

# Hotelier

M A L D I V E S



## THE MALDIVES ALTERNATIVE; BUYING LOCAL

HOTELIER.MV | VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 54

**HOTEL REVIEW**  
LE MÉRIDIEN MALDIVES  
RESORT & SPA  
MAKES ITS DEBUT

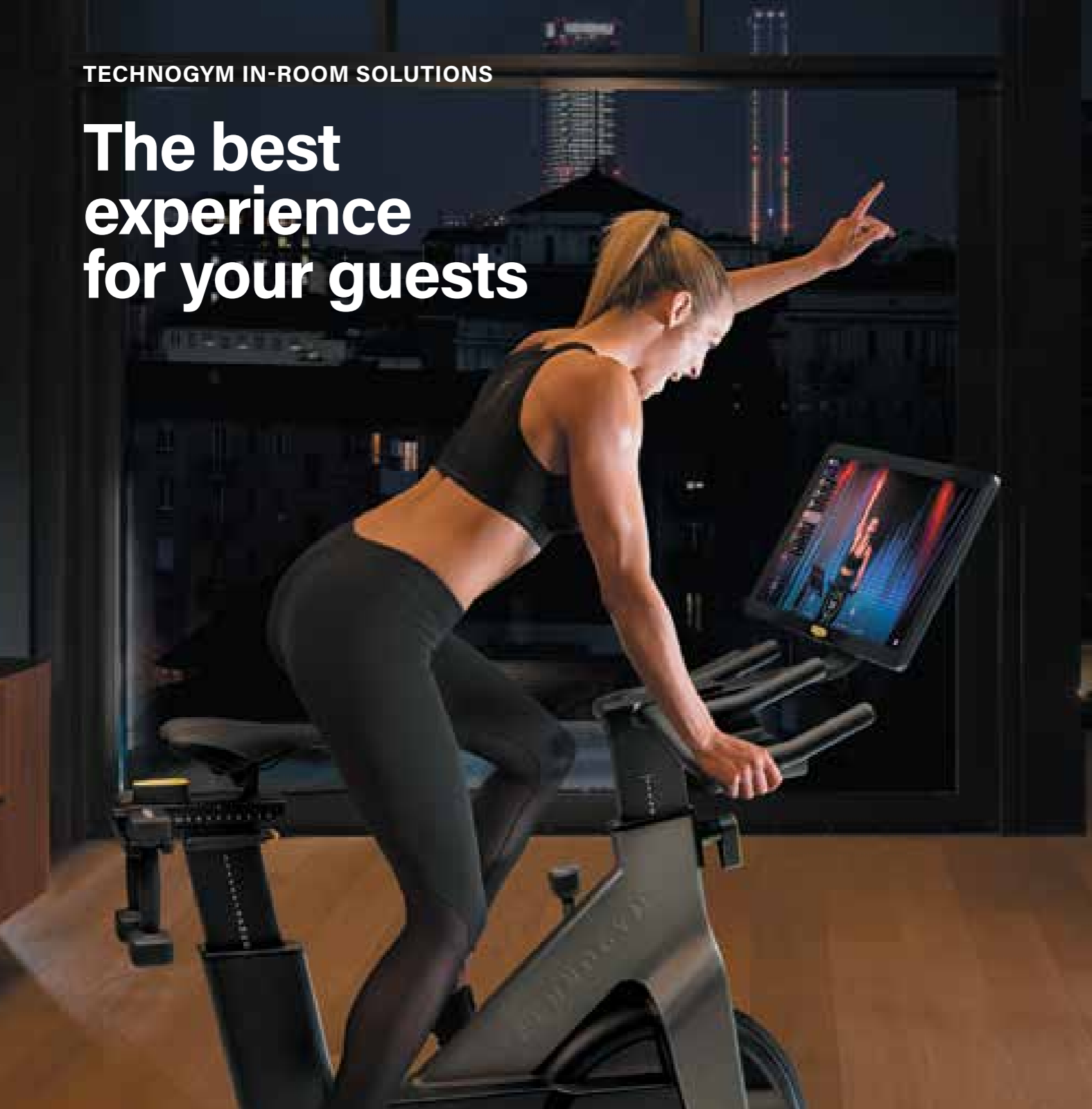
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PATINA MALDIVES,  
FARI ISLANDS

**THE GM'S VIEW**  
EMILIO FORTINI,  
SHERATON MALDIVES  
FULL MOON RESORT  
& SPA

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MALDIVIAN SUSHI  
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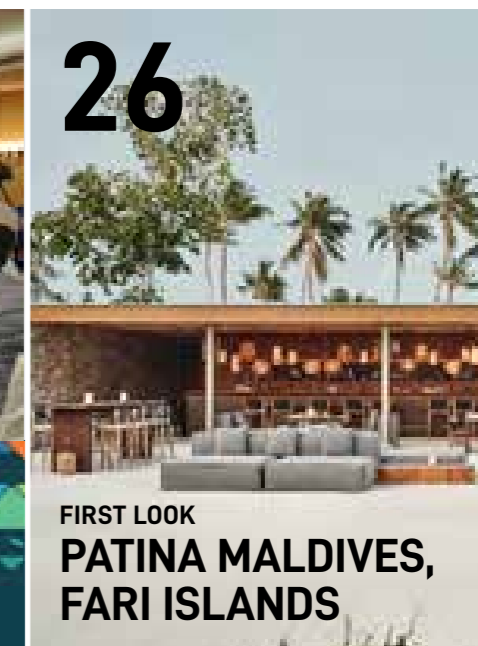
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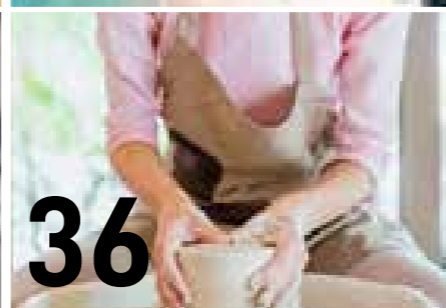
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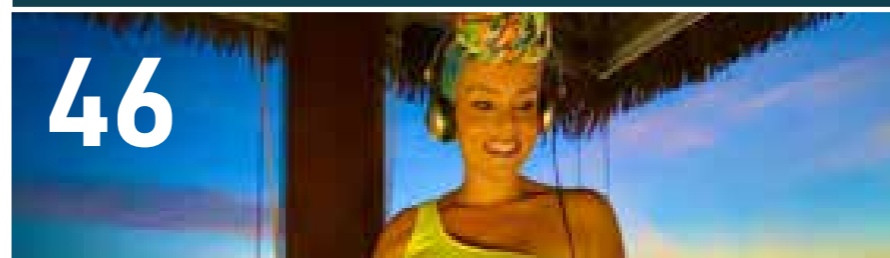
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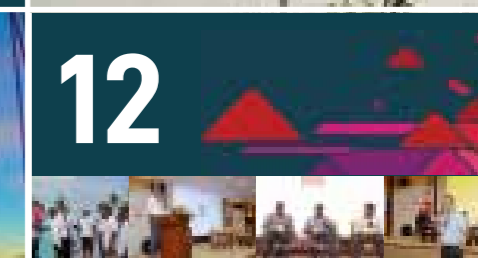
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# The Maldives Alternative; Buying Local

Dear Readers,

Welcome to issue 54 of Hotelier Maldives.

The Maldives is blessed with abundant natural beauty and is now a world leading holiday destination. The country is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the tourism industry. At a recent ceremony held at Kurumba Maldives – the very first resort to open in the country on the 3rd of October 1972 – Maldives president Ibrahim Mohamed Solih announced the country will now begin to celebrate the day as the National Tourism Day. The ceremony also saw the launch of a video song promoting Maldives (sung in the local language Dhivehi) and the start of a countdown to the 50th anniversary Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Maldives tourism industry throughout 2023.

While we are all enjoying a positive momentum in post-pandemic recovery (in the Maldives), in this issue we look at a more nuanced aspect of the tourism economy. Other than the beauty of the country, how much are we contributing to the hospitality industry of the Maldives; in service as well as the goods required to keep a hotel operating throughout the year with over average occupancies? Particularly we look at locally produced brands that are now making inroads into the hotel supply market. Needless to say, we are still at the very nascent stages of catering to tourist demand in terms of the requirement from a resort or hotel supplier. For one, we are not manufacturing much of the F&B produce, building materials or engineering products in the quantities and regulatory required for operational resorts and hotels. The good thing is many private and public initiatives are underway to increase the local production of at least some items.

We have also dedicated issue 54 to the Hotelier Maldives GM Forum '21. We were able to organise the event after missing out on 2020 due to COVID-19. The response from delegates and sponsors was more than we expected and we have shared some highlights from the event in this issue.

In our regular segments, we have reviewed Le Méridien Maldives Resort & Spa, a 141-villa property that opened in Lhaviyani Atoll on 1st September this year. In the GM's view segment, we feature Emilio Fortini, general manager at Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa and Chairman, Marriott International Business Council. One of the most experienced GMs currently working in the Maldives, he also gave a keynote speech at this year's GM Forum.

Moving on, we have Farsa Saeed profiled in the Women in Hospitality segment. And our contributor Janet Smailes profiles Maldivian sushi chefs currently making a mark in Maldivian resorts.

In the Buyer's Guide, we have featured Good Food Maldives in the Suppliers You Should Know segment and have reviewed Lift E-Foil, the latest sensation in water sports and represented in the Maldives by Ocean Group.

If you would like to comment or publish an opinion article, please email them to [mamduh@hoteliermaldives.com](mailto:mamduh@hoteliermaldives.com) or [info@perspective.mv](mailto:info@perspective.mv)

Sincerely,



Mohamed Mamduh  
Managing Editor



# Hotelier

MALDIVES

Hotelier Maldives  
Volume 8, Issue No: 54

**EDITORIAL**  
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## International Housekeeping Week Concludes

September 12-18, 2021 marked the annual, International Housekeepers and Environmental Services Week. A week dedicated to recognising the hard work of a group who plays an important part of any property, but who are often hidden in the background.

Housekeepers have always worked tirelessly to ensure rooms and public areas are kept clean and tidy, whilst delivering an excellent service and welcome experience that the guests expect, often with that unexpected personal touch which exceeds expectations and leaves the guests with Instagram worthy experiences.

The global pandemic has meant that they have all taken on more responsibilities and commitments to cleanliness to enable them to support the health and wellbeing of their colleagues and guests by ensuring that rooms and public areas have the enhanced cleaning standards that are now expected.

Thanks, and celebrations for the hardworking housekeeping teams have been commonplace

across the globe and within the Maldives, with properties providing a program of activities designed to acknowledge and reward the dedication of those who are often taken for granted.

Housekeeping teams have been enjoying the recognition, participating in a full week of fun activities that have included football matches, BBQ diners, movie nights, and a variety of competitions, including the hotly contested Bed Making Competition.

Housekeepers across the Maldives have been showing off their skill and dexterity for making a smooth seamless bed in a blink of an eye and then decorating it in a manner that is as individual and creative as they are.

Towel origami from the now familiar swans to a whole host of animals and creations, ingenuity only hampered by the scope of the laundry basket.

Bed art where a simple bed is transformed into a colourful



canvas depicting an event, welcome message or just a sentiment to make someone's day. Innovativeness and creativeness coupled with a skill worthy of any gallery and a bed is transformed into an imaginative work of art.

Competitions were held at Ayada, Oblu, Hudhuranfushi, Sun Siyam Iru Veli and Iti Maafushivaru to name a few, with bed art ranging from the clean, sleek and stylish to full floral displays, with some unique and amazingly well depicted, intricate resort maps.

All beautifully crafted, showing the depth of artistic talent hidden in the housekeeping wings, that is usually only seen by individual guests and rarely gets the chance to be showcased in an open forum.

Not to be outdone the Pastry department have been concocting some equally creative and elaborate cakes to provide fitting and tasty celebrations to round off the events and allow the housekeeping department to be celebrated by all.

## Six Senses to Add Kanuhura as Second Branded Property in the Maldives



Six Senses will add Kanuhura in Lhaviyani Atoll as second branded property in the Maldives, starting in late 2022. This is Six Senses' second collaboration with Singapore-based Hotel Properties Limited (HPL).

A 40-minute seaplane flight from Velana International Airport, Six Senses Kanuhura will offer 80 private overwater, beach and spacious family

villas offering sunset or sunrise views. Encompassing three private islands – two deserted neighbouring islands and Kanuhura itself – this laid-back retreat is the epitome of white sands, turquoise lagoons, lush tropical greenery and gently swaying palm trees to doze under.

"Six Senses Kanuhura is a unique opportunity to combine our

three best-loved ideals in life: sustainability, wellness and locally themed experiences," says Six Senses Chief Executive Officer Neil Jacobs. "By day, your feet will be sandy and your hair salty. By night, surrender to the spa and your skin will be smoothed, your soul will be soothed, and your mood will be as sparkling as your sundowner."

Kanuhura has already been recognized as the Best Luxury Resort in the Maldives at the Luxury Lifestyle Awards and Best of the Best in the TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice. Sensitive enhancements are planned over the coming months including an upgrade of the overwater villas to include private pools, new family suites, new dining concepts and a pioneering wellness offering – all with the Six Senses brand's sustainability ethos in mind.

HPL owns 41 hotels & Resorts in 15 countries with eight in the Maldives. Stephen Lau, Executive

Director of HPL and Chairman of HPL's Hotel Division, added: "We are delighted to collaborate with Six Senses on our latest acquisition in the Republic of Maldives. Kanuhura is one of the few pristine islands blessed with amazing natural beauty. We are confident that Six Senses will be able to bring to Kanuhura what it has achieved at its sister resort, Six Senses Laamu: a high degree of sustainable sophistication in a natural environment coupled with unparalleled service."

Until late 2022, the resort is available for bookings through [www.kanuhura-maldives.com](http://www.kanuhura-maldives.com) and [www.ihg.com](http://www.ihg.com), and guests can earn and spend IHG Rewards points and experience exclusive benefits as the resort joins the award-winning loyalty program.

## Crossroads Maldives Celebrates Second Anniversary



beach walk featuring retail, entertainment and dining outlets. The facilities include a 30-berth quay, complete with world-class amenities and exclusive concierge services, the Junior Beach Club and Camp, the Crossroads Event Hall, Maldives Discovery Centre and Marine Discovery Centre – the project's environmental and educational hub.

Tolga Unan, managing director of The Marina @ Crossroads and Hard Rock Hotel Maldives says "Now that we are on our second year of operations, we assure our valued customers that it will be even more exciting – thank you so much for your support for the past two years. Equally, thanks to my Team for their dedication and passion in delivering outstanding service. I am very positive that we will rise up strongly from this pandemic, and I truly look forward to continued success of Crossroads Maldives."

Crossroads Maldives, the country's first extraordinary multi-island and fully integrated leisure destination marks its second anniversary.

Crossroads Maldives opened its doors to guests in September

2019 featuring two lifestyle resorts – Hard Rock Hotel Maldives and SAii Lagoon Maldives – Curio Collection by Hilton®. Both resorts offer direct access to extensive facilities at The Marina @ Crossroads, an 800-metre lifestyle area and

## Maldives is back on the Flight Path for Brits

The Maldives is off the 'red list' and back on the 'to do list' for British travellers as the UK Government has announced a major overhaul to simplify the rules governing international travel.

The Transport Secretary Grant Shapps made an announcement yesterday that effectively freed up the red tape that has engulfed the UK travel sector for the past 18 months and dropped the Maldives from banned destinations list.

One of the questions that has been on everyone's lips is will there be inspired confidence in long haul destinations like the Maldives? The answer is yes.

The Maldives Tourism Minister Abdulla Mausoom tweeted in reaction to Shapps news: "You had your luggage packed and waited for ages... finally you can travel to Maldives with ease. Great Britain we are eager to welcome you back."

In a major relaxation of the rules, green and amber lists will now be merged and the number of countries on the red list will be

slashed. And from September 22, eight countries will be dropped from the red list, which requires hotel quarantine, including the Maldives.

The planned changes for the fully vaccinated arrive just in time for the half-term holidays which means wanderlust afflicted families may be inspired to book a long-haul destination. This is good news for the industry and travel to former 'red list' countries may become more popular. The single red list recognises the efforts of countries like the Maldives who have established vaccination schemes.

Furthermore, as of October 4, double immunised travellers will not require a pre-departure PCR test on arrival into the UK. The replacement of the PCR test on day two with a cheaper lateral flow test and scrapping the requirement to test before arrival back to the UK will save families money when travelling to long haul destinations like the Maldives. This may inspire those previously put off by the uncertainty of organising travel in this pandemic.



Considering all these changes, we may indeed see a significant boost to Maldives tourism as the UK market is welcomed. Indeed, many travel experts anticipate a 'large increase in bookings this weekend' for the Maldives, as reported in the Daily Mail.

Up until now, Maldives 'red list' status meant a hotel quarantine was expected upon return to the UK regardless of vaccination status, at a cost of over £2,200 for a solo traveller.

Over the past two years, Crossroads Maldives and its two stunning resorts have received a number of accolades for excellent service in luxury hospitality from some of the most reputable and renowned organisations around the world.

Following a temporary closure due to the pandemic, The Marina @ Crossroads has reopened to the public. Furthermore, Crossroads Maldives will welcome its third resort in 2023, SO/ Maldives. The project is a partnership between S Hotels & Resorts and Wai Eco World Developer to bring SO/, Accor's avant-garde lifestyle brand, to the Maldives.

# INDUSTRY LEADERS DISCUSS CHALLENGES AT HOTELIER MALDIVES GM FORUM 2021

HOTELIER MALDIVES

GM  
FORUM  
2021

The fifth edition of Hotelier Maldives GM Forum has come to a successful close. Over 90 delegates representing 50 hospitality brands attended the forum held at Paradise Island Resort, Maldives on 23rd September 2021.

This year's GM Forum discussed topics on the themes of airline connectivity, human resources, data-driven storytelling and destination marketing trends. The first keynote address was delivered by Dr Abdulla Mausoom, Maldives Minister of Tourism. He stressed the critical roles played by resort staff and regulatory agencies which were critical in reopening the country's borders for tourists. The second keynote address was delivered by Emilio Fortini, General Manager, Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa and Chairman, Marriott Business Council. The third and fourth keynotes were delivered by Rajesh Mehta, Director Enterprise, Ooredoo Maldives.

