

# The islandchief travel news

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**Digital Resorts**

Innovation drives experiences



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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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Dear Readers,

While it's still a little too early to tell exactly how the travel industry will be reshaped, we can all agree it will not be business as usual. The pandemic crisis has knocked us all sideways, personally and professionally, and we're all having to grasp new ways of doing things. Tuning in to webinars and virtual conferences, especially in the early days of the lockdown, it was heartening to watch you and your partners - TMCs, suppliers, consultants - pull together to tackle the new challenges, sharing advice and information openly and freely, even with rivals.

In this issue, we invited Fathimath Hazrath, Reservations & Ticketing Manager of SriLankan Airlines, Maldives, to share her experiences in handling various repatriation flights during the pandemic and guidance on how to navigate some of the key challenges, from traveller safety (p.12).

Our responsibility - as tour planners, industry suppliers and publishers - is to focus on the recovery. Our customers have been walking around with a dark cloud over their heads, or worse yet, sequestered in their homes. That should give anyone the incentive to get out of town. We've seen in previous travel recessions that travel tends to come back regionally, then nationally, then internationally. From a planning perspective, this might require you to rethink your previous strategy and adopt a new approach. What else? Deals! Sure, some suppliers and destinations will try to make up for lost revenue by overinflating prices, but if you're selective, there will be deals to be had and your customers will benefit from your buying power and negotiating skills. The whole business travel community is united with one goal - to restore confidence in travel.

And while you're longing to plan and visit Maldives, we're even more excited to tell you about our epic special on "The Ultimate Maldives Travel Bucket List" (p.18). We cover over 100 experiences, places of interest and of course, loads of things that we know hardcore foodies would love. From the magical underwater world to pristine beaches and the exploration of deserted islands and secluded lagoons, there's so much to do, feel and experience, we're sure you'll need more than just one Maldivian adventure to live it all.

On another upbeat note, our Personality of the Month section this month looks at the buoyant and lucrative Alissa Marcelo, Assistant Sales Manager - Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru & Angsana Ihuru. Check out this feature over on page 11.

As you can see, the October edition is a power-packed one. So, grab a cup of coffee, read it at leisure and let us know your opinion about the issue.

Until next month,  
The islandchief Team  
Rediscover Maldives... the sunny side of life

## DISTRIBUTION



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100+ COMPANY  
EXECUTIVES



5 UNITED NATIONS  
AGENCIES

ACROSS THE SKIES

# Top 10 Markets Since Maldivian Borders Reopened

(from July 15, 2020, to September 23, 2020)



**Russia**  
2065 ▲ 388%



**United Arab Emirates**  
1029 ▼ 37%



**USA**  
935 ▲ 39%



**United Kingdom**  
625 ▼ 13%



**Spain**  
466 ▼ 9%



**Brazil**  
444 ▲ 164%



**Germany**  
362 ▲ 18%



**France**  
279 ▼ 7%



**India**  
262 ▲ 145%



**Egypt**  
232 ▲ 30%

SEPTEMBER 2020  
**9,538** ▲ 25%

Average since the border reopened  
JUL **100**/day    AUG **218**/day    SEP **318**/day  
▲ 118%    ▲ 45.90%

Maximum arrived on a single day  
JUL **218**    AUG **373**    SEP **696**

Minimum arrived on a single day  
JUL **32**    AUG **71**    SEP **97**

View full list from [www.immigration.gov.mv/statistics](http://www.immigration.gov.mv/statistics)



GLASSWARE



## ACROSS THE SKIES

## Flydubai Returns to Maldives Starting October 27

Dubai-based airline, flydubai has announced the resumption of flights to Malé, the capital of the Maldives.



Dubai-based airline, flydubai, which initially operated between 2013 and 2018, will be reinstated from October 27 due to popular demand. Flights will operate four times a week to Malé on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Flight FZ 1569 will depart from Terminal 3, Dubai International (DXB) at 10:35 and the return flight FZ 1570 will depart from Velana International Airport (MLE) at 23:30 (local time). The new service to the Maldives will give passengers more access to a holiday destination from Dubai and further afield whether connecting on the flydubai network or through its codeshare with Emirates. Passengers to the Maldives must complete a "Traveller Health Declaration" 24 hours before arrival from the link below: [www.imuga.immigration.gov.mv](http://www.imuga.immigration.gov.mv)

Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai, said: "We continue to see signs of recovery as more countries start to lift restrictions on international travel. Working together, all the stakeholders in the travel industry have a role to safeguard travel in this new environment enabling more people to travel confidently. We remain agile in our operations and committed to gradually adding more flights to further support the flow of trade and tourism around the region as we look ahead to this new way of travel in the months to come."

Sudhir Sreedharan, Senior Vice President of Commercial Operations (UAE, GCC, Africa and the Indian Subcontinent) at flydubai, stated: "We are pleased to restart our operations to the Maldives."

This has always been a popular destination for our passengers in the UAE, GCC and the Russian speaking markets who are seeking a beach holiday. With Holidays by flydubai expanding its hotels and ancillary offering, we are now able to offer our passengers full packages at affordable prices whether they choose to fly in Business or Economy."

Business Class return fares to Malé from Dubai will start at AED 8,925 while Economy Class return fares will start at AED 3,625 including taxes. Flights can be booked through flydubai's website ([flydubai.com](http://flydubai.com)), the official flydubai App, Contact Centre in Dubai on (+971) 600 54 44 45, the flydubai travel shops or through its travel partners. Passengers booking with flydubai for travel between September 1 and November 30, 2020 will automatically receive free global cover for COVID-19. The new service covers passengers' health expenses and quarantine costs if diagnosed with COVID-19 during their trip.

Inner Maldives Holidays is the leading and multi-award-winning company in the travel and tourism industry in Maldives and has remained as the General Sales Agent for flydubai. The company was founded in the year 1998 with the dedicated objective of providing travel services to the booming tourism industry in the Maldives. Over the years, Inner Maldives has grown to become one of the market leaders in the industry, and today has become a dynamic and strategically diversified group of companies with primary interests in tourism, aviation, logistic, solutions and trading.

## Edelweiss Restarts Flight Operations to Maldives

Edelweiss has recommenced flight operations from Zurich to Malé commencing September 26, 2020, flying twice a week from Zurich to Malé directly.

The Maldives will be another vacation destination added to the airline's range for the coming autumn vacations. According to the airline an additional three long-haul destinations; Punta Cana, the Seychelles and Cancún will also be available in the autumn and winter programme.

Patrick Heymann, Chief Commercial Officer of Edelweiss stated: "Over 1,200 islands in the Indian Ocean with its crystal-clear water offer divers and snorkelers a breathtaking backdrop. Almost nowhere is there so much privacy as on the many beautiful, small islands."

The connection can be booked via their website [flyedelweiss.com](http://flyedelweiss.com) and through all the usual sales channels. Passengers will be informed beforehand if any flight timetable changes become necessary due to new and reintroduced entry restrictions. Edelweiss guarantees free and flexible rebooking options, so that travel can be planned worry-free.



NEW OPENINGS

# Opening Dates of Resorts Approved by Ministry of Tourism

TOURIST RESORTS	Opening Date	TOURIST RESORTS	Opening Date	TOURIST RESORTS	Opening Date
Cocoon Maldives	15th July	Dusit Thani Maldives	1st August	Anantara Resort and Spa Maldives	1st October
Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa	15th July	Six Senses Laamu	1st August	Raffles Maldives Meradhoo Resort	1st October
Furaveri Island Resort & Spa	15th July	Sun Island Resort and Spa	1st August	South Palm Resort Maldives	1st October
Grand Park Kodhipparu Maldives	15th July	Holiday Island Resort and Spa	1st August	Naladhu	1st October
Hard Rock Hotel Maldives	15th July	Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi	1st August	Outrigger Konotta Maldives Resort	1st October
Kudafushi Resort & Spa	15th July	Bandos Maldives	1st August	Pullman Maldives Maamutaa Resort	1st October
Oblu Select by Atmosphere at Sangeli	15th July	Coco Palm Dhunikelhu	1st August	Kuramathi Maldives	1st October
Olhuveli Beach and Spa Maldives	15th July	Coco Bodu Hithi	1st August	The St. Regis Vommuli Resort Maldives	1st October
Ozen By Atmosphere At Maadhoo	15th July	Sun Aqua Iru Veli Maldives	1st August	Niyama Maldives	1st October
Saii Lagoon Maldives	15th July	The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi Maldives	1st August	Baros Maldives	1st October
Soneva Jani	15th July	Biyaadhoo Island Resort	1st August	Reethi Faru Resort Raa	1st October
Taj Exotica Resort and Spa Maldives	15th July	Nika Island Resort and Spa	1st August	JW Marriott Maldives Resort & Spa	1st October
The Residence Maldives At Dhigurah	15th July	Cheval Blanc Randheli	1st August	Kandolhu Island Maldives	1st October
You & Me By Cocoon	15th July	Lux South Ari Atoll Maldives	14th August	Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru Maldives	1st October
Angsana Resort & Spa Maldives Ihuru	15th July	Maafushivaru Maldives	16th August	Dhigufaru Island Resort	1st October
Banyan Tree Maldives Vabbinfaru	15th July	Riu Atoll and Riu Palace Maldivas	17th August	Centara Grand Island Resort & Spa Maldives	1st October
Constance Halaveli Resort	15th July	Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma Maldives	25th August	Amari Havodda Maldives	1st October
Radisson Blu Resort	15th July	Komandoo Maldiva Island Resort	29th August	Malahini Kuda Bandos	1st October
Paradise Island Resort and Spa	15th July	Adaaran Select Meedhupparu	31st August	Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa	1st October
Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives	15th July	Cocoa Island	1st September	W Maldives	1st October
Cinnamon Velifushi Maldives	15th July	The Nautilus Maldives	1st September	Sun Siyam Vilu Reef Maldiva	1st October
Cinnamon Hakuraa Huraa Maldives	15th July	Hurawalhi Island Resor	1st September	Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi	18th October
Ellaidhoo Maldives By Cinnamon	15th July	Veligandu Island Resort	1st September	Diamonds Athuruga Beach & Water Villas	30th October
Noku Maldives	15th July	Embudhu Village	1st September	Velassaru Maldives	1st November
Amaya Kuda Rah Maldives	15th July	Kudadoo Maldives Private island	1st September	Kuredu Island Resort	1st November
Gangehi Island Resort	15th July	Summer Island Maldives	1st September	Baglioni Resort Maldives	1st November
Fihaalhohi Island Resort	20th July	Adaaran Club Rannalhi	1st September	The Standard Huruvalhi Maldives	1st November
One & Only Reethi Rah, Maldives	24th July	Heritance Aarah	1st September	Vilamendhoo Island Resort	1st November
Ayada Maldives	25th July	Meeru Island Resort	1st September	Kanuhura	15th November
Adaaran Prestige Vadoo	27th July	Kandima Maldives	1st September	Four Seasons Private Island Maldives	In operation
Vakkaru Maldives	29th July	Milaidhoo Island Maldives	1st September	Four Seasons Resort Maldives	In operation
Anantara Kihavah Villas	25th July	Gili Lankanfushi	1st September	Lily Beach Resort	In operation
Emerald Maldives Resort & Spa	1st August	Drift Thelu Veliga Retreat	3rd September	Lux North Male' Atoll	In operation
Fasmendho	1st August	Inter Continental Maldives Maamunagau	7th September	Oblu By Atmosphere at Helengeli	In operation
Joali Muravandhoo	1st August	Atmosphere Kanifushi Maldives	15th September	Soneva Fushi Resort	In operation
Royal Island Resort and Spa	1st August	Finolhu Baa Atoll Maldives	15th September	Varu Island Resort	In operation
Centara Ras Fushi Resort & Spa	1st August	Mirihi Island Resort	15th September	Angsana Resort & Spa Maldives	In operation
		Conrad Maldives Rangali Island	28th September	Velaa Private Island Maldives	In operation



