of our oceans

containing more plastic than sea life. It is our hope to raise awareness of the problems of single use plastic and its impact on our environment while offering solutions to reduce consumption. As a start, we have installed water filters on all our premises and we are working towards eliminating plastic responsibly and replacing the current plastics used with another material that has a lesser environmental impact.

**How would you describe the current state of the aviation sector and what changes are you anticipating for the future?**

Air travel is on a steady rise in terms of growth as air transportation has become more accessible and desirable to travelers. Today more people can afford air transport and the number of people opting for this mode is on an increase with the expansion of the middle-class gap. Therefore, this needs to be taken into consideration and addressed in order to sustain a profitable growth.

**If you had one piece of advice to give someone starting a career at IAS, what would it be?**

Airline jobs are not going away at IAS. Even if you are not passionate about aviation, chances are that you will become zealous as this industry has a way of infecting everyone around it. I have seen people who have gone to become high caliber people in this industry that started with Island Aviation. Today wherever they may be, they are 'IAS alumni' and we feel very proud of each and all. The prospects are only getting better!

## EVENTS &amp; AWARDS

## SATA 2020: Panel of Multinational Jury selected and Online Voting opens



Ms. Tamara Zeidan



Dr. Sachin Bansal



Mr. Abdulla Suood



Ms. Sangeeta Rana



Dr. Mahamood Shougee

### SOUTH ASIAN TRAVEL AWARDS



The South Asian Travel Awards (SATA) has selected a multinational panel of experts in the industry as jury members for the evaluation of the nominated properties. The members of the jury travelled to multiple cities in the region to inspect and evaluate the nominated properties and services to the highest standard.

#### Dr. Sachin Bansal

Dr. Sachin Bansal, earned the epithet of the 'rising sun' in the heritage tourism industry, with innovative leadership in his entrepreneurial journey towards creating the brand 'India City Walks', which is now a benchmark. As an enabler and a passionate explorer, his brand is decorated with three National Tourism Awards in consecutive years followed by the coveted Hall of Fame, spearheading multiple flagships. He has over two decades of experience as a tourist engager, creating niche experiences. As an entrepreneurial leader, his passion has steered him in unexplored directions like generating awareness on water as heritage, thereby creating a traction on a tremendous latent opportunity. As a destination branding specialist, he has enabled in co-creation and connecting smart cities through smart citizen initiatives. He is popularly known as a Chief Explorer, a Storywallah and a Heritage Hero.

#### Ms. Tamara Zeidan

Ms. Tamara is a business woman with over 15 years of business development experience. Most recently Ms. Tamara was the Vice President of Business Development for a business accelerator in Washington D.C. Prior to that, she worked at the Malala Fund where she managed various campaigns to raise funds for girls' education. She has travelled all over the world representing various brands and entities. Her educational background is in business with a focus in marketing and branding. She currently serves on several boards globally.

#### Mr. Abdulla Suood

With more than 20 years of experience in Sales & Marketing, having worked in major hotel chains and establishing his own travel business, Mr. Suood stands firm in the travel and hospitality industry as a key voice. He has also actively served in the

Executive Board, and as Vice President of Maldives Association of Travel Agents & Tour Operators (MATATO), before being appointed as the President in the organization. Mr. Suood has worked in partnership with international organizations such as PATA in hosting the Maldives Travel Conference and Maldives Travel Awards annually for the hospitality industry. He is also among the Co-Founders of SME & Entrepreneurs Federation of Maldives (SEFM).

#### Ms. Sangeeta Rana

Ms. Sangeeta Rana is the Executive Director of the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Bhutan. She has several years of experience in the hospitality and tourism industry. She is also the board member of various tourism and private sector development boards, such as TDB, CTA, BSTS, HRDB and many more. She is extremely enthusiastic and passionate about developing the tourism industry and working closely with all the tourism stakeholders around the world. She represents the exotic country, Bhutan, which believes in "Gross National Happiness".