This year's GM Forum also saw three panel discussions that addressed pertinent issues in the hospitality industry. The first panel



discussed 'Connectivity in the New Normal'. Moderated by Ibrahim Saleem Bandhu, panelists included Mohamed Mihad, MD, Island Aviation Services Limited and Ahmed Maumoon, Deputy CEO, Manta Air.

The second panel discussed 'Trends in Destination Marketing', featuring Thooyib Waheed, MD, MMPRC / Visit Maldives and Abdulla Ghiyas, Chair, PATA Maldives. The panel was moderated by Shafraz Hafiz, Deputy Director, Digital Marketing and Social Media, Pulse Hotels & Resorts.

The third panel, looking at 'Human Resource Challenges' was moderated by Vaibhav Garg, Director for Talent and Culture, Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru Maldives and featured Zeenath Solih, Dean, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies, The Maldives National University and Adam Haleem, Director

of Programmes, Maldives Institute of Technology (MIT).

The Forum also featured two presentations: 'Data-driven Storytelling', by IDEaS Revenue Solutions (Singapore), and Training Needs Analysis of the Tourism Sector, by representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education, Maldives.

Throughout the day's proceedings, presentations were also made by sponsors of GM Forum 2021. Sponsors of GM Forum 2021 are: Title Sponsor; The Hawks Private Limited, Platinum Sponsors; Euro Marketing Pvt Ltd, Villa and Ooredoo Maldives. Gold Sponsors; Asia Group Trading and MAWC (Coca-Cola), Silver Sponsors; Bestbuy Maldives Pvt Ltd and Maldives Petroleum Link Pvt Ltd. Wellness Partner; Tropical Fitness Pvt Ltd, Technology Partner; Octopus Systems, and Destination Partner, MMPRC / Visit Maldives.

Participating resorts and hotel management companies included Accor, Coco Collection, Dhigali Maldives, JOALI BEING, The Somerset Hotel, Villa Hotels & Resorts, JEN Male' Maldives by Shangri-La, Kurumba Maldives, Kandooma Holding Pvt Ltd., Milaidhoo Maldives, Madifushi Private Island Maldives, Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru Maldives, One&Only Reethi Rah Maldives, Planhotel Hospitality Group, Pulse Hotels & Resorts, Rahaa Resort (MO Hotels & Resorts Pvt Ltd), Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resorts & Spa, Summer Island Maldives (Kaimoo Resorts & Hotels) and Taj Exotica Resort & Spa.



# GM FORUM '21; MALDIVES LOOKING TO A BUSY SEASON TO END THE YEAR

Panel Discussion on 'Trends in Destination Marketing', featuring Thooyib Mohamed of Visit Maldives and Abdulla Ghiyas of PATA Maldives Chapter at Hotelier Maldives GM Forum '21



Panelists Thooyib Waheed, MD, MMPC / Visit Maldives and Abdulla Ghiyas, Chair, PATA Maldives. Moderator of the panel: Shafraz Hafiz, Deputy Director, Digital Marketing and Social Media, Pulse Hotels & Resorts.

UK online searches for the Maldives have hit the roof since the announcement they were coming off the UK's travel red list.

Abdulla Ghiyas, Chair of PATA, Maldives Chapter, told delegates at the Hotelier Maldives GM conference on 23 September: "The number of searches for Maldives hotels and flights from UK was number five before the pandemic but now it is number one.

"There are more searches from UK because we have been dropped from the UK's red list and visitors don't have to quarantine any more on return."

He added that it is expected that, with travellers no longer having to quarantine upon their return, the UK will become a key market again for the Maldives.

As well as the UK, the Maldives is ready to welcome back Chinese tourists as their vaccination programme progresses.

Ghiyas said: "The country is at 70 per cent vaccination, so they want to travel again, while UK is at 65 per cent vaccinated and this will determine where they are going to travel again."

Thooyib Mohamed, Managing Director of the Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation (MMPC) and Visit Maldives, explained "We never lost focus on the Chinese market – keeping them engaged digitally during the

pandemic.

"China was number one market for us pre pandemic and if there was a possibility of opening the gates again, we would welcome them.

"China will bring more young independent solo travellers and families and millennials who want to travel."



Gordon Stewart, CEO and MD of MACL speaking at GM Forum 2021

"Travel insurance is going to play a huge role going forward.

"A lot of people have been concerned and want the best deal possible and the Maldives hotel and hospitality industry is ready to adapt.

"The Maldives has done extremely well to open its borders in such a small period of

time and has become one of the safest of destinations."

Now, the challenge is for the Maldives to cope with the influx of travellers eager to explore what it has to offer now that it is back on the travel list.

Thooyib Mohamed, managing director of the Maldives Marketing & PR Corporation (MMPC) and Visit Maldives, explained: "There is a huge pent-up demand, like a fizzy drink bottle we see an explosion coming from Europe, Russia and Middle East.

Thooyib elaborated "We have been seeing new markets, like Russia and the USA, with growth potential.

"We did some research on what the future will be and while some countries can be closing or restricting their travel laws, eastern Europe could give us a steady flow as well as the US and southeast Asia, where Indonesia and the Philippines are key markets."

However, he cautioned that we must be responsible and take it slow and steady.

He continued: "We should be careful that we follow the advice of health authorities.

"We are very proud that we are ranking on top of every source market, but it all depends on where the guests are coming from.

"The good news is if we keep our numbers down and have positive social media, Maldives will rank number one.



Delegates at GM Forum 2021

"The Maldives is expecting 1.3 million visitors this year and our targets from next year are two million visitors per year.

"The very fact that Maldives only has 52,000 beds, keeps it exclusive and will keep everyone from flooding it at once.

"We look forward to welcoming nations that have established vaccination programmes to allow Maldives to remain a safe haven.

"The Maldives' own vaccination efforts are also established.

"The whole thing about vaccination, and the target to have 90 per cent of population vaccinated, will all have an impact.

"Talks are ongoing about a digital passport, so unless there is international agreement, it is up to each country to allow visitors so we can fill those 52,000 beds responsibly.

"We have been working together on global campaigns with the airlines, as they bring the tourists in, and the tour operators who are the bridge between the tourist and the country.

"We do joint marketing campaigns with tour operators, and we participate in marketing events with local stakeholders, and we are open for joint marketing efforts.

"Although other destinations are opening while the pandemic is on, people will be looking for a safe haven.

"Our 'one island one resort' model makes us blessed and means the risks of infection are lowered."

While the leisure travellers are now returning, the Maldives Tourism board is also focusing on the revival and establishment of the Maldives as a business travel destination.

Visit Maldives will host two (Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions) MICE roadshows in Mumbai – following the World Travel Market – aimed at UK buyers.

Thooyib said: "MICE is a trillion-dollar industry, and we have a beautiful destination where clients of incentive groups look for places like Maldives.

"There is no better place to manage your



Delegates at GM Forum 2021

business and pleasure – imagine a gala dinner on the beach, a board meeting on a sandbank or a dinner in an underwater restaurant.

"It is out-of-the-box thinking and a safe haven.

Ghiyas added: "MICE is 11 per cent of global tourism and in-person meetings can never be replaced.

"It is an experience that is tangible, and it is going to be changed in some way.

"It might seem that the hopes of trade shows are far-fetched, as the Maldives is not a mainstream MICE market, but it has a lot of scope.

"The way people sell has changed and with the Dubai Expo coming up, the Maldives will become the trendsetter to set the benchmark from."

Gordon Stewart, CEO and MD of Maldives Airports Company Limited (MACL) added that the airport was doing all it could to prepare for the demand and influx of UK visitors after October 4 as more countries expanded their flight paths.

He said: "We have been doing a lot of work to alleviate the queuing and capacity, but we need to do more.

"The congestion we have had recently has been driven by Covid and the documentation required.

"Typically, a check in would be four minutes but now it is about 10 minutes.

"We are looking at how to get check-in times back down to get back to capacity levels.



# GM FORUM 2021 IN PHOTOS



Minister of Tourism, Dr Abdulla Mausoom's arrival at Paradise Island Resort



Delegates arriving at Paradise Island Resort



Registration of the delegates



Delegates at the GM Forum 2021



Delegates at the GM Forum 2021



Opening remarks by Mohamed Mamduh, MD, Hotelier Maldives



Keynote speech by Minister Dr Abdulla Mausoom



Keynote speech by Emilio Fortini, General Manager, Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa and Chairman, Marriott Business Council



Panel 1: 'Connectivity in the New Normal'. Moderated by Ibrahim Saleem Bandhu, panelists included Mohamed Mihad, MD, Island Aviation Services and Ahmed Maumoon, Deputy CEO, Manta Air.



Presentation by Tropical Fitness, Wellness Partner at the GM Forum 2021



Keynote speech by Thoriq Ibrahim, Founder & President, Maldives Ocean Plastics Alliance



Q&A with Milind Derasari, GM Operations, MAWC (Coca-Cola)



Presentation by Euro Marketing, Platinum Sponsor of GM Forum 2021



Panel 2: 'Trends in Destination Marketing'. Moderated by Shafraz Hafiz, Deputy Director, Digital Marketing and Social Media, Pulse Hotels & Resorts, panelists included Thoyyib Mohamed of Visit Maldives and Abdulla Ghiyas of PATA Maldives Chapter.



Presentation by Villa Group, Platinum Sponsor of GM Forum 2021



Data-driven Storytelling presentation by IDEaS Revenue Solutions



Gordon Stewart, CEO and MD of MACL speaking at GM Forum 2021



Training Needs Analysis of the Tourism Sector presentation by Aishath Uraiba Asif and Alma Rashyd, Meery Project, Ministry of Higher Education



MC of the event, Anika Cae, Assistant HR Manager, Paradise Island Resort



Networking event at Farumathi Restaurant, Paradise Island Resort



Panel 3: 'Human Resource Challenges'. Moderated by Vaibhav Garg, Director of Talent & Culture, Accor Hotels Maldives, panelists included Zeenath Solih, Dean, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies, The Maldives National University and Adam Haleem, Director of Programmes, Maldives Institute of Technology.



Keynote Speech by Rajesh Mehta, Director Enterprise, Ooredoo Maldives



Networking event at Farumathi Restaurant, Paradise Island Resort



Networking event at Farumathi Restaurant, Paradise Island Resort



**WTM LONDON 2021**

November 1 - 3, 2021

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Wednesday - November 17, 2021

Online



Join us on November 17 for our second annual Skift Aviation Forum, this year taking place as an online, one-day conference.

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**2021 GLOBAL WELLNESS SUMMIT**

November 30 - December 3, 2021

Encore Boston Harbor  
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Thursday - December 9, 2021

Online



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# Le Méridien Maldives Resort & Spa Makes its Debut



The highly awaited 141-villa property by Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts has opened its doors in Lhaviyani Atoll. Le Méridien, part of Marriott Bonvoy's portfolio of thirty extraordinary brands, makes this debut with Singaporean developer Chiu Teng Enterprises. The Paris-born brand invites travellers to savour the good life and explore the tropical destination in style.

Situated on Thilamaafushi island, Le Méridien Maldives Resort & Spa is a 35-minute seaplane journey north of Velana International Airport. The nine-hectare natural island is an

eco-conscious haven abundant with indigenous flora and fauna, enveloped by a shimmering lagoon and coral reefs bursting with vibrant marine life, including pods of Manta Rays and turtles. The resort celebrates the fabric of the Maldives, its people, nature and art, channelling its energy to uncover the charm of the destination through Le Méridien's distinctive European-chic lens.

## Timeless Chic Design

Le Méridien Maldives Resort & Spa takes inspiration from the brand's roots in the glamorous halcyon days of travel, something that permeates throughout the Le Méridien experience. The design is also inspired by the formation of the Maldives Archipelago, emulating the Atoll's unique topography, its bordering reefs, coral gardens, marine life and underwater pinnacles known as "Thilas". Interior and exterior

design celebrates the Maldives' distinct life and culture and vibrant landscape, fused with Le Méridien's signature mid-century modern and Bauhaus aesthetics to present a resort that sits in harmony with the natural environment.



The resort boasts 141 villas that are tucked amongst the tropical landscape and dotted over the Indian Ocean, featuring unparalleled views across the pristine beaches, the Indian Ocean or turquoise lagoon. A selection of one, two and three-bedroom villas unites the concept of art and industrial design with clean lines, a muted colour palette and a contrast of renewable materials that fosters simplicity, openness and functionality. Guests can also relax and rejuvenate at the Explore Spa by Le Méridien and the two infinity pools at the resort.

## Dining

There are six restaurants and bars that showcase global tastes and locally harvested produce. Inspired by Japanese fishing villages and water lanterns, the signature restaurant Tabemasu features a lively teppanyaki counter and a private open-air pavilion where guests will enjoy an expertly prepared Omakase tasting menu. The resort's adults only bar, Riviera, is a



beachside playground framed by an oceanfront infinity pool and private beach where lazy lunches flow into sunset spritzes as vivid hues are splashed across the ocean. The shores that frame Riviera will be the locale where Le Méridien's signature brand programme "Au Soleil" will be

nourishing approach with a focus on organic farm-to-table ingredients. Velaa Bar + Grill, situated poolside, features crafted cocktails and light dishes to savour in the summer sun, and grilled seafood, meats and wood-fired delicacies to indulge in once the last ray's

conversation and inspire fascination was pivotal throughout the resort's design process. At the center of this is Waves Lifestyle Hub, a wellbeing collective set against the pristine landscape with unparalleled views of the ocean. Meanwhile, The Marine Hub offers a range of conservation programmes including mangrove and seagrass protection and turtle identification and snorkelling with the marine biologist, with the opportunity for guests to name a turtle for themselves. Guests can also visit some of the Atoll's fifty dive and thila sites and the resort's private island Bodu Finolhu.

The Le Méridien Family and Kids' Hub offers programmes that range from day and night nature trails, folklore storytelling and sustainable art classes. The Greenhouse also offers immersive family experiences including

micro-green planting and family foraging and cooking classes. Further, the Thilamaafushi Marine Master's is a specially designed programme that inspires young adventurers to connect with the environment around them in the hope of future preservation.

Ensuring minimal environmental impact was and continues to be paramount throughout the build and resort operations. The hotel safeguards a low carbon footprint through leading-edge practices that focus on renewable energy, waste reduction and usage of renewable resources. This includes the widespread use of solar panels and one of the Maldives' largest state-of-the-art hydroponic farms that has been purposely designed to promote hydroponic farming and consumption.



hosted as part of the resort's weekly culinary events. "Au Soleil" encourages a summer state of mind with an activation at "Golden Hour", where guests will enjoy European-inspired petit plates, specially designed rosé cocktails and Le Scoop by Le Méridien handcrafted gelato or sorbet, set against a soundtrack of live music and waves lapping at the shore.

Located amongst the banyan trees and swaying palms, Waves Café is a mindful eating space that fosters a healthy and

fade. The Le Méridien Hub, a social gathering place for the creative-minded traveller, serves custom-brewed, barista-crafted coffee beverages as part of the brand's collaboration with illy coffee. Rounding out the culinary mix is Turquoise, a beachside marketplace where guests can choose from an array of global tastes and local dishes from breakfast to dinner.

## Experiences

Conceiving spaces that spark



# Buying Local: The Maldives Alternative

**It is widely agreed by hospitality industry experts that creating a positive and unique customer experience is one of the key ingredients of service. The marketing strategies of hoteliers can be more appealing when it is associated with the culture and flavor of the region or destination where they operate. While several components are needed in creating a value-added customer experience, sourcing and procurement strategies in hotel supplies and amenities are an important element to consider and play a key role in what kind of experience a particular hotel wishes to offer its customers.**

One of the benefits of buying from local vendors is bringing socio-economic benefits to the local community. This will add to the corporate social responsibility of hoteliers, as it can promote and enhance the local Small Medium Enterprises (SME's) and businesses, indirectly creating more jobs and improving the wellbeing of the society.

Opting for local hotel suppliers can reduce the environmental impact caused by transport and logistics. Sourcing from local suppliers shortens the distance and could significantly reduce the time taken for shipping and logistics timing, and the positive sustainability effect would matter to the community and the guests too.

The Maldives being a smaller economy and highly dependent on imports proves several challenges for hoteliers. Depending on the situation, availability of local products, and the image the particular hospitality brand wishes to create, the procurement strategy for each property can have considerable differences. However, bringing some flexibility in the procurement strategy and bringing a localized experience within the budget lines could add value to services. Such divergence in the procurement strategy can give an upgrade to the overall service design and customer experience.

Saying that, despite the limited locally available raw materials and resources, there are several SMEs and young entrepreneurs flourishing with creative and authentic local products.



## MvLacquer



Offering a most traditional mastery that defines the Maldives culture and heritage, MvLacquer deals in the marketing, selling and promoting of lacquer art and products, as well as other products of traditional Maldivian craft. Based in the island of Baa Atoll Thulhaadhoo, famous for its lacquer work, MvLacquer promotes the cultural craftsmanship of the island to the entirety of the Maldives, as well as to the world.

As wood is the main material used for making lacquered items, MvLacquer uses locally sourced wood from different islands of Maldives in its production facilities. Ahmed Shifau from MvLacquer said "We use different types of locally available wood such as, 'Uni', 'Kuredhi', 'Funa', 'Hirundhu' and 'Kaani'. For the lacquered pens, we use metal pens which are bought online and abroad, as the quality and durability of metal pens are better. Our lacquer or 'laa' is bought from overseas, usually from India or Sri Lanka. It is then made into strips with colour added by our craftsmen".



# Craft Studio

Based in Male, Maldives, CraftStudio creates individually designed, molded and finished cement-based homeware accessories targeting to both locals and visitors. The perfectly designed planters, trays, pots, and vessels can add style to any of your indoor or outdoor spaces.

Hawwa Nazaahatha Shameem (Naza) is the artisan behind the brand established Craft Studio with a combination of passion for creativity, an undergraduate degree in Interior Architecture and MBA. She said: "Each piece is finished with a unique design, hand-mixing, pouring and finished in various colors, patterns and textures. Being 100 per cent handmade in the Maldives, these products bring a Maldivian touch to interior spaces."



