

Where to dive • When to go • What to see

MALDIVES SCUBA DIVING GUIDE



MAIKE & NIELS
@THE_SCUBACUPLE

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INTRODUCTION

HELLO, WE ARE MAIKE AND NIELS...

and we we are The Scuba Couple.

After traveling to the Maldives during a World trip, we became **Scuba Diving Instructors** and recently worked as Base Leaders and Instructors in North Ari Atoll, Maldives.

We are now focusing on content creation, sharing with you our **underwater adventures** and helping you to turn your dive dreams into reality with our **dive bucket lists** and **destinations guides**.



We absolutely love how diving in the Maldives combines **stunning marine life**, **crystal-clear water** and **diverse dive conditions** - it opens up a whole new level of excitement and connection to the ocean.

We're here to guide you through the different atolls, so you can have an **unforgettable dive holiday**.

INTRODUCTION

DIVING IN THE MALDIVES

Welcome to the Maldives - A Diver's Paradise

Located in the Indian Ocean, southwest of Sri Lanka and India, the Maldives is a tropical island nation made up of more than **1,100 islands** spread across **26 natural atolls**. Its remote location, crystal-clear waters and vibrant marine ecosystems have made it one of the most sought-after scuba diving destinations in the world.

With deep channels, colorful reefs and dramatic drop-offs, the Maldives offers a vast and varied underwater playground. You'll find:

- **Channels** with strong currents that attract large pelagic species
- **Thilas** and **pinnacles**, rich in marine biodiversity
- **Drift dives** for smooth, effortless exploration
- Cleaning stations where manta rays and sharks gather
- **Wrecks** offering hauntingly beautiful underwater adventures

Whether you're a beginner drawn to shallow reefs or an experienced diver chasing adrenaline-packed drift dives, the Maldives caters to every skill level and diving style.

What you can see underwater

Home to over **1,000 species of fish** and more than **200 types of coral**, the Maldives delivers unforgettable encounters on every dive. From **tiger sharks, hammerheads** and **whale sharks** to graceful **manta rays, eagle rays** and **turtles**, this archipelago is teeming with marine life. Macro enthusiasts will love spotting **nudibranchs, ghost pipefish** and **mantis shrimp**, while open-water lovers can admire schools of **tuna, jacks** and **barracuda** swirling in the blue.

With year-round diving and world-famous sites across multiple atolls, the Maldives is a dream destination for divers and marine life lovers alike.

INTRODUCTION - CONTINUED

Dive lingo you'll hear in the Maldives

When diving in the Maldives, you'll come across a few unique local terms, many from the **Dhivehi language**, that describe different underwater formations.

Thila describes "a seamount which is not reaching the surface" in the local Maldivian language dhivehi. Usually thilas can be crossed by boats without hitting the ground. The reeftops of thilas are usually deeper than 3 meters and guarantee some of the best diving in Maldives. Especially with some current in place, Maldivian thilas are a paradise for scuba divers, as marine life appears at the highest density of any reef types in Maldives.

Giris are similar to thilas but their pinnacles are nearer to the surface. Giris are the ideal reef for scuba diving beginners or snorkelers. Giris start as shallow, that the top reef is exposed during low tides. However, below the surface giris are nothing short of any other Reef type in Maldives. It all depends on the location of the giri and the prevailing current conditions during a dive.

Beyru indicates a dive site on the ocean-facing side of the atoll, often exposed with stronger currents.

Faru indicates a long barrier Reef in Maldives. However, the engulfed or "barriered" part can be an Island or another reef alike. Farus usually slope down from the engulfing subject to the edge of a drop down. The shallower end of a Faru is not passable by boats, but the deeper part usually is. Farus are a very nice and relaxed dive site type as you can simply drift along with the current. The Fish life is not as dense as on Thilas, but not less in the total amount.

Kandu is the Maldivian name for Channel. Channels are passes between the open Ocean and the inner atolls. With changing tides or certain positions of the moon, huge amounts of nutritious water is exchanged via those channels. Considering those conditions, channel dives can be challenging but also highly rewarding.

Finolhu means sandbank or small island above water - sometimes part of a site name indicating nearby geography.

ATOLL OVERVIEW

NORTHERN ATOLLS

HAA DHAALU

RAA

BAA

THODDOO

RASDHOO

NORTH ARI

SOUTH ARI

FAAFU

DHAALU

THAA

CENTRAL ATOLLS

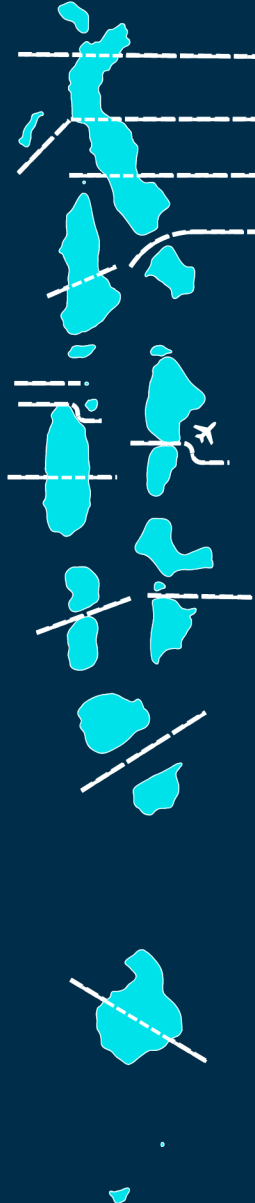
SOUTHERN ATOLLS

DEEP SOUTH

HUVADHOO

GAAFU DHAALU

ADDU



HAA ALIFU

SHAVIYANI

NOONU

LHAVIYANI

NORTH MALE

SOUTH MALE

VAAVU

MEEMU

LAAMU

GAAFU ALIF

FUVAHMULAH

CHAPTER I

NORTHERN ATOLLS

The remote northern atolls (Haa Alif, Haa Dhaalu, Shaviyani, Noonu, Raa, Baa, Lhaviyani) offer a **quieter, less-explored** side of the Maldives with surprisingly rich and varied diving.

In **Haa Alif** and **Haa Dhaalu**, expect untouched coral formations, manta rays and plenty of macro life. **Shaviyani** and **Noonu** provide a mix of channel dives and thilas with surprises like grey reef sharks and stingrays. **Raa Atoll** is home to manta cleaning stations and spectacular soft coral-covered pinnacles. **Baa Atoll**, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, is world-famous for Hanifaru Bay, where hundreds of mantas and whale sharks gather during the southwest monsoon. **Lhaviyani** adds a variety of wrecks and healthy reef dives, including large schools of snapper and vibrant coral gardens.

The north combines **untouched reefs** with **authentic local island charm**, ideal for divers looking to get **off the beaten path**.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

HAA ALIFU ATOLL - NORTHERN THILADHUNMATHI

The Northern Frontier of Exploration

Located at the **northernmost tip** of the Maldives, Haa Alifu Atoll includes **Ihavandhippolhu** as well as part of the larger **Thiladhunmathi** Atoll and offers one of the most untouched and secluded diving experiences in the country.

The atoll consists of **42 islands**, of which only a handful are inhabited, giving divers access to pristine reefs, vibrant coral walls and dive sites that see far fewer visitors than those in the central Maldives.

Currents here are generally mild to moderate, making the region accessible for all diver levels while still offering big fish action in deeper channels. Dive highlights include encounters with **reef mantas**, **leopard sharks**, **turtles** and giant schools of **fusiliers**, plus the spectacular **Baarah Thila**, **Golden Wall** and the **Filladhoo Wreck** - the northernmost wreck dive in the Maldives.

Whether you're looking for macro life, manta rays or dramatic reef formations, Haa Alifu delivers a quiet, raw and unforgettable underwater adventure.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL

Golden Wall

Golden Wall is a spectacular drift wall dive located on the outer corner of Dhonakulhi Island in Haa Alif Atoll, starting at a shallow 6 meters (20 feet) and dropping steeply to 30 meters (98 feet). The wall is famous for its **vibrant yellow soft corals** covering large **overhangs and caverns**, creating a golden glow that gives the site its name. Divers can expect to encounter an abundance of marine life including fusiliers, jackfish, eagle rays, reef sharks, tuna and turtles, with shrimp, scorpionfish, nudibranchs and lobsters hiding in the cracks. This dive offers both wide-angle spectacle and macro critters for all skill levels. A torch is recommended to explore the deeper overhangs and uncover the hidden life in the caves.

Fisch & Friends

Fisch & Friends is a colorful reef dive located on the north side of Mulidhoo Island, **suitable for divers of all levels**. The site begins with a gentle drop-off that slopes down to a depth of 25 meters (82 feet), teeming with vibrant fish life. Divers can enjoy large schools of fusiliers, yellow snappers, tuna and mackerel, with turtles frequently gliding by. During the northeast monsoon (December–April), **manta rays** are often spotted at nearby cleaning stations, making this a seasonal highlight. Occasional encounters with **grey reef sharks, eagle rays** and **Napoleon wrasse** add excitement to this reef dive that's perfect for photography and video.

Marine life

Fusiliers
Jackfish
Eagle rays
Turtles
Parrotfish
Groupers
Shrimps
Scorpionfish
Nudibranchs
Lobster
Tunas
Reef sharks

Marine life

Fusiliers
Yellow snappers
Tunas
Mackerel
Turtles
Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Napoleon fish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Baarah Thila

Baarah Thila in Haa Alifu Atoll is a **large plateau-like thila** located in a channel between Baarah and Hanimaadhoo. The thila starts at 15 meters (49 feet) and drops down to 30 meters (98 feet), offering dramatic **overhangs**, ancient **coral formations** and vibrant **reef life**. Divers can expect to see massive schools of snappers, sweetlips, barracuda and Spanish mackerel, while the true highlight is often the **groups of manta rays** sweeping overhead. Macro lovers will enjoy searching for **critters** like mantis shrimp among the soft corals and rock crevices. For photographers, this site also offers stunning wide-angle moments with mantas, sometimes leopard sharks and occasionally sailfish.

Filadhoo Wreck

The Filladhoo Wreck, also known as “**Captain Pentails**” is the northernmost wreck dive in the Maldives, located in Haa Dhaalu Atoll, just off the southern side of Filladhoo Island. The wreck lies at a shallow depth of 2 to 18 meters (7 to 59 feet), making it accessible to divers of all levels, with some parts even breaking the water's surface. Though partially decayed, the wreck is **beautifully overgrown** with hard and soft corals, especially table coral, and hosts schools of fusiliers, snappers and groupers. Divers often encounter large **green sea turtles** and **eagle rays** gracefully cruising by, while **white tip reef sharks** and **macro life** like small tropical fish and critters hide in the crevices. Visibility is usually good, reaching up to 18 meters (59 feet), allowing for an atmospheric and wildlife-rich dive.

Marine life

Blackfin barracuda
 Spanish mackerel
 Snappers
 Sweetlips
 Leopard sharks (occasionally)
 Cleaner wrasse
 Turtles
 Grey reef sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Napoleon wrasse
 Fusilier
 Mantis shrimps

Seasonal:

Manta rays:
 December - April

Marine life

Groupers
 Snappers
 Fusiliers
 Eagle rays
 Whitetip reef shark
 Green sea turtles
 Blue-striped snappers

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL CONTINUED

The Cathedral

The Cathedral is a dramatic **wall dive** on the outer edge of the atoll, beginning at 10 meters (33 feet) and dropping steeply to 30 meters (98 feet). The site is named after its most striking feature - a **massive, natural arch** or swim-through at around 20 meters (66 feet) depth, beautifully decorated with **blue soft corals** and offering excellent photo opportunities. Divers can explore overhangs filled with **nudibranchs, shrimps and stingrays**, making this a site rich in both macro and wide-angle subjects. Out in the blue, sightings of tunas, groupers, snappers, fusiliers, eagle rays and reef sharks add big-fish excitement. With occasional encounters of dolphins, manta rays and nurse sharks, this site appeals to both experienced divers and those seeking scenic beauty.

Marine life

Nudibranchs
Shrimps
Stingrays
Tunas
Groupers
Snappers
Fusiliers
Eagle rays
Reef sharks
Nurse sharks
Dolphins (occasionally)

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

Ihavandhoo Channel Thila

Ihavandhoo Channel Thila is a shallow underwater pinnacle situated in the center of a channel, starting at just 5 meters (15 feet) and descending to 18 meters (59 feet). The top reef functions as a manta cleaning station during the right season and current, making it a prime spot for exciting encounters. Colorful soft corals blanket the reef, while macro enthusiasts will appreciate the variety of scorpionfish, nudibranchs and lionfish. Overhangs at deeper levels hide lobsters, adding a touch of drama to the vibrant marine landscape. This dive is ideal for both beginners and advanced divers and offers excellent conditions for underwater photography.

Marine life

Scorpionfish
Nudibranchs
Lobsters
Lionfish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Huvahandhoo Corner

Huvahandhoo Corner is a **scenic drift dive** site featuring a vibrant top reef that begins at 8 to 10 meters (26 to 33 feet) and gently slopes down to 20 to 30 meters (66 to 98 feet). The reef is teeming with **colorful reef fish** like butterflyfish, fusiliers, anthias, anemonefish and blue striped snappers, creating a lively underwater scene. Divers often encounter **turtles** and **stingrays** cruising along the reef, and it's worth keeping an eye on the blue for passing tunas and bonitos. Coral blocks around the slope are home to lobsters and shrimp, rewarding those who take a closer look. With moderate to strong currents, this site is ideal for an exciting drift dive suitable for experienced divers.

Vagaaru Garden

Vagaaru Garden features a scenic top reef starting at 7 meters (23 feet) that gently slopes into a wide plateau scattered with coral blocks. The area is bustling with life, hosting **schools of snappers, bigeye trevallies, groupers, and Napoleon wrasses**, making it a perfect spot for observing reef dynamics. During the northeast monsoon season, divers have the exciting opportunity to witness **reef manta rays** visiting the cleaning stations. The coral blocks on the plateau serve as shelter for various species and contribute to the colorful and active underwater landscape. With mild conditions and a wide area to explore, this site suits divers of all levels.

Marine life

Butterflyfish
Fusiliers
Blue striped snappers
Anemonefish
Anthias
Turtles
Stingrays
Tunas
Bonitos
Lobsters
Shrimps

Marine life

Snappers
Bigeye trevallies
Groupers
Napoleon wrasses

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Gallandhoo Faru

Gallandhoo Faru is a **gently sloping reef** starting at 3–5 meters (10–16 feet), ideal for both beginners and experienced divers due to its shallow depth and abundant coral formations. Massive **Pocillopora and Acropora corals** create shelter for colorful reef fish, including the charming **blue tang** (also known as Dory). Divers can expect to see schools of **triggerfish, bannerfish, black snapper, butterflyfish** and **batfish** moving gracefully through the reef. A keen eye may spot camouflaged **scorpionfish** or tiny **nudibranchs** hidden among the corals. Keep an eye on the blue, where **eagle rays** sometimes glide past in the distance.

Marine life

Blue tang
Triggerfish
Bannerfish
Black snapper
Butterflyfish
Batfish
Scorpionfish
Nudibranchs
Eagle rays

Gaammathikulhudhoo

Gaammathikulhudhoo is a scenic **channel dive** with mild currents, making it suitable for divers of all experience levels. The reef begins at 6–8 meters (20–26 feet) and gradually slopes to a sandy bottom at 20 meters (66 feet). Divers often encounter schools of batfish and green or **hawksbill turtles**, especially along the top reef. During certain times of the year, the coral blocks become completely covered in glassfish, attracting fast-moving predators in thrilling hunting scenes. In the deeper part of the channel, **eagle rays** and **tuna** may pass by - so always keep an eye on the blue.

Marine life

Batfish
Green turtles
Hawksbill turtles
Glassfish
Eagle rays
Tunas

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE HAA ALIFU ATOLL

The best time to dive Haa Alifu Atoll is during the **northeast monsoon** (Iruvai), from **December to April**, when visibility is at its peak and conditions are calm. This period brings frequent **manta ray sightings**. Water temperatures average 28–30°C (82–86°F) with visibility up to 30 meters (98 feet).

Though diving is possible year-round, the southwest monsoon (May to November) tends to bring reduced visibility and rougher seas.

For the clearest water and highest marine activity, plan your visit between **January and March**.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL

Resort Islands

JA Manafaru

Best Dives Manafaru by Best Dives Maldives

Hideaway Beach Resort & Spa

Maldives Meridis Dive & Relax

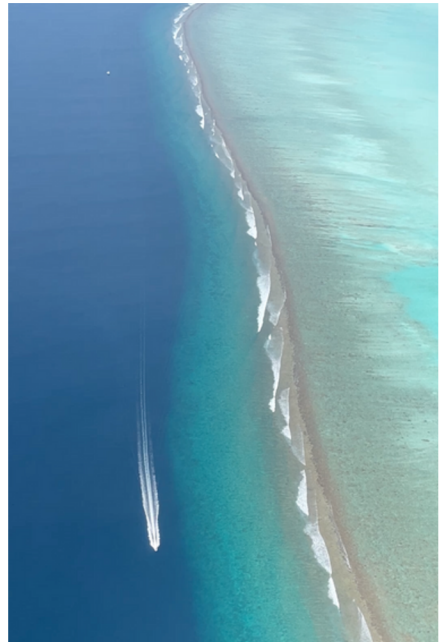
Local Islands

Hoarafushi

- Annama Lodge & Dive

Vashafaru

- Vashafaru Dive & Water Sports
- Aquaholic Dive Center



NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL

Ihavandhippolhu area

Farukolhu Kandu
 Bilehdhoo Thila
 Vagaaru Garden (Manta Point)
 Thuraakunu
 Uligamu Thila
 Uligamu Caves
 Uligamu Corner
 Beckys Caves
 Madulu Caves
 Rasfushi
 Berinmadhoo Kandu / Corner
 Gammathikulhudhoo / Gambas Corner
 Gambas Beru
 Muladhoo Beru
 Muladhoo Corner
 Muladhoo Faru Ethere (Inside)
 Filaafuni Thila
 Kurohli Thila
 Gallandhoo Faru
 Gallandhoo Thila
 Dhigufanuhuraa
 Mattey Muli
 Nasfaru
 Bodu Bandu Thila
 Kuda Bandu Thila
 Manafaru House Reef
 Medhafushi
 Ehgaafaru
 havandhoo Thila
 Ihavandhoo Corner
 Weepeing Eye

Huvahandhoo Corner
 Huvahandhoo Beyru
 Matheera Beyru

Thiladhunmathi area

Hathaa Faru
 Cathedral
 Maarandhoo Blue
 Coral Garden
 Maarandhoo Faru
 Maarandhoo Beru
 Thakandhoo Cave
 Thakandhoo Corner
 Tropical Garden
 Thakandhoo Corner
 Huraa Faru
 Kihafen Thila
 Dhonakulhi North
 Mathi Faru
 Sunset Faru
 Hideaway Boulevard
 Mulidhoo South
 Mulidhoo Aquarium
 Fish and Friends
 Hide & Seek
 Dhonahulhi Channel / Dhonakulhi
 Kandu
 Hideaway Boulevard Housereef
 Fish Planet

DIVE SITES IN HAA ALIFU ATOLL CONTINUED



Golden Wall
Mathifaru Caves
Sweetlip Sandbank / Sandbank
Dhidhoo Wall
Dhonahulhi Housereef
Utheemu Dream / Utheemu Reef
Maafahi Beiru
Alidhoo Wall
Alidhoo Housereef
Alidhoo NE
Alidhoo Caves / Purple Caves
Barrakuda Caves
Naridhoo Housereef
Naridhoo Wall / Batfish Road
Kela Wall
Dhapparu
Filadhoo Wreck
Filadhoo Thila
Muraidhoo Northeast
Muraidhoo Corner / Snappers Corner
Muraidhoo Thila / Turtle Hill
(Muraidhoo)
Muraidhoo Housereef
The Ridge
Maafahi Corner
Maafahi West
Baarah Thila / Kingdom of Fish
Baarah Blue / Baarah Out
Baarah Wall / Tweety & Silvester
Baarah Corner
Baarah Caves
Hukuru Thila

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

NORTHERN ATOLLS

HAA DHAALU ATOLL - SOUTHERN THILADHUNMATHI

Untouched Reefs in the Far North

Haa Dhaalu Atoll (also known as Southern Thiladhunmathi) lies just south of Haa Alifu and is one of the **least explored atolls** in the Maldives, making it a true hidden gem for divers.

The region features untouched reefs, rich marine biodiversity, mild currents and unique dive experiences with **almost no crowding**.

With **limited dive operations** and only a few resorts, divers can expect **pristine sites, canyons, caverns and enticing swim-throughs** and encounters with grey reef sharks, stingrays, groupers and humphead wrasse.

Haa Dhaalu's isolation, healthy ecosystems and variety of topographies make it an exceptional choice for adventurous divers seeking **unspoiled beauty**.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL

Heaven & Hell / Theefarido Thila

Heaven & Hell is a stunning **advanced dive site** located in Haa Dhaalu Atoll, featuring a **narrow thila** that begins at 18 meters (59 feet) and drops down to 30 meters (98 feet). The reef is surrounded by **large overhangs** densely covered in **vibrant soft corals** in shades of blue, pink, yellow and green. These corals bloom beautifully in mild current, offering exceptional underwater photography opportunities. The site is known for its sightings of **turtles, nurse sharks** and occasionally **manta rays** gliding through the blue. Due to its depth and currents, this site is best suited for advanced divers using nitrox.

Sharks Hole / Shark Point

Sharks Hole is an **exhilarating drift dive** that begins in the blue water approximately 100 meters from a large thila. At 30 meters (98 feet), divers encounter a coral ridge adorned with **vibrant blue soft corals**, the perfect waiting spot for big fish encounters. **Grey reef sharks, large barracudas** and **schools of fish** often pass by this edge, offering thrilling pelagic action. The dive continues as you drift toward the thila, which rises to a shallower depth of 12 meters (39 feet). Beneath the large hard coral blocks on the thila, divers can spot lobsters, stingrays, and various snapper species.

Marine life

Turtles
Nurse sharks
Reef sharks
Stingrays
Soft coral (blue, pink, yellow, green)

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Barracuda
Schooling fish
Lobster
Stingrays
Snapper
Blue soft coral
Hard coral

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Rainbow Canyon

Rainbow Canyon is a stunning thila located south of Finney Island, beginning at a depth of 15 meters (49 feet) and dropping steeply to 30 meters (98 feet) on all sides. Its southern side is adorned with **large overhangs** covered in brilliant blue, red and orange **soft corals**, creating a vibrant underwater landscape. These overhangs are perfect for spotting **nudibranchs** and various **macro creatures** hiding in the colorful reef. A look into the blue often reveals larger marine life, with eagle rays, stingrays and Napoleon wrasses commonly passing by. The site's striking color and biodiversity make it a favorite among underwater photographers and reef lovers.

Marine life

Nudibranch
Macro creatures
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Napoleon wrasse
Soft coral (blue, red, orange)
Tropical reef fish

Mushroom Thila / Magic Mushroom

Mushroom Thila is a **mushroom-shaped pinnacle** with a reef top at 13 meters (43 feet), extending down to 28 meters (92 feet), offering enchanting dives both day and night. During **night dives**, divers follow the mooring line to the pinnacle and illuminate sleeping parrotfish, angelfish and groupers, while red coral crabs and giant lobsters emerge from the reef. In the blue, massive moray eels glide out of their crevices, appearing far larger than they do by day. Day dives allow more time to explore the vibrant east wall, filled with nudibranchs, cleaner shrimps and mantis shrimps. The wall rises to just 6 meters (20 feet), making for an effortless and scenic safety stop.

Marine life

Parrotfish
Angelfish
Grouper
Snapper
Red coral crabs
Lobster
Moray eels
Nudibranch
Cleaner shrimps
Mantis shrimps

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Nellaidhoo Thila

Nellaidhoo Thila is an action-packed pinnacle dive where the top of the reef greets divers with feeding **blacktip and whitetip reef sharks**, darting between swirling schools of fish. These close encounters with larger predators chasing prey make for exhilarating moments and incredible underwater photography. Above, **mantas** glide gracefully through the water, accompanied by batfish and large schools of giant trevallies. On the reef itself, moray eels and nudibranchs can be spotted hiding among the hard coral formations. If current conditions allow, divers can explore the east side of the pinnacle to find **leopard sharks** and **guitarfish** resting between the rocks.

Theefarido Thila

Theefarido Thila begins with a stunning **wall dive** on the south side of the pinnacle, where a long rock formation shelters vibrant yellow soft corals and red sea fans. The wall is alive with color and texture and home to abundant varicosa and flabellina nudibranchs. **Lobsters** peek out from crevices as you explore the wall, while schooling yellow **snappers** and blue-and-yellow dash **fusiliers** may suddenly surround you near a canyon. Swaying **anemones** house alert clownfish, adding to the visual drama of the reef. The dive gently transitions to a shallower finish around 13 meters (43 feet), with the top of the tongue-shaped reef revealing even more marine life along the way.

Marine life

Blacktip reef sharks
Whitetip reef sharks
Batfish
Giant trevally
Moray eels
Nudibranch
Guitar sharks
Leopard sharks
Schooling fish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

Marine life

Yellow snapper
Blue-and-yellow dash
fusiliers
Nudibranchs
Lobster
Clownfish
Anemone
Red sea fan
Yellow soft coral

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Buda Cave

Located on the west side of the reef near Naivaadhoo Island, Buda Cave is an adventure dive that features a **massive cave** entrance stretching 60 meters (197 feet) wide, starting at a depth of 30 meters (98 feet) and rising to 25 meters (82 feet). Divers can explore 15 meters (49 feet) into the cave, where torchlight reveals sleeping **nurse sharks**, **white tip reef sharks** and clusters of **marble rays** behind large rocks. From inside, the cave offers stunning photo opportunities with sunlight filtering through the water. As you exit, the wall covered in hard coral teems with marine life. You may be joined by Napoleon wrasse, turtles and even manta rays occasionally as you ascend.

Marine life

Nurse sharks
White tip reef sharks
Marble rays
Napoleon wrasse
Turtles

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

Crusoe Thila / Hodhadhoo Thila

Tucked away north of the uninhabited island of Hodaithoo, Crusoe Thila begins at 15 meters (49 feet) and is a hidden gem for underwater explorers. Its walls are carved with striking **overhangs**, offering a playground for both reef fish and macro creatures. Schools of snappers hover in the overhangs, while closer inspection reveals **longnose hawkfish**, **shrimps** and colorful **nudibranchs** hiding in the shadows. Every now and then, a sleepy **nurse shark** can be found tucked beneath the ledges. This dive site is peaceful, vibrant and full of small surprises for the curious diver.

Marine life

Snapper
Longnose hawkfish
Nudibranchs
Shrimps
Nurse sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Flokati Thila

Flokati Thila, located south of Hondaafushi, starts at a depth of 15 meters (49 feet) and stuns divers with its richly carpeted reef. True to its name, the thila is blanketed in **hard corals and vibrant soft corals** in shades of red, yellow and blue, resembling a colorful shag rug. The reef features dramatic **overhangs** and two impressive **canyons** on its southeast and northwest sides. Divers can spot schools of fusiliers and jacks swirling in the current, while nurse sharks and both white-tip and grey reef sharks may be resting below. It's a spectacular site for wide-angle lovers and shark enthusiasts alike.

Marine life

Fusiliers
Jackfish
Nurse sharks
White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Soft Coral

Candyland

Hidden in the blue water south of Hondaafushi, Candyland Thila begins at 18 meters (59 feet) and lives up to its sweet name with a burst of color. Its reef is lavishly coated in vibrant blue, red, yellow and violet **soft and hard corals**, creating a truly surreal underwater landscape. Along the southwestern side, divers will find massive **overhangs** where schools of snappers and jacks gather. The surrounding blue often delivers surprises - large pelagic fish and various species of rays are frequent visitors. With its lively reef and open ocean encounters, Candyland is a visual treat for experienced divers.

Marine life

Snapper
Jackfish
Pelagic fish
Rays
Soft coral

NORTHERN ATOLLS

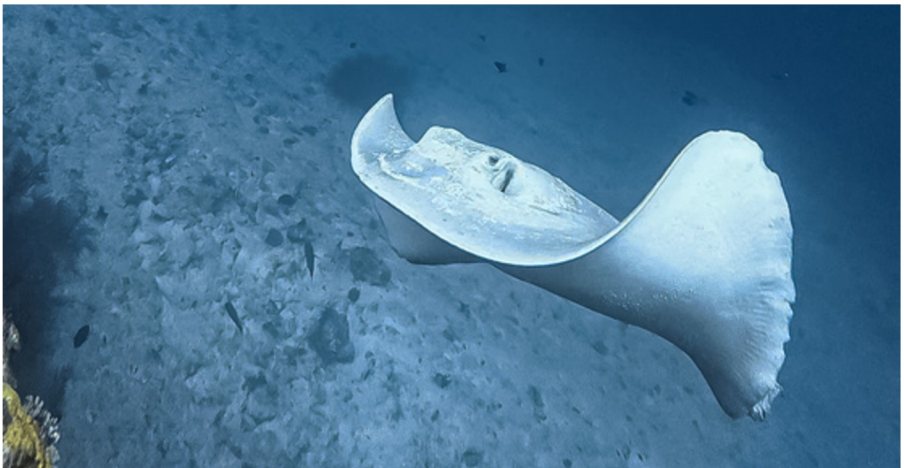
BEST TIME TO DIVE HAA DHAALU ATOLL

The best time to dive Haa Dhaalu is during the dry **northeast monsoon** (December to April), when water clarity and visibility are highest – often reaching 25–30 meters (82–98 feet). During this time, manta rays, turtles, eagle rays and reef sharks are commonly spotted.

Water temperatures stay warm year-round, between 28–30°C (82–86°F), but diving in the dry season means calmer seas and less surface chop.

The southwest monsoon (May to November) brings more rain and reduced visibility, though diving is still possible.

For the best conditions and wildlife encounters, aim to visit between **January and March**.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL

Resort Islands[Hondaafushi Island Resort](#)

Werner Lau & Diverland Joint Venture

[Soneva Secret 2024](#)

Ocean Guardian Dive Center

Local Islands[Hanimaadhoo](#)

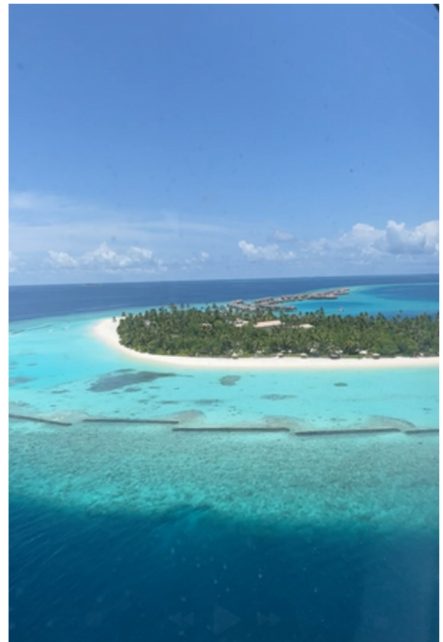
- Hanimadhoo Dive & Watersports
- The Barefoot Diving Center

[Naavaidhoo](#)

- Naivaadhoo Dive

[Nolhivaranfaru](#)

- Ocean Voice Beach Resort & Diving



NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN HAA DHAALU ATOLL

Mushroom Thila
 Twilight Zone
 Shark Point (Haa Dhaalu) / Sharks Hole
 Miyaru Thila
 Thefaridhoo
 Coral Alley (Thefaridhoo)
 Heaven & Hell / Theefarido Thila
 Mas Thila
 Nellaidhoo Thila
 Hodhadhoo Thila / Crusoe Thila
 Hodaafushi
 Hodaafushi Housereef
 Hanimaadhoo Housereef
 Hanimaadhoo Corner
 Barefoot Housereef
 Barefoot Thila
 Flokati Thila
 Candyland
 Hanimaadhoo Out
 Kuni Faru
 Sirru Thila

Hanimaadhoo Faru
 Hanimaadhoo Thila
 Hanimaadhoo South
 Bodu Maagu Thila
 Beenfushi Beyru
 Finey Thila
 Rainbow Canyon / Rainbow Reef
 Hirimaradhoo Housereef
 Hirimadhoo Thila
 Madi Miyaru Thila
 Meridis Thila
 Dhon Thila
 Maavaidhoo Thila
 Vaikaramuraidhoo Thila
 Galum Thila
 Buda Cave

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

NORTHERN ATOLLS

SHAVIYANI ATOLL - NORTHERN MILADHUNMADULU

Where Adventure meets Tranquility

Shaviyani Atoll, located in the northern Maldives, stretches around 37 kilometers in length and includes **51 islands**, only two of which are home to resorts – making it one of the most secluded and **exclusive diving regions** in the country.

With **rich fish populations** and untouched coral reefs, it offers spectacular diving in both shallow lagoons and deep outer reef channels.

Shaviyani is world-famous for its high chance of encountering **guitarfish**, making it a top global destination for these elusive rays. The atoll also boasts an exceptional ray population, including **manta rays** (especially from December to April on the west side), **eagle rays**, **mangrove stingrays**, and **feather tail stingrays**. Shark enthusiasts can look forward to regular sightings of grey reef and silver tip sharks, especially in dive sites with strong current.

The healthy coral ecosystems and lack of dive traffic allow for pristine conditions perfect for photographers, marine enthusiasts and luxury-seeking divers alike.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL

Ekasdhoo Kuda Thila

Ekasdhoo Kuda Thila is located in the center of the Ekasdhoo channel and is known for its **strong currents**, making a quick descent essential. The top of the reef begins at around 18 meters (59 feet) and drops to a sandy bottom at approximately 35 meters (115 feet). This dive site offers excellent opportunities to spot large pelagics such as dogtooth **tunas, white tip reef sharks and trevallies**. Divers will also be surrounded by vibrant schools of surgeonfish and fusiliers throughout the dive. During the southwest monsoon season, **manta rays** are frequently encountered, making this one of Shaviyani Atoll's top dive sites.

Marine life

Dogtooth tuna
White tip reef sharks
Trevallies
Surgeonfish
Fusiliers

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

Maaungoodhoo Wall

Maaungoodhoo Wall is a spectacular **multilevel dive site** offering diverse marine life and fascinating features at every depth. Small cracks and ledges along the wall are home to colorful reef fish like anthias, wrasse, parrotfish and surgeonfish, as well as macro life such as **nudibranchs, shrimps and lobsters**. The western side of the reef is adorned with blue soft corals, feather stars and starfish, creating a vivid backdrop. **Larger species** like green turtles, nurse sharks, stingrays and Napoleon wrasses are often seen cruising by, while lucky divers may even spot dolphins. This site is a favorite for **macro lovers** and wide-angle photographers alike.

Marine life

Anthias
Wrasse
Parrotfish
Lobster
Lionfish
Nudibranch
Shrimps
Green turtles
Nurse sharks
Stingrays
Napoleon wrasse
Dolphins (occasionally)
Starfish
Feather star

TOP DIVE SITES IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Eriyadhoo Rainbow Wall

Eriyadhoo Rainbow Wall is one of the **most colorful dive sites** in the atoll, attracting both divers and snorkelers with its vibrant coral blocks on the top reef. The northern side features a steep wall with small cracks and overhangs that shelter **lobsters, cleaning shrimp, nudibranchs** and **moray eels**. Nurse sharks and stingrays are often seen resting beneath the overhangs, adding to the thrill of the dive. **Pelagic visitors** like manta rays, dogtooth tunas and Napoleon wrasses frequently pass by in the blue. Known for its rich hues and marine variety, this stunning wall has earned its name "Rainbow Wall."

Marine life

Reef fish
Lobster
Cleaning shrimps
Moray eels
Nudibranchs
Nurse sharks
Stingrays
Dogtooth tuna
Napoleon wrasse
Manta rays (occasionally)

Miyaru Thila

Miyaru Thila is a stunning pinnacle dive in the center of Shaviyani Atoll, with the reef top beginning at 10 meters (33 feet) and dropping to 30 meters (98 feet). The thila is lined with beautiful **overhangs** that serve as resting spots for **rays and nurse sharks**, while sandy patches may hide sleeping **guitarfish**. Strong currents attract large marine life, offering thrilling encounters with **grey reef sharks, leopard sharks** and **eagle rays**. It's an excellent site for spotting both resting and cruising pelagics. The dive is suitable for all experience levels, with dramatic topography and consistently exciting wildlife sightings.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Leopard sharks
Guitar sharks
Eagle rays
Nurse sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Sirru Fen Fushi Hulanghu Faru - Manta Point

Sirru Fen Fushi Hulanghu Faru, located northwest of the Sirru Fen Fushi resort, is one of Shaviyani Atoll's **top manta diving spots**. It offers easy access and stunning encounters. Between 12 and 25 meters (39 to 82 feet), divers can witness multiple manta ray cleaning stations during the northeast monsoon season (December to April). The site promises incredible photo opportunities and up-close views of these graceful giants. There's also an excellent private manta spot on the **Sirru Fen Fushi house reef**, reserved exclusively for resort guests.

Marine life

Manta rays
December - April

Ekasdhoo North

Ekasdhoo North is a standout dive site in Shaviyani Atoll, located on the eastern side and suitable for divers of all levels. The site showcases a stunning reefscape filled with **large table corals** and delicate **staghorn corals** that create a colorful underwater environment. These vibrant coral gardens are not only visually impressive but also provide shelter for a range of marine species. A unique highlight of this dive is the chance to observe **nurse sharks** resting under the overhangs during the day. This calm and intimate encounter with sharks makes Ekasdhoo North a memorable experience.

Marine life

Nurse sharks
Reef fish

TOP DIVE SITES IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Maroshi Thila

Maroshi Thila is a submerged pinnacle located in central-western Shaviyani Atoll, with the reef top starting at 14–16 meters (46–52 feet) and sloping down beyond 30–40 meters (98–131 feet). This site features dramatic topography with **steep walls, overhangs** and **canyons** adorned with **colorful soft corals**. It's known for its rich marine biodiversity, with large schools of barracuda, jackfish and vibrant reef fish. The dive is especially exciting due to regular sightings of **leopard sharks, silvertip sharks** and multiple **guitarfish** resting on the sandy bottom. Maroshi Thila offers an action-packed experience for divers drawn to sharks and pristine coral formations.

Marine life

Barracudas
Jackfish
Leopard sharks
Silvertip sharks
Guitarfish

Fahi Thila

Fahi Thila is a gently current-swept dive site located inside Shaviyani Atoll, with a maximum depth of 20 meters (66 feet), making it ideal for divers of all levels. This site is celebrated for its thriving **hard coral formations** found both on the thila and the adjacent reef. One of its standout features is the impressive number of **stingrays** that gather here, often spotted in groups. Divers may also encounter **eagle rays** and the elusive **guitar ray** cruising over the reef. Occasionally, manta rays pass by, adding extra excitement to the dive.

Marine life

Stingrays
Guitar rays
Eagle rays
Manta rays (occasionally)

TOP DIVE SITES IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Lupo Thila

Lupo Thila in Shaviyani Atoll is a compact yet vibrant reef starting at 5 meters (16 feet) and dropping beyond 30 meters (98 feet), ideal for divers of different levels. The dive is renowned for its **rich biodiversity**, with schools of **batfish, jacks and barracuda** creating a constantly moving spectacle. What sets this site apart are its regular encounters with **silvertip, grey reef and white tip sharks**. Lucky divers may even witness a rare **guitar shark** gliding through the blue. With its dynamic marine life and dramatic depth range, Lupo Thila offers an unforgettable dive experience.

Marine life

Batfish
Jacks
Barracudas
Silvertip sharks
Grey reef sharks
White tip sharks
Guitar sharks

Haru Gaa Thila

Haru Gaa Thila is a hidden gem located southeast of Sirru Fen Fushi resort. The top of this underwater pinnacle begins at 10 meters (33 feet) and slopes down to 25–27 meters (82–89 feet), offering varied terrain for exploration. This thila is known for its **large school of barracudas** that circle the reef in dazzling formations. Divers can also encounter **nurse sharks** resting nearby and **dogtooth tunas** patrolling the area. Leopard sharks are often spotted around the thila, making it an exciting site for shark enthusiasts.

Marine life

Barracudas
Nurse sharks
Dogtooth tuna
Leopard sharks

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE SHAVIYANI ATOLL

The best time to dive Shaviyani Atoll is during the northeast monsoon season, from **December to April**, when the weather is dry, the seas are calm and visibility is at its peak.

These months are ideal for **manta sightings on the western side** of the atoll and for enjoying the full beauty of the coral reefs and marine life.

While diving is possible year-round, the southwest monsoon (May to November) may bring rougher seas and reduced visibility.