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## IN A NUTSHELL

## Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi Joins Exclusive Luxury Travel Network Virtuoso

Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi has been accepted into Virtuoso's selective portfolio of luxury travel partners that represents the best in travel with a portfolio of 2,000 preferred travel suppliers.



Virtuoso's collection of the finest luxury hotels, resorts, cruise lines, airlines, tour operators and other suppliers worldwide market to Virtuoso clients via network vehicles and to Virtuoso agencies through multiple communications channels and events, including Virtuoso Travel Week, the largest worldwide gathering in luxury travel. Joining Virtuoso gives Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi

direct relationships with the world's leading leisure travel agencies in North and Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East.

"Virtuoso's selection and approval process is highly selective, so becoming a preferred partner after a year of our grand opening is truly an honour. We look forward to delivering

personalised experiences with True Waldorf service and Maldivian hospitality to Virtuoso advisors and their most valued clients," said Etienne Dalancon, General Manager, Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi.

Situated in one of the most beautiful, sought-after locations in the world, the award-winning Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi offers guests unparalleled, bespoke service and unforgettable experiences. Sleek and spectacular, with unprecedented privacy, Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi inspires extraordinary journeys for the soul. From extensive outdoor adventure options, including snorkelling and diving in the fascinating underwater world, to the mesmerizing Waldorf Astoria Spa, guests are spoilt for choice. Guests can select from 10 indulgent dining venues such as The Ledge by Dave Pynt, the culinary mastermind behind Singapore's Michelin-starred Burnt Ends restaurant, and features elevated

barbecue that can be savored against the stunning backdrop of the Indian Ocean. Discerning guests can also dine amongst the treetops at Terra while enjoying spectacular views of the ocean and horizon, or bask in the magnificent sunset at Amber, the resort's signature bar.

Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi operates with industry-leading standard of cleanliness and disinfection of the proprietary Hilton CleanStay program, while adhering to the Maldivian health and safety guidelines. From arrival to check in and throughout the entire stay, guests can experience an elevated standard of cleanliness and sanitization which build upon Hilton's high standards of housekeeping and hygiene where hospital-grade cleaning products and upgraded protocols are currently in place. For more information about Hilton CleanStay, visit:

[www.hilton.com/en/corporate/cleanstay](http://www.hilton.com/en/corporate/cleanstay)

## The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands Presents Aris Meeha, Your Island Butler

The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands introduces Aris Meeha, a butler concept inspired by the royal courts of the ancient Maldives. In Dhivehi language, Aris Meeha refers to a person who is assigned to a royal member, one of the most important positions among the many titles and rankings in a Maldivian Royal household.

According to the resort, Aris Meeha is similar to a modern-day butler, fulfilling every detail of the life of a royal and is considered to be the closest confidant – much like a Gentleman- or Lady-in-waiting, or a Gentlemen or Lady of the Chamber. The concept relates to the brand's motto of 'We are Ladies & Gentlemen serving Ladies & Gentlemen'. People being the most valuable asset of the brand, and the close connection of Aris Meeha to the local history and

culture opens an exciting career path for passionate butlers to be part of a team that truly delivers a legendary service. As part of the resort's recruitment process, various new job openings are to be announced in the coming months, including the opportunity to fulfil the role of providing the finest personal service as an Aris Meeha.

The Ritz-Carlton Maldives is ideally located at Fari Islands, in the North Malé Atoll of the Maldives, which is a 50-minute journey by speedboat or a 10-minute seaplane flight from Velana International Airport. The resort features white sandy beaches, turquoise lagoons and coral reefs with marine life. Shaped by the Maldivian sun and shored by the Indian Ocean, guest villas at The Ritz Carlton Maldives, Fari Island are expected to range in size from one to three



bedrooms, featuring the refined elegance and legendary service that define The Ritz-Carlton brand.

The property is also expected to offer a choice of outstanding culinary venues serving an array of international and local cuisines, in addition to a full suite of fitness and recreational facilities including a signature Ritz-Carlton Spa. The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands is part of Fari Islands, an archipelago

that features three world-class hospitality brands inclusive of The Ritz-Carlton. The guests are expected to have access to a picturesque Fari Marina – the archipelago's communal beating heart. Built around a vibrant Beach Club, Fari Marina features charming boutiques and a handpicked selection of dining options. Spaces have been designed by the renowned Kerry Hill Architects, to bring about a delicate balance of serene and social.

IN A NUTSHELL

# Kagi Maldives Listed Among Forbes' Five Immersive New Wellness Resorts to Plan Ahead For

Kagi Maldives has been featured in the Forbes' list of 'The Five Immersive New Wellness Resorts To Plan Ahead For', showcasing some of the most highly anticipated wellness destinations making their debut towards the end of 2020 and into 2021.



This wellness-focused retreat at the tip of the North Malé Atoll promises a 360-degree wellness experience and holistic retreat for mind, body and soul.

The resort offers a soulful island experience where equilibrium can be found in the iconic overwater spa where its wellbeing concept promotes the Art of Life -

Living in balance, healthily & joyfully. Inspired by the "Epicurean lifestyle philosophy" and the Maldivian island spirit, Baani Spa comprises of four treatment rooms with outdoor bathing facilities, a relaxation lounge, a beauty salon, a fully-equipped yoga and sound-healing studio, steam rooms, and a spa boutique. Offering a personalized outcome-focused wellness programme designed to take guests on a

journey to Release, Restore and Regain, the spa also provides alternative therapies and fitness classes among the wellness experiences. Putting guests' needs at the forefront, Kagi Maldives thrives to be the Maldives' ultimate holistic wellness destination.

Esteemed architect Yuji Yamazaki is behind the resort's design, bringing together the 1,500-square-metre spa featuring teardrop-shaped sky roof, a state-of-the-art gym, a dive center, two restaurants, three bars and a wine cellar, along with 50 villas across Beach Pool, Lagoon Pool and Ocean Pool categories.

Kagi Maldives aims nourish guests with its culinary offerings prepared by the island artisans at the resort's two restaurants, focused on whole foods with a wellness balance. Providing an excellence in culinary offerings, the resort's two restaurants are focused on whole foods with a wellness balance. The taste of countries of the Pacific Rim are brought to the Maldives by way of the ocean-view signature restaurant Ke-Un, with flavourful Hawaiian, Japanese, Thai and Peruvian dishes. A little more casual and serving cuisine from around the world, Noo Faru is the island's main restaurant with a backdrop of the pool and turquoise lagoon beyond.

# Kandima Maldives & Condé Nast Traveller: 365 Days in Paradise Contest

Kandima Maldives in association with Condé Nast Traveller (India & Middle East) has announced a grand prize for one lucky winner to spend 365 days in paradise. The winner gets a 365-day stay at Kandima Maldives, with all meals included, between November 15, 2020, and November 14, 2021.

To enter the contest, interested participants simply need to visit the Kandima Maldives website [www.kandima.com](http://www.kandima.com) and upload a creatively shot, original photo of themselves enjoying one of the key Kandima Ingredients i.e. Nature, Sports & Wellness, Food, Adventure or Fun. Participants also need to post their entry on social media with the hashtags **#KandimaMaldives #365DaysInParadise**. For live updates, tag and follow: **@kandima\_maldives @cntravellerindia** and **@cntravellerme**. Entries close on October 8, 2020.

The Top 15 shortlisted participants will enter the final round and would need to submit a one-minute innovatively-imagined video on "How do you imagine your 365 days at Kandima, Maldives". This will be uploaded on the contest website and followed by public voting. Entries for the final phase

closes on October 20, 2020. The winner will be selected and announced on November 1, 2020, on the website and social media handles of Kandima Maldives and Condé Nast Traveller (India and Middle East). The winner can start to redeem his/her '365 Days in Paradise' holiday from November 15, 2020, at Kandima, Maldives.

This ultimate prize comes with incredible dining experiences and a stay at the gorgeous Kandima Sky Studio. The prize covers the stay for two, whether it is with a friend or partner, and up to two kids (under the age of 12). The winner will also receive complimentary unlimited round-trip domestic flight transfers to the resort, exclusive resort vouchers and access to a variety of exciting experiences to explore during their entire stay duration. The winner can choose to stay at Kandima Maldives for 365 days in one go or visit as many times as they want during the one-year validity period.



