

Hotelier[★]

MALDIVES

SPECIAL
47 48
DOUBLE ISSUE

HOTEL REVIEW

Baglioni Resort Maldives:
**An Italian Corner
of Maldives**

THE GM'S VIEW

Stefano Grolla, Sandies Bathala
and **Tangi Le Grand**,
Constance Halaveli

CAREERS

Ibrahim Rasheed Moosa
and **Lucas Leonardi Varin**

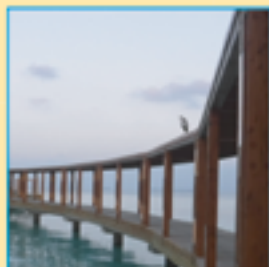
WOMEN IN HOSPITALITY

Aishath Shimani
Planning Director at
Sun Siyam Resorts

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DESTINATION WEDDING FAVORITES IN THE MALDIVES

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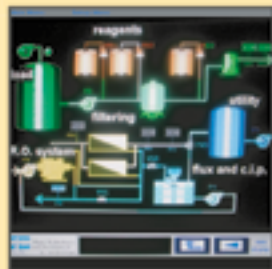
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COVER STORY
TEN DESTINATION WEDDING FAVORITES IN THE MALDIVES

The cover story of this special double issue features ten wedding destination favourites for relaxation seekers and honeymooners alike. Listed in alphabetical order and by no means an exclusive list, each destination is remarkable in their own way and reflective of the diversity of wedding experiences in the Maldives.



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Hotelier
MALDIVES

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ISMAIL HILMY, Founder – Hotelier Maldives



DESTINATION WEDDING FAVOURITES

DEAR READERS,

Welcome to a special double issue (no. 47 & 48) of Hotelier Maldives.

Maldives has always been a favourite among honeymooners, especially in the low-season. According to a 2018 Visitor Survey published by the Ministry of Tourism, rest and relaxation and honeymoon are the two most important reasons international visitors come to the Maldives. More recently, destination weddings are also becoming popular among couples, especially for those looking for a romantic, intimate and unique once-in-a-lifetime wedding experience. With picturesque backdrops for vow renewal ceremonies (perhaps change to this so as not to mention weddings too much?) and photo shoots, it is no surprise that a vast number of weddings are held in the Maldives every year.

The rise of Maldives as a popular tourist destination for weddings has also meant that a number of properties are now offering elaborate and luxurious wedding packages. While we feature ten destination wedding favourites in the cover story of this issue, it is by no means an exclusive list. The wedding packages on offer are varied and remarkable in their own ways. This story is reflective of the diversity of wedding experiences on offer in the Maldives resorts.

Moving on, we feature the newly opened Baglioni Resort Maldives in hotel review. Subtitled 'An Italian Corner of Maldives' our contributor Anastasia Onishko summarizes her experiences over a two day visit to the property located in Dhaalu Atoll. As this is a special double issue, we feature two GM's Views; Stefano Grolla, GM at Sandies Bathala, and Tangi Le Grand, GM at Constance Halaveli. In the careers section we have Ibrahim Rasheed Moola, Engineering Manager at Four Seasons Maldives Kuda Huraa, and in the Women in Hospitality Segment, Aishath Shimani, the Planning Director at Sun Siyam Resorts.

If you would like to get in touch with us please email us at: mamduh@hoteliermaldives.com



Wishing you all the best,
MOHAMED MAMDUH
Managing Director



Planning for GM Forum 2020 is well on the way; registration will open in early February '20 (from left to right: Tolga Unan, GM, Hard Rock Hotel Maldives, Vladimir Reyes, former GM at JA Manafaru, Mark Hehir, CEO, The Small Maldives Island Company, Martin van der Reijden, former VP Operations, Crossroads Maldives and SAii Lagoon, at the GM Forum 2019)

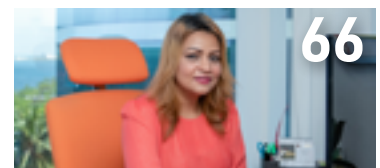
EDITOR'S PICKS



THE GM'S VIEW Tangi Le Grand, General Manager of Constance Halaveli



EXCLUSIVE Sifani: One Precious Gem at a time



Women in Hospitality Aishath Shimani, Planning Director at Sun Siyam Resorts

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Myleene Klass and family help with beach clean up while in the Maldives

Myleene and her family join a beach cleanup on a tropical island near Outrigger Konotta Maldives Resort; Myleene is proud of her kids' commitment to positive environmental action.



Singer, media presenter, model and ambassador for Save the Children (UK), Myleene Klass relaxed with her family at Outrigger Konotta Maldives Resort during the Christmas and New Year festive period. She and her young family also volunteered to clean up plastic from a neighbouring island in the atoll.

Klass posted pictures to her Instagram account of her family, baby son Apollo (4 months) and daughters Ava (12) and Hero (8), and her partner Simon, all relaxing while wearing Christmas hats on Konotta's idyllic tropical palm beach.

Klass wrote on her Instagram account: "Merry Xmas to you and your loved ones.

I still cannot believe I have Apollo in my arms and this is what my family now looks like this Christmas."

While staying at the resort, Klass and her family got hands-on to help the environment. They did a beach clean with Outrigger hosts on a neighbouring island.

Klass wrote: "Doing this with my son strapped to me and my daughters leading the charge, makes me so proud to see them consciously taking action. They could have stayed in the pool all day, eating ice cream, they're on holiday after all, but they chose to set their alarms, to join in and to be the change they want to see in the world. I love my kids!"

John Allanson, General Manager, of the Outrigger Konotta Maldives Resort, said: "Myleene and her family did a great job collecting plastic and polystyrene. They really got into it. Guests who are keen to make a positive difference while they're on holiday in the Maldives is what we encourage at Outrigger."

Apart from beach cleanups and excursions with its marine biologist, Outrigger Konotta Maldives Resort operates according to a robust recycling, reducing and reusing environmental philosophy, which is part of Outrigger's global OZONE (Outrigger's zone) marine conservation initiative. ■



Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru and Angsana Ihuru appoints Executive Chef Michael Ali Yusuf

Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru and Angsana Ihuru announces the appointment of the new Executive Chef, Michael Ali Yusuf.

Michael brings with him 10 years' culinary experience working with luxury brands in West Africa and Seychelles, including George Hotel by Mantis Collection, Hilton Labriz Seychelles and recently, The Legend Hotel Lagos Curio Collection by Hilton.

Michael has a strong background in Italian Cuisine and the culinary team of both islands are excited to welcome the new changes and additional flavors that he will bring.

Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru and Angsana Ihuru are located in North Male' Atoll, just 25 minutes away by speedboat from the airport. The two resorts are just 2 minutes by boat away from each other therefore guests of each resort can enjoy the facilities of both including two of the most vibrant and well preserved house reefs in the North Male' Atoll. ■



Grand Park Kodhipparu, Maldives pledged to ban plastic straws



During the past few months, Grand Park Kodhipparu, Maldives pledged to ban plastic straws.

Plastic straws have quickly become a symbol of the world's unnecessary reliance on plastic. Even more, they have become a symbol of plastic's horrific effects on the environment. One way to reduce the impact of plastic straws on the environment is to simply stop using plastic straws. The team at Grand Park Kodhipparu Maldives encourages guests to either drink directly from a glass, or use a reusable alternative to plastic.

Reusable stainless-steel straws are a good alternative. They are much better than plastics, for more than just the reason of benefiting the environment, they are eco-friendly and contribute to less waste in landfill. ■

More islands and plots to be leased for tourism development

The Maldives government has announced a total of 29 islands and several plots of land from inhabited islands will be leased for development of resorts and guest houses. The announcement was made by Minister of Tourism Ali Waheed while speaking at a function in Male in December 2019. Speaking at the function, Minister Ali Waheed also said that the announcement is in line with the government's plan to develop a further 13,730 beds in the Maldives in addition to the existing inventory (estimated to be 49,337 inclusive of resorts, guest houses and safari boats).



THE UNINHABITED ISLANDS MARKED FOR RESORT DEVELOPMENT UNDER 'ONE ISLAND, ONE RESORT' CONCEPT ARE:

- Four in Haa Alif atoll:
 - **Maafinolhu** (424 beds)
 - **Dhapparu** (1,000 beds)
 - **Medhufushi** (317 beds)
 - **Alidhuffaru Finolhu** (233 beds)
- Three in Haa Dhaal atoll:
 - **Hondaidhoo** (500 beds)
 - **Kudafaru Fasgandu** (233 beds)
 - **Vaikaramuraidhoo** (436 beds)
- Three in Shaviyani atoll:
 - **Nalandhoo** (1,700 beds)
 - **Kudalhaimendhoo** (400 beds)
 - **Fushifaru** (233 beds)
- One in Noonu atoll:
 - **Kunnamalai** (250 beds)
- Two in Raa atoll:
 - **Egili** (200 beds)
 - Land reclaimed from the lagoon of **Alifushi** island (200 beds)
- Two in Meemu atoll:
 - **Seedhee Huraa** (200 beds)
 - **Boa Huraa** (200 beds)
- Two in Faafu atoll:
 - **Enbulufushi** (200 beds)
 - **Jinnathagau** (200 beds)
- Three in Thaa atoll:
 - **Kaaddoo** (200 beds)
 - **Kanimeedhoo** (200 beds)
 - **lhufushi** (200 beds)
- Three in Laamu atoll:
 - **Kashidhoo** (233 beds)
 - **Dhonberaha** (233 beds)
 - **Bodumunyafushi** (233 beds)
- Two in Gaafu Alif atoll:
 - **Maareha Fai** (494 beds)
 - **Funadhoo Villigilla** (233 beds)
- Three in Gaafu Dhaalu atoll:
 - **Kandahalaga** (215 beds),
 - **Fereytha Villigilla** (233 beds)
 - **Kadevaareha** (200 beds)
- One in Addu atoll:
 - **Hankede** (200 beds)

LAND PLOTS FROM INHABITED ISLANDS IDENTIFIED FOR LOCAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ARE:

- 16 hectares from **Addu atoll**
- 2 hectares from **Fuvahmulah atoll**
- 0.5 hectares from the island of **Vaadhoo** in **Gaafu Dhaalu atoll**
- 19 hectares from the island of **Gan** in **Laamu atoll**
- 0.5 hectares from the island of **Nolhivaranfaru** in **Haa Dhaalu atoll**
- 8.5 hectares from the island of **Kelaa** in **Haa Alif atoll**
- 23 hectares from the island of **Uligan** in **Haa Alif atoll**



This location map highlights the islands which are to be leased for tourism development.



AHIC 2020

April 14 - 16, 2020
Madinat Jumeirah Conference & Events Centre,
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

AHIC, now in its 16th year, is the annual gathering for the Middle East’s hospitality investment community organised by global hotel investment event organiser Bench Hotel in partnership with Middle East business intelligence brand, MEED. AHIC creates a knowledge and networking platform for global and regional investors of all backgrounds, offering essential insights to investing in hotels, showcasing regional and international hospitality investment opportunities and facilitating direct connections with hospitality industry stakeholders. AHIC 2020 will be held at Madinat Jumeirah in Dubai from 14 April to 16 April and hosted by its founding patron, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al Maktoum, Chairman of Dubai Airports, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and Chairman and CEO of Emirates Airline and Group, whose continued support of the industry and AHIC has been critical to the region’s tourism growth.



ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET

April 19 - 22, 2020
Dubai World Trade Centre
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Arabian Travel Market (ATM), is the leading global event for the Middle East inbound and outbound travel industry for the last 27 years. At the upcoming event, we will be adopting ‘Events for Tourism Growth’ as the annual theme for 2020. The spotlight will explore the impact events have on tourism growth in the region and will inspire the travel and hospitality industry about the next generation of events, while bringing together senior travel executives to meet and conduct business under one roof over four days.

The annual business-to-business (B2B) exhibition showcases over 2,800 products and destinations from around the world to over 28,000 buyers and travel trade visitors across four days at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

Over 39,000 travel professionals, government ministers and international press, visit ATM every April to network, negotiate and discover the latest industry opinion and trends at Arabian Travel Market.

Beyond the event we continue to help professionals in the Arabian travel industry to drive commercial success with all year round opportunities to make connections and access to industry news and developments, trends and technologies from around the world. Through our industry networks, global reach and regional focus, ATM creates personal and business opportunities providing our customers with quality contacts, content and communities.



ITB INDIA

April 15 - 17, 2020
Bombay Exhibition Centre
Mumbai, India

ITB India 2020 will take place at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai, India, from 15 to 17 April 2020. In its first year it will be organised by the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce and supported by Messe Berlin (Singapore) Pte Ltd. The 3-day business-to-business travel trade show and convention will focus on the Indian travel market including MICE, corporate, and leisure travel sectors. Exhibitors from every sector of the industry, including travel agencies and operators, NTOs, business travel and MICE, travel technology, accommodation, and transport companies are all expected to attend.

ITB India is organized by Messe Berlin GmbH.



HITEC EUROPE 2020

April 21 - 23, 2020
Convention Centre of Palma
Palma, Spain

Hospitality Industry Technology Exposition & Conference (HITEC®) is the world’s largest and oldest hospitality technology exposition and conference brand. HITEC offers a unique combination of top-notch education, and brings together the brightest minds and hottest technologies from across the globe to one place. The unparalleled event offers attendees essential education, access to top hospitality technology industry experts and the resources to find cost-effective ways to improve company bottom lines. Combined with the intimate opportunities to connect with fellow professionals, HITEC has everything to enhance your career. HFTP has produced HITEC since 1972, and in 2017 expanded the brand with two additional boutique events in Europe and Dubai. Since then, the European show has been building annually and a new partnership in 2020 with HTNG will help elevate the program and broaden its audience.

HITEC Europe 2020 is organized by HFTP.



SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY DESIGN AND SUPPLIES EXPO

April 27 - 29, 2020

Shanghai New International Expo Centre, China

Shanghai International Hospitality Design & Supplies Expo (HDE) is the comprehensive sourcing platform of construction and operation for hotels and commercial space. Held together with retail show, cleaning show and franchise show under the flag of Hotel Plus, the mega event covers all 17 exhibition halls of SNIEC with over 200,000 sqm of exhibiting space. Welcoming a record number of over 3,000 exhibitors, Hotel Plus 2019 attracted 147,166 trade professionals from 131 countries and regions.

Event Highlights:

- Explore design materials and hotel amenities for your projects from local and international suppliers
- Build business connections with developers, owners, hoteliers and designers from China and all over the world
- Get inspired by diversified onsite activities and forums at Design Week Shanghai
- Free entrance for all trade visitors



CORNELL GENERAL MANAGERS PROGRAM (GMP)

May 4 - 14, 2020

Cornell University

Ithaca - NY, United States

The General Managers Program is a transformational learning experience for elite hotel general managers and their immediate successors. GMP elevates decision-makers with the power of strategic thinking through a rigorous face-to-face experience with renowned faculty and industry peers on the campus of the world's leading school for hospitality management. Over the past 36 years, the Cornell GMP has hosted more than 1,900 participants representing 120+ countries.