Overall, the dry season offers the most rewarding and comfortable dive conditions.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL

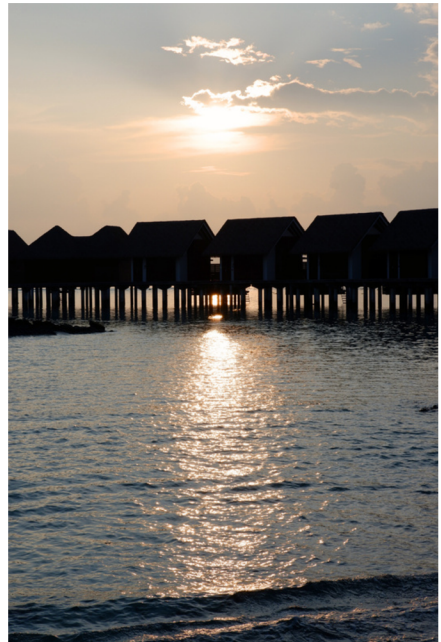
Resort Islands

[Sirru Fen Fushi: Private Lagoon Resort](#)
Sub Oceanic Maldives

[JW Marriott Maldives Resort & Spa](#)
Best Dives Vagaru by Best Dives Maldives

Local Islands

No dive centers on the local islands in Shaviyani atoll



NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN SHAVIYANI ATOLL

Tree House Reef	Naainfaru Uthuru
Lupo Thila	Naainfaru Dekunu
Vagaru Reef Out	Lighthouse Channel
Firunbaidhoo Reef	Kilissa Beyru
Firunbaidhoo Thila	Kilissafaru Thila
Kanbaalifaru	Naalaahruraa Faru
Funadhoo Corner	Naalaahhuraa Thila
Eriyadhoo Rainbow Wall	Huras Thila
Maaungoodhoo Wall	Medhu Thila
Tree Sisters	Haru Gaa Thila
Bodu Hura Wall	Dhahburi Thila
Fefunuh Thila	Miyaru Thila
Ilumahtee Thila	Medhu Faru
Huthulu Thila	Maroshi Thila
Goidhoo Corner	Maroshi Irumathi
Sirru Fen Fushi Hulanghu Faru	Ekasdhoo North
Sirru Fen Fushi Hulanghu	Ekasdhoo Faru
Sirru Fen Fushi Housereef & THE	Ekasdhoo Kuda Thila
CORALARIUM by Jason Decaires	Hirubadhoo North
Taylor	Feydhoo Faru
Sirru Faru Dhekunu Kang	Bodu Thila
Sirru Faru Hulhangu	Van'gaaru
Fahi Thila	Loley Thila / Lola Thila
Fahi Faru	
Sirru Faru Irumathi (Sirru Fen Fushi -	
Private Lagoon Resort Housereef)	
Sirru Faru Dhekunu	
Sirru Coco Miyaru Thila	
Sirru Thila	
Natthey Thila	

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

NORTHERN ATOLLS

NOONU ATOLL - SOUTHERN MILADHUNMADULU

Reef Life & Luxury Resorts without the crowds

Noonu Atoll, located in the northern Maldives, consists of **71 islands** – only 13 of which are inhabited – and forms the **southern part** of the vast Miladhunmadulu natural atoll system.

Known for its **luxurious resorts, expansive lagoons** and **scattered islands**, Noonu offers secluded diving experiences with minimal boat traffic and mild currents.

Diving here is for beginners and advanced divers with standout sites like **Orimas Thila** and **Christmas Tree** offering thrilling encounters with grey reef sharks, eagle rays turtles and massive shoals of reef fish.

Though manta rays and whale sharks are less common here than in southern atolls, **rich coral formations, fascinating topography** and **diverse marine life** make Noonu a standout destination for adventurous divers seeking something off the beaten path.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL

Orimas Thila

Orimas Thila is **Noonu Atoll's top dive site**, famous for its role as a **grey reef shark cleaning station**. The pinnacle starts at 15–20 m (49–66 ft) and drops steeply on one side to 30 m+ (98+ ft), with sandy slopes and overhangs on the other. On the top and around the saddle of the reef, divers can observe **dozens of grey reef sharks** being cleaned by wrasse. With good current, the action is intense and thrilling, and divers may need to use reef hooks to hold their position. The surrounding area also hosts barracuda, eagle rays, trevallies, stingrays and large schools of batfish.

Snow White

Snow White is a gentle sloping reef dive site with a sandy bottom at around 17–18 m (56–59 ft), perfect for **beginner divers** or **check dives**. The best area lies around 10–15 m (33–49 ft), where coral blocks host gobies, hermit crabs and vibrant reef life. Garden eels peek from the bright white sand, while large table corals create a picturesque reefscape. **Painted spiny lobsters**, **lionfish** and **moray eels** hide among finger corals and sponges. Larger marine life includes jackfish, emperors, tunas, turtles, eagle rays and barracuda cruising the edges of the reef.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Leopard sharks
Guitar sharks
White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Tunas
Barracuda
Trevally
Batfish
Snappers
Blue-lined snapper

Marine life

Garden eels
Hermit crab
Sea star
Sea cucumber
Painted spiny lobster
Moray eels
Lionfish
Grouper
Snapper
Jackfish
Tunas
Barracuda
Turtles
Eagle rays

TOP DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL CONTINUED

Vavathi Kurohli / Christmas Tree

Christmas Tree is a renowned thila dive site in Noonu Atoll, named for its **layered pinnacle structure** that resembles a Christmas tree. Starting from 30 m (98 ft) at the sandy bottom, the pinnacle ascends to around 12–15 m (39–49 ft), with each ledge hosting vibrant life like glassfish, lionfish and orange basslets. **Turtles, nurse sharks, trevallies, groupers and stingrays** are often spotted, while the **overhangs** and coral gardens attract **macro life** like nudibranchs, shrimps and porcelain crabs. The topography offers dramatic ledges, caves and nice overhangs. This is a favorite for both macro and wide-angle photographers due to its marine diversity and dramatic structure.

Marine life

Turtles
 Grey reef sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Nurse sharks
 Leopard sharks
 Guitar sharks
 Trevally
 Jackfish
 Groupers
 Tuna
 Fusiliers
 Red-tooth triggerfish
 Napoleon wrasse
 Lionfish
 Moray eels
 Shrimps
 Crabs
 Lobsters
 Nudibranchs
 Snapper
 Marble rays

Toshi Caves

Toshi Caves is a rounded corner site within Kudey Kanduu, known for its steep reef walls and surprisingly easy dives despite strong currents. The reef drops from the surface to 30 m (98 ft), featuring caves and overhangs that make the topography exciting. Though the site may look unremarkable from afar, close inspection reveals an abundance of macro life like shrimp, crabs and camouflaged predators. Blotched fantail and feather tail stingrays rest on the sandy bottom, while green turtles glide between the caves. Shoals of snappers, emperors, jobfish and fusiliers add movement in the shallows.

Marine life

Scorpion fish
 Stone fish
 Lionfish
 Shrimp
 Crabs
 Blotched fantail stingray
 Feather tail stingray
 Green turtle
 Snapper
 Long-nosed emperor
 Jobfish
 Fusilier

TOP DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL CONTINUED

Than'buru Canyon

Than'buru Canyon is a breathtaking dive site featuring dramatic **canyon walls** and a complex reef structure that drops to 30 m (98 ft). The area is filled with **soft corals, crevices** and **swim-throughs**, offering a sense of exploration suitable for both beginners and experienced divers. Along the reef, divers can spot a variety of marine life including pelagics like **stingrays and reef sharks**, as well as nudibranchs, lobsters and moray eels. Sweetlips, snappers, and octopus are also commonly seen navigating the reef structure. The canyon's topography and biodiversity make this a memorable and rewarding dive.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Rays
Sweetlips
Snapper
Nudibranch
Lobster
Stingray
Octopus
Moray eels

Minaavaru Faru

Minaavaru Faru is an **easy reef dive** on the east side of Minaavaru Island, with a gentle slope from 2 to 18 meters (7 to 59 feet). The reef showcases **vibrant coral life**, including cream-colored loped pore corals known for their resilience and growth. **Table corals** in green, blue and brown shades host damsel and palette surgeonfish. Divers often spot large schools of snapper, including humpback, red, black and blue-striped species, as well as passing jackfish and dogtooth tuna. Turtles, octopus and sometimes even surface-feeding mantas add to the excitement.

Marine life

Damsel fish
Palette surgeonfish
Humpback snapper
Red snapper
Black snapper
Blue striped snapper
Dogtooth tuna
Jackfish
Turtles
Octopus

TOP DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL CONTINUED

Saeedh Ge'Hadhiyaa

Saeed Ge' Hadhiyaa is a **channel dive** with a wall that rises from 24 meters (79 feet) to a coral-covered reef top. Its **overhangs** house black corals and rare species like **giant winged pearl oysters, Cock's comb oysters** and **black coral shrimps**. Lobsters shelter in crevices while keeping away from large groupers that prowl nearby. Yellow Clathria soft corals grow in scattered clusters and green midnight corals feed on plankton during the night. Schooling jackfish, rainbow runners and snappers dart when a massive Napoleon wrasse appears with the current.

Marine life

Giant winged pearl oyster
Cock's comb oyster
Black coral shrimp
Lobster
Grouper
Clathria soft coral
Midnight stony coral
Jackfish
Rainbow runner
Snapper
Napoleon wrasse

Kaalhu Maizaan

Kaalhu Maizaan is a **beautiful reef dive** reaching a maximum depth of 18 meters (59 feet). The site features a steep wall with small overhangs at various depths, decorated with colorful reef formations. Purple whip corals mix with spiral black corals and small gorgonians to create a vibrant seascape. Common marine life includes reef fish like **triggerfish, parrotfish** and **angelfish**, along with moray eels, stingrays, eagle rays and octopus. Sharks and lobsters also frequent the area, making this a lively and diverse dive.

Marine life

Triggerfish
Parrotfish
Angelfish
Stingrays
Eagle rays
Moray eels
Octopus
Sharks
Lobster

TOP DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL CONTINUED

Dhigu Faru

Dhigu Faru is a **long reef** stretching northwest to southeast, beginning at a shallow 6 meters (20 feet) and sloping to 24 meters (79 feet) before reaching the sandy bottom. The reef is covered in healthy hard corals and home to vibrant marine life including **lionfish** and **nudibranchs**. Huge schools of reef fish make this a lively and colorful site to explore. Divers may also spot **moray eels, turtles** and occasionally eagle rays or stingrays cruising through the blue. With gentle currents, it's a relaxed and scenic dive for all levels.

Marine life

Lionfish
Nudibranch
Schooling fish
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Moray eels
Turtles

Felivaru Corner

Felivaru Corner is a scenic dive site known for its vibrant coral formations and rich marine life. The site is accessible to divers of all experience levels due to generally mild currents. **Large schools of snapper** often gather here, creating a mesmerizing underwater scene. Divers may also spot bigger pelagics like **tunas** and **eagle rays** gliding through the blue. The combination of calm conditions and stunning reefscape makes this an enjoyable and photogenic dive.

Marine life

Snapper
Tunas
Eagle rays
Reef fish

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE NOONU ATOLL

The best time to dive in Noonu Atoll is from **January to April**, during the northeast monsoon when conditions are calm, dry, and visibility is at its peak - often over 30 meters (100 feet).

This period offers the greatest chance to see grey reef sharks and large schools of fish around iconic sites like Orimas Thila.

Water temperatures remain consistently warm year-round (26–30°C / 79–86°F).

From May to November, the southwest monsoon brings more **rain and rougher seas** but still allows diving with fewer crowds.

Marine life remains rich throughout the year, though visibility and surface conditions vary by season.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN NOONU ATOLL

Resort Islands

Noku Maldives, Vignette Collection
East Wind Dive Center

Kuredhivaru Resort & Spa Maldives (Mövenpick)
Dive Butler Zen

Velaa Private Island
Veela Private Island Dive Center

Robinson Noonu
Deep & Breeze Noonu by Silver Sands

Sun Siyam Iru Fushi
Sun Diving

Siyam World Maldives
Sun Diving Siam World

Soneva Jani
Soleni Dive Center

Cheval Blanc Randheli
Cheval Blanc Randheli Dive Center

Velidhoo
Velidhoo - Dive & Sail by Alfons Straub

Local Islands

Fodhdhoo
• Fodhdhoo Dive



NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL

Taj Mahal
Dhekenanfaru
Kunna Malei
Kuramadhoo Channel
Kuramadhoo Caves
Gathafaru North Channel
True Fairytale
Dhatafaru
Vela House Reef
Vela Wreck
Orimas Thila
Sharks and More
Orimas Varu Koens Dream
Maavelaavaru Beyru
Christmas Tree
Vavthi Kurothi
Caribbean Tale
Christmas Rock
Raimas Thila
Thaburudhoo Corner
Thanburudhoo
Than'buru Canyon
Dhiffushi Kandhu
Viha Faru
Maakurandhoo
Velidhoo Caves
Yellow Pink Corner
Raabandhi
Raafushi Ocean Point
Rasfushi Out
Rasfushi Caves

Kandhoodhoo Terrace
Kandoodhoo
Saeed Ge Hadhiya / Saeedh
Ge'Hadhiyaa
Maalhos Housereef
Kuday Kandhu
Thoshi Caves
Manta Point
La Bouillabaisse
Fulhaa Dhandu
Sallims Lot
Golden Caves
Landhoo Wall
Kadi Corner
All Rise
Tholhendhoo Faru
Kendhi Faru
Bure Caves
Fishermans Friend
The Dome
Barbaras Boulevard (BB)
Festival de Fusiliers
Lost & Found
Fairy Meadow
Kuda Thila
Huivani Thila
Surprise Corner
Dheefuram
Anemone Alley
Lobster Lounge
Raalhu Gandu

DIVE SITES IN NOONU ATOLL CONTINUED

- Coral Garden
- Maafuna
- Carpe Diem
- Kedhivaru
- Felivaru Wreck
- Zulaikha Giri
- Felivaru Giri
- Thanburu Canyon
- Down Fall
- Angel Reef
- Orivaru Giri
- Reethi Loafaru
- Igraidhoo Corner
- Gemendhoo
- Kaalhu Maizaan
- Minaavaru
- Minaavaru Kuroolhi
- Faseyha Feenun
- Irufushi Housereef North
- Irufushi Housereef South
- Dhigu Faru
- Snow White



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

NORTHERN ATOLLS

RAA ATOLL - NORTH MAALHOSSMADULU

Vibrant Reefs and Mantas all year

Raa Atoll, located in the northwestern Maldives, is a **lesser-developed dive destination** with pristine reefs, healthy coral and incredible biodiversity. Most of its nearly **90 islands** are uninhabited, creating a tranquil, untouched setting ideal for both **resort and liveaboard diving**.

The region is known for its dense concentration of thilas (submerged pinnacles), dramatic reef topography and **year-round encounters** with **turtles, rays, sharks** and even **mantas**. Highlights include vibrant coral gardens, deep drop-offs, tunnels and channels teeming with marine life, with top sites like **Labyrinth, The Wall, Reethi Thila** and **Fenfushi Giri**.

Opened to tourism only in the late 1990s, Raa still offers an **authentic Maldivian experience** and uncrowded underwater adventures.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL

Reethi Thila

Reethi Thila is a submerged pinnacle near You&Me Resort and Fuggiri Island, rising to just 6–7 m (20–23 ft) and dropping down to 30 m (98 ft) in the channel. The famous site is known for its **dramatic overhangs**, **caverns** and **sandy flats** that attract nurse sharks, stingrays and macro life like nudibranchs and octopus. Grey reef sharks, schooling batfish and snappers can be spotted. Though the coral may not be the most vibrant, the sheer **biomass of fish** and **marine diversity** make this an unmissable dive. Sea fans, whip corals and gorgonians add beauty and shelter for countless reef species.

Fenfushi Giri

Fenfushi Giri, located in the southwest of Raa Atoll, ranges from 3 to 28 meters (10 to 92 feet) in depth, making it suitable for divers of all levels. The site is known for its **massive overhangs**, **sloping reef** and **coral-covered walls** teeming with marine life like soldierfish, squirrelfish, fusiliers, butterflyfish, parrotfish, bannerfish, unicornfish, surgeonfish, Napoleon wrasse and stingrays. The area surrounding the giri is influenced by **nutrient-rich currents** from nearby channels and the Moresby Channel between Raa and Baa Atoll, attracting everything from reef fish to pelagics. The reef transitions from hard corals to a “dead zone” of coral rubble that still harbors life like gobies, shrimps and mantis shrimp. Large table corals, black coral bushes and tubastrea coral dominate the upper reef, often swarming with fairy basslets and hunting trevally.

Marine life

Grey reef & Nurse sharks
Stingrays
Eagle rays
Batfish
Snapper
Grouper
Barracuda
Nudibranchs
Leaf fish
Shrimps
Octopus
Mantis shrimps

Marine life

Stingrays
Napoleon wrasse
Butterflyfish
Parrotfish
Bannerfish
Fusiliers
Unicornfish
Surgeonfish
Shrimps
Goby
Mantis shrimps
Basslet
Jackfish
Tuna

TOP DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Kottefaru Bodu Thila

Kottefaru Bodu Thila is a well-known **manta cleaning station** in Raa Atoll, most active from **June to November** during the southwest monsoon. The site features a top reef at 10 meters (33 feet) and cleaning stations between 12 and 15 meters (39–49 feet), sloping down to 30 meters (98 feet), making it ideal for divers of **all experience levels**. Up to 10 mantas can be seen circling calmly over the coral blocks, giving divers amazing views in generally easy conditions. The reef wall is lined with overhangs, soft corals and large gorgonians, offering excellent underwater scenery. In addition to mantas, eagle rays, napoleons, tunas and a variety of schooling reef fish can be spotted.

Vaadhoo Thila

Vaadhoo Thila is a compact but **action-packed pinnacle** dive site in the south of Raa Atoll, with depths ranging from 14 to over 28 meters (46 to 92+ feet), and is best suited **for experienced divers**, especially those with deep or advanced certification. The site features a multi-level reef structure with a top reef at 14–15 meters (46–49 ft), a second plateau between 20–26 meters (66–85 ft), and sandy slopes below, allowing divers to circle the thila more than once. From **January to April**, **grey reef sharks** are the stars of the show, cruising calmly at 15–18 meters (49–59 ft) and offering an unforgettable shark-watching experience. In addition to sharks, you'll find eagle rays, stingrays, turtles, dogtooth tuna, barracuda, jackfish and clouds of fusiliers, all gliding around vibrant overhangs and coral formations. The top reef is a hotspot for macro lovers too, with anemonefish, juvenile species and thriving reef life.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Napoleon wrasse
Tunas
Sweetlips
Bannerfish
Fusiliers
Turtles

Seasonal:

Manta rays
June - November

Marine life

Eagle Rays
Stingrays
Dogtooth tunas
Fusiliers
Jackfish
Turtles
Anemonefish
Barracuda
Snapper

Seasonal:

Grey reef sharks
Jan - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Labyrinth

Labyrinth is one of Raa Atoll's most famous dive sites, with a depth range from 12 to 35 meters (40 to 115 feet), making it accessible for advanced divers and **strong-current lovers**. This medium-sized thila has crumbled over centuries, forming dramatic **tunnels, canyons** and **coral-covered rock formations**. The topography is stunning, with gorgonian sea fans, healthy soft and hard corals and a top reef full of anthias. Divers are often surrounded by schooling batfish, fusiliers and glassfish, while **larger marine life** such as grey reef sharks, white-tip reef sharks, stingrays and Napoleon wrasse patrol the surroundings. Add to that the occasional turtle, emperor angelfish, eagle ray or moray eel and it's easy to see why this maze-like site is a must-dive in the atoll.

Rainbow Caves

Rainbow Caves is a **scenic canyon** and **cavern** dive located in the south of Raa Atoll, spanning depths from 5 to 35 m (16–115 ft). Divers enter through crystal-clear water into stunning **caves** and **overhangs**, although coral cover is light - this site's true charm lies in the sheer volume of fish. You'll find towering schools of blue-striped snapper, whip coral fans and soft coral gardens. **Large animals** are sometimes guests too: nurse sharks rest in caverns, manta rays pass by, turtles and reef sharks ignite excited reactions in divers. Drift divers will adore the fun flows and unforgettable **"fish soup"** experience as you drift through walls bursting with clouded schools.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Stingrays
Eagle rays
Napoleon wrasse
Batfish
Triggerfish
Fusiliers
Glassfish
Grouper
Moray eels
Angelfish
Turtles

Marine life

Blue-striped snapper
Batfish
Nurse sharks
Reef sharks
Turtles
Oriental Sweetlips
Nudibranchs

TOP DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Beriyan Kuda Thila

Beriyan Kuda Thila is a dynamic dive site in Raa Atoll made up of **two neighboring pinnacles**, allowing divers to explore both reefs in one dive depending on the current. Depth ranges from 12 to over 25 meters (39 to 82+ feet), making it suitable for all levels, though more enjoyable with some experience. The **larger Bodu Thila** features a steep wall starting at 10–12 meters (33–39 ft) and striking overhangs covered in soft corals around 18 meters (59 ft). The **smaller thila** nearby offers a gentler profile and lots of reef life, and the highlight here is the resident school of **friendly batfish** that often escort divers through the site. Jacks, fusiliers, morays and reef fish add to the action, while the vivid coral growth and split structure of the site make it exciting for wide-angle photography and exploration.

Marine life

Batfish
Jackfish
Fusiliers
Moray eels
Reef fish

Kudathulhaadhoo Thila

Located inside a channel, Kudathulhaadhoo Thila is an advanced dive site known for **strong currents** and high adrenaline. The dive begins on a plateau starting at 15 meters (49 feet), covered in large boulder corals that offer protection from the current and **great shark-viewing spots**. Two main split points on the site often attract grey reef sharks, especially on the north and northwest sides. On the south and southeast, divers can explore colorful soft corals in shallower overhangs starting around 24 meters (79 feet), while deeper overhangs reach beyond 30 meters (98+ feet). The reef features healthy coral growth and large schools of fish, including snappers and fusiliers.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Snapper
Fusiliers
Groupers
Napoleon wrasse
Moray eels
Turtles
Lobster
Long-nose hawkfish

TOP DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL CONTINUED

The Wall (Vandhoo)

Located on the eastern side of Raa Atoll, The Wall begins around 10 m (33 ft) and drops dramatically in sheer cliffs to depths of 60 m+ (197 ft+), offering one of the region's **most impressive reef walls**. It features a clean reef top with **beautiful soft corals** - particularly yellow and pink - along with fan corals covering steep **overhangs and caves** between 10 and 60 m (33-197 ft). The reef supports a dense population of big species, including Napoleon wrasse, eagle rays, turtles and giant tunas plus schools of long-fin bannerfish and snappers. Divers of all experience levels can enjoy this dramatic drop-off, vibrant coral growth and frequent encounters with large marine life.

Sola Corner

Sola Corner is one of Raa Atoll's **top manta ray cleaning stations**, located on the western edge of the atoll with sightings common from December to April. The reef begins at 10 meters (33 feet) and slopes past the manta cleaning station at 15 meters (49 feet), descending down to 25+ meters (82+ feet). The site is a shallow plateau bordered by steep reef walls, rich in hard corals, algae and small crevices that host macro life. Divers can expect encounters with 5-8 manta rays at once, as well as reef sharks, nurse sharks and turtles cruising along the slope. The conditions range from easy to moderate, making it accessible for intermediate divers and a must-visit during manta season.

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
Eagle rays
Turtles
Tunas
Bannerfish
Snapper

Seasonal:

Manta rays
June - November

Marine life

White-tip reef sharks
Nurse sharks
Turtles
Leaf fish
Shrimps
Ghost pipefish
Lobster
Scorpionfish
Moray eels

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE RAA ATOLL

Raa Atoll offers **year-round diving** with warm water temperatures between 27°C and 30°C (81–86°F) and air temps around 29°C (84°F). The **northeast monsoon** (December to April) is considered the best time to dive due to calm seas, sunny skies and excellent visibility.

Manta rays can be seen year-round, but your chances vary by site and season: **Sola Corner (west)** is best in the dry season (**December to April**), while **Kottefaru Bodu Thila (east)**, **Vandhoo Thila** and **Neyo Beyru** shine during the wet season (**May to November**). August to November is particularly good if you're coming here to spot mantas.

The southwest monsoon (May to November) brings some rain and reduced visibility, but diving remains fantastic, often with fewer tourists and lower prices.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN RAA ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Emerald Faarufushi Resort & Spa](#)

Faarufushi Dive Centre

[Ifuru Island Maldives](#)

Blue Wave Ifuru by Divebutler

[You & Me by Cocoon \(Underwater Restaurant\)](#)

Dive Mission

[Cora Cora Maldives](#)

TGI Dive

[JOALI Maldives](#)

Best Dives Maldives

[Raaya by Atmosphere](#)

Koamas By Jalboot

[Alila Kothaifaru Maldives](#)

Eurodivers

[Dhigali Maldives](#)

Eurodivers

[Emerald Maldives Resort & Spa](#)

TGI Diving Center

[Reethi Faru Resort \(Filaydu Island\)](#)

Sea Explorer

[JOALI Being](#)

Best Dives Maldives

[Kudafushi Resort & Spa](#)

Dive Kuda Fushi

[Brennia Kottefaru](#)

Ocean Dimensions Kottefaru

[Adaaran Select Meedhupparu](#)

DivePoint

[Heritance Aarah](#)

Kaito Dive Centre

[Furaveri Island Resort & Spa](#)

Dive Club Furaveri

[InterContinental Maldives Maamunagau Resort](#)

Ocean Group

[The Standard, Huruvalhi Maldives](#)

Drift Dive And Watersports Centre by Silversands

Local Islands

No dive centers on local islands yet

NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL

South area

Bodufaru Caves
 Labyrinth
 Kuroshigiri Canyon
 Kuroshi Giri In
 Kuroshi Giri Out
 Namoonu Thila
 Sola Corner
 Rainbow Caves
 Kukulhudhoo Out
 Kukulhudhoo Kanmathi
 Lhoni
 Maafaru Caves
 Maafaru Thila
 Maafaru Kuda Thila
 Muskelhi Thila
 Miyaru Uthuru Thila
 Miyaru Haa
 Saddle
 Orange Cliff
 Seven Blocks
 Ufulandhoo
 Kuda Thulhaadhoo North
 Kuda Thulhaadhoo Caves
 Kudathulhaadhoo HR
 Kudathulhaadhoo Thila
 Big Eye Bodu Thila
 Fenfushi Giri
 Fenfushi Bay
 Fenfushi Thila
 Kuda Faru
 Kuda Faru South
 Kuda Thulhaadhoo South
 Cressi Subs
 Maamunagau Corner
 Maamunagau Faru
 Maamunagau Kandu
 Maamunagau Giri
 Maamunagau Bay
 Southwest Corner
 Vilingili Thila
 Vaadhoo Wall
 Vaadhoo Thila
 Vaadho Faru
 Nagli Thila
 Medu Thila
 Medu Thila Outgoing
 Fares Canyon
 Aarah Bodu Thila
 Aarah Kuda Thila
 Aarah Bodu Gaa
 Aarah Faru
 Nagili Thila
 Dhigali West
 Dhigali East
 Fasmendhoo Housereef
 Fasmendhoo Aqua
 Canyon
 Kudafushi Housereef
 Reethi Faru Housereef
 Thaawathaa Thila

DIVE SITES IN RAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Thaavathaa Housereef
 Dhoranghali
 Kottefaru Kamathi
 Kottefaru Thila
 Kottefaru Kuda Thila
 Kottefaru Out
 Kottefaru Corner
 Kottefaru Beyru
 Nayo Faru
 Inghoo Kanduu
 Inguraidhoo Thila
 Fainu Kanduu
 Kinohas Corner
 Beriyan Thila
 Beriyan Caves
 Beriyan Faru Thila
 Beriyan Bodu Thila
 Beriyan Dhekunu Blue Hole
 Beriyan Kuda Thila
 Beriyan Dhekunu Thila
 Kinohas HR
 Kinolhas Dhekunu
 Marea Gaa Thila
 Kinolhas Kanduu
 Meedhupparu HR
 Vandhoo Thila South
 Vandhoo Thila North
 Vandhoo Wall / The wall
 Vandhoo Kanmathi
 Innamaadhoo Anga Thila
 Innamaadhoo Thila

North area

Alifushi
 Maadhooni Faru
 Dhigu Faru
 Kan'doogan'du
 Maadhah Faru
 Ekurufushi Beyru
 Vaadhoo Kanduu
 Vaadhoo Thila
 Vaadhoo Bodu Thila
 Faaru Fushi
 Maanenfushi
 Lun'boakandhoo
 Ifuru Thila
 Ungulu
 Ari Futtaru
 Lundhufushi Thila
 Bodu haiykodi
 Maakurathu Thila
 Kudakurathu Giri
 Miyaru Giri
 Kudafen Faru
 Coral Garden
 Raakurendhoo Faru
 Cora Housereef
 Thilin Beyru
 Vaffushi Corner
 Goiyamaru
 Cora Freedom Thila
 West Freedom Giri
 You and Me Giri
 Shallow Corner
 Reethi Thila
 Fuggiri Caves
 Fuggiri
 Seventh Heaven
 Fuggiri Beyru

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BAA ATOLL - SOUTH MAALHOSSMADULU

The Manta ray capital

Baa Atoll, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in the Maldives, is home to the world-famous **Hanifaru Bay** - where massive plankton blooms attract hundreds of **manta rays** and **whale sharks** for spectacular surface feeding events. While scuba diving is not permitted in the bay, **regulated snorkeling trips** allow for unforgettable encounters with these gentle giants.

Beyond Hanifaru, Baa atoll offers more than 90 dive sites with **vibrant coral thilas**, **channels** and **overhangs** full of marine life.

The atoll's eastern side has the highest density of sites, while the western reefs face the open ocean and offer rare surprises.

Whether you're diving from a liveaboard, luxury resorts or budget guesthouses on islands like Dharavandhoo or Maalhos, Baa Atoll promises a **blend of epic wildlife encounters** and **peaceful underwater exploration**.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL

Hanifaru Bay (snorkeling only)

Hanifaru Bay in Baa Atoll is one of the world's most spectacular places to **snorkel with manta rays** and **whale sharks**. Recognized as a **UNESCO Biosphere Reserve**, the bay hosts massive plankton blooms during the southwest monsoon (**May to November**). These conditions attract hundreds of reef mantas and occasionally whale sharks that gather to feed in a mesmerizing underwater ballet. Scuba diving is no longer permitted here to protect the ecosystem, but snorkeling offers a front-row seat to this natural phenomenon. Watching dozens of mantas spin and feed in perfect choreography is an unforgettable experience.

Dhigu Thila

Dhigu Thila is a long, narrow reef about 200 m (656 ft) in length, with a top reef between 6–11 m (20–36 ft) and dramatic drop-offs reaching 25–26 m (82–85 ft). Known for **strong currents** and **drift diving**, it's a hotspot for predators like **sharks**, **dogtooth tuna** and **mobula rays**. On the eastern end lies a large cave with black coral, while the north side features vertically stacked caves. The southern wall boasts plateaus, overhangs and seafans between, where grouper and squirrelfish thrive. A flat-topped outcrop at 26 m (85 ft) adds to the topography, attracting massive schools of red bass and trevallies during active currents.

Marine life

May - November:
Manta rays
Whale sharks

Marine life

Sharks
Tunas
Mobula rays
Groupers
Red Bass
Trevallies
Squirrelfish
Pipefish
Stingrays

TOP DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Dhonfanu Thila

Dhonfanu Thila is a small submerged **oval-shaped reef** in Baa Atoll, close to the famous Hanifaru Bay, starting at 7 meters (23 feet) and sloping down to around 30 meters (98 feet). It features a beautiful **swim-through** and a **canyon** that drops to 25 meters (82 feet), surrounded by lush coral growth. During the southwest monsoon, it becomes a **cleaning station for manta rays** and offers superb encounters with marine life. The site is best with current, drawing large schools of fish and pelagic visitors. Its stunning topography and biodiversity make it one of the best dive sites in the region.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Barracudas
Tuna
Trevally
Jackfish
Fusiliers
Snappers
Longnose hawkfish
Angelfish
Nudibranchs
Stingrays
Turtles

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

Nelivaru Haa

Nelivaru Haa is a unique dive site in the south of Baa Atoll, featuring **star-shaped canyons** and **overhangs** covered in vibrant **hard and soft corals**. The top of the reef lies at 14 meters (46 feet) and descends to around 30 meters (98 feet), creating dramatic underwater landscapes. During manta season, this site transforms into a cleaning station, where **manta rays** hover close to divers while being cleaned by reef fish. Dense schools of glassy baitfish often fill the site, especially during the **wet** season. With its caves, canyons and marine life like rays, sweetlips and batfish, it's a rewarding dive even without the mantas.

Marine life

Glassy baitfish
Stingrays
Groupers
Batfish
Sweetlips

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

TOP DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Dhigali Haa (Dhigali Thila / Horubadhoo Thila)

Dhigali Haa is one of the Maldives' **top dive sites** and a protected marine area within the **UNESCO Biosphere Reserve** of Baa Atoll. This elongated, narrow reef features colorful encrusting algae, branching Acropora corals and vibrant reef-top life starting at 8 meters (26 feet) and descending to around 20 meters (66 feet). It's a photographer's dream thanks to the **diverse fish life** and dramatic reef structure, including overhangs and canyons. With current, divers can drift past curtains of fusiliers, bannerfish and jacks, while spotting napoleons, barracudas and stingrays. Macro lovers will also enjoy nudibranchs, scorpionfish, shrimps and mantis shrimp hiding in the reef's crevices.

Marine life

Fusiliers	Scorpionfish
Bannerfish	Stonefish
Jackfish	Nudibranchs
Tuna	Shrimps
Barracudas	Crabs
Napoleon wrasse	Mantis shrimp
White tip reef sharks	Moray eels
Grey reef sharks	Octopus
Stingrays	Clownfish
Groupers	Eagle rays
Batfish	Angelfish
Oriental sweetlips	Longnose hawkfish
Scorpionfish	Snapper
	Lionfish
	Trumpet fish
	Trevally

Dharavandhoo Thila

Dharavandhoo Thila is a narrow, curved reef that stretches over 200 meters (656 feet) from the island of Dharavandhoo, making it a **sheltered dive site** suitable in nearly all conditions. The outer side features sandy patches inhabited by garden eels, gobies and their partner shrimps, while large groupers and Napoleon wrasse patrol the area. The top reef, between 5 and 17 meters (16 to 56 feet), is a perfect place for your safety stop, home to scorpionfish, sweetlips and blue-striped snappers. On the lagoon-facing side, divers find beautiful **overhangs, sea fans, caves** and **crevices** filled with cleaner fish, lionfish, morays and anthias. During the southwest monsoon, **manta rays** can be seen and the reef's colorful sponges, coral, and dramatic landscape make it a dream for photographers.

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
Groupers
Garden eels
Gobies
Shrimps
Scorpionfish
Sweetlips
Blue-striped snappers
Moray eels
Lionfish
Turtles
Stingrays
Anthias

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

TOP DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Anga Faru / The Aquarium

Anga Faru, also known as “The Aquarium,” is a **conservation dive site** in Baa Atoll and a known nursery ground for **juvenile grey reef sharks**. From **mid-January to March**, divers can witness dozens of young sharks accompanied by large **nurse sharks** patrolling the reef. The area also features abundant marine life, including schools of snappers and tuna and the occasional eagle ray. Nearby Anga Thila offers advanced drift diving through **five submerged pinnacles** at 25 to 30 meters (82 to 98 feet), ideal for experienced divers. Both sites boast stunning underwater scenery and exhilarating marine encounters.

Marine life

Snappers
Tunas
Eagle rays
Schooling fish

Seasonal:

Juvenile grey reef sharks &
Nurse sharks
January - March

Blue Hole - Amilla Maldives Resort Housereef

The Blue Hole at Amilla Maldives Resort housereef is a dramatic **underwater cavern** that opens at about 5–6 m (16–20 ft) and descends to around 25 m (82 ft). This **steep-walled chimney** dive features multiple entrances and exits - enter near the reef top, then drift through the cave system into deeper reef ledges and sandy patches. Divers often encounter **reef sharks and turtles** and on occasion even guitar or blacktip sharks near the deeper edges. Schools of fusiliers, snappers, bannerfish, moray eels, nudibranchs, leaf fish, shrimps and crabs add vibrant life to the site's vertical structure. This blend of cavern swim-throughs and open vertical reefs makes the Blue Hole a **photogenic dive** in Baa atoll.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Blacktip reef sharks
Turtles
Fusiliers
Snappers
Bannerfish
Moray Eels
Nudibranch
Leaf Fish
Shrimps
Crabs

TOP DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Christmas Tree Rock

Christmas Tree Rock is a uniquely shaped reef resembling a tiered Christmas tree. With a relatively deep reef top, it's recommended **for experienced divers** who enjoy intricate reef structures and colorful marine life. Each level of the reef is rich with biodiversity - from **white tip reef sharks** circling the base to **stingrays** on ledges, **nudibranchs** and swarms of vibrant reef fish decorating the "branches." Divers can explore **overhangs, swim-throughs** and **coral shelves** while spotting both macro life and large pelagics like tuna passing in the blue. It's a paradise for underwater photographers thanks to its colors, critters and dramatic shapes.

Kakani Thila

Kakani Thila is a vividly colorful dive site where blocks, coral towers and underwater ridges connect the thila to a nearby island, forming a **stunning reefscape**. The **soft corals** here bloom in every color imaginable - yellow, orange, pink, purple, green and blue - especially when current flows through. Overhangs and coral blocks provide shelter for **nurse sharks, stingrays** and **lobsters**, while schools of snappers, fusiliers, anthias and surgeonfish roam the reef. The topography is ideal for underwater photographers, with intricate coral formations, sandy stretches and calm conditions for **night dives**. With the chance to see pelagics and **manta rays** in season, this is a site you'll want to dive more than once.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Stingrays
Snapper
Nudibranchs
Tunas
Various reef fish
Macro critters

Marine life

Nurse sharks
Lobster
Stingrays
Snapper
Fusiliers
Anthias
Surgeonfish
Pelagic Fish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE BAA ATOLL

Baa Atoll offers **year-round diving**, but the best time to see **manta rays and whale sharks at Hanifaru Bay** and the nearby cleaning-stations is from **May to November**, with peak activity between late **July and early October**, especially around the **full and new moons**.

These months fall within the Southwest Monsoon, when plankton blooms draw large aggregations of filter feeders. While the weather can be more unpredictable, most rain is short-lived and fewer tourists make for a quieter experience.

From January to April, the **Northeast Monsoon** brings dry, sunny weather and calmer seas, making it ideal for great visibility and relaxed diving.

If you're choosing between clear conditions and big animal encounters, it's a trade-off - **manta season offers the action, while dry season offers the clarity**.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN BAA ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Dhigufaru Island Resort](#)
Ocean Dimensions Dhigufaru

[Four Seasons Maldives Private Island at Voavah](#)
Ocean Group

[Anantara Kihavah Maldives](#)
Elements by Silversands

[Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Landaa Giraavaru](#)
Ocean Group

[Milaidhoo Island Maldives](#)
Ocean Stories Aquatic Centre

[Amilla Fushi](#)
Dive Butler

[Dusit Thani Maldives](#)
Ocean Group

[The Nautilus Maldives](#)
The Nautilus Dive Centre

[Reethi Beach Resort](#)
Ocean Fanatics

[Dreamland Maldives](#)
Joy Dive

[Kihaa Maldives](#)
Ocean Dimensions



ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN BAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Royal Island Resort & Spa
DiveOceanus Royal Island

Soneva Fushi
Soleni Dive Centre

The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort
AQUA by Silversands

Seaside Resort Finolhu
Dive Butler Finolhu

Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu
Coco Dive Dhuni Kolhu

Vakkaru Maldives
Splash Dive & Water Sports by Silversands

Avani+ Fares Maldives Resort
Aquafanatics by Silversands

Local IslandsKamadhoo:

- Kamadhoo Dive & Water Sports

Dhonfanu:

- Fehi Velaa Dive

Dharavandhoo:

- Manta Tribe Maldives
- Liquid Salt Divers
- Mantastic Divers / Blue World
- Dharavandhoo Divers

Maalhos:

- Manta Nomad Divers
- The Underwater Institute Maalhos by Maldives Passions



NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL

Fares Thila
 Maavaru Thila
 Napoleon Thila
 Mas Giri
 Olhufali Thila
 Comas Thila
 Ogalhi Haa
 Hulhudhoo
 Maaddoo Thila
 Nelivaru
 Nelivaru Haa
 Nelivaru Beru
 Nelivaru Thila
 Faimini Bodu Thila
 Maalhoss
 Faimini Kuda Thila
 Dharavandhoo Thila
 Dharavandhoo Beyru
 Dharavandhoo Corner
 Thin Gaa Thila
 Dhe Guna Thila
 Hanifaru Bay
 Hanifaru Thila
 Hanifaru Beyru
 Hanifaru Out
 Hani Beru
 Reethi Haa
 Bodu Thila
 Bodu Gaa
 Dhonfan Thila
 Kuda Gaa

Aidhoo
 Aidhoo Thila
 Aidhoo Caves
 Aidhoo Channel
 Hiru Thila
 Dhonfanu Faru
 Hiru Faru
 Maafen Thila
 Vaandhoo Maa Faru
 Turtles Reef
 The shark nursery
 Foni Outer Reef
 Vadhoo Corner
 Vadhoo
 Hulangu Nagu
 Thilandhoo
 Reethi Beach Dive School
 Medhoo Thila
 Medhoo Faru
 Dhandhoo Thila
 Pinnacles
 Veyofushi Thila
 Veyofushi Bodu Giri
 Hirundhoo Housereef
 Labyrinth
 Hiru Caves
 Kakani Thila (Kakka Thila)
 Kihadhoo Thila
 Kiha Rock
 Anga Thilas
 Dhe Gaa Thila

DIVE SITES IN BAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Anga Faru ("The Aquarium")
Kihadhoofaru
Kahanbu Beyru
Katy Thila
Dhigu Thila
Hatharu Thila
Anga Faru Caves
Dhonisu Thila
Royal HR
Dhigali Haa / Dhigali Thila
Dhigali Giri
Mendhoo Thila
Finolos
Blue Hole (Amilla House Reef)
Hura Faru
Milaidhoo
Milaidhoo Caves
Giravaru Thila
Giravaru Corner
Kamadhoo
Landaa Giraavaru
LG Reef
Pink Reef
Farka Thila
Huruvali
Ran Faru
Undhoodhoo
Undhoodhoo Wall
Funadhoo Wall
Hulhudhoo Faru
Hulhudhoo Caves
Bathalaa Kanduu
Cake
Christmas Tree Rock
Maarikilu Caves
Digufaru Thila



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

NORTHERN ATOLLS

LHAVIYANI ATOLL - FAADHIPPOLHU

Perfect Mix of Variety and Access

Lhaviyani Atoll, also known as Faadhippolhu, is a northern Maldivian atoll made up of **more than 50 islands** with over 100 dive sites and some of the country's most varied underwater terrain.

