

**GUIDE TO
AN EPIC SURF TRIP IN**

MALDIVES



**MALDIVES SURF
PHOTOGRAPHER**

I'M HERE TO HELP YOU PLAN AN EPIC SURF TRIP TO MALDIVES!



Thanks for downloading my 'Guide To An Epic Surf Trip In Maldives.' I'm Hupa, a professional surf photographer and surf guide with 7 years experience on liveaboards, resorts and local islands. I am also the Managing Director of Indulge Maldives Holidays (Maldives).

My passion is helping surfers like yourself plan an epic, affordable and unforgettable surf trip to Maldives. My guide is designed as a one stop resource and includes all the info you could possibly need: how to plan a surf trip to the Maldives, Maldives travel info, Maldives surf breaks, accommodation options, island transfers, visa info and more.

If you would like your Maldives surf trip documented in the form of photos or videos, be sure to get in touch & I will do my best to create incredible Maldives content for you. I also work with brands & travel companies - see my testimonials on the back page.

If you visit Maldives, or have any questions, be sure to get in touch via email / socials / Whats App etc. It would be great to meet you and hang out in the line up!

HUPA IBRAHIM - MALDIVES SURF PHOTOGRAPHER

www.maldivessurfphotographer.com



1. RESEARCH THE DESTINATION

- MALDIVES -

LOCATION

The Maldives stretches 800km north to south and 120km east to west. 1,190 islands form Maldives, across two parallel chains of islands, divided into 26 atolls. Maldives is situated south-west of India and Sri Lanka. The equator crosses the country in the southern atolls, between Fuvahmulah Island and Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll, although most of the country is situated in the northern hemisphere.

WEATHER

Maldives is a tropical country with year round weather temps of 26-31°C and ocean temps to match. The dry season is from November to April and the wet season extends from May to October, with the wettest months being May, June and September. There are many sunny weeks in the wet season, especially in July and August.

SURF SEASON

The surf season in Maldives is the same as the wet season: May to October. The biggest swells occur in July and August.

RELIGION

Maldives is a 100% Sunni Muslim country, where religion governs the local laws. Tourists should dress modestly when moving through local villages. Bikinis can be worn in surf breaks around Maldives, and must only be worn at designated 'bikini beaches' on local islands. Bikini wear is acceptable at resorts islands. Alcohol is not permitted on local islands, even for tourists, but is permitted on safari boats. Some local islands have 'bar boats' located off the island, designed for tourists. Religious materials, pork, duty free alcohol & pornographic items are prohibited from entering Maldives.

LANGUAGE

Dhivehi (*dee-va-he*), the formal language of Maldives, uses its own alphabetic system, reading from right to left. English is widely spoken with most Maldivians speaking English fluently as their second language.



2.KNOW THE SURF BREAKS - ATOLLS -

Maldives has over 30 surf breaks located across hundreds of kilometres of coral reefs. Maldives surf breaks are divided into four main surfing atolls / regions:

NORTH MALÉ ATOLL

North Malé Atoll boasts the best waves, most consistent swells & cheapest hotels. Being in close proximity to the airport draws both crowds & safari boats. North Malé Atoll is best for intermediate or expert surfers, although on small days breaks are beginner friendly. A selection of right and left hand breaks in the region, plus two exclusive surf resorts: Adaaran Hudhuran Fushi (Lohis) and Cinnamon Dhonveli (Pasta Point). Surfers can find cheap hotels and guesthouses on Thulusdhoo and Himmafushi local islands, which offer direct access to Cokes, Chickens and Jailbreaks surf breaks.

SOUTH MALÉ ATOLL

South Malé Atoll is for all levels of surfers. It attracts less crowds & consistent swell, slightly smaller than in North Malé Atoll, however when conditions align the waves will challenge even experience surfers. Holiday Inn Kandooma is the exclusive surf resort (Kandooma Right). Guraidhoo Island has cheap hotels plus access to Foxys & Rip Tides surf breaks.