As an experienced hospitality professional, you know that the industry is constantly evolving. To be successful, you must lead your team with purpose, embrace the industry's evolutionary path, and seek opportunities to keep your organization at the forefront. Through GMP, you will hone strategic thinking skills, explore how to create value, and plan for future action to tackle business challenges and opportunities.

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The Growth of Tourism across all regions strengthens sector's potential to contribute to Sustainable Development Agenda

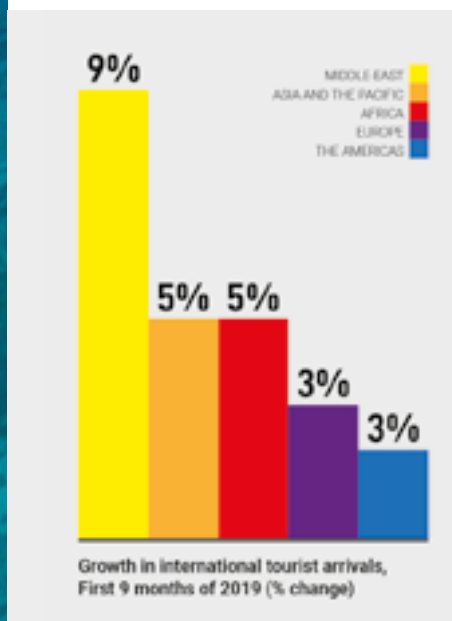


THIS YEAR, INTERNATIONAL TOURIST arrivals grew by a further 4% between January and September, as indicated by the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Tourism's growth continues to outpace global economic growth, bearing witness to its huge potential to deliver development opportunities worldwide but also its sustainability challenges.

Destinations worldwide received 1.1 billion international tourist arrivals in the first nine months of 2019 (which is an increase of 43 million compared to the same period of 2018), according to the latest World Tourism Barometer from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in line with its forecast of 3-4% growth for this year.

The global economic slowdown, rising trade, geopolitical tensions and prolonged uncertainty around Brexit weighed on international tourism, which experienced a more moderate pace of growth during the summer peak season (July-September) in the Northern Hemisphere.

"As world leaders meet at the UN Climate Summit in Madrid to find concrete solutions to the climate emergency, the release of this latest World Tourism Barometer shows the growing power of tourism, a sector with the potential to drive the sustainability agenda forward. As tourist numbers continue to rise, the opportunities tourism can bring also rise, as do our sector's responsibilities to people and planet." Commented UNWTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili.





TOURISM IS NOW THE WORLD'S THIRD LARGEST EXPORT CATEGORY

Generating USD 1.7 trillion in revenues as of 2018, international tourism remains the third largest export category behind fuels (USD 2.4 trillion) and chemicals (USD 2.2 trillion). Within advanced economies, tourism's remarkable performance after years of sustained growth has narrowed the gap with automotive product exports

International tourism accounts for 29% of the world's services exports and 7% of overall exports. In some regions these proportions exceed the world average, especially the Middle East and Africa where tourism represents over 50% of services exports and about 9% of exports overall.

This highlights the importance of mainstreaming tourism in national export policies to broaden revenue streams, reduce trade deficits and ensure sustainable development long term. The world's top ten earners saw mixed results in international tourism receipts through September 2019, with Australia (+9%), Japan (+8%) and Italy (+7%) posting the highest growth, while China, the United Kingdom and the United States recorded declines. Mediterranean destinations were

among the strongest performers in terms of earnings, both in Europe and the Middle East and North Africa region.

Growth in arrivals during the first nine months of 2019 was led by the Middle East (+9%), followed by Asia and the Pacific and Africa (both +5%), Europe (+3%) and the Americas (+2%). Europe's pace of growth slowed down to 3% in January-September this year, from double that rate, reflecting slower demand during the peak summer season in the world's most visited region. While destinations in Southern Mediterranean (+5%) and Central Eastern Europe (+4%) led results, the regional average was weighed down by Northern and Western Europe (both +1%).

Also slower than last year, although still above the global average, growth in Asia and the Pacific (+5%) was led by South Asia (+8%), followed by South-East (+6%) and North-East Asia (+5%), while Oceania showed a 2% increase. Data so far available for Africa (+5%) confirms continued robust results in North Africa (+10%) after two years of double-digit figures, while arrivals in Sub-Saharan Africa grew 1%.

The 2% increase in the Americas reflects a mixed regional picture. While many island destinations in the Caribbean (+8%) consolidate their recovery after the 2017 hurricanes, arrivals in South America were down 3% partly due to a decline in Argentinian outbound travel, which affected neighboring destinations. Both North America and Central America grew 2%.



SOURCE MARKETS INDICATE MIXED RESULTS AMONG TOP SPENDERS.

The United States (+6%) led growth in international tourism expenditure in absolute terms, supported by a strong dollar. India and some European markets also performed strongly, though global growth was more uneven than a year earlier.

France (+10%) reported the strongest increase among the world's top ten outbound markets, reflecting surging demand for international travel for the second consecutive year. Spain (+10%), Italy (+9%) and the Netherlands (+7%) also posted robust growth, followed by the United Kingdom (+3%) and Russia (+2%).

Some large emerging markets including Brazil, Saudi Arabia and Argentina reported declines in tourism spending during this period, reflecting recent and ongoing economic uncertainty. China, the world's top source market saw outbound trips increased by 14% in the first half of 2019, though expenditure fell 4% compared to the same period last year.

Tourist arrivals to the Maldives grew by 15% in the first quarter of 2019 and later through May and June arrivals decreased but still performed well compared to the previous year, recording growths of 10.9% and 21% respectively. The Maldives Ministry of Tourism reported at the end of October an increase of 15.4% over 2018. European arrivals alone to the country increased by a total of 14.9%.

Growth in the European market, the dominating market region contributing to more than half of tourist arrivals to the Maldives, accelerated by a total of 14.9% compared to 2018. The UK, which is the

single biggest European source market reported an increase of 9.6% whilst several other major European markets such as Germany, Italy and France also posted gains of 7.7%, 7.5%, 3.5% respectively as per the Maldives Tourism Performance reported by The Maldives Ministry of Tourism.

Over the past few years, dozens of uninhabited islands have been leased to local and foreign resort developers. Several international brands have entered into the market, increasing the number of resorts to more than 150. That number is also set to increase as another 20 resorts are expected to open over the next two years. Additional flights to the country combined with the array of newly opened luxury resorts has stimulated the influx of travellers to the popular tropical destination. The increase of arrivals this year remarkably reached the 1.5 Millionth arrival target in November 2019. ■



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THE TOURISM SECTOR IN THE MALDIVES HAS

been flourishing over the past 40 years, with many new resorts openings each year. There are many exquisite luxury resorts, some authentic 'Maldivian' properties, several rustic, quite a few family-oriented, and the list goes on. However, this country has not yet seen a 5 star Luxury Italian resort, which Baglioni Maldives proudly stands for.

Baglioni has a total of ten properties, with six of them in Italy in the popular destinations of Milan, Venice, Rome, Florence and two in Punta Ala, one property in London, two in France and the latest property in the Maldives. The Maldives is known for its breathtaking islands and marine life, whereas Italy is well known for its hospitality, mouth watering food and flair. Baglioni Maldives is successfully bringing the best of both worlds together, allowing its guests to experience exceptional Italian hospitality in idyllic settings, which are the Maldivian islands.

The majority of the resorts in the Maldives are locally owned and operated or managed by international hospitality giants. It is uncommon for a resort to be owned, designed and managed by a family company, which is one of the main points which sets Baglioni Maldives apart from its competitors. Baglioni Hotels was founded in 1974 by Commendatore Roberto Polito, who opened their first resort in Punta Ala, Tuscany. Since then the company grew but remained family-owned and managed. Currently, Baglioni group has nine hotels, five in its native Italy, two in France, one in London and one in the Maldives. It is the latest addition to the family. One of the

slogans of Baglioni Hotels is 'Unforgettable Italian Touch' and now they invite travelers to do the latter and whilst diving in the Maldives with them.

The journey to this new resort begins in an elegant lounge at the seaplane terminal, which is beautifully designed. On top of all the expected 5-star resort facilities such as wi-fi, books, selection of food and drinks, Italian espresso coffee, fresh orchids, spacious showers, it offers the guests to be checked-in to the resort prior to the actual arrival to the island. The knowledgeable staff will conduct the check-in process at the lounge, as well as give a briefing about the room category, meal plan and facilities on the island. This certainly is a very productive use of the time in the lounge, allowing guests to proceed to their room upon arrival to the resort without having to wait there for the formalities.

After a 40-minute seaplane ride, upon arriving at the beautiful island of Maagau, Dhaalu atoll, you are greeted by the team and whisked away to your Italian home on a Maldivian island, to one of the 96 villas on the island.

There are eight 65 sqm garden villas, thirty one 65 sqm beach villas, five 77 sqm pool grand beach villas, six 115 sqm pool suite beach villa, seventeen 60 sqm water villas, sixteen 60 sqm sunset water villas, nine 60 sqm pool water villas and last but not least, the 670 sqm Presidential water villa. Whether you wish to be nestled away in the tropical jungle in a tranquil garden villa, enjoy a family retreat in one of the three spacious 135 sqm family beach villas which can accommodate up to 4 adults and 4 children, or indulge in a romantic vacation in a

HOTEL REVIEW

private overwater villa – there is a diverse range of luxurious villa categories to suit all guests tastes.

After spending only a few hours on the island it already feels cozy and at ease, the island is very easy to navigate and the exceptionally friendly people greet you with a 'Buongiorno' wherever you go. Naturally, lush jungle provides privacy to the villas, and the stunning banyan trees decorate the paths. Dining options on the island include 'Taste', which is the main restaurant equipped for buffet and usually open for breakfast and dinner, serving international cuisine. 'Umami' is a Japanese outlet, with a selection of sushi and Tappaniyaki as well, located over water, guests will enjoy an amazing view of the island and the lagoon as well as the food. 'Gusto' restaurant, situated above the pool bar and overlooking the lagoon offers an authentic Italian menu with emphasis on seafood. Exquisite Positano crockery used at Gusto deserves a special mention, it completes the Italian dining experience perfectly. Downstairs you will find the Pool bar open all day and evening, serving both Italian including real Italian Pizza and International dishes and is home to the evening live music entertainment.





The Spa is just around the corner from here. With a 24 hour well equipped Life Fitness, open-air wooden yoga pavilion and tranquil treatment rooms it is a true Italian oasis in a tropical setting. InsiuM is the main cosmetics range used at the spa. New to the Maldives, this exclusive cosmetics range is also family-owned, just like Baglioni group. It is a skincare brand that encompasses aesthetic, technological and environmental values. INSiUM treatments are made with vegan and cruelty-free products.

Baglioni Maldives is one of the four resorts in the Maldives which are part of the Leading Hotels of the World. Since 1928 when Leading Hotels of the World organization was established by a group of influential and forward-thinking European hoteliers, it has been famous for only accepting exquisite and uncommon properties into its members, such as former castles, mountain hideaways, safari camps and private islands. Baglioni Maldives, of course, falls into the latter category, however, it is not enough for the resort to be on a private to be included into LHW. Each property has to offer authentic bespoke experiences and pass an exceptionally prudent review, to actually become a member.

LHW pride themselves on “selecting hotels specifically with curious travelers in mind to meet their high standards for quality and distinctiveness. The result is a curated portfolio of independent hotels united not by what makes them the same, but the remarkable details that make them different.” Baglioni Maldives definitely falls into the above description and proudly offers a one-of-a-kind blend of easy-going beach vibes and Italian style. |

TEN DESTINATION WEDDING FAVORITES IN THE MALDIVES

DESTINATION WEDDINGS ARE BECOMING more popular among couples, especially for those looking for a romantic, intimate and unique once-in-a-lifetime wedding experience. With many couples choosing to exchange their vows on a tropical sandy beach as opposed to traditional and cultural ceremonies held in the familiarity of their hometown. A vast number of destination weddings are held in the Maldives every year.

The Maldives tropical archipelago is renowned for its palm tree-lined islands, stunning white-sand beaches and awe-inspiring overwater villas perched above sparkling turquoise waters, making it one of the most prominent destination wedding spots in the world. When every couple is looking for something unique for their big day and if they can get their dream moment all the whilst saving up on several wedding costs which could easily rack up to thousands of dollars if attempted within a city, why not enjoy an intimate wedding ceremony with just a selected few guests and cherish it all stress free, because it is possible.

PLANNING YOUR SPECIAL DAY IN THE MALDIVES

The Maldives is one of the world's most enchanting tropical destinations, infused with serenity, pure nature and quaint charm. These tiny islands are at the top of several globetrotters and honeymooners bucket lists. The Maldives is not only renowned for its natural beauty, but for its luxury resorts and their excellent level of exceptional hospitality. The prestige of having a destination wedding in the Maldives and having a honeymoon in the Maldives is often non-comparable to any other tropical destination in the world. This is what the Maldives was initially branded for.

The list of luxury resorts listed on this article are no exceptions. Each with their own natural beauty, island concept to service standards and offered packages, getting to celebrate your wedding at one

of these islands would be a dream come true for most couples. Even though ceremonies held in the Maldives are not legal marriages but are celebratory ceremonies (known as blessings) and as such are not officially or legally recognized, many couples choose to tie the knot in this romantic destination.

The island resorts featured on this list have been recognised for presenting their own unique style of wedding ceremonies and several include packages for couples to choose from. Some also offer an onsite wedding planner allocated to assist in





planning the whole event according to individual needs; this is done prior to the couples arrival and before finalising all the steps leading up to the big day.

The well thought out packages include important services like tropical decoration at the venue, Flower bouquet for the bride, Boutonniere for the groom, Master of ceremony, flower girls, tailored photography and videography options, hair and make-up for the bride, drinks for the couple, wedding cakes and symbolic wedding certificates. Certain packages may also include local traditional Maldivian

drums or live music, bottles of champagne and selected canapés.

Some islands offer packages with pre-wedding pampering for couples like spa treatments to unwind before the ceremony, couples spa treatments after the wedding, champaign breakfast or floating breakfast in the morning, evening turndown with flower decoration or floral bath decor, complimentary romantic dinners and the list goes on. The wedding specialist assigned for the couple will work towards creating their dream day.

Wedding package prices in Maldives can vary even at the luxury resorts, depending on the standard of services included. Looking at the selected 10 resorts in this article, the price ranges from 1000 up to 20,000 United States Dollars per couple. Since most of the wedding essentials are provided within the packages or for an additional fee by the resorts, couples can simply fly into the destination and only travel with their ceremony clothes and rings, as the rest will be taken care of once they arrive at their chosen resort in Maldives.



HOTELIER'S PICK; TEN DESTINATION WEDDING FAVORITES IN MALDIVES

Hotelier Maldives has selected some of the best destination wedding resorts in the Maldives. The resorts were selected from different regions of the Maldives, bringing the readers their uniqueness and signature style. Since it would be impossible to state one luxury resort outweighs another, all resorts have been listed in alphabetical order.