Known for its **deep channels, wrecks, coral walls** and **manta-cleaning stations**, this region is a dream for both beginner and advanced divers.

While the southern half is quieter, most dive activity happens **in the north**, near the resorts and around **narrow kandus** where sharks, rays, and large schools of fish thrive.

Besides **Shipyard's two famous wrecks**, **Kuredu Express** is one of the most popular dive sites, known for strong currents and encounters with pelagic species like sharks and manta rays.

The mix of uninhabited islands, small local communities, and fewer mega-resorts gives the atoll a relaxed and authentic vibe.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL

Shipyard

Shipyard is one of the **most iconic dive sites** in Lhaviyani Atoll, featuring two sunken vessels from the Felivaru fish factory resting in a channel between Felivaru and Gaaerifaru. The wreck of **Skipjack II** still pierces the surface with its bow and stands upright on the reef, with its stern resting at 29 metres (95 feet), while the **second wreck** lies 40 metres (131 feet) away on its port side in 28 metres (92 feet) of water. Strong currents have turned both wrecks into **thriving artificial reefs**, now blanketed in soft and hard corals. At 18 metres (59 feet), you'll find a cave hiding scorpionfish, while the wrecks themselves are home to morays, clouds of yellow sweepers and a wide variety of reef fish. On lucky days, you might spot nurse sharks resting in the wreckage and grey reef sharks patrolling the nearby channel.

Anemone Thila

Anemone Thila is a vibrant pinnacle located within a **Marine Protected Area**, known for its explosion of color and overwhelming **abundance of fish life**. Overhangs and terraces around the reef are home to blue stripe snappers, shrimp, crabs and occasionally nurse sharks resting below. Glass fish swirl in massive schools over the reef while trevallies dart in to hunt, creating a dramatic predator-prey dynamic. On top of the thila, **countless anemones** in all shapes and sizes provide shelter for thousands of anemonefish, making this one of the best sites in the atoll for macro and wide-angle photography. However, capturing the full beauty of this magical dive site on camera is a challenge in itself.

Marine life

Moray eels
Yellow sweepers
Boxfish
Pufferfish
Porcupinefish
Napoleon wrasse
Emperor angelfish
Surgeonfish
Red bass
Tallfin batfish
Scorpionfish
Nurse sharks
Grey reef sharks

Marine life

Blue stripe snapper
Nurse sharks
Trevallies
Glass fish
Cornetfish
Shrimps
Crabs
Anemonefish

TOP DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Kuredu Express

Kuredu Express is one of the **most famous and action-packed dive sites** in Lhaviyani Atoll, located at the northern tip near Kuredhdhoo. Known for its **strong currents** and drift diving, this marine protected site is ideal for experienced divers and offers everything from steep outer reefs with colorful overhangs to terraced drop-offs between 10 and 22 metres (33–72 feet). At 18 metres (59 feet), soft coral-covered ceilings shelter leaf fish and along the channel sides, divers can spot moray eels in overhangs and stingrays on the sandy bottom. The real highlight here is the **big fish action**: grey reef sharks, schools of trevally and jackfish, eagle rays, large tuna, napoleons and barracudas are regular sightings. When the current isn't too strong, you can stop on a terrace and watch the show unfold around you.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Trevally
Jackfish
Black snapper
Tunas
Napoleon wrasse
Barracuda
Leaf fish
Moray eels
Eagle rays
Stingrays

Kuredu Caves

Kuredu Caves, also known as the **Green Turtle Airport**, is famous for its resident population of over 45 **green sea turtles**, which rest in the site's many overhangs between 8 and 25 meters (26–82 feet). Divers can watch these turtles gracefully rise to the surface for air before gliding back to their favorite resting ledges. The reef is covered in soft corals, sea fans and houses marine life such as leaf fish, nudibranchs, scorpionfish, lionfish, morays and porcupinefish. Look into the blue to spot eagle rays, reef sharks and napoleons, and keep an eye on the sand for stingrays. Schools of squirrelfish, snapper, fusiliers and a variety of reef fish are always nearby, making this site a favorite for many divers.

Marine life

Green sea turtles
Stingrays
Eagle rays
Reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Leaf fish
Nudibranchs
Scorpionfish
Lionfish
Porcupinefish
Moray eels
Squirrelfish
Snapper
Fusiliers
Reef fish

TOP DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Latheef Reef

Latheef Reef is a dramatic **wall dive** with steep **drop-offs, large overhangs**, and two main **cavern** zones. The deeper caverns lie at 25–32 m (82–105 ft), while the shallower ones range from 8–16 m (26–52 ft). The ceilings are richly covered in brightly yellow coloured soft corals, making it a haven for underwater photographers. **Swim-throughs** and angled passages create fantastic light and photo opportunities. Divers often encounter Napoleon wrasse, turtles and a variety of reef fish.

Marine life

Turtles
Moray eels
Nudibranchs
Snapper
Fusiliers
Reef fish
Scorpionfish

Fushifaru Kandu / Thila

Located in a 500 m (1,640 ft) wide channel between Fushifaru and Madhiriguraidhoo Faru, Fushifaru Thila is the highlight of this **Protected Marine Area**. The pinnacle is around 150 m (492 ft) long, 50 m (164 ft) wide and rises to 10 m (33 ft) at its shallowest, with both ends around 16 m (52 ft) deep. The outside rim of the atoll drops to 30 m (98 ft) and offers dramatic cliff-edge action with sharks, rays, tuna and barracuda. The top of the thila is full of coral blocks, cleaner wrasse stations and sees regular **manta ray** visits during the October–April season. In the channel, the strong currents support thriving reef life with soft corals, huge schools of fish and sightings of napoleons, morays and turtles.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Nurse sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Tunas
Barracuda
Giant trevally
Jackfish
Snapper
Fusiliers
Moray eels
Turtles
Napoleon wrasse
Butterflyfish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
October - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Felivaru Kandu

Felivaru Kandu is a combination **outside reef and channel dive** on the north side of the island, near the fish factory. The outer reef features extraordinary caves and drops gradually into a wide sandy channel ranging from 5 m (16 ft) at the corners to 30 m (98 ft) along the edge. Divers come primarily to cross the **channel** between **Felivaru and Gaaerifaru**, where conditions can allow sightings of **eagle rays, turtles, white tip reef sharks** and **grey reef sharks**. A coral-covered anchor lies near the drop-off, adding to the site's intrigue. Strong currents (over 2 knots) can make the dive more physically demanding, so it is best suited for advanced divers.

Marine life

Eagle rays
Turtles
White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Barracuda
Stingrays

Gaaerifaru Kandu

Gaaerifaru Kandu is a sandy channel dive between Gaaerifaru and Hinnavaru, featuring a thila on the edge of the kandu. This site is known for **white tip and grey reef sharks, turtles** and **large schools of fish**, especially when crossing the channel. **Eagle rays** are frequently seen cruising midwater, while **stingrays** rest on the sandy bottom and batfish gather along the reef edges. The thila hosts **hawksbill turtles** and is fringed with overhangs sheltering lionfish and soldierfish, while the channel ridges are favored by resting nurse sharks. Due to its depth and currents, this dive is best suited for Advanced Open Water divers.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Batfish
Hawksbill turtles
Nurse sharks
Lionfish
Soldierfish
Schooling reef fish

TOP DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL CONTINUED

Fushifaru Corner

Fushifaru Corner is located on the southeast side of Fushifaru Kandu, offering both a **channel and outside reef dive** with varied terrain. The gently sloping channel begins at 5 meters (16 ft) and bottoms out at 22 meters (72 ft), while the outer reef wall drops steeply and features **caves and arches**. Between 8 and 15 meters (26–49 ft), the corner is home to **healthy hard coral formations** untouched by storms, attracting oriental sweetlips, leaf fish, pufferfish, lobsters and turtles. Further down, a sandy slope between 18 and 25 meters (59–82 ft) often reveals stingrays and white tip reef sharks, while grey reef sharks and eagle rays are frequently seen cruising along the wall. Large schools of fusiliers, unicornfish, red bass, midnight snapper and butterflyfish add to the rich biodiversity.

The Wall

Located on the south side of Huravahli, The Wall is a stunning vertical reef that drops from around 4 meters (13 ft) to 33 meters (108 ft) and is ideal for a **scenic drift dive**. Divers can explore large **overhangs** between 25–30 meters (82–98 ft), ledges at 20 meters (66 ft) and small caves between 15 meters (49 ft) and the surface. A torch is helpful to search for **longnose hawkfish** hiding among gorgonian corals, as well as spotting nudibranchs tucked away in the wall's crevices. The reef is also home to turtles, yellow boxfish and countless small reef fish. Out in the blue, **reef sharks**, **mobula rays** and **eagle rays** may glide past.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
White tip reef sharks
Stingrays
Turtles
Lobsters
Moray eels
Leaf fish
Pufferfish
Porcupinefish
Oriental sweetlips
Fusiliers
Unicornfish
Red bass
Midnight snapper
Butterflyfish

Marine life

Longnose hawkfish
Turtles
Yellow boxfish
Nudibranchs
Reef sharks
Mobula rays
Eagle rays
Small reef fish

NORTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE LHAVIYANI ATOLL

Lhaviyani Atoll offers year-round diving, but conditions **peak during the dry monsoon from December to April**, when calm seas and crystal-clear visibility make for unforgettable underwater adventures. **From October to April** divers also have a chance to witness **manta rays** at cleaning stations like Fushifaru Kandu on the east or Dhanifaru as well as Kanifushi Falhu on the west of the atoll.

The **wet season**, from May to November, brings heavier rain and choppier surface conditions. Even during the rainy months, visibility can still surprise, and manta activity is quieter but you can still encounter some feeding activity at Dhanifaru during these months. Just expect occasional downpours - especially between June and August, the region's wettest stretch.



NORTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Hurawalhi Island Resort Maldives](#)
([underwater restaurant](#))
Prodivers

[Kuredu Island Resort & Spa](#)
Prodivers

[Six Senses Kanuhura](#)
Deep Blue Divers

[Fushivaru Maldives](#)
Best Dives

[Palm Beach Island Resort & Spa](#)
Nu Vilu Maldives

[Meyyafushi Maldives](#) -
Opens in October 2025

[Innahura Maldives Resort](#) -
Renovating, reopens in August 2025

[Jawakara Islands Maldives](#)
Prodivers

[Cocoon Maldives](#)
Oceanico Maldives

[Le Méridien Maldives Resort & Spa](#)
Sub Oceanic

[Atmosphere Kanifushi Maldives](#)
Oceanix Dive & Watersport

[Komandoo Island Resort & Spa](#)
Prodivers

[Kudadoo Maldives Private Island](#)
Prodivers

Local Islands

No dive centers yet



NORTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ATOLL

North area

Komandoo Housereef
Gaaerifaru Kandu
Hinnavaru Kandu
Komandoo Kandu
Kudadu Kandu
Medufaru Out
Kalifushifaru Corner
Kalifushifaru Out
The Wall
Nakolhu Giri
Peak
Peak Crossing
Aquarium
Fun Giri
Kuredu Garden
Latheef Reef
Kuredu Ocean Reef
Kuredu Housereef
Kuredu Caves
Kuredu Express
Kuredu Corner
Fehigili
Mashura Out
Reethi Giri
Tinga Giri
Bodu Giri
Kuda Giri
Kanuhuraa Kandu
Medadihura

Fushivaru Inside Reef
Kanuhura Corner
Zafari
Kuda Kandu
Maagiri North
Maagiri South
Maa Giri
Fushifaru Kandu
Fushifaru Thila
Fushifaru Giri
Fushifaru Corner
Fushifaru Out
Guraidhoo Out

Central area

Nemo Thila
Ihi Thila
Muda Thila
Ishmaels Thila
Abdulla Thila
Haama Thila
Anemone Thila

DIVE SITES IN LHAVIYANI ALIFU ATOLL CONTINUED

East area

Guraidhoo Corner
 Fathima Kandū
 Dido
 Meyyafushi Beyru
 Faadhō Beyru
 Faadhoo Kandū
 Dhifhushimaadhoo Beyru
 Hudhu Thila

South area

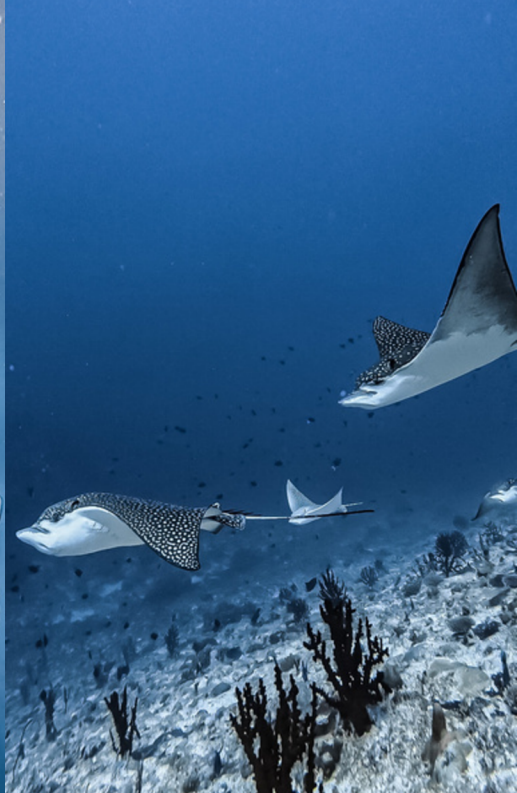
Egaara Thila
 Cocoon Giri
 Javaa Reef
 Malmal Reef
 Ookolhu Faru
 Hulkolhu
 Olhuvēli Medhu Faru
 Olhuvēli Hulangu Faru
 Le Meridien Housereef
 Thilamaa Faru
 Alighaa Beyru Faru
 Aligaa Out
 Aligaa Corner
 Aligau
 Alighaa Beyru Edge
 Maduvvari Irumathi Kann
 Maduvvari Dhekunu Kann
 Maduvvari South
 Maduvvari North
 Varihura South
 Varihuraa Kann
 Varihura North
 Lhohssalafushi Out
 Alafushi Corner

Lhohi Dekunu Kann
 Lhohi Kandū
 Kurendu Thila
 Bodu Giri
 Maduvvari Haa
 Halaaku Thari Thila
 Thin Sehli Thila
 Gaa Vehtunu Thila
 Neyfai Haeh Thila
 Moon Thila
 Talabo Thila
 Salleydhoo Thila
 Kuda Giri
 Thilamaa Thila
 Boava Thila

West area

Olhukolhu Faru
 Dhidhoo Faru
 Dhidhdhoo Corner
 Vavvaru Out
 Vavvaru Kandū
 Hani Kandū
 Veyvah Kandū
 Naifarū Out-reef
 Naifarū Kandū
 Madivaru Out
 Madivaru Thila
 Madivaru Kandū
 Shipyard
 Felivaru Out
 Felivaru Kandū
 Hinnavaru Out

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER



CHAPTER II

CENTRAL ATOLLS

Diving in the central Maldives (North & South Malé, Rasdhoo, Thoddoo, North & South Ari, Vaavu) means **being close to the action** - both in terms of marine life and accessibility.

North and South Malé Atolls offer impressive channel dives, famous wrecks and famous sites like Banana Reef, HP Reef and Lankan Manta Point, all just a short boat ride from the international airport. **Rasdhoo** is a shark hotspot where you'll find stunning wall and channel diving with schools of eagle rays and grey reef sharks. **Thoddoo** is quieter, but known for turtles, mantas and peaceful drift dives. **The Ari Atolls** - both north and south - are a diver's dream with regular whale shark sightings, manta rays - also at night in Fesdhoo, grey reef sharks and dense fish life around thilas like Fish head and Kudarah. **Vaavu** is less developed but delivers big rewards: dramatic channels, shark-filled dives like Fotteyo Kanduu and night dives with nurse sharks.

This region is a must for every diver, combining convenience with high-adrenaline action and colorful reefs. **Start here if you come for the first time to the Maldives.**



CHAPTER II

CENTRAL ATOLLS



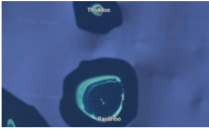
North Male Atoll

North Malé Atoll is the Maldives' most iconic dive region, offering top-notch reef, channel and manta ray diving for divers of every level.



South Male Atoll

South Malé Atoll is famous for its nutrient-rich channels, pelagic action and drift dives - offering manta rays, sharks, soft corals and fish-packed reefs in a quieter, more laid-back setting.



Rasdhoo & Thoddoo Atoll

With vibrant reefs, thrilling channels, manta ray cleaning stations and famous shark encounters, Rasdhoo Atoll is one of the best places to scuba dive in the Maldives.



North Ari Atoll

North Ari Atoll is a top diving hotspot in the Maldives, offering thrilling drift dives, diverse marine life and famous sites like Maaya Thila and Fish Head, making it a must-visit for experienced divers.



South Ari Atoll

South Ari Atoll is one of the Maldives' best diving destinations, offering near-guaranteed whale shark encounters, rich reefs and varied dive sites suitable for all levels.



Vaavu Atoll

Vaavu Atoll is a diver's dream with epic channel dives, vibrant reefs, and legendary shark encounters - highlighted by sites like Fotteyo Kandu and the thrilling night dive at Alimatha Jetty.

CENTRAL ATOLLS

NORTH MALE ATOLL - NORTH KAAFU

The Classic Gateway to Maldivian Diving

North Malé Atoll, also known as North Kaafu, is the **most accessible** and **best-explored diving region** in the Maldives, thanks to its proximity to the international airport.

The atoll consists of these regions: Gaafaru, Makunudhoo, Rasfari, Malé, Himmafushi, Meerufenfushi and Helengeli.

Divers can expect **vibrant reefs**, **underwater caves**, **current-swept channels**, **drop-offs**, and iconic sites like **Banana Reef**, **Manta Point** and **HP Reef**.

The atoll is rich in marine life, from manta rays and reef sharks to schools of snapper, barracuda and anthias. **Drift diving** is common, especially in the many eastern and western channels, with some **wrecks** also available due to historical shipping routes.

With a mix of **luxury resorts**, **local islands** and white-sand beaches, North Malé offers world-class diving for all budgets and experience levels.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL

Banana Reef

Banana Reef, shaped like its fruity namesake, is a **Marine Protected Area** and one of the earliest discovered dive sites in the Maldives. Located on the southeast side of North Malé Atoll near the airport, this fantastic divesite is known for its **dramatic topography**, **healthy corals**, and **abundant marine life**. Divers can expect **caves**, **overhangs**, and currents that earn one section the nickname "**Washing Machine**". Large schools of bannerfish, snappers, and fusiliers are joined by predators like reef sharks, barracudas, and trevallies. With every twist of the reef, Banana delivers both thrill and beauty for reef and big-fish lovers alike.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Barracudas
Trevallies
Bannerfish
Groupers
Angelfish
Snappers
Moray eels
Lobsters
Fusiliers
Soldierfish

Okobe Thila / Barracuda Thila

Located southeast in North Malé Atoll, Okobe Thila is a **protected dive site** renowned for its rich marine life and stunning **colourful soft corals**. Three coral pinnacles offer caves, overhangs and steep walls teeming with lionfish, morays, sweetlips, scorpionfish and squirrelfish. Expect to see blue-lined snappers, trevally, barracudas, tunas and Napoleon wrasses that often approach divers curiously. A ridge at 22 m (72 ft) leads to a larger reef where white-tip reef sharks are sometimes seen. It's a dynamic site best suited **for experienced divers** - don't forget a torch to explore every crevice.

Marine life

Bannerfish
Blue-lined snappers
Tunas
Napoleon wrasses
Scorpionfish
Lionfish
Moray eels
Barracuda
Trevally
Oriental sweetlips
Triggerfish
Squirrelfish
White-tip reef sharks
Soldierfish

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Lankan Manta Point

One of the Maldives' most **famous manta ray cleaning stations** is located on the southeast side of North Malé Atoll, Lankan Manta Point comes alive from **May to November**. Divers gather around shallow coral blocks at around 8–12 m (26–39 ft), where blue-streak cleaner wrasses service majestic manta rays circling in line. While manta sightings are the main attraction, the reef also hosts octopus, moray eels, hawksbill turtles, napoleons, sweetlips, and white-tip reef sharks. The site's long sloping reef, caves, and overhangs are filled with marine life like trevally, parrotfish, and lobsters. It's a magical experience that often leaves divers asking to return for another round.

Marine life

Turtles
 Napoleon wrasse
 White tip reef shark
 Fusiliers
 Lobsters
 Moray eels
 Octopus
 Parrotfish
 Surgeonfish
 Trevally
 Oriental sweetlips

Seasonal:

Manta rays
 May - November

HP Reef / Girifushi Thila

HP Reef, also known as Rainbow Reef or Girifushi Thila, is one of the most stunning dive sites in North Malé Atoll, famous for its **vibrant soft corals** in yellow, pink, blue and orange, as well as black corals and gorgonian fans. The site's narrow **swim-through** called the 'chimney', **overhangs and caves** make for exciting topography. Divers are swept past massive schools of fish like trevallies, big-eye trevally, yellow-back fusiliers, snappers, and jacks, with regular sightings of tuna, barracuda, rainbow runners, eagle rays and grey reef sharks. Keep your eyes peeled for reef dwellers like lionfish, boxfish, three-spot, emperor and regal angelfish, yellow-mouth morays and masked bannerfish. The strong currents bring nutrients that make this site a true pelagic playground and a must-do for experienced divers.

Marine life

Eagle rays
 Trevallies
 Tunas
 Snappers
 Jacks
 Boxfish
 Angelfish
 Lionfish
 Moray eels
 Barracuda
 Grey reef sharks
 Blue-fin jack
 Rainbow runner
 Fusiliers
 Bannerfish

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Nassimo Thila

Nassimo Thila (also called Paradise Rock or Virgin Reef) is widely considered one of the best dive sites in North Malé Atoll, famous for its **dramatic topography and marine life**. The thila starts at around 10–15 meters (33–50 ft) and features a 200-meter-long (656 feet) oval-shaped reef, covered with **vibrant turquoise-blue soft corals** and dotted with coral towers and massive pinnacles, especially on the northeastern side. These pinnacles are exposed to **strong currents** and are often surrounded by hunting trevallies, barracudas, Napoleon wrasses, black snappers, and red bass. Overhangs, caves and swim-throughs with sea fans, blue soft corals, scorpionfish and sometimes nurse sharks offer excellent photo opportunities. With schools of bigeye trevally swirling around and reef sharks patrolling the blue, Nassimo Thila delivers the Maldives exactly as divers dream of it.

Kuda Faru

Kuda Faru (also called Saddle, Shark Point, Finger Point) is a **small but action-packed thila** on the western edge of North Malé Atoll, known for **thrilling shark encounters** and **strong currents**. The reef top starts at 13 meters (43 feet) and stretches around 50 meters (164 feet) in length, with a sandy saddle connecting it to the main reef at 15 meters (49 feet). Divers often encounter **groups of grey reef sharks**, along with **white tips, silver tips** and **eagle rays**. A large overhang at 27 meters (89 feet) shelters nurse sharks and squirrelfish, while turtles and napoleon wrasse roam the area. Due to the accelerated current through the saddle, this site is best suited for experienced divers.

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
Bigeye trevally
Black snapper
Red bass
Barracuda
Scorpionfish
Flower grouper
White-lined grouper
Peacock rock-cod
Snapper
Nurse sharks
White tip reef sharks

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Silver tip sharks
Nurse sharks
Turtles
Napoleon wrasse
Squirrelfish

Seasonal:

Eagle rays
especially Nov–May

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Shark tank

Shark Tank, at the Hulhumale harbour, is one of the most thrilling dive sites in North Malé Atoll, perfect for experienced divers seeking close encounters with **big sharks**. Divers can spot up to seven shark species including **tiger, bull, great hammerhead, spinner, lemon, and even guitar and bowmouth guitarfish**. Massive groups of **stingrays** are also commonly seen gliding through the waters. The site is deep and the visibility can be very low - making it suitable only for **advanced divers** with proper shark diving behavior. Despite being a relatively new site, Shark Tank has quickly become a top highlight for big-animal lovers in the Maldives.

Marine life

Tiger Sharks
 Hammerhead Sharks
 Bull Sharks
 Spinner Sharks
 Lemon Sharks
 Stingrays
 Bannerfish
 Guitar fish
 Eagle rays

Miyaru Faru

Miyaru means shark in Dhivehi, and **grey reef sharks** are often seen cruising the outer reef wall at this site in eastern North Malé Atoll. The best place to observe them is from a large overhang at 28 metres (92 feet) on the outer corner of Thulhaagiri Kanduu, where divers can shelter from strong currents. During an incoming current, visibility is excellent and schools of barracuda, **trevally** and **tuna** fill the blue. **Eagle rays** and occasionally **manta rays** or even hammerheads, add to the pelagic show. Shallower areas and nearby Miyaru Thila are home to powder-blue surgeonfish, fusiliers, groupers, butterflyfish and parrotfish.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
 Barracuda
 Kingfish
 Tuna
 Trevally
 Lionfish
 Moray eels
 Porcupinefish
 Butterflyfish
 Parrotfish
 Powder-blue surgeonfish
 Groupers
 Fusiliers
 Napoleon wrasse
 Eagle rays

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Helengeli Thila

Helengeli Thila, located northeast of North Malé Atoll near the island of Helengeli, is renowned for its sheer abundance of **marine life** and **vibrant coral formations**. The reef top lies between 12 and 15 meters (39–49 feet), while cliffs, caves, and deep outcrops extend below 25 meters (82 feet), reaching depths of up to 40 meters (131 feet) in the adjacent channel. Divers can encounter **eagle rays, grey reef sharks, white tip reef sharks, barracuda, tuna, fusiliers, napoleons** and more, especially during outgoing currents. The northern side features dramatic overhangs, while the southern side hosts a mysterious anchor at 20 meters (66 feet), possibly linked to the Swiss shipwreck of 1890. Currents can be strong and challenging, but the dive rewards with dazzling gorgonian sea fans, seafans and coral-covered pinnacles.

Bodu Hithi Thila

Bodu Hithi Thila, located on the western side of North Malé Atoll, is a long drift dive site popular during the **northeast monsoon** (December to April) for **manta ray sightings**. Mantas come to feed and visit several cleaning stations at various depths and are sometimes seen near the surface, making it a good snorkel site too. The southern end offers the best diving, with reef tops at 8–10 m (26–33 feet) and sandy bays between 15–25 m (49–82 feet). A cave at 17 m (56 feet) sometimes shelters nurse sharks, while white-tip reef sharks rest on the sandy bottom. Divers will also find schools of fusiliers, grouper, sweetlips, tuna and colorful soft corals.

Marine life

Eagle rays
 Grey reef sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Tunas
 Fusiliers
 Great barracuda
 Trevally
 Black snapper
 Napoleon wrasse

Marine life

Nurse sharks
 White-tip reef sharks
 Turtles
 Fusiliers
 Tuna
 Grouper
 Sweetlips

Seasonal:

Manta rays
 December - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Hans Haas Place / Kikki Reef

Hans Haas Reef, also known as Kikki Reef, is a fantastic 100 m (328 ft) **long wall dive** set in a large cavity along the south coast of North Malé Atoll, offering protection from strong currents and making it accessible to all experience levels. The dive site features dramatic overhangs, caverns and a 28 m (92 ft) swim-through, with ceilings covered in delicate purple sea fans. Grouper, soldierfish and shadow-fin soldierfish are common residents, while rarer species like **scribbled filefish, freckled hawkfish** and **leaf scorpionfish** reward sharp-eyed divers. Invertebrate life is rich and unusual species like arrowhead soapfish, cheeked pipefish and white-banded possum wrasse may be spotted. The shallows are frequented by **butterflyfish, surgeonfish, turtles** and **octopus**, rounding out this colourful and diverse site.

Marine life

Grouper
 Soldierfish
 Shadow-fin soldierfish
 Scribbled filefish
 Freckled hawkfish
 Leaf fish
 Arrowhead soapfish
 White-banded possum wrasse
 Cheeked pipefish
 Trumpetfish
 Butterflyfish
 Surgeonfish
 Octopus
 Turtles



BEST DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

WRECKS IN NORTH MALE ATOLL

Maldives Victory Wreck - SS Sea Gull - Lady Christine - Erlangen

North Malé Atoll is home to several captivating shipwrecks, each offering unique diving experiences.

The Maldives Victory is the most iconic wreck dive in North Malé Atoll. This 83-meter (272-foot) cargo ship sank in 1981 after hitting a reef near the airport island of Hulhulé. It rests upright on the seabed at depths ranging from 25 to 35 meters (82 to 115 feet). The wreck is beautifully encrusted with sponges and corals, and divers often spot groupers, fusiliers, batfish, and even turtles around it. It's best suited for advanced divers due to its depth and occasional strong current.

The SS Seagull sank in 1879 and lies near the Gaafaru region on a steep reef slope. Its anchor is still visible at the top of the reef during low tide, while the wreck itself descends to around 50 meters (164 feet), though divers usually explore up to 30 meters (98 feet). A small cave near this depth adds further interest to the dive. The site is atmospheric and scattered with remnants, offering a glimpse into maritime history. Marine life here includes morays, jacks and various reef fish.

Lady Christine - this 30-meter (98-foot) vessel sank in 1974 while laying communication cables for the Maldives near northwest Gaafaru. Now resting between 10 and 25 meters (33 to 82 feet), it serves as a thriving artificial reef. The wreck hosts a variety of marine life including snappers, eels, reef sharks, turtles and rays. It's accessible to intermediate divers and offers good photo opportunities due to its relatively shallow position. The wreckage remains well-preserved and covered in hard corals.

The Erlangen, a 3,500-ton German vessel, sank in 1894 and lies about 1.5 kilometers off Iruvai Kandu. The wreck extends from approximately 15 meters (49 feet) to beyond 30 meters (98 feet) in depth. It features scattered remains and metal structures now covered in marine growth. Divers can often see sweetlips, emperor fish, juvenile wrasses, and even passing manta rays here. The site blends history with abundant reef life, making it both scenic and educational.

CENTRAL ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE NORTH MALE ATOLL

North Malé Atoll offers year-round diving, but the **best conditions are during the northeast monsoon** (December to May), with calm seas, great visibility and rich pelagic life.

The **southwest monsoon** (June to November) brings more wind, possible rain and reduced visibility (10–15 meters), especially in exposed areas.

However, this is also **manta ray season on the eastern side of the atoll**, especially at **Lankan Manta Point from May to November**. From **December to April manta rays** can be seen on the **west side of the atoll**.

Water temperatures range from 26–29°C (79–84°F) throughout the year and air temperatures stay warm around 30–32°C (86–89°F).



CENTRAL ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN NORTH MALE ATOLL

Resort Islands

Bandos Maldives
Dive Bandos

Malahini Kuda Bandos Resorton Resort & Spa
Malahini Dive Centre

Sheraton Full Moon Resort & Spa
Extreme Maldives Dive Sheraton

Kurumba Resort Malediven
Eurodivers

Centara Ras Fushi Resort
Best Dives Maldives

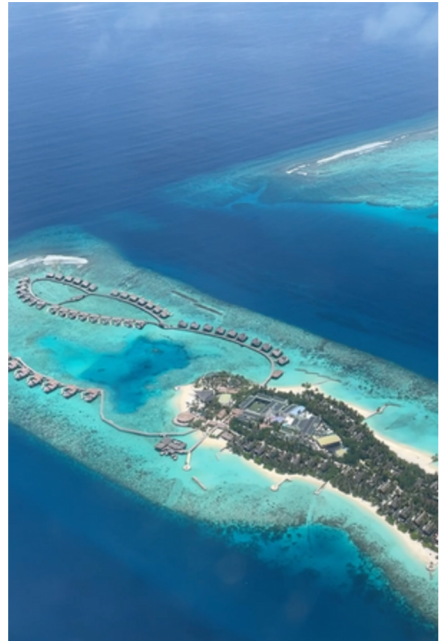
Grand Park Kodhipparu, Maldives
Ocean Explorer Marine Sports Center

Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa
Sub Oceanic Dive Club

dusitD2 Feydhoo Maldives
Silver Sands Dive Centre & Water Sports

Villa Nautica
Dive Oceanus

Gili Lankanfushi Resort
Ocean Paradise



ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

OBLU SELECT Lobigili

Koamas Dive & Watersports by Jalboot

OBLU XPERIENCE Ailafushi

Koamas Dive & Watersports by Jalboot

Thulhagiri Island Resort

Sub Aqua Dive School

Cinnamon Dhonveli Maldives

Dive & Sail

Four Seasons Resort Maldives at KudaHuraa

Kuda Huraa Dive Center

Club Med Kani Maldives

Eurodivers

Adaaran Select Hudhuranfushi

Divepoint Hudhuran Fushi

Club Med Finolhu

Eurodivers

Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives

Kuda Villingili Watersports & Dive Centre

Meeru Island Resort & Spa

Eurodivers

Joy Island Maldives by The CocoonCollection

Dive Mission

The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands

Dive Butler

Patina Maldives, Fari Islands

Dive Butler

OBLU NATURE Helengeli by SENTIDO

TGI Diving

Kaji Maldives Resort & Spa

Eurodivers

Jumeirah Olhahali Island Maldives

Best Dives Maldives

Oblu Select Sangeli

TGI Diving

Oaga Art Resort Maldives

Hoara X Centre

Eriyadu Island Resort

Eurodivers

Makunudu Island

Dive Ocean Makunudu

Summer Island Maldives

Diverland Summer Island

Hotel One&Only Reethi Rah

Reethi Rah Dive Centre

VARU by Atmosphere

Koamas Dive and Watersports by

Jalboot

Taj Coral Reef Resort & Spa

Blue In Dive & Water Sports Center

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Coco Bodu Hithi

Coco Dive

Huvafen Fushi

Float

Centara Grand Lagoon Maldives

Best Dives

Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru

Marine Center Vabbinfaru-Ihuru

Dhawa Ihuru

Marine Center Vabbinfaru-Ihuru

Baros

Divers Baros Maldives

Local IslandsDhiffushi

- Mahi Mahi at Stone Hotels
- Other Divers dhiffushi
- Descend Maldives
- Dhiffushi Dive & Recreation
- Maldivers Dhiffushi
- Scuba Divine Maldives - Dhiffushi

Huraa

- Other Divers

Thulusdhoo

- Feenaa Diving
- Amphibuzz Dive Center
- Sea Star Diving Maldives

Himmafushi

- Himmafushi Scuba Adventure
- Maldivian Academy of Diving

Male & Hulhumalé

- Dive Club Maldives
- My Divecenter
- Ocean Junkies Dive Centre
- Raajje Divers
- Moodhu Bulhaa Dive Centre
- Divers Lodge Maldives
- Dive Desk

CENTRAL ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL

Gaafaru area

Lady Christine Wreck
 Erlangen Wreck
 SS Sea Gull Wreck
 Gaafaru Bodu Kandu
 Gaafaru Kandu Kandu

Makunudhoo area

Olihahali Caves
 Himmiya Beyru
 Didi Gaa
 Madi Gaa
 Ihi Gaa
 Madivaru Beyru
 Akirifushi Caves
 Coral Carden
 Kuda Faru
 Makunudhoo Kandu
 Eri Faru
 Kuda Thila
 Madigaa
 Z Reef
 West Point
 Ziyaarai Thila
 Blue Lagoon
 Madi Thila

Helengeli area

Kagi Kuda Kandu
 Hani Kandu Thila
 Maha Thila
 Ali Place & Ali Reef
 Aladin Reef
 Barbara's Garden
 Helengeli Bodu Thila
 Doris Caves
 Razzag Place
 Trix Caves

Rasfari area

Rasfari Beyru
 Maska Reef
 Dandi Faru
 Rasfari Corner
 Nakatcha Thila
 Neyngey Thila
 Huva Faru
 Kurumba Thila
 Rasfari Out
 Bodu Hithi Caves
 Hithi Corner
 Vashimas / Woshimas Thila
 Hembadhoo Wreck
 Bodu Hithi Thila
 Kuda Thila
 Manta Point
 Shark Point

DIVE SITES IN NORTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Rasfari area - continued

Kandu Thila
 Mas Thila
 Nakatcha Giri
 Kuda Faru
 Farutholi Thila

Meerufenfushi area

Guruwa Faru
 Meeru Thila
 Asdhoo Canyon
 Fairy Tale
 Miyaru Faru
 Miyaru Faru Thila
 Kuda Kandu
 Medhu Faru
 Coral Reef
 Reethi Thila
 Kuda Faru
 Kuda Thila
 Gaaviamas Faru
 Reethi Gaa
 Asdhoo Rock
 Far Reef
 Prisca Corner
 Meeru Corner
 Prisca Head
 Long Reef
 Cave Corner
 West Saddle
 West Rock
 Bodu Giri
 Shallow Point
 Short Cut
 Meeru Housereef
 Meeru Beru

Stairs
 Kahambu Beru
 Koamas Faru
 Palm Reef
 Thulusdhoo Beru
 One Palm
 Gasfinolhu Thila
 Aquarium
 Kani Corner
 HP Reef
 Himmafushi Kandu
 Lankan Manta Point
 Okobe Thila
 Nassimo Thila

Malé area

Furana Thila
 Farukolhufushi
 Fanhamas Thila
 Kuda Haa
 Lions Head
 Hans Hass Thila
 Banana Reef
 Maldive Victory
 Back Faru
 Maagiri
 Coral Garden
 Potato Reef
 Fish Factory / Kanduoiyi Giri
 Kurumba Housereef
 Bandos Rock
 Feydhoofinolhu Wall
 Vilingili Corner
 Shark tank

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

CENTRAL ATOLLS

SOUTH MALE ATOLL - SOUTH KAAFU

Close to the Capital, Full of Life

South Malé Atoll (also known as South Kaafu) offers a quieter, less crowded diving experience compared to its northern neighbor, with a **mix of budget-friendly guesthouses** and **high-end resorts**.

This oval-shaped atoll is famous for its **current-swept channels** (kandus), which bring in nutrient-rich waters that attract large pelagics, reef sharks, manta rays and massive schools of fish.

The atoll features over 18 known channels, with the six on the eastern side offering some of the best **drift dives** in the Maldives. Though hard coral cover isn't as pristine as in other areas, divers will find lush **soft corals, caves, overhangs** and even a **wreck**, making it ideal for both recreational divers and liveaboard itineraries.

Sites like **Kandooma Thila** and **Guraidhoo** are standouts, offering thrilling dives with rays, sharks and seasonal mantas.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL

Cocoa Thila

Cocoa Corner (also called Cocoa Thila) is one of South Malé Atoll's **most thrilling dive sites**, best explored with moderate currents that bring in **large pelagic life**. This deep reef structure features a 400-meter-long thila, steep channel walls, caves, overhangs and ravines between with visibility into the blue often rewarding divers with sightings of **eagle rays, tunas** and **trevallies**. Sweetlips, fusiliers, rock cod and surgeonfish are commonly seen along the reef and inside the caverns, while the southwest corner is known for **grey reef sharks**. Turtles, trumpetfish, groupers and snappers, including black snappers, also frequent the area. Due to the unpredictable current, divers should plan for rest stops in sheltered areas to safely enjoy one of the most colourful and active reefs in the Maldives.