# Ogaa

With a wide range of beautifully designed soaps, Ogaa offers a wide range of handmade cold pressed soap bars. The brand Ogaa was launched in 2019 by a business named Artistree- with the objective of offering wholesome and ecofriendly bath and body products. Today the brand has a diverse range of bath and body products that include soaps, shampoo and conditioner bars, body balms, bath bombs, candles and liquid soap. Ogaa also offers bespoke opportunity to create customised products.

The colourful designs of the soaps are inspired by the way atolls and islands are formed, breathtaking colors of coral reefs, the symmetry of coconut palm leaves and the green vegetation of the local islands.

"Our soaps are tested according to quality management system of ISO9001:2015 requirements. Additionally, we incorporate locally available ingredients such as coconut, tamanu (funu), papaya, neem and moringa. Beside the product itself, we also focus on ecofriendly packaging that could help our environment. Our body balm tubes are made of paper and we introduced soap, shampoo and conditioner bars to help people minimize the consumption of plastic bottles," said Azu, one of the co-founders of the business. For those looking for soaps that are ultra-gentle, 100% vegan and free from SLS and Paraben these could be a great choice."



# Maldivian Coconut Products by Kihaa Faseyha

Cherishing the Maldivian roots and traditions, Kihaa Faseyha Foods presents one of the most authentic handmade coconut-based skincare products. Originally starting its journey in a simple kitchen with the first product being frozen grated coconut for households, the business moved into coconut-based beauty and skincare, with its Virgin Coconut oil pressed by skilled local oil artisans. Assuring quality with attention to detail, the Virgin Coconut Oil has been produced using traditional techniques of extracting coconut oil, a process that has been mastered over the years by the team of oil artisans at Kihaa Faseyha. As the brand focuses on wellbeing, its range of coconut products makes you feel wholesome from both inside and out.

The brand also offers a range of coconut-based food products including the first Maldivian-made coconut cooking oil, coconut flour and desiccated coconut. The dedicated team at Kihaa Faseyha strives to provide the best value to its customers with premium quality environmentally sustainable products.



# Island Bazaar

When it comes to the perfect gift, artwork and souvenirs, for visitors to take home, the Island Bazaar can cater to this in the most creative way. The young founders of Island Bazaar – Fathimath Salah and Hassan Rameez comes from an interior design background, and their passion for arts and crafts combined with a passion for exploring a love of design, travel and deep-rooted appreciation for island lifestyle.

Being a lifestyle brand founded in 2015, Island Bazaar offers a diverse range of products ranging from fashion, apparel and accessories, cushion, gifts, souvenirs, jewellery, local artisanal collections, paintings and even things like kids puzzles to name a few. Ensuring authenticity, all the products of Island Bazaar are locally designed by its founders or are designed in collaboration with fellow local artists.



# Island Apothecary



A truly natural artisan skincare brand of Maldives, the Island Apothecary is another aspiring local business. Despite its recent inception in 2016, the brand offers a wide range of products including bath and body collections, candles, facial alchemy, island essentials and oil therapy.

Island Apothecary is a truly authentic Maldivian brand created by a team of an ambitious artisan apothecary, a communications designer and a brand developer. All the products under the brand are 100 per cent natural, earth friendly and cruelty free. The main ingredients used are USDA-certified Organic and Forest Garden certified while the rest are all plant-based.

In addition to its diverse range of skincare collection, the Island Apothecary provides a collection of unique healing

rituals designed and formulated as destination treatments, that integrate the revered, ancient aesthetics of the Maldivian earth and spirit. Island Apothecary also collaborates with resorts in providing specially curated ranges of hand-crafted skincare and wellness products such as custom fragrances, sustainable resort amenities, soaps and candles to name a few.

Buying local is always the best solution as it supports the hospitality trade and keeps the economy strong so that the Maldives can remain a strong tourism destination. There's treasures galore to be found locally in the Maldives and there is no need to rely on expensive imports. Hotels that buy local and invest in the culture of destination provide a rich array of options to their customers who can discover products made in the islands and have a truly authentic Maldives vacation.

**FIRST LOOK:**

# Patina Maldives, Fari Islands



The very first expression of Patina Hotels & Resorts lies in the pristine surroundings of North Male Atoll, just forty-five minutes from Velana International Airport. An island of wondrous depths, of pure beauty and unexpected dimensionality, Patina Maldives is part of the Fari Islands, a unique resort destination inspired by island artistry. Vibrance, freedom and serenity play a continuous rhythm at this newly opened slice of paradise.

Designed by renowned Brazilian architect Marcio Kogan from Studio MK27, Patina Maldives features ninety exquisitely appointed one, two and three-bedroom beach and water villas, as well as twenty Fari Studios. While the Studios sit on the edge of the vibrant Fari Marina Village, the villas face the perfect sunrises or sunsets. Guests don't just stay in a luxury villa, but they immerse in a cinematic experience curated from nature's materials and pure creativity to soothe their senses and soul. Each and every room exude warm, rustic simplicity.



"At Patina, the flow is yours. And it sets you free." Reflecting on this motto, Patina Maldives offers a gastronomical journey that goes beyond the palate. Each of the resort's twelve dining concepts presents a fresh perspective, where the best ingredients and processes take centre stage. Guests discover a universal connection through fine cuisines- Asian creations at the Wok Society, Japanese and Nordic cuisines at the Kōen. Head to the aesthetic Farine for world-class bakery and patisserie and the Fari Beach Club for beachfront entertainment paired with a daring dining experience by multi-Michelin star chef Nick Brill.

"At Patina, the flow is yours. And it sets you free." Reflecting on this motto, Patina Maldives offers a gastronomical journey that goes beyond the palate.

Despite the harmony aroused by nature, guests can sense wellness through luxury spa treatments, fitness activities and refreshing experiences. At the Flow spa, you will be liberated through therapeutic prowess, clean products, scientific technologies, and the ebb and flow of water. Other facilities include a unique watsu pool for passive aquatic therapy, high and low impact workout classes, the services of highly trained consultants such as a posture expert and a sleep therapist, and the usage of curative and preventative remedies to achieve a calm mind and to restore balance.



The resort has also designed soul-freeing experiences to expand your time. Leave a positive impact at Fari Islands by seeding coral reefs or adopting an injured sea turtle. You can connect with the captivating

diversity of underwater species with a night snorkel, responsibly observe the wild dolphins of Maldives or learn how to scuba dive with Dive Butler. At Patina Maldives, freedom is adventure.

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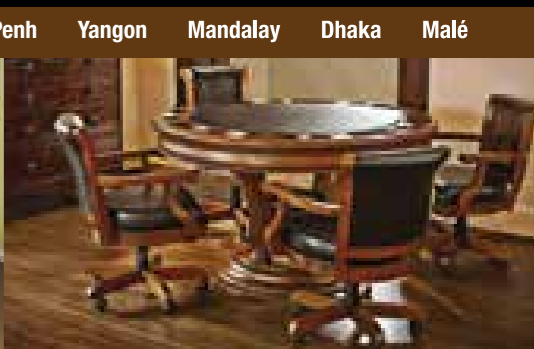
TABLE TENNIS



FOOSBALL



AIR HOCKEY



FURNITURE

# GM's View: Emilio Fortini, Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa

Emilio Fortini is the general manager of Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa. As a seasoned hotelier with over 35 years of hospitality experience in the Asia Pacific region, Emilio joined Rydges hotels and resorts in 1995 after 12 years with independents. He has held several management positions specialising in food & beverage. Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa on Furanafushi Island has a diverse range of room types ranging from idyllic cottages to secluded villas and lavish over water bungalows, villas and suites. Emilio speaks exclusively to Hotelier Maldives about what it is like being the general manager at Sheraton Full Moon resort and Spa.

**HM: As the role of a general manager largely involves leading and directing people, do you adhere to a certain management style or philosophy?**

The question about management style is a quite common one, and I believe that it is more about our own philosophy than a specific style. Leading teams successfully hinges on adhering to a few basic principles, which would, in a nutshell, translate to treating people like you would like to be treated. It is about honesty, integrity, setting and sharing common goals and targets, mutual respect and having clear and realistic expectations. I try to be fair with everyone,

always respectful (particularly towards the hard-working front-line associates), but firm with department heads and managers who are tasked with driving consistency, efficiency, ethics and standards. I try to instil into everyone a sense that nobody is above any kind of work, that in times of need we all need to help each other out and that "it's not my job" should not exist in our vocabulary. An open-door policy is important, as all associates should feel comfortable in discussing any concerns or ideas at any time, and regular discussions with the teams are crucial for a better mutual understanding.

**HM: You've worked in the Maldivian tourism sector for quite a long time, what are the main changes within the sector that you've observed over the years and are there any changes you anticipate for the near future?**

The main changes I can see relate to the destination itself, once seen as the playground for the rich and famous only. We see more and more families coming to enjoy this slice of paradise, as well as less affluent tourists. Luxury and super luxury resorts continue to appeal to the elite travellers, however we see more and more affordable options that cater to a greater cross-section of tourists. Pandemic aside, the major increase in tourist arrivals into the Maldives has not been at the higher end



of the spectrum but rather in groups that up until a few years ago could only dream of ever coming to vacation in the Maldives. We are also seeing a bit of a shift in guest attitudes towards the kind of holiday they want to experience. Whilst some will still want to come and simply relax by the beach for a week or two, more and more guests are looking for experiences, cultural immersion, sustainable activities or environmental tourism. This change has been happening around the world for some time, and it has now reached the Maldives, who, once things return to some sort of normality, has a great deal to offer its visitors. I think that over the next few years we will see more and more focus on experiential tourism and environmental awareness. As we see the world changing, I believe that the Maldives

have a great opportunity to show the rest of the world that great things can be done to support the efforts made towards maintaining pristine environments and protecting the natural resources that ultimately attract visitors to the region, minimising the impact that we have on this part of the globe. I also believe that the Maldivian culture will be a star attraction in the future, one that can and should be shared more with our visitors. Traditions are unfortunately being lost in every continent, but cultural tourism is a great way to keep them alive and to expose guests to the breadth of the unique Maldivian history and lifestyle

**HM: How has your experience prepared you to work in the Maldives?**

I come from what you might

call a family of vagabonds, and so far, from a young age, I have moved 32 times in various countries and locations: cities and tropics, mainland and islands, large and small properties. This has helped me adapt relatively quickly to new environments, challenges, cultures and business trends. Whilst the Maldives are unique in a lot of ways, integration and adaptability come naturally to me now, and I enjoy every move I make. Every move is a learning curve, as was my initiation in the Maldives, but I have enjoyed every single challenged that crossed my path.

**HM: What is your most memorable island moment?**

I don't know that I can pinpoint an exact time that I would consider the most memorable. Every day is special on the island, every interaction is special, every comment from our guests is special. My arrival to the Maldives was certainly memorable, as it is a country that I have been wanting to come to for quite a few years. It was impractical until a few years ago, as our children were still of school age, but

eventually we made it here. The launch of our coral propagation program is also very close to my heart. Reefs are struggling around the globe, and anything that we can do to safeguard, protect and regenerate our local reefs will go a long way towards slowing down the environmental impact that reef damage will have on marine life and coastal areas. We were lucky enough to partner with Reefscapers and relocate coral colonies from a lagoon due to be reclaimed. Reefscapers manage our coral propagation project here at Sheraton, spearheaded by the "adopt a frame" program that our guests can participate in. They also built one of the largest man-made coral structures in the Maldives by developing several coral pyramids in our lagoons. These constructions have already seen new coral growth in just a few months, as well as the return of a multitude of fish varieties that had not been seen in this area for quite a few years.



**HM: Do you have any advice for hoteliers joining the industry?**

It is an industry that has a lot to offer, that is constantly changing and adapting, and that can yield great satisfaction. Anyone looking to become wealthy might want to consider another field, however for those who are passionate about hospitality, guest experiences, connections with people from all walks of life, the hospitality industry is one that offers more

am currently working. Exercise and fitness are things I enjoy and take with me wherever I go, as they allow some private time and personal head space. I enjoy reading and going to the movies when possible. I like making things, when I have the space and materials available, and whilst I'm not particularly good at it, I enjoy making furniture from recycled wood when the situation permits.

**HM: What qualities make a good general manager?**

In terms of experience, I think that a good general manager is one that is well rounded and has experienced all facets of the operation. Experience not only helps in finding solutions when required, it also teaches us that we constantly need to adapt and change our approach to how we do things. The world, and consequently our guests and our business, are rapidly and constantly evolving, so having experienced various situations in different circumstances is very helpful. On a more personal level, being able to read people is important, as is the ability to listen. This does not mean that we need to please everyone all the time when making decisions, but we need to be able to make the right decisions for the business as well as for our colleagues, so being able to understand their needs is also important.

**HM: What steps does one need to get to become a GM?**

There is no set path to becoming a general manager. GMs may have a rooms background, or experience in F&B or sales or revenue or finance and depending on where your career has taken you so far, the steps



than many other careers. It is a great opportunity to travel the world, so anyone growing up in this industry should never be afraid to embrace change or travel and should jump at the opportunity to grow in different geographies. The take-aways from experiencing different cultures, guests, locations and work practices are not something you can buy and the opportunity is definitely something that should be embraced by all who want to develop and grow.

**HM: What hobbies do you enjoy when you are not at work?**

It obviously depends on where I

will be different. There is one constant, though: to be effective in the role of GM we need to be able to make decisions for all departments, and the credibility and success of these decisions will be based on your previous experiences in those areas. More and more these days, everyone seems to be in a rush to move up the ladder, and there is nothing wrong with ambition and desire to grow. This ambition and desire, however, should be supported by the willingness to try different things that may be outside of their comfort zone, to sometimes take a sideways step (or even backwards) that will help each individual grow into a mature manager.

**HM: You have worked in hotels around the world each must have their own merits, what do you love the Maldives most and do you see yourself staying here?**

As mentioned earlier, the Maldives are special and unique. I have lived and worked in amazing locations, cities, tropics and islands, but unlike these other destinations, the Maldives have a global appeal that is unmatched: everybody wants to come and visit. And for a good reason: the majority

of the workforce are locals, who take great pride in looking after our guests and in sharing their experiences, the sea and beaches are amazing, the water temperature never changes and marine life is abundant. The one-island-one-resort concept is unique to the Maldives, the combination of complete relaxation and active fun options is attractive, the fact that guests come from all over the world to experience the uniqueness of the nation makes working in the Maldives all that much more enjoyable. There are obviously no guarantees in anything that we do, however I have no plans to relocate elsewhere, and I really enjoy life on the island.

**HM: What advice would you give to young hoteliers starting out?**

It is not an easy industry to grow up in, it involves a lot of hard work, long hours, sometimes difficult situations, and unfortunately it is sometimes seen as a subservient industry, which it is not. A career in hotels and resorts is as rewarding as any other to those who have a passion for it, if not more. There are certainly greater opportunities in this field than in most others. My advice

to those just beginning their hotel life, or just starting their managerial journey is to never stop learning, to be curious about what other associates and departments are doing, to disregard the negativity they might come across occasionally and to always remember the positives. A smile on a guest's face is more memorable than a complaint received, seeing a guest return after a great stay is surprisingly rewarding, an unexpected promotion is a great booster. Ours is one of the few truly global industries, one that allows those of us who are adventurous or have the wanderlust to travel, explore, experience new cultures and learn from peers around the world, so don't shy away from opportunities wherever they may be. Experience all facets of the operation, even those outside of your comfort zone, learn as much as you can from those around you, but most of all enjoy what you do, as this enjoyment is very visible and very contagious.

**HM: What does Sheraton Full Moon offer that others don't? How do you consistently deliver on that promise?**

When travellers think of the Maldives they think of a small secluded island, peaceful relaxation, total detachment, and it is hard to efficiently deviate from this ideal. We are all resorts on island with white sandy beaches and clear blue lagoons. But considering that the clientele in the Maldives has been changing over the past few years, that we see more families coming than before, that global travel is more prominent than ever (in normal times), we at Sheraton Maldives decided to have a slightly different focus, based on two key pillars: fun and food. Let's start with Fun: whilst a number of guests just want to relax on the beach or in the privacy of their rooms with private pools, more and more want the option to be active, to meet other guests during planned activities, to learn something about the destination and their culture, so we created a very comprehensive activities schedule separate from the traditional water sports and diving programs. At every hour of the day, rotating weekly, there is an activity or other

that guests of all ages can join. Some signature Side by Side activities are designed for families and allow them to connect in a fun way (mum and daughter, father and son, parents and children). Some activities are run by our marine biologist and are more educational in nature. Some are specific cultural activities that connect our guests with the local culture, flora and fauna. Some are for relaxation or fitness. The idea is for everyone to have the option to either do nothing or do lots in a fun and educational way. Secondly, food: I am passionate about this, and sometimes very stubborn about it as well. My view is that as guests travel around the world more and more, they experience typical cuisines wherever they go. As our guests are usually confined to the island during their stay, we need to be able to offer a variety of dining options for the duration of their holiday. Whilst there is no set recipe for the mix and types of outlets and cuisines we should offer, my view is that if a guest orders an Italian dish, or an Indian dish, or a Thai dish or any other, they have a certain expectation of that that dish should taste like, because they probably had it somewhere in Italy, India or Thailand in the past. Maldivian food and cooking classes are also a big part of what we do here at Sheraton Maldives. Much to the dismay of many chefs around the world, I remain a purist in terms of food, and believe that classics and traditions cannot, and should not, be improved on. If a guest chooses Gulha from our Maldivian fish market buffet, it should taste the same as it would when purchased from a street vendor. If they order a pizza here at Sheraton Maldives, they will remember the one they had in Italy a few years ago, which is very important to me. This association of food and memories is crucial to the experience of the guests, and this is what we strive to achieve in all our outlets.

**HM: Are there any exciting upcoming events we should know about?**

The current global situation and travel restrictions have forced us to shelf most of our plans for this year. Our year-



end festivities and NYE bash will obviously stay, and I hope that the world normalizes a little before then. However, we are now preparing a calendar for 2022 with celebrity chefs and winemakers, themed holidays aimed at specific psychographics and more. This calendar will be released in the next few months with more exciting details.