Angsana Velavaru

📍 DHAALU ATOLL

Angsana Velavaru, also known as the 'turtle island' provides the opportunity for couples to exchange their vows standing under a Dhoni-shaped wedding pavilion overlooking the ocean and say 'I do' under the starlit skies or colorful tropical sunsets. For a truly unique experience, dive deep into the house reef and get married underwater, or escape to a secluded sandbank prepared just for you.

For more adventurous couples, looking forward to a unique underwater experience, they could dive into the house reef and exchange their vows in the presence of schools of fish bearing witness to their marriage in the Velavaru lagoon. For romance lovers looking to experience the ultimate castaway experience, couples could escape to a secluded sandbank prepared just for them and spend the start of their marriage in a tropical haven.

Centara Ras Fushi

📍 NORTH MALE' ATOLL

Centara Ras Fushi Resort & Spa Maldives is an adults-only retreat that is ideal for couples and honeymooners alike. Centara offers beach weddings in the evening on a beach lit with flaming torches.

Couples could choose to have a private wedding or invite their closest friends or family for their big day celebration and say "I do" with a picture perfect backdrop of tropical Maldives. Weddings at the resort are influenced by the Maldivian culture with traditional decoration. Simple yet elegant, Centara Ras Fushi specialises in classical beach weddings.





Conrad Maldives Rangali Island

📍 SOUTH ARI ATOLL

Conrad Maldives Rangali Island offers everlasting experiences for the celebration of vow renewals. Couples looking forward to an awe inspiring backdrop for their ceremony or a unique intimate underwater event; Conrad Maldives Rangali Island is the perfect setting.

Ithaa Undersea restaurant is renowned for being the World's first undersea restaurant. Ithaa can be converted to an intimate wedding venue for couples looking forward to walking down the aisle, surrounded by the marine nature of the Maldives.

Other amazing wedding options at Rangali include, Beach Tip weddings, specially suitable for bigger groups, the romantic setup at Quiet Zone Pool as well as the choice of exploring a cast away sailing experience onboard Rangali Raani, the resorts traditional turkish yacht. The adventurous possibilities are endless.

Constance Halaveli

NORTH ARI ATOLL

Say “I do” on a stunning white beach, over crystal clear water or under the swaying coconut palm trees at Constance Halaveli. The lagoon, the sunset, the lush greenery; the island has a plethora of beautiful backdrops which make for a truly memorable wedding.

The wedding packages are usually designed for one couple, however double weddings can be arranged if required and the resort offers arrangements from private weddings to medium weddings where the bride and groom can also have a group of guests joining them to celebrate their big day. The calm and relaxing concept of the resort makes it an ideal island to have a combined wedding and honeymoon in Maldives.





Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Landaa Giraavaru

📍 BAA ATOLL

Landaa Giraavaru's over-water private wedding pavilion elevates the tropical beach wedding experience into new heights. This pavilion is only accessible by boat, completely secluded from the rest of the island. One of the most beautiful features of this unique venue is the fact that it is located in the Baa Atoll, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve which is renowned for its thriving coral and marine life. The bride can even walk down a glass aisle, overlooking the bright turquoise waters in the company of sea turtles and colorful fishes.

For couples who prefer to get married on the beach, the resort has the option of getting married on the Blu beach. Ideal for couples looking for absolute privacy. Four Seasons Resorts Maldives also includes a private island, Four Seasons Private Island at Voavah. This island is ideal for a family looking forward to an exclusive event, where they could book the entire island and also have the event at this picturesque location. The island itself can accommodate up to 22 guests staying overnight. However, if the group is larger there is the option to split the group and the other half can stay at Landaa Giraavaru, which is just 10 minutes away from Voavah.

Naladhu Private Island Maldives

📍 SOUTH MALE' ATOLL

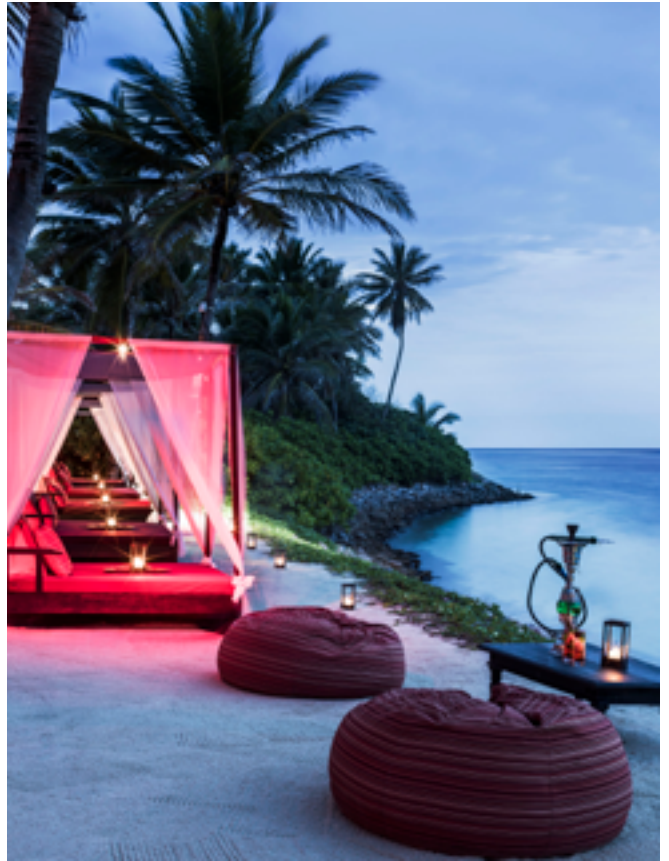
Enjoy Timeless Moments at Naladhu Private Island, which has been named the best resort in the Indian Ocean three years in a row by Condé Nast Traveler Readers.

Naladhu is the epitome of exclusivity and luxury. Long noted for its beauty among the locals, the small island invites you to unwind in blissful seclusion. With 20 elegant and spacious houses with a pool, 24/7 dedicated butler service, world-class dining, luxury spa onsite, secluded pristine white beaches and kaleidoscopic reefs - Naladhu Private Island Maldives a vision of tropical perfection.

Naladhu Private Island Maldives provides the ultimate setting for a fairy-tale tropical wedding. Couples can experience the wedding of their dreams at Naladhu, raise a toast under the stars and dance barefoot on the sand, celebrating a lifetime of memories.

Other perks are choosing to have wedding and combine a honeymoon at Naladhu offers the opportunity to freely experience activities and dine at their sister properties, Anantara Dhigu and Anantara Veli for a change of scenery, yet come back to their villa at Naladhu island when they want their privacy.





One&Only Reethi Rah

📍 NORTH MALE' ATOLL

One&Only Reethi Rah is acclaimed for luxurious lavish weddings. The resort caters to not only small weddings but also large group weddings of up to 350 guests. This island boasts extensive space and twelve different beaches where couples can opt to have their ceremony or they could simply spend their special day on the beach right in front of their villa.

For a more classical beach wedding set-up, couples can also choose to say their final "I do's" under a traditional thatched roof pavilion located at the Northern Tip of the island.

One of the most exclusive wedding experiences offered by One&Only Reethi Rah is the romantic Sandbank Wedding. What could be better than to get married in the middle of a sandbank surrounded by nothing but the ocean, in a secluded private setting away from the rest of the world.

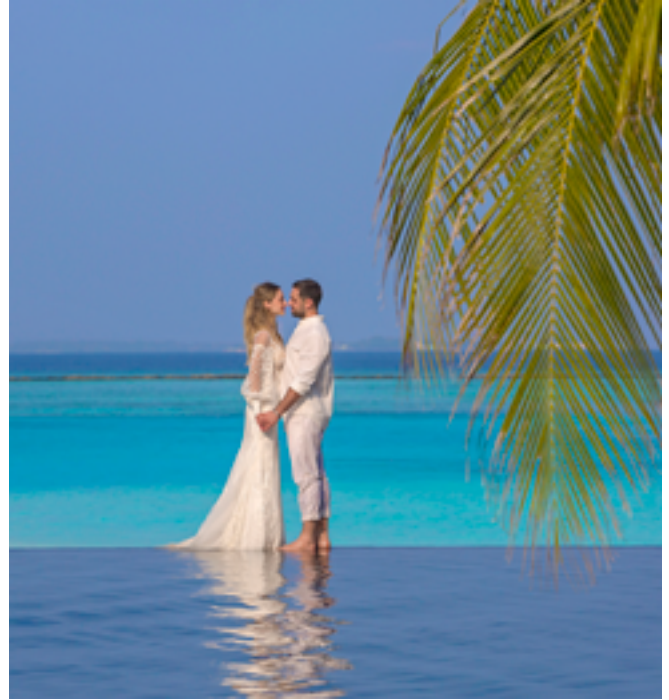
Raffles Maldives Meradhoo

📍 NORTH HUVADHOO ATOLL

Raffles Meradhoo offers couples the opportunity to make their tropical wedding fantasy a reality. This sanctuary is located at North Huvadhoo Atoll, the upper southern province of the Maldives and the largest geographical atoll in the world. With just 21 villas and residences, the island is a sublime getaway for couples looking for privacy.

On this island, couples can get as far away from the rhythm of everyday life as it can be. Here, guests find their own rhythm. In harmony with nature, they can relax, connect and align themselves for the future in front of them as newly weds.





The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi

📍 NOONU ATOLL

Nestled within the palm-fringed island of Iru Fushi and surrounded by the lapping turquoise Indian Ocean, The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi offers luxury in the simplest form, in a charming tropical island setting with the softest white sand and one of the distinct natural lagoons, assessable by a 45-minute seaplane journey from Malé.

Indulge within the natural beauty of the Maldives, and weave your own life-long memories with The Sun Siyam Iru Fushi. With its lush tropical vegetation and amazing beach, the island itself is blessed with nature's treasures, making it a great tropical wedding destination.

The resort is a relaxing island hideaway with 220 villas, including 70 over-water villas with dazzling vistas, direct lagoon access and some even come with their own private pool. The resort offers a number of wedding packages for couples to choose from, each with its own characteristics and beauty. Whether a simple or extravagant wedding ceremony, couples looking to host a large wedding can do so. The island offers over 11 different villa categories including 3 exclusive retreats and the best highlight of this island is the stature of its gorgeous white Maldivian beach.

You&Me by Cocoon Maldives

📍 RAA ATOLL

You & Me by Cocoon is a private, romantic and rustic island set far away from crowded regions of the Maldives. One of the most attractive traits of this island especially for couples is that it is an adults only island specializing in services for honeymooners and couples, making it a quiet, relaxing retreat away from crowds.

To preserve the romantic atmosphere of the whole resort and their concept, You&Me considers only small weddings where the focus is privacy, intimacy and the romance of being away from the rest of the world.

Couples choosing to wed at You&Me have the option of getting married on the beach or even more interestingly at the unique H2O Underwater restaurant which is one of a kind, fully submerged venue with a 360 degrees view of the surrounding ocean and the underwater colors of Maldives.



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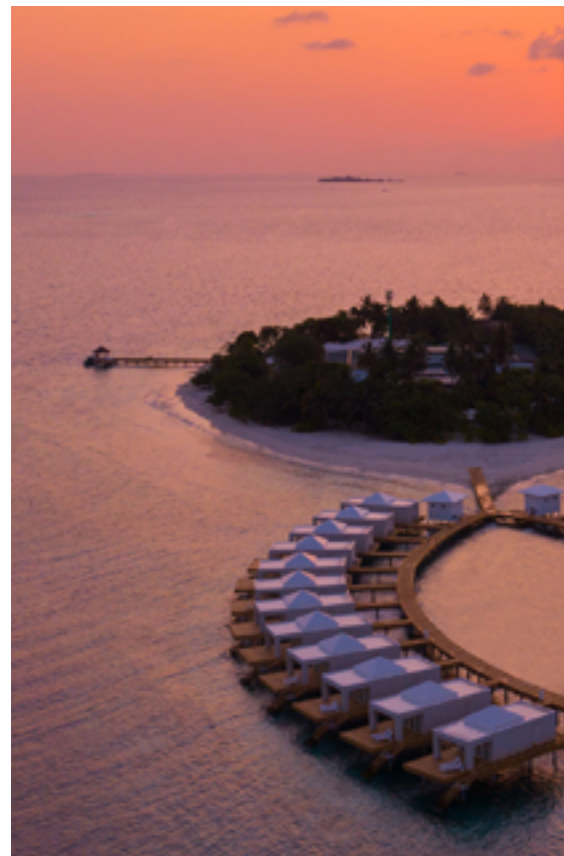
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STEFANO GROLLA

General Manager,
Sandies Bathala

SANDIES BATHALA, THE LATEST ADDITION

to the Planhotel group's ventures in the Maldives, is a beautiful island in Ari Atoll with modern simplicity and a promised fun time for all of its guests. Stefano Grolla, the General Manager at the resort, graced his footsteps in the Maldives as far back as 1989 when tourism in Maldives was at its infancy. With eleven years of experience in the Maldives, he brings his charm and can-do attitude to Sandies Bathala.





HOTELIER MALDIVES: *Could you tell us how you ventured into the hospitality industry and the Maldives?*

STEFANO GROLLA: I started in animation in 1985. Before I completed university the expected plan was to go and work in a bank. But I decided to take a flight and started working with the Rosso family. It has been thirty years since then. I came to the Maldives for the first time in 1989 to Veligandu Resort. Tourism was at its babyhood back then. During those days it was a different scene than what it is today. Even if I compare the airport those days to what it is today, it is completely different. Veligandu was the first FrancoRosso SeaClub venture in the Maldives. I moved to Thundufushi afterwards and then I managed Athuruga for seven years. Last October I joined Sandies Bathala, the third addition to Planhotel group.

HM: *The concept of Sandies Bathala aligns with simplicity. How is it going to be maintained?*

SG: Bathala is an island with unique heritage. When the island came under our management, we were thinking about how to maintain such a beautiful island. The project was focused to preserve the nature of the island as much as possible with eco-sustainability at the forefront of everything they do.

HM: *What are the plans for Sandies Bathala to keep up with the competition here in the Maldives?*

SG: Athuruga and Thundufushi are doing well and we have now opened Sandies Bathala with a completely different look to what it was before. We want to keep the simple concept of the resort, which I think is what the market requires. The island is completely white. This is a four-star resort with an Italian touch. White is the colour of all Planhotel properties here and we wanted to maintain the same for Sandies Bathala. It is a very good product in the market right now. We were full when we opened which is a good start and we are going strong.

HM: *What are the sustainable acts implemented by the resort to lessen its carbon footprint?*

SG: Our new Overwater Villas have been completely assembled in Italy and they are built in an eco-friendly way. We have a water bottling plant which allows us to save water as well as to reduce plastic in the island. Presently our plastic usage reduction is more than 95 percent. The goal we would like to achieve is 100 percent in the near future.



HM: What are the challenges you face as a General Manager working in the Maldives?

