WHITE PEARL

Hanifaru Bay and Northern Atolls

Male to Male | Haa Dhaalu, Shaviyani, Noonu, Raa, Lhaviyani, Baa and North Male

Hanifaru Bay is the site of one of the most spectacular congregations of manta rays in the Maldives, if not the world.

The keyhole-shaped bay acts like a giant funnel for plankton, and the mantas barrel-roll through the food and join up in manta trains, spiralling cyclones of rays feeding in formation.

Whale sharks come here too, and the bay is part of a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.

The northern atolls around it are pristine and untouched, with twenty or more grey sharks on a single dive, leopard sharks and eagle rays.

Under the overhangs, a rainbow of soft corals glows in pastel blue and yellow.

LENGTH	DEPARTURE PORT	ARRIVAL PORT	EXPERIENCE
8 days / 7 nights	Male	Male	20+ dives, Nitrox, currents







Your route

THE REGIONS

Where you dive

HAA DHAALU ATOLL

Dive sites: Heaven & Hell.

Located approximately 320 km north of Malé, Haa Dhaalu Atoll is an administrative district spread over 38 islands, of which 14 are inhabited. The atoll is officially known as South Thiladhunmathi Atoll in the Maldives, and contains two airports – a domestic airport in Kulhudhuffushi and an international airport in Hanimaadhoo. Visitors to Haa Dhaalu are met with stunning beaches and turquoise waters, the main ingredients of a magical beach holiday in the tropics.

Experienced divers have the opportunity to venture into both the depths of Heaven and Hell. This particular dive takes place at a thila, or submerged island, which begins at a depth of 59 feet (18 metres) and boasts some of the finest corals found in the atoll. As you descend further to 90 feet (30 metres), you'll be captivated by the striking overhangs of the reef, adorned with soft corals in various shades of blue, pink, yellow, and green. It's not uncommon to spot graceful turtles and the occasional manta ray gliding overhead.

SHAVIYANI ATOLL

Dive sites: Lupo Thila.

Get ready to dive into an aquatic adventure like no other in the mesmerising Shaviyani Atoll! The Lupo Thila, a small yet vibrant reef, has something for divers of all levels. Here, you'll swim amongst schools of lively batfish, jacks, and barracuda, while also encountering silvertip sharks, grey reef sharks, and white tip sharks. And, if you're lucky, you may even catch a glimpse of the elusive guitar fish! The underwater world of Lupo Thila starts at a shallow 5 metres and plunges down to a mesmerising 30 metres and beyond.





NOONU ATOLL

Dive sites: Orimas Thila and Miyaru Thila.

Diving in the North part of the Maldives the underwater life is the most pristine and untouched. Here you will be able to see many species of fish including colorful schools of reef fish such as parrotfish, butterfly fish, lionfish and more. One of the best sites for grey shark encounters is the Orimas Thila dive site. There's a beautiful drop-down to 30 metres where the current will take you to a sandy channel. On the way, divers can expect to see soldierfish, eagle rays, anemones, nudibranchs, and snappers. Seeing 20 or more sharks is not uncommon here. Leopard sharks and guitar fish, eagle rays, tuna and schools of snapper love to hang around the Miyaru Thila – a pinnacle in the middle of the atoll. Some of the dive sites can be more suitable for experienced divers because especially in the rainy season waters can get choppy and currents mildly strong.

RAA ATOLL AND LHAVIYANI ATOLL

Dive sites: Kuredu Express and Shipyard.

Lhaviyani Atoll offers some of the most diverse and accessible diving in the country. Dive sites range from mild to wild, with exciting underwater attractions including shipwrecks and seasonal encounters with sharks and manta rays. This atoll's northern waters are home to sites like Kuredu Express - known for fast moving currents, plummeting channels, and encounters with pelagic species like sharks and manta rays. Plus, the Shipyard's two famous wrecks, one of which can even be explored by beginners. You'll also visit thilas - submerged pinnacles that serve as busy cleaning stations for marine megafauna. Here, some of the region's largest species wait patiently in line for their spa sessions with tiny reef fish who are more than happy to offer their services.





BAA ATOLL

Dive sites: Maavaru Kandu and Dhonfanu Thila.