**HM: What luxury experiences are available?**

When you think of special experiences in the Maldives you automatically think of sandbank picnics, romantic beach dinners, movies under the stars, wedding vows and renewals, sunset cruises, all of which are available at our resort. In addition, we also offer private lagoon sunset champagne cruises on HamacLand, a unique and special experience. I think that a "luxury experience" is not necessarily related to price and glamor but more relevant to how it makes the guest feel. A private dinner with off-menu dishes, prepared by a specialty chef and with some local entertainment is as much a luxury experience as a sunset cruise on an 80" cruiser.

**HM: What challenges have both resorts faced during the pandemic? Have you continued to have guests and what is the average length of stay?**

The pandemic has caused havoc across our industry worldwide, and last year the Maldives were not immune to this chaos. As the borders closed in late March 2020, the resort also closed its doors for six months, re-opening to a slow start in October and November. Unexpectedly, December saw a great uplift in

bookings and visitors, which held strong until the end of April. This posed a number of challenges, as our team was downsized in order to ride the downturn, and associates could not be brought back in time to cater for the influx of guests. I believe the summer will be tough, and hope that business will normalize again towards the end of the year. Our mix has changed, obviously. With so many travel restrictions around the world, we have seen very little from Europe, South East Asia and Oceania in the last eight months, but on the other hand we saw a substantial increase from Russia and CIS, Middle East and South Asia. As parts of the world re-open, travellers will have more options globally which may challenge our industry for the next few months, but we remain hopeful that the international appeal of the Maldives, combined with the safety of a holiday on an island, will continue to bring visitors to the country.

**HM: What culinary experiences are available on the island?**

We have seven outlets at the resort: Feast is our main buffet restaurant, offering international fare for breakfast and themed buffet dinners. Anchorage Bar is our main beachfront bar and restaurant, with great Mediterranean selections and amazing pizzas all day. Baan Thai is our traditional Thai restaurant. Masala Hut delivers typical northern and southern Indian dishes for lunch and dinner. Sea Salt is our specialty Seafood restaurant, converting soon to an Italian Seafood Restaurant. ChopstiX focuses on dim sums, noodles and traditional Chinese fare. Kakuni Hut is our other beach bar, serving Caribbean specialities for lunch on the

beach. The focus for each and every outlet is on tradition and freshness, using nothing but the best ingredients available locally and from overseas.

**HM: What is your opinion of vaccination tourism and will your resorts participate in it?**

I am a great believer in vaccinations, and I think that global immunization is the only way out of this pandemic. Whilst the current vaccines do not necessarily stop the spread of the disease and vaccinated individuals can still be carriers and transmit it, the purpose of the available, and quickly-developed, vaccines is to stop the population from getting too sick and to avoid putting so much stress on the medical systems around the world. As a destination I think we have done relatively well, and aside from a few supply challenges, we can honestly tell the world that as a result of the vaccination process and of the geography of the country, our resorts are probably amongst the safest places to be right now. Here at Sheraton Maldives we are very particular about processes and protocols, and we do the utmost to protect guests and associates alike. Marriott have very stringent protocols globally, and combined with local regulations, our resorts are as safe as they can be. Vaccination tourism is a great idea in principle, as the more people are vaccinated in the world the sooner we can return to some sort of normality in our industry. We need to be mindful of vaccine availability around the globe, and to ensure that access to tourist vaccines is fair when considering the less fortunate, however if the global supply is sufficient and the opportunity arises to vaccinate more travellers, we would certainly

participate in this Government backed initiative.

**HM: What staff development opportunities are there available on your resorts?**

There are always opportunities available at our resorts. The nature of the business is such that associates move on, change roles, look for other opportunities, leaving gaps to fill in several positions. Marriott International has very comprehensive training programs for all associates at all levels, some of these are self-paced, some are structured, some involve cross training, and all are available to our people in the Maldives. The opportunity for growth is immense, with over 7,400 properties worldwide and new opening almost daily, and for those who choose to make hospitality their career of choice, who want to explore new horizons, Marriott offers more opportunities than most. We have worked in the past with the Universal Foundation, giving young school leavers the opportunity to test their interest in our industry, combining a short industry course with an internship at the resort. We hope to be able to resume this programme soon.

**What new developments are on the horizon in your resorts?**

We are obviously excited about the recent openings of the Ritz Carlton Fari Islands, North Male Atoll, and the forthcoming opening of Le Meridien Maldives in Lhaviyani Atoll. These amazing new properties join the portfolio of five existing resorts currently operating in the Maldives (Sheraton, Westin, W, JW Marriott and St Regis). With seven properties soon in operation, Marriott International will soon cater for guests at all levels, in both speedboat and sea plane destinations. Marriott International is always on the lookout for new agreements and conversions, and because the Maldives are one of the few performing regions in the world, who knows, there may be other announcements in the future.



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# AQUA VITA RESIDENCY – SETTING THE STANDARD FOR EXCELLENCE

An evolution of Modernist Architecture designed with both purpose and intention to create a sublime experience of space and light, Aqua Vita is not just a home, but an extraordinary lifestyle choice.

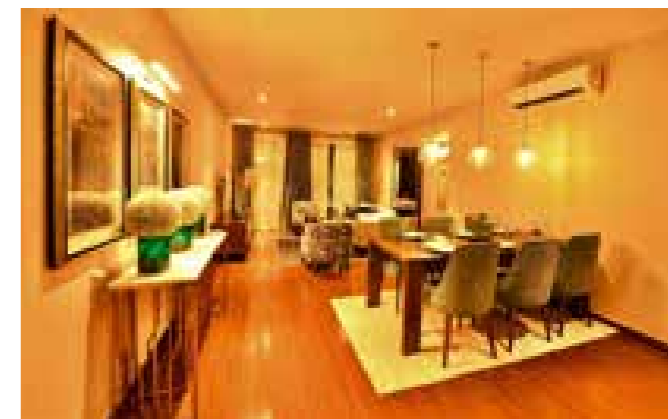
The luxury residential complex developed by NPHD- a joint venture by Ayenka Holdings Pvt Ltd, Sri Lanka, and NPH Investments Pvt Ltd, Maldives, consists of 98 unique apartments including six grand penthouses spread across 14 floors with a land area of 21,188 sq. feet. Situated at on the scenic edge of Hulhumale phase one, this character-filled residence features grand spaces & seamless transitions throughout. Aqua Vita, having surpassed its architecture and design, is truly a work of art.

The exterior of the residency presents clean lines and core elements that lend unpretentious beauty and allows an elimination of virtual clashes. Further, the light, open and quietly spectacular, vast interior spaces are the

epitome of sleek and chic; simultaneously casual and elegant with only the finest quality finishes and material elements thoughtfully selected.

Inspired by the natural beauty of Maldives, the interior consists of creative artwork by local craftsman allowing the culture to be displayed in a contemporary backdrop. The voluminous open floor plan, includes high end infrastructure, soaring ceilings and walls of glass effortlessly incorporating indoor and outdoor space.

The semi-furnished house embodies a spacious and bright open living and dining floor plan, as well as natural lighting throughout. The two and three-bedroom apartments have been designed in a manner that all the rooms are embellished with a view of the widespread Indian ocean along with a private balcony which serves as a personal haven. The carefully designed close kitchen concept adds sophistication that comes with the state-of the art pantry and inbuilt fixtures from high quality international brands. Safety is assured with the central gas, and double-gazed windows are included to



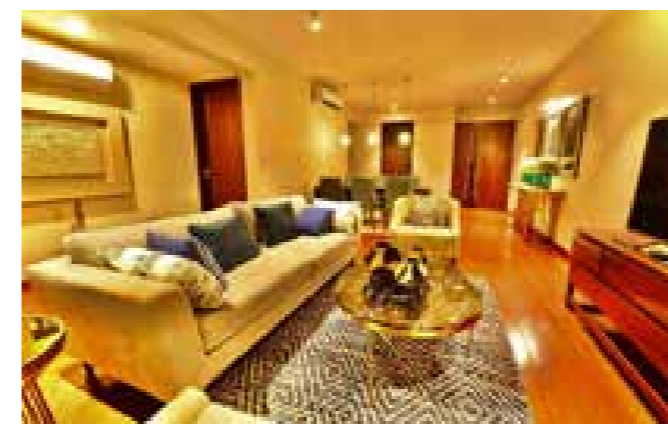
dampen sound. Additionally, high end fixtures and fittings in the attached bathrooms give a luxurious finishing combined with smart technologies for optimization of water usage.

Aqua Vita homes are complete with all the necessary facilities and amenities to ensure the maximum comfort and convenience for its residents. Key features include a 16m long swimming pool with a large deck area, a kids play area, and a fully equipped gym. Additionally, there is also a large hall which could be used for large business meetings or private functions, is also integrated to the Club house. The property also compromises of ample shared parking space where a limited number of slots can be purchased. The safety and privacy of the residents are

taken care of via technology-based access control and surveillance systems. Once you enter the residency, the outside world becomes irrelevant as you experience luxury at its finest.

This stunning, distinctive property is a study in impeccable craftsmanship, elegance and design where enduring style and intrinsic value are the legacy. As promised by Shehan Silva, GM of NPHD, "We are committed to giving the best possible home under the sky, using the best available technology, products and professional service. We have left no stone unturned."

The selling price of the almost complete residential complex starts from MVR.3.9 million.



**NPHD Developments Pvt. Ltd.**

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Telephone: +960 3338866  
+960 7708866  
+960 7388866  
+960 7288661  
Email: info@aquavita.mv  
Website: http://www.aquavita.mv/

# JOALI'S NEW RESIDENT ARTIST NATALIYA KULESHOVA TALKS ABOUT THE INNOVATIVE IMMERSIVE ART RESORT



Amidst a world of tropical splendour JOALI Maldives that offers a canvas for creativity as well as a haven for art aficionados. As the Maldives' first luxurious art immersive art hotel and island retreat, JOALI is a destination brimming with experiential art pieces that extend across the island. Timeless artwork adorns the walls and spaces in each of the 73 private beach and water villas - complete with private pools, that are the epitome of sustainable glamour. Upon arrival, guests are handed an art map to follow for an immersive and interactive tour. All art pieces around the resort have been created in collaboration with artists and local artisans to support the surrounding

community and guests can enjoy all this at their leisure.

Rather than simply place art in the hotel, each art piece has been commissioned for JOALI to the theme of art and nature. Artists work alongside the architects, engineers, and locals to create a unique space where creativity thrives. Wonderful sculptures and art pieces can be found scattered around the resort, designed to complement the flora and fauna and blend effortlessly into nature. As part of the immersive experience, guests can enjoy an art treasure hunt where they can discover each piece as they learn information about the artist. Each art and design can also be found in each room, making it a true artisanal paradise.

This immersive art concept as well as the art curation and design development of the whole hotel was founded by Ala Onur and Zeynep Ercan who created No LaB in 2016. They have displayed multi-talented artist pieces; from sculptures to paintings to tapestry to clothing pieces made by artists. According to their belief, art is more valuable than just seeing it, thus the concept of immersive art was born to stimulate curiosity in the viewer through experiencing the art and delving into the world of the artist.

JOALI creates wonderful art pieces that reflect nature and the Maldives, while also using sustainable materials. JOALI supports local artists and craftsmen and makes them part of the team that creates the art

pieces around the resort. This is a destination where amazing nature and hospitality connect with art, creating a special atmosphere for guests.

And at the helm of all this splendour is newly appointed resident artist Nataliya Kuleshova, born in Moscow, who has made the island her home and specialises in ceramics. Before arriving to the Maldives, she spent time in her home country surrounded by nature, forests, and family creating sculptures in a custom-made ceramic studio. It was here she started



creating art pieces inspired by nature as her muse. Ever since she was a child, Kuleshova has contently explored creative possibilities. After school she decided to truly connect her life with art, enrolling in the British Higher School of Art and Design, where she chose fine arts as her creative discipline. Kuleshova has held many workshops as a ceramist and her artworks have been displayed in several exhibitions

including 4Ceramics and IMPLANT.

Kuleshova says: "I believe that my role as JOALI's resident artist is vital for connecting people with art and showing them what they can do with clay. I have guests who say that they want to continue this practice when they get back home, and I am absolutely happy to introduce them to the beautiful world of ceramics."

Joining JOALI in May Kuleshova is thrilled at the prospects working on "the island of

joy" may bring for her career. "When I saw a huge kiln behind the art studio, I was so excited about all the art pieces that I can do with it. I am passionate about creating ceramics whenever I'm free, it's what I enjoy doing the most."

Kuleshova is currently working on a series of textured vases inspired by the Maldives' underwater world and alongside this she is currently

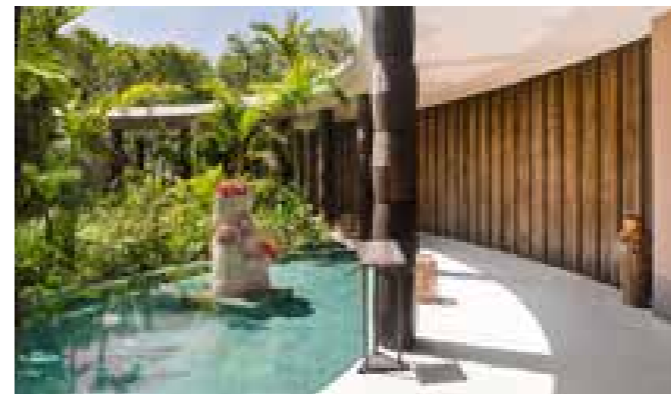


spinning several projects including working on an art book and a film photography project about nature and connections through seasons. In her spare time, she loves doing crafts like macrame and knitting. While on island, she also enjoys photographing the spectacular scenery and snorkelling and exploring the breathtaking underwater world of the Maldives. She also has a deep interest in nature and living, reflecting the colours of plants and flowers in her creations and her beautiful botanic sketches and watercolours are sure to

now."

Recently, she experimented with ceramics sake cups that can be used in Saoke, the Japanese restaurant here at JOALI. I am also currently working on a series of textured vases inspired by Maldives' underwater world.

Her advice to aspiring artists is to dream more and take even small steps towards your dream until you achieve it: "Art is a part of me. Whenever I create any art piece, it makes me feel so fulfilled. It is how I



brighten up your mood and bring a smile to your face.

She says: "I love to experiment with mediums and techniques and connect different concepts to create something new and interesting. As many creative people, I thought that I will never find my passion because I loved doing everything, but I was wrong because I discovered ceramics. From the first touch with clay, I understood that it is my way

express my emotions, whether it's happiness, sadness, success, and more. Art completes me and I cannot imagine myself doing anything else."

Art advocacy is also an active movement and Kuleshova actively supports JOALI's Women in Arts project, where she shares her skills and talents to other women. She is an advocate for women empowerment. JOALI is particularly committed to

*"Art is a part of me. Whenever I create any art piece, it makes me feel so fulfilled. It is how I express my emotions, whether it's happiness, sadness, success, and more. Art completes me and I cannot imagine myself doing anything else."*

gender equality and to the development of talented women in all its entities and at all levels of the organisation. JOALI started Women In Art which focuses on two main ideas: offering women a platform and honouring talented women. JOALI will educate women in Maldives and hone their artistic skills. It aims to reach women who are interested in arts as well as collaborate with schools and communities to offer art workshops.

"I am supporting JOALI's Women in Arts project, and we are planning to do more activities that involved women, not just our guests but also our team members. We are also excited for the festive season. Our team already started putting together activities for guests, including art workshops such as painting, glazing, ceramics and more."

As an art immersive resort, guests can truly experience the art pieces around the island - the most famous being the Manta Tree House by Porky

Hefer. Here guests can enjoy an extraordinary treetop dining experience with the views of the ocean. Scattered around the island are art pieces like John-Paul Philippe's The Perch, which represents a point of rest and reflection for both humans and birds. We also have Misha Kahn's table, Club Tropicana at Mura Bar, that is inspired by corals, a delicate symbiotic system, just like art is with colour and form.

And adding to this Kuleshova, in the future wishes to create a series of textural vases inspired by the sea world and place them around island. "I plan to make customised ceramic sake and tea sets for Saoke, our Japanese restaurant. Eating from handmade plates is a completely different experience so I shall produce special plates for our guests to enjoy JOALI's culinary arts. I also aim to leave my mark on this island and be one of artists whose works are featured around the resort."



# INTRODUCING THE NEW FRONT OFFICE MANAGER OF CONSTANCE MOOFUSHI, AHMED ADIL – THE VERY DILIGENT LOCAL TALENT



A perfect combination of barefoot luxury and simplicity, Constance Moofushi is among the only two Constance properties in the Maldives set on its own secluded island. The resort is known as a diver's paradise due to its location being at one of the best diving sites in the world. From ecological thatch roofing to crystal clear water, Constance Moofushi is one of the unique resorts with a soul. All villas are built and decorated with wondrous tones of nature with a hint of Constance chic further enhancing their top-tier service by providing

an all-inclusive package to all their guests. To ensure the satisfaction of their valuable guests, Constance Moofushi pays particular attention on providing the best training to their employees at the resort.

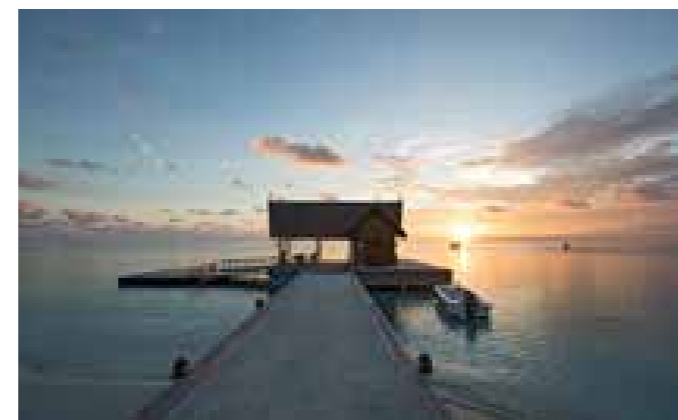
Constance Moofushi focuses on encouraging and developing the employees especially local talents to the HOD and senior level positions through proper Managerial development programs whereby they do that by SUCCESSION PLANNING – identifying the individual talents and enrolling them to “Performance Development Plan” which generally goes up to six months during where the employees are given proper training and guidance from the senior leadership of the resort.