SG: This is a beautiful country. I have spent altogether more than eleven years in this country. The challenge now is to find the proper personnel to manage the island. The demand is very high for the Maldives as every year new openings are springing up. Ideally, we would like to have more qualified people to work with us, whom we can trust and who will grow with us. Thankfully the turnover rate here is not that much. The employees at present are proud to work for us, as they feel they are part of the project. What we are looking for and would like to maintain is the smile and the excellent service. At the end of the day what I learnt in my career is that it is the human being who makes the difference.

HM: What do you think can be done locally to improve the efficiency of the human resources of the property?

SG: As tourism contributes a lot to the Maldives, I think we should find a way to bring the new generation into the industry. To do that we have to create proper schooling for tourism and we have to create a culture for it.

HM: With the increased connectivity to the Maldives, how do you foresee the tourism industry to be?

SG: I have seen the change in what connectivity brought to the tourism industry of the Maldives when compared to when I initially came here. There are more opportunities now and we have to seize those opportunities to let the industry soar. The Maldives is well established as a popular destination. The islands are and can be sustained to maintain their beauty.

HM: How do you plan on involving the local communities around you with the resort's goals?

SG: We have a very good relationship with Ukulhas. We have signed a waste disposal agreement with the island. We have organised sports events with the island and we organise visits for the younger generation to the island as an open day. We have weekly trips to the island for our guests should they be interested. We buy fish from the island as well. Having good relationships with the local communities is important.



HM: What is your approach to managing?

SG: I think leading by example is what makes you successful. I consider myself part of the staff. This experience is completely different to anywhere else. In a resort, we are not only sharing the institutional eight-hours of work with our employees but we are sharing twenty-four-hours. I am involved in the operational side as well as the recreational side. I speak Dhivehi so sometimes I communicate with Maldivians in Dhivehi too. We have diverse nationalities with different religious backgrounds in the resort and it is important to be close to the staff and your guests to be a successful manager.

HM: How do you see your future looking with Sandies Bathala?

SG: We just started the project here so let's see. From the beginning, we exceeded our expectations. We received good feedback from our first guests to the island. The resort has a lot of potential for career growth.

HM: What would be your advice to new and well-established hoteliers?

SG: I suggest to completely dive into the experience. This is a place that you either love or dislike. There is no in-between. You have to be all in. You have to embrace the property, the country and the people in it. |

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TANGI LE GRAND

General Manager
of Constance
Halaveli

FRENCH-BORN TANGI LE GRAND IS THE current General Manager of Constance Halaveli Maldives. With a Bachelor's Degree in Hospitality Administration and Management from the Institut Vatel Bordeaux, France, he ventured into exploring the Asian hospitality industry. With over a decade's experience working in several Asian countries, Tangi is finally pursuing the dream of working in a quiet, pristine island in the Maldives, in a country best known for its high-end luxury resorts. With his extensive knowledge of leading multicultural teams and excellence in Asian hospitality and his "Can Do" attitude, Tangi is a man of strong tenacity and perseverance.





HOTELIER MALDIVES: *Was hospitality your first choice of a career path? How did your journey begin?*

TANGI LE GRAND: I have always been passionate about travel and fascinated by Asian cultures. Immediately after graduating from the Hospitality Management School in Vatel, France, I joined Accor in Asia to undertake a Management Training Program in Cambodia and China in the Food & Beverage field. A couple of months later, I had the chance to move to Indonesia where I ended up spending five amazing years. Later on, I had a great opportunity to work in Canada, Singapore and Vietnam.

HM: *After working many years in Asian cities, what attracted you towards the Maldives and working with Constance brand?*

TLG: Nature has always been my greatest inspiration and working in the Maldives was an opportunity I could not miss! Maldives is one of the most high-end and exclusive leisure destinations in the world, with limitless opportunities. The challenge offered by Constance Group Hotels and Resorts to manage one of their flagship properties is unique and I feel very grateful to be the General Manager of such a well-known luxury resort in the Indian Ocean. Constance Halaveli is one of these rare properties that have kept their original beauty and preserved their innate purity.

HM: *Having previously worked with other hospitality brands, how did these experiences influence you in shaping your career?*

TLG: Working with larger luxury brands is the best way to learn, challenge yourself, grow and build a solid career path. I have a wide range of experience in operating city hotels, resorts and I have managed to successfully open two brand-new luxury hotels in Singapore and in Vietnam. This exposure to diverse countries gave me the unique opportunity of running through all the different levels of the hospitality business and developing a positive approach to intercultural human relationships.

HM: *Could you describe your management style and policies in a few words? In your perspective, what is your biggest strength as a General Manager?*

TLG: I always like to compare myself to a football head coach where I see myself coordinating, instructing, motivating and organising the operational and non-operational teams, developing their tactical awareness and their mental motivation, all the while ensuring that they keep improving the skills they need to become successful in their respective departments. I believe in empowering, being visible and always approachable for my team members, guests and partners. Transparency, responsibility and probity are my key values. I believe my two biggest strengths are tenacity and perseverance. I basically never give up.



HM: *With the fast-paced evolving requirements of modern-day luxury travellers, what is the best way to keep up with their needs in a highly competitive market?*

TLG: In a world of standardisation and material belongings, I believe it is all about creating an emotional connection with our guests. At Constance, we define it as providing a “True Experience”. Luxury travellers are nowadays seeking an emotionally awakening experience and service should be true, sincere and genuine so that each client feels unique. At Constance Halaveli, we feel proud, we are generous, we love people and want them to feel at home. Our repeater guests keep coming back as we have all managed to create this connection and sincerely put emotion in everything we do. Generosity from the heart always delivers a great return on investment!



HM: *Sustainability and environmental conservation have become crucial to a country like the Maldives. What are your thoughts on it and what are the efforts being made by Constance Halaveli on the issue?*

TLG: Sustainability within the Constance Hotels & Resorts is defined as carrying out our business in line with the company's guiding principles of being conscious of global environmental issues and acknowledging our responsibility towards the environment. At Constance Halaveli, we are constantly aware of the risks of our operations to the environment and local communities. We realise that our operations may produce significant environmental impacts as we consume large quantities of resources and generate a lot of waste. We also recognise that our activities can have both positive and negative impacts on these areas and that we have responsibilities to manage these impacts.

Constance Halaveli is certified Green Globe and our group is a Green Globe Gold Member. This prestigious designation is a great accomplishment for Constance Halaveli and the entire group. It has been brought about by dedication, passion and the continuous effort of our teams in order to bring improvements to their environment.

When you think of the Maldives you picture islands surrounded by white sandy beaches and sparkling turquoise waters. Unfortunately, as with many seaside resorts, plastic waste and other non-biodegradable materials have had detrimental effects on the environment. Luckily, there are some key organisations in the Maldives that care about the environment and are making a huge effort, on a local level, to involve not only tourists but also community members to raise awareness of this situation and help make a difference in protecting this fragile ecosystem. Alongside local people, we work towards marine conservation and preserving the pristine environment of Maldives.

HM: *As the General Manager, what are your vision and main goals for Constance Halaveli?*

TLG: We just celebrated our 10th anniversary recently. We all are very proud to see many of our team members still working with us since the opening. We are a corporation as well as a family, we treat our guests as friends but never forget the excellence they deserve. Our ambition is to be the exemplar of human-scale luxury hospitality in the Maldives. |

IBRAHIM RASHEED MOOSA

Engineering Manager, Four Seasons Maldives at Kuda Huraa

A PROUD NATIVE FROM B. THULHAADHOO, the island famous for its lacquer work, with his own family involved in the craft, Ibrahim Rasheed Moosa started in the field of Engineering 10 years ago. Currently, he is the Engineering Manager of Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa. With extensive experience carrying out projects at the luxurious property, Ibrahim has an innovative mindset and a growing interest in his field.

In his role, a typical day at work starts early in the morning. Rasheed observes the entire island to inspect ongoing projects, after which he will update the Director of Engineering at the daily morning briefing. Then he prepares assignments for all the engineering employees for their day's work. Working in the engineering department not only involves the hours spent working in front of a computer but notable important factors it requires are technical skills, assertiveness and alertness.

As an international chain, when presenting new concepts, primarily the department contemplates the brand philosophy of Four Seasons. Before commencing a project, a very thorough study is carried out to assess the areas lacking when compared with its competitors. Expert help is sought from industry professionals with several manual readings done for the technical details. Properties that might have done a similar concept are visited to obtain further

insight. Findings are compiled in a concise format with various visual presentations and costing details for easy comprehension. The design and layout will then go through the approval stages before the project can officially start. The department has to think of ways to enhance their existing features with the constant development of the resort at the forefront. New technologies are researched in order to maintain the department as they will cut down on manual labour and will be useful in the long run.

The resort has taken several initiatives for a sustainable future, which include having a bottling plant to desalinate seawater used for several purposes, from drinking water to water used for laundry and washing purposes. The use of plastic bottles on the island has been eliminated since 8 years ago. In electrical initiatives, LED lights are used to reduce energy consumption and the guest rooms are installed with a heat-recovery boiler system. The generators are automatically synchronised which allow us to reduce

running hours resulting in a reduction of carbon emission. A specialist solution is used for killing mosquitoes without chemical repellents that will be harmful to the environment. In the near future, the resort is looking at solutions and new ideas to reduce its carbon footprint further.

One of the challenges faced by an engineering department is not getting good, reliable contractors who work in line with the management's requirements. In order to mitigate this issue, it is vital to build a good rapport and keep strong relationships with the contractors. Another challenge faced is getting experienced locals to work in the field. As a Maldivian, Ibrahim stressed that he would like to see





more Maldivians getting involved in this department. Creating awareness and providing educational opportunities to get more locals interested is paramount to succeeding in getting more locals to join. Important technical services are not readily available in the Maldives as well, in addition to not getting good supplies.

To safeguard workplace hazards, personal protection measures are foremost. In the engineering department, workplace hazards are identified by carrying out risk assessments. Arranging all the chemicals using labels and handling them with protective gear is practised. Additionally, conducting training for new employees and refresher courses for experienced ones is important. At Four Seasons Kuda Huraa, minor fire incidents have happened over the course of the years but practising safety measures throughout, with proper storage of equipment and awareness amongst employees, can help to lessen such incidents from occurring.

Ibrahim believes that safety is one of the primaries of engineering as both risk and uncertainty have to be taken into consideration. Safety management when carrying out large scale projects such as New Year's Eve celebrations or even small scale projects should be done accordingly to prevent any incidents. He trusts that the employees at present are well-suited to their roles in carrying out the engineering tasks of the resort in co-existence with the other aspects of the resort's operations. |



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 100% Sweetened with Stevia



LUCAS LEONARDI VARIN

**Executive Chef, LUX* South Ari
Atoll Resort & Villas, Maldives**

THE EXECUTIVE CHEF AT LUX*

South Ari Atoll Resort & Villas, Lucas Leonardi Varin, has a remarkable history of working in luxurious five-star Hotels and Michelin Star Restaurants in various countries for over a decade. Some of these outstanding locations include Corsica Island, Saint Barths, Koh Samui, Paris, Sydney, Sao Paulo and the Maldives. French techniques are the root of Lucas' cuisines, an electric fusion of flavours inspired by his culinary trips. He is an efficient team leader with strong management and communication skills, leading a team of over 120 Chefs and stewards from 13 nations. In addition to his outstanding culinary skills, he also speaks multiple languages, enabling him to provide exceptional guest service.

Growing up in Sao Paulo – Brazil, Lucas got his first job at the age of eleven. He worked in catering to support his family. Reminiscing about his younger days, Lucas explains how he developed a passion for food, various international cuisines and cooking techniques. “My mom is an amazing cook, she always cooked us dishes from around the world. We always ate well and the variety of different dishes was a true pleasure to take part in” Lucas recalled. Thanks to her, I grew this passion for food and I’ve travelled to more than 35 countries just to try different ingredients and dishes from all corners; various techniques from Michelin star restaurants and traditional techniques from the street food markets in Thailand.”

For Lucas, hospitality has always been an appealing industry since his first job in catering. However, after experimenting, learning and utilising the knowledge he gained by experiencing various ingredients and flavours from around the world, he chose to become a professional chef.

Reaching the career stage he is today at his age was a bit of a challenge. Lucas shares how his culinary journey began. “I started working professionally when I was 14 years old. I started off as an intern, then I became a waiter, bartender, barista and all the way until I finally got to work in the kitchen, followed by studies at the University of Gastronomy.”

Lucas has had the privilege to serve several A-list guests, including various celebrities and Royal families. However, he expressed that the most memorable experience in his career was serving Nepal’s Royal family. “It was a true honour to cook for the Royal family of Nepal: King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, the Queen and the Princesses. They stayed for ten days at the resort and I had the chance to talk to them every day,” said Lucas. “They were so happy and for me, that was an unforgettable experience.”

“All chefs experiment on a daily basis” talking about his experiment at the moment. “Since a while back, my focus has been sustainable food, meaning fresh,

locally sourced food. I want to reduce as much waste as we can and create unique dishes with the available resources. Mindful cooking is so important, we all need to take responsibility not only for our planet, but to give the guest an amazing experience.”

As a creative chef himself, Lucas considers that the freedom to create and the urge to develop are the most important traits for a chef to have. Lucas adds that the most valuable possession to him as a professional chef is his integrity and passion for what he does.

As an Executive Chef, to keep his team motivated Lucas leads them by being a good example. “This includes hard work, respect and to give your team the opportunity and space to express themselves in work and the results.”

In the continuous journey to perfect everything he takes on, Lucas believes that the food trends that will dominate the luxury culinary industry in the upcoming decade will be fresh, simple, tasty, healthy and sustainable food. |



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SIFANI

One precious gem at a time

HUMANS HAVE TREASURED GEMSTONES

for centuries. They are often associated with beauty and great wealth. From religious, medicinal, mythical to astrological values, gemstones have been associated with human beliefs from as early as the middle-ages. Gemstones are found at various depths and locations within the Earth's crust. The island of "Ceylon", modern day Sri Lanka, is one of the most celebrated regions of the world for its incredible nature given resources of various types of precious and semi-precious gems and stones. The ancient Indians referred to it as "Ratnadeep" which is translated as - Gem Island.

THE SIFANI BRAND CREATION

The Sifani brand was established in 1970. A family owned business by a group of directors under the leadership of their former Chairman, Dr. A.M.M.Sahabdeen. He was originally from a real estate background and later moved into the gold trading business. It was right after the colonial era, when Sri Lanka was regarded as the pinnacle of tropical tourism for Europeans, especially among the British tourists. It was through the gold business, that a niche jewelry market for gemstones was discovered. Since foreigners visiting the country wanted to buy a momentum of Sri Lanka which was in the form of colored stones - precious souvenirs to take home and remind them of their adventure.

With the growth of the business, the Sifani store in Kandy was opened, presenting an all-round experience for tourists, complete with a museum, explaining the entire process from the formation of the gemstones, the mining process, to the end result of the fine jewelry creation. The concept was very popular among tourists and the company became successful in Sri Lanka during the



beginning of civil war in 1983. However, this naturally led to a significant decline in tourism, which had an overall effect on the company. The brand struggled through these challenging years until things took a positive turn in 1991.