CENTRAL ATOLLS

The Central Atolls are where surfers can find uncrowded waves that are suitable for all levels. Here, surfers will find a variety of wave types from point breaks to barrel sections to mechanical reef breaks. Liveaboard are the best way to explore this region as surf breaks are spread over a large area. Liveaboards offer the flexibility to sail to breaks according to surf conditions. Six Senses Laamu Resort and Niyama Private Island are the two exclusive surf resorts in the Central Atolls.

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

The Southern Atolls are the most secluded region and receive the most swell. It is open to the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Laccadive Sea. Waves here are for experienced surfers, especially for fast, powerful & hollow barrel riding. Surfers will find many empty lineups - some of the best in Maldives. A liveaboard surf trip is recommended for flexibility.

THE SURF BREAKS

NORTH MALÉ ATOLL

COKES	R - A
CHICKENS	L - I
BABY CHICKENS	L - B
SULTANS	R - I
JAILS	R - I
HONKEYS	L - I
NINJAS	R - B & I
PASTA POINT	L - I - ERW
LOHIS	L - A - ERW

CENTRAL ATOLLS

F1	R - A
MUSHROOMS	R - B & I
MIKADOS	R - B & I
FINNIMAS	L - I
YING YANG	R - I & A
MACHINES	R - I & A
KASABU	R - B & I
REFUGEE'S RIGHTS	R - A
VODI	L - I - ERW
YING YANG	R - A

SOUTH MALÉ ATOLL

QUARTERS	R - B & I
TUCKY JOES	L - A
TWIN PEAKS	L - A
	R - B & I
RIP TIDES	R - B & I
FOXYS	L - A
KANDOOMA	R - B, I, A - ERW
RIGHTS	

SOUTHERN ATOLLS

BEACONS	R - A
BLUE BOWLS R	I & A
LOVE CHARMS	L - A
FIVE ISLANDS	R - A
TIGER STRIPES	L - A

R = RIGHT B = BEGINNER
L = LEFT I = INTERMEDIATE
A = ADVANCED

ERW = EXCLUSIVE RESORT WAVE



3. WHERE TO STAY - ACCOMMODATION -

When it comes to accommodation, this goes hand in hand with trip budget. In Maldives it is possible to find accommodation from USD\$50 to \$50,000 a night.

SURF CAMPS

Surf Camps are situated on local islands where Maldivian people live. Surf camps are equipped with local surf guides, so surfers can receive daily updates on the surf forecasts plus insider tips for particular surf breaks. Surf camps will organise surf trips to other nearby breaks, plus the guides will join you in the water. You'll meet other surfers staying at the camp & in the line-up, get a taste of local island life & make Maldivian friends. It's the perfect mix of surfing, culture & value for money, starting from \$80/night.

GUESTHOUSES

Guesthouses offer bed and breakfast style accommodation on local islands, designed for budget travellers. Some guesthouses even offer surf packages inclusive of accommodation, transfers and meals. The cost of guesthouses starts from US\$50 per night, including breakfast. Many guesthouses have small restaurants & offer lunch & dinner options for guests.

SURF RESORTS

All-inclusive luxury surf resorts are designed for luxury travellers with high budgets, seeking access to exclusive and uncrowded waves. Only surfers staying at the resorts, who have purchased a surf pass on per surf basis, are permitted to surf the exclusive resort wave. A maximum capacity of surfers staying at the island at any one time is strictly enforced, ensuring waves are off-limits to the public. Each surf resort has a local and international surf guide team. Staying at a luxury surf resorts means surfers can also enjoy the resort's facilities: luxury fine dining, day spas, kids clubs and excursions.

LIVEABOARDS

Set sail on the ultimate surfing trip, onboard a safari boat. Drift between Maldivian islands with an experienced surf guide, in search of perfect waves. All-inclusive except for alcohol.



4. LOCAL SURF ISLANDS

To help you save time on researching the best local islands in Maldives for surfing, I've compiled a list for you...