#### Dr. Mahamood Shougee

Dr. Mahamood Shougee is the former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation of the Maldives. He played a pivotal role in guiding the establishment of the South Asian Travel Awards (SATA). Dr. Shougee holds a Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Arts in Economics, and a Master of Education from the University of Manitoba, and a PhD from the University of Toronto. He continues to work as a Consultant for Hotel and Resort chains, and as a Visiting Lecturer and Research Associate at Villa College (Maldives) and the Open University of Malaysia.

Online voting has now been opened for this year's prestigious South Asian Travel Awards. The voting will be open to the general public until the end of April on their official website.

Voting Page: [www.southasiantravelawards.com/vote](http://www.southasiantravelawards.com/vote)

At the end of each year, stellar brands and organisations of the travel, tourism and hospitality industry from all over South Asia, turn their attention to the South Asian Travel Awards. With its strict judging criteria, SATA is the only tourism and hospitality recognition brand in the region. Thousands of stakeholders attend the glamorous three-day retreat where the beneficiaries of the highest honours are revealed.

With participants from six destinations (India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and the Maldives), and endorsement from more than 15 travel industry organizations and national tourism bodies, SATA has grown immeasurably over the past four years. This year, SATA revealed 52 categories for organisations and brands of the travel, tourism and hospitality industry, in addition to Visitors Choice Awards and Special Recognition Awards. Nominations for SATA 2020 closed during the end of February and this year the highly-acclaimed award is scheduled to be held in the Maldives.

# 8th Edition of Maldives Living Expo successfully held



**The 8th edition of Maldives Living Expo 2020 successfully concluded with over 6,500 visitors within the 3 days of the event held at Dharubaaruge from 27th to 29th February 2020.**

The Expo provided Maldivian citizens and expats with the golden opportunity to invest in luxury real estate properties in the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, furniture and fittings service providers, home and lifestyle products and services plus insurance, banking, and financing options. Exciting prizes for the daily 'Visit & Win' lucky draws were provided by key exhibitors of the Expo.

Exhibitors of the Maldives Living Expo 2020 included; service providers for home and living, real estate, construction and the resort industry (Mohan Mutha Exports Pvt Ltd, Hari & Co.); 3 Sri Lankan properties (Altair, John Keells Holdings, Marina Square); 1 Malaysian property (Richland Properties); key real estate properties in the Maldives (Aquavita Residencies, Apollo Holdings - Apollo Towers, JCC Properties, leading properties developed in Hulhumalé), and leading furniture and fittings service providers (Sinaf, Muni Homecare, Blanc, Damas, Slippers, LinkServe, Tekton Design).

Additionally, banking and insurance companies such as Maldives Finance

and Leasing Company (MFLC), Maldives Islamic Bank (MIB), Allied Insurance Company of the Maldives, Dhivehi Insurance, Ceylinco and Solarelle Insurance, provided attendees with the best financing and insurance options.

The Main Sponsor of the Maldives Living Expo 2020 was Mohan Mutha Exports Pvt Ltd (India) and the Co-sponsors were Aqua Vita Residencies (Maldives) and Altair (Sri Lanka). This was the second consecutive year that both co-sponsors joined forces with the Maldives Living Expo. The event was endorsed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and Housing Development Corporation (HDC). Other partners include, Printing Partner – Print Lab, Set-up Partner – Asaree Services, Sound & Light Partner – UNICA, Flooring Partner – Sinaf, Specialty Coffee Partner – Civil Coffee Roasters, Security Partner – Absolute Security & Advance Protection (ASAP), Online Media Partner – ONE Online, Tabloid Partner – The islandchief, Videography Partner – Skape, and Hospitality Partner – Champa Central Hotel.

## IN THE NEWS

## Voyages Maldives celebrates 40 years of service in the tourism industry



**Voyages Maldives has reached a huge milestone, celebrating 40 years of service in the tourism industry of the Maldives.**

Since its establishment in 1980, Voyages Maldives has expanded over the years to cover a number of key tourist services in the Maldives. Voyages Maldives has become a one-stop-shop for all travel needs to the Maldives, whether catering towards tour operators, airline operators or individual travellers visiting the country.

