

SOUTH TO THAA ATOLL





South to Thaa Atoll

Start/End: Male/Maamigili

3 dives per day / 7 to 11 nights aboard

Atolls: North Male, South Male, Vaavu, Meemu, Thaa Atoll
This routing gives you a variety of channel and reef diving.

When: From November to April, Itineraries prepared and specific dive sites carefully chosen depending on the monsoon.

For who: Advanced divers with minimum 50+ dives. Experience with drift dives required. Nitrox recommended!

Type of dives: Mostly channel dives. Sites exposed to strong or very strong currents.

Marine life: Mostly pelagic fauna. Reef sharks, whale sharks by night, mantas

Dive Sites Description:

*easy **medium difficult ***challenging

NORTH MALE ATOLL:

Fish Tank*

Directly in front of a fish factory in the North Male Atoll, large schools of stingrays gather again and again, looking for food. Mostly you can find them on a sandy slope with rubble, so that you can watch the spectacle easy or if there is current, you can also hook there. You can also find all kinds of moray eels there. If you are lucky, a guitar shark or even a tiger or bull shark will appear.

Lankan Beyru (Manta Point) *

The outer reef of the Paradise Island resort, not far from the airport island. The main attraction of the site are manta rays coming to the cleaning station during the southwest monsoon. The divesite is relatively easy to access, with small currents and is very often considered as a good dive to start the week. The cleaning station itself is a large coral block covered with anemones and full of fish life. It is also very common to come across whitetip reef sharks, turtles and napoleons.

SOUTH MALE ATOLL:

Embudu Kanduu ***

This is a famous channel between the ocean and Embudu Island, located east-west of Embudu Island. The channel is around 35-45 meters deep, and a thila is located on its North-East side where a variety of sea life such as sharks, hump head wrasses, eagle rays, and barracudas can be explored. The current is strong, making it ideal for only experienced divers. The best season to explore the site is during the Northeast Monsoon.

Kandooma Thila ***

Definitely number one in the ranking of the best dive sites in South Male atoll. Long thila, located in the middle of the channel, offers spectacular conditions to observe grey reef sharks, whitetip reef sharks, eagle rays, big schools of jacks and snappers both with incoming and outgoing current. North side of the pinnacle is nicely covered with soft corals with the top of the reef being home to many reef fish and green turtles. Currents can be pretty strong so negative entry and fast descent is often required. Current hooks should be ready to use. Rasdhoo atoll

Guraidhoo Corner

Located south of Guraidhoo Island, this is a protected site hosting many pelagic species during incoming currents and presents several “washing machines”, downstream currents. This site is thus only recommended for advanced divers with greater experience and should be avoided by those who are beginners. This site is a great spot to watch eagle rays, whitetip sharks, and gray reef sharks, and is especially interesting during Northeast Monsoon.

VAAVU ATOLL:

Miyaru Kandu ***

One of the channel dives that you don't want to miss. With strong incoming current the list of possible encounters is impressive. Mainly grey reef sharks but also whitetip reef sharks, eagle rays, napoleons and tunas are quite common and with the visibility reaching 40 meters during the northeast monsoon it can be the highlight of the trip. Outgoing current offer worse visibility but the sharks are still there. The site is not recommended for beginners, negative entry is often required and current hook is a must to avoid causing unnecessary damage to the reef. Most of the time you will spend at the depth of 26 to 30 meters so checking air and no-deco time more often is strongly recommended.

Alimatha House Reef **

Located on the south side of Alimatha island resort and considered one of the best night dives in the Maldives, being often a victim of its success and resulting in overcrowding of divers. Every night there is a show performed by a big number of nurse sharks, stingrays and massive jacks. Maximum depth will not exceed 15 meters and most of the time you will be kneeling on a sandy bottom waiting for the sharks to come closer. Definitely not to be missed.

MEEMU ATOLL:

Hakuraa Thila *

Located in the Mulee Kandu, this marine-protected thila is 80 meters long with its top at three meters, gently sloping down in the west part. The northeast side is full of overhangs, cavities, and caves where a variety of species such as gray reef sharks, eagle rays, sweetlips, needlefish, and trevallies can be spotted. The reef top of this site is excellent for photography as it is full of surgeon fishes, angel fish, basslets, butterflyfish, and damsels of every color.

Muli Corner **

The reef is known as home to a lot of sharks during incoming currents but it also welcomes manta rays on a large cleaning station during outgoing current. Entering the water with empty BCD and not wasting time on the surface is often recommended, specially with strong currents.

THAA ATOLL:

Whaleshark point *

There is no specific place where diving would guarantee an encounter with a whale shark but the common practice is to use a strong light in the evening at the back platform of the boat to attract the zooplanktons which will further attract the whale sharks. Scuba

diving while having the shark at the back of the boat is rather discouraged as the bubbles may disperse the mass of the plankton. The best experience is to grab a mask, fins and gently enter the water on the side of the boat, not to scare the whale shark away and then enjoy the view while snorkeling. Sometimes the whale shark will stay for hours, more than one visitor is also possible. Instructions given by the dive guides have to be followed and a code of conduct must be respected by all snorkelers to enjoy the moment to the fullest.