Kandooma Caves

Kandooma Caves is one of the **most spectacular cavern dive sites** in the Maldives, featuring a series of four massive caves along the reef near Kandooma Island. The **largest cave** stretches up to **70 metres** (230 feet) in length, with **dramatic overhangs** that block out light and create an atmospheric dive experience - best enjoyed with a torch. Inside the caves, divers can spot yellow sponges, seafans, tube corals and resident giant moray eels. Along the reef and inside the caverns, expect to encounter grouper, squirrelfish, clown triggerfish, sweetlips, angelfish and even napoleon wrasse. With varying depths and calm to strong currents, this site offers both adventure and beauty for experienced divers.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip sharks
Eagle rays
Trevally
Tunas
Sweetlips
Fusiliers
Rock cod
Snappers
Groupers
Trumpetfish
Surgeonfish
Turtles

Marine life

Clown triggerfish
Napoleon wrasse
Angelfish
Sweetlips
Grouper
Squirrelfish
Giant moray eels

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Kandooma Thila

Kandooma Thila, also known as Ran Thila, is a teardrop-shaped underwater pinnacle just outside Kandooma Island and is considered one of the **top dive sites in South Malé Atoll**. The top lies at 13–16 metres (43–52 feet), and the sandy bottom drops to 35–40 metres (115–131 feet), with strong currents from west to east attracting **pelagics and large reef fish**. At the famous Jack Corner (23 metres / 75 feet), divers can observe schools of big-eye trevally, snapper, tuna and barracuda, while caves and overhangs are filled with soft corals and reef life. Expect action-packed dives with **grey reef sharks, white tip sharks, eagle rays** and even **turtles** and **Napoleon wrasse** riding the current. While thrilling, the site is suitable only for experienced divers due to the depth and strong currents.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Fusiliers
Sweetlips
Snappers
Groupers
Tunas
Trevally
Bluefin jack
Barracudas
Anthias
Glassfish
Turtles
Napoleon wrasse

Vaadhoo Caves

Vaadhoo Caves, located along the northern wall of Vaadhoo reef in South Malé Atoll, offer a stunning **series of caves and overhangs** between 7 and 40 metres (23–131 feet) deep. Inside the caves, you'll find colorful soft corals, sea fans, gorgonians and whip corals decorating the walls. These caverns provide shelter for marine life like **soldierfish, unicornfish** and **turtles**, while larger species such as **white tip sharks, tuna** and **eagle rays** cruise by outside. Divers can enjoy a peaceful swim-through experience as they move from cave to cave, escaping the currents before rejoining the flow. In medium to strong current, it's also a great spot to see trevally and other big fish - but it's best suited **for intermediate to experienced divers**.

Marine life

Soldierfish
Turtles
Unicornfish
Whitetip sharks
Tunas
Eagle rays
Trevally

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Guraidhoo Kanduu

Guraidhoo Kanduu is one of the most diverse and impressive dive sites in the Maldives, located within a **Protected Marine Area** in South Malé Atoll. The site spans two main channels - Guraidhoo Kanduu and Lhosfushi Kanduu - separated by the central reef Medhu Faru, creating a complex underwater landscape of **walls, caves, sandy bays** and **overhangs**. Marine life is abundant and includes **grey reef sharks, eagle rays, napoleons, jacks, moray eels** and **manta rays**, as well as vibrant soft corals, sea fans and sponges. Guraidhoo Corner, with its rich fish life and current-driven action, and the scenic Medhu Faru ledge are particular highlights for **drift diving** and **photography**. With multiple entrances, current directions and habitats, the area can be explored countless times with something new to discover on every dive.

Marine life

Grey reef shark
White-tip reef shark
Moray eels
Lionfish
Squirrelfish
Trevally
Jacks
Tunas
Groupers
Snappers
Napoleon wrasse
Bannerfish
Fusiliers
Rainbow runners
Butterflyfish
Turtles
Eagle rays
Barracuda

Embudhoo Kanduu

Embudu Kanduu, located in the northeast of South Malé Atoll, is a **Protected Marine Area** famous for its population of **grey reef and white tip sharks**, often seen near the channel mouth. This exhilarating drift dive takes you along steep walls and overhangs, decorated with soft corals, sea fans and sponges, while pelagics like **Napoleon wrasse, eagle rays** and **tuna** cruise by. A massive cave includes a swim-through and shelters creatures like **moray eels, octopus** and **lionfish**. The north side of the channel features a thila, offering even more reef life and photo opportunities. Whether drifting with the current or exploring the overhangs and caves, Embudu Kanduu delivers some of the most varied and exciting diving in the region.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Eagle rays
Tunas
Trevally
Groupers
Soldierfish
Lionfish
Moray eels
Squirrelfish
Angelfish
Octopus
Turtles

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Kuda Giri Wreck

Kuda Giri Wreck is a **small, purpose-sunk steel wreck** lying upright between 20 and 35 metres (66–115 ft) near a giri (pinnacle) west of Dhigufinolhu in South Malé Atoll. The wreck is **ideal for beginners** and **night dives** due to minimal currents and easy access, with penetration possible in small groups. Colonised by colourful sponges and cup corals, it attracts **glassfish, gobies, batfish, turtles, humphead wrasse** and reef predators. Around the wreck and pinnacle, divers can spot **garden eels, leaf fish, nudibranchs, flatworms, shrimp-goby pairs, octopus, morays** and **anemonefish**. The nearby reef features overhangs and caves full of **soldierfish** and **groupers**, and if lucky, even a guitar shark may make an appearance.

Marine life

Glassfish
Gobies
Batfish
Leaf fish
Yellow sweepers
Bluefin trevally
Humphead wrasse
Groupers
Soldierfish
Red-toothed triggerfish
Turtles
Nudibranchs
Flatworms
Shrimps
Octopus
Clownfish
Guitarfish / Guitar shark
(rare sighting)

Velassaru Caves

Velassaru Caves is a scenic dive site located on the outer reef of South Malé Atoll, known for its **impressive series of overhangs and caverns**. These caves are rich in marine life, often home to **nurse sharks, moray eels, groupers** and large **stingrays** resting in the sand. Soft corals, sponges and sea fans decorate the ceilings and walls, making it a photogenic spot. **Turtles, lionfish** and schools of **snappers and fusiliers** often cruise by the reef edge. It's a calm, slow-paced dive with minimal current, ideal for macro enthusiasts and wide-angle photographers alike.

Marine life

Nurse sharks
Stingrays
Moray eels
Groupers
Turtles
Lionfish
Snappers
Fusiliers
Butterflyfish
Angelfish
Trevally
Scorpionfish
Shrimp and small crustaceans

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Vaagali Bodu Thila

Vaagali Bodu Thila is a 250-meter (820-foot) long reef located southwest of Vaagali island, best known for its northern end where a small channel opens and **several caves** sit between 15–30 meters (49–98 feet). The most striking cave lies at 26 meters (85 feet), covered in **soft corals, sea whips** and **black coral bushes**. These caves are home to **oriental sweetlips, squirrelfish** and **snappers**, while the top reef at 15 meters (49 feet) teems with bannerfish, featherstars and schooling fusiliers. Divers may also encounter large **Napoleon wrasse** patrolling the thila and **hawksbill turtles** feeding around the coral. The western wall is steep and dramatic, while the eastern side slopes more gently with occasional caves.

Dhigu Thila

Dhigu Thila, also known as Bushy Thila or Manta Point, is a long reef running east-west in the middle of Gulhee Dhekunu Kandu between Gulhi Island and Anantara Resort. Its top lies at around 10–15 meters (33–49 feet), with walls dropping to 25–30 meters (82–98 feet) into sandy surroundings and a trough rising from 25 to 14 meters (82 to 46 feet). **Rich overhangs and caves** between 15–20 meters (49–66 feet) are decorated with soft corals and sea fans, offering shelter to sweetlips, snappers and bannerfish. During outgoing currents, nutrient-rich water is funneled through the channel, attracting **feeding manta rays** - especially on the eastern side known as **Manta Point**. Even without mantas, the reef offers stunning coral, thriving fish life, and regular sightings of **sharks, turtles, rays** and **macro species**.

Marine life

Hawksbill turtles
Napoleon wrasse
Oriental sweetlips
Squirrelfish
Snappers
Sweetlips
Bannerfish
Fusiliers
Featherstars

Marine life

Marble stingrays
Eagle rays
Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Nurse sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Bumphead parrotfish
Turtles
Snappers
Oriental sweetlips
Basslets
Bannerfish

Seasonal:

Manta rays (especially with outgoing currents)
May - November

CENTRAL ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE SOUTH MALE ATOLL

Diving in South Malé Atoll is possible year-round, but the **best conditions are during the northeast monsoon** (January to April), when the sea is calm and skies are clear.

Water temperatures stay warm at 26–29°C (79–84°F), and visibility ranges from 15–30+ meters (50–100 feet) depending on dive site and season.

The **southwest monsoon** (May to November) brings more wind and rain, but storms are usually short-lived.

Manta ray season runs from **May to October**, with peak encounters often starting from August.

Reef sharks, turtles and Napoleon wrasse can be seen year-round and liveboards mostly operate from November to May.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL

Resort Islands

Taj Exotica Resort & Spa, Maldives
Ocean Dive

SO/Maldives
Ocean Dive Centre Emboodhoo Lagoon

Hard Rock Hotel Maldives & SAii Lagoon Maldives, Curio Collection by Hilton
Ocean Group

Adaaran Prestige Vadoo
DivePoint Vadoo

Velassaru Maldives
Velassaru Dive Center

Ozen Reserve Bolifushi
Best Dives Bolifushi

Embudu Village
Diverland Embudu

JW Marriott Maldives Kaafu Atoll Island Resort
Best Dives

Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi
Ocean Dive Centre Ithaafushi

Adaaran Club Rannalhi
DivePoint Rannalhi

Fihalhohi Maldives
Fiha Dive Center

Rihiveli Maldives Resort
Rihiveli Dive Center

Sun Siyam Olhuveli
Sun Siyam Diving

Fun Island Resort
Fun Island Dive Center

Ozen by Atmosphere at Maadhoo
Dolphin Base

Holiday Inn Resort Kandooma Maldives by IHG
Kandooma Island Dive Center

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

COMO Cocoa Island

Ocean Paradise

Anantara Veli Maldives Resort

Aquafanatics by Silversands

Anantara Dhigu Maldives Resort

Aquafanatics by Silversands

Naladhu Private Island Maldives

Aquafanatics by Silversands

Local IslandsMaafushi

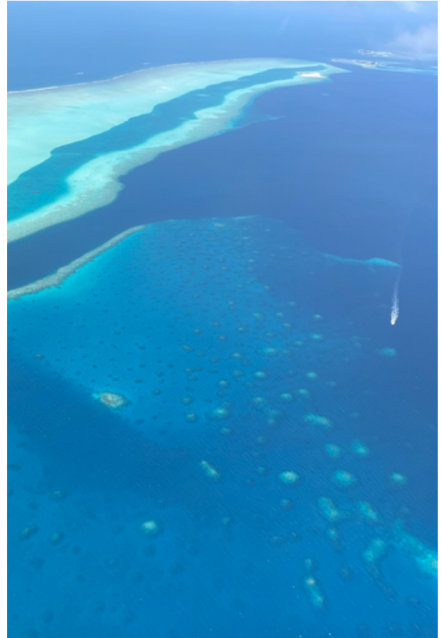
- Arena Dive Club
- Eco Dive Club - Maafushi
- Maafushi Dive & Water Sports
- The Dive Squad
- Maafushi Scuba & Freediving
- Sinai Dive Club Maldives

Guraidhoo

- Manta Divers - Maldives
- Scuba Dive K. Guraidhoo
- DivePoint Guraidhoo
- Bubbles Excursion Guraidhoo

Gulhi

- Ayala Bubbles Dive Center
- Adventure Diving Maldives Gulhi
- Ocean Pearl Maldives
- Aquatic Adventures
- Getaway Divers



CENTRAL ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL

Vaadho area (North)

Mas Thila
 Bolifushi Housereef
 Bolifushi Thila
 Bolifushi Wreck
 Bolifushi South Corner
 Bolifushi Corner
 Alia Wreck
 Velassaru Caves North
 Velassaru Caves South
 Velassaru Beyru
 Velassaru Corner
 Laguna Dropoff
 Coral Garden
 Vaadhoo Caves
 Vaadhoo Housereef
 Secret Point
 Hameed Reef
 Wadu Channel
 The Wall
 Turtle Point
 Cathedral
 Embudhoo Coral Garden
 Embudhoo Housereef
 Embudhoo Express
 Mystery Caves
 Rainbow Reef
 Embudhoo Caves
 Embudhoo Canyon
 Embudhoo Corner
 Embudhoo Finolhu

Embudhoo Kanduu
 Embudhoo Thila
 Fuselier Reef
 Turtle Reef

Gulhi area (East)

Stage Reef
 Shark Point
 Gulhi Outside
 Dhigu Thila
 Dhigu Manta Point
 Miyaru Faru
 Bushy Out
 Gulhi Corner
 Gulhi Channel
 Veligandu Beru
 Kuda Giri
 Hiaru Faru
 Gulhi Kanduu
 Gulhi Faru
 Kuda Fushi
 Bodu Fushi
 Lemon Reef
 Dhigufinolhu
 Potato Reef
 Kuda Giri Wreck
 Maafushi Thila
 Hoara Huraa

DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Kandooma area

Sultan Reef
 Maafushi Caves
 Maafushi Corner
 Maafushi Outside
 Khukulhu Huraa
 Cocoa Back
 Cocoa Kuda Giri
 Cocoa Bodu Giri
 Cocoa Corner
 Cocoa Island Housereef
 Cocoa Out
 Cocoa Thila
 Cocoa Beru
 Cocoa Faru
 Cocoa Reef
 Makunu Sidi
 BackKandooma
 Kandooma Beyru
 Kandooma Caves
 Napoleon Reef
 Losfushi Canyon
 Lhosfushi Kuda Kandu
 Jack Point
 Guraidhoo Manta Point
 Guraidhoo Kuda Kandu
 Guraidhoo Corner
 Bodu Kandu Beyru
 Ocean
 Veli Reef
 Mendhu Ingili
 Bodu Huraa Corner
 Banana Reef
 Guraidhoo Beru
 Guraidhoo Bodu Beru
 Medufaru
 Back Aquarium
 Lhosfushi Kandu

Emmadi Giri
 Sand Dune
 Baagiri
 Kandooma Thila
 Villivaru Giri
 Biyadoo Kuda Giri
 Thundu Faru
 Bodu Giri
 Waagiri

Vaagali area

Black Coral Faru
 Vaagali Faru Thila
 Vaagali Bodu Faru North
 Balcony
 Vaagali Faru
 Vaagali Outside
 Vaagali Bodu Thila
 Vaagali Thila
 Vaagali Caves
 Kahambu Giri
 Rannalhi Faru
 Ran Thila
 Ran Faru
 Admiral
 Donimaru Thila
 Fihalhohi Paradise
 Ihi Reef
 Ramm Faru
 Lhohi Faru Thila
 Fihalhohi Faru
 Lhohi Kandu Thila
 Lhohi Bodu Kandu
 Coral Faru
 Ranikan
 Rihiveli Housereef

DIVE SITES IN SOUTH MALE ATOLL CONTINUED

Hathikolhu Kandu West
Hathikolhu Kandu East
Origandu Finolhu
Rihiveli Caves
Kudarah
Rihiveli Wreck
Mas Uhlandu
Adam Faru
Lhoi Paradise
Lhoi Housereef
Ali Thila
Dhoshi Giri
Ranfaru Thulu
Rannalhi Bodu Giri
Jack Faru
Alimas Faru
Dongmass Giri
Triton Reef
Thundu Faru
Dhandi Giri
Triton Giri
Seenu Giri
Lhoi Giri
Illa Reef
Endori Giri
Olhuveli Kuda Giri
Bodu Gaa
Vaggiri
Maadhoo Muli
Maadhoo Beyru
Olhuveli North
Olhuveli South
Stingrays Lagoon



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

CENTRAL ATOLLS

RASDHOO & THODDOO ATOLL

Tiny Atolls, Giant Encounters

Rasdhoos Atoll is one of the **top scuba diving destinations** in the Maldives, offering a mix of thrilling channels, deep walls and vibrant reefs.

Located between North Malé and Ari Atolls, it benefits from both **shelter and open-ocean currents**, creating ideal conditions for marine life. Divers can explore world-class spots like **Madivaru Corner**, where grey reef sharks and eagle rays patrol the currents. **Two shipwrecks**, Kuramathi Queen and Reef Explorer, provide exciting artificial reefs teeming with marine life and are popular among photographers. Between January and April, **manta rays** visit the cleaning stations, offering unforgettable encounters.

Thoddoo Atoll – above Rasdhoo – is a **hidden gem** in the Maldives, offering uncrowded dive sites, healthy reefs and diverse marine life. Thoddoo provides a **peaceful and authentic** Maldivian diving experience. The dive sites around the island feature everything from shallow **coral gardens to deep drop-offs, caves and cleaning stations**. Divers can encounter manta rays, eagle rays, turtles, reef sharks, stingrays and large schools of tropical fish.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN RASDHOO ATOLL

Madivaru Corner

Madivaru Corner is one of Rasdhoo Atoll's **most thrilling dive sites**, known for its horseshoe-shaped ridge patrolled by **grey reef sharks, whitetip sharks** and schools of **eagle rays**. The reef features dramatic overhangs, leading to a **brehtaking drop-off** covered in sea fans, black coral and thousands of anthias. **Strong currents** often carry divers effortlessly along the reef, where shoals of barracuda, jackfish and fusiliers move in synchrony while giant trevally and dogtooth tuna hunt. The sandy patches host garden eels and the vibrant reef teems with oriental sweetlips, snappers and goatfish. Occasionally, divers may encounter **mobula rays, silvertip sharks, guitar shark** or even a hammerhead shark. The exposed location attracts plenty of predator fish, making every dive an exhilarating experience. With its thriving marine life, colorful coral formations and fast-paced drift diving, Madivaru Corner is a **must-visit** site for experienced divers.

Madi Gaa / Manta Block

If you want to see **manta rays**, this is your go to dive site! Located inside the north channel of the atoll, this cleaning station attracts manta rays from **January to April**. The site consists of a big coral block at 12m depth surrounded by a sandy bottom. There is no need for swimming a lot, divers normally just kneel down on the bottom and observe the **mantas gracefully circling around**. The currents can be strong, that's why it is important to quickly descend to avoid missing the block. Apart from the manta rays, divers can see reef sharks, stingrays, mantis shrimps, garden eels and common tropical reef fish.

Marine life

Eagle rays
Reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Turtles
Stingrays
Reef fish
Barracudas
Jackfish
Tunas
Guitar sharks (occasionally)
Silver tip sharks (occasionally)

Seasonal:

Manta rays & Mobula rays
January - April

Marine life

Manta rays
January - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN RASDHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Rasdho Channel

Rasdho Channel, located between Kuramathi and Rasdho Island in the Maldives, is one of the most thrilling dive sites **for advanced divers**. With depths ranging from 20 to 25 meters at the pinnacles and dropping into the deep blue beyond 30 meters, it offers an **exhilarating drift dive experience**. The site is best explored when currents flow into the atoll, creating ideal conditions for spotting marine life. Divers can admire the vibrant coral colonies on the thilas while keeping an eye out for **stingrays** and **white-tip reef sharks** on the sandy bottom. The channel is also a hotspot for larger pelagic species, including **grey reef sharks, eagle rays, Napoleon wrasse** and even the occasional **silver tip reef shark**. Schools of fusiliers and anthias add to the vibrant underwater scene, attracting predators like diamond rays. This dive is a must for experienced divers seeking adventure and unforgettable encounters in the Maldives.

Bodu Gaa

Bodu Gaa, meaning "Big Stone" in Dhivehi, is a vibrant dive site featuring a **large coral block** just below the surface, teeming with colorful reef fish. As divers descend along the wall to around 25-28 meters, they encounter sandy areas where **white tip reef sharks** and **stingrays** often rest. Scattered coral blocks on the sandy bottom attract schools of Kashmir snappers, oriental sweetlips and glassfish, with stingrays sometimes hiding beneath them. The site offers a mix of macro life and larger pelagic species, making it ideal for divers of all interests. When currents are present, **eagle rays** may glide past, adding to the excitement.

Marine life

Stingrays
 White tip reef sharks
 Grey reef sharks
 Eagle rays
 Silver tip reef sharks (occasionally)
 Hammerheads (rare)
 Fusiliers
 Anthias
 Napoleon wrasse
 Dog-tooth tunas
 Mantis shrimps

Seasonal:

Manta rays
 January - April

Marine life

Stingrays
 Snappers,
 Oriental sweetlips
 Glassfish
 Stingrays
 Eagle rays
 White tip reef sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN RASDHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Caves

Located on the western edge of Rasdhoo Atoll, Caves dive site is the farthest site in the area but well worth the trip. This breathtaking wall dive features a **series of overhangs, caverns and swim-throughs**, stretching from 15 to 30 meters deep. Inside them divers often encounter resting **white tip reef sharks** or even **nurse sharks**. The caves and tunnels are also home to glassfish, moray eels and a variety of reef fish. Staying shallow provides the added thrill of spotting **eagle rays** gliding overhead along the edge of the reef. The blue water is always worth watching, as larger marine life sometimes make an appearance. With its mix of dramatic topography and fascinating marine life, Caves is a beautiful drift dive for those who love underwater exploration.

Rasdhoo Beyru

Rasdhoo Beyru is a stunning dive site on the southern side of Rasdhoo Island, featuring a **beautiful wall and three submerged thilas**, that sit just beyond the island's reef. The top of the thilas begin at around 18 to 20 meters, making this site suitable for both beginners and experienced divers, though the currents can range from moderate to strong. This site is a hotspot for marine life, with regular sightings of **Napoleon wrasse, white tip reef sharks** and **grey reef sharks** patrolling the reef. The sandy corridor between the wall and the thilas is a resting place for **stingrays**, while **eagle rays** glide gracefully above. On lucky days, **manta rays** or **devil rays** may appear, adding to the excitement of the dive. The thilas attract hunting trevally and jackfish, making for an action-packed experience. For macro lovers, Rasdhoo Beyru is also home to a variety of smaller marine creatures hiding in the coral and sandy patches. With its mix of large pelagic species, intricate coral formations and diverse marine life, this dive site offers an unforgettable underwater adventure.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Stingrays
Nurse sharks
Eagle rays
Glassfish
Moray eels
Turtles
Tunas
Lionfish

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Stingrays
Eagle rays
Trevally
Jackfish
Sweetlips
Tunas
Turtles

Seasonal:

Manta rays & Devil rays
January - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN RASDHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Veligandu East

Veligandu East is a nice dive site with a gently sloping reef and large coral blocks that provide shelter for glassfish, as well as **scorpionfish** and **stonefish** hiding in plain sight. The site is also known for its friendly **turtles**, which often swim alongside divers. White tip reef sharks and even elusive leopard sharks can sometimes be seen resting on the sandy bottom. The shallow reef top is home to anemones bustling with clownfish. Deeper along the reef, **jackfish**, **tunas** and even **napoleon wrasse** make an appearance, while **eagle rays** or **mobulas** may glide past in the blue. With its diverse marine life and scenic coral formations, Veligandu East is an excellent dive for both small and big-fish enthusiasts.

Marine life

Turtles
 White tip reef sharks
 Leopard sharks (occasionally)
 Clownfish
 Jackfish
 Tunas
 Napoleon wrasse
 Eagle rays
 Nudibranchs
 Scorpion fish
 Stonefish

Seasonal:

Mobula rays
 January - April

Hammerhead Shark Point

Hammerhead Point in Rasdhoo was once famous for **early morning dives** where lucky divers could spot elusive schools of scalloped hammerhead sharks in the deep blue. This offshore site requires an early descent into **open water**, often before sunrise, to drift at depths where hammerheads were historically seen. However, sightings have become **extremely rare** in recent years, possibly due to changing ocean conditions and human impact. Despite this, the dive still offers an exhilarating experience with the chance to encounter other pelagic species like **barracudas**, **tuna** and **reef sharks**. The feeling of drifting in the vast blue, scanning the depths for silhouettes, makes it an exciting adventure even without hammerheads. While some divers still try their luck, Rasdhoo now offers more reliable shark encounters at other sites, making it important to manage expectations before the dive.

Marine life

Hammerhead sharks (occasionally)
 Barracudas
 Tunas
 Grey reef sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN RASDHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Kuramathi Queen (Wreck Dive)

Kuramathi Queen is a 40-meter-long (131 feet) supply boat that was intentionally **sunk in 1987**, now resting at depths between 16 and 20 meters (52-66 feet) inside the Kuramathi lagoon. Over the years, it has developed into a **thriving artificial reef**, covered in coral growth and home to various marine species. Divers can explore its structure, which shelters schools of **reef fish**, **nudibranchs** and occasionally **stingrays** resting on the sandy bottom. Due to its location in calm waters, the wreck is accessible to divers of **all levels** and is particularly popular for **night diving**. At night, the wreck comes alive with hunting moray eels, crustaceans, and bioluminescent plankton. The eerie atmosphere and diverse marine life make it a fascinating site with easy access for all levels of divers.

Marine life

Nudibranchs
Stingrays
Moray eels
Shrimps
Crabs
Groupers
Parrotfish
Pufferfish
Napoleon wrasse

Reef Explorer (Wreck Dive)

Reef Explorer is a 30-meter-long (98 feet) **fishing boat** that sank in the Rasdhoo channel, now resting on its side at depths of 12 to 16 meters (39-52 feet). Unlike the Kuramathi Queen, this wreck is **more exposed to currents**, attracting a different range of marine life. The surrounding sandy bottom is home to **garden eels**, **shrimps** and larger fish species like **groupers** that patrol the area. Due to the open location, lucky divers may even spot manta rays passing by during the right season. The wreck itself is partially encrusted with coral and provides shelter for small **reef fish**, **glassfish**, **lionfish** and **moray eels**. Its moderate depth makes it accessible to divers of all levels, though currents can occasionally add a challenge. With the potential for encounters with larger marine life, Reef Explorer offers a different kind of wreck diving experience compared to the more sheltered Kuramathi Queen.

Marine life

Garden eels
Shrimps
Groupers
Glassfish
Lionfish
Moray eels

Seasonal:

Mobula rays (occasionally)
January - April

CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN THODDOO ATOLL

Thoddoo South Corner

Thoddoo South Corner, located on the island's southeastern side, offers diving for all levels with great conditions year-round. The site features a **coral ridge** sloping from 5 to 40 meters (16 to 131 feet), ending in a **cavern** and a **sandy plateau**. This plateau is a hotspot for **mobula rays, eagle rays, stingrays, mantas** and various **sharks**. The ridge is always buzzing with life, including tuna and jackfish hunting over schools of reef fish. Shallower dives between 10 to 15 meters (33 to 49 feet) also offer sightings of **turtles, white tip sharks** and vibrant reef life.

Thoddoo Rangabeelu

Rangabeelu is one of the best sites in Thoddoo for diving with **mantas**, especially from **November to March**. A mushroom-shaped coral serves as a cleaning station for giant mantas, with additional formations like the "Broken Head" and "House of Flying Daggers" adding variety to the drift. Depending on current, divers can encounter **silvertip** and **white tip sharks, eagle rays** and big **tuna**. Shallow coral gardens are teeming with **nudibranchs, clownfish, angelfish, butterflyfish** and **moray eels**. Depth ranges from 3 meters (10 feet) in the lagoon entrance to deep outer ridge drifts beyond 25 meters (82 feet).

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Mobula rays
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Manta rays
Turtles
Tuna
Jackfish
Anemonefish
Schooling tropical fish

Marine life

Green turtles
Hawksbill turtles
Silvertip sharks
White tip reef sharks
Tuna
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Nudibranchs
Clownfish
Moray eels
Angelfish
Butterflyfish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
November - March

TOP DIVE SITES IN THODDOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Thoddoo Turtle / Rockey Island Turtle Beach

This long coral wall dive site on Thoddoo's southwestern side is known for **frequent turtle encounters**. The top of the wall starts at just 3 meters (10 feet), making it **perfect for beginners** and shallow drift dives around 15 meters (49 feet). The coral here is vibrant and healthy, supporting a growing population of **green and hawksbill turtles**. It's also the site where turtles come ashore to lay eggs, adding a unique conservation angle to the dive.

Marine life

Green turtles
Hawksbill turtles

Middle Reef / Caves

Middle Reef lies between the harbor and South Corner, featuring a wall starting at 2 meters (7 feet) and dropping to about 20 meters (66 feet). It's a **relaxed drift dive** along a colorful wall teeming with fish. Deeper divers can descend to 25 meters (82 feet) to explore a sandy ledge and small caverns along another drop-off. **Reef sharks** cruise the wall and stingrays rest in the sand patches. Depending on current, you may end near South Corner, finishing your dive amid schools of reef fish.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Stingrays
Reef fish

Thoddoo Beyru

In the northwest of Thoddoo lies a **shallow coral plateau** with a gradual drop-off. The plateau, around 10 to 15 meters (33 to 49 feet) deep, is full of **coral blocks** and **pinnacles** that hide exciting marine life, making it a great spot for underwater photography. Divers frequently see **baby sharks** and **stingrays** resting under rocks, along with **octopuses** and **moray eels** tucked into the reef. Key highlights include the "**Lobster House**" with dozens of lobsters and the "**Shark Nursery**" where juvenile white tips can be found. Changing currents mean each dive here feels different, offering endless variety.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks (juveniles)
Stingrays
Octopuses
Moray eels
Lobsters
Turtles

CENTRAL ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE RASDHOO & THODDOO ATOLL

Scuba diving in Rasdhoo and Thoddoo Atoll is possible **year-round**, but the **best conditions** are typically found during the northeast monsoon from **January to April**. This dry season brings clear skies, calm seas and excellent visibility, often exceeding 30 meters, making it the ideal time for divers seeking the best underwater experience. This period is also the **peak season for manta ray sightings**, particularly between January and March when they gather at the cleaning station.

From **May to November**, the southwest monsoon brings more unpredictable weather, stronger winds and reduced visibility.

The **transitional months** of December and May can offer **mixed conditions**, with the weather shifting between monsoon patterns. While climate change has made weather patterns less predictable, both atolls remain an excellent diving destination regardless of the season.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN RASDHOO & THODDOO ATOLL

Resort Islands

Kuramathi

Kuramathi Dive Club (ex: Rasdhoo Divers)

Veligandu Island Resort & Spa
Ocean Group

Local Islands

Rasdhoo

- Aqua Adventures Rasdhoo
- Alihuras Rasdhoo Dive & Excursions
- Big Blue Divers Rasdhoo
- Ocean Dive & Watersports
- Drop Dive Maldives
- Jerry's Dive Club
- Apex Dive Rasdhoo
- Awequatic Divers Rasdhoo
- Family Divers Maldives
- Alihuras Rasdhoo Dive & Excursions Center
- Men of Water

Thoddoo

- Thoddoo Diving Center PDH Maldives
- Astro Dive Club And Excursions Thoddoo
- DIVE AETAS



CENTRAL ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN RASDHOO & THODDOO ATOLL

Rasdhoos

Beyru Kandu / North Corner
North Channel
Madi Gaa / Manta Block
Miyaru Faru
Caves
Bodu Gaa
Three Palms
Holhi Faru
Fan Reef
Rasdhoos Channel
Rasdhoos Beyru
Madivaruu Corner
Hammerhead Point
Madivaruu Channel
Madivaruu Beyru
Veligandu East
Veligandu North
Kuramathi Queen
Reef Explorer

Thoddoos

Thoddoos South Corner
Thoddoos Rangabeelu
Thoddoos Turtle / Vella Ulhey Than
Rockey Island Turtle Beach
Middle Reef / Caves
Thoddoos Beyru

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

CENTRAL ATOLLS

NORTH ARI ATOLL - ALIFU ALIFU

Mantas, Wrecks and Sharks

North Ari Atoll offers some of the best diving experiences in the Maldives. It features a **mix of thilas (pinnacles), kandus (channels) and wrecks**, attracting a diverse range of marine life. Divers can expect encounters with **manta rays, grey reef sharks, eagle rays** and **schooling barracudas**.

Iconic dive sites include **Maaya Thila, Fish Head** as prime locations for shark action and **Maalhoss Thila** for fantastic blue soft corals. Night dives in **Fesdu Lagoon** offer mesmerizing encounters with manta rays gliding just inches away.

With **strong currents** in many areas, this region is better suited for experienced divers, particularly for deep drift dives. However, sheltered reefs and house reefs around resorts provide opportunities for all skill levels to explore North Ari's underwater wonders.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL

Fish Head / Mushimas Minghili Thila

Fish Head, also known as Shark Thila, is one of the **most famous dive sites** in the Maldives, located in North Ari Atoll. This submerged pinnacle features a flat top at around 10 meters (33 feet) and steep walls dropping to 40 meters (131 feet). The site is renowned for its **resident grey reef sharks**, which patrol the area in groups, offering thrilling **close-up encounters**. **Strong currents** are common, making this an exciting dive for experienced divers, while overhangs along the reef wall provide shelter for snappers and moray eels. Schools of **fusiliers** and **bannerfish** swarm the thila, while larger predators like **tuna** hunt in the blue. On the reef top, **turtles** can often be seen grazing undisturbed by passing divers. With its dramatic topography, rich marine life and exhilarating shark encounters, Fish Head remains a must-dive location in the Maldives.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Hawksbill turtles
Bannerfish
Fusiliers
Scorpionfish
Peacock mantis shrimp
Moray eels
Tunas
Batfish
Stonefish
Silver tip sharks
Eagle rays
Guitar shark (occasionally)

Maalhoss Thila

Maalhoss Thila, also known as **Blue Caves**, is one of North Ari Atoll's **most picturesque dive sites**, renowned for its stunning **blue soft corals**. The top of the thila lies at around 6–10 metres (20–33 feet), sloping down to over 30 metres (98 feet), and features a series of **large overhangs** and swim-throughs, particularly on the south and west sides. These caves are beautifully adorned with soft corals, offering spectacular scenery for **underwater photographers**. Divers can explore schools of blue-striped snappers, fusiliers and sweetlips around the reef, with occasional sightings of tuna, mackerel, white-tip reef sharks and Napoleon wrasse. Due to its depth and the potential for **strong currents**, this site is recommended for **advanced divers only**.

Marine life

Blue-striped snappers
Fusiliers
Sweetlips
Tuna
Mackerel
White-tip reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Blue soft corals

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Maaya Thila

Maaya Thila is a small but iconic dive site in Ari Atoll, starting at 6 metres (20 feet) and dropping to over 30 metres (100 feet), known for its abundant marine life and dramatic topography of **caves, overhangs** and **coral outcrops**. While the reef and **corals have suffered damage** due to heavy diving and water temperature increase, deeper sections remain rich in life. **White tip** and **grey reef sharks, barracuda, dogtooth tuna, turtles** and **eagle rays** are common, along with **octopus, cuttlefish** and various reef fish. The site is also famous for **night dives**, where trevally and white-tip sharks can be seen hunting. With mild current, Maaya Thila suits all diver levels, but stronger currents make for the most thrilling shark encounters.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Barracuda
Batfish
Snapper
Butterflyfish
Clown triggerfish
Cuttlefish
Dogtooth tuna
Eagle rays
Fusiliers
Giant trevally
Lionfish
Moorish idol
Moray eels
Nudibranchs
Octopus
Turtles

Fesdu Wreck

The Fesdu Wreck is a 30-metre (98-foot) long **fishing trawler** that rests upright on a **sandy seabed** at 29–30 metres (95–98 feet), with the top of the wheelhouse at 24 metres (79 feet) and the propeller at 27 metres (89 feet). **Sunk in the 1980s as an artificial reef**, the wreck has become completely overgrown with hard and soft corals, sponges, tubastrea and feather stars, creating a vibrant habitat for marine life. Divers will find the wreck swarming with glassfish, anthias, nudibranchs, lionfish, moray eels, groupers and bluefin trevally, while macro enthusiasts will enjoy searching for tiny critters like shrimps and crabs. The wreck lies next to a **fantastic, colourful thila** rising to 12 metres (39 feet), which makes a perfect place to finish the dive and serves also as an **occasional manta cleaning station**. While penetration is not advised due to narrow passages and limited exits, circling the wreck and enjoying the surrounding reef delivers a rewarding and biodiverse experience.

Marine life

Anthias
Batfish
Bluefin trevally
Butterflyfish
Feather stars
Glassfish
Groupers
Lionfish
Manta rays
Moray eels
Nudibranchs
Garden eels
Mantis shrimps
White-tip reef sharks
Clownfish
Bearded Scorpionfish

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Bathala Thila

Bathala Thila is a vibrant submerged pinnacle located just east of Sandies Bathala Resort, with its top reef starting at 6–10 metres (20–33 feet) and sloping down beyond 30 metres (98 feet). The thila is richly covered in soft and hard corals, anemones and table corals, creating a perfect habitat for both large and small marine species. Divers can often encounter a large school of **jackfish, barracudas** circling the reef, **grey reef sharks** and **white tip reef sharks** plus occasionally **eagle rays, turtles, marble rays** and **napoleon wrasse**. Macro enthusiasts will enjoy spotting nudibranchs, red anemones, crustaceans, and shrimps. From **January to March**, the site becomes especially thrilling as large groups of grey reef sharks gather close to the reef, giving divers the opportunity to hook in and observe the spectacle up close.

Himandhoo Thila

Himandhoo Thila lies in the channel between Himandhoo and Moofushi Islands and is known for its **striking underwater topography**, including **canyons, swim-throughs** and **overhangs** decorated with sea fans, soft corals and black coral whips. The thila features plunging crevices from 5 to 20 metres (16 to 66 feet), with deeper reef outcrops at 35 metres (115 feet) where **white tip and grey reef sharks** often gather. Marine life includes **manta rays** (Dec - Apr), eagle rays, grey reef sharks, turtles, Napoleon wrasse, barracuda, sweetlips and nudibranchs. Inside the overhangs, divers may encounter emperor angelfish, squirrelfish and midnight snapper, while dogtooth tuna and black snapper patrol outside. While suitable for all levels in calm conditions, the site can experience **very strong currents**, washing machines and up/down currents, making it more appropriate for advanced divers during such times.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Barracudas
Blue-striped snappers
Crustaceans
Eagle rays
Fusiliers
Jackfish
Marble rays
Napoleon wrasse
Nudibranchs
Shrimps
Surgeonfish
Turtles
Clownfish

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Barracuda
Dogtooth tuna
Sweetlips
Napoleon wrasse
Turtles
Emperor angelfish
Squirrelfish
Black snapper
Midnight snapper
Nudibranchs

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Bathalaa Maaga Kanthila

Bathala Maaga Khan Thila is a legendary dive site in North Ari Atoll, stretching as a **long, narrow reef spur** and a couple of hundred metres long into the Maaga Kandhu channel. The reef slopes from 5 metres (16 feet) in the south to about 30 metres (98 feet) at its deepest, with **strong currents** attracting big schools of **grey reef sharks, tuna and mackerels**. Depending on current direction, divers explore either the east or west side, with the eastern side facing the open ocean and offering better visibility and chances to see barracuda, Napoleon wrasse, turtles and from time to time manta or devil rays. Small caves and coral-covered reef tops add interest, with vibrant schools of fusiliers, soldierfish and occasional bumphead parrotfish. This site is ideal for experienced divers and delivers thrilling drift diving with a variety of pelagics and reef life.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
 White-tip reef sharks
 Tuna
 Mackerels
 Eagle rays
 Napoleon wrasse
 Barracudas
 Turtles
 Bumphead parrotfish (occasionally)
 Manta rays (occasionally)
 Devil rays (occasionally)
 Fusiliers
 Soldierfish

Orimas Thila

This 100-metre-long (328-foot) reef stands out for its **exceptional topography** and **diverse marine life**. On the northern side, a unique crack at 6 metres (20 feet) is filled with small marine creatures, and a meandering cave between 15 to 18 metres (49 to 59 feet) is lined with weed-like soft corals, sea fans and black coral bushes. The eastern and southeastern sections feature coral rocks, crevices and canyons, plus a **large patch of sea anemones** at 15 metres (49 feet) and another cave at 25 metres (82 feet) with nudibranchs and more black coral. The southern slope is more gradual, leading to a sandy bottom at 30 metres (98 feet), where rays often rest, and schools of blue triggerfish, blue-striped snapper and tuna gather. The reef is covered in fire coral, staghorn and table corals and sightings of octopus, shrimps, clownfish, and from time to time Napoleon wrasse, reef sharks and eagle rays make this one of the **top reef dives** in the Maldives.

Marine life

Nudibranchs
 Octopus
 Shrimps
 Clownfish
 Napoleon wrasse
 Eagle rays
 Rays
 Tunas
 Mackerel
 Reef sharks
 Blue triggerfish
 Blue-striped snapper

TOP DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Gangehi

Gangehi Pass is one of Ari Atoll's **longest channels**, stretching 2.5 kilometres (1.5 miles), and offers thrilling drift dives on both sides with strong currents. The northern side is known for **large coral boulders** at around 20 metres (66 feet), a 200-metre (656-foot) cave teeming with **stingrays** and **groupers** and multiple **overhangs** where macro life like mantis shrimp hides. The sandy bottom hosts vibrant coral formations, sea fans and frequent sightings of white tip reef sharks and leopard sharks. Divers drifting through this wide pass may also encounter **turtles, triggerfish, tuna and manta rays**. From June to August, the site is especially exciting, with huge schools of **humphead wrasse** and regular appearances by **Napoleon wrasse** in the blue.

Ukulhas Thila

Ukulhas Thila is a long, narrow pinnacle located on the northeastern edge of Ari Atoll, stretching around 300 metres (984 feet) and rising from a 30-metre (98-foot) seabed. Its flat top sits at around 15 metres (49 feet), with gentle slopes descending to 25–30 metres (82–98 feet), and it's known for **strong currents** and **open-ocean exposure**. Between December and April, **manta rays** visit its three cleaning stations at 13 metres (43 feet), hovering in the current while cleaner fish remove parasites. This thila also attracts large schools of **fusiliers, glassfish** and **blue-striped snapper**, as well as **moray eels, groupers, turtles, tuna, eagle rays** and **reef sharks**. Due to the site's depth and current exposure, divers often enter up-current and drift onto the reef for protection and access to the marine life action.