The Voyages Maldives safari programmes are among the best in the country. Whether for activities such as diving or surfing, or just to laze around on the tranquil ocean on a perfect sunny afternoon, Voyages Maldives provides unforgettable

experiences. Currently, they operate seven safari boats (Gurahali, Gahaa, Kethi, Koimala, Sea Coral, Gulfaam, Sea Farer), all built in the traditional Maldivian sailboat, "Dhoni" style - motorised and fitted with the latest modern amenities for comfort and convenience.

Additionally, Voyages Maldives provides ground handling services to tour operators, supervision & representation for airlines, and travel solutions to and from anywhere in the world. They have highly qualified and an esteemed team working towards providing visitors with the best tour and excursion

options in the Maldives. From excursions to the city and photo flight excursions around the islands to underwater, submarine and island-hopping excursions, Voyages Maldives offers great options to round-off a holiday in the Maldives.

With the biggest fleet of safaris in the country, and offices in the capital city Malé and the Velana International Airport, Voyages Maldives works round the clock to make sure operations run as smoothly as their distinctively unique vessels.

## Maldives signs with CNN to commence global advertising campaign

**Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) has announced a massive global advertising campaign in collaboration with CNN - the number one international media brand, to promote Maldives over a span of three months starting in March 2020.**



This will be one of the biggest campaigns carried out by MMPRC. Maldives will be featured on CNN editorials, travel vignettes and the Great Big Story segment with further access to commercial spots across CNN's international channels in Europe, Middle East Africa, Asia Pacific and South Asia during the allocated times.

In order to promote Maldives as a preferred destination, roadshows, fairs, familiarization trips, outdoor campaigns and joint campaigns will commence throughout 23 different markets as part of the strategy with CNN.

Based in the United States, CNN reaches more individuals in traditional and digital media than any other cable news organization in the US with a monthly global reach of 638 million. CNN's global audience has a wide reach and brand recall among upscale luxury travellers and those looking for local culture, local cuisine, as well as sports and wellness activities.

The aim of the campaign is to highlight the unique aspects of the Maldives and raise the country's profile as a world-class destination that appeals to affluent travellers and those seeking unique experiences. This campaign also aims to boost the destination's presence in the global market in order to increase the intent to visit the Maldives.

IN THE NEWS

# First permanent Schengen Visa application centre opens in Malé

A permanent Visa Facilitation Services (VFS) Centre has opened in Malé. The opening was inaugurated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Abdulla Shahid, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Jörn Rohde and Ambassador of Czech Republic, H.E. Milan Hovorka.

The centre will provide visa facilitation services to Maldivians who wishes to travel to Germany and Czech Republic. The VFS Centre would initially cater to those travelling to Germany and Czech Republic as the main destination.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Minister Shahid thanked the Government of Germany and especially Ambassador Rohde for taking the initiative to establish the Visa Centre in the Maldives. The Minister also thanked the Government of Czech Republic for their support towards the initiative, which the Minister noted, reflected the growing ties of friendship and cooperation between the countries.

Both Ambassador Rohde and Ambassador Hovorka expressed confidence that this initiative would further strengthen the increased tourism and trade between Maldives

and their respective countries. Minister Shahid, however expressed confidence that more European countries would follow Germany and Czech Republic and join with VFS in the close future.

The establishment of the VFS Centre in the Maldives aims to bring an end to the time-consuming and costly process for Maldivians applying for Schengen visa through embassies based in Colombo or New Delhi. Such visa facilitation services are part of the Government's broader objectives in providing quality consular services for Maldivians.



The Maldives has signed visa waiver Agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Russia, Morocco and Thailand last year, and expanded its visa arrangements with the neighbouring countries; India and Sri Lanka.

# Maldivian Passport recognised as most powerful in South Asia



The Henley Passport Index listed the Maldivian passport as the most powerful in South Asia.