Through the same process two promotions has been given as of August 2021, one of them being Ahmed Adil, the newly appointed Front Office Manager who exclusively shares more details of his career in the industry and Constance Moofushi. Ahmed Adil is a diligent and experienced hotelier who has been thriving in the industry since 2008 when he started the career as a receptionist and thirteen years later, finally earning his goal of becoming a Front Office Manager.

**HM: Tell me a little bit about yourself**

AA: I was born and raised

in Fuvahmulah. I completed my O'Level from GN Atoll Education Center. At the age of 19 to help my family financially I decided to join a resort and I got a job opportunity from Meeru Island Resort as a receptionist. I am a patient, persevering and a go-getter. I always take time to have fun even though most people describe me as a serious and quite person.



**HM: How would you describe your career in this industry?**

AA: I joined Meeru Island Resort as a receptionist in 2008. After 4 years I was promoted to Front Office supervisor and during my time as a Front Office supervisor, I got countless trainings and cross exposure in other CCR properties to learn and

develop. The management saw potential in me and awarded a sponsorship opportunity in 2013 to do my Diploma in Hospitality Management. In 2015, I was promoted to Assistant Front Office Manager in Meeru. After completing 3 years in the position, I realized that I need to go out of my comfort zone to achieve what I want and that is to become a Front Office Manager. I took a leap of faith and I landed in Constance Moofushi.

**HM: What has been your motivation to get out of your comfort zone?**

AA: The motivation was the need for new challenges and to explore more.

**HM: What does the role of Front Office Manager involve?**



AA: I oversee a team of sixteen team members including transport. On the contrary to many other resorts, here it is the Guest Service team that takes care of all reception duties. Therefore, under my management I have the Guest Service team, Bell Boys, Reservation, Telephone Operator, Seaplane Transfer Coordinator & Speedboat/Dhoni crews). On the daily, I together with my team, we take care of arrivals and departures and ensure that every guest that stay at Constance Moofushi has a memorable stay.

**HM: How do you feel to be the newly appointed Front Office Manager?**

AA: Humbled and grateful. All my hard work, commitment and efforts paved the way to become FOM.

**HM: How would you describe the work environment at Constance Moofushi?**

AA: It is a fun place to work. Guests' satisfaction is at its highest as well as employee satisfaction. Moofushi has a chilled environment focusing on friendliness.

**HM: Briefly tell me about your journey in Constance Family.**

AA: I have been with the company for two years.

I joined Constance Moofushi in August 2019 as Assistant

Front Office Manager. Due to pandemic the resort was temporarily closed in March 2020 and since the reopening in November 2020 I was trusted with all the responsibilities of the front office operations. I was promoted to Front Office Manager on 1st August 2021.

**HM: What staff development opportunities are available at the resort?**

AA: In Constance, the focus on development opportunities is very high. There are always training available and opportunities for cross exposure. Constance even has its own development program called BRIGHT. I was on a “Personal Development Plan” which led to my promotion.

**HM: What is your opinion about the Managerial Development Programs held by Constance Moofushi?**

AA: I would say that our Development programs in Constance are well structured that makes the leaders and potential leaders to hone their potentials.

**HM: What makes Constance Moofushi distinct?**

AA: The island itself is very nicely located, but the people of Moofushi is what makes it distinct.

**HM: What has been your**



**most memorable moment at work?**

AA: Every moment with my team is memorable. They never cease to surprise me.

**HM: How do you enjoy your leisure time?**

AA: I enjoy watching football and movies.

**HM: What are the changes you have observed in your 13 years of experience in the tourism and hospitality industry of Maldives?**

AA: With the massive increase in number of flights and opening of more resorts (especially world-renowned brands), Maldives has become a more popular destination. All these leading to Maldives winning multiple prestigious awards. As a Maldivian, I am very proud of how far and how much Maldives has accomplished over these years.



**HM: What do you think is most important to achieve success in the hospitality industry?**

AA: Most important is service from the heart because genuine warmth and hospitality comes out effortlessly, commitment, empathy, and perseverance.

**HM: What are the changes you wish to bring within your sector?**

AA: More locals to be trained and developed in technical and managerial skills, for the locals to flourish in the industry.

**HM: What is your advice for the local talents thriving in the industry?**

AA: To value every opportunity to learn new skills to work hard. The only way to get to the top is to start from the bottom.

# Trans Maldivian Airways Launches Special Aircraft Livery



Trans Maldivian Airways (TMA) has unveiled a new aircraft livery to celebrate the underwater world of Maldives. This special livery aims to promote sustainable continuity of biodiversity and the world's oceans.

The inauguration took place on 11 August 2021 at TMA Seaplane Base and was attended by the Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, who was joined by the managing director of MMPRC, Mr. Thoyyib Mohamed; the chief operating officer and managing director of MACL, Mr. Gordon Andrew Stewart, along with the senior management of Trans Maldivian Airways and other major stakeholders.

At the event, CEO of Trans Maldivian Airways, Mr. A.U.M Fawzy revealed plans to further grow the TMA fleet by bringing in new aircrafts in September and October. He also stated that he is looking forward to the

opening of the New Seaplane Terminal at Velana International Airport, which is set to be a state-of-the-art facility.

Trans Maldivian Airways, recognised as the largest seaplane operator in the world, continues to passionately partake in projects that promote continuity in the seas, oceans and marine life. The new livery offers tourists flying on-board TMA the chance to celebrate the underwater world of Maldives. TMA also actively supports Olive Ridley Project's Marine Turtle Rescue Centre by helping them transport rescued turtles.

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# ILAA MALDIVES PVT LTD CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF SERVICE



ILAA Maldives Pvt Ltd, a one-stop engineering solution provider for resorts, celebrated its 30th anniversary on 22 August 2021. Along with a joyous staff party to mark the occasion, ILAA also carried out social media giveaways and collaborated with Maldives Blood Services to conduct a blood donation camp.

Throughout the past three decades, ILAA has remained committed to playing a key role in providing environmentally sound engineering solutions across the Maldives. The family-owned business supplies world renowned products to upkeep the delicate environment of the resorts in the Maldives. ILAA is the authorized distributor in Maldives for Caterpillar, Total Lubricants, Sany Heavy Machineries and Snap-On Tools.

# Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives Hosts Kite Festival for In-house Guests

Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives recently completed the resort's annual Kite Festival for its in-house guests, with over fifty traditional and modern kite designs brightening up the coast and skies of the island.

The Kite Festival offered guests the opportunity to experience art and local culture coupled with world-class entertainment. Guests participated in kite-making and flying competitions ('Best Kite', 'Furthest Flown Kite', 'Fancy dress like a kite'), as well as activities such as face painting and childrens' games, conducted under strict COVID-19 health & safety regulations and the 'Cinnamon Care' program - The Cinnamon Standard for Care and Cleanliness.



"At Cinnamon, we continue to push the boundary to constantly innovate - putting guests needs, safety above all. I am pleased that we were able to create yet another inspiring moment for our guests in accordance with the brand ethos of Cinnamon," stated Sanjeeva Perera, general manager at Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives. The annual kite festival originally began at the resort in 2018.

Located twenty minutes from Velana International Airport, Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives is an island of both activity and lavish relaxation. The property is operated under Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Sri Lanka's leading hospitality chain with a portfolio of fifteen hotels and resorts in both Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

# Women in Hospitality: Farsa Saeed, Sales Manager, The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort

Farsa Saeed is a sales manager and driving force at The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort. Saeed joined the finest address in the Maldives in 2017 as a sales coordinator and quickly worked her way up to a sales executive and sales manager position. Highly skilled in her role, Saeed expertly manages the Asia Pacific accounts of the hotel, proactively seeks new business for the property, and strategically supports various departments and teams. Prior to The St. Regis Maldives, she was project manager at Maldives Stock Exchange and Maldives Securities Depository. Saeed received her bachelor's degree in Marketing & International Trade from Victoria University and Certificate for International Relations from Maldives National University. When not working for the award-winning luxury resort, Saeed enjoys travelling, reading, meeting new people and learning about different cultures.

**HM: Why did you decide on your chosen career?**

The hospitality industry has so much to offer in terms of opportunities, learning and personal development. It is the most wholesome industry to work in where you have the chance to acquire numerous skills. I wanted to be a part of something that is limitless. Hospitality embraces the whole world - it connects everybody from everywhere.

**HM: Tell me about your passion for your role?**

It warms my heart to meet people from different countries who travel to Maldives and hear them speak about their delightful experience here. Being a Maldivian I am proud to be able to curate such experience for them here at home. It is love to share the stories of Maldivian history and geography with the people I meet from around the world.

**HM: What does your role entail?**

My role is to manage APAC Wholesale Accounts of the resort, represent the resort at domestic and international travel forums and maintain the relationship between our partners and the resort. Apart from that I also organise and curate destination weddings at the resort.



**HM: What kind of things do you do day to day in your role?**

It involves a lot of calls and emails to partners for sure. Apart from that, reporting and analysing the business performance, keeping up with the global news and also assist the off-shore team based in different parts of the world.

**HM: Tell me about where you are from and where you have worked?**

I am from Feydhoo, Addu City. I started my career at The St. Regis Maldives in 2017 as a sales coordinator. Four years later, I am working with this resort as sales manager. It has been a surreal experience and journey so far. I briefly worked

at the MSE & MSD prior to joining SR Maldives. My first job was at Housing Development Finance Corporation as an administrative assistant.

**HM: How has your career shaped you as a person, for instance you worked at the Maldives Stock Exchange and have a degree in marketing & international trade, does this help you in your role?**

My career in hospitality industry has made me a better and informed decision maker even in personal life. Being able to apply the learned skills and knowledge from university is a rewarding experience. Moreover, working with such a diverse team of people, it really helps to understand and appreciate different backgrounds and ways of accomplishing goals.

**HM: What do you love most about the resort you work at?**

The people and their passionate dedication towards

**HM: As a woman in hospitality, what challenges and opportunities have you faced?**

Initially a lot of raised eyebrows and judgement from society for leaving family behind and living among strangers on a remote island. I believe we have come very far from mere 5 years ago. There are more and more women joining the industry and defying the gender stereotyping - proving that women can make a difference here too. In terms of opportunities, I have received many in the past few years which have helped me grow in my role.

**HM: Are there many women in your field to look up to and should there be more?**

There are many to look up to, yet not enough. It is noteworthy that we are making immense progress, but it will take some time to develop a significant number of women in the industry to make an impact. I am extremely pleased



When I first joined, there were very few Maldivian women working at the resort and the industry itself. Over the past four to five years, more fresh graduates have joined the industry and doing an incredible job. Slowly but surely the mind-set of society is changing too. Hopefully soon, women's presence in the industry would be much more than just eight per cent.

**HM: What hobbies do you enjoy when you are not at work?**

I read books and I do love to travel.

**HM: What advice would you give to people entering the industry?**

The industry is full of prospects and you can try different roles within the industry itself until you find what is right for you if you are unsure in the beginning. You will be exposed to many learning opportunities both on the job and off the job which will ultimately help you to build not just your career but yourself as a person. Reach out to the industry professionals - everybody has a story to tell and plenty of advice.

**HM: What ways can women achieve in the hotel industry?**

I believe any woman can achieve whatever she sets her heart and mind on. Women have the ability to drive the hospitality industry in the Maldives and take it to greater heights. We all need a bit of encouragement and support.



the work they do. The combined effort of ensuring that each of our guests has a truly incredible time and create personalised memories that they will cherish for a lifetime. Apart from that I love the inspirations that shaped The St. Regis Maldives on Vommuli Island as well as the unique creations that this beautiful resort has pioneered.

to be a part of a company such as Marriott International that drives and encourages women to step forward.

**HM: What changes have you seen in the industry and the resort itself during the time you have worked at the resort?**

**HM: Are there many opportunities for women at your resort?**

Yes, we have more and more opportunities for women in different roles at the resort. The opportunities are open for those who are interested to join the industry. It is only a matter of your passion, dedication and effort.

# Feel the Beat of the Maldives with Jennifer Dons, Music Curator at W Maldives



Escape to W Maldives where the sound of the waves drumming against the infinity pool provides the perfect soundtrack to life as you luxuriate in a wonderland of white-sand beaches, turquoise lagoons and breathtaking reefs. From the moment you step onto this heart shaped island playground, get ready to welcome infinite days amplified by the only Music Curator in the Maldives.

Jennifer Dons is passionate about her role as Music Curator for W Maldives, a role she has held since September 2019. The talented DJ who hails from Tenerife in Spain, brings the soul of the Canaries to this island nation, giving guests at W Maldives the backstage access to what is new and next in the music and spinning the decks in paradise.

As music is foundational to every W experience around

the globe, W Maldives, part of W Hotels, connects the crowd through the sound of the moment and sets the scene. Guests can enjoy their luxury escape through the curated music of Jennifer Dons across the property. Be it on the monthly full moon dinner at Fire Beach, weekly Get Wet pool party or daily Sunset Spin at SIP watching the golden hour while sipping cocktails. Jennifer Dons, the face and voice of W Maldives' passion for music, owes her love for music from her childhood memories with her father who is a former DJ.

Escape at W Maldives and tap into the expertise of Jennifer Dons as she delivers energy and aspirational scene for music programming that draws a crowd. She truly believes she has 'music in her soul' and loves mixing the stunning colours of the Maldivian sunsets with music as she indulges the resort's guests love of house music. Hotelier Maldives catches up with her for an exclusive interview.



**HM: Tell me about your background and where you grew up?**

JD: I was born in Tenerife, Canary Islands, in Spain. My father was a DJ, and he instilled the passion for music in me. I grew up listening to music every day and I have a lot of good memories. He taught me a lot about the culture of music.

**HM: How does it feel to be the Music Curator for W Maldives?**

JD: I'm so happy to be here and so proud to be part of the W Maldives family. I am almost finishing my second year here and I'm so excited about the new adventures for my upcoming third year. This is my island, my home, my special music place. I love mixing the stunning colours of the Maldivian sunsets with music. It's the most memorable experience in my life, living in one small island in the middle of the Indian Ocean and making

soundtracks for our guests.

**HM: Tell me about how you got into DJing?**

JD: It was 2007 and I went for a party in a club in Tenerife. I was speaking with the resident DJ about music, and I told him that I was doing sessions to listen in my car. He said, "come tomorrow, you will play!" And I did! I went the next day with ten CDs and I started my career. It was the best decision of my life.

**HM: You were working in Tenerife before coming over to the Maldives, what is different about playing to Spanish market and Maldives market?**

JD: I worked for a few months in Puerto Rico and moved to Madrid before coming here. The Puerto Rico experience was exciting. All the places are completely different, also in the same club, every night could be different. In Maldives, the

guests love house music, and this is great! Maldives is a fancy place to listen to elegant music.

**HM: You are one of the few female DJs in the Maldives, how do you deal with the male attention?**

JD: It's easy. The character of people here is very open and I'm comfortable. Men around me are kind and respectful. They are part of my family here.

**HM: What is the best advice you've been given?**

JD: The best advice I've received was from my father – days before he passed away, he told me: "Live your life Jennifer, don't be scared and go achieve your dreams."

**HM: If you could change anything about the industry, what would it be?**

JD: It's a really difficult question. I will ask for more respect for women DJs. We need to support each other, and our little world is full of competition between us. We must help each other more.

**HM: What was your takeaway from the Cercle event, and do you hope there will be many more events of this nature in future?**

JD: It was a great experience. I was so excited, and everything was perfect. They are a very professional and talented team. I made new friends in the industry, and I can't wait for our next big project.

**HM: Do you have a music genre preference?**

From a personal perspective, I grew up listening to salsa music and I still love listening to it. Professionally, of course, it is always House Music.

**HM: Why are there so few female DJs?**

JD: It was considered a male profession. Nowadays, it's more common to see more girls behind DJ booth and this is very cool. To be honest, when



I started DJing, it was very difficult for me, fourteen years ago but I never gave up.

**HM: How do you keep up with the latest music?**

JD: It's my job, every day I must update my music. The latest, what's new and what's next! There are a lot of artists sending me their tracks, and every day I spend around two hours to listen and buy new tracks.

**HM: How do you prepare before a gig?**

JD: I am always nervous before a gig. If it's a big event, I can't even eat before. It's a part of my passion, feelings, and desire to give my best by connecting with the crowd. After mixing two first songs, all the nervousness disappears.

**HM: What is your strategy for getting a crowd going?**

JD: After 14 years working in this industry, I can connect with the people. I need to read their minds and guess what they want to listen. We call it "dance floor psychology." I was born to make the people happy through music.

**HM: What does music mean to you?**

JD: Music is everything in my life. Through the music, I can make people happy and this is

the most important thing. Over the years, I learned a lot about how to make people dance or how to make them sit and just enjoy the music. It is not about the job but the philosophy I live for. I can listen to music everywhere: sound of the waves or someone's laughter. My most favorite session at W Maldives is the Sunset Spin at SIP where I can mix sounds with the most beautiful stage in the world," said Jennifer.

**HM: What first got you into music?**

JD: Music is my life; I was born with music in my heart.

**HM: What inspires you to make music?**

JD: Everything, music is everywhere: in the waves, in the birds, in the beats of your heart.

**HM: What is your creative process like?**

JD: I always have something on my mind. It's hard for me to create a song because I'm a perfectionist and very self-critical.

**HM: Who would you most like to collaborate with?**

JD: I always wanted to collaborate with Erick Morillo. But sadly, he passed away one year ago. I loved the passion that he showed when he was

on stage, you could feel his vibes.

**HM: If you could go open a show for any artist, who would it be?**

JD: It be an honor for me to do it with every DJ that I did before and I will do in the future.

**HM: What is one message you would give to your fans?**

JD: Music is food for the soul. You can never be alone if you are listening to music, so make music your happy place. See you on the dance floor! Don't walk, DANCE!

**HM: What advice do you have for new DJ's aspiring to be you?**

JD: Be strong, be yourself and please, never give up. Work hard and stay humble.

