Tourism has an unrivalled cross-cutting nature and is at the heart of trade and development.

– Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary/General
UN Conference on Trade and Development
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EDITORIAL

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Back Cover Photo: Vakkaru Maldives
Tourism spending per trip has increased significantly due to large savings and pent-up demand, softening the blow to economies.

UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, November 2021 edition
DID YOU KNOW?

In the Maldives, it is prohibited to dump any waste, including food waste or biodegradable waste into the sea, effective from 22 November 2021.
I reiterated my message of UNWTO not leaving anyone behind as we chart a path for an accelerated safe tourism recovery.

- Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General
World Tourism Organization, UNWTO
CRUNCHING NUMBERS

TOURIST ARRIVALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>151,552</td>
<td>173,347</td>
<td>92,103</td>
<td>-39.2</td>
<td>-46.9</td>
<td>2,971</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>168,583</td>
<td>149,785</td>
<td>96,882</td>
<td>-42.5</td>
<td>-35.3</td>
<td>3,460</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>162,843</td>
<td>59,630</td>
<td>109,585</td>
<td>-32.7</td>
<td>+83.8</td>
<td>3,355</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>163,114</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>91,200</td>
<td>-44.1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3,040</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>103,022</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>64,613</td>
<td>-37.3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2,084</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>113,475</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56,166</td>
<td>-40.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>132,144</td>
<td>1,752</td>
<td>101,818</td>
<td>-22.9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3,284</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>139,338</td>
<td>7,636</td>
<td>143,599</td>
<td>+3.1</td>
<td>+1,780.6</td>
<td>4,632</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>117,619</td>
<td>9,605</td>
<td>114,896</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
<td>+1,096.2</td>
<td>3,830</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>141,928</td>
<td>21,515</td>
<td>142,066</td>
<td>+0.1</td>
<td>+560.3</td>
<td>4,583</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>137,921</td>
<td>35,757</td>
<td>144,725</td>
<td>+4.9</td>
<td>+304.7</td>
<td>4,824</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,531,539</td>
<td>459,082</td>
<td>1,157,653</td>
<td>-24.4</td>
<td>+152.2</td>
<td>3,466</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REGIONAL TRENDS

(Arrivals and Growth Rate Year-on-Year)
### TOP 10 MARKETS by Nationality
(as at end November 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Shares %</th>
<th>Arrivals</th>
<th>Growth % over 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>259,760</td>
<td>+486.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>204,813</td>
<td>+344.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>83,518</td>
<td>+160.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>48,645</td>
<td>+190.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>45,739</td>
<td>+19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>37,300</td>
<td>+398.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>33,206</td>
<td>+499.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>31,757</td>
<td>+333.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>23,891</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>21,786</td>
<td>+111.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOP 10 ARRIVALS by Country of Residence
(as at end November 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Arrivals</th>
<th>% of arrivals were</th>
<th>Growth % over 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>213,028</td>
<td>97.8% were Indians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>192,149</td>
<td>98.7% were Russians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>75,001</td>
<td>91.0% were Germans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>U.A.E</td>
<td>55,506</td>
<td>22.6% were Emiratis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>U.S.A</td>
<td>44,020</td>
<td>89.3% were Americans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>43,100</td>
<td>77.8% were Saudis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>32,607</td>
<td>91.3% were Spaniards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>32,005</td>
<td>85.5% were Brits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>28,331</td>
<td>97.4% were Ukrainians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>25,313</td>
<td>74.2% were Swiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AIRLINES OPERATING TO THE MALDIVES
(November 2021)

SCHEDULED 23  CHARTERED 5

EUROPE
- AEROFLOT
- AUSTRIAN AIRLINES
- AZUR AIR RUSSIA
- BRITISH AIRWAYS
- BLUE PANORAMA
- CONDOR
- EDELWEISS
- LUFTHANSA
- NEOS
- TURKISH AIRLINES

MIDDLE EAST
- EMIRATES
- ETHAD AIRWAYS
- FLY DUBAI
- GULF AIR
- QATAR AIRWAYS
- SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINES

OTHERS
- SINGAPORE AIRLINES
- SRILANKAN AIRLINES
- AIR SEYCHELLES

INDIA
- AIR INDIA
- GOAIR
- INDIGO
- SPICEJET

OTHERS
- AIR VISTARA
- AIR ASTANA
- LOT POLISH AIRLINES
- GULLIVAIR
## TOURIST FACILITIES

(In Operation as at end November 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATOLL</th>
<th>TOTAL CAPACITY</th>
<th>Reshorts</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Guesthouses</th>
<th>Safaris</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.A. ATOLL</td>
<td>52,024</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>37,352</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>1,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.DH. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,360</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,104</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.A. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,224</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.DH. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DH. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,794</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TH. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>152</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.DH. ATOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td>550</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SH. ATOLL**
- 2 Reshorts: 457 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 3 Guesthouses: 24 Beds

**N. ATOLL**
- 8 Reshorts: 1,620 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 6 Guesthouses: 64 Beds

**LH. ATOLL**
- 10 Reshorts: 2,504 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 4 Guesthouses: 44 Beds

**K. ATOLL**
- 52 Reshorts: 12,710 Beds
- 5 Hotels: 750 Beds
- 232 Guesthouses: 5,478 Beds

**V. ATOLL**
- 4 Reshorts: 694 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 45 Guesthouses: 532 Beds

**M. ATOLL**
- 2 Reshorts: 440 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 3 Guesthouses: 30 Beds

**L. ATOLL**
- 2 Reshorts: 242 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 3 Guesthouses: 138 Beds

**G.A. ATOLL**
- 6 Reshorts: 1,279 Beds
- 1 Hotel: 164 Beds
- 6 Guesthouse: 48 Beds

**GN. ATOLL**
- 0 Reshorts: 0 Beds
- 0 Hotels: 0 Beds
- 17 Guesthouses: 206 Beds

**S. ATOLL**
- 1 Reshorts: 260 Beds
- 1 Hotel: 156 Beds
- 12 Guesthouses: 216 Beds
We are all here for the same reason: To rethink and to restart tourism. We must make the most of this opportunity – to transform goodwill into concrete support.

- Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
IN CONVERSATION WITH
YOOSUF RIFFATH
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)
CAPITAL TRAVEL & TOURS

“Commitment, communication and collaboration are the most crucial skills to hone for success in this industry.”
With a service record of 40 years in the tourism sector of Maldives, Yoosuf Rifath is recipient of this year’s National Award of Recognition in the field of contributing to the advancement of the tourism sector through innovation and other activities. Mr. Rifath began his hospitality career in 1981 from Universal Enterprises. Today he is the CEO of his own company, Capital Travel & Tours. Under his guidance and leadership, the company grew and became one of the leading tour operators in the country. Mr. Rifath is also the founder and President of the Association of Travel Agents (ATA). He was also the founder and former president of the Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators (MATATO), and serves as a founding member of the Liveboard Association of Maldives (LAM).

Apart from leading his own company, during his remarkable career Rifath has fulfilled leading roles in various pioneering initiatives within the Maldivian tourism sector.

You have been in the hospitality industry for nearly 4 decades, tell us about your beginning. Where and how did you got started?

My career in the hospitality industry began in 1981. Back then, the Tourism Industry was just emerging. Nonetheless, it was quite popular, and many were eager to join. It was whilst working at the Ministry of Education, where I saw advertisements of employment opportunities in the Tourism sector. I applied and received my first opportunity from Universal Enterprises. Here, I underwent training at a variety of departments for a year. That is how my career started.

Today, you are the owner and CEO of one of the leading tour operators in the Maldives. What made you to start Capital Travel and Tours?

I started my own business in 1990. At the time there were a lot of foreign tour operators entering the Maldives and many commented and noted on the scarcity of local tour operators. After numerous discussions with those foreign tour operators, I decided to create a local travel company – Capital Travel and Tours. Even then I firmly believed that the Maldivian tourism sector will develop exponentially in the future.

You have successfully turned Capital Travel and Tours into one of the leading tour operators in the Maldives. How would you describe the journey? What were the major challenges?

It took great effort and dedication for Capital Travel and Tours to become a leading travel company in the Maldives. Our success as a tour operator is because we value commitments, uphold business transparency, and maintain our accountability and responsibility to our clients and partners. We’ve been upholding these values since our inception.

Nonetheless, our journey was not without trials and tribulations. One of the key challenges we faced was in the form of competition from large international operators such as Thomas Cook, TUI, and KUONI Travel who at the time, not only had the financial means but also would gain special wholesale rates from some resorts which the Local

DMC’s were not privy to. To overcome this, we bolstered our relations with other international resort chains and diversified our business within the hospitality industry. We diversified into cruise operations and more successfully Resort and Hotel Supply – Astrabon.

Apart from owning a travel agency, you are also the founder and President of the Association of Travel Agents (ATA). Tell us about ATA and how you came up with this idea.

It was actually through the efforts of creating and regulating the Liveboard Association, which paved the way for ATA. Liveboard Association is quite different than ATA in the sense that it accommodates for different stakeholders. Nonetheless, I found similar issues within the two. Thus, after setting up the Liveboard Association in 2007, I aimed to set up a similar regulatory body to support and advocate for incoming and current local travel agencies and tour operators.

What has been your most memorable experience from the tourism industry so far?

The experiences gained from an international business by meeting different people make for very valuable and memorable experiences. It is these global interactions of knowledge and culture exchange which allows me to grow on a personal level as well. Thus, narrowing it down to one makes it quite difficult.
As a pioneering senior from the tourism industry, in your opinion, what has been the most significant changes to the tourism industry of the Maldives over the years?

When we first started in 1990, resort room rates were around US$50 to 60. Now, the room rates of the same resorts have gone up to around US$400 and above. Hence, back then, Maldives was not under a ‘luxury’ concept. It was a budget-friendly destination with 2-3-star level resorts.

Maldives has seen such a significant upgrade as now; it is one of the world’s leading luxurious destinations. As for the future, with the expansion of local tourism, I think the luxury resorts with US$2,500-7,000 room rates would be forced to bring their rates down, maybe even by 50% in order to maintain themselves in the market. Otherwise, I think their occupancy rates would keep dropping day by day.

I also think the Maldivian tourism industry is going to experience massive expansions in the upcoming two years, especially in the local tourism segment, and I think around 2,000 additional beds are going to open up from the resort segment as well.

As we gear up to celebrate the golden jubilee year of tourism in the Maldives in 2022, how would you describe the current status of the Maldivian tourism sector and what changes are you anticipating for the future?

Over the last 2 years, local tourism has been experiencing a boom in the Maldives. Although income generating resources are few in the Maldives, I believe local tourism is a new avenue which can provide greater opportunities for a significant portion of the local working population. Thus, Capital Travel and Tours is preparing an extensive and inclusive platform that would allow people to be engaged in the tourism sector while still living in their own islands and atolls. The platform will be used by local tour agencies and guesthouses. We will be implementing methods to fully support them and further assist in the development of the industry.

The global travel and tourism industry is faced with many challenges due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. How has the pandemic changed the tourism for you and how you manage bookings?

The pandemic affected us quite hard as well. I faced many challenges and losses in the business due to low production. However, we still managed to maintain our business relationship with our partners. We also attended webinars virtually hosted from all over the world.

We increased our communication and kept our clients well informed with updated news and protocols surrounding Covid-19 in the Maldives, making it much easier to cater to our clients and to provide our services.

Our partners also supported us immensely and provided flexibility in cancellations and offered special rates and alternatives for the difficulties faced.

We also studied and implemented strategical plans for future bookings and, through trial and error, increased our preparedness for unforeseen circumstances. We were always connected to our partners virtually and offered hope and support to overcome the hardships they were facing.

What skills are most crucial to succeed in this industry?

We treat our clientele with dignity and respect and leave no stone unturned in order to provide them with our best services right from the moment we make our initial contact. We thrive on the confidence we build with our clients and partners. We make it our sole purpose to delight our clients in cooperation with our partner hotels and resorts. Thus, commitment, communication and collaboration are the most crucial skills to hone for success in this industry.

What is the biggest factor helping you to succeed? Who are the people behind your success?

The biggest factor helping me succeed is undoubtedly my professional and personal network. First, my hardworking and skilled employees who have committed their time for the growth of the company and the Tourism Industry. Second, my partners and agents across the globe, who tirelessly continue to support me throughout the years. Third, my peers and colleagues who I continue to learn from. Last but not least, my family and friends who are my stalwart supporters, encouraging me throughout this journey.