THE MAN BEHIND THE SIFANI BRAND

In 1991, Mr. Mahmood Rizvan Sahabdeen, joined the company. Young, enthusiastic, and the son of the founding member and chairman, Rizvan was determined to take the company to the next level. Around this time, he discovered an opportunity in the Maldives and without any hesitation, he pursued this new direction.

Under the leadership of Rizvan, the first Sifani store to open in the Maldives was in Kuredu Resort in 1992 and to this day it is still going strong. Though it was

his first experience in the Maldives, Sifani previously had a store inside Nasandhura Palace Hotel, an iconic location in Male city. Following the closure of the store, Rizvan decided to venture into the Maldivian resort market. After the launch in Kuredu resort, Sifani fearlessly began opening up jewelry boutiques in the Maldives resorts, conquering one by one.

"I remember travelling to Kuredu, it was a six or seven hour long boat journey, as back then there were no speedboats in the Maldives. Then came the helicopter transfer, which eased our travel to resorts. Everything had to be brought from Male' at that point. But the model worked well in Kuredu," commented Rizvan Sahabdeen

The 90's was all about operating stores at classical resorts and the airport duty free, in the Maldives and by 2000's, Sifani



CROSSROADS MALDIVES AND NEW VENTURES

The beautifully designed, well-lit Sifani boutique stands overlooking the ocean beyond the berths of the Marina at Crossroads. This boutique stocks a vast range of colored gemstones and a unique collection which is not yet available in other stores. The boutique not only offers gems such as Ceylon Sapphires and Rubies but also an interesting collection of semi-precious stones including Amethysts and Rose Quartz which are believed to have healing powers in different cultures. In addition, there is a vast choice of Diamonds and Emeralds available.

On the 19th of September 2019, Sifani opened its boutique at the Crossroads, Marina. Crossroads offers a completely new experience in the Maldives with a plethora of retail and excellent dining options, which are accessible to the public in addition to the guests staying at the collective resorts. The modern innovation that Crossroads provides is a completely new approach on the usual one island one resort concept of the Maldives.

was a well established, reputable and trusted brand in the Maldives. Then came the opening of stores in high-end luxury resorts including Fourseasons, Cheval Blanc and Shangri-La. By this time, the brand had already captured the market in the Maldives. However, the mastermind behind the success of Sifani did not stop at this, Rizvan also expanded their presence to other destinations such as the Seychelles, Mauritius, Malaysia and London, United Kingdom, with all around the same time.

Even though the company began as a family business with his father and uncles as the directors, in the 90's with Rizvan's success and loss of his father, he managed to gain ownership and buyout the company.

"We also went back to Sri Lanka and re-entered the market in a strong way during 2009-2010. Tourism started post war so we expanded our footprint there in Sri Lanka. We now have about ten stores spread across the island" commented Mr. Rizvan Sahabdeen

2010 onwards, Rizvan has also developed into the luxury watch business and this is proving to be extremely successful. Currently, Sifani and Associate Company Chatham are the distributing agents for international luxury watches including Cartier, Chopard, Rolex and Omega.





The inspiration for the design concept was derived from the companies tagline - Sun, Sand and Luxury. Drawing inspiration from the beautiful nature in the Maldives and Sri Lanka, the collection consists of various designs inspired by the Maldives corals and fish.

“Sri Lanka not only produces gemstones but the country has also become a trusted trading hub for gemstones. We have a long tradition in gems and gem mining. We produce the finest sapphires which are highly sought after. We also produced the Sapphire that Princess Diana was gifted by Charles, Prince of Wales which is a ceylon Sapphire. This one-of-a-kind piece has now been passed down to Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge.” explained Mr. Rizvan Sahabdeen

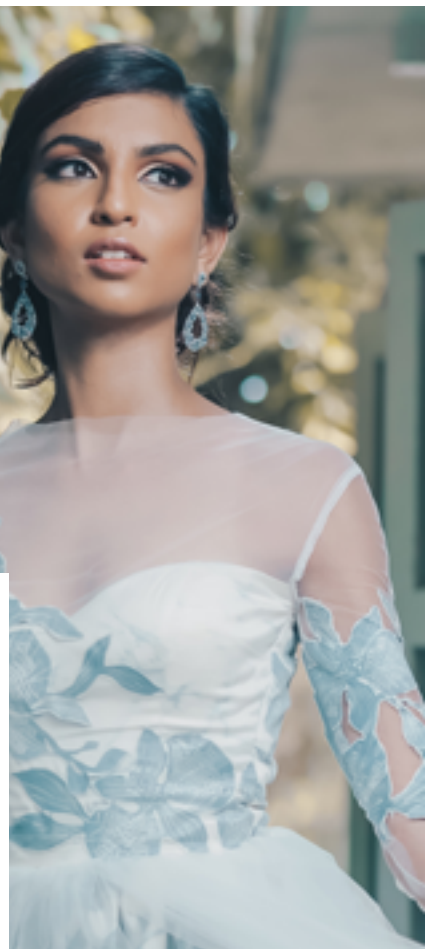
Today Sifani has become a reputable local Sri Lankan brand, known by certain segments of the European market. Sophisticated travellers are always looking for something out of the ordinary to take back home and cherish that represents memories from the destination.

Each year Sifani launches two main collections as well as additional special collections launched on different occasions in the year. From their versatile designs, some of which include the added ability to interchange the stones to suit any occasion or the wearers mood to jewelry which serves as a dual purpose from a ring to a pendant; they



have attractive, modern designs for a range of clients, from young designs to more classical and timeless pieces.

This coming year, Sifani is set to open four new stores in Shangri-La Mall and Colombo, Sri Lanka, which will also stock their new watch designs. The new stores will include a store especially for high-end luxury brands Rolex and Omega, a multi-branded luxury watch store and a stand-alone Sifani boutique. 2020 is set to be an eventful and prosperous year for Sifani. |



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HUVAFEN SPA & PEARL

INDULGE YOURSELF IN A WORLD OF serenity and pure luxury in bliss-inducing and magical surroundings on an island set in the waters of Kaafu Atoll, just a 35 minute speedboat ride away from Velana International airport. Huvafen Fushi Island Resort and Spa opened its doors in July 2004, and since then the resort has created unique once-in-a-lifetime experiences for its guests, many often returning each year.

Featuring some of the largest guest villas and water bungalows in the Maldives, each with their own private swimming pool; the resort offers exceptional levels of service, comprehensive spa facilities and extraordinary fine dining experiences. All enhanced by cutting edge and ergonomically sound designs in an elegant yet simple manner that is bound to delight and surpass the expectations of even the most discerning guests.

Huvafen Spa & Pearl's luxurious treatments are available to all, and overwater treatment villas feature all the hallmarks of attention, luxury and indulgent comforts of a world-class spa. The spa holds a special allure for couples, whether young or old. Its two couples' rooms beneath sea level have large windows that offer a panoramic view of the underwater wonderland. Not only immersing guests in the sensory delights of the innovative treatments themselves, but also allowing them to lose themselves in the azure blue waters teeming with colourful marine life.

Revitalize together whilst you sip away your welcome drink; a soothing elixir of natural healing herbs and exotic spices that is guaranteed to awaken the senses. You are now ready to be expertly



guided through the spa's wide selection of facials, body treatments, traditional Maldivian medicine, yoga and "PURE" massage — a world famous modern massage concept pioneered by Beata Aleksandowics. Once your selection is made, you and your partner can lose yourselves in relaxation brought on by both the treatment, and the calm turquoise underwater surroundings. You can round off this one-of-a-kind experience with private yoga and meditation sessions. All amidst the gentle lapping waves and sea life surrounding you.

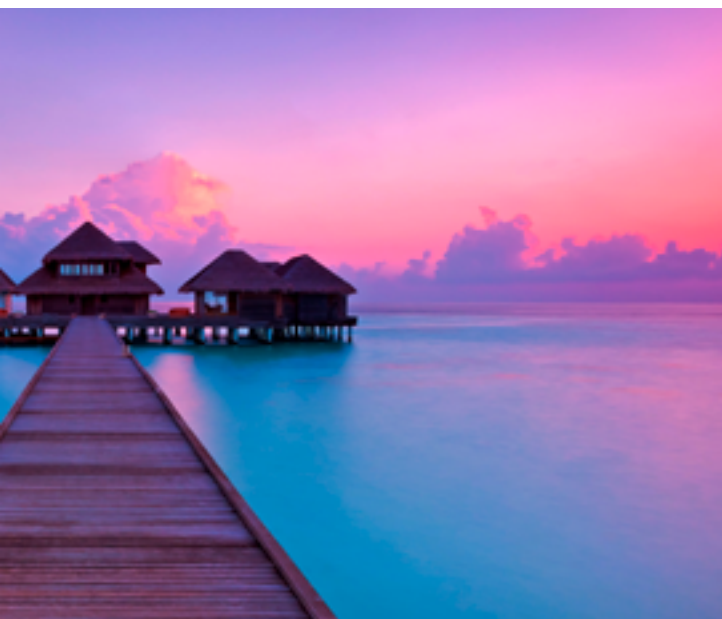
After the treatment, having every memory of stress wiped clean from the mind, satisfy your appetite with the enlivening flavours of the spa's international and local cuisine - arguably one of the best in the Maldives. Huvafen Spa & Pearl is equipped with two restaurants situated on the seaside and overwater. One serving healthy 100% raw organic



food, the other serving a creative fusion cuisine influenced by Asia and Europe, all paired with delicious wine from the very first underground wine cellar in the Maldives, home to the best Cuvee and Champagne collection in Asia.

Huvafen Spa & Pearl at Huvafen Fushi Maldives, has been recognised as the “Best Luxury Romantic Destination Spa in the Indian Ocean” at the annual “World Luxury Spa and Restaurant Awards 2019” celebrating luxury restaurants and spas across the globe for their impeccable standards and memorable experiences.

Endless seascapes. Infinite seduction immersed in a cocoon of timeless luxury. A dreamscape of hidden pleasures, where every second transcends time. A sanctuary for lovers of life. Surrender to the embrace of Huvafen Spa & Pearl - a powerful experience that will revitalise your mind, body and soul. ■



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DONAD INVESTMENTS PVT LTD

Christmas by the waves at Outrigger® Konotta

OUTRIGGER® HAS SHOWCASED HOTELS AND RESORTS IN PRIME resort destinations such as Hawaii, Fiji, Thailand, Guam, Mauritius and now the latest Outrigger Konotta Resort in the Maldives. Konotta Resort is located 340 kilometres away to the south of the Maldives capital city of Malé. “Each year we welcome Santa and his elves to create festive magic for families and couples who wish to unwind in a pristine beach setting at Christmas. Outrigger promises a magical experience where you can forget the winter cold and celebrate in style” explains John Allanson, General Manager.

Konotta has a special selection of Christmas and New Year packages this year for guests to delight in a luxurious holiday by the waves. The entire family can indulge in a range of experiences, ranging from local island excursions, renewal of vows, sunken beach table dining by candlelight, a picnic on a sandbank, cooking classes, or even escaping in a traditional boat (dhoni) to be castaway on an uninhabited island for a day. Konotta has also introduced conservation and preservation activities to guests who wish to be involved with Outrigger’s OZONE global marine conservation commitment. |





Christmas in the sand at Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME TO BE IN THE WARM EMBRACE OF FAMILY.

Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa has elevated the holiday experience and invites guests for an unforgettable Christmas, 290 km from the capital Malé at Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa, Dhonakulhi Island Resort, Maldives. A unique tropical Christmas in the sand for you and your loved ones awaits. Hideaway combines the luxury, privacy and exclusive quietness for guests to utilise their experience. Trained butlers are on hand to assist with arranging a range of tailored activities. Between the gingerbread house and the Christmas tree, there is time to splash around in the sea and to enjoy the holiday in complete serenity as a family.

“Every Christmas and New Year, we cast a magical spell over the entire resort and transform it into a fantasy world for children and adults alike. It is even more beautiful to see the joy and happiness in their eyes, setting a warm festive mood throughout their holiday” says Christian Szabo, General Manager at Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa. ■





TGI Maldives initiates training for the instructors

TGI MALDIVES HAS INITIATED A TRAINING program in collaboration with the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) for the dedicated instructors of TGI Maldives.

This three day training program was conducted at Emerald Maldives Fasmendhoo, courtesy of the resort. The course was conducted by the PADI Regional Manager, Mr. Matt Wenger. A total of five participants were trained successfully and all participants passed with flying colours.

The dive centre highlighted the need for their divers to be on par with the latest PADI standards. TGI Maldives emphasised that it was crucial for the instructors to maintain an updated skill set, thus proving the need for a dedicated training program. |





The award winning BlueTribe Moofushi celebrates 10 consecutive years as the number one Diving & Excursions Center to provide the highest number of PADI certifications in the entire Maldives

WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS WINNER, BlueTribe Diving and Excursions Centre has been a firm fixture within the Maldives tropical archipelago for many years, with a track record for exceptional guest experience and a diverse range of water activities from diving, snorkelling and private boat tours to adventurous excursions, including the ultimate whale shark excursion in the underwater paradise of South Ari Atoll - known as one of the best diving spots in the world.

On the 10th and 11th December 2019, the BlueTribe team celebrated their success winning the award for 10 consecutive years as the number one Dive and Excursions Center to provide the highest number of PADI certifications within the Maldives region. The award was presented by PADI Regional Manager and PADI Examiner (Europe/Africa & Asia), Mr. Matt Wenger, at the PADI instructor examination held at Constance Moofushi. The BlueTribe team also celebrated another key milestone with an award for 15 years of outstanding service to the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI). PADI course director, Mr. Miles Crookes was also awarded for 25 years of service to PADI and recognition for his dedication to all diver and instructor training and his support to the team to prepare all divers. Each award is a testament to BlueTribe's passionate and dedicated team of instructors.

New Instructors to the BlueTribe team include: Ahmed Mohamed Mahmoud Ali, Ismail Farish, New IDC Staff Instructor Maged Abdelhak, Ahmed Nazim, Abdulla Firaash Mohamed.

BlueTribe's mission is to create unforgettable memories both above and

underwater for it's adventure-seeking guests who travel across the world to one of the Maldives top 5* luxury resorts, Constance Moofushi - a spectacular secluded island which embodies the True Indian Ocean, as voted for in the Conde Nast Traveler Readers Choice Awards 2019. Rich in culture, with it's own story to tell, Constance Moofushi encapsulates true Maldivian beauty from the ecological thatch roofing to the stunning turquoise water; an understated luxury island escape with true soul. Recognized for its unique sustainability initiatives, marine life conservation efforts and eco-friendly and power-efficient products, Constance Moofushi is the ideal residency for Blue Tribe, with more than 20 exceptional diving points close by, clear water visibility between 20 and 25 metres and a slow to moderate current; beginners and expert divers have a plethora of options to explore.