This year, the Maldives has been ranked globally at the 61st position, and holders of this passport can travel to 85 countries without prior visa. India takes the second spot in South Asia holding the 84th position with the ability to travel to 58 countries. Japan has been globally ranked as the most powerful passport with visa-on-arrival access to 191 countries, and Singapore comes a close second with 190 countries.

The Henley Passport Index is the original and most authoritative ranking of all the world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without a prior visa. The ranking is based on exclusive data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which maintains the world's largest and most accurate database of travel information.

During the past year, visa exemption agreements have been signed with UAE, Russia, Morocco, Thailand and Saudi Arabia.

## YEAR END SALE

Special Discount on

From: 25th December, 2019  
To: 31st January 2020

Hassan Marine Equipment Shop  
M. Kakolhas, Izzudheen Magu,  
3313335 | sales@hassanmarine.com



# In Conversation with Sarah Forster

## Director of Sales, JOALI Maldives

We had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Sarah Forster, Director of Sales at Joali Maldives, to talk about the tourism industry, her experiences, and about what makes JOALI unique. Here's what she told us:



### What inspired you to decide on a career in the hotel industry?

When I was about to finish my A-Levels and not sure what to study, I accidentally saw an article about a hotel school, got so fascinated and visited their day of open door. Ever since I knew, this was the best decision I took.

### What are some of the characteristics of the Maldives' Raa Atoll that makes it so appealing to travellers?

I believe the fact that the atoll has only a few resort islands compared to other atolls makes it more "natural" and less crowded. Guests can see so many uninhabited islands and little sandbanks all around which makes it very special and gives a very remote feeling.

### How do you position the Joali brand and its approach to hospitality?

Joali is a luxury new brand. The aim of the brand is to give back to its guests, making them feel at home, while at the same time surprising them with new ideas and approaches, such as the art immersion.

### Can you tell us a bit about the different dining experiences available to guests and what makes them special and unique?

We want everything in Joali to be bespoke. We have three different restaurants, one of them, our Japanese Restaurant Saoko being consulted by a 2 Michelin star chef from Kyoto.

### Joali won the Resort of the Year at the 2019 Destination Deluxe Awards. Congratulations! What do you think was behind Joali that put it ahead of the competition?

I always hear from clients and partners alike, that our island has "a soul". The resort itself has a certain magic and charm that makes our guests feel instantly connected to us and the resort itself.

### How do you think technology has changed the hospitality industry?

I believe it has advanced the industry – making information available at any time for everyone. The pace of the industry has increased, more last-minute bookings, less early bookings. The clients can now receive all kinds of information (fake or real) at any given time.

### In your opinion, what are some of the things that make (or break) the guest's experience that most people don't think about?

I personally believe that it is all about the "software" of a resort. Especially here in the Maldives the "hardware" such as rooms, restaurants, spa and beaches are already beautiful and of good quality. It is hard for customers to compare and this is when the "software" comes into play, the people in the resorts make all the difference and can easily make or break holidays.

### With so many big-name competitors already here, can a squeeze in the high-end hospitality competitiveness be felt? Do you think demand in this sector is already being met?

The competitiveness in the ultra-high-end luxury segment can be felt, but is in my opinion not as strong, as in the e.g. entry 5-star segment. The beauty is, that at this level, all resorts are almost perfect in terms of Villas and service, and it mainly comes down to differences in terms of size and ambience of the resorts. At the end of the day, many of the guests are repeaters to Maldives and chose to return to islands, where they felt most comfortable and being able to connect.

### What do today's customers expect from hotels in terms of sustainability?

Sustainability becomes more and more important and I do believe that customers start strongly to look into what a resort does for the environment. Especially in an environment so special like the Maldives, sustainability plays an important role. Features like an organic garden, no plastics, waste

segregation and composters are what customers expect these days from hotels in terms of sustainability.

### What do you think are the challenges and stereotypes women face in the workplace? Any advice on how to overcome them?