Back-rolling into the invitingly warm water of Maavaru Kandu, you will sink down initially to the top of the reef at around 8 to 9 metres where ideally you will encounter a gentle current. As with many of the dive sites in Maldives, there are plateaus and overhangs cutting into the side of the reef, but this site promises something exceptional. Every inch of the overhangs which face downward are covered in a rainbow of soft corals illuminating the reef in pastel shades of predominantly blue and yellow but also green and mustard. The sight is one of delicate beauty with the delightful colours seeming to glow brightly against the dull shade of the rocky substrate. Fish life includes midnight snapper, small-toothed emperor, coral rock cod, moon fusiliers and broad-striped fusiliers, while the shallows play host to thousands of orange basslets as well as moon wrasse and lizardfish. Dhonfanu Thila consists of a pinnacle which comes to a point and faces into the prevailing current. The current splits at the point and runs down either flank of the reef so you will normally drop in advance of reaching the thila so that as you descend and allow the current to bring you to the point of the reef at about 22 metres. Look for manta rays here. Baa Atoll is well known for them and this is one site where they are seen regularly. Overhangs provide shelter for yellow-lined snapper and soldierfish in big numbers. Often there are a lot of cleaning wrasses around so expect to see plenty of skin treatments being administered. The site is also home to an unbelievable number of fish: red toothed triggers, black pyramid butterflyfish, parrotfish, angelfish, long nosed butterflyfish, unicornfish and starry rabbitfish among hundreds of species. Hanifaru Bay Hanifaru Bay is the site of one of the most spectacular congregations of manta rays in the Maldives - if not the world. After catching the attention of the diving world in the 1990s, the bay and its manta rays and whale sharks are now part of a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. What makes Hanifaru Bay so special? Located on the southeastern side of Baa Atoll, Hanifaru Bay overlooks a deep-water channel that separates the island from neighbouring Dharavandoo. The bay's reef is twice as wide at the mouth as it is towards the lagoon, forming a distinctive keyhole-like shape. This unique structure acts like a giant funnel, driving high concentrations of plankton deeper into the bay and closer to the surface - creating the perfect conditions for a bonafide filter-feeding frenzy. This high concentration of plankton is the reason why the manta rays gather here in such huge numbers - the more food there is, the more mantas join in the feeding! Individual manta rays barrel-roll through particularly dense patches of food, but will also join up and form manta trains - spiralling 'cyclones' of rays feeding in formation. It is this extraordinary behaviour that has made Hanifaru Bay so famous.

NORTH MALE ATOLL

Dive sites: HP Reef and Nassimo Thila.

North Malé Atoll's diving is perhaps the best known and most explored within the Maldives, making it a great destination for those seeking reliable world-class experiences. The atoll is known for its healthy reefs, underwater caves, drop offs and abundant soft and hard coral, as well as encounters with large pelagics such as sharks and manta rays. At HP Reef and Nassimo Thila, divers will be blown away by the seemingly endless soft coral fields inhabited by large schools of bright coloured Anthias. HP Reef is a stunning dive site. It is also called Rainbow Reef, due to the variety of colours. The reef leads to a channel with multiple rock formations, blocks, boulders, ledges, rifts, and a cave. Strong currents provide food for schools of fish hanging around in a swim-through that leads to the top of a cave and is frequently called "the chimney". All of the underwater structures are rich in various corals and other underwater plants, divers can examine. The demanding dive at Nassimo Thila follows the north side of a fine thila, also known as Paradise Rock, which has superb gorgonians and sea fans on coral blocks, cliffs and overhangs. Numerous large fish can be seen on this dive site.

HANIFARU BAY

Snorkelling at Hanifaru Bay

Hanifaru Bay is a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve and a Marine Protected Area. Diving is not allowed inside the bay, so you visit it to snorkel, and an entry fee is paid in cash on board. It is one of the most spectacular manta ray gatherings in the Maldives.

A DIVING DAY

A typical diving day

- 06:00 Wake-up call
- 06:30 to 07:00 Light breakfast, briefing and Dive 1
- 08:30 Full breakfast and a rest
- 10:30 Briefing and Dive 2
- 12:30 Lunch and a rest
- 14:30 Briefing and Dive 3
- 16:00 Snack and a rest
- 19:00 Dinner

INCLUDED

What is included

- Full board accommodation, with three meals a day, drinking water, coffee, tea and snacks
- Transfers between the airport and the yacht
- Guided dives with 12 litre tanks, weights and weight belts, and a night dive
- Free Nitrox for qualified divers
- Beach barbecue, cocktail party, paddle boards, kayaks, the pool, jacuzzi and water slide
- Free Wi-Fi, limited to messaging and social media

NOT INCLUDED

What is not included

- Government service charge, green tax and fuel surcharge, paid on board
- Domestic and international flights
- Spa treatments, jet ski, soft drinks and alcoholic drinks
- Dive equipment other than tanks and weights, and 15 litre tanks
- Dive insurance, which is mandatory, and travel insurance

GOOD TO KNOW

Good to know

- The sample plan visits the regions in the order shown, and the days spent at each depend on the conditions
- Divers should have Nitrox certification and experience of diving in currents
- Some sites are better for experienced divers, especially in the rainy season when the water is choppy and currents can be strong
- A long overnight sail is part of this trip
- The Cruise Director and Captain choose the route and the dive sites to suit the weather, tides, currents and the number of other dive boats at a site. If bad weather stops the yacht reaching a site on time, alternative sites are offered. The safety of everyone on board comes first.