Marine life

Groupers
Stingrays
Napoleon wrasse
Leopard sharks
White-tip reef sharks
Tunas
Eagle rays
Manta rays (occasionally)
Turtles
Mantis shrimp
Triggerfish

Seasonal:

Humphead wrasse
June - August

Marine life

Fusiliers
Glassfish
Grouper
Tuna
Moray eels
Turtles
Blue-striped snapper
Eagle rays
White-tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - April

CENTRAL ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE NORTH ARI ATOLL

North Ari Atoll offers **diving year-round** thanks to its tropical climate and warm waters, ranging from 26°C to 30°C (79°F to 86°F).

The best time to dive is during the northeast monsoon season from **December to April**, when dry weather, calm seas and visibility between 20 and 40 metres (66 to 131 feet) make for ideal conditions. This period also brings frequent encounters with **more manta rays, reef sharks** and excellent opportunities for drift diving due to stronger currents.

The southwest monsoon from **May to November** brings occasional rain, storms and slightly rougher surface conditions, but diving remains possible. Transitional periods between monsoons tend to be less favourable for diving due to changing currents and visibility.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN NORTH ARI ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Gangehi Island Resort](#)
Gangehi Diving Center

[Nika Island Resort & Spa](#)
Nika Diving Center

[ananea Madivaru Maldives](#)
Azure Dive and Water Sports Center by Silver Sands

[Maayafushi Nakai Maldiva Resort](#)
Nakai Maayafushi Diving Center

[Sandies Bathala Resort](#)
Werner Lau Bathala

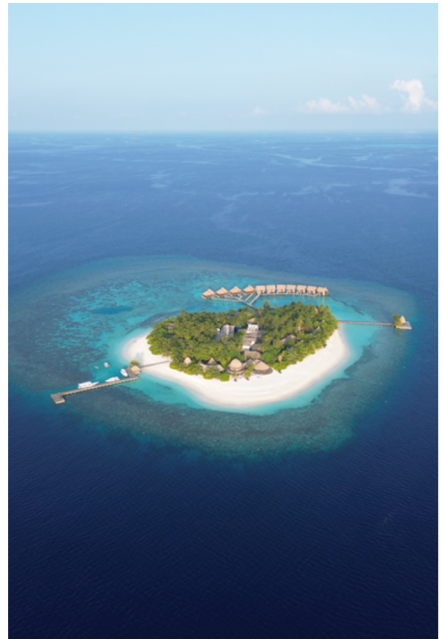
[Constance Halaveli Maldives](#)
TGI Maldives Halaveli Diving by TGI Diving

[Ellaidhoo Maldives by Cinnamon](#)
Dive & Sail Alfons Straub @ Ellaidhoo

[Kandolhu Maldives](#)
Noovilu Sports

[W Maldives](#)
Down Under & Wave by Silver Sands

[Safari Island Maldives](#)
Joy Dive Safari



ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN NORTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Local IslandsMathiveri

- Dive Club Buoyancy

Ukulhas

- Dive Ukulhas
- Murakabay Maldives
- Reef Rangers Ukulhas
- Scuba Journey
- Atoll Dives
- Sea Crest Scuba

Bodufolhudhoo

- Lagoon Dive Club
- Sirius Diving Paradise
- Bodu Manta Diving Center
- Miyaru Divers Bodufolhudhoo Maldives

Feridhoo

- Noohiri Diving & Water Sport Center
- AriUthuru Dive Center

Himmandhoo

- Scuba Himandhoo
- Himandhoo Divers
- Manta Dive Club



CENTRAL ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL

East / Halaveli area

Coral Garden
 Beyru Thila
 Madivaru Tila
 Beyru Madivaru
 Madivaru Manta Point
 Table Dance
 August 's Rock
 Kari Beyru Thila
 Dhigu Thila
 The Arch
 Kanduu Thila
 Mary Thila / Tip Top Thila
 Bathala Thila
 Bathala Housereef
 Bathala Maagaa Kanthila
 Bathala Maagaa Faru
 Halaveli Wreck
 Halaveli Lagoon
 Halaveli Thila
 Kuda Thila
 Medu Thila
 Bodu Thila
 Kuda Giri
 Fanu Giri
 Bodu Giri
 Medhu Faru
 Medhu Corner
 Medhu Thila
 Ellaidhoo Housereef
 Ellaidhoo Thila
 Ellaidhoo Giri

Maaga Lagoon
 Maaga Corner
 Orimas Thila
 Orimas Faru North
 Orimas Wall South
 Safari Medu Giri
 Safari West
 Kanduu Faru
 Konogau Faru
 Fushi Faru

Center

Kandolhudhoo Thila
 Kandolhu Housereef
 Fish Head / Mushimas Minghili Thila
 Hohola Thila
 Kuda Faru Thila
 Ians Thila
 Fesdu Wreck
 W Housereef
 Maaya Thila
 Bodu Falhu

DIVE SITES IN NORTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

West / Feridhoo area

Warren Thila
 Himendhoo Thila / Himandhoo Thila
 Himendhoo Dhekunu Kandu
 Donkalo Thila
 Fathima Thila
 Ran Faru
 Donkalho Beyru Thila
 Maalhoss Thila
 Maalhoss Housereef
 Donkalhoo Etere Thila
 Berucolo Thila
 Berucolo Falhu
 Dhiggaa Faru

Casa Mia Housereef
 Reethi Thila
 Paradise Rock
 Nika Point
 Gangehi Pass
 Dhinolhu Gaadhu Thila
 Gangehi Kandu
 Futtaru Faru
 Gangehi North Kandu
 Gangehi Lagoon
 Manta Point North Ari
 Maavaru
 Ukulhas Thila
 Gangandhu Faru
 Galla Giri South
 Kuda Faru Thila
 Fushi Faru
 Fushi Faru Inside
 Hudhu Thila
 Gemburuga West
 Gemburuga East
 Bodu Gaafaru
 Monika Thila
 Velidhu Housereef
 Velidhu Thila
 Velidhu Digha

North area

Lucky Rock
 Havza Thila / Hafsa Thila
 Vihammaafaru Caves
 Tin Thila
 Kuda Kandu
 Dinnoluga Thila
 Eterecolhu
 Blue Caves
 Donagali Thila
 Mathiverree Dhekunu Kandu
 Kuda Thila (West)
 Bodu Thila (West)
 Dinolhu Kandu
 Miyaruga Thila
 Mattiburi
 Maa Thila
 Nika Housereef
 Kuda Giri

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

CENTRAL ATOLLS

SOUTH ARI ATOLL - ALIFU DHAAL

Whale Shark Capital of the Maldives

South Ari Atoll, or Alifu Dhaal, lies southwest of Malé and is one of the Maldives' **top diving destinations** thanks to its ease of access, rich marine biodiversity and nearly 50 islands – many of them home to dive resorts.

It's world-renowned for near year-round encounters with **whale sharks and manta rays**, particularly within the South Ari Marine Protected Area.

The atoll features dramatic underwater topography like **thilas, channels, overhangs** and **soft coral gardens**, suitable for both beginners and advanced divers. Highlights include the **Machchafushi Wreck**, **manta cleaning stations** like **Rangali Madivaru** and Thilas like **Broken Rock** and **Kudarah**.

With shallower and **easier dive sites** compared to its northern counterpart, South Ari Atoll is popular for liveboards on their central atoll itineraries.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL

Maamigili - South Ari Maldives Protected Area

The **South Ari Maldives Protected Area** (SAMPA), centered around **Maamigili Island**, is one of the best places in the world to encounter **whale sharks year-round**. Maamigili Beru, just south of the island, features a shallow reef starting at 4–12 metres (13–39 feet) and sloping down to 35 metres (115 feet), where divers can see mobulas, eagle rays, lionfish, moray eels, nudibranchs - and if lucky, a whale shark. Whale shark sightings are more common **west of Maamigili between December and April** and shift **eastward between May and November**, based on plankton flow. Several dive sites in the area, like **Whale Shark Point** and **Dhidhdhoo Beyru**, also offer exciting chances to spot these giants. Be aware that the area can get **very crowded**, as lots of snorkeling and dive boats look out for the whale shark.

Marine life

Whale sharks
Mobula rays
Eagle rays
Moray eels
Lionfish
Nudibranch
Jackfish
Tuna
Fusilier
Angelfish
Triggerfish

Dhigurah Thila

Dhigurah Thila is the largest thila in the Dhigurashu Channel, stretching 500 metres (1,640 feet) in length and offering its best diving on the northeast side. The reef top starts at 10 metres (33 feet) and steps down to 30 metres (100 feet), with **multiple overhangs** and **caves** lined with black coral, sea whips and feather stars. Inside these formations, you'll encounter cardinalfish, shrimps and juvenile angelfish, while outside, large schools of fusiliers swirl over the reef. The eastern end features a collapsed cave turned rocky outcrop that attracts grey reef sharks, jacks, tuna and unicornfish. With its **impressive coral, pelagic sightings** and **dramatic underwater topography**, Dhigurah Thila offers one of South Ari's most complete and reliable dive experiences.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Jackfish
Tunas
Emperor angelfish
Fusiliers
Big-nose unicornfish
Scribbled filefish
Shrimps
Cardinalfish
Squirrelfish
Feather star
Moray eels

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Kudurah Thila

Kudurah Thila is a stunning **marine protected reef** and one of the **most famous dive sites** in South Ari Atoll. Rising from around 30 metres (98 feet) to a reef top at 14 metres (46 feet), this 80-metre (262-foot) long thila is packed with **caves, canyons** and **coral-covered outcrops**. On the north side, you'll find a small canyon and massive seafans; on the east, a wide cave lined with soft coral, black coral and gorgonians. The thila is alive with marine biodiversity - tens of thousands of **blue-striped snapper**, batfish, moray eels, mantis shrimp and occasionally reef sharks, napoleons, eagle rays, tunas, barracudas or rainbow runner. With strong currents common, it's best suited to intermediate and advanced divers - but it's a **bucket-list-worthy dive** for anyone experienced enough to handle it.

Marine life

Blue-striped snapper
Humpback snapper
Grey reef shark
White tip reef shark
Eagle rays
Napoleon wrasse
Mantis shrimps
Moray eels
Emperor angelfish
Sweetlips
Pufferfish
Grouper
Fusiliers
Glassfish
Tunas
Rainbow runner
Great barracuda
Jackfish
Shrimps
Reeffish

Mahibadhoo Manta Point

Mahibadhoo Manta Point, also known as Mahibadhoo Rock or Thila, is a well-known **manta ray cleaning station** located in a channel on the eastern side of South Ari Atoll. The reef features three smaller coral blocks and one larger L-shaped formation at depths between 8 and 19 metres (26-62 feet), making it accessible to divers of various levels. Between May and November, especially during outgoing currents, the site attracts large numbers of **reef manta rays** feeding on plankton and stopping to be cleaned by wrasses. Other **marine life** includes white tip reef sharks, sweetlips, yellow and red snappers and small reef creatures. Though currents may be strong and visibility reduced at times, the chance to witness graceful manta rays up close makes this dive site a must.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Sweetlips
Yellow snapper
Red snapper
Cleaner wrasse

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Machchafushi Wreck / Kudhima Wreck

A highlight of South Ari's diving is also the Machchafushi Wreck, or Kudhima Wreck, is a 50-metre (164-foot) **Japanese cargo vessel** deliberately sunk in 1998 near Machchafushi Island to create an artificial reef. Resting upright at 15 to 32 metres (49 to 105 feet), the wreck is now covered in corals, algae, sponges and sea squirts, making it a rich site for marine life. Divers can explore the wheelhouse, crane and various entry points around the hull. It's a **hotspot for macro photographers** thanks to sightings of nudibranchs, shrimp, frogfish and ghost pipefish. Larger species like batfish, lionfish and even nurse sharks also make regular appearances.

Marine life

Batfish
Frogfish
Ghost pipefish
Moray eels
Nudibranchs
Shrimps
Crabs
Lionfish
Boxfish
Pufferfish
Stonefish
Nurse sharks
Sponges

Broken Rock

Broken Rock is a striking dive site in South Ari Atoll, named for the **deep canyon that splits its thila** in two. The site reaches from 12 to 30 metres (40 to 100 feet) in depth and is best known for its **beautiful topography and strong currents**. The 50-metre (164-foot) canyon allows divers to swim through a dramatic passage framed by sea fans, sponges and colorful soft corals. The reef is teeming with life, from clouds of anthias and moray eels in the crevices to larger pelagics like Napoleon wrasse, jacks and whitetip reef sharks. Due to the currents and the canyon's narrow walls, this site is best **for experienced divers**.

Marine life

Triggerfish
Pufferfish
Moray eels
Napoleon wrasse
White-tip reef sharks
Oriental sweetlips
Jacks
Barracuda
Turtles
Scorpionfish
Anthias
Tallfin batfish
Fusilier

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

7th Heaven

7th Heaven is one of the most **spectacular soft coral gardens** in the Maldives, known for its immense size and dazzling rainbow-colored corals. The reef starts at about 10 metres (33 feet) and slopes gently beyond 30 metres (100 feet), featuring **overhangs and caverns** lined with blue, pink, orange, yellow and green soft corals. It's a haven for marine life, with regular sightings of **turtles, eagle rays, Napoleon wrasse** and a rich variety of reef fish. White tip reef sharks rest in the caves and rays may be seen on the sandy floor. This dive site is a true paradise **for coral lovers and underwater photographers.**

Vilamendhoo Thila

Vilamendhoo Thila is a **narrow pinnacle** located just off the eastern side of Vilamendhoo Island, ideal for advanced divers due to frequent currents. Its top reef starts around 6–10 metres (20–33 feet) and slopes past 30 metres (100 feet), with **caves and overhangs** on the west side. Large sea fans, hard and soft corals and schools of reef fish decorate the thila's vibrant reefscape. **Sharks and eagle rays** are seen year-round, stingrays sometimes rest on the sandy bottom and **mantas** often pass by during the right season. The thila's excellent coral cover and strong current exposure make it a dynamic dive with fantastic reef structure and marine life density.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Torpedo rays
Stingrays
Napoleon wrasse
Tunas
Turtles
Bannerfish
Fusilier
Snapper
Groupers

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Napoleon wrasse
Pompano
Sea turtles
Batfish
Fusilier
Snapper
Sweetlips
Jackfish
Moray eels

Seasonal:

Manta rays (occasionally)
June to November

TOP DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Rangali Madivaru - Manta Point

Rangali Madivaru, also known as Manta Point, is one of the most iconic **manta ray cleaning stations** in South Ari atoll, best visited during the northeast monsoon from **December to April**. The site lies within Rangali Kandu, where outgoing currents carry plankton-rich waters that attract groups of reef manta rays to a shallow plateau at around 8–10 metres (26–33 feet). The reef features a vertical wall on the north side and a gentler slope to the south, with plenty of crevices, overhangs and macro life. Divers can also spot **white tip reef sharks, turtles, napoleon wrasse** and schooling fish along the reef. As a fantastic alternative on the western side more north of the atoll, **Moofushi Manta Point** offers similar manta activity at a cleaning station, with additional sightings of **eagle rays, mobula rays, Napoleon wrasse** and **reef sharks**.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
 Napoleon wrasse
 Turtles
 Cleaner wrasse
 Eagle rays
 Mobula rays
 Snapper
 Sweetlips
 Squirrelfish
 Barracuda
 Jacks
 Shrimps
 Nudibranch

Seasonal:

Manta rays
 December - April

Five rocks / Reethi Thila

Five Rocks, also known as Reethi Thila - meaning **"beautiful pinnacle"** in Dhivehi - is a circular formation of **five coral-covered pinnacles** separated by canyons and crevices, located in the Dhigurahshu Kandu of South Ari. The reef top begins at around 12 metres (39 feet) and the sandy bottom is at approximately 30 metres (98 feet), with channels wide enough to swim through comfortably. Divers can admire vibrant gorgonian fans, tubastrea corals, sponges and encrusting algae that create a colourful and textured reefscape. Marine life includes **nudibranchs, scorpionfish, sweetlips, fusiliers, jacks, barracuda** and occasional visits from **grey** and **white tip reef sharks**. This is a top spot for photographers thanks to the dramatic lighting and landscapes created by the caverns and overhangs.

Marine life

Clownfish
 Scorpionfish
 Nudibranch
 Fusiliers
 Oriental sweetlips
 Jackfish
 Barracuda
 White tip reef sharks
 Grey reef sharks

CENTRAL ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE SOUTH ARI ATOLL

South Ari Atoll offers **year-round diving** with consistent water temperatures of 26–29°C (79–84°F), but the best weather and sea conditions are typically from **January to April** during the dry northeast monsoon. This season brings sunny skies, calm seas and great visibility, particularly on the eastern side, although stronger currents may occur.

Whale sharks can be seen all year, with higher chances from December to March, while **manta rays** shift between the western sites like **Rangali and Moofushi** from **December to April** and eastern sites like **Mahibadhoo** from **June to November**.

During the **southwest monsoon** (May to November), the weather can be more variable with possible rain and wind. While visibility may drop during plankton blooms, these same conditions attract mantas and whale sharks, making for unforgettable encounters.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Diamonds Athuruga Maldives](#)
IDive Athuruga

[Constance Moofushi Maldives](#)
Blue Tribe Water Sports And Diving Centre

[Diamonds Thudufushi Maldives Resort & SPA](#)
IDive Thudufushi

[Fushi Dhigga](#)
Resort under construction

[Angaga Island Resort & Spa](#)
Sub Aqua Dive Center Angaga

[Drift Thelu Veliga Retreat](#)
Dive Corp

[Lily Beach Resort & Spa](#)
Lily Beach Prodivers

[Vilamendhoo Island Resort & Spa](#)
Euro-Divers Vilamendhoo

[OUTRIGGER Maldives Maafushivaru](#)
Coral by Silver Sands

[Machchafushi Island Resort & Spa Maldives](#)

Best Dives Centara Grand by Best Dives Maldives

[Mirihi Island Resort](#)
Ocean-Pro Mirihi



ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

Conrad Maldives Rangali Island

Ocean Dive Center At Rangali by Ocean Group

Radisson Blu Resort, Maldives

Ocean Dive Center At Huruelhi by Ocean Group

Nova Maldives

Aquaholics-Nova

NH Maldives Kuda Rah Resort

Dive & Sail Alfons Straub @ Kuda Rah

LUX South Ari Atoll

Euro-Divers LUX* South Ari Atoll

Barceló Whale Lagoon Maldives

Koamas By Jalboot @ Bodufinolhu

Villa Park Sun Island Resort

DiveOceanus Villa Park Sun Island

Villa Haven Maldives

DiveOceanus Holiday Island Resort Spa

Local IslandsHangnaameedhoo

- Scuba Therapy Maldived

Omadhoo

- Scuba Inn
- Sea Soul Maldives
- Drift Divers Maldives
- Ari Atoll Divers

Mahibadhoo

- Zala Divers @ Mahibadhoo Scuba Dive Inn
- Goby Dive Center @ Goby Lodge

Mandhoo

- Mandhoo Dive
- Dive Club Fiyavalhu @ Fiyavalhu Resort Maldives

Dhangethi

- Scuba Divine Maldives
- Endheri Dive Center
- Fathu Dives
- South Ari Dive Center
- Saltus Dive Center
- Island Scuba

Dhigurah

- Oceanholc Dive Center
- Dhigurah Divers
- Island Divers
- Go Divers Maldives
- Maldives Dhigu Divers
- BB Dive @ Boutique Beach
- Athiri Beach

Fenfushi

- Maldives Diving Loabi

Dhidhdhoo

- Dive And Sleep

Maamigili

- Shamar Guesthouse & Dive
- Blue Reef Dive Centre
- Dravida Hotels Diving & Spa

CENTRAL ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL

West area

Emas Thila
 Moofushi Faru
 Moofushi Kandu
 Moofushi Manta Point
 Moofushi Beru
 Kalu Giri
 Athuruga Thila
 Nice Thila
 Paradise Reef
 Atabu Thila
 Kuda Thila
 Ely Thila
 Mas Thila
 Emboodhoo Thila
 Emboodhoo
 Dega Thila
 Ruli Thila
 Yaani Thila
 Kuda Miaru
 Thundufushi Thila
 Panettone West
 Maamigili Corner
 Kalhuhadhihuraa Faru
 Tamala Thila
 Bulhaalohi Thila
 Bulhaa Lhohi Corner
 Bulhaalohi Reef
 Aiyabe Thila
 Rehi Thila
 Rehi Reef
 Bulhaa Lhohi Caves

Ali Thila
 Bodu Miyaru Gaa Thila
 Mama Giri
 Shameem Thila
 Rahi Thila
 Radhdhigaa Thila
 Miaru Gala Thila
 Coconut Thila
 Pineapple Thila
 Kuda Kandu Thila
 Angaga Thila
 Dhekunu Thila
 Ralua Thila
 Coral Garden
 Mihiri Thila
 Mihiri Drop Off
 Huruelhi Kandu
 Hukurundu Housereef
 Rangali South
 Faruhuruvalhibeyru
 Hukuruelhi Faru
 Mirihi Madi-Ge Wreck
 Bodu Thila
 Medhu Thila
 Hurasdhoo Reef
 Barabaru Thila
 Mandu Corner
 Mandhoo Thila
 Dhigu Thila
 Kobba Thila
 Rangali North
 Rangali Kang
 Rangali Madivaru

DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

West area - continued

Rangali Outside
 Rangali Corner
 Madivaru - Manta Point

South area

Kandu Reef
 Nalaguraidhoo Reef
 Sun Island Beyru
 Bodufinolhu Thila
 Holiday Outside
 Dhifushi Beyru
 Maamigili Kandu
 Maamigili Faru
 Maamigili Beyru - Whale Shark National
 Park
 Kudadhoo Etheru Faru
 Ariyadhoo Caves
 Ariyadhoo
 Kudadhoo Beyru
 Dhidhdhoo Beyru Faru
 Whaleshark Point
 Ari Beach Outside

East area

Dhigurah Beru
 Dhigurah Lagoon
 Fhun Thila
 Dhigurah Arches
 Five Rocks / Reethi Thila
 Huddu Thila
 Dhigurah Thila
 Visara Dune Thila
 Thinfushi Beru Thila
 Batfish Reef

Dhigurah Etere Thila
 Hane Thila
 Jahed Thila
 Meddu Thila
 Kandu Thila
 Dhigu Thila
 Broken Rock
 Thinfushi Ethere Thila
 Aah Thila
 Kuda Rah Thila
 Vakarufalhi Beru Thila
 Vakarufalhi Thila
 Seventh Heaven
 Beru Gato Thila
 Uthuru Thila
 Lucky Hell
 Dhangethi South
 Dhangethi Corner
 Hoodhoo Thila
 Reethi Thila
 Ibe Thila
 Kashi Thila
 Al Karim Wreck
 Huda Thila
 Ranveli Thila
 Banana Reef
 Ranveli Bodu Thila
 Ranveli Housereef
 Ranveli Kuda Thila
 Kuda Faru
 Gaviamas Thila
 Kukulhu Thila
 Endiri Thila
 Villingili Corner
 Fanghamas Thila
 Bodu Giri
 Theluveligaa South
 Lucky Rock
 Miyaru Thila

DIVE SITES IN SOUTH ARI ATOLL CONTINUED

East area - continued

Noo Giri
 Kuda Mafushi Varu Giri
 Kudhima
 Machchafushi Wreck
 Dhumbebe Giri
 Mv Kudhu Maa
 Orimas Faru
 Kuda Thila
 Viligilivaru Thila
 Vilamendhoo Caves
 Vilamendhoo Thila
 Vilamendhoo Express
 Bapolhimas Thila
 Stingray Corner
 Hammerhead Reef
 Lily Beach Thila
 Hiti Thila
 Lily Beach Channel
 Nurse Shark Point
 Jackfish Channel
 Huravali Thila North
 Madi Faru
 Thiki Thila
 Bodu Mahi Thila
 Mahibadhoo Thila
 Huravali Thila South
 Camel Rock
 Hithi Faru
 Coral Hills
 Velagali Thila
 Bohwa Thila
 Namnetti Thila
 Theluveligaa South



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

CENTRAL ATOLLS

VAAVU ATOLL - FELIDHU

Action-Packed Channel Diving & Sharks

Vaavu Atoll, also known as Felidhu, is the **easternmost atoll** in the Maldives and features the country's longest unbroken reef, stretching 55 km. This boot-shaped atoll is sparsely populated, with just five inhabited islands and is renowned for its **thrilling channel dives** that attract sharks, rays, and schools of pelagic fish.

Dive highlights include **Fotteyo Kandu**, with its soft coral-covered drop-offs and overhangs, and **Miyaru Kandu** ("Shark Channel"), home to large schools of grey reef and whitetip sharks, tuna and Napoleon wrasse.

Vaavu also boasts one of the Maldives' most exciting night dives at **Alimatha Jetty**, where blacktip and nurse sharks gather in large numbers.

The atoll's remote location, advanced-level channels, and pristine reef systems make it a paradise for adventurous divers.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN VAAVU ATOLL

Miyaru Kandu

Miyaru Kandu, meaning “**Shark Channel**” in Dhivehi, is one of Vaavu Atoll’s **most iconic shark dives** and a favorite among local divers. Known for massive schools of grey reef sharks - sometimes more than 50 individuals - this thrilling drift dive is **best suited for experienced divers** who are comfortable with strong currents. Divers begin in the blue, then hook in near the reef wall to witness schools of **sharks, silver tips, black tips, eagle rays, tuna** and **Napoleon wrasse**. The dive features a cave at 33 m (108 ft) at the north corner, with more overhangs and soft coral-covered swim-throughs along the outside reef. Inside the channel, you'll encounter white tip and black tip reef sharks, moray eels, hawksbill turtles and colorful reef fish.

Alimatha jetty

Alimatha Jetty is a famous **night dive site** in northern Vaavu Atoll, known for its mesmerizing congregation of **nurse sharks, blacktip reef sharks, stingrays** and **marble rays**. Divers descend just before sunset and slowly make their way from the reef to the jetty area, where the main action unfolds. This shallow dive offers surreal views of sharks and rays gliding inches from the sand. While incredibly popular, it requires **careful behaviour** to avoid disturbing or accidentally harming the animals. Occasionally, lucky divers also spot eagle rays and manta rays passing through the channel's blue water.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Black tip reef sharks
Silvertip sharks
Tuna
Napoleon wrasse
Trevally
Reef fish
Moray eels
Turtles
Eagle rays

Marine life

Nurse sharks
Black tip reef sharks
Whiptail rays
Stingrays
Marble rays
Eagle rays (occasionally)

TOP DIVE SITES IN VAAVU ATOLL CONTINUED

Fotteyo Kandu

Fotteyo Kandu - often called the best dive site in the Maldives, is a **legendary channel dive** on the easternmost point of the Maldives, famous for its dramatic **swim-throughs, colorful coral-covered caves**, and **pelagic encounters**. The outer reef starts at about 30 meters (98 ft) with large overhangs, cherry-blossom-like soft corals and arches, making it a haven for photographers and marine biologists alike. **Grey reef sharks, whitetip reef sharks, eagle rays** and schools of tuna, trevally and barracuda cruise through the current-rich channel. Mantas, mobulas and even hammerhead sharks are occasionally seen as well. Inside the channel, divers drift past hard coral beds, sand patches and triggerfish territory, with a chance to spot turtles, stingrays and dolphins.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
 Black tip reef sharks
 Silvertip sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Stingrays
 Turtles
 Grouper
 Tuna
 Trevally
 Barracuda
 Triggerfish
 Sweetlips
 Blue surgeonfish
 Hammerhead sharks (occasionally)
 Manta rays (occasionally)
 Eagle rays
 Mobula rays (occasionally)
 Dolphins (occasionally)

Medhu Kandu

Medhu Kandu, located between Finolhu and Bolikey Falhu, features a deep northern entrance with sandy patches and caves starting at 30–35 m (98–115 ft), home to **white tip reef sharks** and **stingrays**. The southern side is a favorite for underwater photographers, offering a sloping outer reef from 30 m (98 ft) with a sand plateau at frequented by **eagle rays, white tips** and **stingrays**. Inside the channel, the reef gently slopes between 5 and 20 m (16–66 ft), and the shallow reef at 8 m (26 ft) features sandy patches rich in reef fish. Numerous crevices on the interior walls house **macro critters** like lobsters and shrimps. With areas protected from current and a diversity of marine life, Medhu Kandu offers both dramatic scenery and small subjects for every diver.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
 Stingrays
 Eagle rays
 sharks
 Reef fish
 Lobsters
 Shrimps

TOP DIVE SITES IN VAAVU ATOLL CONTINUED

Golden Wall / Kashaavaru Kandhu

Golden Wall, located in Kasavaru Kandhu, the southern east region of Vaavu Atoll, is a **stunning channel dive** renowned for its exceptional soft coral coverage between 10 and 30 metres (33–98 feet). Divers begin on the outer reef wall, often hooking in to observe **grey reef sharks, silvertips, blacktips** and **whitetip reef sharks** cruising past in the current. As the dive progresses into the channel, the scenery transforms into a **vibrant coral garden** filled with pink, orange, green, and golden soft corals covering ledges, caves, and boulders. The reef is also home to honeycomb morays, nudibranchs, oriental sweetlips, batfish, anthias and dense schools of squirrelfish. With colourful coral, rich fish life and dramatic underwater topography, Golden Wall is a favourite among underwater photographers.

Vattaru Kandhu

Vattaru Kandhu is the **only channel dive** in the small, round **atoll of Vattaru**, south of Rakeedhoo, and is famous for its dramatic drop-offs, lush caves, and rich marine life. The dive begins near the uninhabited island of Vattarurah, where the reef drops steeply to 45 m (148 ft) and offers deep sandy bottoms with seafans and occasional leopard sharks. **Caves** and **overhangs** are scattered from 10 m (33 ft) to 32 m (105 ft), some filled with soft corals, black coral trees and vibrant reef life. Divers can expect to see **tuna, barracuda, trevally, fusilier schools, white tip** and **grey reef sharks, turtles** and even **manta rays**. The eastern island corner is perfect for night dives during ingoing currents, where coral rocks host sleeping napoleon wrasse and parrotfish.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Silver tip sharks
White tip reef sharks
Blacktip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Tuna
Oriental sweetlips
Batfish
Lionfish
Squirrelfish
Moray eels
Nudibranchs
Surgeonfish
Anthias
Fusiliers
Bannerfish
Emperor angelfish
Groupers

Marine life

Leopard sharks
Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Tuna
Trevally
Barracuda
Fusilier schools
Manta rays
Turtles
Napoleon wrasse
Parrotfish

TOP DIVE SITES IN VAAVU ATOLL CONTINUED

Devana Kandu

Devana Kandu, a **protected marine area**, is one of Vaavu Atoll's **top drift dives**, featuring two passages - Miyaru Kandu (south) and Bodu Miyaru Kandu (north) - split by a central reef. With an ingoing current, divers are treated to an exhilarating ride through a 1-km (0.6-mi) channel filled with **pelagic fish, coral-covered rock formations** and **dramatic drop-offs** from 30 m (98 ft) and beyond. Grey reef sharks, eagle rays and schooling pelagics like snappers and jacks are common, especially during the northeast monsoon. The south side features coral-covered boulders colonized by blue-face angelfish, saddled pufferfish and lizardfish, while the north side has a raised narrow reef ideal for spotting marine life. Divers need excellent buoyancy control to enjoy this stunning coral drift safely.

Rakeedhoo Kandu

Rakeedhoo Kandu is a **deep, thrilling channel dive** on the eastern side of Rakeedhoo Island. The Rakeedhoo side features spectacular **terraced drop-offs** starting at 20 m (66 ft), descending in steps to 45 m (148 ft), each layered with coral-covered overhangs, seafans and black coral trees. The site is known for **large schools of big-eye trevally, sharks, napoleons, tuna** and **barracuda**, especially during strong currents. Early morning dives might reward you with rare sightings of hammerhead sharks cruising through the deeper blue. The northwest side is particularly rich with caves and soft coral formations, making this site a favorite among experienced divers.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Jackfish
Snappers
Angelfish
Pufferfish
Variegated lizardfish
Fusiliers
Tuna
Barracuda

Marine life

Big-eye trevally
Grey reef sharks
Hammerhead sharks (rare, early mornings)
Barracuda
Tuna
Napoleon wrasse
Sweetlips
Turtles
Seafans
Soft corals
Black coral trees

TOP DIVE SITES IN VAAVU ATOLL CONTINUED

Hulhidhoo Kanduu

Hulhidhoo Kanduu is located between the deserted islands of Aarah and Hulhidhoo and offers excellent diving on the **outer reef**, which is shaped like a terraced rice field. The outer wall features **small overhangs** between 20 and 35 m (66–115 ft), with deeper caves down to 55 m (180 ft). A highlight is the reef corner at 25 m (82 ft), marked by a cave and a **sand plateau** that often hosts **white tip reef sharks** and **stingrays**. This spot is also ideal for seeing pelagics like barracuda, trevally and tuna. Inside the channel, a series of caves between 18 m (59 ft) and shallower depths offer habitat for turtles, snappers, moray eels and reef fish.

Vaavu Shipwreck

Lying at a dramatic 140-degree angle in the shallow Kuda Lagoon near Keyodhoo, this **mysterious shipwreck** - believed to be an Indonesian vessel lost in a 2015 storm - now serves as a **vibrant marine habitat**. The wreck is partially above the surface, with its mast emerging from the turquoise waters, making it also perfect for snorkelers and freedivers. The captain's cabin, deck and the famous bicycle fixed to the hull are adorned with healthy corals, sea anemones and swarming reef fish. Snorkelers can admire the vivid reef life from above, while divers and experienced freedivers can explore inside the structure and capture incredible underwater photos. This wreck tells a story not just of loss but of nature's resilience and transformation.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Stingrays
Barracuda
Trevally
Tuna
Moray eels
Turtles
Snapper
Napoleon wrasse
Reef fish

Marine life

Table corals
Clownfish
Reef fish
Moray eels
Soft corals

CENTRAL ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE VAAVU ATOLL

The best time to scuba dive in Vaavu Atoll is during the **northeast monsoon season**, from **December / January to April**, when currents flow from the ocean into the eastern channels. This inflow brings crystal-clear water and an abundance of pelagic life, including sharks, rays, tuna and trevally, offering spectacular visibility and thrilling dives. Channel diving is at its peak during this period, making it ideal for advanced divers seeking action-packed drift dives. The seas are calmer and the weather is typically sunny and dry.

While diving is possible year-round, **June to November** (southwest monsoon) brings more plankton, lower visibility and a chance to see mantas (May - June) especially near outflowing western channels.



CENTRAL ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN VAAVU ATOLL

Resort Islands

Cocogiri Island Resort Maldives
Meridis Dive & Relax

NOOE Maldives Kunaavashi
Aqua Quest

NAKAI Dhiggiri Resort
Nakai Dhiggiri Diving Center

NAKAI Resort Alimatha
Nakai Alimatha Diving Center

Cinnamon Velifushi Maldives
Dive & Sail

Local Islands

Thinadhoo Island

- Plumeria Diving And Watersports Centre
- Thinadhoo Dive
- Thinadhoo Maldiva Dive
- Vaavu Dive Club

Felidhoo Island

- Felidhoo Dive Club

Keyodhoo

- Kalhu Muraka Guest House & Muraka Diving
- Keyodhoo Dive

Fulidhoo Island

- Divers Lodge Fulidhoo
- Fulidhoo Dive & Water Sports



CENTRAL ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN VAAVU ATOLL

Kunarvashi Kandu / Kunaavashi Kandu
 Kudaboli Thila / Kudhiboli Kandu / Kudi
 Boli Kandu
 Fiyaitoshi Kandu
 Cocogiri Housereef
 Coral Thila
 Coral Field
 Dhigu Faru
 Boamas Kandu / Bo Mas Kandu
 Fulidhoo Kandu
 Fulidhoo Caves
 Farukolhu Kandu
 Ihiga
 Fufalhi Kandu
 Reethi Kandu
 Manta Point
 Dheliya Giri
 Thila Bari
 Shareef Thila
 Hendheri Thila
 Ikogaa Thila
 Dhiggri Kandu
 Dhiggri Housereef
 Medhu Kandu
 Bolike Faru
 Alimatha Kandu
 Walu Kandu
 Alimatha Jetty

Alimatha Housereef
 Devana Kandu
 Miyaru Kandu
 Madi Kandu
 Dekunu Kandu
 Hulhidhoo Kandu
 Maafussaru Kandu
 Thinadhoo Faru
 Keyodhoo Kandu
 Felidhoo Kandu
 Kuda Kandu
 Golden Wall / Kashaavaru Kandu
 Caravara Bodu
 Caravara Ecola
 Fushi Kandu
 Fotteyo
 Pioneer Wreck
 Fahumi Giri
 Rakeedhoo Kandu
 Vattaru Kandu
 Anbaraa
 Grouper
 Vaavu Shipwreck

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER



CHAPTER III

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

A bit further **off the tourist trail**, the southern atolls (Meemu, Laamu, Thaa, Faafu, Dhaalu) are where diving starts to feel **more adventurous**.

Meemu is known for its strong currents and sharky channels, especially during incoming tides. **Laamu** charms divers with long drift dives, untouched coral gardens and regular sightings of green turtles and eagle rays. **Thaa** combines beautiful hard coral formations with exciting pelagic encounters, especially during the northeast monsoon. **Faafu's** secluded dive spots include deep drop-offs and vibrant thilas swarming with reef fish. In **Dhaalu**, you'll explore unique topography like swim-throughs, steep walls and manta cleaning stations.

With **fewer divers** around, the underwater life here often feels bold and undisturbed.



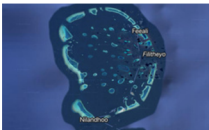
CHAPTER III

SOUTHERN ATOLLS



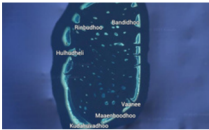
Meemu Atoll

Remote and wild, Meemu Atoll offers manta rays, sharks and epic drift dives through deep, current-swept channels.



Faafu (North Nilandhe) Atoll

Faafu Atoll offers adventurous, isolated diving in healthy northeast channels filled with reef sharks, mantas, and massive schools of fish, centered around the protected Filitheyo Kandu.



Dhaalu (South Nilandhe) Atoll

Dhaalu Atoll offers varied, uncrowded diving for all levels, with standout sites like Fushi Kandu featuring deep thilas and abundant marine life.



Thaa Atoll

Thaa Atoll is one of the Maldives' most pristine and least-explored dive destinations, offering thrilling pelagic encounters and untouched reefs in total serenity.



Laamu Atoll

Laamu Atoll offers pristine reefs, exciting pelagic encounters and peaceful macro dives in a remote setting rich in both history and marine life.

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

FAAFU ATOLL - NORTH NILANDHE

Underrated & Undisturbed

Faafu Atoll is a compact, remote diving destination measuring around 30 km by 25 km (19 by 15.5 mi), with most of its islands **uninhabited and lush**.

The diving industry only recently explored this region, offering **untouched dive sites**, especially around the northeast edge. The eastern channels are 20–25 m (66–82 ft) deep and ideal for drift diving, leading into deeper interiors of 30–35 m (98–115 ft).

Divers often spot **mantas, barracudas, eagle rays, Napoleon wrasse** and both grey and white tip reef sharks, particularly during the northeast monsoon. **Filitheyo Kandu**, a marine protected area, is the diving highlight of the atoll.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN FAAFU ATOLL

Lighthouse Channel

Lighthouse Channel is one of Faafu Atoll's top dive sites, known for its **stunning biodiversity** and dramatic underwater terrain. The site features **multiple thilas, deep drop-offs, caves, sand channels** and excellent drift diving conditions. Eagle rays, grey reef sharks, stingrays and turtles are frequently seen, along with large shoals of fish. Sheltered areas behind thilas offer calmer diving during strong currents and are home to **macro species** like scorpionfish, sand gobies, lobsters, shrimps and sea cucumbers. It's best explored between 20 and 30 m (66 to 98 ft) with medium to strong currents.

Northern Hailight

Northern Hailight is a remote and **rarely visited channel dive** at the northern tip of Faafu Atoll, spanning 900 m (2,950 ft) across. With **eight thilas and vibrant coral formations**, this site offers an adventurous drift dive that's also **suitable for intermediate divers** due to its relatively easy currents. Its untouched nature means marine life is abundant and unafraid - especially the large **grey reef sharks** that curiously approach divers. Eagle rays and trevallies patrol the channel, while the farus (outer reefs) are teeming with **healthy corals** and reef fish. It's so rich and vast that it's worth diving twice in one trip.