Although income generating resources are few in the Maldives, I believe local tourism is a new avenue which can provide greater opportunities for a significant portion of the local working population.
What is your advice for local new commers and for those who aspire to be in leading roles in this industry?

Three aspects for a leading career; Commitment, Leadership and Efficiency in Production

Recently you received the National Award of Recognition in the field of contributing to the advancement of the tourism sector through innovation and other activities. What are your sentiments on this?

I felt humbled and honored to have received the award and of course, for being recognized for my contribution to the industry. It was even a greater honor to be included in such distinguished ranks of the past recipients, most of whom have been my colleagues at one time or another, all of whom I have immense respect and admiration for, especially for the important contributions they’ve made to the Tourism Sector of the Maldives. It is our duty now to impart the knowledge for the next generation, as although we have come a long way, we still have a long way to go.
The great challenge of the UNWTO General Assembly is the declaration on a harmonized [international] travel protocol; key to open up and not confuse international tourists. It is a pending issue.

- Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General
World Tourism Organization, UNWTO
WOMEN IN TOURISM

AISHATH REETHO
DIRECTOR
THE BAREFOOT ECO HOTEL

“Education and awareness can create a generation to be more accepting of the different working circumstances leading to support from families for their career choices.”
With a masters degree in Real Estate and Property Management, Ms. Aishath Reetho joined the hospitality industry in 2015. It was her interest in investment and properties that lead her to the Barefoot Eco Hotel. She started her professional career in 2001 as a trainee in construction project management at HDC and took a study break in 2004 and went to India to complete her bachelor’s degree in Sociology specializing in urban development and planning. Completed her masters degree in UK. Apart from her professional interests, she loves doing Yoga and enjoys reading and playing chess.

What motivated you to join the hospitality industry? Where and how did you start from?

After completion of my masters in real estate and property management, I was very interested in investment and properties, especially commercial properties and their valuation. So I was consciously looking for an opportunity to work in the private sector, especially commercial properties like hotels, resorts etc. The Barefoot Eco Hotel had very recently opened, but given that it was in an inhabited island with a very different concept to what have been used to so far, they were facing challenges in fitting the operation into the existing laws & regulations. So I was requested by the Managing Partner of the hotel whether I would like to come on board and be part of the team to help them resolve these issues. I was all too glad to be part of something different. To be part of a different industry to what I have experienced so far.

How would you describe your journey so far?

So far it has been a huge growth experience for me professionally as well as personally. Initially there were many challenges, but along the way learning to navigate these obstacles and eventually being able to find solutions have been a very rewarding experience.

Tell us about your current position. What do you like most about it?

At the moment I am a director on the board of the company. However, I am very much involved in the daily management of the operations of the hotel too. But the best part for me now is working on expansion of the operation, on new concepts or prospects for development. Looking for new investment opportunities.

What is an average work week like for you? What are the biggest challenges you face in this job?

I am based in Male’ and I usually work 48 hours a week. However, I travel to the hotel quite often and on average I spend about 10 days a month at the hotel in Hanimaadhoo. Depending on the work load sometimes I have to make 2-3 trips. So, it always varies.

One of the biggest challenges that I am constantly facing in this job is finding local staff. Every day we face issues like uninformed absences and abrupt resignations. This definitely disrupts the everyday operations very much. I would very much like to have more local staffs to be working with us. And I think we can find a solution to this problem only through proper training. This being said I have a few local staff who have been with us since the beginning. The professionalism and excellence in the delivery of their work makes me quite proud to be a Maldivian. And I am very happy that they are part of our team and every day I am very grateful for their hard work in making the business a success.

How do you balance work and life responsibilities?

Honestly, I don’t have a balance if we are strictly speaking in terms of devoting time equally to work and life responsibilities. And I don’t think any of us really do in that sense. It always depends on your situation, your interests and passion. Usually, if you are married of course, you do have more responsibility towards a family. Since I am not, my family responsibilities are much less. So, my life very much revolves around my work. And I am quite happy with the way it is. That being said whenever I am in Male’ I do take the time out to spend time with my family and also with my friends. And it is important to take time off from work and relax so that when I get back I am refreshed and energized. This is my balance and it works for me. At the end of the day, what matters is how contented you are. As long as you are happy with how your life is, that is the best balance you can achieve.

Hospitality industry is perceived as a male dominated industry specially, in leadership roles. In your opinion, what is the most significant barrier for female employees, especially locals in this industry?

One main reason is definitely family responsibilities. Especially in a local context woman do bear most responsibilities within the family than men. Our hospitality industry is hugely based and spread across our islands. So, travelling, commuting or even to be based in a different island are difficult choices for women to make. As for leadership roles too, it is difficult to devote the time required of such roles when most women are already taking on a lot of responsibilities within the family. However, this is changing and I hope that we will see more women especially in leadership roles in the future.

What changes do you wish to see in this sector, to make it more attractive and welcoming for local female employees?

One step could be creating the opportunity for proper training especially at the islands. Since the hospitality industry is the key contributor to our economy, it is really important to have a good hospitality school in the country which can facilitate training of locals in the islands. This would create an interest among young women and men to be part of this industry. Education and awareness can create a generation to be more accepting of the different working environments leading to support from families for their career choices.

Young women can be motivated to join the industry through career guidance and awareness programs, which would also pave the way for career advancement in future. This could lead to better career opportunities where they can have more flexibility in taking up more responsible roles without compromising their family responsibilities.
What has been the most challenging adjustments you had to make due to the ongoing COVID pandemic?

Working from home was challenging. I felt like office and home were being merged together and after a while it was mentally draining. Of course, on the bright side many services moved to online and it was definitely a very progressive move. And I hope even after COVID this could continue as it is. In addition, the abrupt closer of borders was definitely a nightmare. We had to work around these decisions, in planning our work, our staffs travel etc. I guess the COVID pandemic is one of the most challenging times we had in this industry, but I believe the experience has made all of us more resilient and we are moving forward having learnt many lessons.

What are your thoughts and views on the Maldives tourism industry?

I think there is still huge room for diversification and expansion. Right now, I feel there is still too much rigidity and focus is only on increasing the no of beds. And I do understand the reasons for this approach. However, to continue to be a competitive destination we need to create and offer a varied no of options. And I think this can be done even within the existing laws and regulations. We only need support from the government to be more open to different ideas and relax development restrictions. Right now, even at bidding stage we see to many rigid guidelines which are limiting room for creativity. So, I honestly hope that this is something that the Government would consider in future.