Kandima Maldives is much more than just a holiday. This new game-changing destination offers a seriously stylish island setting with extraordinary restaurants and bars and plenty of on-site activities to choose from. Kandima Maldives is a place with soul, deeply rooted and respectful of guests, colleagues, community, culture and surroundings. It is all about genuine hospitality with a human touch and smart solutions that make use of the latest innovations – not to mention a playful spirit.

# Jalboot Maldives Partners with Palm Tree Marine to Install GPS & RADAR Systems in its Fleet of Luxury Vessels



in Marine Services in the Maldives where it is successfully serving some of the biggest resort islands of the country.

Palm Tree Marine offers a wide range of boat equipment from Racor Filtration, JCS Hi-Torque, Golight Inc., as well as Jabsco & Rule Pumps. The company is also the authorized dealer for MAN, Perkins, John Deere, FG Wilson, Twin Disc, Guidi, Force Professional Tools, R & D Marine, and SEC Batteries in the Maldives.

Today, Palm Tree Marine Pvt Ltd is as an undisputed market leader in the field of trading in the Marine, Industrial & Power Generation Sector in Maldives. During the past years, the company has created a new benchmark for the market by launching new quality products and providing the opportunity to experience the best technology and machinery available in the world to customers in the Maldives. Their uncompromised quality of products, proves a strong selling point and is key to the success in holding its place in the industry for more than 23 years.

Jalboot Maldives has announced its collaboration with Palm Tree Marine Pvt Ltd to install all Garmin GPS and Radar systems in its fleet of luxury vessels operating in the Maldives. Jalboot offers its customers a revolutionary experience with cutting edge technology and top-notch luxury onboard its vessels as it rides through the mesmerizing sceneries of the Indian Ocean.

Jalboot Maldives is a subsidiary of Jalboot Holdings LLC, a marine company based in the capital of the United Arab Emirates. Established in 2017, Jalboot Maldives specialises in delivering high quality, fully integrated marine solutions such as water transport, marina management, design and build of custom boats, watersports, and luxury charters. Despite its young age, Jalboot Maldives is a pioneer

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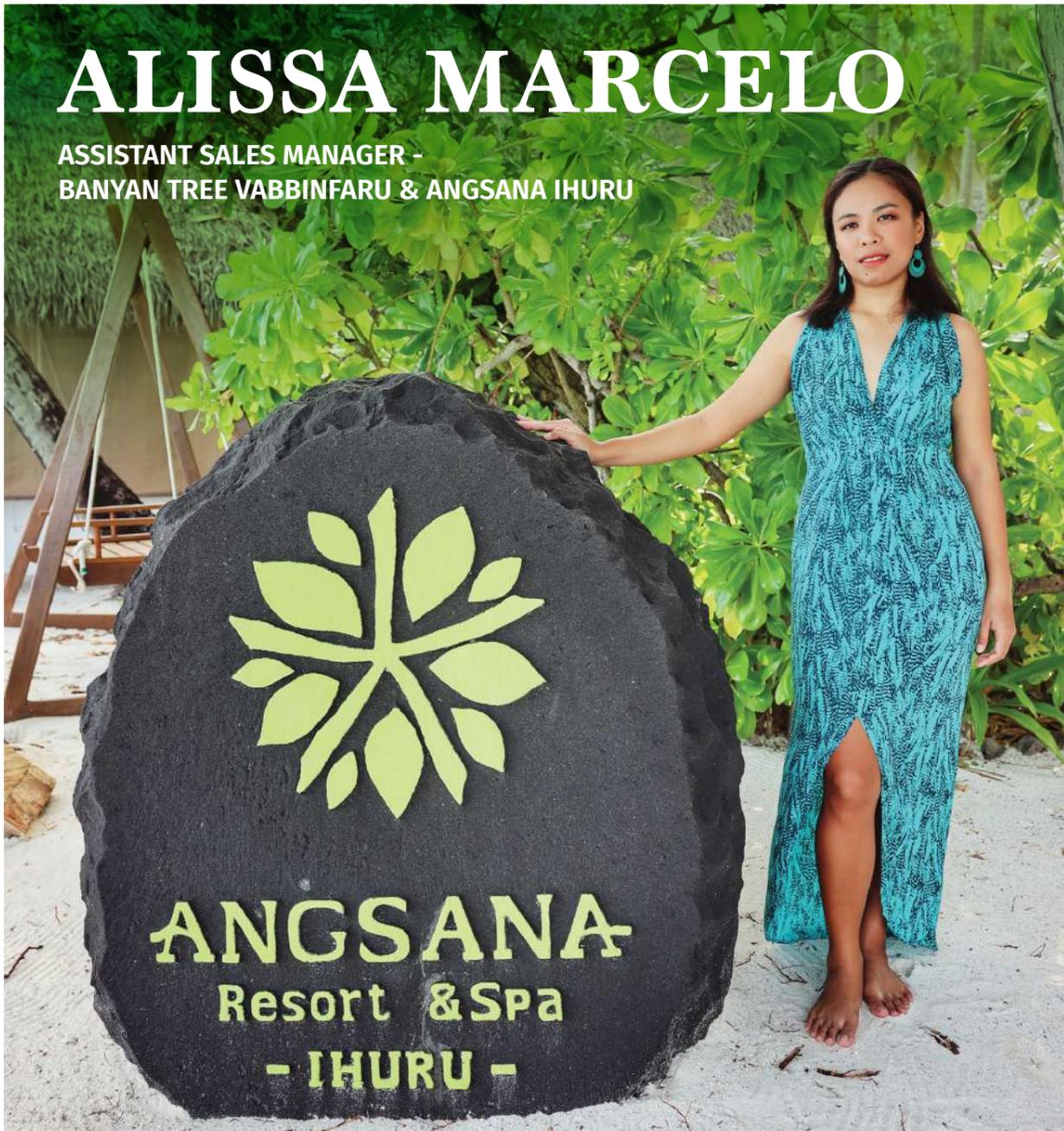
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ACTIVECAPTAIN NAVIONICS BLUE CHART 63

# Personality of the Month



## ALISSA MARCELO

ASSISTANT SALES MANAGER -  
BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU & ANGSANA IHURU

### How are you finding Maldives?

Living in the Maldives is like existing in a fairy tale. The colour of the sky changes from blue to rose-tint to grey. Cotton-candy-like clouds are almost reachable by your hands. You wake up into a golden sunrise and sleep under star-blanketed skies. Sometimes I'm wondering if I'll see a mermaid emerging from the water or a pixie sprinkling magical dust into palm trees. Kidding aside, the Maldives, more than just a dreamy paradise, is a great learned curve for me. On top of my career progression, I've learnt more about the marine life in the Maldives, the fragility of the ecosystem and what we humans can do to protect the environment even in the smallest way. I am so grateful that I have the chance to work and live here so I have the opportunity to discover so much.

### What's your favourite spot at the resort and why?

My top favourite spot would definitely be underwater. We have very rich house reefs and we always take pride in saying that. Every day is like a surprise. You'll never know what you'll see. We also have a signature dive spot just 10 meters off the Angsana Ihuru house reef called the Rannamaari Ship Wreck. My colleagues and I always try to reach it just by freediving. The top of the shipwreck is about 19 meters deep while the bottom goes down to 26 meters. The wreck has a lot of residents and usually, there will be several batfish and a school of jackfish on top of it. I once found myself in the middle of the school of jackfish swirling around me. The experience was surreal.

My second favorite spot would be the sunset jetty at

Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru. It is the best spot to chase sunsets and also a great venue for weddings, destination dining, and yoga, or meditation.

We also have a spot that we internally call 'Banyan Highway' which is a clearing in the middle of Vabbinfaru Island that gives you the view of the arrival jetty all the way down to the sunset jetty. It resembles a long runway minus the red carpet - you get soft white sand instead and it's very instagrammable. I think it's really cool and unique.

### What do you most like about your work, and what do you find to be the most challenging aspect?

I like my job because it brings many challenges to the table every day. The Tourism industry is the most important economic contribution to the Maldives and it is going through a massive transformation, making it interesting. Supply is way more than demand, so the competition is stiff and the market is volatile, we have to be creative to deal with challenges constantly.

There is no 'one strategy fits all' in terms of selling resorts in the Maldives. What worked today might not work tomorrow. We get to learn something new every day. And to be able to keep up with the ever-changing game of supply and demand, I always keep in mind that I have to learn, unlearn, and learn again.

Another thing that I like about this job is the opportunity to share beautiful stories of the islands

to people that I meet. I firmly believe that selling by storytelling is a very effective approach and I love sharing stories. Our two resorts have a long history and a lot of beautiful stories waiting to be told.

### What are the positives and the opportunities which you have gathered from the pandemic?

As we experienced a life stripped of everything, we have been given time to reflect on what actually is more valuable to us. There are lots of things that we take for granted in the past that is actually what we need and what we should have been paying attention to.

This pandemic gave us an opportunity to reset and start with a clean slate. We should take this chance to start anew with a much deeper and better perspective in life.

### If you can change anything in your life, what would it be?

I wouldn't want to change anything. I believe that all choices we've made in the past add up to build what we are today.

### How would describe the DNA of your brand?

The Banyan Tree brand is rooted in sustainability. The environment and local community will always be considered when making decisions from the time of building of the resort to running in full operations. Once you've worked for the brand, whether you stay longer or move on to another later in your life, you'll find that the values that Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts have instilled in you during your tenure with the company is running deep in your veins. You'll find yourself always considering the environment and the local community which associate to the choices and actions you made.

### Who are you listening to at the moment?

I love listening to late 90s' and early 2000s' punk rock bands like The Used, Dashboard Confessional, Greenday and the top of my list goes to My Chemical Romance.

### Favourite motto or saying:

Be nice to people on your way up, because you'll meet them on your way down.