Marine life

Eagle rays
Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Stingrays
Turtles
Dogtooth Tunas
Big Eye Trevally
Barracudas
Fusiliers
Lobsters
Scorpionfish
Sand Goby
Sea cucumbers
Shrimps

Marine life

Eagle rays
Grey reef sharks
Bluefin Trevally
Dogtooth Tuna
Big Eye Trevally
Fusilier
Snapper
Anthias
Hawkfish
Butterflyfish
Angelfish

TOP DIVE SITES IN FAAFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Jumping Jack

Jumping Jack is a northern Faafu Atoll **top channel dive**. There is an **underwater ridge with seven lushly overgrown thilas** across the entrance of the wide channel at around 20 metres (66 ft). These thilas rise to depths of just 8–12 m (26–39 ft). You can explore caves at around 30 m (98 ft), cross sand channels at 26 m (85 ft), or drift past massive schools of fish on the outer corner. With **mild to moderate currents**, the dive is dynamic yet accessible, offering many route options. Expect to hop from pinnacle to pinnacle in crystal-clear water while watching **eagle rays, grouper, sweetlips, jacks, sharks** and schools of **tuna**.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Grouper
Sweetlips
Jacks
Tunas
Barracudas
Snapper
Fusiliers
Turtles
Shrimps
Sea Cucumber
Scorpionfish

Barracuda Kanduu

Barracuda Kanduu is a wide 500 m (1,640 ft) channel dive with coral outcrops starting at around 20 m (66 ft) and a shallower section at about 5 m (16 ft) on the northern corner. This is the most frequently dived section due to its **abundant marine life** and excellent structure. Divers can often spot **large schools of barracuda** along with **eagle rays** cruising past and **stingrays** resting in the sand. **Nurse sharks** are occasionally seen among the coral heads, making for an exciting and varied experience. With moderate currents, it's suitable for intermediate divers who enjoy relaxed pelagic encounters and reef exploration.

Marine life

Barracudas
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Nurse sharks
Snapper
Fusiliers
Trevally
Parrotfish
Glass fish
Shrimps

TOP DIVE SITES IN FAAFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Road to Paradise

Road to Paradise is a stunning **channel dive** located east of Dharaboodhoo's house reef in southern Faafu Atoll, offering a vibrant experience with incoming southeastern currents. The dive starts as a gentle drift, leading you past large schools of **grouper** and **eagle rays**. Deeper coral pinnacles lie between 25–33 m (82–108 ft), surrounded by flowing soft corals in all colors. The drop-off near the house reef features dramatic vertical walls from 2–33 m (7–108 ft) and is dotted with caves, soft corals and anemones. Schools of fusiliers and snappers add color and movement to this magical site.

Kudafalhu (Manta Point)

Kudafalhu is a remote dive site on the west side of Faafu Atoll, accessible by day trip and centered around a faru at the northern edge of a 300 m (984 ft) wide channel. The reef top stretches far into the channel and gently slopes from 5 to 25 m (16 to 82 ft), dotted with coral outcrops that function as **cleaning stations**. These attract huge shoals of reef fish and large species like **turtles** and **Napoleon wrasse**. From **December to May**, **mantas** frequent the outer reef side, often gliding over the slope. Notably, whale sharks have been spotted here during this same season.

Marine life

Eagle rays
Grouper
Rock Cod
Perch
Fusiliers
Snapper
Anemonefish
Glass fish

Marine life

Turtles
Napoleon wrasse
Cleaner wrasse
Butterflyfish
Surgeonfish
Parrotfish
Moray eels

Seasonal:

Manta Rays &
Whale Sharks (occasionally)
December - May

TOP DIVE SITES IN FAAFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Seven Stingrays

Seven Stingrays is a wide channel dive located south of Dhiguvuru Falhu, featuring a **central thila** and **numerous overhangs** between 12 and 30 m (39 to 98 ft). The southwest side of the thila has caves at 25–30 m (82–98 ft), while the reef slopes gently from 15 m (49 ft) down to sandy bottoms ideal for spotting **stingrays** - often in groups of seven or more. The site is adorned with black coral bushes, sponges and vibrant marine flora. A close inspection of the pipe cleaner corals may reveal the elusive black coral crab. The strong current flow brings in pelagics such as **grey reef sharks, eagle rays** and **barracudas**.

Marine life

Stingrays
 Grey reef sharks
 Eagle rays
 Barracudas
 Sweetlips
 Blue striped snapper
 Black coral crab
 Fusiliers
 Groupers
 Scorpionfish
 Sea Cucumber
 Shrimps
 Anemonefish

Two Brothers

Two Brothers is a **double-thila channel dive** on the north side of Fieeali, suitable for beginners and advanced divers alike. The larger thila rises to 5 m (16 ft) and drops to 28–30 m (92–98 ft), with caves at depth and a steep outer wall falling to 45 m (148 ft). The smaller thila begins at 10 m (33 ft) and features coral-covered surfaces rich with reef life. Big brother is known for **nudibranchs** and resting **stingrays** inside its caves, while **eagle rays and sharks** often patrol the channel entrance. The site is easy to navigate with current-dependent options for exploring both thilas.

Marine life

Nudibranch
 Stingrays
 Eagle rays
 Grey reef sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Dogtooth Tuna
 Barracuda
 Snapper
 Fusiliers
 Glassfish
 Turtles

TOP DIVE SITES IN FAAFU ATOLL CONTINUED

Biledhdhoo Kandu

Biledhdhoo Kandu is a wide 1 km (0.6 mi) channel dive site in Faafu Atoll featuring **four thilas** with shallow tops ranging from 8–14 m (26–46 ft). These pinnacles are separated by narrow sandy gutters at 17–20 m (56–66 ft), while the southern edge drops to over 25 m (82 ft). The reef formations are vast and **beautifully carpeted**, housing stationary schools of reef fish and frequent **stingray sightings**. During the southeastern monsoon, **manta rays** are commonly observed gliding through the site. It's ideal for divers looking for scenic reefscape and rich biodiversity with moderate currents.

Filitheyo Kandu

Filitheyo Kandu is a 2 km (1.24 mi) wide **marine protected channel** featuring three unique dive sites: Filitheyo Thila, Filitheyo Outside and Dolphin Corner. **Filitheyo Thila** is a U-shaped reef pinnacle with a top between 10–20 m (33–66 ft) and a sandy valley at 30 m (98 ft), where stingrays and schools of fish gather. **Filitheyo Outside** is a northern reef ridge sloping beyond 30 m (98+ ft), known for coral outcrops and dense schools of snapper and sweetlips. **Dolphin Corner** on the south side features mushroom corals and a steep wall starting at 5 m (16 ft) and descending to 33 m (108 ft), attracting sharks, rays, large schools of fish and sometimes dolphins. This area is **thrilling for advanced divers**, especially with strong currents bringing pelagics like tuna, jacks and eagle rays.

Marine life

Stingrays
Sweetlips
Fusiliers
Snapper
Butterflyfish
Angelfish
Parrotfish
Trevally
Surgeonfish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
December - May

Marine life

Eagle rays
Stingrays
White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Batfish
Tuna
Bluefin Jack
Mackerel
Snapper
Sweetlips
Fusilier
Barracuda
Moorish Idol
Blue Triggerfish
Surgeonfish
Turtles
Dolphins (occasionally)

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE FAAFU ATOLL

Faafu Atoll enjoys warm tropical weather year-round with air temperatures ranging from 25–31 °C (77–88 °F) and water temperatures staying between 26–30 °C (79–86 °F).

The dry **northeast monsoon season** (December to April) brings blue skies, calm seas, and excellent diving conditions with great visibility often exceeding 30 m (100 ft).

The wet **southwest monsoon** (May to November) features more clouds, occasional short rainstorms and stronger winds, though diving remains good.

Manta rays are most commonly spotted during the **dry season**, especially at cleaning stations like Manta Point.

Overall, Faafu offers superb year-round diving with particularly ideal conditions in the northeast monsoon.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN FAAFU ATOLL

Resort Islands

Filitheyo Resort Island
Werner Lau Diving

Local Islands

Magoodhoo
• Bicocca Diving



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN FAAFU ATOLL

Northern Hailight
 Eagle Trail
 Jumping Jack Channel
 Two Brothers
 Lighthouse Channel
 Fish & Chips
 Fish Pan
 Airport Corner
 Seven Stingrays
 Little Channel North
 Little Channel South
 String of Pearls
 Paternoster
 Filitheyo Faru
 Filitheyo Outside
 Filitheyo Thila
 Dolphins Corner
 Takatuka Land
 Kings Corner
 Loabi Giri
 KM Agro Mina II
 Coconut Faru
 Coral Garden
 Filitheyo Houserreef
 Repeaters Paradise
 Cliffhanger
 Ibura Tila
 The Cathedral
 Ayer's Rock
 The Glen of Fiddich
 Coral City

Bodu Beru
 The Pillar
 Kuda Giri
 One Way Ticket
 Barrakuda Kanduu
 Ebulfushi
 Banana Reef
 Kika
 M and M Reef
 Wallstreet
 Sunny Reef
 Greyzone
 Biledhoo Kanduu
 Ebulfushi Kanduu
 Route 66
 Blue Valley Thila
 Maghoodhoo Reef
 Dharaboodhoo Point
 Mano Negra
 Highway Drop
 Dhara Wall
 Road to Paradise
 Magoodhoo Terrace
 Kudafalhu (Manta Point)
 Mesu Tila
 Himithi Thila
 Minimasgali Kanduu
 Ante Bellum
 Big Foot
 Three Hills

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

DHAALU ATOLL - SOUTH NILANDHE

Luxury meets Virgin Reefs

Dhaalu Atoll is a scenic and **relatively quiet region** in the central Maldives, known for its mix of **luxury resorts** and local island charm. It consists of around **56 islands**, with a small number inhabited, offering a peaceful escape without the heavy crowds.

Dhaalu is a remote diving destination with around **15 channels** and **numerous pristine reefs**.

The eastern side has about ten channels and the western five, offering diverse topographies from **drift-friendly channels** to **deep thilas**.

Fushi Kandu, a marine protected area, is especially famous for its five fan-covered pinnacles. Sites like **Velavaru Thila**, **Lhohi Caves** and **Hulhuveli Kandu** offer everything from caves and coral to eagle rays and reef sharks.

With less diver traffic, conditions are ideal for both beginners and seasoned explorers.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEST DIVE SITES IN DHAALU ATOLL

Fushi Kanduu

Fushi Kanduu is a wide 1.2 km (0.75 mi) channel and a **protected marine area** in the Meedhoo region of South Nilandhe Atoll, featuring **five long thilas** rising from sandy bottoms at 20–25 m (66–82 ft) to around 10 m (33 ft). On both the inside and outside edges, depths reach over 30 m (98 ft), and the outside wall drops steeply, offering great views of **large pelagics** like sharks, eagle rays and other big fish. With mild current, divers can drift from one thila to the next; stronger currents require staying close to the reef and watching from the side. Expect stingrays, nurse sharks and moray eels in sandy areas and thila crevices. The channel's remote feel and consistent fish life make it a favorite in the region.

Marine life

Nurse sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Turtles
Moray eels
Schooling reef fish

Velavaru Thila

Velavaru Thila is one of Dhaalu Atoll's top dive sites, made up of three thilas - **Bodu Thila**, **Kuda Thila** and **Beyru Thila** - ranging in depth from 7 to 30 m (23 to 98 ft). The site offers everything from sandy slopes and coral blocks to caves and overhangs filled with sponges, sea fans, lobsters and black coral. Divers often begin at Beyru Thila with an ingoing current, then cross to Bodu Thila and Kuda Thila across a sandy channel home to white tip reef sharks and garden eels. The southern side of Kuda Thila features two sponge-filled caves at 13 and 25 m (43 and 82 ft). This thila system is a **macro and reef fish paradise**, frequently visited by turtles, sweetlips, Napoleon wrasse and sharks.

Marine life

Turtles
White tip reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Garden Eels
Sweetlips
Fusiliers
Snapper
Basslet
Lobster
Gobies
Blennies
Tunas

TOP DIVE SITES IN DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Anemone City

Anemone City is a vibrant giri dive site with one side completely **covered in swaying anemones** and the other teeming with moray eels such as yellow-margin and giant morays. The reef features a **photogenic overhang** draped in black coral, which shelters elusive longnose hawkfish. Nudibranchs, gobies and well-camouflaged leaf fish hide throughout the corals and soft substrate. This site is a favorite among macro photographers and marine life lovers. Depths range from 3 to 35 m (10 to 115 ft), making it accessible for all certified divers.

Marine life

Anemonefish
Yellow-margin moray eels
Giant moray eel
Longnose hawkfish
Leaf fish
Nudibranch
Gobies

Beru Thila

Beru Thila lies in the Velavaru Island channel and is known for encounters with large marine life like white **tip reef sharks, tunas** and **Napoleon wrasse**. The dive site features both an outer reef that drops off into the blue and a more gently sloping inner reef. **Stingrays** are often seen resting in the sandy areas. A school of **batfish** may curiously swim close to divers. The site is suitable for intermediate to advanced divers, depending on current conditions.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Tunas
Batfish
Stingrays

Maale Faru

Maale Faru is a calm reef dive located off Maalefaru Island, featuring a long and wide thila that starts around 16 meters (52 feet). Its flat top is covered in healthy hard corals and is ideal for slow, exploratory dives. Divers can expect to see **schools of goatfish** and **fusiliers** darting across the reef. Green coral trees (Tubastrea micrantha), also known as **midnight coral**, grow along the thila's sides. Featherstars and other small invertebrates add extra texture and color to the scene.

Marine life

Goatfish
Fusiliers
Featherstars
Green Coral Trees
(Midnight Coral)

TOP DIVE SITES IN DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Lhohi Caves

Lhohi Caves is a spectacular dive site famous for its vibrant invertebrate life and **colorful cave walls**, making it ideal for **macro photography** and **night diving**. The caves range from 5 to 20 m (16 to 66 ft) deep and are packed with sponges in vivid colors, along with corals and sea fans. Inside the caves, you can find creatures like **banded shrimp, slipper lobsters, spaghetti worms** and various shells such as **tiger cowries** and **thorny oysters**. Its easy access and sheltered location in the lagoon make it suitable for both beginners and advanced divers. Lhohi Caves is great for day or night diving, it also occasionally offers sightings of **frogfish** and mobulas.

Marine life

Banded shrimps
Spaghetti worms
Lobster
Slipper lobster
Tiger cowries
Thorny oysters
Turbans
Featherstars
Urchins
Frogfish
Mobula rays
Sea stars

Meedho Out

Located northeast of Meedhoo Island, this sloping reef dive is perfect for spotting well-camouflaged marine life. Coral blocks shelter **moray eels, leaf fish** and **scorpionfish**, while anemones host **clownfish** and **porcelain crabs**. Deeper areas often reveal **grey** and **white tip reef sharks** cruising the reef. **Eagle rays** and **napoleon wrasse** may appear in the blue, adding excitement to the dive. The dive concludes with stunning hard corals, including large table corals, at safety stop depth.

Marine life

Moray eels
Leaf fish
Scorpionfish
Porcelain crabs
Clownfish
Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Napoleon wrasse
Snappers
Groupers

TOP DIVE SITES IN DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Hulhuveli Kandu

Hulhuveli Kandu is a dynamic **channel dive** south of Hulhuveli Island, featuring a ridge across its entrance at 15–20 meters (49–66 feet) depth. Several small thilas scattered through the channel make for an engaging terrain, especially when currents are manageable. A recess in the southern reef provides shelter, often hosting outcrops and critters like **moray eels** and **shrimps**. Strong incoming currents attract **pelagic species** such as tuna and trevallies, making the dive thrilling but best suited for experienced divers.

Marine life

Moray eels
Shrimps
Lobsters
Tuna
Trevallies
Jackfish

Kermitt Corner

Kermitt Corner lies at the northern edge just south of Kannyly Fara and is ideal for **shark lovers** when current conditions are medium to strong. Hard coral formations connect the corner to a thila within the channel, forming a rich habitat for marine life. **White tip reef sharks**, **napoleon wrasses** and **eagle rays** are frequent visitors to the area. Swarms of jackfish, fusiliers and emperor fish create a high-energy atmosphere along the reef. With favorable currents, the dive transforms into a dynamic and visually spectacular underwater experience.

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Jackfish
Fusiliers
Emperor Fish

Madivaru Express

Madivaru Express is the **southernmost channel** in Dhaalu Atoll and known for its **fast drifts** and **pelagic action**. Depending on the current, dives can begin either inside or outside the channel, with the strongest marine activity near the corners. A prominent thila at the southern entrance attracts **large schools of fish** and hunting predators. With depths of 20 to 30 m (66 to 98 ft) and strong currents, this site is ideal for advanced divers. Expect an adrenaline-filled dive full of **sharks**, **rays**, **turtles** and powerful ocean energy.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Tunas
Turtles
Moray eels

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE DHAALU ATOLL

Dhaalu Atoll benefits from year-round warm water (27–30 °C / 81–86 °F) and excellent visibility, often exceeding 30 m (100 ft), ideal for diving and photography. The Maldives' climate is tropical with two seasons: the **dry northeast monsoon** (January to April) and the **wet southwest monsoon** (May to November).

The dry season offers calm seas, sunshine and ideal dive conditions, while the wet season brings occasional short storms and stronger winds.

Located on the western side of the archipelago, Dhaalu Atoll sees the most **manta activity from January to April**. Despite seasonal shifts, diving is rewarding all year.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN DHAALU ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Sun Siyam Vilu Reef Maldives](#)
Sun Diving Vilu Reef

[Hotel Riu Palace Maldivas](#)
ScubaCaribe Maldives

[Angsana Velavaru](#)
Endheri Marine Center

[Baglioni Maldives Luxury All Inclusive Resort](#)
Maagau Dive Center

[Sun Siyam Iru Veli](#)
Sun Diving Iru Veli

[Yash Nature Resort](#) – currently closed for renovation: reopen planned in 2026

[The St. Regis Maldives Vommuli Resort](#)
Vommuli Dive Center by Silver Sands

[Kandima Maldives](#)
Aquaholics Kandima

[Niyama Private islands Maldives](#)
Float by Silver Sands

[Hotel Riu Atoll](#)
ScubaCaribe Maldives



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN DHAALU ATOLL

Northeast area

Maavaru Bathi Corner
 Fushi Kanduu
 Fushi Kanduu West
 Gina Fushi Kanduu
 Octopus Lover
 Alikea Reef
 Macro Spot
 Extasy Deep
 Vilu HR
 Vilu Wall
 Vilu Deeo End
 Napoleon Reef
 Fishermans Point
 Azmee Corner
 Udhdhoo Reef
 Lhoni Caves
 Yuki Reef
 Stephan Thila
 Meedhoo Out
 Meedhoo Caves
 Velavaru Kanduu
 Velavaru Corner
 Velavaru Tongue
 Coral Garden
 Kihafun Kanduu
 Kuda Thila
 Velavaru Thila
 Wella Giri
 Bodu Thila
 Bandidhoo Thila
 Bandidhoo Giri
 Bandidhoo Wall

Kanney Corner
 Kermit Corner
 Banditos Point

Northwest area

Thibisa Far Garden
 Miyaru Kanmathi
 Far Reef
 Eves Thila
 Anemone City
 WS Thila
 Miyaru Thila
 Thanmathi Falhu
 Sweet Corner
 Soft Coral Pass
 Jo-One Thila
 Dhoores Kudagaa Hoholha
 Dhoores Caves
 Dhoores Dhekunu Hoholha
 Hadrien Thila
 Dhoores Kudagaa Uthuru
 Dhonbilih Hoholha Caves
 Fushi Faru North East
 aaaVeeee Caves
 Fushi Faru West
 The Canyon
 Ayya Thila
 Arivaru Giri
 Madivaru Thila
 Madivaru Kanduu
 Maadheli Uthurukanduu

DIVE SITES IN DHAALU ATOLL CONTINUED

Northwest area - continued

Hulhudheli Giri
 Hulhudheli Kandu Uthuru
 Hulhudeli Kandu
 Boduhaa
 Athafushee Falhu
 Beybe Hoholha Caves
 Sinking Hole
 Vommuli Caves
 aaaVeee East Corner
 Nizzaru Thila
 Faana Thila
 Rinbudhoo Corner
 Rinbudhoo Hoholaha Caves
 O-Ring Thila
 Maagau South
 Maagau Caves

South area

Maale Faru
 Loricantu Giri
 Loricanto Terrace
 The Boot
 Amelie Thila
 Laume Giri
 La Lacune Giri
 Hulhuveli Kandu
 Madivaru Express
 Madivaru Kandu
 Northern Faru
 Naibukalo Caves
 Thilabolhufushi
 Kandima Caves
 Kandinma Deep

Vaanee Kandu
 Vaanee Expressway
 Issari Faru
 Tiu Dighu Thila
 Maaenboodhoo Corner
 Maaenboodhoo Giri
 Olhuveli Thila
 Niyama House Reef
 Enbodu
 Kudahuvadhoo Corner
 Kudahuvadhoo Faru
 Kudahuvadhoo Kandu
 Bodu Thila
 Maafushi Faru
 Maafushi Beyru
 Kedhigandu Faru
 Kedhigandu Beyru
 Valla
 Valla Thila
 Pisani Thila
 Vallalhoni
 Minimasgili
 Valhi Thila
 Mass Thila
 Small Thila
 Maaen Express
 Fishing Giri
 Vaanee Corner
 Vaanee Reef
 Kandi Corner
 Sea Dragon Wall
 Kuda Thila
 Kandima House Reef Point
 Kandima House Reef Sands
 Coco Reef
 Pop Reef

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

MEEMU ATOLL - MULAKU

Where Reefs meet Serenity

Meemu Atoll is a **remote, lesser-visited** atoll in the Maldives with pristine reefs, vibrant soft corals and a relaxed, authentic atmosphere.

The atoll features dramatic topography including **deep channels, cave-studded thilas** and **steep reef walls**. Divers can enjoy year-round sightings of reef sharks and eagle rays, with the best chance to see **manta rays** during the southwest monsoon (May–December).

Muli Kandu is a standout dive site with excellent drift diving and manta cleaning stations, while **Malaku Kandu** in the north attracts large pelagic species over its deep channel floor.

With just two resorts, one private island and minimal tourism, Meemu offers a peaceful escape and some of the Maldives' best **off-the-beaten-path diving**.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL

Mulaku Kandu / Shark Point

Mulaku Kandu, also known as Shark Point, is Meemu Atoll's **top dive site**, featuring a narrow 25 m (82 ft) channel entrance, vibrant overhangs and rich marine life. Divers typically begin at the west corner among snappers and jacks, then descend to 30 m (98 ft) to spot grey reef and **white tip sharks, eagle rays** and **stingrays**. With outgoing current, the dive becomes an exhilarating drift past soft corals, moray eels and groupers. The outer reef plunges from 35 m (115 ft) to beyond 100 m (328 ft), often attracting **tuna, giant trevally** and **barracuda**. Clear visibility, pastel coral formations and white sand make this site a favourite for photographers and experienced divers.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Whitetip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Giant trevally
Bluefin trevally
Tunas
Groupers
Snappers
Jacks
Barracudas
Moray eels
Squirrelfish
Sea turtles

Boahura Express

Boahura Express is a sloping outer reef dive site located between Mantas and More and Medhufushi Outside. The reef begins with a steady 45° incline, then drops off as a **vertical wall** beyond 30 meters (98 feet), offering depth and **dramatic scenery**. Along the way, divers encounter schools of **blue-lined** and **humpback snapper, fusiliers, sweetlips** and other reef fish. Turtles, tunas and various sharks patrol the reef edge, while juvenile white tip reef sharks are sometimes found resting under coral blocks. Depending on the current, this can be an exhilarating drift dive along either side of the reef.

Marine life

Snapper
Sweetlips
Fusilier
Turtles
Tuna
Whitetip reef sharks
Trevally

TOP DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Muli Kandu

Muli Kandu is one of Meemu Atoll's top dive sites, known for its **powerful channel currents** and **rich marine life**. This long drift dive along a reef finger near Boahuraa Island features **coral gardens, steep walls** and **manta ray cleaning stations** between 10 and 15 meters (33–49 feet). Divers can expect thrilling pelagic action with schools of trevallies, barracudas, jacks, tuna and eagle rays **gliding through the current**. Turtles are frequently seen, especially during breeding season and the area is home to black and humpback snappers, napoleon wrasse, fusiliers and honeycomb moray eels. The best time for manta sightings is during the southwest monsoon, from **May to December**.

Marine life

Turtles
Eagle rays
Barracudas
Tuna
Jackfish
Giant trevallies
Snapper
Napoleon wrasse
Fusiliers
Batfish
Bannerfish
Moorish idol
Honeycomb moray eels
Reef fish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - December

Rayvilla Wreck

The Rayvilla Wreck is a 30-meter-long wooden transport dhoni that **sank in 1979** and now rests on the south side of a Giri at 20–33 meters (66–108 feet). This wreck dive is perfect **for experienced divers** and can be explored from bow to stern, including the inside of the wreck. Surrounding the wreck are stunning **overhangs, caves** and **caverns** teeming with life. The area is richly decorated with lush soft coral gardens and dense schools of colorful fish. Groupers, moray eels, glassfish and rock cods are some of the highlights making this a memorable and photogenic dive.

Marine life

Groupers
Moray eels
Rock cods
Glassfish
Anthias
Fusiliers
Sweetlips
Napoleon wrasse
Snappers
Surgeonfish
Shrimps

TOP DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Vanhuravalhi Kandhu / Lucky Reef

Vanhuravalhi Kandhu, also called Lucky Reef, is the third and **deepest of the northern channels** in Meemu Atoll and offers a dramatic underwater topography with **overhangs, steep walls** and **colorful soft corals**. The dive starts at a massive overhang between 12 and 40 meters (39–131 feet), filled with sea fans and reef features best explored with a torch. The channel's edge drops to around 30 meters, where **sharks, eagle rays** and **trevallies** cruise through the current. Large coral blocks and schooling fish gather on both sides of the channel, making it ideal for drift dives up to 1.5 kilometers into the atoll. Whether diving along the wall or crossing the channel, divers are treated to vibrant reef life and pelagic encounters.

Kurali Kandhu / Valley of the Ray

Valley of the Ray is a remote dive site in the southwest of Meemu Atoll, typically reached on a **2-tank dive trip**. Between **January and May**, outgoing currents attract **manta rays** to the channel, making it a seasonal hotspot. The best manta encounters happen around coral blocks in a sandy passage at about 14 meters (46 feet) depth. Divers may also encounter **white tip reef sharks, stingrays, turtles** and reef fish. With mantas being seen at Muli Kandhu during the south-west monsoon, the two resorts of Medufushi and Hakuraa are ideally located to capture year round viewing of these amazingly gentle and graceful rays.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Nurse sharks
Eagle rays
Trevally
Silver jacks
Large schools of reef fish
Groupers
Snapper
Fusiliers

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Giant stingrays
Turtles
Fusiliers
Snappers
Sweetlips
Surgeonfish
Jacks
Barracudas
Glassfish
Anthias
Cleaner wrasse
Various reef fish

Seasonal:

Manta rays
January - May

TOP DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Divers Paradise / Medhu Faru Kandu

Diver's Paradise, also known as Medhu Faru Kandu, is the **second northern channel** in Meemu Atoll, offering a classic Maldivian channel dive with strong fish action. The channel can be crossed if the current allows, or explored as a drift dive into the atoll. At depths around 22–25 metres (72–82 feet), divers find **overhangs** and **caves** under the drop-off, often populated by fusiliers, jacks, and schooling barracuda. The two channel corners are hotspots for eagle rays and reef sharks, while beautiful coral blocks host vibrant reef life. It's a rewarding dive for those seeking current action, schooling fish and pelagic encounters.

Marine life

Sharks
Eagle rays
Jacks
Fusiliers
Barracuda
Napoleon wrasse
Groupers
Sweetlips
Tuna
Surgeonfish
Moray eels

Shark's Tongue

Shark's Tongue is a thrilling dive site off Mulah Island, known for its **coral-covered slopes** and **impressive shark activity**. Between 8 and 15 meters (26–49 feet), divers can drift past coral blocks teeming with oriental sweetlips, fusiliers, copper snapper, surgeonfish and turtles. The reef slope from 15 to 30 meters (49–98 feet) is the real highlight – home to groups of resting **black tip** and **white tip reef sharks**. With strong incoming currents, **grey reef sharks** and **silver tip sharks** often join the scene, making this a hotspot for shark enthusiasts. The dive demands skill due to the current, but offers some of the most rewarding encounters in Meemu Atoll.

Marine life

Turtles
Oriental sweetlips
Surgeonfish
Fusilier
Snapper
Blacktip reef sharks
Whitetip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks
Silvertip sharks
Moray eels
Trevally

TOP DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Medhufushi Thila

Medhufushi Thila is a stunning submerged pinnacle west of Medhufushi Island, known for its **vibrant overhangs** and a rich diversity of reef life. Between 15–25 metres (49–82 feet), divers find thriving soft corals, hard corals and large sea fans. Big shoals of sweetlips, fusiliers, snappers and groupers create a colorful underwater show. The site also attracts **pelagic predators** like tuna and trevally, while moray eels and lionfish hide in crevices. Calmer currents make this divesite **suitable for less experienced divers** also.

Mantas and More

Mantas & More lives up to its name with frequent sightings of **manta rays, mobulas** and **eagle rays** - especially between **May and December**, when they visit shallow cleaning stations at 10–15 m (33–49 ft). The gently sloping reef, dropping to 30 m (98 ft), is rich with coral blocks that attract tuna, Napoleon wrasse, turtles and large schools of jacks. Lobsters hide in the reef crevices while barracudas circle and reef sharks patrol the current. Sometimes, divers witness a real feeding frenzy in the blue with multiple predators hunting. This is one of Meemu's **top drift dives**, ideal under the right current conditions.

Marine life

Sweetlips
Fusiliers
Snappers
Groupers
Rock cod
Moray eels
Lionfish
Tuna
Trevally
Sea fans
Various reef fish

Marine life

Eagle rays
Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Tuna
Barracuda
Napoleon wrasse
Jacks
Trevally
Snappers
Turtles
Lobsters
Anthias
Butterflyfish
Angelfish
Reef fish

Seasonal:

Manta rays & Mobula rays
May - December

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE MEEMU ATOLL

The best time to dive Meemu Atoll is during the **dry northeast monsoon** from January to April, when the weather is calm, seas are flat and underwater visibility is at its best - often up to 30 meters (98 feet). This season is ideal for exploring the eastern channels, known for thrilling drift dives and pelagic encounters.

Water temperatures remain **warm year-round**, between 26–30°C (79–86°F), with air temperatures around 27–31°C (81–88°F).

During the wet **southwest monsoon** from May to November, seas can be rougher and rainfall more frequent, but **manta rays** are more common, especially from May to June.

Overall, diving is possible year-round, with conditions varying slightly depending on the season and goals of the dive.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN MEEMU ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Madifushi Private Island](#)

MSTS Scuba Fun

[Medhufushi Island Resort](#)

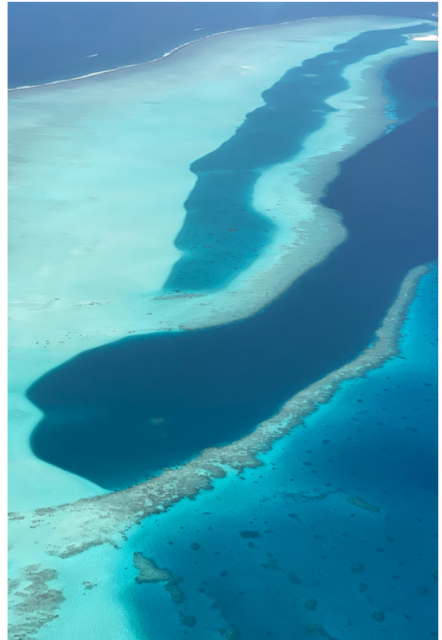
Werner Lau Diving Center Medhufushi

[Cinnamon Hakuraa Huraa Maldives](#)

Dive & Sail Alfons Straub

Local Islands

Currently no dive centers on local Islands



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

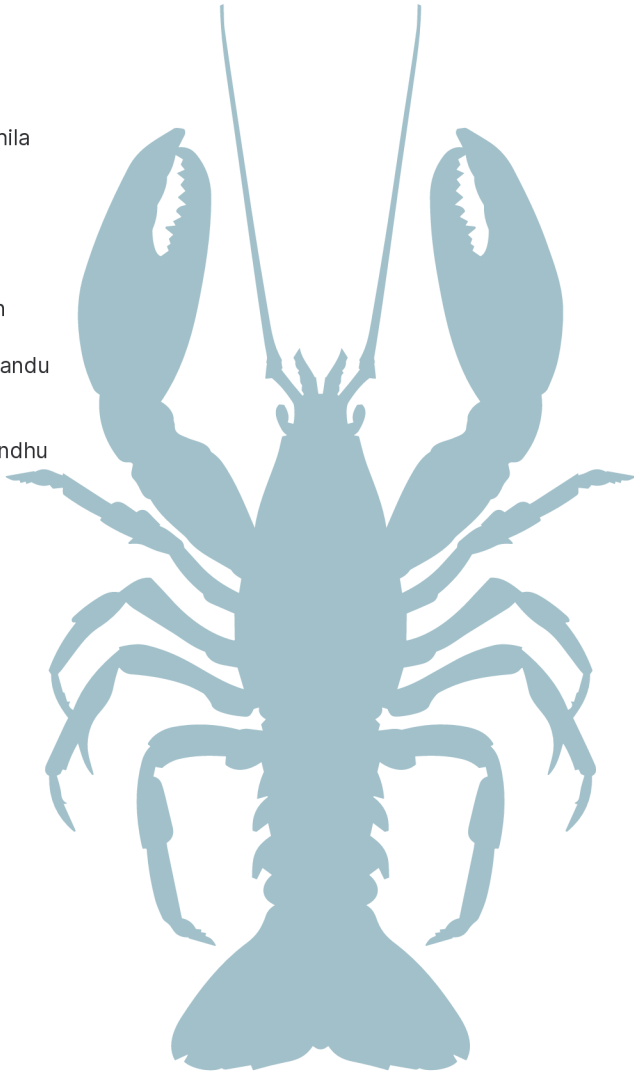
DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL

Mulaku Kandu / Shark Point
 Medhu Faru Kandu / Divers Paradise
 Vanhuravalhi Kandu / Lucky Reef
 Veyvah Beyru
 Muli Kandu
 Muli Beyru
 Muli Out
 Muli Corner
 Hakura Thila
 Hakura Express
 Hakura East Point
 Hakura West Point
 Hakura Giri
 Hakura Outside
 Hedhey Faru
 Bodu Faru
 Ashaa
 Kurali Kandu / Valley of the Ray
 Nenge Kandu
 Nenge Faru
 Thuvarudhekunu Kandu
 Thuvaru South
 Thuvaru North
 Rayvilla Wreck
 1000 Rocks
 Aquarium
 As you like it
 Boahura Express
 Bodu Bandu
 Bodu Securade
 Chapati
 Chapati Tilas
 Deep-Corner

Dolphins Line
 Easy Express
 Fish and Caves
 Fish Pan
 Giant Clam
 Grouper Cave
 Half & Half
 Happy Corner
 Kingdom Of Fish
 Kurali Corner
 Lost Shark
 Maalhaveli Outside
 Mantas and more
 Medhufushi Outside
 Medhufushi Tila
 Northern Tube
 Picasso
 Pretty in Pink
 Rayvilla Kandu
 Rock 'n' Stripes
 Shark's Tongue
 Simply the Best
 Streets of Mulah
 The Big Cave
 The Scorpion
 Triple Rock
 Turtle Bay
 Van Gogh
 Veyvah North
 Veyvah Tila
 Wave Giri
 Western Highlight
 White Tip Station

DIVE SITES IN MEEMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Williams Reef
 Kurali Inside
 Dhiththundi Out
 Kekuraalhuveli Thila
 Keluruli Vheli Giri
 Kudahini Kandu
 Maahini Kandu
 Bodu Kandu
 Dhuni Kandu
 Japanese Garden
 Tibet Giri
 Raabandihuraa Kandu
 Diggaru Kandu
 Maduvaru Kandu
 Raiymandhoo Kandhu
 Velaavani
 Hurasveli
 Lhazikuraadi
 Muli Madivaru
 Gaathu Giri
 Dhigu Giri
 Fashan Corner
 Haatha Giri
 Medhu Giri
 Funn Faru
 Beyru Giri
 Dhigu Faru
 Durabani
 Ashaa Giri
 Ali Giri
 Egga
 Masda
 Rayimas Giri
 Kuda Thila



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

THAA ATOLL - KOLHUMADULU

Deep Channels & Pelagic Action

Thaa Atoll, locally known as Kolhumadulu, is one of the **least-developed** and **most adventurous** diving destinations in the Maldives, with over **60 mostly untouched islands** and **minimal tourist infrastructure**.

It offers a rare mix of discovery and world-class diving, featuring **sharks, mantas, eagle rays** and **turtles**, alongside unexplored reefs and newly charted dive sites.

The atoll boasts **more than 30 dive sites**, concentrated on the eastern side, with channels (kandus) and thilas providing exciting dives for both beginners and advanced divers.

Diving is possible via **liveaboard** or **COMO Maalifushi** resort. With few other boats around and frequent discoveries, diving in Thaa feels like true exploration in pristine Maldivian waters.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN THAA ATOLL

Olugiri Kandū

Olugiri Kandū is one of Thaa Atoll's top sites for **pelagic action**, thanks to **powerful currents** that sweep nutrients and baitfish through the wide channel. Massive schools of **jackfish** attract numerous **white tip reef sharks**, which patrol the area in search of prey. **Tuna** and **eagle rays** often cruise by in the blue, while the reef itself shelters large **Napoleon wrasse** and smaller reef dwellers. The dive is best done on an incoming current when visibility improves and fish activity peaks. Due to the size of the channel and passing freighters, divers are advised to stay close to the reef for safety.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Jackfish
Eagle rays
Tuna
Napoleon wrasse

Gorgonian Garden

Gorgonian Garden is a vibrant dive site in Thaa Atoll known for its **large sea fans** on a steep wall, steady currents and abundant marine life. Divers can spot majestic **Manta rays** and **Eagle rays** gliding through the water, while turtles, schooling batfish and fusiliers add to the spectacle. The reef features a sloping wall and caves, making it visually stunning and dynamic. **At night**, the site transforms into a magical environment where ghostpipe fish appear. It's a dive suitable for both beginners and advanced divers, with ever-changing encounters from day to night.

Marine life

Eagle Rays
Turtles
Schooling batfish
Manta rays
Fusiliers
Ghostpipe fish
Crustaceans
Nudibranchs
Reef fish

TOP DIVE SITES IN THAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Dhiffushi Kandu

Dhiffushi Kandu is a **thrilling channel dive** best suited for advanced divers due to its depth, strong currents and large pelagic life. With two dive options based on the current direction, the site offers encounters with **grey reef sharks, white tip reef sharks** and occasionally **silvertip sharks** or even a sailfish in the blue. A highlight with outgoing current is the 'Arena' - a bowl-shaped area where swirling fish add to the dramatic underwater scenery. Located in the northern part of Thaa Atoll, it features impressive coral coverage and overhangs that drop into the deep blue. The adrenaline and biodiversity make Dhiffushi Kandu one of the standout sites in the atoll.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Silvertip sharks
 Eagle rays
 Stingrays
 Dogtooth tuna
 Big Eye Trevally
 Barracuda
 Fusiliers
 Hawksbill Turtles
 Manta rays
 Napoleon wrasse
 Trevally

Dhiyamigili

Dhiyamigili Corner is a thrilling pelagic dive where divers may encounter **grey reef sharks** and **eagle rays**. This dive can be extended into a 2.2-kilometre (1.4-mile) drift into Guraidhoo Corner, offering even more action with **nurse sharks, tunas** and **mobulas**. The dive usually begins on a steep reef slope and drops beyond 30 metres (100 feet), with deep overhangs hiding reef predators. Divers may also spot wahoos, barracudas or even dolphins depending on current strength and luck. Best suited **for experienced divers**, Dhiyamigili offers strong currents, exhilarating drifts and big fish excitement.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Nurse sharks
 Eagle rays
 Stingrays
 Dogtooth Tuna
 Fusiliers
 Hawksbill Turtles
 Snappers
 Mobula Rays
 Wahoos
 Barracudas
 Sailfish
 Dolphins

TOP DIVE SITES IN THAA ATOLL CONTINUED

7-Up / B7-Up / Number 7

7-Up is a beautiful **wall dive** in Thaa Atoll known for its excellent visibility – often around 30 meters (98 feet) and stunning coral growth along the walls and overhangs. The site's name playfully nods to the soft drink, and diving here really does feel like a refreshing experience in crystal-clear water. The **coral is exceptionally healthy**, with vibrant colors and formations that make it ideal for wide-angle photography and peaceful exploration. Because Thaa Atoll is rarely crowded, you'll likely have the reef to yourself, free from the bubbles and bustle of other dive boats. This site is suitable for all levels of divers, with calm conditions most of the year.

Marine life

Fusiliers
 Butterflyfish
 Angelfish
 Surgeonfish
 Tunas
 Shrimps
 Crabs
 Moray Eels

Brand's Hatch

Brand's Hatch is a **classic channel (kandu) dive** on Thaa Atoll's eastern rim, where strong tidal flow through a rocky coral-filled pass creates dramatic overhangs and swim-throughs. The rugged terrain shelters smaller reef fish while vibrant pelagic life such as **sharks, eagle rays, tuna** and **barracuda**. Dive skippers typically time visits with specific tides to ensure optimal visibility and marine activity as the current intensifies. Coral bommies and ledges attract cleaning stations, often held by wrasse and other small cleaners tending larger species. It's an adrenaline-pumping adventure best suited to intermediate and advanced divers who love action-packed channel environments.