What has been your most memorable experience from the tourism industry?

I think re-opening in October 2020 after the Covid pandemic was challenging as well as a memorable experience. We were all going through a very uncertain time, and even though things were getting better, it was a time when things could change overnight. Of course, it was beyond our control. However, we succeeded to bounce back and come this far in a years’ time. Looking back, it feels like despite the hurdles, with the right positivity if we keep trying, we can achieve any goal.

What is the biggest factor helping you to succeed?

The biggest factor is knowing that I work in an environment where my input and suggestions are valued. The freedom to make decisions which are also respected definitely drive me to do better and help me succeed.

Who you look up to for inspiration and mentorship?

I draw inspiration from everyone I work with. Working with a team from different countries and also different professional backgrounds gives you the opportunity to learn every day. Everyone has something to contribute however big or small. So, it’s really inspiring to continuously learn from your team and it also motivates you to be better.
What would be your advice to the young women entering this industry aspiring to be in leadership roles?

The hospitality industry is a sector where there is room for many career opportunities. It is a very diverse and interesting industry. It can also be a beginning, paving your path for leadership roles. Without a doubt one industry that can build your confidence and professionalism to be really good leaders. So, my advice for young women is that if they aspire to build a good career, this is definitely one of the best opportunities we have in this country and I encourage more and more women to become part of this industry.

Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

I see myself to continue to be part of this industry. However, I am hoping that I am able to be part of a project or projects that would diversify the industry. I am passionate about preserving the culture, heritage and embracing sustainable practices. And while I am involved in further development and expansion of our operations, these are themes that I am trying to integrate in our plans. Therefore, in five years’ time I am hoping that I would be able to bring these ideas into a reality and make a significant impact especially in the development of tourism in the Northern region of the country.

Closing remarks:

As a closing remark I would like to say that a very significant trait of the hospitality industry is that it is customer-driven, which makes service excellence the most important core value. It requires patience and persistence and most importantly strong decision-making ability. It requires time, and results will be gradual but it’s definitely worth the effort.

Finally, I would like to thank the people who have supported me to come this far. The Managing Partner of The Barefoot Eco Hotel for giving me the opportunity to join this industry and for continuously entrusting me with more responsibilities to grow professionally. My parents and my family for always been there for me and for giving me the freedom to make my own choices.
Despite recent improvements, uneven vaccination rates around the world and new Covid-19 strains could impact the already slow and fragile recovery

- UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, November 2021 edition
It is great to see that so much opportunity is going to be ahead of us, if we are willing to face the challenges and willing to work as a one big family.
Fathimath Aseela, is a young enthusiast from Raa Kandholhudhoo. Ms. Aseela started her hospitality career in 2014 from Kurumba Maldives. From the very young age she was interested in working in a tourist resort. She loves socializing with people hence takes joy in being among people and getting to know them. With a loving and supportive family, who encourages and motivates her to grow in her career, she has worked in several resorts over the years and is currently working at the newly opened Cora Cora Maldives as an Assistant Restaurant Manager.

Were you interested in the Hospitality industry before? Where and when did you start from?

I joined tourism industry on March 2014, as an in villa dinning order taker at Kurumba Maldives. My mom always say that when she asked me while I was 10yrs old, what will I do when I grow up and I said to her I will be working at resort. I was always excited to know what happens at resort and how a resort looks like. I was so excited on my first field trip to one of the resorts when I was at grade 08 (I don’t remember the name, all I remember is at that resort there was an underground wine cellar)

I have done O’level and A’level. After my A’level I studied shariah and law from villa college but later I changed my field which was in my mind when I was 10yrs old, which is tourism industry.

I have worked at Kurumba as an order taker, hostess, waitress, restaurant captain and restaurant supervisor. I worked at there for 5yrs, then got opportunity from Lux* North Male’ in 2019. From there I moved to Emerald Maldives, after that Robinson Noonu as head waitress. Now I am working at Cora Cora Maldives since August 2021, as the Assistant Restaurant Manager of Teien (Japanese Restaurant). After 10yrs I got this awesome opportunity, which is a dream come true.

Tell us about your role at Cora Cora Resort?

My role here at Cora Cora Maldives, is managing the restaurant and day to day operation, also motivating each and everyone working. As we work as one big family. Getting feedback from guests and colleagues, which is very helpful to organize daily tasks.

How do you manage your daily tasks? What is the favorite part of your job?

As I am working in the food and beverage department, before my duty starts, I go through the reservation for dinner and daily activities, prepare for briefing for my team. Make and allocate tasks for each and everyone, so we could give an awesome service to our guest. I love to plan my day one day ahead and keep updated my team and myself.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

I have achieved international Saba Butler Certificate and well known at tripadvisor. At Cora Cora Maldives, known as voice of the guest.
What challenges do young people face related to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion—and how do you think we should address these challenges?

I love to see the young generation grow in their career in this industry. But they do face a lot of challenges, as some young people don’t get much support from their family and get demotivated too early, also still at most of the resort have the old culture where, if the person doesn’t have experience won’t be getting opportunity. But in my opinion, if they get chance to show they are capable by giving training and mentoring, the young generation will be growing at tourism industry and we will see very motivated and enthusiastic people at each and every place. I would love to see young people more than now in this industry.

I have faced so much challenges in my journey at this industry, as being a woman, it is sometimes hard for people to accept the fact that a woman can lead. Still some people have negativity towards woman in this industry but its an encouragement for me. Any challenge I face gives me much more encouragement.

As an enthusiastic young professional, how would you describe the tourism industry of the Maldives?

Tourism industry in the Maldives, in my opinion is growing each and every year. It is great to see that so much opportunity is going to be ahead of us, if we are willing to face the challenges and willing to work as a one big family. Each and every year it is getting better and better.

What would be your advice to young locals entering the tourism industry?

My advice to each and everyone is be positive, be open minded. If you have the will, if you have a target and a goal, you will achieve it, with honesty, discipline and hard work.

Who do you look up to for inspiration and mentorship?