THULUSDHOO

Thulusdhoo (*Th-oo-lu-st-oo*) is where I live in Maldives and is the best local island in Maldives for surfing. Home to two of Maldives best surf breaks, 'Cokes' (a fast hollow right) and 'Chickens' (a long barrelling left). Loads of guesthouse accommodation and 3 surf camps. Popular with couples, honeymooners, solo travellers & families. Thulusdhoo is located in North Malé Atoll, 30 minutes from the airport via speedboat. Snorkel, dive, swim or stand up paddleboard directly off the island's two 'bikini beaches,' laze in a beachside hammock under palm trees or visit a sandbank island. Thulusdhoo is close to luxury resorts which offer resort day passes. The island is also equipped with cafés and restaurants for travellers.

HIMMAFUSHI

Himmafushi (*Him-a-fu-she*) is also situated in North Malé Atoll, 20 minutes from the airport via speedboat. Himmafushi is a developing surf island in Maldives, with guesthouse accommodation steadily growing on the island. It has direct access to Jailbreaks (a long right) and is close by to other renowned breaks like Sultans.

GURAI DHOO

Guraidhoo (*Gur-rah-do*) is perched in South Malé Atoll, 30 minutes from the airport via speedboat. The island is home to Foxy's & Riptides and is nearby other surf breaks. There are a number of guesthouses on the island and it is quieter than the above two islands in terms of surfers.



5. SURF RESORTS

Maldives surf resorts have the luxury of exclusive waves that only guests with surf passes are permitted to surf. A surf pass must be purchased on a per surf basis in addition to resort accommodation, speedboat transfers and meal plan.

CINNAMON DHONVELI RESORT

Cinnamon Dhonveli is a four-star resort in North Malé Atoll, 20 minutes from the airport. The resort is home to the birth place of surfing in Maldives, Pasta Point (a playful left-hander). The surf legacy was founded in the 70's by Aussie surfer Tony Hindes, which his son continues today. Excellent location for surfing Sultans and Jailbreaks. Great food, pool, beaches and newly refurbished accommodation.

ADAARAN HUDHURAN FUSHI

Maldives' most popular surf resort for experienced surfers as Lohis (a fast barrelling left) is one of Maldives' most dreamed about waves. Consistent swells and a range of accommodation options for surfers. Great pool, beach bar, food and beaches at this four-star resort. 25 minutes from airport via speedboat in North Malé Atoll.

HOLIDAY INN KANDOOMA

Kandooma is situated in South Malé Atoll, 30 minutes south of the airport and is popular for couples and family surf trips. Kandooma Rights is the exclusive wave with beginner, intermediate and advanced sections. A beautiful four-star resort with stunning pool, beach bar, restaurants and great choice of accommodation. Close to other nearby surf breaks and Guraidhoo Island is just across the lagoon.

AYADA MALDIVES

A beautiful luxury five-star resort in the remote south, Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll (Southern Atolls). Ayada offers access to many nearby empty surf breaks including Blue Bowls and Five Islands. 6 stunning restaurants & Turkish/Maldivian inspired villas. It is a 1hr domestic flight & 30min speedboat journey, that is well worth the travel time.

SIX SENSES LAAMU

The only resort situated in Laamu Atoll (Central Atolls). One of the best luxury resorts in Maldives, this beautiful five-star property is perfect for an indulgent stay with world class facilities. The closest surf break is Yin Yangs with a handful of other surf breaks nearby. 35 minute domestic flight combined with 20 minute speedboat.

SONEVA FUSHI

Maldives' most eco-friendly surf resort situated in the spectacular Baa Atoll, home to UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve Hanifaru Bay. Soneva Fushi is an ultra lux five-star surf resort, nearby to a number of intermediate surfbreaks. Incredible food, spa and private eco villas, some equipped with pools and slides. 35min seaplane flight.

FOUR SEASONS KUDA HURAA

Located in North Malé Atoll, Kuda Huraa has access to nearby surf breaks such as Ninjas, Sultans and Jailbreaks. One of the most luxurious resorts in Maldives, home to an overwater spa, beautiful restaurants and a sea turtle rehabilitation sanctuary. Just 20 minutes speedboat journey from the airport.