I believe for women in hospitality, things are slowly changing and becoming a bit easier. Yes, most of the time women need to prove themselves harder, as we are considered "too emotional" or not "strong enough to handle the stress", but in the past years a lot of women, especially here in the Maldives, have successfully proven the opposite and therefore gained all of us a lot of respect and more confidence.

Every woman should have the confidence in herself and believe in her strength and capability and my personal advice would be, that women should start to encourage each other more in order to achieve greater heights.

### How are you celebrating International Women's Day at Joali?

The previous year, all female team members received a flower, chocolates and a special greeting card, as well as a nice sunset gathering with drinks, nibbles and music in our Mura Bar. Our Sales & Marketing Team on the island currently consists only of women so everyone is looking forward to a little gathering on such wonderful occasion.

### Do you have something new and exciting that you're currently working on for Joali?

We do have various new and exciting projects in the pipeline with Joali. Most importantly for this year will be our culinary journey, which will involve the visitation of several Michelin Star Chefs from various parts of the globe, but further information about that would be shared in due time.

Also, our Joali branded luxury seaplane has commenced operations on March 1st, and flies our guests directly to the resort.

## MOVERS &amp; SHAKERS

## Audra Arul designated to the post of Cluster Director Sales & Marketing at Crossroads Maldives



Crossroads Maldives has designated Audra Arul to the position of Cluster Director Sales and Marketing, with responsibilities encompassing its two newly opened hotels; SAii Lagoon Maldives - a Curio Collection by Hilton, and Hard Rock Hotel Maldives. Audra Arul will be responsible for the overall commercial objectives of Crossroads Maldives and the two resorts with this new role.

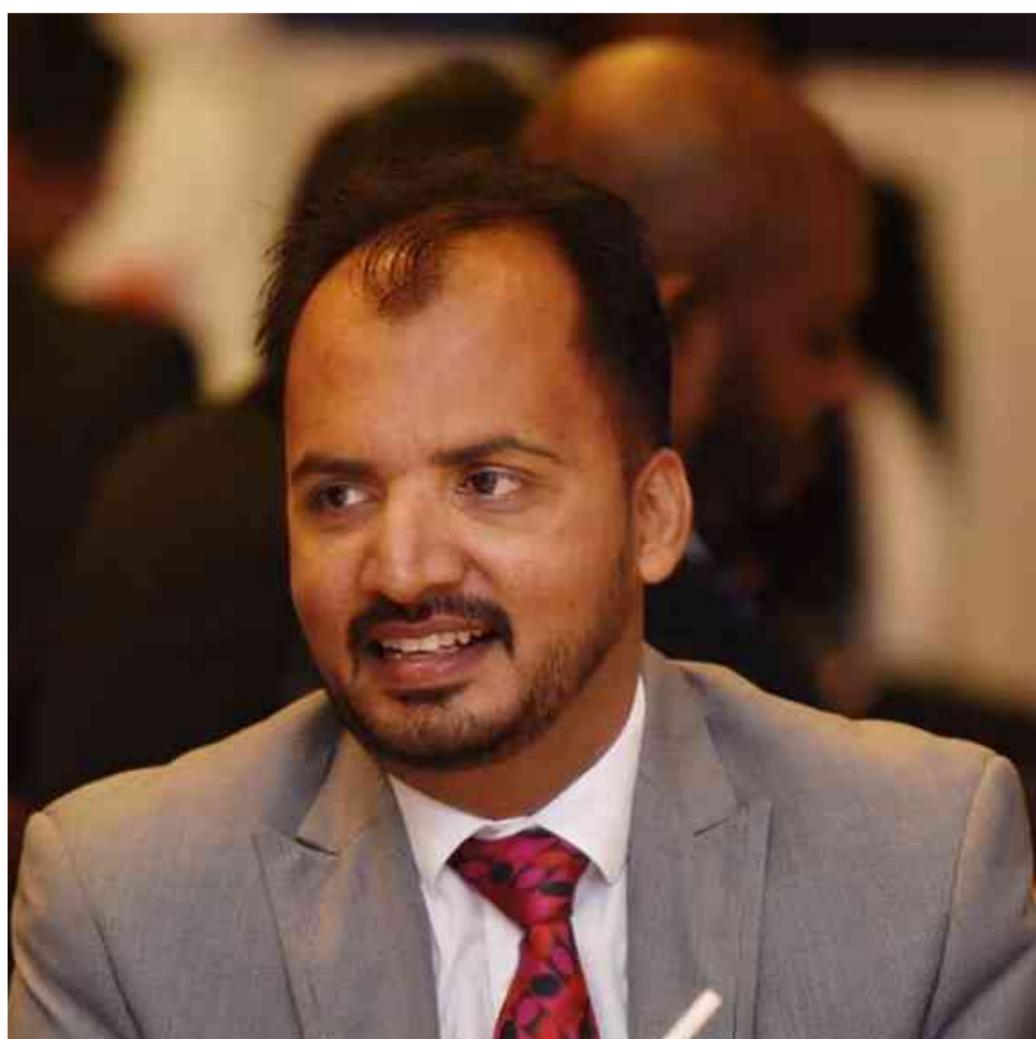
Graduating from Glion Institute of Further Education in Switzerland, Ms. Arul established a solid track record of hotel Sales and Marketing for various internationally recognised hotel management companies, including Hyatt and Marriott in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, and Le Meridien Nirwana Golf and Spa in Bali. She also had Director of Sales and Marketing roles in Hanoi, Vietnam, Yangon, Myanmar and Phuket, Thailand. She then joined Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts as Area Director of Sales and Marketing based in Ho Chi Minh,