**HM: What is next for you?**

JD: I'm learning how to flow. I'm in a period of my life where I'm focused on living in the moment, CARPE DIEM, and I am not thinking too much in the future, of course I have goals and dreams, and I want to remain part of W, but just now, I'm enjoying the moment.

# Oevaali Art Shop Maldives

From being simply an idea between sisters in 2015 as a boutique online store, Oevaali Art Shop has become a fully operational eCommerce and Retail outlet offering worldwide delivery. Serving individual local and international customers; with a wonderful all-Maldivian full-time team supporting daily operations; and strong brand presence all around the archipelago, with a vibrant portfolio of over 60 corporate clients engaging our services for bespoke merchandise, or as resort boutique stockists.



There is no doubt that travel shoppers have become increasingly diversified in their purchasing habits over the past decades, becoming more and more conscious of mass-factory produced 'souvenirs', heralding the introduction of a much more wholesome business model: local, artisanal, Maldivian-designed products. With every purchase of an Oevaali Art Shop product, the artists and designers behind it benefit directly. When souvenirs come from local artisans, it channels revenue from tourism back into our communities. As more hoteliers, resorts and local businesses come on board, we are realizing the full socio-economic potential of this partnership.

**For prospective stockists:** Oevaali Art Shop's retailing products from jewelry, accessories, notebooks to hand-poured coconut soy candles and more, are available at discounted rates for stockists meeting minimum order quantities. Tiered discount packages are aligned with total quantity requested, to suit purchasing needs at any level.

**For bespoke designs & Merchandise:** Creating custom products and merchandise just a click away with Oevaali Art Shop. From conception to completion, a comprehensive design and production service is provided by a team of Artists and Designers who become a natural extension to the client's creative team. Projects are fully aligned with the values and aesthetics of the client's brand, making bespoke production projects absolutely seamless from start to finish.

**For prospective art for interior projects:** Interior designers, businesses, hotels and individuals have commissioned Oevaali Art Shop to create beautiful art pieces in an array of various mediums. Oevaali Art Shop's founders and partners specialise in creating site-specific artwork in an array of mediums, and welcome the opportunity to fill your spaces with colours of Maldives.



Working with Oevaali Art Shop starts with 100% Maldivian art and design, internationally sourced materials and best practices, and finally, crafting and putting it all together exclusively for their clients. Oevaali Art Shop's team is dedicated to collaborate on boutique offerings, corporate merchandise and gifting, with authentically Maldivian-designed, contemporary and polished keepsakes designed to keep client brands top-of-mind.

To organize a meeting or a call for a more detailed discussion, Oevaali Art Shop can be reached via email at [partners@oevaaliartshop.com](mailto:partners@oevaaliartshop.com).





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## Helen Malmgren Appointed Director of Sales & Marketing at St Regis Maldives



Malmgren most recently led the sales and marketing department at Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi from 2018 to 2020 as commercial director. Prior to the Maldives, she served as director of luxury sales for Hilton Hotels & Resorts, (Europe, Middle East and Africa) for the global portfolio of Waldorf Astoria and Conrad hotels and resorts in assigned geographic markets. She was the director of sales for Hilton Worldwide, (Southeast Asia) from 2013 to 2015. She also led and managed the Southeast Asia regional sales team, drove revenue growth to Hilton managed hotels in Asia Pacific and to 14 hotel brands globally, proactively developing, shaping, and closing new and repeat business.

Furthermore, Malmgren assisted with the opening of Waldorf Astoria Beijing in the Commercial function and also held positions including director of business development for Waldorf Astoria Shanghai on the Bund in 2011 to 2013, and director of sales & marketing for Bristol Buenaventura, Panama.

“Helen Malmgren’s extensive international experience with luxury hotels, resort openings and global sales make her the perfect fit for The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort,” said Vincent Pauchon, general manager, St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort. “Her talent and expertise will further support our testament and commitment to excellence in our signature services, world class amenities, and superior experiences, that guests anticipate when visiting our resort.”

Helen Malmgren has joined St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort at as the resort’s new director of sales and marketing.

## Maurice Van Den Bosch Appointed General Manager at Coco Bodu Hithi

Coco Collection has appointed Maurice Van Den Bosch as general manager of Coco Bodu Hithi, Maldives. The Australian-Dutch citizen brings in over twenty years of experience in hotel management.

Maurice most recently led the pre-opening team at Le Meridian Maldives Resort & Spa. His experience in managing resorts in the Maldives began in 2017 as resort manager of Ozen by Atmosphere. He later joined Atmosphere Kanifushi as general manager, before being promoted to vice president of operations for Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts in 2019. Back home in Australia, Maurice also worked in food & beverage management and event management in multiple hotels including Novotel Pacific Bay Resort and Ayers Rock Resort.

Drawing upon the unique selling points of Coco Bodu Hithi, Maurice will be focusing on elevating the guest experience and streamlining resort operations in the wake of these challenging times.

“When it comes to management, I truly believe in the idea of ‘All for one and one for All’. The success of the resort can only be achieved with the success of the team that operates it. For me, there is no better achievement than having a team that is empowered to provide the best of service and challenge themselves to new heights,” he said.

Maurice is also looking forward to introducing some new projects



and festive delights at Coco Bodu Hithi. “Already on the horizon are a new dining concept and a new kids’ hangout that will be added to the long list of services already on the island. Both will have a very natural relaxed atmosphere component to them. We will be looking to have a beachside dinner with a traditional Maldivian menu where guests can chill out and enjoy a cold beverage while being able to look out over the horizon and soak in the palate of colours that only the Maldives can provide. The Kids’ hangout zone will consist of activities leaning more towards crafts and horticulture, with an area also to laze and relax when it’s time to wind down after a full day of exploring the island and swimming all day long.”

## Monika Adlakha Appointed Marketing and PR Manager at LUX\* South Ari Atoll Resort & Villas



LUX\* South Ari Atoll Resort & Villas has appointed Monika Adlakha as the resort’s new marketing and public relations manager. With a broad spectrum of experience across media and communication, Monika brings in over 18 years of experience to the role. Based at the island, she will be responsible for planning, developing and implementing the resort’s marketing, communications and PR strategy. She will be reporting to Roshan Radhay, vice president, sales and marketing, Maldives and GCC.

Monika holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Journalism (H) from the Delhi University, India, and has been associated with leading media publications including Mid-Day, Hindustan Times and Peaklife Magazine. In her corporate avatar, specialising in sustainability, she has conceptualised various campaigns with organisations, including Cox and Kings and Vodafone India. In 2015, she pursued her Masters in Photography from the Light and Life Academy in Ooty, India, and has done independent projects with many hotels and restaurants in India, Turkey, U.A.E. and Indonesia, including Shangri-La, Hilton and J.W.Marriott. Before joining the LUX\* family, she was working with Reethi Faru Resort, Maldives, in the same capacity.

Speaking about her new role, Monika said, “LUX\* South Ari Atoll truly represents the luxe way in hospitality and it’s a sheer delight to be a part of the family. I love the challenges that come with aligning travel and hospitality ethos with that of sustainability to bring about a real change. I’m looking forward to this next chapter, continuing to put the brand’s creative heritage and commitment to help people celebrate life centre-stage and truly represent the values that LUX\* stands for.”



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## Elise Rimbaud, Director of Spa and Wellness, OZEN Reserve Bolifushi



OZEN Reserve Bolifushi has recently appointed Elise Rimbaud as the director of spa and wellness. An experienced wellness practitioner herself, Elise is responsible for the wellness programs at ELE | NA Elements Of Nature, the spa and wellness centre at Bolifushi island.

After graduating from the University of London with a BA Management degree, Elise started her professional career in 2007 in sales. Since then, her passion for wellness has led her to travel throughout Asia where she studied and practised alternative therapies including Naturopathy, Yoga, Reiki, and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). Prior to joining Bolifushi, Elise has successfully managed prestigious Spa and Wellness facilities across Europe, Africa, and the Middle East

## Ahmed Naufal, Director of Sales and Marketing, Sun Siyam Olhuveli

Ahmed Naufal joins Sun Siyam Olhuveli as the resort's new director of sales and marketing.

Prior to this, Naufal was director of sales for Mövenpick Resort Kuredhivaru Maldives, Radisson Blu Maldives and Raffles Maldives Meradhoo. He has also worked as the sales manager for Dhevanafushi Maldives Luxury Resort in 2017, a property that was managed by Accor Hotels. Naufal took his first managerial assignment at Baros Maldives, where he was promoted from reservations and sales executive to cluster assistant sales and reservations manager in 2015.



## Ahmed Jihad, Corporate General Manager, Cocoon Maldives and You & Me Maldives



Cocoon Maldives welcomes Ahmed Jihad 'Jay' as its new general manager. With this appointment, Jay becomes the corporate general manager for both Cocoon resorts in Maldives.

Throughout his twenty years of experience in the hospitality industry, Jay has worked with renowned 5-star luxury brands in the Maldives in various managerial positions including operations manager, resort manager and general manager.

"We are confident that under the leadership and guidance of Jay and all our hardworking team members, we will be able to bring Cocoon and You & Me to new heights and strategically position both properties as the leading brands in Maldives luxury resort segment," said Alessandro Azzola (Alex), Managing Director of Cocoon and You & Me Maldives.



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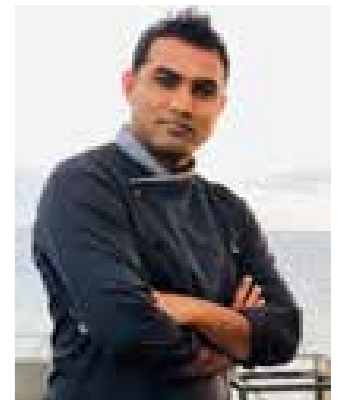


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# Maldivian Sushi Chefs, Yes They Do Exist!



is a lack of professionally trained chefs, there are actually several highly trained Maldivian sushi chefs. These chefs all share a passion for the industry and whilst each have evolved in their own way, they all started their journeys as apprentices and then seized the opportunities presented to them gaining international exposure and training from world class chefs via international competitions, their work environment or from working abroad.



Chef Jameel Ahmed and Chef Ahmed Fatheen, both started their culinary journeys in 2004 and are now two of the leading sushi chefs in the Maldives

The Maldives is a natural paradise, its azure waters home to vibrant sea life interwoven with enticing white strips of sand, which have spawned a flourishing tourism industry that even the pandemic couldn't dampen. New resorts are opening on a seemingly continuous basis. Each with the aim of wowing their discerning audience.

Japanese cuisine is popular the world over, so with a plethora of luxurious resorts all seeking to provide the best culinary experience, it is no surprise that resorts now feature a specialised Japanese restaurant, many of which are linked to, or have taken inspiration from, renowned names such as Nobu and Zuma.

When people think Japanese and sushi, they often have raw fish in mind. A menu will typically include sashimi, nigiri and maki, all traditional Japanese fish dishes. Sushi is actually the prepared vinegared rice, while Sashimi is raw fish or meat, but no rice. Nigiri is a combination of sushi and sashimi and Maki

is layers of fish, vegetables and sushi rice rolled in sheets of seaweed.

Making delicious, melt in the mouth sushi and sashimi requires a skill in both preparation and plating that is difficult to learn and takes time to perfect, especially as the raw fish makes them one of the high risk foods. Therefore, having skilled chefs that understand how to source, prepare and store the raw ingredients safely is even more important.

The Maldives can offer some of the highest-quality sushi and sashimi in tandem with stunning architecturally crafted environments, with views guaranteed to provide an unforgettable dining experience. Prestigious resorts attract some of the leading sushi masters lured by the challenge of being able to showcase their skill and set their restaurant firmly on the foodie map. Other resorts utilise the skill of international chefs that 'specialise' in Japanese cuisine, whilst a few utilize the talent on their doorstep as, despite a perception that there



Chef Fatheen was first attracted to the art of Japanese cuisine whilst working with Four Seasons in Canada, he was excited by the intricacy of the dishes and challenges they presented which drew him to a mastery he has perfected over the years. The skills and passion ignited in Canada were further honed on his return to the Maldives by world class mentors. Fatheen further developed his eye for detail and skill for creating tantalising flavours through various culinary competitions, scooping numerous awards in local and international competitions. He



### Jameel's top tips for aspiring sushi chefs

#### 1. Learn your products

Know how to assess and ensure the quality of fish, raw fish is a high risk product so there is no room for error. It's important to know how to clean and fillet the fish, how to slice it so that it melts in the mouth and which is the best part of the fish to use for what you are making, for instance the belly part of salmon and tuna is the best for nigari.

#### 2. Take time to get the rice right

Understand that making sushi rice is a specialist procedure, the soaking and cooking need to be spot on so using a timer

now owns and runs The House of Oshi in Hulhumale, the only Japanese restaurant accessible to both locals and tourists where he passes on his skill by tantalising platters and by training and mentoring other aspiring chefs.

his mentor: his persistence and patience rewarded by explanation and demonstrations of the skills required. These skills were further developed during a nine-month cross

Chef Jameel Ahmed started his culinary journey as an apprentice at Four Seasons Kuda Hura, starting in the Italian kitchen which took him to One and Only and then Four Seasons in Texas. It wasn't until he returned to the Maldives and re-joined One and Only in 2007 that he was enticed into the world of Japanese cuisine, a world he has mastered with a quiet, understated confidence that has made him a sought-after sushi chef.



Chef Hiroaki Nakamura was Jameel's inspiration and mentor, but not a natural teacher, however Jameel soon learnt how to watch, question and study

exposure programme at One and Only's Nobu restaurant in Cape Town before returning to Reethi Rah in 2012 as Sous Chef of Tapasake, the resorts Japanese restaurant. In 2017 Jameel took the opportunity of going to Japan and working with Chef Hiro once again in his restaurant Naka Naka, where he relished the immersion of the Japanese craft. He returned in 2018 to join HuvaFen Fushi until his recent appointment as Chef de Cuisine, in charge of IWAWU, the Japanese restaurant at the newly opened Ritz Carlton. IWAWU means 'to celebrate' a fitting title that honours both Chef Jameel and the tantalising Japanese flavours he creates.

is essential. Also having a good vinegar recipe is key, recipes are often a closely guarded secret and only passed on to a trusted few so listen carefully.

#### 3. Always use the best quality ingredients possible and make sure they are stored correctly

If you get the best quality ingredients, you must be able to store them properly. Using a super freezer not only keeps the fish properly but minimises the food safety risk as well.

#### 4. Give it time and be patient

Focus on learning as much

as possible and practicing, attention to detail is important so watch, ask questions and make yourself available to all learning opportunities.

Opportunities for locals entering the culinary field have grown immeasurably over the past decade, with apprenticeship programs remaining an enviable way to fast track those who are dedicated. Several resorts now offer programs, however the Four Seasons apprenticeship scheme coupled with annual visits from Chef Tushikazu Kato has inspired and created more talented sushi chefs this has enabled a Maldivian to hold the position of sushi chef at Four Seasons Landaa Giraavaru for the past 7 years, first by Chef



Mohamed Adil, who passed the baton to his younger brother Chef Ahmed Mazim who in turn passed it to Chef Hasssan Zareer (Kembo) who holds the position today.

### Chef Ahmed Mazim

Mazim joined the apprentice program with zero knowledge, initially inspired by home visits from his older brother Adil, so it seemed natural for him to follow his footsteps. Mazim quickly developed his culinary skills, deciding that Japanese cuisine

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was the area to focus on, as he recognised that very few chefs were skilled at it. He started to watch and practice, gaining knowledge from Chef Kato and his brother, so it was a logical step for him to take over as the sushi chef when the opportunity arose. Mazim's skill was further enhanced by Chef Benito who taught him how to recognise the freshness and quality of raw fish and meat, both of which are extremely important in for sushi and sashimi.

### Mazim's Top Tips

1. Don't jump in too quickly, learn the basics and don't rush, there are no short cuts
2. Understand your ingredients, know how to store them properly to keep them fresh
3. Learn how to identify if your fish is good quality and safe to eat

4. Taste is key with sushi so get the rice right and focus on taste and flavours first before the presentation where you can take inspiration from your surroundings

### Chef Hasssan Zareer (Kembo)

Chef Kembo was inspired as an apprentice when given the opportunity to attend Chef Kato's class on how to make a perfect nigiri. Although he wasn't working in that area, Kembo continued to watch and learn from both Adil and Mazim, moving to the cold kitchen to work with Mazim and further benefit from Chef Kato's annual training. In 2019 Kembo was offered the opportunity to go to Japan for a month and learn from Chef Hirotsugu Tsumotota at the Tokyo sushi academy, where he graduated top of his class. Kembo also credits Executive Chef Jude for his success as he instilled the belief in him that anything was possible 'if you do it with your heart'.

An important skill is the ability to work to consistently high standards when guests are watching, plus being able to communicate with them, both of which Kembo has perfected. He also leads sushi classes for guests and helps train apprentices on the basics of sushi techniques and key skills such as organisation. Kembo looks for those who are passionate, hungry to learn and prepared to practice as getting it right is hard work!

These chefs are just some of those who are proficient in the art of sushi and show that locals are just as talented at sushi as their international colleagues and may even have an edge. Fish are intrinsic to the Maldivian culture so it is unsurprising that chefs with a flair for the delicate and intricate are drawn to the art of sushi and sashimi. Add in the natural friendliness Maldivians are known for, plus a twist of showmanship and you have a recipe for creating an unforgettable culinary experience.