NIYAMA PRIVATE ISLAND

Renowned five-star luxury surf resort situated in Dhaalu Atoll (Central Atolls). Vodi Point (powerful left) located at the resort plus other surfbreaks nearby including Kasabu (hollow right). A 40 minute seaplane flight or 30 minute domestic flight and 10 minute speedboat journey.



6. ISLAND TRANSFERS - T R A N S P O R T -

It is important to consider how to travel between islands in Maldives. The method of transfer and the accommodation style you choose will depend on your trip budget.

SPEEDBOATS

Local islands in North and South Malé Atolls use public speedboats to travel from Malé Airport to the island. Very few islands (like Thulusdhoo) have multiple services daily, whilst most other islands have a once daily schedule. Speedboat tickets start from USD\$30 per adult one way & tickets must be pre-booked via a travel agent / hotel. It is not possible to arrange speedboat tickets at the airport on arrival in Maldives. Private speedboats are available for charter at any suitable time, day or night, from USD\$250.

LOCAL FERRIES

Local ferries are the cheapest and slowest transfer option for budget travellers. Tickets start from USD\$2pp one-way. The islands in North & South Malé Atolls are connected via the local ferry network, with a once daily service. Ferries depart from the local island early in the morning and return from Malé in the afternoon. Day trips using local ferries are not possible due to the limited schedule. Ferries do not depart the airport - only to / from Malé.

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

As the islands of the Maldives are wide spread, it may be necessary to take a domestic flight to reach a holiday island. Hotels will inform guests of this before their arrival in Maldives. Domestic flight transfers start from USD\$100pp one-way.

SEAPLANES

A seaplane flight may be necessary to reach an island in Maldives. Seaplanes are mainly for travellers staying at resort islands, located outside of North and South Malé Atolls. Prices for sea plane flights start from \$300p.p. one-way. It is possible to charter a sea plane, with prices starting from USD\$2000. Have your camera ready for a spectacular journey!



7.ARRIVAL IN MALDIVES

AIRPORT

Velana International Airport (Malé), is situated on Hulhule Island. Hulhumale Island is the best island for an overnight transit stay in Maldives, with many beachfront hotels, as opposed to Malé City which is not so tourist friendly. Hulhumale, the Airport and Malé are all connected via taxi, costing around USD\$4 one-way.

AIRPORT ARRIVAL

All resorts and safari boat guests will be greeted by an airport rep who will assist with speedboat, domestic flight or seaplane transfers. Local island tourists will be informed in advance if a hotel representative will greet them on arrival at the airport, or if guests are required to make their own way to the speedboat / domestic check in.

VISA

Maldives supplies the 30 day Tourist Visa On Arrival to all nationalities, subject to:

- tourists having a passport with at least 6 months validity
- a confirmed reservation for each night of the stay in Maldives
- a departing flight ticket

Tourists are required to produce these to Immigration upon entry into Maldives.

ISLAND ARRIVAL

Arriving at each island, guests will be greeted on arrival at the jetty by hotel staff. Guests will be transferred to the reception for check in, unless at a resort has in-room check in procedures with private Butler.



8. TRAVEL INFO

CURRENCY

The main currencies used in Maldives are US Dollars and the local currency Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR). Both are widely accepted on local islands. Resort islands accept USD, Euros or credit cards. Some local islands have ATM facilities but not all islands, so be sure to check beforehand & withdraw/exchange enough cash at the airport before travelling to an island. Some local island shops have card machines available, however it is always advisable to carry local MVR or USD cash with you. Many hotels and guesthouses also offer in-room safety deposit boxes for guests.

Standard Exchange Rate:
USD \$1 = 15.42 Maldivian Rufiyaa.

WIFI

WiFi in Maldives is very fast and efficient. Resorts offer WiFi for guests although it's often chargeable. On local islands - it's likely a guesthouse will have WiFi but it may only be in communal areas. If you wish to have WiFi access 24/7, purchase a tourist sim card at the airport for USD\$20 17GB. Make sure your phone is unlocked and not restricted to a home network or the sim will not work. It is not possible to get a tourist sim on a local island or resort so be sure to plan ahead & purchase one on arrival at the airport. The two mobile providers in Maldives are Dhiraagu and Ooredoo.

