CONTE MAX

Northern Atolls

Male to Male | Rasdhoo, Baa and Raa

Timed for the feeding manta rays of Hanifaru Bay, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve famous for seasonal gatherings of manta rays and whale sharks.

From May to November the plankton-rich water draws them in, for diving and snorkelling.

Rasdhoo has channels full of sharks and eagle rays, and a wall that drops to 200 metres, with hammerheads especially in the early morning.

Raa has spectacular walls of colourful soft corals for drift dives, with mantas cleaning between late September and November.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
7 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, and the boat then sails north.

DAY 2-7

The route

3 dives a day

The cruise is timed for the monsoon winds and lunar currents that move the reef manta rays, to find their feeding aggregations.
It starts in Rasdhoo Atoll, with channels full of sharks and eagle rays, then goes to Baa Atoll to look for the feeding mantas of Hanifaru Bay and hopefully whale sharks, and on to Raa Atoll, with walls covered in soft corals.
Depending on the programme, the route can also include North Ari to dive at night with manta rays in Fesdhoo Lagoon.
These cruises are often run with the Manta Trust, with biologists on board for presentations, dives and guided snorkelling.

DAY 8

Disembarkation

The cruise ends in Male.
Check out is at 08:00.







THE DIVING

Dive sites and life on board

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.

Hanifaru Bay, Baa

A UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, famous for seasonal gatherings of manta rays and whale sharks. From May to November the plankton-rich water attracts them, for diving and snorkelling.

Dharavandhoo Thila, Baa

A submerged reef with a large variety of fish. In the southwest monsoon manta rays glide through or pause at cleaning stations, and garden eels come out of the sand. The top has anemones and corals with crustaceans, octopus, moray eels, scorpionfish and stonefish.

Kottefaru Thila, Raa

Starts at around 12 metres and drops beyond 80 metres, a spectacular wall for drift dives with colourful soft corals. Manta rays clean here between late September and November, and there are sharks and rays.

Vandhoo Wall, Raa

A drift dive of several hundred metres along Vandhoo island, with a coral reef on top and a 250 metre wall going below 30 metres. Mantas use the cleaning station on the top reef from June to November, with napoleons, turtles, whitetip sharks and fusiliers.

Dhigali Haa, Raa

A protected thila from about 10 to 40 metres, like a Fish Head, with a large number of grey reef sharks, barracuda, batfish, fusiliers, snappers and eagle rays.

Milaidhoo Thila, Baa

A thila with a spectacular wall of colourful soft corals, good for drift dives, with grey reef sharks and a chance of manta rays from late September to November.

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

Good to know

Hanifaru Bay and the mantas depend on the season and the plankton, and sightings cannot be promised

Good to know

Weather in the northern atolls in the season can be more changeable