

SCUBASPA YING

Christmas Cruise

Male to Male | North Male, South Male and Ari

Christmas week is spent in the rich waters of the central atolls, where mantas, turtles and whale sharks are all possible.

Ari Atoll has a canyon that splits the reef in two, with fan corals, turtles, scorpionfish and morays, and a wreck with open cargo holds and schools of batfish, pufferfish, boxfish and lionfish.

North Male is a place of caves, drop offs and overhangs, and South Male has its currents and soft coral walls.

On land there are sandman contests on uninhabited islands, gingerbread houses baked with the chefs and a turkey dinner with all the trimmings, with Christmas films under the stars.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
8 days / 7 nights	Male	Male	No minimum level







Your itinerary

DAY 1

Departure day: Welcome aboard

Transfer to the yacht, meet the crew and settle in for the week.

DAY 2

The festive week: Diving and sandbanks

Up to 3 dives a day

Diving in North Male Atoll with its caves, drop offs and reefs, the currents of South Male Atoll and the rich marine life of Ari Atoll, with mantas, turtles and whale sharks all possible.

DAY 3

Christmas Eve: Island barbecue

The annual Christmas Eve barbecue is held on a deserted island, with catch of the day seafood and fresh vegetarian dishes from the chefs.

DAY 4

Christmas Day: Turkey feast

A Christmas Day turkey dinner with all the trimmings, with a quiet day of beaches, spa treatments and relaxing on board.

DAY 5

Departure: Back in Male

Breakfast, check out and transfers to the airport.

THE EVENT

Christmas on board

The week is full of festive traditions, from sandman contests on uninhabited islands and baking and decorating gingerbread houses with the chefs, to Christmas films under the stars. Guests are encouraged to join the Christmas tradition of wearing their favourite holiday pyjamas, and if that is not for you there is plenty of adventure on board.







DIVE SITES

Atolls and sites on the central routes

- North and South Ari Atoll: the most reliable place in the Maldives for pelagics and big schools. Whale sharks, mantas and eagle rays visit, with napoleon wrasse, grey reef and white tip sharks, blacktail barracuda and batfish. Broken Rock in North Ari is a canyon splitting the reef in two, with fan corals, turtles, scorpionfish and morays. The Kudhimaa wreck in South Ari, sunk in 1998 close to the Machchafushi house reef, has open cargo holds and schools of batfish, pufferfish, boxfish and lionfish.
- Vaavu Atoll: deep channels with fast, nutrient rich currents and schooling reef sharks, with the occasional hammerhead. Fotteyo Kandu, with its swim throughs, caves and overhangs, is rated by many as the best dive in

the Maldives, with tuna, trevallies, unicorn fish, snappers, eagle rays, mantas and groupers.

- North Male Atoll: among the first atolls dived in the Maldives. Gaathugiri, known as Banana Reef, has rock faces, caves, drop offs and overhangs, with sharks, mantas, trevally, black snappers, groupers, bannerfish and large morays.
- South Male Atoll: Kandooma Thila is a large teardrop shaped pinnacle with soft coral walls, red bass and big eye trevally, grey and white tip sharks, eagle rays, green turtles and batfish.

THE DIVING

How the diving is organised

A separate 20 metre dive boat, a dhoni, goes with the yacht and carries the equipment and compressors, so the yacht stays quiet while you prepare. It has plenty of seating, several entry points, a stern platform, a sun deck and a toilet on board. The yacht is a PADI 5 Star Dive Resort, the instructors speak several languages, and courses run from introductory dives to certification, with children from ten years old able to learn.

Dives are limited to 30 metres. A dive computer is compulsory, diving alone and decompression dives are not allowed, and night dives and dives deeper than 18 metres are for advanced certified divers. You can upgrade your certification on board.





THE SPA

Treatments, yoga and calm

The Asian style spa covers 300 square metres over two decks, the largest on any liveaboard in the Maldives. There are four treatment rooms, including one for couples, a secluded deck for open air Thai massage and meditation, and a shaded lounge.

More than fourteen treatments are on the menu, including Swedish, Balinese, Thai, Filipino, Hilot, Shiatsu, Ayurvedic, Hawaiian, Lomi Lomi, warm bamboo, lava shell and hot stone massage, plus facials and Ayurvedic champissage for the hair. The products are made for the boat with organic ingredients, botanical extracts and essential oils, and you can buy them from the on board boutique.

Yoga runs every morning and at sunset on the open deck, with asanas, breathing and meditation for beginners and experienced practitioners alike.





ON THE TABLE

Food, drink and celebrations

Internationally trained chefs cook European, Mediterranean and Asian dishes with local flavours, served as three buffet meals a day with live cooking stations in the al fresco restaurant. The menu runs from the catch of the day, lamb and beef to a sushi bar, tapas and flaming crêpes Suzette, and fresh lobster can be ordered for a small extra charge. Dietary requirements are catered for.

The bar sits next to the restaurant and opens onto the shaded lounge deck, with wines, champagnes, cocktails, beers and spirits and a daily happy hour. Once a week the crew hosts a moonlit barbecue on a sandy beach.

The chefs will also plan birthdays, anniversaries, engagements and weddings, from a private dinner on a separate deck to champagne at sunset.







PACKAGES

Choose how you spend the week

Every guest chooses one of three packages for the week. The packages cannot be mixed, and dives cannot be swapped for treatments.

Scuba holiday

Up to 17 dives over the week. This package is for certified divers, and you can book extra spa treatments on board when there is space.

Spa holiday

Eight spa treatments in the week, plus yoga and snorkelling. A Discover Scuba Diving experience can be added if you would like to try diving.

Scuba and spa

Six dives and four spa treatments. This is also the package for the PADI Open Water course, which runs on the seven night cruises.

CONDITIONS

Seasons, water and sea life

The water stays between 26 and 29 degrees all year. From November to May the north east monsoon brings clear skies and little rain, with channel dives on the eastern sides of the atolls and mantas at the cleaning stations on the western sides. From June to October the south west monsoon brings fewer crowds, with mantas on the eastern sides and the channel dives on the western sides. Routes are adjusted to the monsoon, the weather and the tides.

Expect mantas, whale sharks, turtles, reef sharks, eagle rays, stingrays and big schools of tropical fish.

INCLUDED

What your trip covers

INCLUDED IN THE TRIP PRICE

- Cabin accommodation with three meals a day
- Welcome drink, drinking water, coffee and tea
- Airport transfers on the regular arrival and departure days
- Yoga classes every morning
- Snorkelling, with equipment included
- A barbecue on a deserted island and the excursions in the programme
- The diving or spa treatments of the package you choose
- Wi-Fi, with a 5 GB allowance per cabin

NOT INCLUDED

- International and domestic flights
- Service and administration charge and the nightly green tax, shown on our trip listings
- Dive and travel insurance
- Dive equipment rental
- Drinks from the bar and extra spa treatments
- Crew gratuities, which are optional