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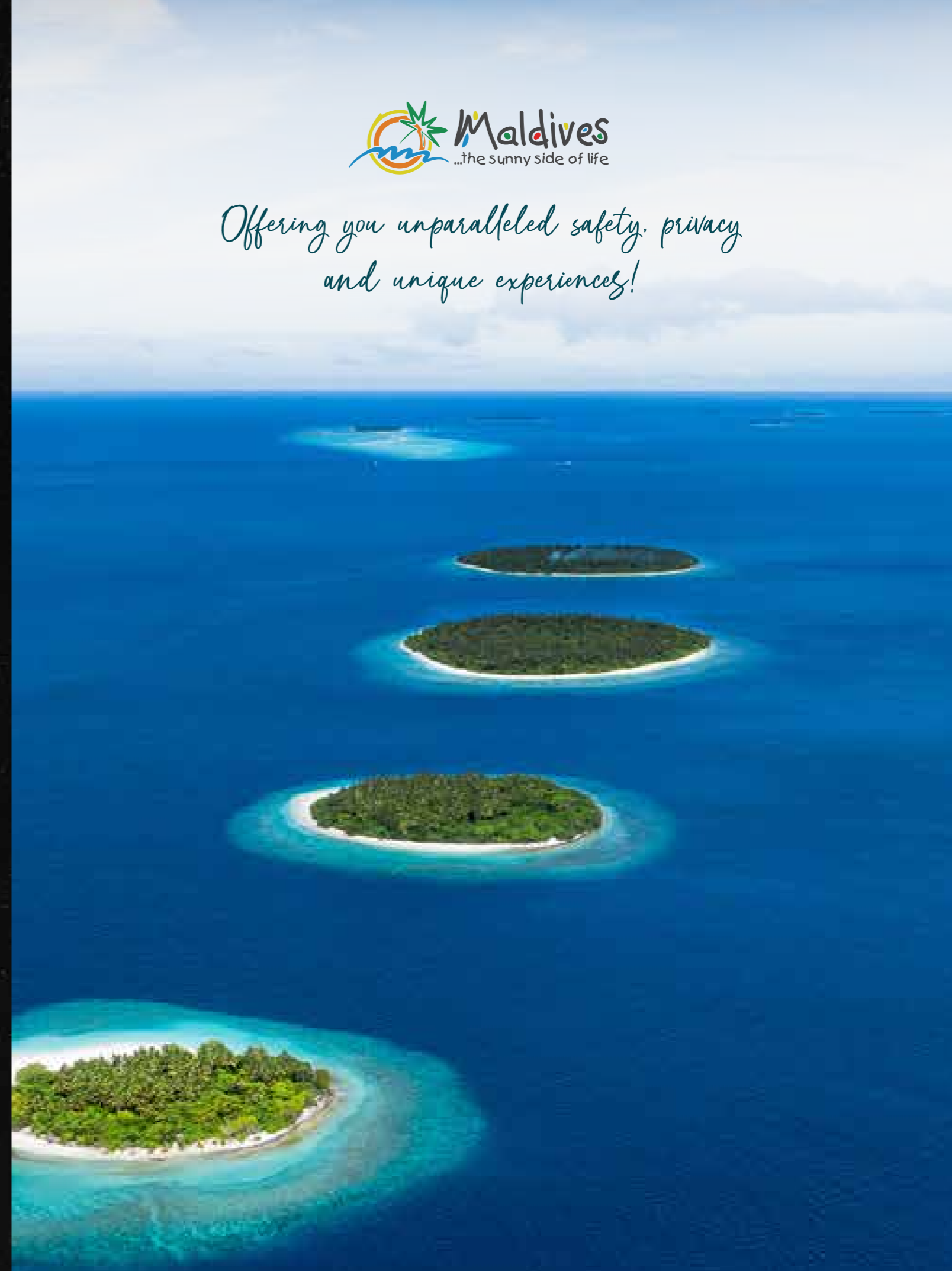
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# Ishan Munaweera,

**ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF AVIATION SERVICES, TALKS EXCLUSIVELY TO HOTELIER MALDIVES ABOUT BUSINESS POST-PANDEMIC**



Aviation Services Pvt Ltd is an airline representation company offering a one-stop shop for any airline who wishes to visit the Maldives. Offering all services to enable an airline to operate to Maldives from supervision, sales and marketing, office space and support with local authorities for licensing and staffing requirements and located in the capital Male’.

IndiGo, represented by Aviation Services was the first Indian airline to commence scheduled flights on the day Maldives re-opened for the South Asian

countries, on 15 July 2021, with flights arriving from Cochin, Bangalore and Mumbai. Operating for IndiGo – the largest airline by far in India, on 21 July, Aviation Services recommenced its Delhi flights to add to the three sectors they already operate, with four flights a week and is now at 100 per cent capacity with daily flights to all four main Indian cities to and from Maldives. To put this into context, IndiGo flights operated until the recent lockdown imposed in May, banning the South Asian passengers arriving in the Maldives and caused a lull of two months. During the lockdown, the company

operated charters to and from Cochin to enable passengers to travel hassle free during this difficult period.

## NEW FLIGHTS LAUNCHED

IndiGo launched flights direct from Male’ to Chennai and Hyderabad for the first time on 21 August to give the airline the highest connectivity from Maldives to India. With six destinations in India covered from Delhi, Bombay, Bangalore, Cochin, Chennai and Hyderabad. Additionally, Chennai has two flights a week and Hyderabad three flights a week.

All other destinations are operated with a daily frequency. From 15 October, the company mentioned that IndiGo will increase to three flights from Chennai per week

and four from Hyderabad making it five flights a day between India and Maldives.

The company also represents Etihad the flagship carrier of UAE. The national carrier operates daily flights to/from Maldives connecting major destinations across the globe via its hub Abu Dhabi, including European sectors, US, Canada and Middle East. According to Munaweera, flights operated unhindered with the recent restrictions. Aviation Services is looking forward to welcoming its other partner carriers such as Alitalia, China Southern, US Bangla and Himalaya within the upcoming months. They are also looking forward to a more established partnership with these carries for the future. For Alitalia, they are the GSA as well for the national carrier of Italy and they hope flights resume this winter with its usual schedules connecting Milan and Rome from November to April.



## PANDEMIC REFLECTIONS

“We are doing well within our business model and cannot grumble given the current situation effecting the entire world and we hope things will get better as time goes by and we come to terms with the pandemic and move forward,” he said.

“The challenges of the last year have been no different to anyone else in the aviation and tourism industries given the fact that these are among the worst affected industries across the world. This impacted many livelihoods in the process and leaving many without a permanent stream of

income. Another major factor is the direct impact of the soaring USD exchange rates and the drop in business due to the lesser demand for travel vs the ample flying options. To put it in other words the pie become smaller whilst the stomachs to feed has increased. This effect is felt more in markets such as Maldives where the outbound segment is very low and is heavily impacted by the restrictions and the lockdowns imposed in other destinations which we used to see clients travelling in the past.

“The pandemic has given us many perspectives, some good – some challenging. Most importantly, it made us stronger and smarter as a human race. We have been thrown into the pot of

fire and this has helped us to understand business in a different perspective and to look at new and innovative ways and means to cater to the market and the demand. We have not faltered in this and maintained our business and managed to keep all our clients happy to the best of our ability within the boundaries of the present situations. We have new challenges now and we have worked out on how to deal with these and make sure we are geared to service a new world, a post covid world, it’s all about how you adjust your mind and yourself to see a better world.”

## RECOVERY

So will we simply have to learn to live with all this or we will actually see the end to the pandemic and go back to doing business as before? “Well as I see it, like it or not, things will never be the same. The business models will be quite different and so will the customer needs, recovery of businesses have already started. We closed the year on a positive note for 2020. It’s how we look at the situation and how we can counter it to increase our business and make profits.

“It’s been a up and down process, I cannot literally recall how many times I have adjusted the yearly P&L

*“The pandemic has given us many perspectives, some good - some challenging. Most importantly made us stronger and smarter as a human race. We have been thrown into the pot of fire and this has helped us to understand business in a different perspective and to look at new and innovative ways and means to cater to the market and the demand.”*

forecasting as we are in a stage where we cannot predict what tomorrow will bring to our plates. The present situation is utterly dynamic and very unpredictable. Our main markets open, close or are restrictive. Changes come thick and fast with new regulations introduced almost daily and sometime overnight with very less warnings. We must be alert, and we need to be prepared to accept these changes and counter these matters for the betterment of the company. These are very trying months and more to come until we see the silver lining in the dark clouds.”

He cautioned, “The industry has suffered immensely, and we are not even closer to pre-pandemic levels, and we may not see these levels soon. It is of course a balancing act in a way, as there have been many airlines which have gone





*“People are still afraid of travel yes, and most would turn a blind eye if it’s not a necessity, but as all pandemics, or near pandemic situations, terror attacks or natural disasters travel has picked up in a short time and we see that happening even right now. I believe the main effect for travel will be the disposable income of the leisure traveller or the corporates budget allocated for such matters with the world economies crashing and feeling the pinch.”*

into liquidation, and many have seized the opportunity to launch new airlines or subsidiaries. IATA is predicting 2021 to be around the figure of 52 per cent vs 2019 and I believe to get back to normal levels we will have to wait until 2023, and that too if we are able to deal with this pandemic situation and bring a close to it and get a handle on the situation.

“The cancellations of flights for many months, covering the overheads of the company whilst we had a zero-income due to the lockdown and restrictions has been the main challenge, yet we have managed to overcome all these issues with strategic thinking and actions thus managing to deliver a positive P&L at the end of 2020 and looking forward to a successive 2021 as well, which is currently on track with our forecasting.

“The company has been in business since 2016 and it has been an upwards trend for us since the inception and 2021 looks fairly on track with our goals.”

Aviation Services work very closely with the entire industry

income of the leisure traveller or the corporates budget allocated for such matters with the world economies crashing and feeling the pinch. The airlines represented by Aviation Services operate with stringent protocols in line with the highest industry standards associated with many regulatory bodies, from cleaning of the aircrafts, disinfecting to the onboard utilises and the equipment along with the replacement of the filters onboard the aircrafts to maintain the highest standards set forth by the authorities and even going beyond. Even the crew, airline staff at airports and any others concerned and connected to the operations are tested many times and made sure the risk factors are bare minimal.”

## LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

and are tied up with most of the Travel Agents and Tour Operators. “The agencies can access our inventory and make bookings, issue their tickets and service their clientele and we are 24/7 available to assist them in case of any troubleshooting is required.”

## ARE PCR TESTS HERE TO STAY?

“Most educated travellers will agree that, taking a PCR test is for your own safety and that of the others around you and your own family. Even though a negative PCR does not mean your 100 per cent Covid free or safe, I would be more concerned if an airline accepted passengers without a negative RTPCR report being produced by the traveller from a reputed entity. People are still afraid of travel yes, and most would turn a blind eye, but as all pandemics, or near pandemic situations, terror attacks or natural disasters, travel has picked up in a short time and we see that happening even right now. I believe the main effect for travel will be the disposable

The company is eagerly anticipating the launch of TSM (Travel Services (Pvt) Ltd) under Best Buy Maldives – a new and interesting concept, again a one-stop shop alike ASM (Aviation Service Maldives). They will offer services to customers, the resorts, the corporates, the individuals whilst targeting key areas such as medical tourism, vacation hunters, pilgrim travellers and expats.

He rounded this interview saying “2022 will be a good challenge for me and the team on the ASM and TSM fronts as we are looking at few more airlines on the passenger and cargo fronts to be launched under our wing making our portfolio larger and more lucrative. These steps are presently being finalized and we hope we will have a positive outcome of all this, and our aspirations and goals will be completed before the middle of next year. I’m hoping this will be a great challenge and a year to look forward to. I’m a firm believer in a saying ‘Effort is important but knowing where to make it makes the difference.’”

# Gulf Air Begins Daily Flights to Maldives

Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain has upgraded its direct flight operations to Velana International Airport from 15 August 2021. According to the airline, the decision to operate daily flights is a response to the growing travel demand by passengers from Bahrain, the GCC and Europe after Maldives relaxed entry restrictions.



Gulf Air’s Acting Chief Executive Officer Captain Waleed AlAlawi stated: “The decision to increase our flights to Male is a classic example of demand and supply. We witnessed a growing demand for travel to the Maldives, being a year-round

destination and one that’s open for tourism. Going daily with our flights is a fantastic feature for passengers to be able to depart or return on any day of the week depending on their calendars.”

Gulf Air is among the six international airlines operating to Maldives from Middle East. The airline resumed flights on 13 December 2020 with two weekly scheduled flights.

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# QATAR AIRWAYS TITLED AIRLINE OF THE YEAR 2021



AirlineRatings, the world's only safety, product, and COVID rating website, has awarded airline of the year to Qatar Airways. The state-owned flag carrier of Qatar surpassed Air New Zealand and Singapore Airlines for the top spot, followed by Qantas, Emirates, and Cathay Pacific.

"Airline Ratings' Excellence awards are aptly named, for, at every touchpoint, excellence is the goal at Qatar Airways led by its inspirational Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker," said AirlineRatings.com Editor-in-Chief Geoffrey Thomas. "His drive for perfection has led to many improvements in both Airbus and Boeing aircraft and travelers across the world are better off because of the drive and the pursuit of excellence of Qatar Airways."

The airline was also recognised as the Best Middle East Airline, Best Catering and the Best Business Class. This marks the third year in a row Qatar Airways has achieved the Best Business Class accolade, recognising its patented Qsuite product. "It leaves little to chance, and our judges rated it as one of the best overall business-class products they had seen. It sets a standard to which some airlines can only aspire," said Mr. Thomas.

Qatar Airways is one of the fastest growing airlines in the world and hosts many of the industry's firsts, including the first airline to complete IATA's important IOSA safety audit and the first to be fully COVID audited and compliant by both AirlineRatings and Skytrax.

The airline was the first international airline to resume operations to the Maldives after border reopening and currently operates four daily flights between Doha and Male.

# Purchasing Power: Ahmed Asim, Purchasing Manager, Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives

In this interview with Hotelier Maldives, Ahmed Asim, the Purchasing Manager for Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives, speaks about the ideal supplier and his most successful deals.

**Hotelier Maldives: How long have you been in purchasing?**

Ahmed Asim: I started my career in hotel industry back in 2007, so it's been 14 years since I have been in purchasing.

**HM: What do you look for in a product?**

AA: When choosing a product, I consider the price, availability, the quality/reliability of the product, and its technical support.

**HM: What area of the hotel are you most proud of?**

AA: There is no specific area as I'm proud of all the areas of our operation.

**HM: Tell us about one of your most successful deals.**

AA: I have been very fortunate to have met many professionals in my career.

It has been said that over the past couple of years, procurement departments are becoming increasingly powerful. They dictate how negotiations unfold as value propositions are torn apart and prices lowered until vendors can hardly think straight. It sounds like a horror story, right? But it doesn't have to be that way. Dealing with procurement is always going



to be a challenge, but if you understand their game, it will be much easier to play yours.

I would say that my most successful deal was once the supplier has expressed interest to the resort supply business, I make myself available to answer any questions they have. Next, I elaborate on any of the details surrounding the product that they are not familiar with (i.e. features, benefits, etc.). I believe that when a supplier is making an expensive purchase, they like to have time to fully

understand all the features, and how each feature will benefit them. I also like to explain what makes one company (i.e., manufacturer) preferable to another. By representing a company with a superior product (and a high level of customer support) I have been very successful at landing most of my purchases for the hotel.

Every deal I have negotiate which saves the resort money, whilst sourcing the highest quality, is a successful deal. I have lead negotiations on multiple container deals

over the years with many international and local suppliers as well as freight forwarders, which has been integral in the resort operations.

**HM: What does a supplier have to do to impress you?**

AA: Well, what impresses me the most is when the supplier is honest, reliable and go above and beyond with their service. Provide us the best quality product and deliver the goods on schedule.

# Marc van Bergen, Managing Director of Heilbron Hospitality Talks about Butler Training

Grand Park Kodhipparu in the Maldives began their butler training programme in 2019 for the lifestyle hosts with follow up trainings in 2020. However, due to the pandemic, this was delayed for a year. Now things are back on track and, Heilbron Hospitality is assisting the team with restarting and reviving their energy after the challenging months of lockdown, restoring motivation, prioritising work/private life balance, and finding a place in the new normal.



Hotelier Maldives interviews Marc van Bergen, managing director of Heilbron Hospitality, based in the Netherlands, about butler training who says: "It is heart-warming to see that everybody in the team is participating in the training and giving it their best. While guests are returning to the Maldives, this is a right time to create together service excellence.

"The role of the butler has changed enormously over the years. Today, the main task of the Maldivian butler or thakuru, lifestyle host or guest experience maker is to look after his/her guests, providing them with personalised service based not only on the guest profile but also on cultural background and international etiquette to ensure maximum satisfaction and the guests return.

Marc goes on to explain, training the next generation of butlers, we share useful knowledge, skills, and techniques. All our modules are customised in accordance with the resorts SOP's, and we prepare the trainees to carry out their predetermined tasks."

Heilbron Hospitality offers professional butler service

and communication, guest interaction, detail retention and inner mindfulness to anticipating and exceeding guest expectations by crafting intuitive and detailed individualistic service. The training includes sessions centred around inner mindfulness and balance, enabling the participants to grow not only as service providers but also as individuals.

## The Alliance of Professional Butler Trainers

Heilbron Hospitality is one of the founding members of The Alliance of Professional Butler Trainers, an organisation founded earlier this year bringing together globally recognised professional butler schools to guarantee their working practices and ensuring the correct Butler Training standards. It is a global network of Butler Training Companies with integrity, value and professionalism who have agreed to give the Butler World meaningful input and to share knowledge in many different



areas, including policies, expertise, and organisational development. Heilbron Hospitality is also a member of The International Guild of Professional Butlers.

## What makes a good butler?

Marc explains 'in one word: passion!' "Personalised butler services extend beyond welcoming guests at the arrival jetties and delivering fruit to the villas. A butler must be able to organise the complete stay of the guests, know what their preferences are, follow the guest's time schedule during their holiday and perhaps most importantly, he or she needs to be able to anticipate the unique needs and preferences of the guests.

"That the butler reflects the brand or resort, goes without saying. It is important that they are not only trained in all aspects of personalised service but also in formal and informal etiquette. A wide knowledge of cuisine, wine, and mixology is a pre. Other qualities are being organised, discrete, calm under

pressure, able to work under tight deadlines and patience." Currently, several of the world's top training companies are associated with this exclusive group. The difference is very much in the training methods. All cover the same subjects, assisting teams to deliver top service. Then it is up to clients to decide which training method fits their team best.

Heilbron Hospitality is specialised in hotel and resort training, working with local staff whose English is not their mother tongue. This asks for a specific approach. Furthermore, we have a programme designed to assist our clients to roll out a programme post training to monitor the trainees and to ensure that the momentum of the training is continued. Most importantly, none of our trainings are in a classroom set up. You don't create butlers sitting around a table and listening to theory. Where resorts want to make a difference and offer a signature and custom-designed Villa Service for their guests, there are butlers. Everything that a guest needs during their stay is taken care of by the various departments. The butler is there to add the personalised touch and to create memorable moments.