Vietnam, and two years later moved to northern Africa, assuming the position of Director of Sales and Marketing for Banyan Tree Tamouda Bay, Morocco.

Crossroads Maldives, the first integrated lifestyle destination in the country, is a 25-minute speedboat ride away from Malé, the capital of Maldives. This 800-meter ultimate shopping and lifestyle destination includes 50 retail shops incorporating authentic island design and beautiful ambiance. Crossroads Maldives is aptly named and specifically master-planned as a global meeting place where travellers from around the world can experience authentic Maldivian culture from the past to the present

## Aditya Raj Singh appointed as Deputy Director of Sales & Marketing at Brennia Kottafaru

Recently opened Brennia Kottafaru has appointed Aditya Raj Singh as the Deputy Director of Sales & Marketing.



Starting off his career in the year 2006 after the completion of his Degree in Hotel Management, Aditya brings with him a bounty of experience to Brennia. He has worked with India's 3rd largest hotel chain - ITC Hotels, Aitken Spence Hotels India and Six Senses, India, where he handled the promotional activities of Six Senses Resorts in India and Bhutan, before making his way to the Maldives in 2015.

In the Maldives, Aditya has worked with Adaaran Resorts Group since 2015, prior to his present appointment. Aditya is well-known for his efforts to increase Indian tourist arrivals to the Maldives, and has also arranged visits by Bollywood celebrities and artists.

Located in Raa Atoll, northern Maldives, Brennia Kottafaru is accessible by a picturesque 40 minutes seaplane ride from Velana International Airport. Guests who wish to travel by domestic, can alternatively take a 40-minute flight to Ifuru Airport, followed by a short speedboat ride.

With 190 villas in 10 categories ranging from beach villas and garden villas to water villas, Brennia Kottafaru offers timeless luxury with authentic and indulgent interiors. One major distinction of the resort is the island's focus on nature and culture. As such, the resort hosts an art gallery showcasing Maldivian culture in over 1,000 pieces of artwork by local artists.

## BON APPÉTIT

# Lobster Ravioli

Chef Marek Koucky (Czech Republic) joined Kuredu Island Resort as Executive Sous Chef in October 2019. His cooking style is modern and is influenced by travelling and his training at Dulce Partia in Mexico City. Local ingredients of the Maldives inspired him to make lobster the star of this dish, while his previous experiences in Italian cuisine nudged him in the direction of ravioli, and his travels inspired the spiced shellfish bisque.