In 2004 BlueTribe introduced the innovative DPV diving (diving with underwater scooters) with an amazing guest program which has proved to be very popular and has enabled a wide range of divers to dive where they could only dream of diving previously, for example channel dives with sharks and eagle rays. With an underwater scooter, divers don't have to negotiate with the current as the scooter will guide them easily into the current and maintain a depth that the diver controls. In the past these types of dives were always reserved for very experienced divers. However, now with some basic training and high powered and professional underwater scooters, it is a great new underwater activity for a range of divers to enjoy. ■





Centara Grand launches newly renovated employees canteen; 'Grand Cafe'

THIS PROJECT WAS DEDICATED TO THE PASSIONATE AND HARDWORKING Centara Grand team, who strive daily to ensure that all guests receive exceptional service. Centara General Manager, Riaan Drever, alongside the in-house Engineering, TFC projects and Housekeeping team set out to improve the employees canteen and deliver a restaurant which the team can be proud of. Mr. Drever's inspiration for the restaurant came from interesting common and multi-use spaces, which tend to be trendier in comparison to the formidable dining spaces traditionally found in hotels.

Centara Grand managed to keep costs down by repurposing the furniture used for the canteen from the previous front-of-house upgrades, along with fabric that was no longer used in the resort. The outcome of the improvement was well received by an enthusiastic team, who thoroughly enjoy the new space.

The culinary team, under the supervision of the Executive Chef and Sous Chef, managed to put together a phenomenal menu set to delight a range of tastes. The menu consists of a 14-day rotational menu, designed in the same way Centara Grand would for their main guest restaurant. However since the team live and work on the island, the menu starts from 0600 until 2130, with snack breaks allocated in between those times for those who might be off or missed a meal. In addition, the team have the option of a Coffee Café, and the Resort Chefs plan to add an a la carte menu starting from January 2020. This will be a choice of items from the guest In Villa dining menu or from guest restaurants such as Azzuri Mare (Italian) and Suan Bua (Thai).

Centara Grand has grown net promoter scores by more than 14% annually. The resort has been recognised and awarded by the World Luxury Travel Awards, TripAdvisor and Hotel of the Year, in addition to the consistent growth in guest and mystery guest scores. The launch of the newly improved 'Grand Cafe' is a testament to all the hard work the Centara Grand team put into making the resort a success and achieving recognition and international awards. |





Aishath Shimani

Planning Director at Sun Siyam Resorts, an award-winning innovative Interior Designer



MS. SHIMANI STARTED HER EXCITING

career journey from humble beginnings – as a freshly graduated high school student. Confused and with little idea of what she wanted to do as a future career, she sought advice from her parents who encouraged her to pursue a field that would utilize her strengths, and most importantly a profession that she would be passionate about. This supportive guidance enabled her to realise that

she was extremely meticulous and fond of maintaining an orderly space in all aspects of her life. During this transformational time, Ms. Shimani was provided with the fantastic opportunity to study overseas in Malaysia. With her parent's advice in mind, she selected the subject from the university prospectus that most suited her strengths – Interior Design. At the time, Interior Design was not a popular field and there were many doubting opinions from the society, that this career choice was not going to be a success and she would be better to pursue a different creative approach in the field of architecture or engineering, which were very popular. The desire to prove that Interior Designing was a successful profession and others opinions wrong, she decided to try her best and follow her passion.

During her college years in Malaysia, she was successful in all of her classes and consistently achieved the highest grades each semester. Her passion and dedication gained her recognition from her University who decided to waive all of her education fees for the final year. In addition, she was awarded the Best Student award for the year 2001, by the Interior Designing Society of Malaysia. Following this success, Ms. Shimani completed and obtained her BA (Hons) in Interior Architecture and Design from Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom.

As the first Maldivian to obtain a Bachelor of Arts (BA Honours) in Interior Architecture and Design, Ms. Shimani's talent was highly sort after and was approached once she arrived back home to the Maldives, to work on a Government project to redesign the Department of Immigration and Emigration office then. Being familiar with the standard office designs in the Maldives, she decided to use this unique opportunity to be innovative and showcase the power of creative Interior Design. She introduced colour and custom designed, modern furniture into the office space, which became popular amongst the public and resulted in her receiving further government projects and private projects for resorts, as a freelancer.

After working as a freelancer, she received an opportunity in Singapore, which is where she resided for the past 18 years. During her last 6 years in Singapore she worked with the United Nations, joining the project to set up and design the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence in Singapore. Upon completion of this high profile project,

she was appointed as the Administrative Assistant to the Director of the United Nations Center. Progressively, she then worked as a mediator between the Centre's communications and submissions with the Singapore Government. Ms. Shimani returned to the Maldives in the year 2018 for family priorities, after the demise of her father. Upon her return, she was presented with the opportunity to work as the Planning Director for Sun Siyam resorts in the Maldives – this opportunity she regards as the chance for her to give back to the community which she calls home. She is very grateful to Hon. Ahmed Siyam Mohamed, Chairman and Managing Director of Sunsiyam Group, for trusting and believing in her work and giving the opportunity to plan and develop the infrastructures of the newly developing Sun Siyam Properties.

As the Director of Planning, she explains that her role involves overlooking the construction projects from the beginning till the end. The Planning Department ensures that each project receives government approval and the project is administered accordingly. The in-depth process of turning a remote island into a luxury property is led by the Planning team of Sun Siyam Resorts.

When asked what part she enjoys most about her role, she explained that she genuinely enjoys being able to meet different people around the world. She considers herself a peoples' person, so visiting the construction sites first hand and working together as a team to bring a project to fruition brings her great joy. Being at the site allows her to be hands on with the project, as she explains that "sitting in the office you would not realise the real complications that can occur on a work site". She further highlights that witnessing the transition and overlooking each project from the beginning till the end makes her role more fulfilling. Asked if she considers herself a leader, she mentioned she views herself not as a manager, but more as a team player – considering her colleagues as her family and friends. She highlights that all of her team members are crucial to the success of any project, and each person brings something new to the table. Her achievements to this day is a reflection of all her teams' contribution.

Ms. Shimani expressed that she hopes more women will feel compelled to join the construction industry, as currently there is a significantly higher number





of men in contrast to women. This is reflected at the construction work sites, where often she is the only woman in sight. She mentioned that at the work sites, one should be a bit more active than usual and she believes there are plenty of women who are to take on such challenges. According to her, everything should be balanced, and there are certain things women would have a better grasp on than men. Having a gender balance would expose the industry to more creative design ideas and further opportunities to explore different outcomes from a female approach. She further comments on the stigma which surrounds women who work in resorts, as it is still prevalent in the country.

When asked what she considers to be her proudest achievement, Ms. Shimani smiles and says that she considers every project she has worked on as an achievement in itself. She puts maximum effort into each project and every individual design she works on. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing a project unfold in front of her eyes - from its

grassroots beginnings to its final glory. When people appreciate the final project and the immense effort that goes into it, from the design details to the overall environment curated by the workers, it brings her immense satisfaction. Design is a crucial element to the tourism industry, and if her work can contribute to the economic growth of her country, she considers this as a huge achievement.

She further addressed the fact that she has noticed within the industry, often praise and press coverage is awarded to the employees who work in resorts, and there is very little credit given to the employees that work behind the scenes. Articles emphasise the managers, executive chefs and purchasing officers etc. that indeed play a key role in the tourism sector of the Maldives, however the success of the resort is also down to the designers, the engineers and the construction workers who are all a crucial part of a resort but are often forgotten about. The resorts are not magically luxurious from the get go, a lot of labour and work goes into an island before it

becomes a paradise destination. Their vital work ensures the resort is built in a manner that guarantees the tourists a safe and happy stay. Ms. Shimani wants to praise all the designers, architects, engineers and construction workers who work tireless hours during the initial creation of the resorts.

One of the main things she wishes to highlight is the eternal gratitude she has for her parents; she owes her success to them and is thankful that they encouraged her to follow her passion and supported her in every decision. She has been blessed to be surrounded by a good team of people wherever she worked - making all of her projects memorable and enabling her to get to where she is today. When asked what advice she would give to aspiring young women, she expressed that there is nothing that women cannot do. It is crucial that women believe in themselves, their dreams and choose to follow their passion, whatever it may be. As long as you are happy and enjoy what you do, work hard, make your dreams a reality and put your heart and soul into it! 🌟

Gateway to the Maldives

VELANA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



LEVO RESTAURANT

Pioneering the way for women working in the food and beverage industry



THE MALDIVES WELCOMES ITS FIRST-EVER restaurant led entirely by a team of women. The conglomerate, SIMDI Group, has initiated its brand new project, LEVO Restaurant and Azuvia Hotel - a project backed entirely by women, from the management to the service, to the kitchen.

This groundbreaking concept encompasses the vision of Dr Shakeela, who sought to empower women in the Maldives and around the world. She has been working closely with forums specializing in women empowerment, both on a local and international level.

The restaurant is open daily from 8am till 11pm, with a fusion of international and local cuisines served throughout the day. Designed by SMART Design, the restaurant boasts an open bar and an open kitchen, allowing customers to watch

the chefs prepare their meals from the comfort of their seat.

Determined to outshine competitors, LEVO restaurant boasts remarkable choices which are unavailable in any other restaurant in Male' and Hulhumale'; including the iconic bubblegum milkshake and the pizza dough - only LEVO and one other restaurant in the world has the unique pizza dough recipe. LEVO offers fine dining and a large variety of international cuisines, from Indian to a local Maldivian breakfast. The Head Chef, Broni Cuff, is responsible for the fusion of local and international cuisines, and the large variety of options available at LEVO. Every dish provided at the restaurant is done with meticulous care and planning, and LEVO will be offering high tea as part of their ever-expanding menu.

After the hotel expansion, SIMDI Group has plans to open a sushi bar, which will even be equipped with a swimming pool, jacuzzi and sauna. LEVO currently offers a full shower room in their downstairs toilets, offering the convenience for guests who wish to take a shower after a swim.

LEVO Restaurant Manager, Ms Deborah Weetman explained that a lot of thought and effort went into every process leading up to the restaurant construction, opening and its operations, highlighting that this thorough planning allowed for a smooth opening.

LEVO intends to expand its vision and unique concept, leading by example and promoting women empowerment throughout the Maldives. LEVO emphasizes that they would be giving higher priority to employing local women, aligning with their core intention to empower women and bring forth new go-getters of the hospitality industry. ■

Faiz Idrees

Executive Chef of Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu

FAIZ IDREES IS A CHARMING, FUN LOVING man full of positive energy. He is the incredible talent behind the delightful food served at Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu by Coco Collection. Before joining as the Executive Chef at Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu by Coco Collection, Faiz worked for Club Med for 26 years.

Within his long committed career with Club Med, Faiz worked in ten of the companies properties around the globe. He had the opportunity to experience different contrasting cultures while working in Japan, Thailand, New Caledonia Mauritius, Australia and various areas of Indonesia in addition to the Maldives. The opportunity to professionally train in France in the field of culinary arts, then later several short courses in Malaysia, further enhanced his career. During his adventures and working abroad, Faiz has picked up lots of amazing tips, tricks and techniques from different cultures and cuisines.

Faiz was born in Eydhafushi, the island capital of Baa Atoll. Growing up in the seventies in an island community was challenging, especially in terms of education. So like many children from that generation, Faiz was forced to move to Male' city to pursue his studies. His culinary odyssey began with a mere job as a dishwasher at a young age. He joined Club Med right after completing his secondary school studies. At the young age of sixteen, he was introduced to resort life at Club Med Farukolhufushi. "Back then I wasn't much interested in it. I wasn't sure what I wanted and had no particular interests," says Faiz. "But it was a different environment, quite fun and I soon began to enjoy it."



Working as a dishwasher, things slowly turned around for him due to his ability to communicate proficiently in English, in comparison to his colleagues as well as some of his superiors. Soon he became an important part of the team. “The chef began to brief me everyday and I would translate his instructions for my superiors in the kitchen.” With this strength and his ability to grasp instructions, combined with his keenness and friendly personality, soon opened several doors within the company and he gradually began ascending the posts of the kitchen brigade all the way to the top, serving as Chef de Cuisine since the year 2000.

Coming from a large family with 8 siblings, Faiz grew up in a busy household playing outdoors frequently and getting into mischief with his siblings. After working abroad in different countries one would often wonder why such an adventurous man returned back home.



“I think I did enough exploring for a lifetime. What brought me back to Maldives is when I got married in 2003 and had my beautiful daughters. At this time my priorities greatly changed. The culture here is when girls grow-up, their father’s are very distant. I didn’t want to grow apart from my girls and miss out on the opportunity to be with them during this important stage in their lives. So, when I finally got a chance to work closer to home at Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu, I took the opportunity without hesitation. I am a very family person. I spend a lot of time gathering my family, my siblings along with their children as well” Today Faiz is the proud father of three daughters and his family lives in Eydhafushi.

At Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu, Faiz leads a team of fifty plus staff. He has always wanted to serve a Maldivian company and offer the best of his experiences. At Dhuni Kolhu, he and his team caters to over 200 guests and their biggest task is to keep up with the current food trends and to always offer something exciting for their guests.





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Chef Faiz believes a good chef must always try to use the best, most freshly available local ingredients and create local experiences for the guests, as they travel to exotic destinations to explore something out of the ordinary. He enjoys experimenting with seafood and Maldavian fishes, creating unique localized memories for the guests.

“With my experience, most of the new creations that I have implemented here are centered around fish and seafood as these are local products which we can use. I could bring expensive ingredients from abroad, but we can only offer a unique experience by using local ingredients,” adds Faiz. At Dhuni Kolhu they often work closely with local fishermen from nearby islands and sometimes they even get fresh Maldavian lobsters.

Today the biggest challenge faced by Faiz is not being able to retain local Maldivians working in the kitchen and the lack of interest for culinary arts by young Maldivians. The culinary industry of Maldives is still dominated by foreigners and it is his dream to see more young

people learn this art as a passion rather than just a job.

“I am an active member of the Chef Guilds Association of Maldives. I was recently at the Job Fair, at the coco palm stand plus CGA stand. We are doing our best to create awareness among our youth to see what a beneficial career path this could be.” says Faiz. In 2018, Chef Faiz represented Maldives at the Culinary Congress held in Kuala Lumpur and Heritage Cuisine in Punjab along with his association member Chef Ishaaq.

Currently serving a long career of over 30 years in the culinary field, Faiz does have a dream of going into an early retirement at his mid 50's, maybe in a couple of years from now. But he challenges himself with retirement to pursue something completely different from cooking and culinary arts but to find something else he is passionate about. Lets see what surprises he holds for the future. |

Noku

Back to Basics



THESE DAYS EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE shrouded in plastic packaging. A casing here, a wrapper there; one way or another plastic finds its way into our lives. A modern-day invention created to make our lives more comfortable has undeniably become one of the biggest challenges that we face today.