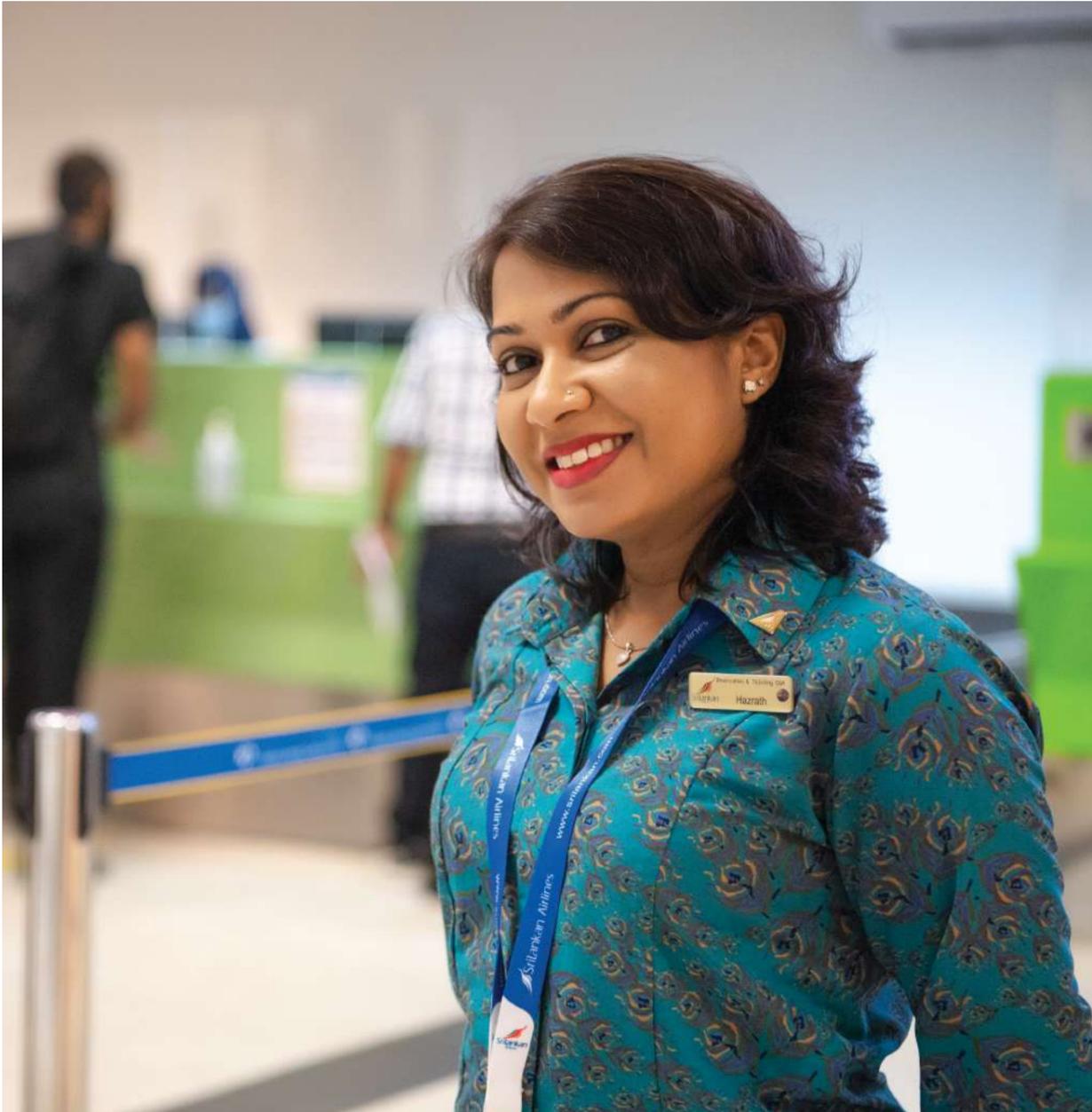


Angsana Ihuru Aerial View



Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru beachfront villas aerial view

# DARE TO DREAM with FATHIMATH HAZRATH



**RESERVATIONS & TICKETING MANAGER,  
SRILANKAN AIRLINES, MALDIVES**

**“The way we travel has changed, but our commitment to our guests' safety, comfort and peace-of-mind remains steadfast.”**

**Fathimath Hazrath leads the Reservations and Ticketing team at SriLankan Airlines, Maldives. From time-limits to re-bookings and issuance of tickets to handling special cases, her efforts are focused 24/7 around the clock. During the last 27 years, her experience in the aviation industry has won the confidence of numerous clients - individuals and corporates, and also paved the airline's future for an aspiring young team in the Maldives. In this exclusive interview, she shares her journey into the aviation industry and talks with us about the challenges and perception of women's role in the airline industry.**

**Tell us about your journey into the airline industry and from where did you draw your inspiration?**

Despite my parents insisting me to choose a different career, I discovered an enthusiastic and energetic character in me that eventually unfolded as a people's person. And so, it gave me the thought to challenge myself in an environment that was completely customer-driven and lead me to choose the airline and aviation industry in 1993, where I began my profession as a Reservation & Ticketing Agent at Air Maldives.

Having gained my first-hand experience at Air Maldives – I learned my aviation basics from my great mentors, namely Ms. Maimoona Ahmed and Mr. Ismail Waafir. And then I had to take a short break in my career as I achieved the best accolade a female could get, which is motherhood. Having spent quality time with my little

daughter I got my next opportunity and broke into international aviation arena to test my ability with an international airline by joining SriLankan Airlines (GSA) in 2003 as a Reservation & Ticketing Supervisor.

I consider this one of the challenging times in my career as I had to balance work life and had to play the role of a wife and a mother, while focusing on my job role. The product SriLankan Airlines offered then was global due to the airlines' codeshare partnership with Emirates. My mind was well-suited to take up the challenge due to the fact that my initial thoughts on a career path is customer-oriented.

Most of my early inspiration was influenced by my mentor Ms. Maimoona Ahmed, subsequently working under different management teams with international

experience that lead me to much greater heights from overseas trainings, familiarisation travels and meetings to gain much needed international aviation industry exposure that transformed me to who I am today. I have also learned and gained an abundance of insight knowledge from Mr. Roshan Maduwarala, Country Manager of Ace Aviation Services Maldives, General Sales Agent for SriLankan Airlines in the Maldives. I also thank Mr. Mohamed Firaq, Managing Director of Ace Aviation Services Maldives and Mr. Tikiri Ellepola, Chief Operating Officer of Aitken Spence Travels / Chairman of Ace Aviations for entrusting me in my role and duties.

**What do you enjoy most about your current role?**

It's the bond that I have with my management team and my subordinates. I consider my office environment as a family unit and this is certainly my natural approach. Having such a mind-set makes my life a lot easier, as I have a family when I report to work and a family when I return back home.

I pretty much enjoy this emotional family role especially with the team I manage that consists all females both in Malé and Addu city office. Having such a bond creates an opportunity to have better results simply due to the fact that each one of us stands up for one another to ensure we, as a team, deliver our best to all our valued customers. The management, too, gives a huge backing to maintain this – thus, I consider this as the key reason SriLankan Airlines Maldives has produced vibrant teams over the years.

**What are some of the challenges you've faced as a woman, in what many would view as a "man's world", of aviation and the airline industry in general?**

Yes, we were often told that previous generations had limitations on women embarking into corporate environments. The key reason could be cultural and religious factors.

The world today speaks about Woman Empowerment and Gender Equality. Our motherland too made necessary amendments to the constitution in 2008 to guarantee Gender Equality. In this context, it is the woman's responsibility too to step up and show the world that "Nothing is impossible". SriLankan Airlines' first ever female pilot was with a Muslim family background which highlights that the cultural and religious environment is not a barrier anymore for a woman to break into the corporate work force. SriLankan Airlines currently has approximately 10 female pilots flying our biggest aircrafts Airbus A330.

I would say the only challenge I have faced is breaking the cultural barrier and mixing up with men in the corporate world during the initial stages. However with the international exposure sitting at trainings and meetings have helped me break the ice, and today, I feel proud as a woman representing my organization at meetings and training teams consisting of males.

**What is the impact of COVID-19 on business travel, particularly between Sri Lanka and Maldives, and/or the Indian Subcontinent?**

In general, aviation is one of the worst hit industries due to the outbreak of COVID-19. During my career since 2003 with SriLankan Airlines, I have seen through many setbacks starting from Sri Lanka's civil unrest, the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, SARS/MERS Pandemic. But no one would have thought in their wildest dreams or ever expected such an impact from the globally disruptive Coronavirus pandemic on our businesses and private lives.

Our business/corporate traveller customer base often take Malé-Colombo, Malé-Bangkok, and various Chinese destinations. And certainly, this segment has come to a total standstill due to respective country border restrictions. Despite the fact that it is too early to assess the impact, the projection is for this segment to decline even after the borders are open. Most businesses are slowly but surely moving towards online platforms amidst such developments and cost concerns, and it is fair by airlines to project a serious decline on corporate and business traffic.

***In a fiercely competitive market, how do you position your product offerings to remain at the forefront of the industry?***

SriLankan Airlines is not only the flag carrier of Sri Lanka, but also the largest international airline serving the Maldives and Southern India. Our greatest strength is that we are the only international airline to cover two points in the Maldives and offer the best of connectivity to the rest of the world.

Pre-COVID-19, our schedule to Malé and Gan was carefully evaluated to cater customer requirements to connect key destinations such as Bangalore, Chennai, Kochi – for those who travel on medical purposes – and Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore primarily for those who wish to travel for leisure. We anticipate to offer the same to Maldivians until we resume our regular operations from the base station.

By becoming a member of world airline alliance “oneworld” in 2014, we further strengthened our presence in the market as SriLankan is the only airline to represent oneworld in this part of the globe.

With the COVID-19 developments, most airlines have been cutting corners on operations in order to bring the operational cost within the manageable levels to sustain the business. The situation is expected to eventually lead to the survival of airlines to fall under an alliance – by one airline carry a customer to a midpoint and another member carry the customer to the final destination. oneworld member airlines cover over 1,000 global destinations in 170 countries. Over 225 loyalty programme members will benefit again through our alliance offer once current COVID-19 comes to a controllable level.

***Your airline has been operating a number of repatriation charters during this pandemic, what have been your key takeaways in executing these flights, particularly focusing on the Colombo – Malé route?***

I hope I can put the records straight; we are proud to say that SriLankan is the only airline which has been operating to the Maldives uninterrupted, despite our base being closed for traffic movement. Maldives is considered as our second home base for SriLankan Airlines and it is important that we maintain our image in Maldives.