Marine life

Sharks
 Eagle rays
 Tuna
 Barracuda
 Wrasse
 Reef fish

TOP DIVE SITES IN THAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Dutch Divide

Dutch Divide is a dynamic **reef dive** offering some swim-throughs, overhangs and thrilling currents that appeal to experienced divers. Located along a reef ridge, the site sometimes features strong water movement, which enhances visibility and draws in pelagic species. **Barracudas** and **reef sharks** are often spotted cruising by, while closer to the reef, large spider crabs with long, alien-like legs roam the coral. The underwater topography adds a sense of adventure, with its caverns and passageways creating ideal hiding places for crustaceans and small reef life. This site is best for intermediate to advanced divers due to occasional current surges.

Marine life

Spider crabs
Barracudas
Reef sharks

Kolhufushi

Kolhufushi offers a **peaceful, coral-filled dive** where divers of all levels can enjoy a relaxed experience surrounded by healthy reef life. The reef begins at around 6 to 8 metres (20 to 26 feet) and slopes down to a sandy bottom between 30 and 35 metres (98 to 115 feet). The site is known for its coral formations, including **large table corals** and **occasional manta ray appearances**. Currents are generally mild to moderate, making this a relaxing and accessible site. It's the perfect dive when you just want to slow down and enjoy the underwater world.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Trevally
Dogtooth Tuna
Fusiliers
Hawksbill turtles
Snappers
Manta rays (occasionally)
Leopard Sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN THAA ATOLL CONTINUED

Devil's Cave

Devil's Cave is a dramatic **wall dive** on the outer reef, featuring a wide, shadowy overhang that opens up around 15 to 20 meters (49 to 66 feet) deep where divers often encounter **white tip reef sharks, nurse sharks and tunas** cruising through the shadows. Bring a torch - this site lives up to its name with dim corners that reveal striking contrasts of light and dark. The upper reef lies at 6 to 8 meters (20 to 26 feet), covered in colorful sea fans and swarming with fusiliers and Trevally. From there, the site drops steeply to 30 meters (98 feet), offering chances to spot graceful **eagle rays, stingrays** and **turtles**. Despite its name, conditions can be adjusted to suit diver comfort levels with guidance from experienced instructors. The **eerie cave atmosphere** and abundant marine life make this a thrilling and memorable site.

Marine life

Stingrays
Dogtooth tuna
Fusiliers
Trevally
Hawksbill turtles
White tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Nurse sharks

Kuda Haa

Kuda Haa is a **pinnacle (thila) dive** with the top of the reef starting at about 20 metres (66 feet), shaped like a camel's hump and spanning approximately 60 metres (197 feet) in diameter. This submerged coral structure offers a rich **mix of macro marine life** tucked into its ridges and crevices, along with **passing pelagics**. Divers can spot everything from ghost pipefish and nudibranchs to dogtooth tuna and stingrays. It's best suited for **advanced divers** due to its depth and the attention to detail required for macro spotting. A great dive for those who enjoy searching for small marine treasures rather than adrenaline rushes.

Marine life

Stingrays
Trevally
Dogtooth Tuna
Fusiliers
Glassfish
Leaf fish
Ghost pipe fish
Shrimps
Nudibranchs

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE THAA ATOLL

Thaa Atoll offers excellent diving year-round, with warm water temperatures between 26°C and 30°C (79°F to 86°F).

The best time to dive is during the **dry season, from December to April**, when clear skies, calm seas and high visibility prevail. This is also the **peak season for liveaboards** cruising through the central and southern Maldives.

While the **Southwest monsoon season** (May to November) brings more rain and reduced visibility, it still offers rewarding dives, especially on the western side of the atoll with fewer crowds.

Manta rays and other pelagics can be spotted **throughout the year**, making Thaa a great choice regardless of season.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN THAA ATOLL

Resort Islands

COMO Maalifushi

COMO Maalifushi Dive Center

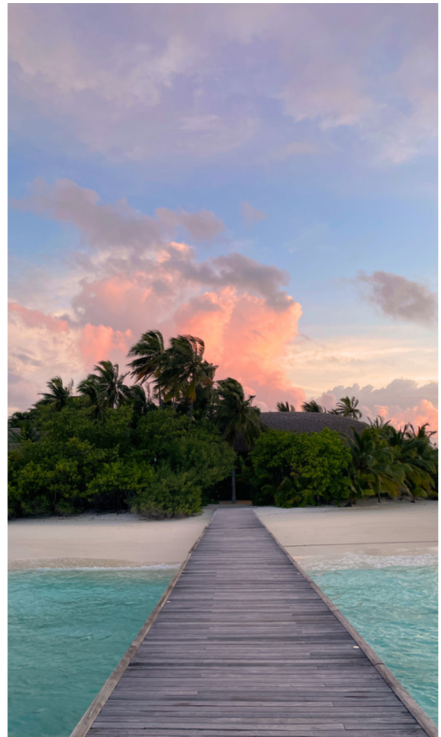
Note: As of October 2024, whale sharks are classified as a protected species in the Maldives. In compliance with these regulations, COMO Maalifushi resort is no longer offering the whale shark night snorkelling experience.

Huravee Resort - is still under construction and has not opened yet

Local Islands

Thimarafushi

- Thimarafushi Dive & Watersports



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN THAA ATOLL

Dutch Divide
Digufaru Kandu
Maagulhi Kandu
Schumi Express
Dhiffushi Kandu
Vilufushi Beyru
Olhugiri Kandu
The Wall
The Steps
Captain Hook
Fahala Bodu Gaa
Nasih Thila
Thau Reef North West
Thau Reef Cave
Anemone Reef
Thinvana Giri
Gaadhifushi Reef
Kuda Haa
Dhebaachi
Guraidhoo Corner
Kandu Gaa
Gunnars Rock
Aquarium

Number Seven / 7-Up Pinnacle / B7Up
Kanimeedhoo Kandu
Thimaarafushi Beru
Veymandhoo Kandu
Funandhoo Faru
Maalifushi Outside
Turtle Point
Maalifushi Housereef
Dhiyamigili Corner
Madifushi Outside
Kolhufushi / Kohifushi
Fahala Gaa
Fahala Beyru
Fahala Whale Shark Point
Brand's Hatch
Gorgonian Garden

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

LAAMU ATOLL - HADHDHUNMATHEE

Scenic Reefs and Gentle Currents

Laamu Atoll, also known as Haddhunmathi, is a **remote and pristine diving destination** in the southern Maldives, known for its rich Buddhist heritage and even serving as a film set for **Star Wars: Rogue One**.

The atoll's limited number of channels creates **intense lagoon currents** that attract sharks, rays and other pelagics while maintaining clear visibility. Beginners can explore the **calm inner reefs** filled with vibrant coral and macro life, while experienced divers enjoy **thrilling drift dives** like **Fushi Kanduu** or manta ray cleaning station **Hithadhoo Corner**.

Unlike many other atolls, Laamu's **coral reefs** remain in excellent condition, offering a colorful underwater landscape of soft corals, caves and thilas. There is also a good chance to see **dolphins** during boat trips or even from the shore as they come to Laamu Atoll to reproduce and rest.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

TOP DIVE SITES IN LAAMU ATOLL

Hithadhoo Corner (Manta Point)

Hithadhoo Corner, also known as Manta Point, is located in the southeast of Laamu Atoll at the tip of the atoll's largest channel. The site features **five active manta cleaning stations** positioned around small coral blocks in the channel at around 15 meters (50 feet) depth, where divers can relax and watch manta rays glide in for grooming. Currents can be strong here, drawing in manta rays and large pelagics **year-round**, with peak sightings from **May to June** and **October to November**. The site is also known for its **giant napoleon wrasses, large turtles** and regular appearances by big fish cruising through.

Fushi Kanduu

Fushi Kanduu is one of Laamu Atoll's **most thrilling and biodiverse channel dives**, stretching 250 meters (820 feet) with strong currents that attract an incredible variety of marine life. Entering the channel at around 15 meters (50 feet) and crossing it gives divers the best chance to encounter **reef sharks and more**. It's a top choice for experienced divers, offering dramatic underwater landscapes and vibrant coral walls. The channel drops down to 30 meters (100 feet) and feels like diving into a living aquarium. You can see **grey reef sharks, white tip reef sharks, barracuda, bigeye jacks, tuna, eagle rays, manta rays, mobulas, napoleon wrasse, turtles, fusiliers, dolphins** and even the occasional **octopus**.

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
Turtles

Seasonal:

Manta rays
Best: May - June and
October - November

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Barracuda
Bigeye jacks
Tuna
Eagle rays
Mobulas
Napoleon wrasse
Turtles
Fusiliers
Dolphins
Octopus

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

TOP DIVE SITES IN LAAMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Mundoo Kandu

Mundoo Kandu is one of Laamu Atoll's most visited and exhilarating **channel dives**, known for strong currents and blue water conditions that attract **large marine life**. With an entrance depth of 12 meters (40 feet) and a maximum depth of up to 30 meters (100 feet), it's a site recommended **for confident, experienced divers**. Powerful currents sweep through the channel, bringing in schools of fusiliers, jacks, trevallies, snapper and surgeonfish, while pelagic predators like sharks, barracuda, and tuna patrol the blue. Grey reef sharks are common here, along with eagle rays, stingrays and sometimes manta rays. Adding color to the action, soft corals, turtles and napoleon wrasse complete the scene.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Barracudas
Tunas
Bigeye trevally
Jacks
Fusiliers
Snapper
Surgeonfish
Green turtles
Napoleon wrasse

Seasonal:

Manta rays
May - November

Vadinolhu Kandu

Vadinolhu Kandu is a **channel dive** in the northeast of Laamu Atoll, recommended only **for advanced or expert divers** due to its strong currents. The dive starts at a drop-off around 16 meters (52 feet) and goes down to approximately 30 meters (100 feet), offering excellent opportunities to encounter pelagic life. Divers can witness large schools of **jackfish** and **tuna, eagle rays** and an abundance of **shark species**, including the chance to spot sailfish slicing through the blue. The site is also known as a breeding ground for groupers and napoleon wrasses, adding to its ecological importance. **Reef manta rays, green turtles** and **hawksbill turtles** are frequently recorded in this rich and biodiverse marine environment.

Marine life

Sharks
Eagle rays
Tuna
Jackfish
Sailfish
Green turtles
Hawksbill turtles
Groupers
Napoleon wrasse

TOP DIVE SITES IN LAAMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Munnafushi Kandu

Munnafushi Kandu is a wide and vibrant **channel dive** offering thrilling drift experiences, ideal for advanced divers. The dive begins on the open ocean side and crosses the channel at a depth of around 12 to 14 meters (40 to 46 feet), where divers float effortlessly with the current along **healthy coral walls** that drop into the deep blue. Here, **eagle rays** glide gracefully, while **sharks** and **dogtooth tuna** hunt in packs through swirling schools of fish. The site is rich with life including snapper, jackfish, giant trevally, fusiliers, groupers and many other reef species native to the Maldives. The strong current, colorful reefscape and big fish action make this dive both scenic and action-packed.

Marine life

Eagle rays
Sharks
Dogtooth tuna
Jackfish
Giant trevally
Snapper
Fusiliers
Groupers

Maamendhoo Giri

Maamendhoo Giri is a **scenic reef dive** known for its enormous **table coral formations** that create a vibrant underwater landscape. Colorful parrotfish dart among the coral while turtles graze peacefully, and butterflyfish glide through the scene. It's an ideal dive for **spotting reef life up close**, with plenty of relaxed photo opportunities. The site transforms into a magical setting at night, making it a popular **night dive on liveboard routes** before crossing into the next southern atoll. Shallow depths and healthy coral make it suitable for all levels, though especially rewarding for keen macro or coral enthusiasts.

Marine life

Parrotfish
Turtles
Butterflyfish
Reef fish

TOP DIVE SITES IN LAAMU ATOLL CONTINUED

Stingray City

Stingray City, also known as the **Ray Sanctuary**, lives up to its name with an incredible diversity of ray species. Divers can expect encounters with **eagle rays, marvel stingrays, jetking stingrays, porcupine stingrays, cowtail stingrays**, and even **guitar sharks** gliding through the site. The area is rich in surprises - no two dives are the same and rare sightings make every visit thrilling. Whether you're a seasoned diver or a big-animal enthusiast, this site offers one of the most consistent ray encounters in Laamu Atoll. It's an unforgettable experience for anyone who loves graceful pelagic life.

Marine life

Eagle rays
Marvel stingrays
Jetking stingrays
Porcupine stingrays
Cowtail stingrays
Guitar sharks

Bella Thila

Bella Thila is an underwater pinnacle surrounded by vibrant coral gardens. It's a peaceful yet engaging dive where **green sea turtles** often graze among the corals and divers are encouraged to help identify individuals during each visit. Though mainly known for its gentle inhabitants, the thila can reveal larger curiosities like **Napoleon wrasse** or **eagle rays**. Its serene ambiance and healthy reefs make Bella Thila a favorite for quiet, immersive dives.

Marine life

Green sea turtles
Parrotfish
Butterflyfish
Napoleon wrasse
Reef fish

Baresdhoo Faru

Baresdhoo Faru is a haven for **photographers** and **critter-spotters**. Everyone who is not into strong current and channel diving has a great alternative at this dive site. Highlights include **nudibranchs, various shrimp species, ghost pipefish, leaf fish** and **octopus**. It's a must-visit macro wonderland for anyone with a sharp eye and love for small wonders.

Marine life

Nudibranchs
Shrimps
Crabs
Leaf fish
Ghost pipefish
Octopus
Reef fish

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEST TIME TO DIVE LAAMU ATOLL

Laamu Atoll enjoys warm tropical weather year-round, with air temperatures between 25–30°C (77–86°F) and water temperatures around 27–30°C (81–86°F).

The best visibility and diving conditions occur during the **dry season from December to April**, when the seas are calm and days are typically sunny. This is also the **peak season for dive resorts**, with more vibrant activity both underwater and on land.

From May to November, the wet southwest monsoon brings occasional rain showers, but also offers quieter dive sites and an excellent chance to see **manta rays**.



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN LAAMU ATOLL

Resort Islands

[Rahaa Resort Maldives](#)

Rahaa Dive Center

[Six Senses Laamu](#)

Deep Blue Divers Laamu

Local Islands

[Gan](#)

- Reveries Maldives Scuba Zone Dive centre (Divers Tribe / Emperor Divers)



SOUTHERN ATOLLS

DIVE SITES IN LAAMU ATOLL

Isdhoo Muli
Isdhoo West
Isdhoo East
Fushi Kandu
Mundoo Kandu
Mashura
Eryadhoo Reef
Baresdhoo Faru
Fushi Haa
Mundoo Haa
Mundoo Beyru
Stingray City
Nassimoo Taka
Baresdhoo Faru
Bodu Giri
Kuda Giri
Gan House Reef
Bella Thila
Lambada Thila
Miski Thila

Elephant Rock
Gadhoo Etere
Gadhoo Outreef
Gadhoo Corner
Hithadhoo Corner
Hithadhoo West
Hithadhoo Outside
Reethi Haa
Hulgimeedhoo House Reef
Maavah Kandu
Munnafushi Kandu
Vadinolhu Kandu
Maamendhoo Giri
Hanahanaa Giri

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER



CHAPTER IV

DEEP SOUTH

The Deep South (Huvadho, Fuvahmulah, Addu) is the **wild frontier of diving** in the Maldives - remote, raw and filled with big fish action.

Huvadho (Gaafu Atoll) is the "channel atoll" par excellence and one of the deepest natural atolls on Earth. It boasts some of the country's best shark diving, with abundant grey reef, silky and oceanic blacktip sharks seen in deep channels.

Isolated and unique, **Fuvahmulah** is a volcanic island with no surrounding atoll but world-renowned for consistent tiger shark encounters and sightings of thresher sharks, oceanic manta rays and even hammerheads - often all without a reef, as dives happen in the blue.

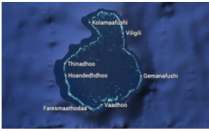
In **Addu**, the southernmost atoll, divers can explore the historic British Loyalty Wreck, manta cleaning stations and dive lush coral reefs teeming with fish life and a variety of reef sharks.

The Deep South is **best suited for experienced divers**, with challenging conditions but unforgettable rewards. Drift dives, predator action and true expedition vibes define this region. It's where serious divers go when they've done the rest of the Maldives - and want more.



CHAPTER IV

DEEP SOUTH



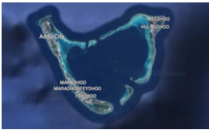
Huvadho Atoll

Huvadho Atoll offers world-class diving in the deep South of the Maldives famous for powerful shark-filled channels and some of the Maldives' most diverse marine encounters, all in an isolated and unspoiled setting.



Fuvahmulah

Fuvahmulah is the Maldives' top shark diving destination, offering guaranteed tiger shark encounters and the chance to spot other rare pelagics like thresher, hammerheads and oceanic mantas.



Addu Atoll

Addu Atoll is the Maldives' southern gem - famous for year-round manta rays, healthy reefs and the country's largest shipwreck, perfect for divers wanting adventure off the beaten path.

DEEP SOUTH

HUVADHOO ATOLL - GAAFU ALIFU & GAAFU DHAALU

The Ultimate Channel Diving Destination

Huvadho Atoll is **one of the largest** and most remote atolls in the Maldives, offering pristine dive sites in the deep South. Its 65 km-wide lagoon and deep outer reef host over 60 dive sites, featuring vibrant **coral gardens**, **caves**, **thilas** and **dramatic drop-offs**.

But the atoll is most famous for **thrilling channel dives** (kandus), where strong currents attract a wide range of shark species including grey reef, nurse, leopard, spinner sharks and even hammerhead and tigersharks from time to time. Macro lovers will also find plenty to explore among coral bommies, such as ribbon eels, scorpionfish and nudibranchs.

Between **January and April**, liveaboards look out for whale sharks at night which adds another unforgettable highlight to the region.



DEEP SOUTH

TOP DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL

Kooddoo Kandu

Kooddoo Channel, located at the southern tip of Kooddoo Island in Huvadhoo Atoll, offers **one of the most shark-rich diving experiences** in the Maldives. With depths reaching 25 meters (82 feet), this site features coral blocks scattered across the sandy floor and strong currents that focus the action around the channel mouth and inner wall. Expect to see large numbers of grey reef sharks and oceanic blacktip sharks. From January to April, a nearby night snorkel spot may offer unique encounters with **whale sharks** feeding under special lighting. This dive site is ideal for experienced divers seeking powerful drifts and large pelagic life.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Oceanic black tip sharks
Hammerhead sharks (occasionally)
Eagle rays
Turtles
Reef fish

Nilandhoo Kandu

Nilandhoo Kandu, located in the northeast of the atoll, is one of the Maldives' **top channel dives**, famous for its thrilling drifts and high pelagic action. Starting around 10 meters (33 feet), divers glide through a wide 300-meter channel that drops to 30 meters (98 feet), with the strongest currents near the entrance. Expect to encounter **grey reef sharks, leopard sharks, eagle rays, stingrays, barracudas** and even the occasional tiger shark. Turtles rest on the sandy bottom while massive schools of trevallies, surgeonfish and bigeye jacks swirl overhead. Best dived from **January to April**, this site is ideal for experienced divers and underwater photographers alike.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Leopard sharks
Tiger sharks (occasionally)
White & black tip reef sharks
Eagle rays
Stingrays
Turtles
Napoleon wrasse
Red bass
Bigeye trevally
Barracuda
Tuna
Sailfish
Jackfish
Grouper

TOP DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Maafushi Beru

Maafushi Beru is a classic **outer reef (outreef) dive** with a reef top starting at 5 meters (16 feet), gently sloping to 15 meters (49 feet), before dropping off like a wall to a depth of 40 meters (131 feet). The reef is rich in coral coverage and buzzing with reef fish, creating an ideal setting for both wide-angle and macro photography. It's a site where anything can happen - **large pelagics** often appear in the blue, from tunas and barracudas to reef sharks. Turtles and napoleon wrasses are also frequently seen drifting along the reef. Look closely for **macro treasures** like nudibranchs, flatworms and cleaner shrimps.

Marine life

Turtles
Sharks
Tunas
Barracuda
Napoleon wrasse
Nudibranch
Flatworm
Cleaner shrimps
Reef fish

Kuda Hafsa Thila

Kuda Hafsa is a small yet **action-packed thila** dive with a top reef starting at 10–12 meters (33–40 feet) and a large coral block on the top rising up to 6 meters (20 feet). Despite its compact size, the site boasts **massive biodiversity** - from dense schools of blue-striped snapper and anthias to predatory dogtooth tuna and bluefin trevally hunting baitfish. Grey reef sharks, white tip sharks and even mobula rays often make an appearance in the blue, especially during strong currents. **Macro lovers** will also be rewarded with sightings of leaf fish, ribbon eels, fire gobies and anemonefish among sea anemones and black whip coral. With intense predator-prey action and vibrant soft corals in red, orange and yellow hues, this site guarantees a spectacular underwater show.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Dogtooth tunas
Bluefin trevally
Mobula rays
Eagle rays
Batfish
Rainbow runner
Yellowback fusilier
Yellow and blue striped
Snapper
Scorpionfish
Ribbon eels
Fire goby
Stonefish
Anemonefish
Turtles
Nudibranch

TOP DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Meradhoo Kandu

Meradhoo Kandu is a wide **channel dive** on the west side of Gaafu Alif Atoll, starting at 10 meters (33 feet) and descending to about 30 meters (98 feet). The ocean-facing wall is richly decorated with layers of table corals, yellow and orange soft corals and branching corals, often attracting **macro life** and **large pelagics**. Divers can spot white tip and black tip reef sharks, schools of bluefin trevally, giant groupers, eagle rays and Napoleon wrasses, while leopard sharks and stingrays rest on the sandy patches. With strong incoming currents, it's a thrilling drift dive with fusiliers raining down and bigeye trevallies hunting on the corner. Spinner dolphins are sometimes seen (or heard) passing through the channel, adding to the magic of this dynamic site.

Villigili Kandu

Villigili Kandu is a **thrilling channel dive** in the northeast of Gaafu Alif Atoll, where strong currents make for exciting drift diving from around 10 to 30 meters (33 to 98 feet). This site is famous for its **shark action**, especially large numbers of grey reef sharks and silvertip sharks congregating near the channel mouth. Divers often hook in to observe the show before drifting into the channel, where they may also encounter white tip reef sharks, schools of barracuda and eagle rays. The dive direction depends on the current, and high seas may add an extra challenge, making this site best suited **for experienced divers**. It's a favorite among liveboards and shark diving enthusiasts.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
 Black tip reef sharks
 Leopard sharks
 Giant grouper
 Bluefin trevally
 Bigeye trevally
 Jackfish
 Tunas
 Eagle rays
 Stingrays
 Napoleon wrasse
 Snappers
 Surgeonfish
 Fusiliers
 Barracuda
 Hawksbill turtles
 Spinner dolphins
 (occasionally)

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
 Silver tip sharks
 White tip reef sharks
 Barracuda
 Eagle rays
 Turtles

TOP DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Maarehaa Kandu

Maarehaa Kandu is a **marine protected channel dive** on the eastern side of Huvadhu Atoll, with depths ranging from 10 to 30 meters (33 to 98 feet). Due to the fishing ban, **marine life here is abundant** and divers often encounter up to 200 grey reef sharks, along with silvertip, white tip and black tip reef sharks. The dive usually starts at the channel mouth to watch pelagic activity before drifting into the atoll, gliding past sandy patches and vibrant coral formations. **Strong currents** make this site best suited for advanced and Nitrox-certified divers. Turtles, eagle rays, dogtooth tuna, Napoleon wrasses, moray eels and even sailfish can also be spotted, making this a top dive in the atoll.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Silver tip sharks
White tip reef sharks
Black tip reef sharks
Dogtooth tuna
Eagle rays
Napoleon wrasse
Hawksbill turtles
Green turtles
Moray eels

Vodamulaa Kandu

Vodamulaa Kandu is a wide, **high-energy channel dive** located along the southeastern reef of Vodamulaa Island. The sandy bottom lies at a depth of around 28 to 30 meters (92 to 98 feet), where divers frequently spot **grey, white tip and silvertip reef sharks**. Due to strong currents, divers must exercise caution near the channel mouth to avoid drifting too far. Along the inside wall, turtles are often seen feeding among the coral and eagle rays gracefully glide through the shallower areas. This dive offers a thrilling mix of pelagics and reef life, making it ideal for experienced divers seeking adventure.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
White tip reef sharks
Silver tip sharks
Turtles
Eagle rays

TOP DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Kooddoo Harbour / Shark Point

Kooddoo Shark Point is a thrilling dive site located just off **Kooddoo Harbour**, known for its impressive shark action. Divers can explore the reef at depths ranging from 10 to 30 meters (33 to 98 feet), where **grey reef sharks** and **spinner sharks** are frequent sightings. Occasionally, the dive becomes even more exciting with appearances by **bull sharks** and **guitar sharks**. Here it's all about high-adrenaline encounters with large predators. This site is ideal for experienced divers seeking close encounters with some of the ocean's most powerful creatures.

Marine life

Grey reef sharks
Spinner sharks
Bull sharks
Guitar sharks

Gemanafushi Blue

Gemanafushi Blue is an **advanced-level dive site** ideal for experienced divers comfortable with **blue water diving** and no reef or bottom reference. Located offshore from Gemanafushi Island, this site is known for its thrilling drift dives in **open ocean conditions**. The main highlight here is the **potential to spot scalloped hammerhead sharks**, which often swim past in the early morning hours. Other possible sightings include silky sharks, silvertip sharks and even whale sharks if luck is on your side. This dive requires excellent buoyancy control, situational awareness and confidence in deep, reference-free conditions.

Marine life

Scalloped hammerhead sharks
Silky sharks
Silver tip sharks

DEEP SOUTH

BEST TIME TO DIVE HUVADHOO ATOLL

Huvadho Atoll offers year-round diving thanks to its tropical equatorial climate, but seasonal changes still influence conditions. The best time to dive is during the **northeast monsoon (December to April)**, when calm seas, excellent visibility, and mostly incoming currents create ideal conditions for underwater exploration. Water temperatures range from 26–29°C (79–84°F) and air temperatures hover around 28–30°C (82–86°F).

The **southwest monsoon** (May to November) brings more wind, occasional rain and slightly warmer water.

Liveaboards tend to visit the Deep South mainly between **January and March** due to transit distances and weather stability.



DEEP SOUTH

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN HUVADHOO

Resort Islands

[Pullman Maldives Maamutaa Resort \(incl. UW Accommodation\)](#)
Pullman Suvadiva Diving Center

[Mercure Maldives Kooddoo Resort](#)
Suvadiva Divers Maldives

[The Residence Maldives at Dhigurah](#)
The Residence Dhigurah - Dive & Water Sports

[The Residence Maldives at Falhumaafushi](#)
The Residence Maldives Dive & Water Sports

[Raffles Maldives Meradhoo Resort](#)
MSTS Dive Club

[Robinson Club Maldives](#)
Deep by Silver Sands

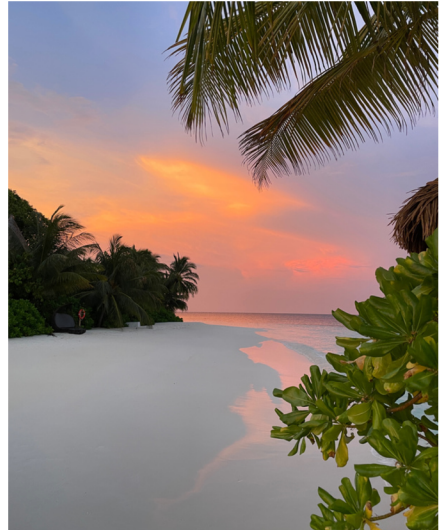
[NH Collection Maldives Havodda Resort](#)
Aquafanatics @NH Havodda

[Park Hyatt Maldives Hadahaa](#)
Blue Journeys

[Ayada Maldives](#)
Dive Kingdom International

Local Islands

[Maamendhoo](#)
• Scuba Chain @ Huvadhoo Lodge



DEEP SOUTH

DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL

Whale shark point
Turtle Point
Villingili Kandu
Kooddoo Kandu
The Residence
Maitidhoo Thila
Kuredhoo Kandu
Matidhoo Thila
Nilandhoo North
Nilandhoo Kandu
Nilandhoo Thila
Doragall Thila
Dhaandhoo Out
Vodamulaa Kandu
Five Brothers
Munandhoo Corner
Munandhoo Kandu
Mahadhoo Corner
Shigalla Kandu
Funadhoo Kandu
Hasanbey
Kondey Mathee Faru
Hadahaa Housereef
Park Thila
Park Faru
Kalhu Bodu Thila
Kondey Corner
Kondey Kandu
Kondey Coral Garden
Hirifushi Faru
Alila Thila
Alila Faru

Dheeva Giri
Dheeva Thila
Wagaathu Gala
Mas Thila
Fulangi Thila
Fulangi Kandu
Coral City
Hafsa Thila
Maafushi Beyru
Meradhoo Thila
Meradhoo Kandu
Cabbage Thila
Dheevamaagalaa Faru
Funamaudoo Faru
Haodi Galaa Giri
Thinadhoo Thila
Kafena Kandu
Rahadhoo Kandu
Dhiyadhoo Corner
Dhiyadhoo Out
Dhiyadhoo Thila
Marehaa Thila (Nemo Thila)
Marehaa Kandu
Gemanafushi Corner
Gemanafushi Canyon
Eagle Rays Garden
Hulaa Thila
Keyolhu Faru
Kuda Thila

DIVE SITES IN HUVADHOO ATOLL CONTINUED

Araigathaa Faru
Bondu Giri
Gaddu Kanduu
Kaashidhoo Thila
Mafzoo Giri
Fanka Thila
Coral Garden 1
Coral Garden 2
Gan Channel
Gadhoo Channel
Aquarium
Manta Point
Ulegalaa Thila
Gabur Island
Vadhoo Thila
Beyru Ha Thila
Bodu Giri
Kuda Giri
Leons Giri
Gosi Faru
Baulhageella Faru
Kaadedhdhoo Kanduu



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

DEEP SOUTH

FUVAHMULAH

Tiger Sharks and Deep Blue Encounters

Fuvahmulah, **located on the equator** in the deep south of the Maldives, is a diver's paradise for **rare shark and pelagic encounters**. It's the only place in the world where **tiger sharks** can reliably be seen every day at the famous Tiger Zoo.

Fuvahmulah is both an **atoll and a single island**, with **no resort infrastructure** – you'll stay on a local island and dive with locally owned dive centers, offering an authentic Maldivian experience. With its remote location, raw beauty and thrilling marine life, it has become one of the country's **most exciting destinations for experienced divers**. If you're chasing big animals and true adventure, diving in Fuvahmulah is a must!

The island's **deep walls** and ocean-facing reef attract rare species like **thresher sharks, hammerhead sharks, oceanic manta rays, whale sharks** and even **mola molas**, but these sightings depend on timing, conditions and a bit of luck.



DEEP SOUTH

TOP DIVE SITES IN FUVAHMULAH

Tiger Zoo

Tiger Zoo is Fuvahmulah's most famous and sought-after dive site, offering **year-round, close-up encounters with tiger sharks** - often five to ten individuals per dive. Located right at the **island's harbor**, the site starts on a shallow reef and slopes down to over 30 meters (100 feet). Since 2004, fish waste discarded by local fishermen has attracted a stable population of tiger sharks, making this one of the few places in the world with such reliable sightings. These massive sharks, easily recognized by their dark stripes and size of up to 5 meters (16 feet), now coexist with schools of trevallies, rainbow runners and snappers. Due to its popularity, **dive centers operate on a time slot system** to avoid overcrowding and ensure safe diving conditions. Each dive begins with a detailed safety briefing covering shark behavior, group protocols and emergency procedures.

Gemmiskih Fanno

Gemmiskih Fanno is a reef on the northern side of Fuvahmulah, known for its **rich coral growth** and vibrant reef fish population. Divers can expect to see colorful species and schools of **fusiliers, mackerel** and **rainbow runners** moving in from the blue. Large **milkfish** are also commonly observed gliding through the current. When conditions are favorable, rare encounters are possible with pelagic giants like **oceanic mantas, thresher sharks** and **even whale sharks**. The site is a beautiful blend of reef biodiversity and pelagic surprises.

Marine life

Tiger sharks
Silver tip sharks
Giant trevallies
Rainbow runners
Barracudas
Jackfish
Flounders
MorayeEels
Leaf fish
Lionfish

Marine life

Pelagic thresher sharks
Giant trevallies
Barracudas
Groupers
Snappers

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
March - May

TOP DIVE SITES IN FUVAHMULAH CONTINUED

Farikede

Farikede is one of Fuvahmulah's **most spectacular dive sites**, a designated Protected Marine Area and a dramatic drift dive along a submerged reef that extends from **Fuvahmulah's southern tip**. The reef starts at 10 to 15 meters (33–50 feet) and **drops off into the open ocean**, creating ideal conditions for large pelagics. Here divers can see grey reef, white tip and silver tip sharks, along with frequent visits from tiger sharks and thresher sharks. Large schools of dogtooth and skipjack tunas, giant trevallies, great barracudas, groupers and snappers are common throughout the site. Oceanic mantas are sometimes seen here, and the **fast-moving currents** make it possible to cover large areas of reef in one dive. Though it's not guaranteed, lucky divers have also spotted rarer species such as mola molas (sunfish), hammerhead sharks, whale sharks, oceanic white tips and even humpback whales. This site is suited for advanced divers due to the often-strong currents and deep drop-offs.

Marine life

Silver tip sharks
 White tip sharks
 Grey reef sharks
 Thresher sharks
 Tiger sharks
 Giant trevallies
 Barracudas
 Skipjack tunas
 Dogtooth tunas
 Groupers
 Snappers
 Yellow fin tunas
 Oceanic White Tips
 Mola Molas (very rare)

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
 March - May

Hammerhead Sharks
 October - April

Whale Sharks
 Jan - May

Marine life

Pelagic thresher sharks
 Giant trevallies
 Barracudas
 Groupers
 Snappers
 Green turtles
 Hawksbill turtles

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
 March - May

Maaneyre

Maaneyre, once used as a landing beach before the harbor was constructed, is now a stunning dive site rich in **hard corals**. The reef begins at around 12 meters (39 feet) and slopes down into the deep blue, offering a **vibrant underwater landscape**. Colorful reef fish thrive here, nourished by the nutrient-rich currents flowing over the reef. Divers should always keep an eye on the blue water, as surprises often await - anything from schooling fish to passing pelagics. **Sea turtles** are frequently encountered at this site.

TOP DIVE SITES IN FUVAHMULAH CONTINUED

Thundi / Thoodu / Toondu

This divesite is located on the northeastern corner of Fuvahmulah, where the reef begins at 6 meters (20 feet) and slopes down past 30 meters (98 feet) into the deep. The site is rich in hard coral growth and teeming with reef life, including triggerfish, wrasses, surgeonfish and parrotfish. **Hawksbill turtles** are often seen gliding along the reef, while **scorpionfish** rest around large coral blocks. With favorable conditions, lucky divers may also spot **pelagic visitors** like thresher sharks, oceanic mantas or even whale sharks passing by. These sightings are not guaranteed, but they make every dive at Thundi feel full of potential. The reef's healthy ecosystem and surprise encounters make it a rewarding site for divers of all experience levels.

Rasge Fanno

Rasge Fanno, located on the eastern side of Fuvahmulah, is a sloping reef dive site known for its vibrant coral ecosystems and diverse marine life. The reef starts at a shallow 5 to 7 meters (16 to 23 feet) and slopes down to 18 to 30 meters (59 to 98 feet), offering a variety of depths to explore. This site is a **popular cleaning station for manta rays** and **thresher sharks**, which can sometimes be seen in the area. Predatory fish like giant trevallies, dogtooth tuna and barracudas also frequent the reef, alongside numerous reef fish species. Rasge Fanno is suitable for both Open Water and Advanced divers and offers the chance for unique and exciting encounters.

Marine life

Pelagic Threshers (cleaning station)
Giant Trevallies
Barracudas
Groupers
Snappers
Eagle rays
Mola Molas (very rare)

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
March - May

Hammerhead Sharks
October - April

Whale Sharks
Jan - May

Marine life

Pelagic thresher sharks
Giant trevallies
Barracudas
Groupers
Snappers
Bat fish
Reef sharks

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
March - May

TOP DIVE SITES IN FUVAHMULAH CONTINUED

Seafan / Bondo Fanno / Bodo Fanno

Bondo Fanno, also known as Sea Fan, is a stunning reef located north of Fuvahmulah's harbor. The site is named after the **large sea fans** that grow starting at around 20 meters (66 feet), creating a colorful underwater landscape. The top reef, beginning at 5 meters (16 feet), is rich with hard corals and bustling with reef fish. **Coral blocks and crevices** shelter various marine species and **soft corals** add to the beauty of the site. Divers also have a chance of spotting oceanic mantas, tiger sharks and other pelagic visitors.

Marine life

Pelagic Threshers
Tiger sharks
Giant Trevallies
Barracudas
Groupers
Snappers
White tip reef sharks
Fusiliers
Boxfish
Nudibranch

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
March - May

Neregando

Neregando is Fuvahmulah's northwestern reef, known for its thriving coral life that supports a large variety of reef fish. Coral blocks located between 20 and 30 meters (66 to 98 feet) attract big schools of **snappers, groupers, trevallies** and several species of **reef sharks**. When current conditions are favorable, divers can spot a variety of **pelagic species** cruising by. Big marine life sightings are possible here, including thresher sharks, oceanic manta rays and occasionally even whale sharks. This site is a great choice for divers who enjoy both reef and blue-water encounters.

Marine life

Pelagic thresher sharks
Giant Trevallies
Barracudas
Groupers
Snappers

Seasonal:

Oceanic Mantas
March - May

DEEP SOUTH

BEST TIME TO DIVE FUVAHMULAH

Fuvahmulah can be dived **year-round**, but the best time to visit is between **January and April**, when conditions are most stable and visibility peaks.

The island's location on the equator means less pronounced monsoons compared to other parts of the Maldives, offering more consistent diving with warm water temperatures throughout the year.

The northeast monsoon (December–March) brings dry weather and especially **April - May** brings the best chances to see **whale sharks, thresher sharks, hammerheads** and **oceanic mantas**. While tiger sharks are seen daily all year, these peak months offer a rare chance to encounter nearly all of Fuvahmulah's seasonal pelagics in one trip. The calm seas and excellent visibility make this period ideal for underwater photographers and big-animal enthusiasts.



BEST TIME TO DIVE FUVAHMULAH CONTINUED

Tiger Sharks (Year-Round)

Fuvahmulah is the only place in the Maldives where you can dive with tiger sharks every single day, with a near 100% success rate. These massive predators are resident year-round and are commonly seen at Tiger Harbour, often calmly circling divers in shallow water for unforgettable close-up encounters regardless of the weather or season.

Thresher Sharks (Year-Round)

Unlike most places where thresher sharks stay deep, in Fuvahmulah they often rise to shallower cleaning stations at just 12–15 meters (39–49 feet), especially during high tide. These elusive sharks, with their long whip-like tails, can be seen year-round but more often between mid April to December.

Whale Sharks (January - May)

Fuvahmulah is one of the few places in the world where you can sometimes see adult female whale sharks with pups. While encounters are possible year-round, these gentle giants are more commonly sighted between January and May, often cruising the deep reef walls around the island.

Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks (October - April)

Fuvahmulah is one of the Maldives' only hotspots for schooling scalloped hammerheads. Divers may encounter large schools of them at deeper sites, especially during new and full moon phases between October and April. Occasionally, great hammerheads are also seen, though they are more solitary and elusive.

Silver Tip Sharks (Year-Round)

Often found mingling with tiger sharks in areas like Tiger Harbour, silver tip sharks in Fuvahmulah are seen in large numbers and can appear in schools. Their striking white-edged fins and bold behavior make them a favorite among experienced divers.

BEST TIME TO DIVE FUVAHMULAH CONTINUED

Oceanic Manta Rays (March - May)

Fuvahmulah is the Maldives' top location for the rare black oceanic manta ray - an entirely different species from the reef mantas seen elsewhere. Between March and May, these giants gather in large numbers to feed, clean and mate, making it one of the best places in the world to witness their majestic movements.

Grey Reef & White tip Reef Sharks (Year-Round)

These reef sharks patrol the reefs of Fuvahmulah in large numbers year-round. White tips are commonly found resting in overhangs and caves, sometimes even with pups, while grey reefs often cruise in the blue alongside schools of barracuda and tuna.

Other Oceanic Species

Mobula rays are a thrilling surprise in Fuvahmulah's deep blue, gliding by in groups. The island's exposed location also means regular sightings of giant trevally, yellowfin tuna, schools of bonitos and occasionally mola mola, sailfish and even pilot or humpback whales.