At Noku, the focus has been to find simple, creative solutions utilizing what is abundantly available on the island. General Manager, Justin and Food and Beverage Manager, Basil have been working tirelessly over the past year to eliminate as much single use plastic as possible in the resort.

Eliminating plastic from the island has not been an easy task, and one that is still very much a work in progress. The team tackled the project one department at a time.

Food and Beverage is always the most wasteful. Some waste is evitable, but with some effort, waste generated by single use products can be avoided.

Plastic straws for example, can easily be replaced by paper straws. But doing so did not reduce the amount of waste piling up on the island. Instead, they replaced it entirely with handmade straws from coconut leaves which are plentiful on the island and adored by their guests.

None of the items in the resort are served in single serve packing. The sugar is served in pots, the butter piped into serving dishes and jams and sauces are made in house. This not only applied in the restaurant but also in the guest rooms. Noku and a local coffee supplier, the Maldives Coffee Company have a joint venture to develop Eco Friendly F&B amenities in the guest rooms. On top of reducing their carbon footprint, supporting local businesses is also a priority for them.

The plastic free Mini Bar is one of the most notable features at Noku. The coffee and tea are served loose in glass jars and the beverages are made fresh and refilled daily in reusable glass bottles.

F&B manager, Basil noted that the next

step was to reduce plastic in the housekeeping department. Right now, most of their bathroom amenities are in refillable bottles, However, he added that there is still work to be done and they will continue to work on ways they can meaningfully remove as much of single use packing as much as possible.

At Noku, it is not just the guests who enjoy eco-friendly amenities. The team themselves are dedicated in their efforts to embody a sustainable lifestyle on the island. They started by segregating their waste and eliminating single use plastic bottles, bags and many items that come in plastic packets.

Going plastic free is not an easy task and there will always be some amount of waste created. At Noku, they approached this issue by simplifying their lifestyle and going back to basics. Although less convenient, the extra effort has definitely paid off in terms of a cleaner island. ■





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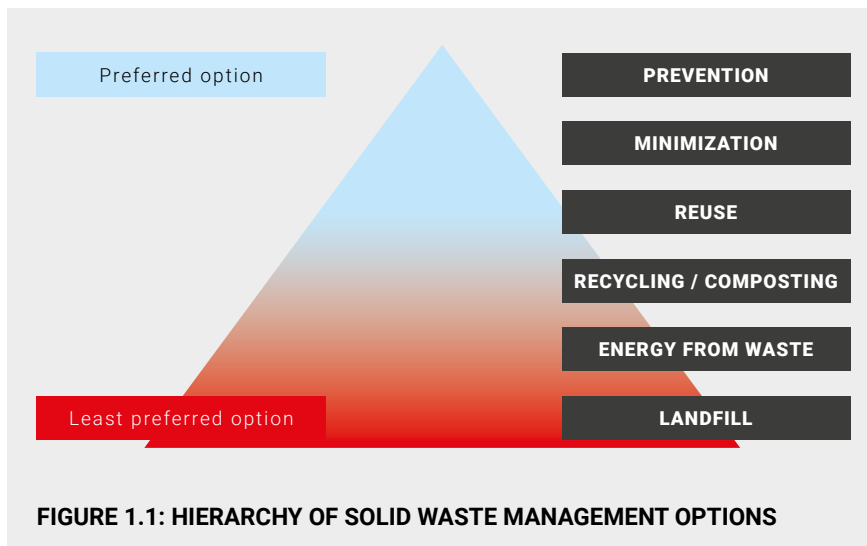
Waste isn't worth the gamble

THE WORLD, AND THIS INCLUDES THE hospitality industry, is increasingly focused on waste management and the accumulation of plastic, especially in the oceans. In Small Island Developing States (SIDS) hotels and resorts are custodians to the pristine nature of the places they operate in. And this is doubly true of the Maldives, with its 'one island - one resort' ethos. The responsibility falls upon the resort to not only run its business profitably, but to also be ecologically ethical. It has a dual obligation of making a minimal carbon impact on the island and its community and, as much as possible, of enhancing the lives and livelihood of the locals.

The Maldives has been attracting over a million tourists for the last several years - with 2019 arrivals at 1.7 million - drawn by its natural beauty and marine life.

Unfortunately, the waste that holidaying, and tourism invariably generate is a substantial civic challenge. It has been estimated that each tourist contributes an average 3.5kg of waste daily. So, while the income and positive optics that tourism generate for the country are vital, sustainable waste management programmes are a crucial focus area for hotels in order to continue contributing positively to their bottom-line and the economy while protecting the planet at the same time.

The Maldivian Ministry of Tourism (MoT) has outlined a tiered approach to classifying solid waste to enable multi-pronged efforts to manage the problem. The tiers range from most desirable behaviours to least, and they are worth reproducing here for valuable information (Figure 1.1).



The most preferred approach to waste management is to not create it in the first place. Nipping waste before it happens should be the starting point of hotels' waste coping and control strategies.

Daily operations present numerous opportunities for waste eradication that begin with small behavioural and procedural adjustments. For example, using refillable ceramic dispensers for hotel toiletries, or installing water filters on every floor and providing aluminium bottles or glass water carafes in guest rooms. This would mean doing away with the unhealthy dependence on single-use plastics. Of course, procedural changes are always easier than behavioural ones, and in this case, the behavioural adjustments would entail guest participation as well. So, in the case of drinking water, while housekeeping can restock the bottles or carafes in each room with their daily room cleaning duties, guests would need to be gently educated and requested to replenish their bottles themselves from the water filter during the day.

Minimising waste means avoiding unnecessary consumption of goods and services - like packaging, transportation, lighting and electricity, etc. Some examples include:

- Electrical waste can be curtailed using up-to-date LED lighting technologies and movement-sensitive lighting that automatically cuts off when no activity is sensed in the area.
- Or, by using washable cloth wipes to reduce dependence on single-use tissue products.
- Avoiding individually wrapped toiletries and providing additional toiletries only upon request.
- Swapping out individual packages of food items like butter, honey, sauces and jams during food service for replenishable jars.

A successful waste reduction program requires both a philosophical and financial commitment from facility managers. Without a sustained commitment to fighting waste, employees may be reluctant to fully embrace the program. Designate a "green team" comprised of representatives from each facility operation (e.g., housekeeping, kitchen, grounds keeping, purchasing, etc.) This team would receive training inputs on the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) and spearhead their department's waste reduction efforts.



With so much focus on SWM (Solid Waste Management) reuse practices in the hotel industry are closely monitored. The recently published Asia Pacific Sustainability Trends 2019 study by Greenview & Horwath HTL, with over 2000 participating hotels, reported a greater than 90% uptake for linen/ towel reuse and an uptake of 93% in reusable food service wares for the Maldives. These statistics present a heartening picture of a mindful hotel industry that is fully partnering with civic and community efforts to preserve and enhance our environment.

Food waste typically represents up to 40% of the waste generated at a resort location. Food discards typically are separated from other wastes and dumped in the sea. Combustible waste components including garden / yard trash and paper products are generally incinerated, and combustion under suitable process systems can reduce waste volume by up to 90%. A summary of how most resorts tackle the various categories of waste is depicted diagrammatically in the “Assessment of solid waste management practices in Maldives’ tourism sector” report commissioned by MoT (Figure 1.2).

TABLE 1.1: BEST PRACTICE MEASURES TO SEPERATE AND RECYCLE WASTE

DEPARTMENT	MEASURE	DESCRIPTION
All (Management Led)	Develop waste inventory and identify options	Survey all areas and processes to identify sources of on-site waste generation. Identify waste recycling and packaging return options available locally.
	Monitoring and reporting	Continuously monitor and periodically report waste generation and collection by fraction.
Procurement	Procurement selection	Select products and packaging made from recycled and recyclable material.
Housekeeping	Waste bins	Install seperated waste collections in rooms.
	Waste collection in rooms	Seperate waste during room cleaning into fractions collected seperately from accomodation premises.
	Back-of-house waste management	Seperate waste arising from public areas, maintenance of outdoor and indoor facilities, and other back-of-house areas into appropriate fractions for recycling and correct disposal.
Catering	Green procurement	Consider packaging volume, production impact and recyclability when accessing products for green procurement.
	Seperation	Install and train staff to use coveniently located bins for seperate collection of glass, plastics and paper and cardboard in kitchen and dining areas.
Reception and public areas	Collection points	Install collection points for paper and magazines, batteries and other harzardous waste.

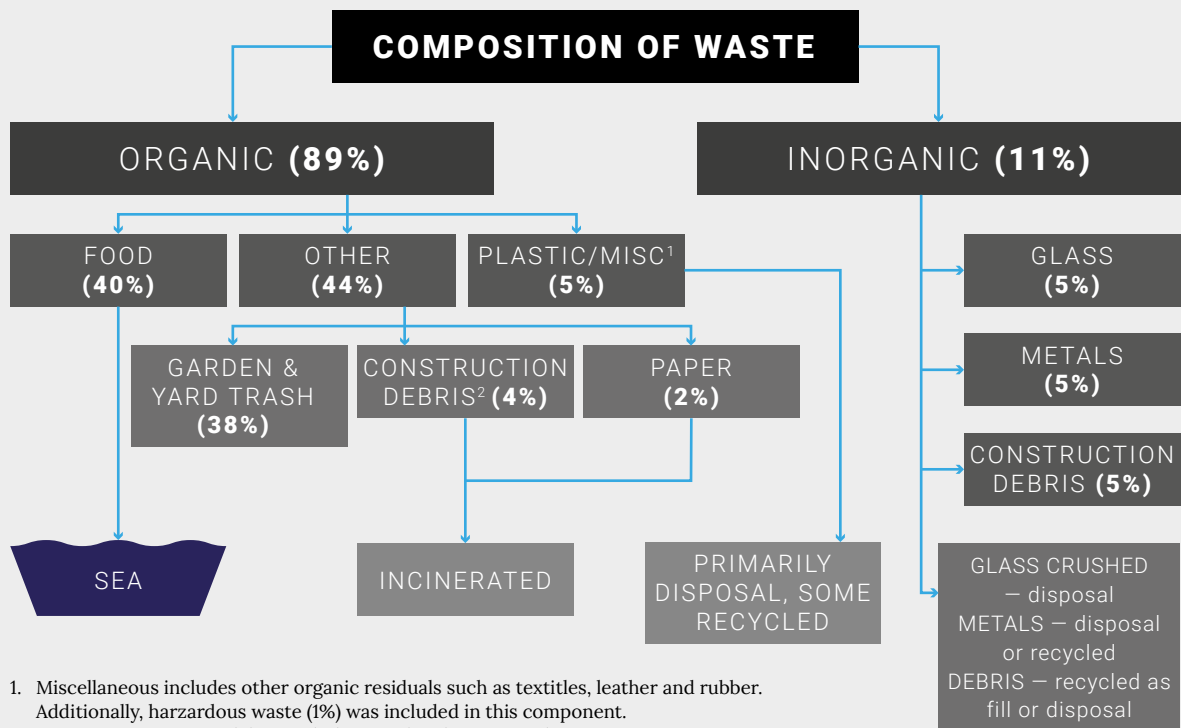


FIGURE 1.2: WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT TYPICAL TOURIST RESORT



While methods like discarding food waste into the sea and incineration still prevail, there are examples of hotels that are fully committed to reversing the trend and have actively managed to do so. We have extensively covered the recycling and composting methods followed by the Eco Centro, Soneva Fushi's solid-waste management centre on the island of Kunfunadhoo. It is worth noting that the resort actively tracks its impact on Natural Capital, i.e. the region's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things. The results are routinely published in its Total Assessment Impact survey, and some of the enviable records in it include:

- 90% of solid waste recycled
- 1.5 million plastic bottles prevented from going to land-fill since 2008
- USD 400,000 in value generated from Eco Centro's Waste-to-Wealth programmes⁶

As you can see, there is ample wealth in mindfully planned waste management – economic, social and environmental. So, good SWM programmes in combination with well-crafted Public Relations and Social Media communication can only lead to the influx of Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS)-minded tourists, looking to take away amazing memories while leaving behind a light, almost negligible, footprint on the pristine shores they've visited. █

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Scent, identity and reflections of our olfactory imprint

THE WIND PICKS UP THE SCENT OF THE water and its surroundings. The sea breeze catapults my memories back to my Native Islands; the allure of nutty coconut and the faint aroma of beach gardenia. A breeze of fresh salty air passing through semi-submerged coral reefs finds its way from the shoreline. It fills me with a deep longing for home, yet satisfies me with its presence. Those scents, images, and feelings are forever imprinted in my memory and identity. I know I am not the only one; the distinct scent plays a prominent role in many cultures of the Indian Ocean. Traditions, rituals, and countries in the region, it can be said, have in part developed through a sense of smell.

Scent and memory have long been known to be intertwined – the olfactory bulb is next to the limbic system, which houses long-term memory and emotion, which is why we can catch a whiff of campfire smoke and be instantly transported back to a childhood camping trip in quite a startling and immediate way.

Being invisible, scents trigger memories deep in the subconscious and send subliminal messages. There is also an evident link between scents in a particular environment and geographic locations – even moments in time – and how people behave on both an individual and collective level. With there being such a strong expression of identity through the sense of smell, it is almost impossible to separate one from the other. For example, island nations like Madagascar may make us think of scents such as jasmine, while Sri Lanka brings back fragrances of cinnamon and spices, and the Seychelles and Mauritius remind us of bougainvillea, frangipani and orchid fragrances.

The sense of smell is the first of the five senses to develop. We now know that, by the end of the first trimester, babies can smell what mom is eating which will be an influence on their future taste and, once born, smell is the most important of the senses which newborns use to orient themselves to their surroundings, much like any other living mammal.

Scent lacks a specific vocabulary. We don't really have words to specifically describe scent and we fall back on metaphors linked to other senses: taste (sweet), texture (velvety), sight (bright). We lack the language to be able to confirm that our own experience of smelling a cup of coffee is the same as someone else's experience.

Think about how you are suddenly enveloped in a smell when you walk past a bakery store: you can't tell when it will hit and when it will pass. You are temporarily adrift in the experience.

No matter where you are, you are likely to be subtly (and not so subtly) influenced by scent. It is believed that an astonishing 75 percent of the emotions we generate on a daily basis are affected by smell, and, because of this, it is believed we are 100 times more likely to remember something we smell over something we see, hear or touch.

Though most of us instinctively understand that scent (baking cookies, a campfire, gardenias, etc.) is tied to memories and can transport us to another place and time in our lives (often referred to as the "Proust effect"), we didn't really understand how or why until fairly recently. In 2004, Dr. Linda Buck and Dr. Richard Axel were awarded the 2004 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine for their paper that demystified the sense of smell and

our olfactory system, including the discovery that there are approximately 1,000 olfactory genes in our bodies (roughly 3 percent of the human genome). Each olfactory receptor cell is able to detect a minimum number of odours, and Buck and Axel estimated the average human being is able to recognize and remember about 10,000 different scents.