Pre-opening of Maldives’ border, SriLankan Airlines operated nearly 100 flights. With the efforts of our management team, we moved approximately 4,000 customers to different parts of the globe. This includes repatriation flights to Colombo, Manila, Dhaka, and Lahore while moving over 1,800 customers to Europe, the Americas, Japan, South Korea, Australia and South East Asia via our hub Colombo. Meanwhile helping over 700 Maldivians to head back home from Belarus (via London) and from Colombo.

We stepped up during the hour of need to help many people that were stranded on holiday in the Maldives to connect with their family, friends and loved ones. Despite our operational limitations during lockdown, the management headed by the Directors and Country Managers of Ace Aviation and SriLankan Airlines along

with my team whom I call family, worked hand-in-hand through day and night to coordinate and execute plans. Our actions certainly earned us appreciations from various stakeholders, High Commissions and Embassies.

***SriLankan Airlines and Maldives’ General Sales Agent, Ace Aviation Services Maldives have conducted various CSR projects across the Maldives. How have these projects helped and benefitted the local communities?***

As a prime international airline, we do not limit our reach only to business. It is our duty to look at things from a different perspective – from a non-commercial view. To date, we are the only international airline that has viewed and focused Maldives in this unique perspective and embarked on many journeys filled with corporate social responsibilities.

Our objective was to reach out to the less privileged children in the far-flung islands to help with healthcare facilities. Our first CSR project was held in 2013 – we sponsored an education field trip for 36 students from inter-atoll island schools to explore Sri Lanka for 5 days. The trip covered economy airfare and accommodation. In 2015, we held a medical camp for patients from the Home for People with Special Needs in Guraidhoo island in conjunction with Sri Lankan Airlines. And in 2016, we held another medical camp for children at Kudakudhinge Hiya, Villingilli in conjunction with Sri Lankan Airlines. We were honoured that the event was held under the patronage of SriLankan Airline’s Group Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anomi Jayasinghe who flew down from Colombo with her team of medical experts to conduct the camp.

The last CSR project was held in Addu city from 28th November to 01st December 2019. And, during the CSR Health Camp project, we provided special assistance from “Kauvery Hospital”, one of the most popular hospitals in South India. SriLankan Airlines brought down five specialist doctors, and over 300 Maldivians attended the camp in Addu city.

Moving forward we are looking at various other areas such as beach clean-up projects and environmental sustainability initiatives. We certainly want to embark on this, soon as the current pandemic situation comes under a controllable level.

***With air travel going through its worst crisis in history, what precautionary measures have SriLankan Airlines put to prevent the virus from spreading onboard, through its lounges and at the airport?***

The friendliest airline in the skies is ready to take all our customers around the world. We consider health and safety of our customers as our number one priority. A range of COVID-19 preventive measures have been enforced at Bandaranaike International Airport, Colombo and on-board all SriLankan aircrafts. Wearing face masks

at the airport and on-board the flights has now been made mandatory. Before check-in, passenger belongings will be sanitized and temperatures will be checked where passengers will walk through thermal screening. We take special care to frequently disinfect surfaces and sanitize our lounge facility, plus, hand sanitizers are placed at prime locations at Colombo airport.

To be extra cautious we encourage our customers to use the airline’s online check-in facility, self-check-in kiosks and baggage drop. We will be providing a complimentary hygiene kit before boarding every customer. Our aircrafts are sanitized and disinfected after every service by the dedicated team of professionals and this process is 24/7. While onboard HEPA filters remove 99.97% of all viruses, dust, germs and allergens inside the aircraft. The way we travel has changed, but our commitment to our passengers’ safety, comfort and peace-of-mind remains steadfast.

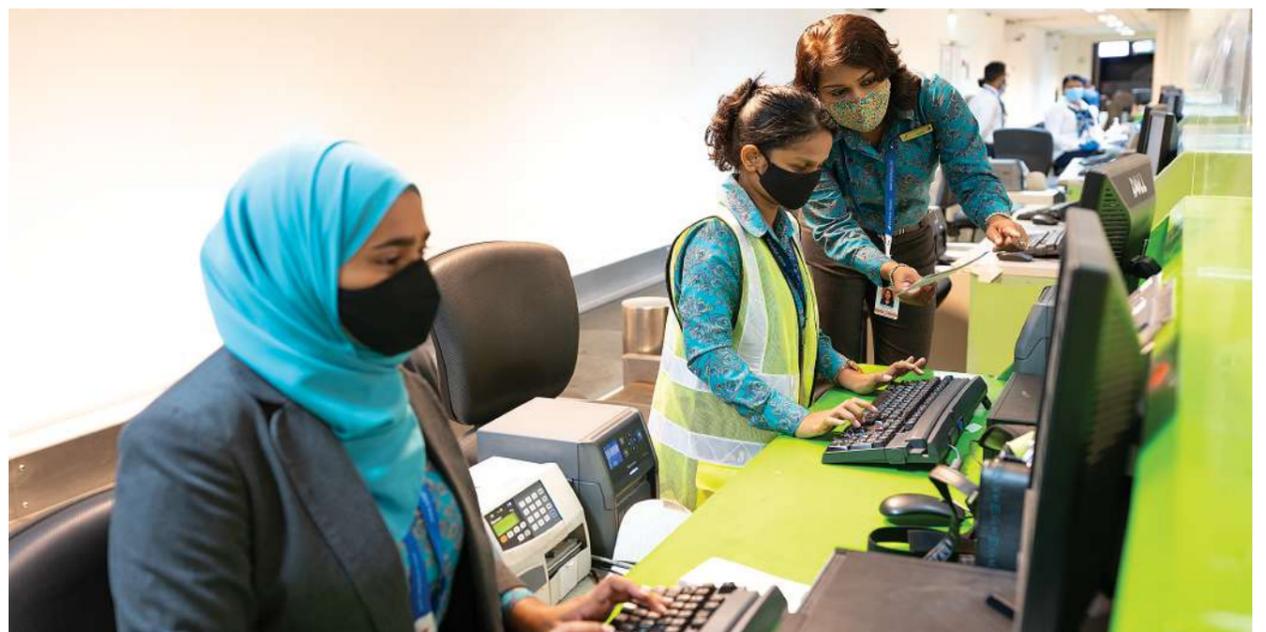
***SriLankan Airlines had very fruitful expansion targets for this year - with plans to add Sydney, Incheon and Chengdu to its route network. How do you think the airline will maintain its focus on consolidating its position in key markets such as India, China, the UK and other major destinations?***

As per the plans at present, we will maintain our current destinations upon opening of Sri Lanka borders as India, China, UK had been our main source markets. Pertaining to our expansion plans, it is too early to comment since the pandemic situation still prevails. However, currently we have deployed our service to Frankfurt, Paris and Milan which we operated until 2017 and terminated service. In terms of new destination plan, we have already commenced our schedule service to Sydney and is effective first week of October. Once a week services will commence to Incheon with immediate connectivity to Malé on both directions.

***What is your advice for someone who wants a career path in your role?***

As I mentioned early, “Nothing is impossible!” - dare to dream, dare to challenge yourself, maintain a good work life balance. Never stop learning because each day is a brand new opportunity to create a better version of yourself and no one knows what is on offer tomorrow – unless it is tried. Have plenty of faith in your team.

Nobody is perfect. Mistakes will happen and should be taken as a lesson and should not be repeated. Most importantly, enjoy what you do. I personally believe that I have done my fair share of contributions to the aviation industry in Maldives. In other words, I have passed the baton, which I got from my mentors, to many who have trained under my guidance and supervision. Now it’s their turn to keep women’s pride high in Maldives. Stay safe and stay strong!



## MOVERS &amp; SHAKERS

## Baglioni Hotels & Resorts Appoints Tanushree Joshi as Regional Director of Sales - Indian Subcontinent, Asia, Middle East & Local DMC



**Baglioni Hotels & Resorts has appointed Tanushree Joshi as the brand's Regional Director of Sales for the areas; Indian Subcontinent, Asia, Middle East & Local DMC, where she will oversee the sales and marketing strategies of the luxury, Italian-styled resort.**

With over 13 years of experience in the corporate and hospitality sectors working with the Tourism Boards of Las Vegas and Abu Dhabi, as well as with 5-star hotels and boutique resorts of Switzerland, South Africa and the Maldives, Tanushree has been associated with some of the most renowned hotels in the hospitality sector.

A seasoned sales and marketing professional, Tanushree has worked with Sun Siyam Resorts as the Regional Sales and Marketing Manager – India and Australia for almost two years before moving The Small Maldives Island Co (TSMIC) in 2018, where she spearheaded the sales and marketing of TSMIC's three resort

properties in the Maldives, viz., Amilla Fushi, Huvafen Fushi, and Finolhu (now under different management) in the India market. Most recently, Tanushree filled the role of Sales Marketing Head – Global at Furaveri Maldives, where she successfully promoted the property in major markets including Local DMCs, Germany, Russia, China, the UK and Spain.

Basking on the island of Maagau in pristine Dhaalu atoll, just a 40-minute seaplane ride from Velana International Airport, Baglioni Resort Maldives' 96 exquisite villas are surrounded by tropical nature, turquoise waters and velvet-smooth white sands. The resort has been

planned in meticulous detail for guests to experience a tailor-made stay in the heart of the Indian Ocean with exclusive Italian hospitality by Baglioni Hotels. Designed with methods and materials carefully chosen to minimise the environmental impact, Baglioni Resort Maldives is the ideal destination for those looking to indulge in their love of nature and sport on an exclusive holiday steeped in beauty. To add to the effect, guests could experience the Italian brands partners like Ferrari Trento, makers of the world's favourite Italian bubbly, Frette, for lavish handmade bed linen and bath towels, MC2 Saint Barth, for chic swimwear with original designs, and Insium innovative anti-ageing cosmetics.

## Amilla Maldives Resorts & Residences Appoints Yuliya Pospelova as Senior Sales Manager

**Luxury private island resort Amilla Maldives Resorts and Residences has announced the appointment of Yuliya Pospelova as the new Senior Sales Manager, bringing with her comprehensive experience in the field – having worked in the Maldives for the last 7 years.**



Prior to her recent appointment, Yulia was the Manager of Sales at Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi, and before that, she was the Area Sales Supervisor at JOALI Maldives. Her career in the Maldives started with Crown Tours where she worked for 5 years, first as Sales & Marketing Consultant and then as Senior Sales Executive. Yulia further brings with her a fluency in English and Russian to her role.