FOOD

Maldivian cuisine mainly consists of tuna, curries, rice dishes, coconut and spices. It is influenced by Sri Lankan and Indian cuisines. The most popular Maldivian dishes include Mashuni, Garudhiya and Bokiba. Many local islands have cafés where travellers can sample these dishes.

WATER

Hotels provide guests with drinking water daily, either bottled or from their own desalinated (reverse osmosis) source. Bring a re-useable drink bottle to help cut down on plastic pollution as Maldives does not have recycling facilities. Brushing teeth with tap water is not harmful.



MALDIVES SURF TRIP PACKING LIST

SURF ESSENTIALS

- ☐ BIKINIS / SWIMWEAR
- ☐ BOARD SHORTS
- ☐ RASH VEST / SURF SUIT
- ☐ SURF TEE
- ☐ 50+ SUNSCREEN
- ☐ ZINC
- ☐ SURF HAT
- ☐ BOOTIES / REEF BOOTS
- ☐ BEACH TOWEL (LOCAL ISLAND)
- ☐ AFTER SUN GEL
- ☐ WAX

ELECTRONICS

- ☐ PHONE & CHARGER
- ☐ LAPTOP & CHARGER
- ☐ CAMERA, BATTERIES & CHARGER
- ☐ GO-PRO & CABLES
- ☐ SD CARDS
- ☐ USB / EXTERNAL HARD DRIVE
- ☐ UK POWER ADAPTOR
- ☐ AIRPODS / HEADPHONES

CLOTHING

- ☐ LIGHT CASUAL CLOTHES
- ☐ 1 SWEATER
- ☐ 1 MODEST VILLAGE OUTFIT
- ☐ FLIP FLOPS / THONGS
- ☐ GYM SHOES (WORKOUTS)
- ☐ UNDERWEAR & SOCKS
- ☐ PYJAMAS
- ☐ PLANE WEAR

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

- ☐ PASSPORT
- ☐ ACCOMMODATION DOCS
- ☐ DIVE LOG & BOOKS
- ☐ DRINK BOTTLE
- ☐ GASTRO STOP & PANADOL
- ☐ BASIC FIRST AID KIT
- ☐ MOSQUITO REPELLENT
- ☐ HYDRALIGHT / MAGNESIUM
- ☐ PRESCRIPTION MEDS
- ☐ GLASSES / CONTACT LENSES
- ☐ EYE MASK / EAR PLUGS
- ☐ HAND SANITISER
- ☐ TOILETRIES

**USD
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**LESS THAN
\$100 A DAY!**

7 NIGHT ULTIMATE MALDIVES SURF PACKAGE (THULUSDHOO ISLAND)

OCEAN FRONT SEAVIEW BALCONY ROOM

DAILY BREAKFAST

AIRPORT MEET & GREET

RETURN SPEEDBOAT TRANSFERS

1 x SURF TRANSFER: JAILS / HONKEYS / SULTANS

1 x IN-WATER SURF SHOOT

1 x SANDBANK ISLAND & SNORKELLING TRIP

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PRIVATE SURF SHOOTS

DRONE & LIFESTYLE



TESTIMONIALS

SIMON MURIE

- FOUNDER SWIM TREK (UK)

Hupa was an incredibly talented guy who managed to capture the beauty of the Maldives from below and above the water. He was very flexible and managed to supply Swim Trek with the most jaw-dropping shots of our Maldives swimming trip.

KENDALL LAYT - KOKOH & KOI (AUS)

We have worked with Hupa in Maldives on various occasions, capturing shots both in and out of the water, as well as from the skies. Hupa has followed our briefs with ease yet has also provided us with his unique creative spin. Kokoh & Koi will always choose to work with Hupa when in the Maldives.

AS SEEN ON:



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