## Ingredients

### PASTA DOUGH:

250g 00 Flour  
170g Egg Yolk  
20ml Olive Oil  
1 pinch Salt

200g Lobster, diced  
15g Chervil, finely chopped  
15g Parsley, finely chopped  
15g Tarragon, finely chopped  
1 ea Lemon Zest  
Maldon Salt – to taste  
White Pepper – to taste

### FILLING:

300g Fresh Salmon  
1g Egg White  
125g Double Cream

## Method

### PASTA DOUGH:

- To make the dough, put all the ingredients into a food processor and blitz until well combined.
- Place the dough onto the work surface and knead for about 7 minutes or until the dough is smooth and stretchy.
- Wrap the dough with cling film and let rest in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

### FILLING:

- Make a mousse by blending salmon, egg white and cream. Season with lemon zest, salt and pepper.
- Add diced lobster and herbs into the mousse and mix well.

### RAVIOLI:

- Take the dough from the fridge, remove the cling film and lightly dust the dough with flour.
- Run the dough through on the widest setting. Continue to roll the dough through the machine, decreasing the thickness by one setting each time.
- Once you have rolled it through the thinnest setting, cut the long sheet of pasta in half horizontally.
- Place tablespoonfuls of the lobster mixture at even intervals along the middle of the pasta sheet.
- Using a pastry brush and water, dampen the pasta around the lobster filling.
- Now take the other half sheet of pasta and carefully lay it over the lobster, gently pressing down around the mounds of filling and pushing out any air pockets.
- Using a pastry ring, cut the pasta evenly into ravioli, then lay them out on a tray, dust with a little flour. Cook the ravioli in the boiling water for about 4 minutes.

### PRESENTATION:

- Serve the ravioli with poached lobster medallions, carrot puree, wilded greens and yuzu gel.
- Lastly pour spiced shellfish bisque at the table.



Courtesy of Chef Marek Koucky, Executive Sous Chef  
Kuredu island resort



## Keep your worries away

Our industry-leading printing solutions deliver exceptionally high quality print to create lasting impressions for your business.

Our services include printing - large-format, books, brochures/ leaflets, business cards, posters, calendars, ceramic tiles, flyers, greeting/invitation cards, letterheads, menus, name plates, photo books, cloth/fabric printing and glass etching. Additional services - laser cutting, plaque making, self-ink stamps, creative designing, die cutting, pins, shopping/gift bags, trophies and shields.

While celebrating over 20 years in the business we provide full color printing services onto any type of flat surface, including wood, plastic and metal.



# THE NEW **CIP/VIP** TERMINAL

@ Velana International Airport (VIA) is under Development to meet the needs of today's modern traveller. The total transformation of CIP/VIP Terminal in terms of its infrastructure and services has made the Terminal stand out in terms of its services and ambience and takes care of all the airport formalities for its guests in an atmosphere of comfort and luxury.

# Frankly Speaking

An experimental campaign to promote the niche segments of Maldivian culture through local island tourism is a vital component of MMPRCs destination marketing strategy for 2020. Whilst the local islands have only opened their doors for tourism a little over a decade ago, is this a sustainable haven for Maldives' future and economic growth? Are we seeing significant progress?