Located on the crystalline waters of the

Baa Atoll UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, just 30 minutes flying time from Velana international Airport, Amilla Resort and Residences offers 23.5 hectares of lush island with 67 luxurious rooms the vast majority over-water.

Dining at Amilla Resort and Residences is an adventure around the globe; with international gourmet cuisine, as well as vegan/keto/special diet options. From Maldivian curries to seafood extravaganzas, the cuisine at Amilla is both simple and indulgent.

Amilla offers a holistic approach with its unique Wellness Your Way concept which includes an abundance of organic homegrown cuisine, fresh from the Mystique Garden, special dietary and 'lifestyle eating cuisine, probiotics, yoga, personal training, pro tennis coaching and massage therapies, to name but a few.

## CROSSROADS Maldives Appoints Shumaes Rasheed as Cluster Marketing Communications Manager

**CROSSROADS Maldives has appointed Shumaes Rasheed as the Cluster Marketing Communications Manager for its luxury properties; Hard Rock Hotel Maldives and SAii Lagoon Maldives, Curio Collection by Hilton.**



Bringing more than 14 years of marketing experience to the integrated leisure destination, Shumaes will oversee the marketing communications of the two properties along with the resort team.

Starting off his career with local advertising agency, Think Advertising, Shumaes has filled various leading roles at Maldivian properties of world-renowned brands including Sheraton Maldives, OZEN Reserve Bolifushi, Brennia Maldives and most recently, at Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts as PR and Marketing Manager.

Nestled amongst the breathtakingly exotic Kaafu Atoll and Emboodhoo Lagoon, the Maldives first extraordinary multi-island, fully integrated leisure destination, CROSSROADS Maldives is located just a 15-minute speedboat ride from Velana International Airport and Malé making transfers and day trips quick and easy.

The tropical, vibrant SAii Lagoon Maldives, Curio Collection by Hilton offers a collection of overwater and beachfront villas decorated with artisanal furniture, scattered across a picturesque island paradise.

Hard Rock Hotel Maldives features a collection of music-infused overwater and beachfront villas, complete with Hard Rock's brand signature in-room amenities Rock Om, a unique yoga experience intertwined with music, and The Sound of Your Stay, allowing guests to enjoy in-room Crosley players or Fender guitars.

# Ooredoo Maldives Inaugurates Digital Kiosk for Tourists at Velana International Airport

The 24-hour self-service Digital Kiosk enables contactless registration, payments and instant dispatching of tourist SIM cards. The company believes that providing contactless and fast services is crucial under the current circumstances to ensure safety for its customers and employees.



The Ooredoo Digital Kiosk for tourists was officially inaugurated on September 27, 2020 by Honourable Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom at a special launch event held at Velana International Airport. The event was attended by CEO & MD of MACL Gordon Andrew, MD of MMPRC Thoyyib Mohamed, Chief Executive of CAM Ilyas Ahmed and Ooredoo Maldives Board Director Uza. Dheena Hussain.

The Ooredoo Digital kiosk at Velana International Airport has been established right in front of the Arrivals Gate and provides 24/7 access to Tourist SIM Cards, Bill Payments, Recharge Services and m-Faisaa Cash-in Services

Chief Commercial Officer of Ooredoo Maldives Hussain Niyaz stated: "Ooredoo being a community focused company, we have always thrived to

boost the economy and enrich the lives of the people of our communities through digital. As we continue the fight against the ongoing global pandemic, Maldives has been able to establish a Safe Haven and welcome travellers from around the globe to enjoy the sunny side of life. As service providers, we believe that it is our duty to use our strengths to contribute to the nationwide efforts in restoring the Maldives tourism

industry and ensuring the safety of our travellers in every way possible. Today we have established our Digital Kiosk for tourists at Velana International Airport enabling contactless services for travellers to help them stay connected with their friends and family during their stay, on the best network in the Maldives."

# Maldives Receives 'Safe Travels' Stamp from World Tourism and Travel Council

The specially designed, global safety stamp recognizes governments and companies around the world which have adopted health and hygiene global standardised protocols – so visitors can experience 'Safe Travels'.

Speaking to local media, Minister of Tourism Hon. Dr. Abdulla Mausoom stated that securing the stamp of Safe Travels ensures visitors a future of travel which is safe, secure, seamless and provides an authentic and meaningful experience across the journey.

According to Dr. Mausoom, various countries greatly approve of negative border PCR testing, as a Russian airline started air operations to the Maldives with the reveal of the announcement.

Eligible travel and tourism establishments such as hotels, restaurants, airlines, cruise lines, tour operators, attractions, short term rentals, transportation and airports will be able to use the stamp as long as the health and hygiene protocols, outlined by WTTC, have been implemented.



IN THE NEWS

# Ooredoo Maldives Launches Destination Marketing Campaign “Visit Maldives Now”

Ooredoo Maldives, together with Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC), Tourism Ministry and Orca Media Group, has launched a destination marketing campaign “Visit Maldives Now” reaching its international network of over 117 million people across 10 countries.



Ooredoo’s global network of customers will get the chance to discover picturesque content of the paradise destination, which will be shared on Ooredoo social media platforms and its various other partnered media platforms from around the globe. Travellers will also be given the chance to win hotel stays and gifts by interacting and sharing the posts.

Thoyyib Mohamed, Managing Director at MMPRC stated: “We are pleased to be a part of the Ooredoo Maldives destination

marketing campaign ‘Visit Maldives Now’. The success of this exciting campaign will further strengthen visibility of Maldives on the map and promote our beautiful country worldwide, enticing tourists to visit amidst the reopening of borders. Our country is a “safe haven” for tourists, with a lot of stringent measures in place to ensure the safety of everyone.”

Najib Khan, Managing Director & CEO of Ooredoo Maldives stated: “Across the globe, Ooredoo continues to utilise its

strengths and resources to benefit the communities within which we exist. The impact of the global pandemic on the local tourism sector has been felt by families across the nation, and we are honored to join countrywide efforts to restore the tourism industry in the Maldives and thus the livelihood of many, with an exciting destination marketing campaign that will promote this beautiful country across our global network.”

The “Visit Maldives Now” campaign is

aimed to kick start Maldives tourism at a fast pace and bring back the sunny side of life. The campaign will be carried out from September 2020, through to early 2021.

With the unprecedented situation that arose due to the pandemic, MMPRC has been adapting and shifting marketing activities to digital platforms for enhanced destination marketing. Maldives reopened borders to all nationalities from July 15, 2020.

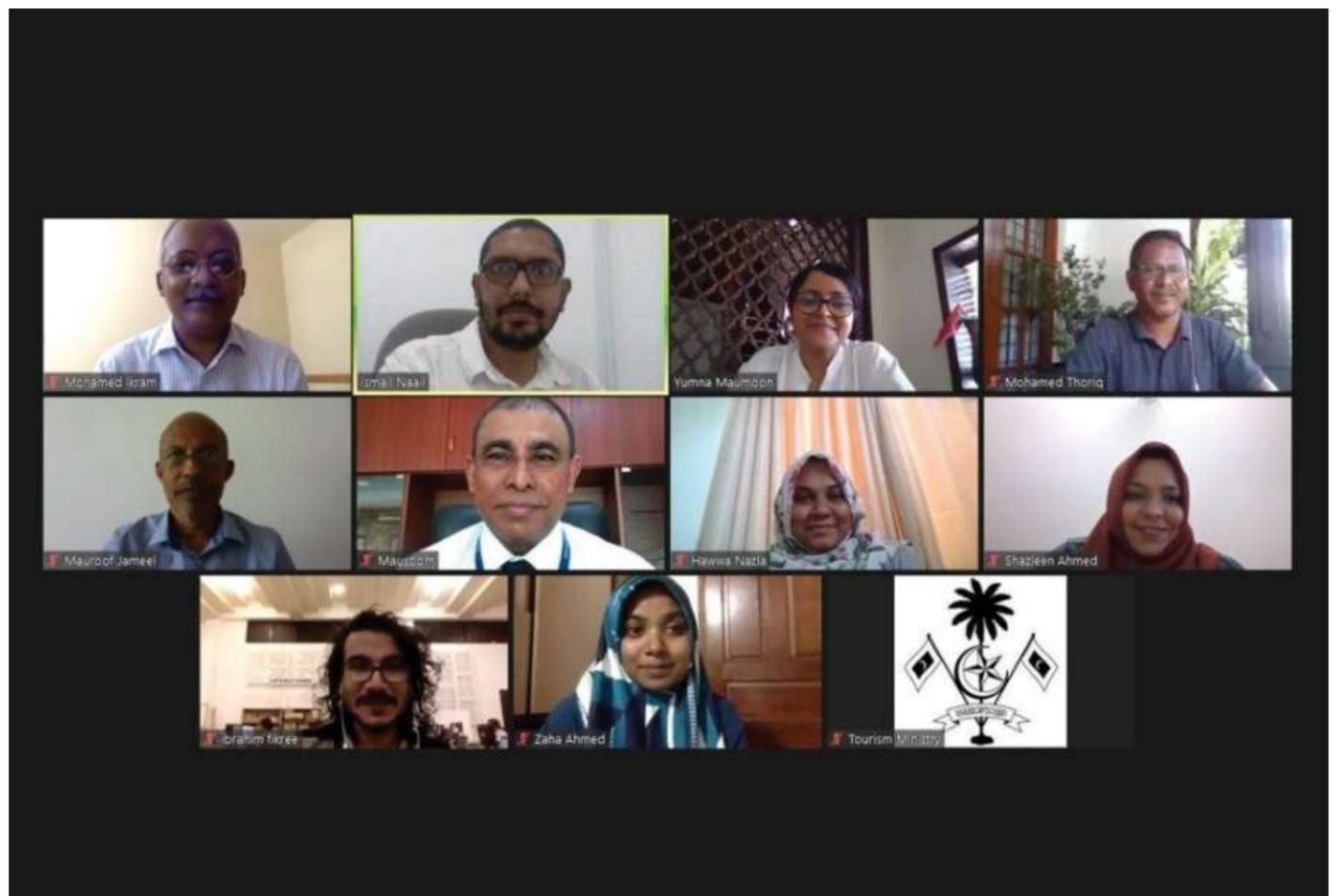
## Discussion Held to Promote Cultural Tourism

Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Arts, Culture and Heritage have held a discussion to promote cultural and ecotourism of the Maldives in the ‘new normal’.