I am inspired by each and every honest hard worker in this industry or any other industry. I get advice from each and every superior of me, where ever I worked. It won’t be fair to mention a specific name. I really appreciate been given this opportunity and I love to see a lot of Maldivians in tourism industry.
Data for the third quarter of 2021 is encouraging. However, arrivals are still 76% below pre-pandemic levels and results across the different global regions remain uneven

- Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary-General
World Tourism Organization, UNWTO
MONTH IN REVIEW - November

The President of Maldives Visits WTM London

The President of the Republic of Maldives, H.E. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, visited Maldives stand at WTM, London and met with representatives from Maldives at the stand. The president encouraged and commended them for their persistent efforts to promote Maldives tourism despite the challenges caused by Covid-19 pandemic. During his visit to Maldives stand, the president also toured the fair ground accompanied by a high-level delegation including the Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom and the High Commissioner of Maldives to UK, Dr. Farah Faizal. The fair organizers acknowledged and recognized the visit of President Solih as the first head of state to visit the fair.

A large contingent from the Maldives, consisting of a total 102 participants from 58 companies along with Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC) and high-level representation from the government, including the Minister of Tourism participated in the World Travel Market (WTM), London, which was held from 1st to 3rd November at ExCeL, London.

The fair provided a platform to the stakeholders to promote individual products and properties. On the 2nd day of the fair, MMPRC organized a press conference, where the Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, Managing Director of MMPRC, Mr. Thoyyib Mohamed, and Executive Director of Sun Siyam Resorts, Ms. Zuley Manik briefed the international media on Maldives tourism and answered their queries. On the last day of the fair, MMPRC organized a Roadshow to promote MICE opportunities available in the destination.

The World Travel Market London (WTM London) is one of the leading global events for the travel industry to meet industry professionals and conduct business deals. Through its industry networks and unrivalled global reach, WTM London creates personal and business opportunities, providing customers with quality contacts, content and communities. This year for the first time in history WTM was held as a hybrid event and the physical fair took place after a year’s break due to the covid-19 situation in the UK.

On the sideline of WTM, London, 2021, Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom met with several international stakeholders and discussed the future of tourism. One meeting was held with Mr. Victor Moneo, Senior Vice President of Iberia Air. Discussions during this meeting were focused on improving air connections between Maldives and Spain through Iberia Air.

On another meeting Minister Dr. Mausoom met with the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan H.E. Nayef Hamidi Mohammed Al-Fayez. Discussions were focused on strengthening partnership between the two countries in developing tourism.

Furthermore, Minister Dr. Mausoom gave an interview to Mr. Richard Quest from CNN and talked about the story of Maldives and challenges and success after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Minister also attended a dinner hosted by CNN and the 9th Aligned Advocacy Dinner hosted by Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA).
Minister of Tourism Participates in UNWTO Summit and PATA Forum

On the sideline of WTM, London, Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom participated in the UNWTO Minister’s Summit and PATA’s Forum on East Meets West.

The UNWTO & WTM Minister’s Summit was held on 2nd November at the Global Stage of WTM fair ground. The summit was held under the name, “UNWTO and WTM Minister’s Summit 2021: Investing in Tourism’s Sustainable Future” and was moderated by BBC presenter Zeinab Badawi. The objective of the session was to explore how the sector can facilitate and promote greater investment in tourism. UNWTO’s Secretary General and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)’s president Julia Simpson delivered the opening remarks.

On 3rd November, Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom participated as a speaker in the PATA forum on, East Meets West: Restarting Travel and the Lessons Learned Along the Way. Discussion of this forum were focused on lessons learned from Covid-19 and restarting tourism. Among other panelists for this forum include Ms. Liz Ortiguera, CEO of PATA, Mr. Alan Elliot Merschen, Partner, International Insights, Myriad, Ms. Kimarli Fernando, Chairperson, Sri Lanka Tourism. The session was moderated by Mr. Rajan Datar, Presenter of BBC’s The Travel Show.

Agoda Becomes an Associate Partner of Maldives Border Miles

One of the fastest-growing online travel booking platform Agoda, signed an associate partnership with Maldives Border Miles on 22nd November 2021. This partnership was signed in aims to increase the benefits for members and the partners of the Maldives Border Miles program. Hence, Agoda will be sharing their expertise for the development and will also facilitate to promote the partners of the program on their global network.

The online signing ceremony was honored by Controller General of Maldives Immigration, Mr. Mohamed Ahmed Hussain, along with Deputy Minister of Tourism, Dr. Naushad Mohamed, Chief Executive Officer of Agoda Company Pte. Ltd., Mr. John Brown, Deputy Managing Director of Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation, Mrs. Neesha Shahid, Director of Global Government Affairs of Agoda Company Pte. Ltd., Mr. Daniel Gelfer and the Country Manager of Agoda Company Pte. Ltd. to the Maldives, Mr. Mohamed Amaan.
Atoll Council Members Meet with the Tourism Diversification Team of Ministry of Tourism

During the month of November, several atoll council members visited the Ministry of Tourism and met with Minister and the Ministry’s Diversification Team.

On 15th November three different meetings took place with members from L. Gan Council, Sh. Komandoo Council and Addu City Council where discussions were focused on tourism development and related issues in these atolls.

For the L. Gan meeting, Council President Ahmed Zaki and Council Members along with Constituency MP Hon. Mohamed Wisam joined. For the Sh. Komandoo Council meeting, Council President Mohamed Sinaan and Council Members joined. And for the Addu City Council meeting, the city Mayor Ali Nizar, Deputy Mayor Mohamed Shuaau and council members joined.

On 17th November, Th. Vilifushi Council President Hussain Jabeen and Council Members along with Vilifushi Constituency MP Hon. Hassan Afeef joined the meeting with the Ministry Team, where discussions were focused on Vilifushi tourism development and related issues.

On 18th November 2021, Th. Atoll Council President Abdulla Shareef Abdul Faththah and Thimarafushi Constituency MP Hon. Abdulla Riyaz joined the meeting and discussed development of tourism and its linkages.
Maldives Police Service Organizes the Tourism Sector Security Workshop

The Maldives police service, in collaboration with Ministry of Tourism and the British High Commission in the Maldives held a security workshop for personnel working in the tourism sector on the 14th November 2021. Topics discussed during this workshop includes ways to identify potential security threats to the industry and ways to mitigate these threats. The workshop held in Crossroads Maldives was targeted towards Security Managers of various tourist facilities in the Tourism Sector.