**Abdullah Nasheed**  
 Founder & Chairman  
 Kaani Hotels Group

*Absolutely not! Even today, tourists booking accommodation at guesthouses have very high expectations and preferences. They view Maldives as a high-end hospitality market. So, be it a city hotel, a guesthouse or a resort - they want accommodation with an innovative concept and approach offering guests a premium luxury experience that really is second to none.*



**Nimad Ibrahim**  
 Managing Director  
 Plumeria Maldives

*Do we really have any significant cultural tourism? At present, there are no specific cultural tourism components or activities carried out in the local islands or elsewhere across the Maldives. Even in the island of Utheemu, there is a small palace that was once the home of our national hero Mohamed Thakurufaanu, however, cultural activities are yet to be enhanced. It would certainly be a game-changer and would increase attraction to the local tourism sector, only if cultural tourism activities can be placed well in the plans with additional marketing and campaigns.*



**Ruth Franklin**  
 Co-founder  
 Secret Paradise

*Secret Paradise has been promoting local islands and cultural tours since 2012 and we fully support the decision by MMPRC to incorporate this aspect of the Maldives into their 2020 marketing strategy. Local island tourism is now an established part of the Maldives tourism offer, however, from conversations I have at trade events, as well as with guests, awareness within the worldwide tourism industry and at consumer level remains low. Therefore, I hope that this campaign will be successful and go some way to increasing awareness of both local island tourism and cultural opportunities available in the Maldives.*

*Tourism worldwide has seen an increase in demand for experiential travel opportunities and local island tourism falls into this category. I appreciate that not every tourist staying on a local island is looking for cultural learning and that many are happy to enjoy the beaches and ocean at a more affordable price. But there is a growing market of travellers who want to get to know a destination at a cultural level. Cultural opportunities are therefore important to showcase, but not just from the tourist's perspective, also to ensure they remain alive for generations of Maldivians to come.*

*On the basis that sustainable economic growth is development that satisfies the needs of locals and guests in a manner that sustains natural resources and the environment, I would suggest that we have a long way to go in order for local island tourism to be a 'sustainable haven' for the Maldives. My personal opinion, based on what I see when I visit local islands and the feedback we receive from guests, is that greater regulations need to be in place in regard to island and property development and management. This should be based on protecting the environment which guests come to visit. We need to ensure that the islands and environment that guest's dream of experiencing are not lost through the desire to drive growth from local tourism.*

*I have always been a believer that small steps are better than none at all and can lead to greater things. Let us not forget the time it took for the resort industry to develop and become fully established. Local tourism is still in its infancy, now is the time to learn from the last 10 years and with the correct focus and direction allow local islands to play a key part in our tourism economy.*



**Abdul Matheen Solih**  
 Managing Director  
 Madi Finolhu Guest House

*These types of campaigns will definitely have a positive impact on our tourism. Even right now, there's a wide array of traditional entertainment items happening almost every day, like boduberu (big drum) thaara (tambourine), dhandi jehun (stick dance) and bandiyaa jehun (pot dance) which our guests really enjoy. Moreover, annual cultural festivals during bodu eid, kuda eid and hithaanee season are well-celebrated in the local islands, and they define authentic Maldivian traditions and are easy for tourists to blend in.*



**Mohamed Shaaz Waleed**  
 Group CEO  
 Resort Life Maldives

*It plays a vital role in improving the tourism sector. I also think that the tastes and spices of Maldives should be mandatory through such cultural tourism campaigns. Likewise, Indian tourism is well-promoted using their globally-popular spices and culinary arts - the same goes with Thailand. Despite others calling us umbalhakada (dried tuna in Sinhalese), only those who had really tasted it would truly appreciate and value it.*

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

**DD**

*Double dot*

Portrait | Fashion | Lifestyle

E: info@colourprofile.net, M: +960 9990555  
 insta: doubledot.mv



# SOUTH ASIAN TRAVEL AWARDS

2020

**ONLINE VOTING  
OPEN NOW**

[www.southasiantravelawards.com](http://www.southasiantravelawards.com)

DEADLINE :  
**30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020 (00.00 Hrs)**

||

*Celebrating  
the Best of South Asian Hospitality*



SOUTH ASIAN  
TRAVEL AWARDS

📍 CHP #4, 5th Floor, Orchid Magu, Male', Maldives

☎ +960 330 6606

✉ [secretariat@satravelawards.com](mailto:secretariat@satravelawards.com)

🌐 [www.southasiantravelawards.com](http://www.southasiantravelawards.com)