Minister of Tourism Hon. Dr. Abdulla Mausoom and Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage Hon. Yumna Maumoon participated in the virtual meeting. Both Ministers shared opinion on the challenges faced by the local artists working in the tourism industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a tweet, Ministry of Tourism stated that they are “committed to encourage and facilitate the development of cultural and ecotourism products across the Maldives” as well as increasing the linkage of tourism benefits to island communities.

In a collaborative effort, both ministries have been working to promote tourism despite the temporary halt in activities during the pandemic, said Ismail Naail Nasheed, Director of Communications, Cultural Ministry. He also emphasized on the beneficial aspects of promoting cultural tourism in the island communities. The local guest houses are expected to profit most from this strategic move.



# Minister of Tourism Inaugurates Maldives Border Miles

The Minister of Tourism, Hon. Dr. Abdulla Mausoom has inaugurated the Maldives Border Miles programme, during a special virtual ceremony held to mark the 2020 World Tourism Day. Aimed to boost tourism in the Maldives, this will be the first of its kind loyalty programme developed in the entire world. The programme will be officially implemented on December 1, 2020.



The Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Maldives Airports Company Limited Gordon Andrew Stewart stated: “Maldives Border Miles program is an innovative way to attract global travellers to the Maldives. To support this, we are focused on our passengers and staff’s health. We have taken a number of steps to assure that Velana International Airport is a safe airport, for all our travellers. We recently attained the Airport Industry Association; ACI International Health Accreditation certification. This certificate recognizes the steps we have implemented to ensure we have all the required health and safety measures in our airport to assure passengers of their safety, while travelling through the airport.”

Maldives Border Miles is a three-tiered loyalty programme for tourists. Those who enrol will earn points based on the number of visits and duration of stay, with additional points awarded for visits on celebrate special occasions. The three categories of the programme include: Aida (bronze tier), Antara (silver tier) and Abaarana (gold tier). Each tier is defined by a set variety of rewards, services or benefits, which increase in value as members progress.

Maldives Border Miles is a tourism promotional programme initiated by Maldives Immigration, and developed with joint stakeholders who joined the World Tourism Day ceremony; the Ministry of Tourism, Maldives Marketing and Public Relations

Corporation (MMPRC) and Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL).

Minister Dr. Mausoom stated: “The Maldives Border Miles programme will increase the popularity of Maldives as a tourist destination and provide a path for more marketing and advertising opportunities. In addition, I think that this will further enhance the popularity gained in the key markets of Maldives tourism.”

Speaking at the ceremony, the Controller General of Immigration Mohamed Ahmed Hussain stated: “The hotel reception is not where the tourists begin their holiday. Their awaited journey begins from the welcoming smile of the immigration officer at the border, which indeed narrates the initial chapter of a memorable vacation. And with the introduction of Maldives Border Miles, we are prepared to welcome them with privileges and facilitate an experience like never before.”

Following the launch of the programme, Managing Director of MMPRC Thoyyib Mohamed stated: “Our sincere hope is that this program aids in increasing the destination presence and produces a beneficial impact on the tourism industry, as well as increase the tourist arrival rate in the future. We look forward to its successful implementation in the approaching days.”

With the introduction of the Maldives Border Miles program, it is expected that tourism will boost considerably as it is an added advantage in promoting Maldives.

The year 2019 was a remarkable one in the history of Maldives’ tourism, with a ground-breaking record of 1.7 million tourist arrivals to the country. The year 2020 started off with more diversified and aggressive marketing activities, and a target of reaching 2 million tourist arrivals by the end of the year. However, due to the ongoing global pandemic, the Maldives closed its borders on March 27, 2020. As the tourism industry accounts for the majority of foreign exchange earnings, it was majorly hit due to the stringent measures taken to curb the spread of COVID-19.

After almost four months since the suspension of on-arrival tourist visas, the tourism industry reopened on July 15, 2020, with enhanced precautionary measures against COVID-19. A safe tourism guideline was issued by the Ministry of Tourism, along with a certification programme to ensure the safety and hygiene standards of all tourism facilities. Resorts and liveboards have resumed operations, whereas guest houses on inhabited islands will resume operations on October 15, 2020.





image credit: visitmaldives.com



image credit: ajarimages.online



image credit: The islandchief

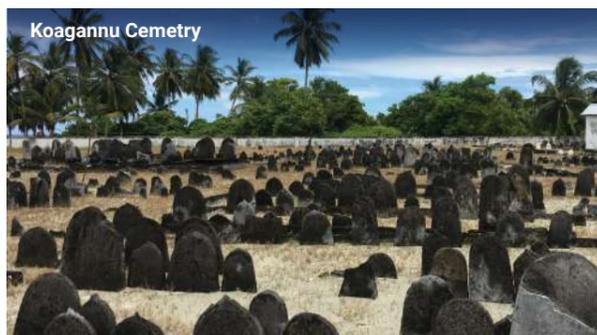


image credit: theislandlogic.com

# The Ultimate Maldives Travel Bucket List



image credit: diveadvisor.com



image credit: diveadvisor.com



image credit: cokessurfcampmaldives.com



image credit: travelcentremaldives.com



image credit: surfatoll.com



image credit: husnoo-hedhika.business.site

## NATURAL

- Addu Nature Park (Addu City)
- Ranin Hanaa Fengandu (Hithadhoo, Addu City)
- Fuvahmulah Nature Park (Fuvahmulah City)
- Kelaa (Haa Alif Atoll)
- Thoddoo (Alif Alif Atoll)
- Paree Fengandu (Gan, Laamu Atoll)
- Rakeedhoo
- Rinbudhoo
- Dhigurah
- Havitta

## CULTURAL/HISTORICAL

- Islamic Centre (Malé)
- Hukuru Miskiy (Grand Friday Mosque - Malé)
- Munnaaru (Malé)
- Malé Eid Mosque
- Dharumavantha Rasgefaanu Miskiy
- Bihuroazu Kamanaa Miskiy
- Sultan Park
- National Museum
- Muliaage (Malé)
- Medhuziyaariy (Malé)
- Utheemu Ganduvaru (Utheemu, Haa Alif Atoll)
- Ihavandhoo Friday Mosque
- Meedhoo Friday Mosque
- Fenfushi Friday Mosque
- Isdhoo Old Mosque
- Koagannu Cemetery (Hulhumeedhoo, Addu City)

## DIVE SITES

- Maaya Thila (North Ari Atoll)
- Ukulhas Thila (North Ari Atoll)
- Alimatha Jetty (Vaavu Atoll)
- Broken Rock (South Ari Atoll)
- Hanifaru Bay (Baa Atoll)
- Miyaruga Thila (North Ari Atoll)
- Kuda Rah Thila (South Ari Atoll)
- Kandooma Thila (South Malé Atoll)
- Okobe Thila (North Malé Atoll)
- Banana Reef (North Malé Atoll)
- Mushimasmigili Thila (North Ari Atoll)
- Manta Point (North Malé Atoll)
- Rainbow Reef (North Malé Atoll)
- Fotteyo Kandu (Vaavu Atoll)
- Victory Wreck (North Malé Atoll)
- Kuredu Express (Lhaviyani Atoll)
- Embudu Kandu (South Malé Atoll)
- Fesdu Lagoon (North Malé Atoll)

## SURF SPOTS

- |                                     |                                      |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lhoi's     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta Point | <input type="checkbox"/> Mikado        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jailbreaks | <input type="checkbox"/> Natives     | <input type="checkbox"/> Isdhoo        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Riptides   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sultans     | <input type="checkbox"/> Finnimas      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chickens   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yin Yang    | <input type="checkbox"/> Beacons       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cokes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Tsunami's   | <input type="checkbox"/> Castaways     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guru's     | <input type="checkbox"/> Mahibadhoo  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tiger Stripes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ninjas     | <input type="checkbox"/> Malik's     | <input type="checkbox"/> Shangri-La    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honky's    | <input type="checkbox"/> Muli        | <input type="checkbox"/> Voodoo's      |

## FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS

- Hithaanee Season
- Eid al-Adha
- Eid ul-Fitr

## SPECIAL INTEREST

- Sinamalé Bridge (Malé)
- Southernmost Point (Gan, Addu City)
- Walk 80 Islands

## LOCAL FOOD & DISHES

- Garudhiya
- Bambukeyo Baiy
- Maskuroolhi
- Hedhikaa
- Aluvi Boakibaa
- Saagu Bondibaiy
- Disk Mas-huni
- Masbaiy and Thelli Rihaakuru
- Kandu Kukulhu Riha



# WTM London and Travel Forward to be Held Virtually in November 2020

World Travel Market (WTM) 2020 has been announced to be held from November 9 to 11, 2020.



of travel trade professionals from around the globe will still be able to meet and do business in an extensive range of virtual sessions, to help the industry recover, rebuild and innovate.”

WTM Virtual will offer delegates the chance to arrange one-to-one virtual meetings to do business, attend conference sessions and roundtables, take part in speed networking and more. The virtual show will also see an investment summit in partnership with ITIC – International Tourism & Investment Conference – and a new Marketing Forum and masterclass workshop in partnership with The Five Percent. The event will have four virtual theatres to host webinars and debates, including Responsible Tourism.

Due to the continuing travel restrictions, imposition of quarantine requirements and local lockdowns across Europe, the events will be a fully virtual experience.

physical show, but the increasing number of travel restrictions and the uncertainty around the world means it will be impractical for many overseas visitors to attend in person.