Minister of Tourism Participates in WTTC Safe Travels Forum

Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom participated as a panelist at PDOT Safe Travels Forum organized by The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) held in the Philippines. At the forum which was held on 26th November, Minister shared Maldives’ experience and highlighted the importance of transparency and swift response to timely tourism revival.

"MULA Maldives" Brand Launched

Minister of Tourism Dr. Abdulla Mausoom joined First Lady Fazna Ahmed in launching “Mula Maldives” brand. The ceremony was held on 19th November where Minister and the First Lady presented awards for the winners of MULA bodyboarding challenge 2021. Speaking at the event, Minister Mausoom thanked Mula Maldives MD and Team for introducing reef-friendly products. The bodyboarding challenge was held from 17th to 19th November with 28 surfers competing.

Deputy Minister of Tourism Participates in the 5th ITOP International Policy Seminar

Deputy Minister, Dr. Naushad Mohamed was invited to participate in the 5th ITOP International Policy Seminar. The seminar was held in Jeju Island, South Korea on 21st November. Dr. Naushad discussed and shared tourism policies in Maldives that lead to the swift recovery of tourism despite shifting source markets.
During the Month of November, several international dignitaries paid courtesy calls on the Minister of Tourism.

On the 17th of November, the High Commissioner of New Zealand to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, H.E. Mr Michael Appleton paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, Minister briefed High Commissioner on Maldives Tourism recovery.

On 18th November, Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom received a courtesy call from Tuvalu Minister of Finance, Hon. Seve Paeniu. Discussions were focused on tourism & environment issues for island states. The meeting was also attended by Ms. Lafita Meatuai Paeniu, Senior Advisor, Pacific Division, Department of Foreign Affairs.

On 18th November, Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom received a courtesy call from Ms. Jemmy Correia Nunes, Minister Counsellor at the Delegation of the EU Maldives. Minister Dr. Mausoom thanked the EU for their support and contributions towards tourism & discussed areas of cooperation for tourism development in the Maldives.

The newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to the Maldives H.E. Wang Lixin had a virtual courtesy call on Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom on 22nd November. Discussions were focused on tourism cooperation between China and the Maldives.
The High Commissioner of the Republic of India to the Republic of Maldives, H.E. Amb Munu Mahawar paid a courtesy call on Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom on 22nd November. They discussed on furthering the existing cooperation in tourism between the two countries.

On 23rd November H.E. Rakibe Demet Şekerioğlu, the newly appointed ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Maldives paid a courtesy call on Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom. Discussions were focused on the tourism cooperation between Turkey and Maldives. Mr. Ismail Hilmy, Turkish Hon Council General was also in attendance.

Honorary Consul of Maldives in Italy Avv. prof Luca Fiormonte paid a courtesy call on Minister Dr. Abdulla Mausoom. Discussions focused on tourism cooperation between Maldives and Italy.

The CEO of Jal Boot, Mr. Mohamed Roestali & his Team Leaders paid a courtesy call on Minister of Tourism Dr. Abdulla Mausoom. Mr Roestali briefed Minister on their expansion plan, CSR drive and green commitment. Minister thanked them for engaging a high percentage of Maldivians in Jal Boot Team.

The famous Maldivian performer/vocalist Mr. Abdul Rasheed (Abcy) met the Minister of Tourism Dr. Abdulla Mausoom and volunteers to help organize Maldives Tourism Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2022. He also presented a copy of his album “Eyzamaanaa”, a Maldives Magical Melodies to Minister. Abcy has been performing in resorts since 1978.
Ministry of Tourism’s Localization and Diversification Team Visits Laamu Atoll

Ministry of Tourism’s Tourism Diversification & Localization team continued its series of Atoll trips and visited Laamu Atoll from 23rd to 27th November. Their first stop was L. Fonadhoo, where the ‘Re-imagining Tourism’ project, was launched, which aims to transform tourism in the Maldives with a focus on diversification of tourism. In a ceremony held at the L. Fonadhoo on Wednesday at Center for Education, the project was launched by the Minister of Tourism, Dr. Abdulla Mausoom together with the UN Resident Coordinator for Maldives, Ms. Catherine Haswell and UNDP’s Resident Representative, Mr. Enrico Gaveglia. The ‘Re-imagining Tourism’ project is a joint initiative between the Government and UNDP Maldives to explore, develop and test pathways for making tourism in the country more inclusive, resilient and sustainable.

On November 24th, the tour continued to L. Mundhoo, accompanied by Laamu Atoll council President Ismail Ali, UN Resident Coordinator for the Maldives, Ms. Catherine Haswell and UNDP’s Resident Representative, Mr. Enrico Gaveglia. They met with Mundhoo Council & entrepreneurs and discussed tourism development approaches.

On 25th November, the team visited L. Isdhoo, Kalaidhoo, Dhanbidhoo and Maabaidhoo and on 26th November, they visited Kunahandhoo and Maavah and finally on 27th November they visited Maamendhoo, Hithadhoo and Gan. The team met with these islands council and entrepreneurs and discussed ways that they can develop tourism in the island. During this lag of the tour, the team was accompanied by L. Atoll council President Ismail Ali. The Gan Constituency MP, Mohamed Wisam joined the tour of L. Gan.

On the sideline of Tourism Diversification Laamu Tour, Tourism Minister, Dr. Abdulla Musoom and team met with some employees of Rahaa Resort. During the meeting minister highlighted HR Policies of the Government, discussed issues of concern and thanked them for contributions towards Maldives tourism recovery.

Mongolian Airlines Commences Charter Flights to the Maldives

The Mongolian Airlines, commenced charter flights to the Maldives on 23 November 2021. Guest that arrived from this commencement flight include tour operators, travel bloggers and other media. Regular flights between Mongolia and Maldives will start from 27th December 2021 until 31st March 2022. This is a collaboration between Maldivian travel agency, Awesome Maldives and Mongolian tour operator, Cruise Tour Mongolia.
Visit Maldives Kicks off Marketing Campaign with India’s OTAs

Visit Maldives launches a campaign with India’s Online Travel Agency, Yatra and Go First airline. The campaign will be held for a period of 3 months from 8th November onwards. This campaign is aligned with the India market strategy and would help to further boost arrivals from the Indian market and reach pre-pandemic targets. The campaign aims at creating buzz and destination awareness for potential travelers from India to Maldives.

