Discovering *The Maldives*

The Maldives is a tropical paradise in the Indian Ocean, known for its crystal-clear waters, white sandy beaches, and vibrant coral reefs. Comprising over 1,000 islands, it is a popular destination for luxury resorts, water sports, and underwater experiences like diving and snorkelling. The Maldives offers a serene and romantic atmosphere, ideal for indulgent relaxation in a tranquil setting. Its diverse marine life and stunning natural beauty make it a dream destination for nature lovers.





Visa Process

UK, Australian and New Zealand citizens do not require a visa to visit the Maldives for stays of up to 30 days for tourism purposes. A free tourist visa on arrival is granted at the airport, provided you have a valid passport, a return or onward ticket, and sufficient funds for your stay. If you plan to stay longer or for other purposes, you may need to apply for the appropriate visa. Always check for the latest travel regulations before your trip.

Currency

The currency used in the Maldives is the Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR), but US dollars are widely accepted at resorts and tourist areas.

Plug Sockets

The Maldives uses Type D and Type G plug sockets, which are the same as those used in the UK. The standard voltage is 230V, with a frequency of 50Hz. If your devices use a different plug type, you'll need an adapter, and if they are not compatible with the voltage, a voltage converter may be necessary.

Gratuities

Tipping in the Maldives is appreciated but not mandatory. If no service charge is included:

Restaurants: Tip 5-10%.

Hotel staff: Around USD 1-2 for housekeeping or bellboys.

Tour guides/boat crew: Around USD 5-10 per day.

Always check your bill to see if a service charge is already included.

Check-in Process

Check-in times at hotels in the Maldives typically start from 2:00 PM. However, this can vary depending on the hotel, so it's a good idea to confirm with the property. If you arrive earlier, many hotels can store your luggage until your room is ready.

Credit Cards

Yes, credit cards are widely accepted in the Maldives, especially at resorts, hotels, and larger establishments. Major credit cards like Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are commonly used. However, smaller guesthouses, local shops, or remote islands might prefer cash, so it's a good idea to carry some Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR) or US dollars for such places.



The Maldives enjoys a tropical climate, with warm and sunny weather year-round. The temperature typically ranges from 25°C to 31°C (77°F to 88°F). There are two main seasons:



Nov - Apr

This is the best time to visit, with plenty of sunshine, calm seas, and little rain.



May - Oct

Occasional rain showers and higher humidity, with more rainfall, especially in the southwest monsoon period.





Cultural Norms

In the Maldives, some key cultural norms include:

Respect for Religions: The Maldives is a Muslim country, so it's important to dress modestly, especially when visiting local islands or mosques.

Avoid revealing clothing and cover your shoulders and knees.

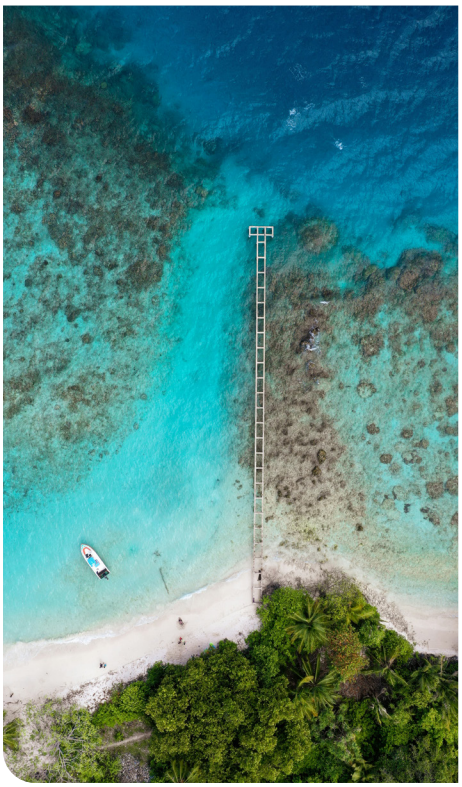
Public Behaviours: Public displays of affection are discouraged. Keep your interactions respectful and reserved in public spaces.

Respecting Local Traditions: Local customs and traditions should be observed. For example, always remove shoes when entering a home or mosque.

Right Hand Etiquette: The right hand is used for giving and receiving items, as the left hand is considered less polite.

Alcohol Consumption: Alcohol is only served in resorts, bars, and designated areas. It is illegal to drink in public or on local islands.

Tipping: Tipping is not compulsory but appreciated, especially for hotel staff and tour guides.



Activity Level

The Maldives may not be suitable for guests with mobility difficulties or disabilities due to the use of speedboat transfers and uneven ground on the resort islands.

If you have booked a water villa, you should have good upper body strength, as the steps leading out of the water are steep and not sloped.



Dining

In the Maldives, try these local specialties:

Mas Huni: Tuna, coconut, onion, and flatbread for breakfast.

Garudhiya: Fish soup served with rice, lime, and chili.

Fihunu Mas: Grilled fish with rice and spices.

Rihaakuru: Thick fish broth, served with rice.

Bajiya: Fried pastries with fish and coconut filling.

Hedhikaa: Small fried snacks, often enjoyed with tea.

Kulhi Boakibaa: Maldivian tuna cake made with rice and spices.

What to pack

Clothing: Light, breathable, comfortable clothes for warm weather.

Swimwear: For the beach, pool, and water activities.

Cover-Up: For walking around resorts and visiting local islands.

Flip-flops and Sandals: Ideal for the beach and resort areas.

Sun Protection: Sunscreen, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat.

Waterproof Bag: For protecting your electronics or valuables during water activities.

Light Jacket: For cooler evenings or air-conditioned spaces.

Insect Repellent: To protect from mosquitoes.

Snorkelling Gear: If you plan to snorkel (though many resorts provide this).

Chargers and Adaptors: For your electronics, especially a UK-style adaptor.

Pack light, as the Maldives is a tropical destination, and ensure you have essentials for both beach and resort activities.



Emergency

In the Maldives, here are the emergency telephone numbers you can call for assistance:

Police: 119
Medical Emergency: 102
Fire and Rescue: 118