WTM London’s Senior Director Simon Press said: “Sadly, this year will be the first time since we launched WTM London in 1980 that there will be no live event. We have worked tirelessly to organise a

“Additionally, there remains uncertainty around business events and conferences being allowed to take place in the UK. The official deadline for this decision being the 1st October. However, thousands

Furthermore, a virtual version of Travel Forward is being shaped up and will combine a virtual exhibition, free virtual conference sessions and speed networking for start-ups to meet investors. With the theme “Resilience, Innovation, Response”, Travel Forward Virtual will add a technology-based approach in supporting the recovery of the travel and tourism industry.



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## EVENTS &amp; AWARDS

# Astrabon Signs as Main Partner of International Maldives Travel Market 2020

Astrabon Pvt Ltd has signed as the Main Partner of the International Maldives Travel Market (IMTM) 2020 for the third consecutive year.



IMTM 2020 is scheduled to be held virtually on October 28 and 29, 2020. It is the first of its kind concept of online travel and trade fair in the Maldives.

For the last three years of the IMTM Travel and Trade Fair, Astrabon has played a huge role in the success of the event sharing their valuable insight of the industry and experiences. The partnership between

the two companies has solidified to work towards a better future for the Maldivian Tourism Industry.

IMTM 2020 is set to be held in a unique virtual environment that connects local accommodation providers of the Maldives (Resorts, Hotels, Guesthouses, Liveboards, Dive Centers, Local Tour Operators and Travel Agents) with international buyers (Tour Operators, Travel Agents,

Destination Management Companies, and PR Companies) from around the world. The event has been organised with the aim to assist in the gradual reopening of the travel, tourism, and hospitality sector in the Maldives to new and existing markets. It further creates an avenue for resorts, hotels, and guesthouses to increase occupancy, thereby strengthening the government's efforts to rebuild the tourism sector of the country following the impacts of the pandemic. IMTM equips all stakeholders with the necessary tools to Reconnect, Revive, and Grow businesses.

CEO of Astrabon and Capital Travel & Tours Yoosuf Riffath, commending the initiative of IMTM, stated: "I am confident that with IMTM's innovative initiative, the Maldivian tourism sector will revivify tremendously."

Honourable Minister of Tourism Dr. Abdulla Mausoom stated: "Moving forward gives us an opportunity to build back better for the tourism sector, to rethink its contribution; it is an opportunity to work towards more resilient and inclusive tourism, to ensure benefits are shared by all."

IMTM fair has consistently contributed to the government's efforts to build the country's tourism sector and market the Maldives as a tourism destination across the globe. It works towards building a sustainable tourism model in the Maldives that equally promotes both luxury and local island tourism, whereby creates opportunities for the communities all over the Maldives.

Established in 2002, Astrabon operates under Capital Group, a network of companies owned and managed by Capital Travel & Tours. Astrabon is a leading hotel and resort supplier known for providing high-quality kitchenware and F&B-related products to resorts throughout the Maldives. Astrabon's product portfolio includes glassware, tableware, flatware, pastry ware, and kitchenware. The company is the exclusive distributor of a number of top European brands including Pujadas and Arcos from Spain, Bron Coucke and MATFER from France, Durobor from Belgium, Felix Solingen, Glesser Messer, GCS, and Neumarker from Germany, Itagli from Italy, Athena from the UK, as well as Tango from Australia. Astrabon also provides room appliances and products related to housekeeping

## Maldives Participates in Virtual PATA Travel Mart 2020

Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) is taking part in one of the longest-running pan-regional travel shows organized by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). PATA Travel Market (PTM) 2020 is held on a new, fully virtual platform. The fair started on September 23, 2020, in conjunction with Sichuan International Travel Expo, and concluded on September 27, 2020.

During the five days of 2020 Virtual PTM, MMPRC connected with several qualified buyers through network lounges, interactive games and giveaway sessions. Furthermore, the show highlights the latest updates from participating destinations and corporations, alongside the PTM's 'forums' section of the event. These activities are useful in providing beneficial insights on travel recovery with live presentations and panels

which could be utilized into future marketing strategies in the tourism industry, to strengthen the image of Maldives as a destination. The second day will include the PATA Global Awards Presentation to acknowledge accomplishments within the Asia Pacific region's travel and trade.

In order to maintain destination presence in the markets, MMPRC took part in the PATA Dream to Travel Festival, held from June 22 to July 17, 2020. The purpose of this was meeting experts in the field and to showcase the products to the Pacific Asian Region. MMPRC also conducted several activities including the Rediscover Maldives Webinar Series which included 4 sessions that were targeted towards giving updated information about the destination to travel trade and media across different regions. The overall aim of participating in these virtual events is



to maintain the constant efforts through digital platforms and rebuild the confidence in the destination as a 'safe haven' for tourists.

Asia Pacific has always been an important region for the Maldives in terms of tourist arrivals, as some of the highest arrivals are from this

region. This includes China, India, Japan and Australia positioned in the top 10 markets for Maldives during December 2019. While some of the countries have maintained their position during the earlier period of 2020, others are expected to grow in the future when traveling is resumed to a normal status.

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BON APPÉTIT

# DECONSTRUCTED ITALIAN CANNOLI



Chef Elisa Cigolini has been the Pastry Sous Chef at Joali Maldives since October 2019. Her creations are modern and inspired from her different various in Italy, the Middle East and the Maldives. She started her work experience at the mere age of 16 in a 5-star hotel in her city Torino. She's since worked in various places around Italy; Toscana, Piemonte and Cortina D'Ampezzo for 3 years, discovering the local ingredients. She also spent 3 years in Doha, until she finally landed in the Maldives. Chef Elisa loves experiencing different cultures and ingredients to improve her knowledge, appreciating the original taste of the products, plus, mixing them together to get a brand-new combination of ingredients.

"In this dessert I kept the traditional flavors of the Sicilian Cannoli, but in a modern key. It is a dessert that reminds me of the summer vacation, sea and sun. Something that, here in Maldives, we have every day. This dessert is an Italian classic dessert that needs to be tasted at least once in your life."

## Ingredients

### Cannoli dough

Flour	200 g
Butter	20 g
Sugar	20 g
Cocoa powder	½ tsp
Water	40 g
Egg	1 pc
White vinegar	10 g
Orange zest	½ pcs
Cinnamon powder	½ tsp
Salt	1 pinch

### Ricotta cream

Ricotta cheese	500 g
Icing sugar	180 g

### Chocolate Chantilly

Dark chocolate	300 g
Whipping cream	500 g

## Method

### Cannoli dough

- Get ready with all the ingredients and start by placing the flour in a large bowl. Add the sugar, cinnamon, cocoa powder, salt and orange zest. Mix with a spoon. Make a well in the center and add room temperature butter, egg, water and white vinegar. Combine all the ingredients in the center and gradually incorporate the flour in order to form a dough. Using your hands, knead until a dough is formed. When the dough is homogeneous and smooth (about 5 minutes' work), make a loaf, wrap it in a cling film, and let it rest in the fridge for about 30 minutes. (Alternatively, get ready with all the ingredients and place all of it a mixing bowl. Let it mix for approx. 3 minutes, until a dough is formed, homogeneous and smooth. At that time make a loaf. Wrap it in a cling film, then let it rest in the fridge for about 30 minutes).
- Now take out the Sicilian cannoli dough from the fridge and roll it out with a rolling pin up to a thickness of about 3mm. Using a cutter or just a knife cut the dough into your favorite shape.
- Fill a deep pot halfway with vegetable oil. When the oil is hot, fry 3 or 4 cannoli dough at a time until golden. You may have to turn them to ensure that all sides are evenly fried. Remove from the oil, drain on paper towels, and let cool.

### Ricotta cream

- Strain the ricotta cheese over night and the next day mix it with the icing sugar. If you want the mix creamier pass the ricotta through a sieve.

### Chocolate Chantilly

- Warm the whipping cream and pour it slowly into the dark chocolate. Mix it until the chocolate is totally melted. Cover it with cling film (must touch the cream) and keep it in chiller for 3 hours.

### Deconstructed Italian Cannoli

- Take the Chocolate Chantilly out from the chiller and whip it. Place the mix in a piping bag with a medium tip.
- Dust the cannoli dough with icing sugar.
- Take a clean plate and plate it as you wish with all the ingredients.



Courtesy of  
Pastry Sous Chef Elisa Cigolini  
Joali Maldives



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# Frankly Speaking

**With the reopening of Maldivian borders on July 15, 2020, there has been a rise in the number of guests who wish for longer stays. Would it be a challenge if guests are not allowed to have split stays in the country such as Resort-Liveaboard and Guesthouse-Liveaboard?**



**Ahmed Afrah**  
President  
National Boating Association of Maldives (NBAM)

*We are seeing long-stay numbers since the reopening – which is good. In order to further encourage long stays, it is crucial that we introduce split stays combining different sectors of tourism including Resorts, Liveaboards and Guesthouses.*



**Sharda Abdul Gaffoor**  
Head of Safari Operations  
Voyages Maldives

*It is very difficult. As most of the customer who book safari boat trips, always book a resort or guesthouse for them to relax before going back home. That is how most of our cruising trips run. We've lost couple of surf trips due to this issue.*



**Nimad Ibrahim**  
Managing Director  
Plumeria Maldives

*That would be best. However, I believe that during these “new normal” holidays, travellers will understand the challenges. And due to that, it will not affect their stay in any sort of way.*



**Alexander Rausch**  
Founder and Managing Director  
Eco Blue

*We operate Blueshark One and EcoBlue liveaboards and we have already had several cancellations due to this regulation. We don't understand why it's allowed to split between resorts but not with liveaboards. Since all travellers to the Maldives are required to have a negative test, regulations like this should be eased for all in the industry.*



**Alexander Bryant**  
Managing Director  
Emperor Divers Maldives

*Well, it's not a challenge, but of course it's always attractive to have more options.*



**Donatella Telli (Dodi)**  
Managing Director  
Albatross Top Boat

*For sure, it can have an effect. But because of the situation, it is probably better not to mix.*



**Aboobakuru Mohamed**  
Director  
Blue Shark

*It is a challenge. I have had a few cancellations as a result of this. I am hoping that the government will access the likelihood of allowing split stays for guests between Liveaboards and Resorts and vice-versa. Even if allowed, I am not yet willing to engage in Guesthouse & Liveaboard split stays.*



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# Daiya Devilled



**Fiery Goodness in a Bowl**