Visit Maldives Begins Marketing Campaign with Anex Tour of Russia

Visit Maldives begins a marketing campaign with one of the top tour operators from Russia, Anex Tour. The one-month campaign will be conducted from October to November 2021. ANEX TOUR is one of the top 5 tour operators in Russia and CIS region. Activities to be conducted under this campaign include screening advertisements of the destination in three shopping malls in Moscow and St. Petersburg, radio advertising campaign with Relax Radio Station and outdoor advertising activity in Moscow.

Visit Maldives Launches Marketing Campaign with Bluvacanze, Italy

Visit Maldives launches a destination marketing campaign with Italy’s largest travel agency brand, Bluvacanze and Vivere & Viaggiare. The campaign will be held till the end of March 2022. Vivere & Viaggiare with Bluvacanze is the brand that represents the largest number of travel agencies in Italy. Under the campaign with Visit Maldives and Bluvacanze will hold several B2B and B2C promotional activities using email marketing, digital communication, social media posts, and webinar for the Italian travel trade and tourists.

Maldives Showcases Watersports and Underwater Experiences at DEMA Show

Visit Maldives showcases underwater experiences available in the Maldives at DEMA Show 2021. The event is being held in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA from 16th to 19th November 2021. DEMA is the largest trade only event in the world for companies doing business in the scuba diving, oceanwater sports and adventure/diving travel industries. It attracts hundreds of exhibitors and thousands of dive and travel industry professionals from around the world each year.
Maldives Participates in an Online Travel Mart Organized by JATA

Maldives participated in an online travel mart organized by the Japanese Association of Travel Agents (JATA) which was held from 16-17th November 2021. The B2B meetings of this mart are to be held from 25th-26th November. The online seminar allows travel industry professionals from Japan and other countries exchange latest information on the tourism sector. Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation represented Maldives in the online event, while industry partners including Crossroads Maldives, The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo & Grand Park Kodhipparu will be taking part in the B2B meetings of the event.

Familiarization Trip Series Organized for the Brazilian Market

Visit Maldives wraps up the familiarization trip series organized for Brazilian market. This series of FAM trips saw a total of 5 influencers from Brazil visiting the Maldives. They were hosted in various different properties where they got to experience various amenities available at these properties, including spa and wellness treatments, snorkeling, and other exclusive experiences unique to the properties. Their experiences in Maldives were shared through their social media accounts which helps promote Maldives to the Brazilian market.

Visit Maldives Concludes Live Event with Singapore Airlines

Visit Maldives successfully held a destination marketing LIVE event with Singapore Airlines on Naver Live Shopping, South Korea’s one of the largest E-Commerce Websites, on 17th November 2021. Videos and images of Maldives were shown during the live broadcasting along with information about flight schedules between Maldives and South Korea via Singapore Airlines. The purpose of this event was to advertise and promote Maldives to the South Korean travelers.

Maldives Showcased in the GCC Region

Maldives is showcased at one of the leading international travel and tourism markets in GCC region. Qatar Travel Mart (QTM) 2021 is held from 16-18th November where Maldives is advertised as an attractive destination through beautiful images and videos. Coinciding with QTM, Maldives Roadshow was held in Doha on the 16th November. During the roadshow, Visit Maldives presented a video highlighting the products, experiences, and the latest travel information for the Maldives.
Visit Maldives Becomes a Member of Australia’s TravMedia

Visit Maldives becomes a member of Australia’s travel industry’s top global media network, TravMedia. The membership with TravMedia is established as part of our effort to make the Maldives the go to destination in the Australian market. The main objective of this membership is to reach as many media contacts and access as many journalists as possible to help disseminate genuine and latest information relating to the Maldives to the travel trade professionals in Australia. TravMedia is trusted by travel PR professionals and media to network and share press releases, stories and ideas. This membership will help Visit Maldives share information on the latest industry developments, market our and experiences unique to the Maldives to 2,200 Australian travel media and industry professionals through email and website feed.

Influencer Couple from India Arrives in the Maldives for a Familiarization Trip

Karanvir Bohra and Teejay Sidhu, along with their 3 children and production team arrived in Maldives on 21st November. They will be staying in Paradise Island Resort & Spa from 21st November to 26th November where they will experience amenities available for families while vacationing in the Maldives.

Mr. Bohra is a famous actor, producer and designer from India. His wife Teejay Sidhu, is also an actress, producer and famous radio jockey. They will be sharing their experience in Maldives through their social media accounts where they have millions of followers. Their experiences will highlight family friendly activities available in the Maldives.

Visit Maldives Kicks off Campaigns to Maximize Brand Presence in the Balkan Region

Visit Maldives kicks off marketing campaigns to maximize the Maldives’ brand presence in the Balkan region. The activities for this region will be held for a period of 6 months, starting from November 2021 until the end of March 2022.

The focus markets of the campaigns, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia & Romania, have the potential to contribute greatly to the overall tourist arrivals into the Maldives. These markets have shown substantial growth over the years, have great connectivity and accessibility along with the spending power to travel to the Maldives. These campaigns coincided with re-opening of borders for international travels in these markets, and would assist in creating better brand presence and awareness in these markets for the Maldives.
Visit Maldives Holds a Webinar for Travel Trade from the Nordic Region

On 30th November, visit Maldives held a webinar ‘Unique experiences of the Maldives’ for travel trade from the Nordic region. The session lasted one hour with industry partners including Canopus Maldives and Centara Hotels & Resorts joining visit Maldives. The webinar is held for the Nordic travel trade, in order to provide them with the latest information and travel guidelines from the destination. The webinar series aims to inspire the Nordic travel trade to broaden and extend their Maldives product portfolio. This is the second session of a series of webinars organized by MMPRC. The first session was held in September 2021, under the title, ‘Connect with Maldives, Your safe Haven.’

Visit Maldives Kicks Off Marketing Campaign for the German Market

Visit Maldives kicks off a major marketing campaign targeting the German market with TUI held from 29th November 2021 till 3rd April 2022. This campaign will include advertising, press releases, newsletters, social media activities, trade communications with dedicated emails distributed to the partners and clientele of TUI Austria. These advertising and dedicated content will promote Maldives as a safe haven, emphasizing on the geographical formation of our scattered islands which offer natural social distancing. The campaign will focus on marketing the Maldivian tourism products (resorts, hotels, guesthouses and liveaboards), the experiences unique to the Maldives, and the stringent measures in place at our properties. Latest information about the destination will be relayed to travel trade and tourists from the German market through this campaign.