This focus on scent's powerful connection to our brains and its potential to heal, soothe and delight is "making consumers hungry to learn more about how it can be leveraged for health and wellbeing," says Matthias Tabert of International Flavors & Fragrances (IFF), a leading innovator of scent.

Of course, the concept of aromatherapy, or using scent to treat "disease," is a centuries-old practice. However, what's old is new again thanks to huge leaps in technology, fragrance development and neuroscience studies, including new formulations; cleaner and greener ingredients; and more science-based research encouraging medical professionals, health insurers and sceptical consumers to take another, more serious look at this age-old treatment.





“Eighty percent of what we taste is what we smell,” says Karen Stanton, Director of Global Marketing & Branding for Taste, IFF. It makes you imagine a world where scent can create no-calorie eating and drinking experiences. One real-world example of this comes from SZENT, a company that has developed water bottles featuring collars infused with natural oils that, as you smell them, turn plain, zero-calorie drinking water into something else entirely. “Flavors” include tangerine, tropical, pineapple, mint and passionfruit and are all now available on Amazon’s website.

In Singapore, an innovative bar and restaurant called the Tippling Club has patrons choose their drink by scent versus reading menus. Taking SZENT’s concept to the next level, imagine alcohol-free cocktails based purely on the smell...no hangover, no guilt - purely all wellness.

Using scent commercially clearly isn’t necessarily a new phenomenon as hotels, spas and retailers have been aware of its ability to tap into consumers’ brains for years. What is different is a growing acceptance that “olfactory logos” are a must to complete a brand’s identity.

There is an exploding industry of scent specialists vying for a brand’s marketing dollars to create signature scents as businesses big and small recognize that smell registers in our brains first, before sight, sound or touch. The goal is to either get you to buy more, stay longer, or come back. It appears to be money well spent as studies show that consumers have a much better experience and are likely to stay somewhere longer and spend more money if the experience includes scent. In fact, shoppers tend to stay fifteen minutes longer in locations that are pleasantly scented, and that translates into further spending.

The advance in scent technology will start impacting product development in interesting ways. For example, studies show that the longer women can smell their hair-care products, the more likely they are to stay loyal to them. Don’t be surprised if scent scientists develop some way to layer time-released beads of scent into personal care products so that users can get a whiff of that “just washed” smell all day long. Another hair-care innovation comes from HAI Beauty Concepts, which launched a new line of blow dryers that infuses every blow out with the sweet scent of jasmine (with more scents to be introduced to the range).





Unsurprisingly, the hospitality industry was among the first to register the impact scent can make on brand loyalty. If you're a frequent traveller, signature scents are likely to be the reason you may feel more at home at a Westin hotel or a Marriott hotel, all depending on your taste in fragrance. Boutique hotels have smartly gravitated toward scent as a differentiator, and new properties, such as Anantara Quy Nhon Villas in Vietnam and the just-opened Fendi hotel in Rome (Fondazione Alda Fendi Esperimentali), are taking the luxury of scent to another level by letting guests personalize their room's aroma from a scent menu.

Just as intriguing is a new deeper focus on the "bottling" of the scent of a place, allowing you to take home that "holiday" feeling or the relaxation from your last spa visit in the form of a candle or skin-care product. With the scent of your recent vacation wafting through your home or office, your mind and body are transported back to a state of relaxation.

Scent's ability to transport us to other places is used to great effect in multisensory experiences in spas that are designed to chill us out and calm us down. From experience showers to multisensory pods to float tanks, spas are deploying scent to trigger subtle changes in our bodies, such as lowering heart rate and blood pressure, improving breath, and triggering positive memories for stress relief.

As with memories of particular times and events, scents can also remind one of places, as Ashraf Osman of the Scent Culture Institute shows in his art project *Scents of Exile*. Inspired by an eulogy the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish wrote for himself in 2006, *In the Presence of Absence*, Osman's project delves into issues surrounding olfactory memory, identity, and the nostalgia associated with cities in the Arab world and beyond.

"Cities are smells: Acre is the smell of marine iodine and spices; Haifa, the smell of pine and rumpled sheets; Moscow, the smell of vodka on ice; Cairo, the smell of mango and ginger; Beirut, the smell of sun, sea, smoke, and lemon; Paris, the smell of fresh bread, cheese, and the accoutrements of charm; Damascus, the smell of jasmine and dried fruits; Tunis, the smell of honeysuckle and salt; Rabat is the smell of henna, incense, and honey... And lands of exile have a common smell, which is that of longing for elsewhere. A smell remembering another, a smell of intermittent breaths, emotional, leading you like a tourist map that's been used too often, to the smell of the first place."

What does exile smell like? It is, perhaps, the scent of a melancholic desire of wanting, needing, longing for a way to return; a lucid moment of remembrance and comfort. Sometimes, this scent is all one has to hold onto. |



Aminath Shafana (Shafa) is the founder+formulator of Island Apothecary. The first beyond sustainable, hand crafted artisan skin care & wellness brand born in the Maldives, raised by nature and spiritually rooted in Mother Earth.

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BLANC BY VELIGAA HARDWARE

VELIGAA HARDWARE'S RAPID GROWTH

in customers, the size of its operation and products has exponentially risen over the years. From the start of the establishment in 2008, Veligaa Hardware has expanded to 6 outlets around the Maldives capital, serving different market segments at each location with over 150 qualified employees working around the clock to provide guests with exceptional service.

Veligaa Hardware unveiled the brand new Blanc showroom in Hulhumalé on October 31, 2019. Blanc showroom is situated on the Eastern border of Hulhumalé, in the centre of Nirolhu Magu. The showroom was inaugurated by the chairman of Veligaa

Hardware, Mohamed Aboobakuru along with Managing Director of VRH, Leson Zhong, CEO of Medca, Chaninda Hathaipantalux and Managing Director of HDC, Shuhail Ahmed. Blanc invited a specialised brand for sanitaryware and interior design solutions, in the pursuit to provide necessities to create a durable, functional and affordable solution for an ideal home.

Blanc's state-of-the-art facility in Hulhumalé is equipped with a contrasting selection of products from world-renowned brands such as VRH, Medca, Capi-Europe, EKO, Duss, Star, Hoy, and Osledar; popularised with the complete set of solutions for hotel housekeeping. This fully customisable set of products are ideal for both small hotels and resorts alike. Since the initial establishment, Blanc has been providing its services to aspiring homeowners, residential developers and hospitality groups with a wide range of sanitaryware and interior solutions to help create a practical and dependable experience for the consumers.

Blanc by Veligaa Hardware is well renowned for the availability of its wide collection of products which include faucets, showers, sanitaryware, lighting and home decors. Experience the latest designs and innovations of interior decor developed by world-renowned brands. The change in lifestyle and growing scarcity of space is a major challenge for designing beautiful homes in the Maldives.

A special emphasis was provided in selecting products that fit into the requirements of the majority of homes. The showcased products are screened for functionality, installation, cost-effectiveness and elegance in small spaces. The intimate decision to create a home with the latest product designs in decor and infrastructure is brought right to your doorstep. |



Dusit Thani Maldives: Sustainability meets the

POWER KNOT LFC BIO-DIGESTER

ROUGHLY, A THIRD OF EDIBLE FOOD produced for consumption is lost or wasted, accounting to 1.3 billion tonnes per year. While there are various methods to safely discard biodegradable and organic waste, the general practice exercised in a number of hotels and resorts across the country is to dump it in the ocean. While this comes with a number of consequences, hotels and resorts are the most affected, as they rely on the cleanliness of the beaches and reefs to attract visitors.

While composting is one of the most effective means to stabilise and convert ecological waste, Dusit Thani Maldives - the five-star resort that blends graceful Thai hospitality with the unparalleled luxury setting in the Maldives, has turned towards innovation and technological advancements to offset the global problem. The answer to reducing its carbon trail is the Liquid Food Composter (LFC) Bio-Digester by Power Knot.

“At Dusit Thani Maldives, sustainability is in our DNA; we are committed to making sustainability a part of everything we do. Our journey towards a greener planet and a sustainable future come with the support and engagement of our staff, partners and guests,” explained Mr. Thomas Weber, General Manager at Dusit Thani Maldives.

The Power Knot LFC Bio-Digester is marketed and distributed in the Maldives by Hospitality Depot Pvt Ltd - a hospitality products and solutions provider. The aerobic bio-digester, which disposes of food waste safely and cost-effectively, is a practical substitute for the old-fashioned discarding of food waste. “Technicians from Hospitality Depot came for the installation and did a commendable job. They also trained our team members; my deputy and I, in addition to eight garden staff who handle segregation of food waste,” explained Ajith Kumar, chief engineer at Dusit Thani Maldives.





On any given day, Dusit Thani Maldives has approximately 220 guests and 250 staff, producing 500 kilogrammes of food waste. Dusit Thani Maldives employs the LFC-500 model, a fully enclosed automatic biodigester that safely disposes of a maximum of 500 kilogrammes within 24 hours. It decomposes food waste by using a series of processes in which bacteria breaks down the recyclable materials in the presence of oxygen. The matter that comes out of the machine is grey water that is environmentally safe and can be cleared down the drain. It comes with

a colour screen interface and connects to a web-based cloud so that everything related to the machine can be monitored remotely.

How does Dusit Thani Maldives deal with the byproduct? “The byproduct which comes in the form of a liquid is directly connected to the Sewage Treatment Plant, where it is filtered and reused to water the gardens and plants,” Ajit explained.

The sustainability practices at Dusit Thani are centred around conserving the environment, protecting all forms of life,

building resilient local communities and supporting local economies to promote inclusive economic growth. For Dusit Thani Maldives, sustainability is not just a trend, but an essential way of life.

“Embracing sustainable practices like phasing out the use of single use plastics including plastic straws and bottles and the installation of solar panels, are just simple examples of our persistent commitment to preserving the natural environment. We are working to implement more initiatives to care for our environment,” Mr. Thomas Weber added. ■

iQUE by V-Kool:

Architecture Window Films

OVER THE LAST DECADE, THE ROLE OF glass in buildings has evolved tremendously. Where glass was previously restricted to only small areas, constant innovations have resulted in the increased usage of glass as a key building material. Today, glass is the prominent building material and this trend is on the rise.

With concerns of increasing energy demand required to cool and light up buildings; the clear solution needed is to reduce significant amounts of the building's heat from the sun, maximize daylight harvesting and achieve savings in energy bills. In seizing this opportunity, PMO PRIVATE LIMITED diversified in 2013, introducing iQUE MALDIVES (IQM) as the Master Franchisee and sole distributor for iQUE films in Maldives. Since then iQUE has been slowly penetrating the architectural market for solar control window films.

iQUE is engineered and endorsed by V-KOOL. Established in 1991 in the United States, V-Kool has established a leading premium brand position in the automotive retrofit market for window film globally, V-KOOL is now dedicating its expertise in window coating products and services for the architectural market. iQUE offers an extensive range of applied films for the architectural market. From virtually clear films capable of rejecting high amounts of the sun's heat without changing the appearance of existing glass, to safety and security films able to counter hazards commonly associated with shattered glass.

iQUE by V-KOOL is a brand owned by Eastman Chemical Company. iQUE is a specialist architectural window film brand that offers leading technology for solar heat control. The core of iQUE window films spectrally-selective infra-red

heat-rejection performance is its XIR Technology, a proprietary sputtering process developed in Silicon Valley, USA.

Eastman is a global specialty chemical company that produces a broad range of products found in items people use every day. With a portfolio of specialty businesses, Eastman works with customers to deliver innovative products and solutions while maintaining a commitment to safety and sustainability. Its market-driven approach takes advantage of world-class technology platforms and leading positions in attractive end-markets such as transportation, building and construction, and consumables. Eastman focuses on creating consistent, superior value for all of its stakeholders. As a globally diverse company, Eastman serves customers in approximately 100 countries and had revenues of approximately \$9.6 billion in the year 2015. The company is headquartered in Kingsport, Tennessee, USA and employs approximately 15,000 people around the world.

The iQUE Safety & Security films have gone through the Bomb Blast Mitigation Test, conducted by the America Bureau of Shipping Consulting (of the ABS Group) with the assistance of the Canadian Explosives Research Laboratory (CERL) and Defense Research Establishment Suffield (DRES). Favorable test results have demonstrated that iQUE Safety and Security films are effective in mitigating glass fragment hazards when subjected to blast loads.

The films have met the stringent US General Services Administration (GSA) testing requirements under Category C of the GSA Building Classification, achieving a GSA condition of 3B or better, which means that glass pieces shattered from the blast land no further than 3 meters from a window coated with iQUE Safety and Security films.





WHY IQUE™?

When it comes to top grade and high performance window film, iQUE™ leads the pack in features and qualities designed to achieve not only solar heat and glare control but also aesthetics to transform your window glass into intelligent components of your home, office or business.

GLARE CONTROL

- Offers more than 60% rejection of solar energy.
- Delivers glare control while allowing the ideal level of daylight to brighten your space.

HEAT CONTROL

- 98% infra-red and 99% ultra-violet rejection
- Effectively lowers the interior temperature of any room it protects, keeping it cool and comfortable even during the hottest summer days.

AESTHETIC APPEAL

- Lowest ever visible light reflectivity.
- Maintains the natural transparency and light transmission of window glass while offering unparalleled protection from the sun.

PRIVACY PROTECTION

- Lower visibility coupled with high performance heat and glare control with variants offering darker hues.
- Safeguards you from the sun and helps you achieve the level of privacy you desire.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- With heat control and daylight harvesting features, it helps you cut down on your air-conditioning and lighting bills, thus lowering the carbon footprint that you generate.
- iQUE blocks off over 50% of total solar energy gain through windows while allowing more daylight than tinted or reflective films. As a result, home and building occupants will be able to reduce the use of interior lighting and reducing the necessity for artificial lighting indirectly reduces electricity cost.

SAFETY & SECURITY

- Mitigates the danger through its cutting edge, shatter-resistant and impact-resistant technology, making it safer for modern buildings to feature larger panel glass windows.
 - UV Protection
 - Presents up to 99% ultra-violet rejection, iQUE film application
 - Prevents harmful UV rays from penetrating indoors.
 - Protects you from sunburn or other UV-induced skin damage.
- iQUE has won a multitude of awards, including the Consumer and

Best Buy Award in 1994, Most Preferred interior decor brand in 2006 at China and the Singapore Green Building Product in 2010. |

IQUE CLIENTS INCLUDE: Absolute Hideaways Pvt. Ltd. Cathay Pacific Office, H Beach Tower, Adaaran Vadoo Guest Gym (Unique Resorts Pvt. Ltd) ADK General Trading, Coastline Investment Pvt. Ltd. Constance Halaveli, Hurawalhi Island Resort, Kurumba Resort, Maldives Ports Limited, MWSC, UNFPA, UN, UNICEF Maldives, World Bank Country Office, MACL- Duty Free, Singapore Airlines Office in Airport complex, Mookai Hotel, Soneva Jani Resort.

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For a meeting and a price quote for installation are welcome you to discover more at our showroom, located on the 8th floor, Beach Tower Boduthakurafaanu Magu, Malé.

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