CONTE MAX

Central Atolls

Male to Male | North Male, Rasdhoo, Ari, Felidhoo, Vaavu and South Male



The central atolls of the Maldives are made for big animals, with very good visibility and coral gardens throughout.

Near Male come close encounters with tiger, hammerhead, bull, lemon and spinner sharks, often over dozens of stingrays, and one of the best known manta cleaning stations in the country.

In Ari, manta rays gather at night to feed on plankton, and there is a chance of whale sharks by day and at night.

Vaavu has dozens of nurse sharks and blacktip sharks at night, and drop-offs where grey reef sharks and eagle rays pass by.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
11 nights	Male	Male	Open Water, certified







Your itinerary

DAY 1

Embarkation

Check dive

Departure is from Velana International Airport in Male.
After boarding there is a check dive at Fish Tank, with its many stingrays, moray eels and guitarfish, or at the Lankanfinolhu manta point in the season of the mantas.

DAY 2-11

The route

3 dives a day

The map shows the whole central area, but each week follows a different route, depending on the weather, guest preferences and where the best sightings are.
One route runs through Ari, Felidhoo and South Male, and another through South Male, Felidhoo and Mulaku.
A typical week crosses to central Ari for Maaya Thila, Fesdhoo with mantas at night and Fish Head, then to the southern tip of Ari for whale sharks by day and at night.
It then crosses to Felidhoo for its channels and a night with nurse sharks, and returns through South Male for the Guraidhoo passes, Kandhooma thila or the Gulhi wreck.
There are stops on beaches, sandbanks and uninhabited islands, and visits to local islands.

DAY 12

Disembarkation

The cruise ends in Male.
Check out is at 08:00.
Cruises that start and end in Male may finish with an optional visit to Villingili.

THE DIVING

Dive sites and life on board

Nerumathi, North Male

Known as the Shark Tank, at the entrance to Hulhumale harbour. Close encounters with sharks, including tiger, blacktip, hammerhead, bull, lemon and spinner sharks and guitarfish, and often dozens of stingrays. The depth runs from about 8 to over 30 metres.

Lankan Manta Point, North Male

One of the best known manta cleaning stations in the Maldives, around a large coral block at 10 to 18 metres. Mantas arrive in the southwest monsoon and on outgoing currents, with whitetip reef sharks, turtles and lobsters.

Rasdhoo Madivaru, Rasdhoo

A narrow spur reaching out across the pass, peaking at 13 metres above a wall that drops to 200 metres. Barracuda, trevally, tuna and reef fish, hammerhead sharks especially in the early morning, and mantas in season.

Maaya Thila, Ari

Reef sharks, napoleon wrasse and schools of fusiliers, often a guitarfish, with coral gardens and very good visibility. It suits beginners and experienced divers, and is also a night dive.

Fesdu Wreck, Ari

A 30 metre fishing boat lying at 29 metres, with the bridge at 24 metres and the propeller at 27 metres. Covered in soft coral, with black coral at the stern, moray eels on the deck and groupers in the engine room.

Fesdu Lagoon, Ari

A night dive in the lagoon, where manta rays gather to feed on plankton, with coral gardens, smaller rays and reef fish.

Moofushi Kandu, Ari

A channel and manta point. In the northeast monsoon, from December to April, the cleaning station comes alive with manta rays, along with pelagic fish.

Kuda Rah Thila, Ari

A protected site with a main thila with shallow peaks on each side, a tunnel through the deeper ridge on the west side and two detached blocks to the north. Soft corals, flatworms, snappers, jacks and batfish, with big overhangs on the east side.

Fish Head, Ari

A protected flat-topped tower rising to 10 metres below the surface, with a large school of grey reef sharks, coral walls and caverns with gorgonians and black coral. In gentle current it can be circled in one dive.

Maamigili whale sharks, South Ari

A chance to dive or snorkel with whale sharks, for divers and snorkellers of all levels. At selected sites, lights at the stern of the boat attract whale sharks at night.

Alimatha and Dhiggiri, Vaavu

A night dive at Alimatha with dozens of nurse sharks, stingrays, blacktip sharks and jacks. By day, a dive or snorkel at Dhiggiri, where nurse sharks and large stingrays glide over the sand.

Fotteyo Kandu, Vaavu

Dolphins usually cross the channel morning and evening. Yellow soft corals on a curved slope, rays in the caves of the north-east wall, a small thila where sharks gather, and sometimes hammerheads and leaf fish.

Miyaru Kandu, Vaavu

A channel and the area around it are a marine protected area. Miyaru means shark in Dhivehi, and the drop-off has passing grey reef sharks, eagle rays, schools of jacks and pelagic fish.

Kandhooma, South Male

A thila at the bottom of a channel, with the top at about 14 metres and slopes dropping to about 40 metres. The east and north slopes have overhangs and soft corals, with large schools of fish, eagle rays, whitetip and grey sharks and green turtles. It can be dived on either current.

Non-divers

The cruises suit divers and non-divers, with guided snorkelling, island visits and fishing, and a free try dive in the lagoon for non-divers from 8 years old, with equipment included.

On board

A diving dhoni, a kayak and paddle boards, underwater scooters, and rebreather support on request. Italian and international cuisine, with a bar, a boutique and a massage service.

End of the cruise

Cruises that start and end in Male may finish with an optional visit to Villingili, to see the Save the Beach Centre and the coral restoration site, and snorkel with a marine biologist.

Dives

The check dive is on the arrival day, and there is one dive on the morning of the last diving day.

Check in

The best time to arrive is between 07:00 and 11:00, and the earliest is 06:30 to 07:00. If your flight arrives after about 11:00 to 11:30 you need to arrive the day before. An airport representative meets you in the arrivals area with a board and takes you to the dhoni.

Check out

Check out is at 08:00 on the last day.

INCLUDED

What your trip covers

INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Cabin share (twin or double) with private bathroom and full board, with an afternoon snack
- Unlimited drinking water, tea, coffee and fruit
- Airport transfer by dhoni
- Diving and night diving, with the dive dhoni and free Nitrox
- Guided snorkelling
- Sunset fishing, trolling and free use of the kayak
- Excursions and island visits
- GST
- Dive instructors and dive guides

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Service charge, on your invoice
- Green tax per person per day, paid on board
- Alcoholic and soft drinks
- Diving and snorkelling courses
- Dive and snorkel equipment rental, to request when booking
- Wi-Fi
- Dive insurance (mandatory)
- Beach dinner on request
- Onboard purchases, plus 10% service and GST

BEFORE YOU GO

What to bring

ESSENTIALS

- Dive certification card and logbook
- Completed diver medical questionnaire
- Details of your dive and travel insurance
- Dive computer and surface marker buoy with reel
- Reef-safe sunscreen

AND ALSO

- Swimwear, hat and sunglasses
- Light clothing and sandals
- Personal medication and toiletries
- Travel adaptor
- Passport

WORTH KNOWING

Key notes

Good to know

The route changes with the weather, the currents, the season and guest preferences, so every cruise is different

Good to know

Nitrox is free of charge