DEEP SOUTH

DIVE CENTERS IN FUVAHMULAH

Local Divecenters

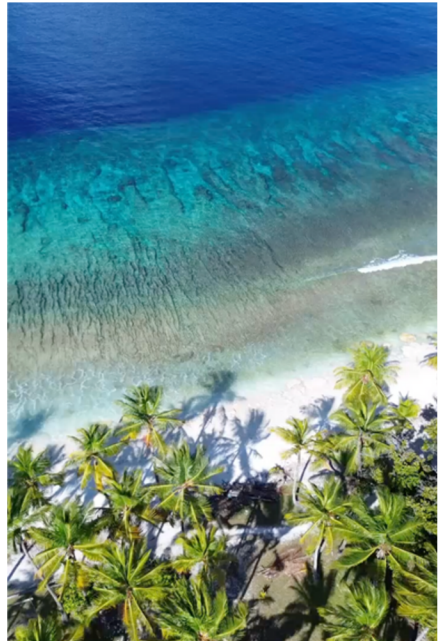
- Fuvahmulah Central Dive Center
- Pelagic Divers Fuvahmulah
- Extreme Dive Fuvahmulah
- Fuvahmulah Dive School
- Fuvahmulah Scuba Club
- Shark Island Dive
- Scuba Shark Fuvahmulah
- Scuba Butler
- Shark Expedition Fuvahmulah
- Shark School Fuvahmulah
- Liquid Shark Divers



DEEP SOUTH

DIVE SITES IN FUVAHMULAH

Tiger Point / Tiger Zoo (Merika
Falhagando)
Bilhi Feyshi / Fari Mikede / Galgandi
Kede
Kudhu Falhagando / Abadhas / Vankole
Goni
Farikede (Plato)
Ganbithe Faro / Ebithe Faro
Bilhifeysi / Hawwa Faro
Kalho Akiri
Kandhoval
Maaneyre
Aruh Fanno
Nere Muli
Neregando
Gehmiskiy Fanno
Varovaa Thundi / Toondu / Bathi Dhoro
Havitha Fanno
Ambul
Rasge Fanno
Sea Fan / Bodo Fanno / Bondo Fanno



ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

DEEP SOUTH

ADDU ATOLL - SEENU

WWII Wrecks & Mantas Year-Round

The heart-shaped Addu Atoll is the **southernmost atoll** of the Maldives, just below the equator, and offers a unique blend of diving, culture and scenery.

Divers can enjoy **year-round manta ray encounters, the Maldives' largest shipwreck** (British Loyalty), and healthy reefs. The atoll features diverse underwater topography including channels, thilas, wrecks, and calm lagoon dives suited for beginners.

With **fewer tourists, local charm** and both **budget and luxury accommodation**, Addu is ideal for those seeking something different.

The currents are generally mild, making many sites accessible **for all levels** and enjoyable even during tidal changes.



DEEP SOUTH

TOP DIVE SITES IN ADDU ATOLL

British Loyalty Wreck

The British Loyalty is the **largest shipwreck in the Maldives**, lying between the islands of Maradhoo and Hithadhoo at depths of 16 to 33 metres (52 to 108 feet). Originally a 5,583-tonne oil tanker built in 1928, it was torpedoed twice during WWII and finally scuttled in 1946 by British forces. The 140-metre (459-foot) wreck lies on its starboard side and is now **completely encrusted with hard and soft corals**, hosting schools of fish, turtles and occasionally manta rays and sharks. Divers can explore large holes in the hull and even swim through parts of the wreck. With visibility around 20 metres (66 feet), easy access from Gan and a rich history, the British Loyalty is a must-dive for wreck and marine life lovers alike.

Gan Inside

Gan Inside is a **shallow, beginner-friendly dive site** located near Gan Airport in Addu Atoll. The site features a small reef wall starting at 5 meters, with sandy paths on the reef top inhabited by numerous **stingrays**. Divers frequently encounter **hawksbill and green turtles** in the area. Its sheltered conditions and gentle currents make it ideal for novice divers and training sessions. Despite its accessibility, Gan Inside offers rich marine life and scenic underwater landscapes.

Marine life

- Turtles
- Bluefin jack
- Reef fish
- Sharks (occasionally)
- Manta rays (occasionally)

Marine life

- Stingrays
- Turtles
- Eagle rays
- Jackfish
- Reeffish
- Reef sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN ADDU ATOLL CONTINUED

Muli Kolhu

Muli Kolhu Faru, on the southeastern edge of Addu Atoll, is known as the atoll's '**Manta Point**', where manta rays can be seen **year-round**. The dive begins on a gently sloping reef from 5 to 30 metres (16 to 98 feet) and leads into the Viligili Kandu channel, with a sandy bottom at around 35 metres (115 feet). A large steel buoy and a thick chain, both remnants of a WWII submarine net, lie along the bottom and reef edge, adding a historical highlight to the dive. Mantas often glide along the chain, while **white tip reef sharks**, **barracuda** and **nurse sharks** can be found resting under nearby overhangs. The site offers both marine megafauna encounters and fascinating wartime relics.

Marine life

Manta rays
Reef sharks
Barracudas
Nurse sharks

Maa Kandu Channel

Maa Kandu is an adrenaline-packed **channel dive** ideal for thrill-seekers and shark lovers. The dive starts on a wide thila at 5–7 metres (16–23 feet) before drifting along a reef slope that drops steeply beyond 12 metres (39 feet). The outer edge at around 30 metres (98 feet) is the hotspot, often swarming with pelagic action - **tunas**, **eagle rays**, **napoleons** and groups of **grey reef sharks**. Big **manta rays** are frequently seen at the corner, soaring over stunning coral formations. The reef is rich with hard acropora coral, massive brain corals and spongy leather coral.

Marine life

Manta rays
Grey reef sharks
Tunas
Napoleon wrasse
Eagle rays

Maa Kandu Beyru

Maa Kandu Beyru is a **gentle outside reef dive** perfect for beginners and those who enjoy slow, scenic drifts. The reef is beautifully decorated with **large table corals** and vibrant **brain coral** formations. Divers are often surrounded by schools of **fusiliers** darting through the water. **Eagle rays** glide by gracefully, and **turtles** are frequent companions on the reef. On lucky days, manta rays also make an appearance.

Marine life

Fusiliers
Eagle rays
Manta rays
Turtles

TOP DIVE SITES IN ADDU ATOLL CONTINUED

Shark Point (Meedhoo Beyru)

Shark Point, located on the northeast tip of Addu Atoll near Hulhumeedhoo, is one of the most thrilling **shark dives** in the area. The dive begins on a sloping reef from 5 to 30 metres (16 to 98 feet), leading to a broad sandy plateau. This area is famously known as the "**shark hotel**", where many white-tip reef sharks and grey reef sharks can be seen. Beyond the plateau, the reef drops steeply past 60 metres (197 feet) into the blue. When visibility is good, divers can spot larger sharks cruising in the deeper water.

Marine life

White tip reef sharks
Grey reef sharks

Gulda Lamago

Gulda Lamago is a reef dive site located southeast of Koatthey in Addu Atoll. The site features a steep slope adorned with hard coral boulders and **vibrant soft corals**, descending to a sandy bottom at approximately 40 meters (131 feet). Divers can explore **cavities and caves** between 30 to 35 meters (98 to 115 feet), which are known to house lobsters. The area occasionally offers sightings of **sharks**, adding an element of excitement to the dive. The combination of diverse marine life and intriguing underwater topography makes Gulda Lamago a noteworthy dive spot in the region.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Lobsters
Napoleon wrasse
Octopus

Bushy West

Bushy West Channel, located on the west side of Kandu Huraa, is a stunning **drift dive** and a highlight of Addu Atoll. The coral slope is covered with vibrant coral gardens and large coral heads. **Nurse sharks** often rest among these coral formations. Divers regularly encounter **eagle rays, napoleons** and **turtles** throughout the dive. The corner of the reef sometimes brings sightings of reef sharks and rays.

Marine life

Napoleon wrasse
Eagle rays
Turtles
Reef sharks
Nurse sharks

TOP DIVE SITES IN ADDU ATOLL CONTINUED

Koatthey Beryu West

Koatthey Beryu West, situated near Fen Muli on Addu Atoll's outer reef, features a series of **descending plateaus** teeming with marine life. Divers between 20 and 30 meters (66 to 98 feet) can observe **white tip** and **grey reef sharks**. The site also hosts **Napoleon wrasses**, **surgeonfish** schools, **barracudas** and occasional **manta rays**. A notable steep drop-off begins at 30 meters (98 feet), enhancing the site's topography. Due to potential strong currents, diving is recommended during calm weather conditions.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Napoleon wrasse
Surgeon fish
Barracudas
Manta rays

Muda Kan

Muda Kan is a **must-dive drift site** leading through a channel into Addu Atoll, known for both thrilling currents and exceptional marine life. On the eastern side of the channel lies a broad plateau between 12 and 22 meters (39–72 ft), covered in impressive **table corals** of all sizes. At the channel entrance, divers regularly encounter various species of **reef sharks** cruising in the blue. Further inside, cleaning stations attract numerous **manta rays**, especially when the current is right. The area is also home to large numbers of **triggerfish** - some of which can be a bit feisty.

Marine life

Reef sharks
Triggerfish
Manta rays

DEEP SOUTH

BEST TIME TO DIVE ADDU ATOLL

Diving in Addu Atoll is possible **year-round** thanks to warm tropical conditions, with air temperatures between 24°C–33°C (75°F–91°F) and water temperatures ranging from 27°C–31°C (81°F–88°F). **Manta rays can be seen year-round** in Addu atoll.

The best time to dive is from **January to April**, when the sea is calmest, visibility is high and the water is warmest - perfect for all levels of divers. This period coincides with the dry season and peak tourist season, so early booking is recommended.

From **May to October**, the southwest monsoon brings more rain and reduced visibility, especially June to August, but dive operators usually know which sites remain sheltered.

Travel during new or full moon is ideal for stronger currents and more pelagic activity like manta rays and sharks.



DEEP SOUTH

ISLANDS AND DIVE CENTERS IN ADDU ATOLL

Resort Islands

[South Palm Maldives](#)

Southern Maldives divers

[Canareef Resort Maldives](#)

Diverland Maldives & Werner Lau Joint
Venture

[Equator Village Maldives](#)

Diverland Maldives

Local Islands

[Maradhoo](#)

- Aquaventure Maldives

[Addu City](#)

- Forest Blu Maldives



DEEP SOUTH

DIVE SITES IN ADDU ATOLL

Fen Muli / Koatthey Beyru West / Kotthey Corner
 Koatthey Outside / Koatthey Beyru
 Demon Point
 Gulda Lamagu
 Umaru's Place / Turtle Point
 Bodu Hoholha
 Kuda Hoholha
 Kuda Kandu Beyru
 Kuda Kandu Kan
 Fihali Faru / Fihaufara
 Maahala
 Bushy West
 Bushy Beyru
 Bushy East
 Hunboh Faro
 Maakandu Thila
 Mudakan Manta
 Maakandu Channel / Manta Point
 Maakandu Beyru / Maakandu Outside
 Ismehelaa Beyru / Meedhoo Wall

Meedhoo Beyru / Meedhoo Coral Garden / Shark Point
 Hulaudhoo Beyru
 Herethera Beyru
 The Pyramids
 Mulikolhu Outside / The Plateau
 Mulikede Beyru / Viligili Channel /
 Mulikolhu Faru
 Banana Reef
 Medu Gaa
 Sandra Thila
 Thoraa
 Muli Inside
 Mulikede Beyru / Villingili Coral Garden
 Villingili Outside
 Mulikolhu Faru
 Gan Channel
 Gan Outside
 Kahanbu Faru
 Dighera
 British Loyalty Wreck

ATTENTION: DIVE SITE NAMES VARY A BIT FROM DIVE CENTER TO DIVE CENTER

CHAPTER V

PLANNING, SAFETY AND LOGISTICS

Before you giant stride into the turquoise waters of the Maldives, a bit of planning goes a long way.

This chapter covers what you need to know to make smart decisions - from choosing between **liveaboards**, **resorts** and **local islands** to understanding when and where to dive. We'll guide you through the **seasons**, **weather patterns** and how they affect visibility and marine life. You'll also find practical tips on **booking**, **packing** and navigating the **local dive culture**. **Safety** is a priority too, so we've included essential advice on current conditions, dive insurance and responsible diving practices.

Whether it's your first dive holiday or your tenth, the Maldives can still surprise you. Let's make sure you're ready for every bubble.



CHAPTER V

BEST TIME TO DIVE THE MALDIVES

The Seasons

The Maldives enjoy a tropical climate all year round, with consistently warm temperatures and abundant sunshine.

April is typically the **hottest month**, with an average high of 31.5°C (88.7°F) and a low of 26.5°C (79.7°F). In contrast,

December is usually the **coolest month**, with daytime temperatures averaging 29.8°C (85.6°F) and nighttime lows of 25.3°C (77.5°F).

There are regional differences in weather patterns across the country. The **southern Maldives** tends to experience more frequent but less intense rainfall, whereas the **northern atolls** see heavier downpours and greater temperature fluctuations. As you move farther north from the equator, the seasonal contrasts become more distinct.

Monsoon Seasons

December – April: **Northeast Monsoon**
(Dry Season)

April: Transition Period

May – November: **Southwest Monsoon**
(Wet Season)

November: **Transition Period**

The Maldivian climate is shaped by two monsoon periods each year:

The **Northeast Monsoon (Iruvai)** – This period is typically dry and sunny, as winds from the Asian continent travel quickly across the ocean, picking up little moisture. The humidity is lower, and the skies are often clear, creating ideal conditions for travel and diving.

The **Southwest Monsoon (Bulhangu)** – Dominating from June to September, this monsoon brings increased cloud cover, stronger winds and rougher seas, along with frequent showers and occasional storms.

The hottest months are March and April, when light winds from the northeast create calm conditions. During April, it's common to experience days with no wind at all, signaling the start of the seasonal transition. Between April and May, the winds gradually shift from west to southwest, often accompanied by two weeks of stronger winds and rain.

BEST TIME TO DIVE IN THE MALDIVES CONTINUED

Occasionally, remnants of cyclones from the Bay of Bengal can affect the region.

From **June to September**, the Southwest Monsoon brings stormier weather, choppier seas and cloudier skies. The transition back to the dry season begins in **October and November**, with winds shifting from west-northwest to north-northeast. Early **December** can still see gusty winds and rain, but as the Northeast Monsoon settles in, the weather becomes more stable and dry.

Due to its equatorial location, the Maldives is rarely affected by **tropical storms** or **cyclones**. If any remnants of cyclones do reach the Maldives, they typically impact the northern atolls, as major storm systems rarely form south of the 5th parallel.

Water temperatures

In the Maldives, water temperatures typically range from **27–30°C** (80.6–86°F), though thermoclines can sometimes be felt below 20 meters (65 feet). During the hottest months, the temperature in shallow lagoons can rise significantly, impacting the overall warmth of the atoll's waters. This period is ideal for divers who tend to feel cold easily, as they can comfortably dive without a wetsuit.

However, during seasonal transitions with strong winds and passing rain showers, wearing waterproof clothing on dive boats is advisable. Mostly Lycra skins or 3mm wetsuits offer sufficient protection, though those doing multiple dives per day may find a 5mm wetsuit more comfortable.



BEST TIME TO DIVE IN THE MALDIVES CONTINUED

Currents

Currents are one of the most defining features of diving in the Maldives - and one of the reasons the underwater world here is so rich with life. These **nutrient-packed ocean flows** attract large schools of fish, pelagic species like sharks and mantas and feed vibrant coral ecosystems. While currents can feel intimidating at first, understanding them will help you enjoy some of the most spectacular dives of your life.

The Maldives lies at the heart of the Indian Ocean, where water flows are influenced by seasonal monsoons. **During the Northeast Monsoon currents generally flow from east to west. During the Southwest Monsoon they reverse, flowing west to east.** These changing patterns affect visibility, water temperature, and where marine life congregates - especially in the channels of the atolls.

In channels, **incoming (into the atoll) and outgoing (out to the ocean)** currents create two very different dive experiences. **Incoming currents** bring clear blue ocean water and excellent visibility, perfect for shark sightings. **Outgoing currents**, on the other hand, stir up nutrients and may attract mantas or whale sharks - though visibility may drop.

Your dive guides will always check current strength and direction before a dive and adjust entry points accordingly.

Best time to dive

The Maldives offers exceptional scuba diving opportunities **year-round**, with water temperatures consistently ranging from 27°C to 30°C (80°F to 86°F). However, the optimal time for diving varies based on seasonal monsoon patterns, which influence visibility, marine life activity and overall weather conditions.

Northeast Monsoon (December to April):

This period is characterized by dry, warm weather, making it the **most popular season for tourists**. Divers can mostly expect clear blue skies, calm seas and excellent underwater visibility, often ranging from 20 to 40 meters. These conditions are ideal for exploring the vibrant coral reefs and encountering a diverse array of marine life. Additionally, **the strong currents during these months attract large pelagic species**, including various shark species, making channel diving particularly thrilling.

BEST TIME TO DIVE IN THE MALDIVES CONTINUED

Southwest Monsoon (May to November): Known as the **wet season**, this time frame brings increased humidity, higher chances of rainfall and occasionally rougher seas. Visibility may be reduced due to plankton blooms; however, these nutrient-rich waters attract manta rays and whale sharks, offering unique diving experiences despite the decreased clarity.

Transitional Periods: The shoulder months mark the transitions between monsoon seasons. Diving conditions can be unpredictable, with variable weather patterns and shifting currents.

It's important to note that weather patterns have become **less predictable** in recent years, leading to potential rain during the dry season and unexpected stretches of sunshine during the wet season. Therefore, while the outlined seasonal trends provide a general guideline, divers should **remain flexible and prepared for varying conditions**.



CHAPTER V

DIVING SAFETY

Diving in the Maldives is **generally safe**, but being well-prepared is essential to avoid preventable problems and ensure a worry-free experience. **Conditions can vary from easy to advanced** - especially in current-swept channels - so physical and mental readiness, along with proper planning, make a big difference.

Before your trip, it's recommended to **complete a medical check-up** to confirm you're fit to dive. Some dive centers may require a signed medical statement, especially if you have pre-existing conditions or haven't dived in a while. If you're planning a liveaboard trip or diving in remote areas, physical fitness and confidence in the water are even more important.

Health insurance that includes scuba diving is a must. Many standard travel insurance policies don't cover diving accidents, so make sure your plan includes emergency evacuation and treatment for decompression sickness (DCS). Organizations like DAN (Divers Alert Network) and DiveAssure offer coverage specifically for divers.

There are a **few decompression chambers** in the Maldives, with the main ones located in Malé, Bandos Island, and Kuramathi. On resort and local islands, there is usually a basic medical clinic or doctor, but for serious issues you may need to be evacuated by seaplane or speedboat to a better-equipped facility or the capital.

Staying hydrated is critical - tropical heat and multiple dives per day can lead to dehydration, increasing the risk of DCS. Drink plenty of water and limit alcohol.

Also, protect yourself from sunburn by using **reef-safe sunscreen or covering up between dives**. Too much sun can lead to fatigue, dehydration and ruined dive days.

Ear infections are another common issue - always rinse your ears after diving and if possible bring ear drops.

Be aware of **hazardous marine life**. While most marine animals are harmless if left alone, certain creatures like stonefish, lionfish, moray eels, scorpionfish and sea urchins can sting or bite if accidentally touched. **Don't touch or stand on the reef** and always wear full foot protection during shore entries.

DIVING SAFETY CONTINUED

Drift Diving

Drift diving is a **popular and thrilling** way to explore the Maldives, offering divers the chance to see more marine life and coral formations than other dive types. The **outer reefs and channels are the best spots** for these dives.

Diving with incoming currents is safer than outgoing ones, which require extra caution. Strong outward currents mean divers should **stay close to the reef** and in shallower waters to quickly escape over the edge to the sheltered side. Channel entrances often feature protruding reefs at 20–30 meters (65–100 feet), while inside the atoll, depths can reach 40 meters (130 feet).

When water flows into the channels, **sharks and pelagic fish gather in open water** to hunt, making it an excellent observation spot. However, **during spring tides, these areas can be challenging**, especially for beginners, inexperienced current divers, or those with bulky camera gear.

Whirlpools and downward currents may form, pulling divers away from the reef into deeper water. Panic increases if divers lose their group, consume too much air, or struggle with buoyancy.

Staying close to the reef and ready to move into calmer water by hand is essential. If in open water, a controlled ascent while monitoring the dive computer is advised.

Drift diving is exciting but requires caution to prevent it from becoming unsafe. Currents are unpredictable, and dives may need to be aborted. Having **experienced guides and boat crews is key**.

Diving Guidelines

- Do a **buddy check** before diving.
- **Descend quickly**; don't linger on the surface.
- Swim efficiently to the reef.
- **Avoid fighting strong currents**; stay close to the reef and move carefully
- Always follow the **buddy system**.
- Be mindful of deceptive underwater distances.
- Do **not exceed 30 meters** (100 feet) - maximum allowed depth in the Maldives.
- Stay within **no-decompression limits**.
- Have a **surface marker buoy** (SMB) with you

CHAPTER V

DIVING FROM A RESORT ISLAND

Scuba, spa & sundowners

Scuba diving from a resort island in the Maldives is a luxurious, seamless experience designed for comfort, convenience and breathtaking underwater adventures. Resort islands are private islands operated by mostly high-end hotel brands and almost all have their own PADI or SSI dive centers right on the beach.

From the moment you arrive, everything is taken care of - from setting up your gear to organizing daily boat trips and post-dive refreshments.

Professional divecenters at your fingertips

Resort-based **dive centers** are often **large, well-equipped and staffed by multilingual instructors** and dive guides. They offer daily fun dives, PADI or SSI courses from beginner to pro level, private instructors for extra comfort and even personalized dive itineraries for your stay.

Incredible access to divesites

Many resorts feature **excellent house reefs** just steps from your villa, allowing for **training dives, try diving, unguided dives** or easy **night dives** right off the shore.

Daily boat dives are offered to explore nearby reefs, channels and thilas - often departing **two or three times a day**. When you stay longer on the island you have the chance to explore all the divesites in the area, whereas with a liveaboard you would only see few of them, before going to the next atoll.



DIVING FROM A RESORT ISLAND CONTINUED

A typical dive day

You can expect two to three dives per day, often scheduled to fit around your spa treatments, gourmet meals or beach time. Many resorts offer sunrise dives, sunset dives or flexible half-day outings, allowing you to create the perfect balance between diving and relaxing. A double dive in the morning and a single dive in the afternoon is common in many resorts.

Comfort, service & cost

With resort diving, expect concierge-level service: your equipment is set up and rinsed for you, fresh towels await you after every dive and surface intervals might include drinks or fresh fruit. The price reflects the premium experience - dives are usually more expensive than on local islands and extras like Nitrox, gear rental, larger tanks or marine park fees may be added.

Ideal for...

Resort diving is perfect for couples, honeymooners, families or anyone wanting to combine a world-class dive holiday with luxury, privacy and comfort. It's also great for those on a shorter trip who want an effortless diving experience with easy logistics.

Tips

Book your resort early if you are traveling during high season (December to April), get in touch with the dive centre before you arrive, look for all-inclusive or dive package offers and choose a resort based on what you want to see - for example, manta ray, shark or whale shark hotspots.



CHAPTER V

DIVING FROM A LOCAL ISLAND

Budget-friendly authentic diving

For those seeking a more authentic and budget-friendly experience, diving from a local island in the Maldives offers a unique way to explore the underwater world. Local islands are inhabited by Maldivians and have opened up to tourism in recent years, offering guesthouses, small dive shops and a taste of real island life.

Dive shops with heart

Dive centers on local islands are often small and community-oriented, offering a personal touch, social atmosphere and competitive pricing. Whether you're looking to join fun dives or take a course, you'll find passionate instructors, attentive service and a relaxed vibe.

Epic dive sites, affordable prices

While most local islands don't have house reefs for diving, they're often located close to spectacular sites - including thilas, channels and cleaning stations. Daily boat dives (usually on traditional dhonis) will take you to the same incredible sites accessed by resort and liveaboard divers, but at a lower cost. Some centers offer up to three dives per day, including night dives.

A day in the life

Expect a schedule with 2–3 dives a day and cozy surface intervals spent in cafés or lounging by the beach. Many dive centers also offer refresher dives, Open Water courses and even freediving or underwater photography classes.



DIVING FROM A LOCAL ISLAND CONTINUED

Budget-friendly and culturally rich

Prices for diving and accommodation are significantly lower than on resort islands. You can find great dive package and gear rental is often included or offered at a low fee. Staying on a local island also means experiencing Maldivian hospitality, tasting local food and observing traditional island life.

Ideal for...

This option suits backpackers, solo travelers, long-term travelers or anyone who values authenticity and affordability. It's also perfect for divers who want to stay longer and dive more without breaking the bank.

Cultural tips

These islands are home to Maldivian families - there are banks, schools, local companies, fishermen and sports areas. Unlike resort islands, local islands are governed by Islamic customs, which means **modest dress** is expected in public areas (outside of designated tourist or bikini beaches), **Friday** is day off and **alcohol is not available**. Many guesthouses offer home-cooked meals featuring fresh seafood, coconut-based curries, and tropical fruits. You'll also find small local cafés serving traditional dishes like tuna with coconut and onion for breakfast or fish soup for dinner.

Some islands have a few international options but overall, the culinary scene is simple, fresh and local. Accommodation options range from **basic guesthouses to boutique hotels**. Rooms are generally clean, air-conditioned and equipped with private bathrooms. Many guesthouses now offer full diving packages including accommodation, meals and daily dives. While service may be more personal and less polished than in resorts, it's often warmer and more welcoming.

Popularity

The local islands are more and more focusing on tourism, new guesthouses are getting build and dive centers start to operate. Some of the most popular local islands include **Rasdhooh** (Rasdhooh atoll), **Dhigurah** (South Ari atoll), **Maafushi** (South Male atoll), **Fuvahmulah** (Fuvahmulah atoll) or **Thulusdhooh** (North Male Atoll) for example.

CHAPTER V

LIVEABOARD DIVING

The fastest way to explore all the atolls

Liveaboard diving is the ultimate way to explore the ocean: **you live on a dive boat for several days**, travel between dive sites by night or during surface intervals and **dive multiple times a day** - all while waking up to the ocean on your doorstep. It's more than just a dive trip; it's a full immersion into the underwater world, without daily transfers, packing and unpacking gear. You **eat, sleep, dive, repeat** - surrounded by other passionate divers and a professional crew that takes care of everything.

The Maldives is one of the best places in the world for a liveaboard adventure. With over 1,000 islands scattered across 26 atolls, many of the best dive sites - especially those frequented by large pelagic animals - are sometimes located far from the resort or local islands. Liveaboards make it possible to dive these remote channels, thilas and cleaning stations, offering encounters with manta rays, whale sharks, tiger sharks, hammerheads and more.

Compared to land-based diving, liveaboards allow for a more intense dive schedule, typically **3 to 4 dives a day**

(including night dives) and remove the logistical stress of commuting to the dive center or waiting for boats. The boats are purpose-built for divers, with large dive decks, dhonis (dive tenders), Nitrox and gear stations, along with cozy cabins, sun decks and delicious meals.

If you're looking to **maximize your dive time**, explore remote atolls and experience the Maldives in the most immersive way possible, a liveaboard trip is the way to go.



LIVEBOARD DIVING CONTINUED

Popular Liveboard Routes in the Maldives

The Maldives is made up of 26 atolls and thousands of islands spread across a vast area of the Indian Ocean. This unique geography makes liveboard diving the perfect way to explore the best dive sites scattered across the country.

Central Atolls Route - The classic itinerary

The most common and beginner-friendly route is the Central Atolls itinerary, which includes North Male, South Male, Ari Atoll and Vaavu. It's popular for a reason: you'll visit iconic sites like Maaya Thila, Fish Head, and Kandooma Thila, see manta cleaning stations, drift in current-swept channels and even spot whale sharks, especially in South Ari. This route is ideal year-round and great for divers of all levels.

Deep South Atolls - For experienced divers and shark lovers

The Deep South itinerary typically runs between February and April, during the northeast monsoon. Boats travel from Male down to Huvadhoo and Fuvahmulah or even Addu Atoll, often offering one-way trips. These routes focus on big animal action - expect adrenaline-packed channel dives, tiger sharks in Fuvahmulah, schooling grey reef sharks and occasional hammerheads. Currents can be strong, so this itinerary is best suited for advanced divers.

North Atolls - Less crowds, more exploration

The northern itineraries cover Baa, Raa, Lhaviyani and sometimes Noonu Atoll. These areas are less frequently visited by boats, so dive sites are less crowded and more pristine. In Baa Atoll, the famous Hanifaru Bay hosts manta aggregations (snorkeling only) during the southwest monsoon (June to October), while deeper manta cleaning stations like Dhonfanu Thila remain a scuba diving highlight. These trips often combine mantas, healthy coral reefs and macro life.

Southern Atolls - Laamu, Thaa and Meemu

These routes offer a balance between shark action and stunning reefs. Channel diving dominates, particularly in Meemu, where strong incoming currents bring in grey reef sharks and eagle rays. With fewer boats heading south outside of deep south season, you may find yourself alone on spectacular dive sites.

Specialty Itineraries - Hanifaru Bay, Technical Diving, Photography

Some liveboards offer themed or seasonal trips. These include Hanifaru Bay snorkeling safaris, dedicated macro photography weeks, rebreather-friendly expeditions or trips with marine biologists onboard. These are perfect for divers who want something a little more specific or advanced.

LIVEABOARD DIVING CONTINUED

What to expect onboard

A liveaboard trip in the Maldives is a unique and immersive dive experience where your days revolve entirely around the ocean.

Most boats follow a **relaxed yet structured daily routine**, typically starting with a light pre-dive snack and briefing at sunrise, followed by up to three to four dives per day.

Between dives, you'll enjoy freshly prepared meals, surface intervals with snacks and tropical fruit, and plenty of downtime to relax on a sundeck, nap in your cabin, or swap dive stories with fellow guests. Evening dives or night dives are also often included in the itinerary.

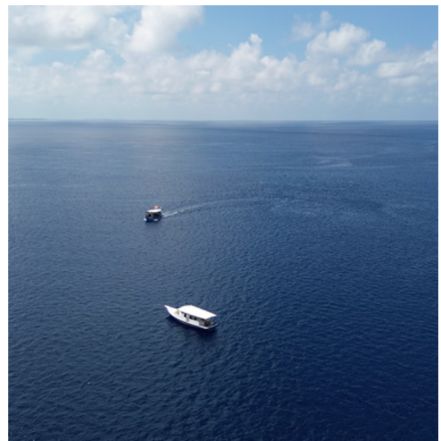
Cabins vary depending on the boat category - from **budget bunks to luxurious suites** with sea views, en-suite bathrooms and air conditioning. All boats provide towels, linens and daily cleaning, while higher-end vessels may offer extras like mini-bars, massage services or hot tubs.

Food is a big part of the experience: expect buffet-style meals with a mix of Maldivian and international cuisine. Most liveaboards can accommodate vegetarian, vegan, halal and allergy-friendly diets with advance notice.

Each trip is guided by a team of experienced local **Maldivian dive guides and international instructors** or divemasters, ensuring both regional knowledge and global safety standards. Briefings are held before every dive and include detailed site maps, marine life highlights and safety protocols.

Boats are equipped with **gear storage areas, individual crates, rinse tanks and camera tables** with charging stations - perfect for photographers.

The crew will help you gear up and down for each dive and a dedicated **dive dhoni** (tender boat) is used for space and convenience, keeping the main vessel quiet and comfortable.



LIVEBOARD DIVING CONTINUED

Dive experience & certification levels

Liveboard diving in the Maldives is best suited for certified divers with at least an **Advanced Open Water (AOWD)** certification. While some itineraries may be beginner-friendly - especially those focusing on calm atolls or shallow reefs - many dives involve **strong currents, deep channels and open-ocean drift dives**, which can be overwhelming for novice divers. That said, some boats do allow Open Water Divers, but you may be restricted from joining deeper dives or required to take the AOWD course on board.

Drift diving is a core part of the Maldivian dive experience, especially in channels (kandus) where nutrient-rich currents attract sharks, rays and schooling pelagics. Therefore, having prior experience with diving in currents is strongly recommended. In fact, for safety reasons, the **use of a surface marker buoy (SMB) is mandatory** on most boats and divers are expected to know how to deploy it before ascending.

Nitrox is widely available on Maldivian liveboards - either included in the package or for an additional fee. Because many dives are in the 25–30 meter (82–98 feet) range and you'll be diving multiple times a day, diving with Nitrox is highly recommended to extend your bottom time and reduce nitrogen build-up.

If you're not yet experienced with drift dives or Nitrox, many liveboards offer **optional courses during the trip**, giving you the opportunity to level up your skills while diving in one of the world's most exciting underwater environments.



LIVEBOARD DIVING CONTINUED

Tips for a great trip

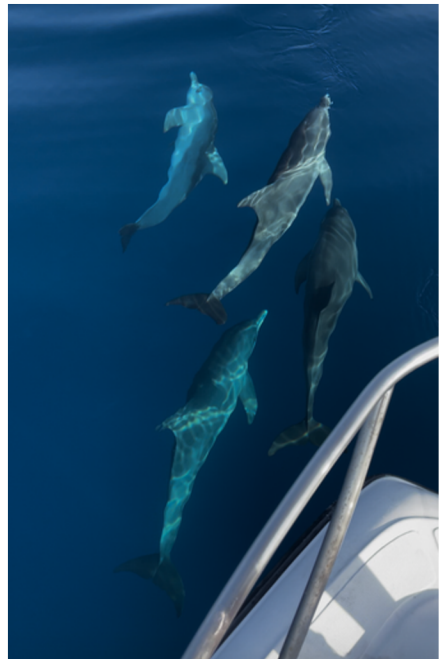
To get the most out of your Maldives liveboard adventure, a little planning goes a long way. First, **book early** - especially if you're traveling during peak season (December to April). The most popular boats and best itineraries fill up months in advance, so early reservations mean better prices and more choices.

Make sure to review the **cancellation policy** and consider purchasing travel insurance that covers diving activities. Weather conditions and personal health can affect your plans and having coverage gives you peace of mind.

Look closely at **what's included** in the package. Some boats include extras like Nitrox, airport transfers, equipment rental or marine park fees, while others charge separately. These can quickly add up, so checking beforehand helps avoid surprises.

If you're flying in from far away, plan to **arrive at least one day before** your trip starts. International flights are often delayed or rescheduled and missing your boat departure can be costly. A night in Malé or Hulhumalé also helps you acclimate and start the trip rested.

Finally, don't forget the downtime. Bring **offline entertainment** - books, downloaded series, music or games for surface intervals or quiet evenings. While some boats offer Wi-Fi, it's often slow or unreliable out at sea.



LIVEABOARD DIVING CONTINUED

Choosing the right liveaboard

With over 100 liveaboards cruising the Maldives, choosing the right one can make a big difference in your dive trip. The Maldives offers a broad range of vessels, from **budget-friendly boats** with basic comfort to **luxury yachts** that feel more like floating resorts. Your choice will depend on your preferences, travel style and budget but it's important to look beyond just price.

Group size matters: most liveaboards in the Maldives host between **12 and 24 guests**. If you prefer a more social atmosphere, go for larger boats; for a more intimate and quiet experience, choose a smaller one. Also, pay attention to the **language spoken on board**. English is standard on most boats, but some offer German, French, Spanish, Russian or Chinese-speaking guides, which can make briefings and safety instructions easier to follow.

Sustainability is increasingly important in the Maldives, as the islands face challenges from plastic pollution, coral bleaching and over-tourism.

Consider choosing boats that follow eco-conscious practices - like banning single-use plastics, operating reef-safe wastewater systems, supporting marine conservation programs or even offering solar-powered charging stations. Some boats are certified by organizations like **Green Fins** or aligned with the **Manta Trust**.

To compare options easily, **use trusted booking platforms** like LiveAboard.com, ZuBlu Diving, Blue Water Dive Travel and PADI Travel. These platforms allow you to filter by price, language, itinerary, boat rating and even sustainability features.

LIVEABOARD DIVING CONTINUED

Companies (usually several Boats)

Adora Liveaboard
Aggressor Adventures
AMBA Dive Private
Blue Horizon Maldives
Blueforce
Carpe Diem Maldives
Dinasha Liveaboard
Divescape Maldives
Dune Maldives Liveaboard
EcoPro Divers
Emperor Divers Maldives
Fun Azul Fleet
Keana Maldives Quality Cruises
Macana Maldives Fleet
Maldives Legend
Master Liveaboards
Mastro Diving Fleet
Myna Tours Maldives
Ocean Divine Maldives
Pearl Fleet
Scubaspa Maldives
Seafari
Spirit Liveaboards
Submaldives
Top Class Cruising

Boats only

Conte Max
Duke of York
Felicity
Infinity X
Nautilus Two (Sailboat)
Ocean One
Ocean Sapphire (only Charter)
Pearl 111 (Sailboat)
Soleil 2
Yasawa Princess

CHAPTER V

HOW TO PLAN YOUR DIVETRIP

Planning a dive trip to the Maldives can feel overwhelming at first - but don't worry! With a few clear steps, you can design the perfect dive adventure that matches your goals, experience, time and budget.

1. Decide what you want to see

Start by identifying your dream underwater encounters. For example:

- Manta rays are seen year-round, but cleaning stations peak at different times.
- Whale sharks are most common in South Ari.
- Tiger sharks are resident in Fuvahmulah year-round.
- Drift dives and pelagic action are best in channel-rich atolls like Vaavu or Huvadho.
- Colorful coral gardens? Try Lhaviyani or Vaavu.

This decision helps you narrow down the best atoll or region to visit.



HOW TO PLAN YOUR DIVETRIP CONTINUED

2. Find out where and when

Once you know what you want to see, find out where it occurs - and most importantly, when. Many pelagic encounters in the Maldives are seasonal, depending on monsoon currents.

- **May - November (Southwest Monsoon):** great for manta rays in Baa Atoll and vibrant plankton-rich waters
- **December - April (Northeast Monsoon):** best visibility, tiger sharks, hammerheads and whale sharks more common in certain areas

Also consider the sea conditions and current strengths - these vary by season and can affect dive difficulty.

3. Consider your dive experience and certification

While many dive sites in the Maldives are beginner-friendly, some channels, drift dives and deep sites require more experience. Here's what to keep in mind:

- **Diving level:** If you have very little experience, an island will be the best option. For liveaboards mostly around 50 dives and Advanced Open Water certification is required.
- **Drift diving:** Common in channels - some current experience helps. If you don't like diving in currents, choose an area with easy dive sites instead of a liveaboard trip to the southern atolls.
- **SMB (Surface Marker Buoy):** Strongly recommended or even required especially on liveaboards.

- **Nitrox:** Often included or available at an extra cost. especially useful on liveaboards.

Our tip: You can still enjoy diving in the Maldives as an Open Water diver, but some of the most exciting dives will require either more experience or a guided intro. Diving in the Maldives is more expensive than in other areas of the world, if you fully want to enjoy diving here, have your Open Water, Advanced Open Water and Nitrox courses finished before.

4. Choose your style of diving trip

Now decide how you want to travel and dive:

- **Liveaboard diving:** Ideal for experienced divers who want to focus on diving only, explore multiple atolls, dive remote channels and enjoy 3 - 4 dives a day without commuting.
- **Resort island diving:** A more relaxed experience with high comfort, often including private beaches and luxury service - perfect for couples or those looking to relax between dives. Great also when traveling with a non diving partner.
- **Local island diving:** Budget-friendly and authentic, with direct access to great dive sites and more interaction with Maldivian culture. They're ideal for independent travelers, solo divers and those who want to dive from an island without the resort price tag.

HOW TO PLAN YOUR DIVETRIP CONTINUED

Each comes with its own pros and cons, and your choice will depend on your budget, travel style and dive goals.

5. Choose your specific boat, island or resort

Once you've picked your preferred atoll and travel style, narrow it down to your specific base or boat:

- **Liveaboards:** Compare routes (e.g. Central Atolls vs. Deep South), trip length, diver capacity (12–24 guests) and amenities. Most run on a Saturday–Saturday schedule.
- **Resorts:** Decide if you want all-inclusive comfort, spa access or just a house reef - or combine diving with a romantic or wellness trip.
- **Local islands:** Look for those with professional dive centers, decent reef access and good reviews - some even offer budget rooms directly at the beach.

Booking platforms, reviews and diving forums can help you make a confident choice - especially if you're planning your first Maldives trip.

6. Book smart

A few final tips to make your trip go smoothly:

- **Book early**, especially for peak season (December to April)
- **Arrive a day early** if you're flying long-distance to buffer against delays
- **Check what's included** (Nitrox, marine park fees, transfers) so you don't get surprised later
- **Get travel & dive insurance**, especially for liveaboards or remote atolls
- **Bring offline entertainment** (books, music, movies) for surface intervals and evenings without Wi-Fi

7. Where to research and book

If you're not using a travel agent, here are some trusted platforms:

- **Liveaboards:** LiveAboard.com, Emperor Divers, Aggressor Fleet, Explorer Ventures
- **Local islands & guesthouses:** Booking.com, Agoda, Airbnb
- **Dive center reviews:** Google Maps, DiveBuddy, ScubaBoard

Also check forums or Facebook groups where divers share trip reports and insider tips.

Disclaimer

All information provided in this guide has been thoroughly and carefully researched and personally verified to the best of our knowledge and experience. However, details can change over time, and while we strive for accuracy and completeness, we are human—and despite all efforts, errors or omissions may occur. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the absolute correctness or completeness of the content.

Please note that while the information was personally researched and checked, AI-assisted tools were used in the writing and editing process to enhance clarity and readability.

We recommend confirming key details (e.g., prices, schedules, regulations) with official sources or providers before making travel or diving decisions.

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