Marc explains: "Very often resorts only focus on guests having a birthday, an anniversary or a wedding. It's our belief that every guest should have at least one memorable moment during their stay in the resort. And that moment needs to be customised to perfection. Training in the Maldives requires some additional skills. Our trainers focus on technical and vocational education giving Maldivians the necessary skills to compete for butler jobs in hospitality concentrating on the butlers and those who want to become a butler.

"Hotels and resorts work tirelessly to exceed guests' expectations. The challenge is that guests' expectations proliferate daily. A warm reception upon arrival, local welcome amenities, a 24-hour gym with brand name equipment, high speed Internet and a points Reward Loyalty Programme are all standard, predictable and generic. Today's guests demand unique,

unexpected and engaging experiences during their stay. "During the training, we assist the trainees to become more familiar with the concept of intuitive service, to increase their levels of empathy, to observe and understand their guests and to know where to find the necessary clues in order to creatively provide memorable experiences for their guests."

## How has the pandemic affected butler training?

Heilbron Hospitality is active around the world, working with butlers from all corners of the globe. They are not only active in the Maldives but also China, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, UK, Netherlands, Russia, Montenegro, Croatia, Portugal, Turkey and USA.

As such they have an international talent pool of American, Bangladeshi, Belgian, British, Dutch, Canadian, Chinese, Egyptian, Ethiopian, French, Indonesian, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Kenyan, Malawian, Maldivian, Mauritian, Moroccan, Nepalese, Philippine, Portuguese, Russian, Saudi Arabian, Spanish, Sri Lankan, South African, Swiss, Thai, Tajik, Turkish, Ugandan, Ukrainian, Uzbek and Zimbabwean butlers – and more.

Most of their clients are in the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and the USA and the company has full teams of professional trainers located in South Africa, France, England, and the Netherlands. Depending on the needs of clients and their teams is the way they compile their teams.

Since March 2020 Heilbron has conducted several virtual butler trainings for clients in Asia, Europe and the USA, and as the world has opened up, they plan to expand again.

Marc says: "We all know that online training is not the ideal option but when there were no flights and travel was restricted, it was a good alternative. For pre-opening projects, we do not advise a virtual training. Many resorts did everything possible to support their teams during the pandemic while being completely closed or only open for local guests and some expats. Guests are on their way back.

It is amazing to see that our industry is getting back on its feet, although training budgets are tight all over the spectrum, not only in the Maldives. Various hotels and resorts see training as an essential element where employee care is more than just a standard. We currently assist the various teams to understand and adapt to the new normal in Hospitality and assist in the introduction of the many new procedures."

Raffaele Solferino general manager of Grand Park Kodhipparu said: "Your holistic approach to the training with technical, soft skills and mindfulness brings a new level of learning to all our team members. They thoroughly enjoyed the training. Their eagerness to use their new skills and knowledge in their daily interaction with our guests and colleagues after the training is an inspiration to all. They are charged with energy, passion and commitment."



Meanwhile, Frans Westraadt, former resident manager of Six Senses said: "Your inspirational training along with the materials shared will enhance the capabilities of our GEMS team and will definitely be instrumental for our host to live the company vision by bringing emotional luxury' to our guests. Heilbron Hospitality is a flexible, modest, discreet and with a

superb eye for detail. They know how to add that extra special touch that makes an outstanding contribution to our guests. We heartily endorse Heilbron Hospitality to any luxury Resorts worldwide."

JOALI commended Heilbron's training which was 'carried with a lot of zeal and professionalism by the team'. "The services rendered were of high calibre and the shared knowledge and attention to detail have aided our front office team to set up the structure for the butler service of the resort."

And Vakkaru Maldives said: "The key factors for choosing Heilbron Hospitality is your in-depth knowledge and experience as well as your expertise in hospitality, and dedication to our needs and requirements. Showing flexibility and dedication in honing the skills of our team members your methods of training have created an impact to them as

# INTERVIEW WITH NI KETUT ARIANI, SPA MANAGER AT REETHI FARU RESORT

Ni Ketut Ariani is the spa manager at Reethi Faru Resort's Coconut Spa. We interviewed the experienced hotelier from Indonesia to learn about her role at the resort, her advice to aspiring hoteliers and discover more about the Balinese-specialised Coconut Spa.

**Hotelier Maldives:** Tell me a bit about yourself and your career. How did you come to the Maldives?

My name is Ni Ketut Ariani, but everybody calls me Ari. I am the youngest of three siblings. I graduated from Spa training school as a Spa therapist and have previously worked in several Spas Hotels in Bali.

I was interested in working in the Maldives because it is such a beautiful place. I also knew as this is a luxury lifestyle in Resort, I could learn more, improve the way to serve Guests better and then I also wanted to help my family financially.

So when Coconut Spa was looking for a new team member, I directly applied for the job.



**HM:** Can you describe a day in your life as a Spa Manager at Reethi Faru?

My daily life as a Spa manager is organising the schedule, coordinating with the therapists, welcoming the Guests and explaining all our procedures, listening to their needs and finding the best treatments, and working in close cooperation with the Resort, evaluating how to promote the best the Spa.

**HM:** What do you think are some skills and attributes that should be present in a good Spa Manager?

A good Spa manager should have good leadership, working in harmony with the team, knowledge of the wellness industry, a high level of understanding of the importance of a good marketing strategy with goal orientation and a high standard of presentation.



**HM:** Can you guide me through the Coconut Spa? What are the facilities and treatments available?

Coconut Spa combines Balinese traditions with a French touch as all our team members are coming from Bali and our owners are French. The Spa in Reethi Faru have all the facilities guests can dream of having in a Spa. From Jacuzzi to steam room, sauna, beautiful massage rooms with private Jacuzzi and all this, surrounded by an amazing tropical garden. We also have an extensive

choice between massage, facials, body treatments, hair treatments, manicures, pedicures, romantic packages etc.

**HM:** What has been the most popular spa treatment among guests at the Resort?

Our Balinese Traditional Massage and our Coconut Spa Signature Massage.



**HM:** The pandemic has dramatically reshaped traveller attitudes towards health and wellness. What are the changes brought to the Spa as a response to this?

This pandemic has taught us a lot.

Before reopening, we have studied how to implement strict health protocols for all our guests and staff with our owners.

All our therapists are wearing face masks and face shields, using both hand wash and hand sanitiser before the treatment, all this creating a sense of security among our guests to do any treatments they wish to have without any worries.

**HM:** As a Spa Manager in Reethi Faru Maldives, what do you love most about your job?

My favourite part of this job is talking to and discovering so many different people; this is what I like the most. I also enjoy working here because the management and our team members are very professional, friendly and cooperative, and let's also tell the truth; this island is so beautiful.

**HM:** What's your advice to hoteliers aspiring to get to your position?

It is all about hard work, dedication, willingness to improve skills, and having a good character as this job requires the management of employees.





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# Good Food Maldives: Bringing Healthy Food Brands from around the World



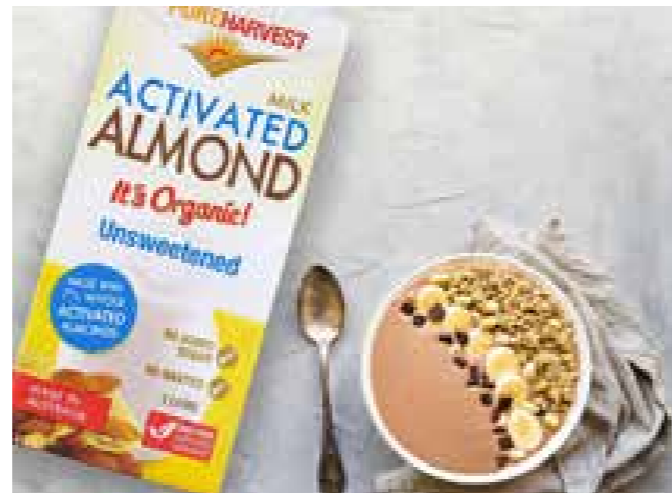
Amidst the rising global trend of healthy eating and conscious consumerism, a passionate team of locals in the Maldives began sourcing organic grocery product lines from markets such as Australia and Europe.

Good Food Maldives (GFM) offers high-quality organic and natural food products by renowned brands around the world. From baking products like gluten-free flours to beverages like organic teas, the GFM catalogue boasts a diverse range of healthy products that are not only delicious, but are also produced by some of the top international brands that are trusted by millions of people.

## Gluten-Free Noodles & Flours - Orgran

Known as the pioneers of gluten-free in Australia, Orgran was the first to produce gluten-free pasta from rice and corn as a substitute of wheat pasta. Consuming gluten-free foods helps to ease digestive symptoms, reduce chronic inflammation, boost energy and it also promotes weight loss. The Orgran pasta range includes Corn & Vegetable Shells, Quino Penne, Buckwheat Spirals and Lasagna Mini Sheets.

Orgran also promotes gluten-free and wheat-free baking with their high-quality flours and a variety of mixes. Its Self Raising and Plain Flour serves as an all-purpose flour for your baking needs. The Orgran No Egg Egg Replacer lets you create delicious cakes and baked goods with a similar texture to those with eggs and is free from the eight most common food allergies in the world.



## Plant-Based Milk - PureHarvest

PureHarvest, Australia has been sharing simple, healthy and organic food products with the world since 1979. Its plant-based milks are gluten-free, lactose-free, GMO-free and vegan. The Organic Almond milk is made from 7 per cent activated almonds and no added sugars, while PureHarvest's refreshing Coco Quench is Australia's most popular coconut milk beverage. Other products include Oat Milk and Soy Milk.

Good Food Maldives is the exclusive distributor of PureHarvest in Maldives and offers the widest selection of organic and plant-based milk by the brand.

## Gluten-Free Snacks - Nature's Superfoods

Nature's Superfoods' Superfood Bites make sure your snacking cravings are satisfied with no guilt. These healthy snacks are the ideal minibar items and are produced by one of the top 100 fastest-growing firms in Singapore. Their Sundried White Mulberries are an excellent source of nutrients including iron, calcium, vitamin C, protein and fiber. For a sweet and sour snack, the Fried Incan Golden Berries hail from the Peruvian Andes and are dehydrated at low temperatures to preserve all the nutrients. There are also Raw Cacao Nibs, made from organic unroasted cacao beans of the premium variety Criollo, and sweet Goji Berries, organically grown in the pristine, high-altitude Tibetan Plateau.



## Organic Chocolate - Chocolate & Love

The winner of nine Gold Great Taste Awards in 2020, Chocolate & Love produces organic chocolate in Switzerland, made from the finest ingredients. Their product range includes Dark Chocolate, Vegan Chocolate and Milk Chocolate. Their best-selling product, Dark Chocolate with Caramel & Sea Salt blends caramel crunch and the dash of sea salt to create an addictive flavour experience. Meanwhile, the Milk Chocolate with Caramelised Hazelnuts & Sea Salt Bar offers an irresistible combination of rich, creamy milk chocolate and caramelised hazelnuts.

You can find the impressive range of Chocolate & Love's organic chocolates at Good Food Maldives.



## Natural Teas - Red Seal

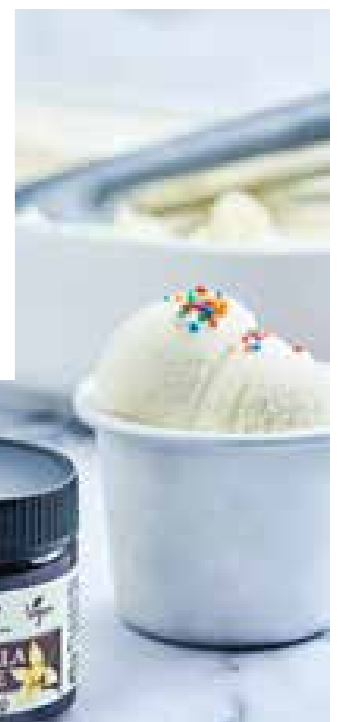
For almost a decade, Red Seal in New Zealand has been creating products to support everyday health and wellness. Best known for their comprehensive range of vitamins and herbal teas, Red Seal uses scientific research and development together with naturopathic knowledge to provide their customers with high-quality products. Their range of herbal blends includes Red Bush Chai for body balance, Chamomile to soothe body and mind and Peppermint for digestive comfort.



## Kombucha - Remedy

With no sugar, live cultures, organic acids and antioxidants, some people are calling this the tastiest and healthiest kombucha going around! Remedy, Australia follows the traditional method of making kombucha, which involves a natural fermentation of sweet tea, wild healthy bacteria and yeasts. Their all-natural and authentic kombucha is 'I Quit Sugar-approved' and comes in a variety of different flavours, making it a great alternative for minibar beverages. Whether you'd like a fiery and tangy Ginger Lemon or a fruity and refreshing Cherry Plum, Good Food Maldives has the Remedy Kombucha stocked up.

An e-commerce business that took off during the pandemic and gained popularity for delivering healthy groceries to households, Good Food Maldives has recently opened their retail store in Malé City. GFM also supplies their products to resorts and hotels in the country.





# OCEAN GROUP INTRODUCES LIFT E-FOIL AND LIFT SURF FOIL TO THE MALDIVES

The first to bring SEABOB, CROWNLINER boat, PARITET glass bottom boats, MASTERCRAFT wakeboarding boat, X-JETBLADE and X-JETPACK to the island nation, Ocean Group has now expanded their water sports equipment range with the innovative LIFT e-Foil. This electric hydrofoil surfboard lets you fly above any body of water, even without wind and waves.

LIFT e-Foil is an all-electric, silent motor that glides through the water. It uses an advanced lithium-ion battery to power a silent electric motor that's mounted on an all-carbon-fiber hydrofoil. Controlled by a wireless Bluetooth hand controller, it allows you to ride for up to two hours on a two-hour charge.



Moosa Zahid, Director of Operations & Sales, Ocean Group Maldives



For more than a decade, LIFT spent time developing and fine-tuning the ultimate foiling experience. The result of this was the fastest, most durable and long lasting e-Foil experience with a completely customizable line-up of foil hardware. The newly released LIFT3 boards feature an updated shape for increased maneuverability and ease of use. The improved design reduces any acoustic noise down to silence; and its size and updated construction makes it the lightest and strongest e-Foil options available in the market!

From renowned American surfer Laird John Hamilton to Hawaiian surfer Kai Lenny,

LIFT e-foils are loved by people around the world and trusted by the best names in surf. Furthermore, due to its noise-free and emission-free feature, these e-foils are an eco-friendly water sports equipment. It also packs enough power to pull two riders at the same time.

The rider can be a complete beginner or even a highly-experienced thrill-seeker; all you need is a few instructions from someone who knows how to use it. The waterproof Bluetooth controller easily shows battery life and allows you to swap quickly and intuitively between a multitude of speed and performance settings. For added safety, the propulsion automatically

stops as soon as the controller hits the water or if the board tilts past 45 degrees.

“Foiling sports is fast gaining popularity amongst water sports enthusiasts all over the world. We are delighted to introduce this sport in the Maldives. Besides the LIFT e-Foil, we have also introduced LIFT Surf Foil to cater to surfers looking for an elevated surfing experience,” says Moosa Zahid, a VDWS certified water sports trainer and the Director of Operations & Sales at Ocean Group.

Founded in 1998 by a husband and wife team, Ocean Group is renowned for driving many firsts in the field and remains dedicated to introducing the latest products in the market. The company manages and operates premiere water sports and PADI 5-star dive centres at high end resorts in the Maldives and the region. Ocean Group is also the exclusive distributor for LIFT in the Maldives.

For Media queries, please contact [yasmin@oceangroup.mv](mailto:yasmin@oceangroup.mv)

For Sales queries, please contact [sales@oceangroup.mv](mailto:sales@oceangroup.mv)

# PRODUCT REVIEWS

## Redhan Jewellery



Exclusive ocean inspired pieces made sustainably. Designed with love in the Maldives to be bold and to empower. Every piece of our ocean collection is responsibly made from 100% recycled gold and silver. We work with Fairtrade certified jewellers to cast, polish and assemble each of our mesmerizing designs by hand to give you something truly personal. We are a proud member of 1% for the Planet and every purchase is carbon compensated through reforestation. With a 5-year warranty to promote responsible consumerism, these are truly your 'forever pieces of the ocean'.

**Redhan Jewellery**  
 Email: [hey@redhanjewellery.com](mailto:hey@redhanjewellery.com)  
 Website: [www.redhanjewellery.com](http://www.redhanjewellery.com)



## Seaflo



SEAFLO was established in 2004. For the 14 years, SEAFLO has specialized in the Research, Design, Manufacturing, SupplyChain Integration and Marketing of micro pumps, blowers, pressure system, fluidic devices, sprayers, blow-mould kayaks and accessories, which are used in Marine, RV, Industrial, Agricultural & Water Sports parts.

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## Pure Harvest- Unsweetened Almond Milk



Plant based milk and milk substitutes are becoming the choice of Milk for many people who are following a plant-based, vegan or non-dairy diet. Pure Harvest's Unsweetened Organic Almond Milk is a full flavoured non-dairy milk made from real organic activated almonds with no added sweetener. You can add to your breakfast, coffee, smoothie or even use it for other sweet and savory uses. Other Products in our range include Organic Unsweetened Soy Milk, Oat Milk and Rice Milk.

Pure Harvest is exclusively distributed in Maldives by Good Food Maldives. We have the widest selection of organic and plant based milk from Pure Harvest, Australia

**Good Food Maldives**  
 M. Blue Light, Majeedhee Magu, Male  
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Bodu Thakurufaanu Magu, Male'  
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Solution Pvt Ltd**

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Lonu Ziyaaray Magu, Male'  
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M.Antrac Tower, ground floor,  
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331 0096

**Octopus Systems**

MHA Building, 3rd Floor,  
Orchid Magu, Male'  
7771458

**Euro Marketing Pvt Ltd**

Ma. Favorite, (1st / 2nd Floor)  
Chandhanee Magu, Male'  
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