Visit Maldives Launched a Campaign with American Express

Campaign has been launched with American Express’s Travel Impressions. Under the campaign, a brochure consisting of information about the Maldives will be circulated to affluent cardholders of American Express starting from 26th November. The campaign aims to target 4500 Centurion card holders in German and Austrian market where they will advertise Maldives through a brochure containing the luxurious properties of Maldives. Travel Impressions is the vacations collection brand for American Express. They are exclusively contracted for the American Express to reach premium Card Members, receiving top-tier benefits. Their online product directory is uploaded on American Express websites and/or in American Express Smart Phone Apps.
We are past the deepest point of the crisis. While serious issues remain, the path to recovery is coming into view.

– Willie Walsh, Director General of International Air Transport Association (IATA)
INDUSTRY NEWS

The Marina @ CROSSROADS Maldives will host its first Trade Expo

By: Crossroads Maldives

The Marina @ CROSSROADS Maldives will host its first Trade Expo on Friday, 3rd December 2021 at the Artificial Beach on Male’ City. The event will take place between 4:00pm and 9:00pm - no entrance fee and it is open to the public.

The objective of The Marina Expo is to promote the CROSSROADS Maldives as a destination HUB for all walks of life - the first extraordinary multi-island and fully integrated lifestyle destination hub offering rich combination of dining options, shopping, recreational & leisure experiences and a lot more. The event will definitely provide opportunities between The Marina entrepreneurs and Visitors for networking, discovery and awareness - all converge to explore the objective.

In addition to that, the two premium resorts at CROSSROADS Maldives namely Hard Rock Hotel Maldives and SAii Lagoon Maldives will also showcase its products and services with our Event Hall at CROSSROADS Maldives with Events and MICE packages.

In terms of sustainability development programs, the Maldives Discovery Center and Marina Discovery Center will facilitate educational presentations during the event. And last but not the least, CROSSROADS Maldives’ job fair in one of the exhibition stalls will provide ample of job openings for the local community.
The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands organized a tennis clinic hosted by Paula Badosa, the Spanish professional tennis player, for young local players. In collaboration with the Tennis Association of Maldives, on 24th November 2021, 8 tennis players below the age of 14 years from Malé were invited to master their skills with the world number 8 ranking holder.

Appreciating this initiative, Badosa comments, “It brings immense pleasure to share my skills and connect with the beautiful people of this special destination. I strongly believe in inspiring and empowering passionate young players as they are the future; after all, I discovered my passion for tennis at the age of 7.”

The President of Tennis Association of Maldives, Ahmed Hafeez, adds, “I would like to thank the management of The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands for this invaluable opportunity in inspiring our ambitious young players.”

This community engagement initiative was aimed to inspire the next generation of local tennis players as part of the brand’s commitment to the local communities under the Community Footprints project. During her stay, Badosa also hosted clinics for guests as part of a series of ongoing tennis clinics the resort has planned with world-class players to offer guests a meaningful holiday experience.

In terms of sustainability development programs, the Maldives Discovery Center and Marina Discovery Center will facilitate educational presentations during the event. And last but not the least, CROSSROADS Maldives’ job fair in one of the exhibition stalls will provide ample of job openings for the local community.
Laamu Atoll has been designated as one of the planet’s Hope Spots by the international non-profit organization, Mission Blue. The Hope Spot designation highlights Laamu’s unique marine ecosystems and benefits they provide, along with the conservation work done by Six Senses Laamu and its partners within the Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI) to protect them.

Hope Spots are special places identified by Mission Blue’s scientific council as being critical to the health of the ocean. These areas are proven to hold significant ecological, economic and cultural importance, and so hold the potential to reverse damage from negative human impacts. From its rich reefs, vast seagrass meadows and culturally significant mangroves, Laamu Atoll ticked all the boxes for Mission Blue as an area worthy of the highest protection.

This Hope Spot declaration results from an application by MUI, an initiative created by Six Senses Laamu in partnership with three NGOs: the Manta Trust, Blue Marine Foundation and the Olive Ridley Project. MUI’s mission is to lead the tourism industry in the Maldives by undertaking meaningful marine conservation focused around the three pillars of research, education, and community. Thanks to its extensive research projects over the past few years, MUI provided crucial evidence to Mission Blue on the ecological importance of Laamu in this application.
Vakkaru Maldives named #1 Favourite Family Hotel in the 2021 Condé Nast Traveller Middle East Readers’ Choice Awards

By: Vakkaru Maldives

Vakkaru Maldives is delighted to have been named the No. 1 Favourite Family Hotel (International category) in the Condé Nast Traveller Middle East Readers’ Choice Awards 2021. This is the fourth prestigious award the luxury resort has received this year, after winning three accolades at the World Travel Awards 2021.

The Condé Nast Traveller Middle East Readers’ Choice Awards is an annual online poll that invites readers in the region to vote for their favorite travel experiences across 34 categories in the Middle East and internationally.

Iain McCormack, General Manager, Vakkaru Maldives, said: “We are deeply honored that our guests have voted us the No.1 Favourite Family Hotel in the Condé Nast Traveller Middle East Readers’ Choice Awards 2021. The biggest reward for us at Vakkaru is creating special memories that families can share together forever. We are always committed to innovating and creating new experiences and look forward to playing host to more families in the coming year.”
Royal Island Holds an Island Clean-up for Sustainability Day

By: Royal Island

Royal Island colleagues came together in a team-building effort to protect the natural environment in the recently marked Sustainable Day with a cleanup effort to collect plastic, debris and other waste materials around the island towards a sustainable future.

Through its regular ocean and beach cleanups by its colleagues and guests, the resort donates the plastic materials for recycling in partnership with Parley for the Oceans – an organization addressing major threats towards our oceans and fighting for environmental protection through recycling initiatives and global projects.

To maintain the fragile natural environment, Royal Island continues to work towards a sustainable future by implementing several forward-thinking initiatives such as energy-saving strategies, producing fresh water on the island, recycling plastic and organically growing a selection of fruits and vegetables amongst others. In attrition, the resort is also in progress to achieving the Green Globe certification after months of dedication and hard work towards this important milestone.
Milaidhoo Maldives Recognized as Condé Nast Johansens Award for Excellence

By: Milaidhoo Maldives

Milaidhoo has been recognized by the annual Condé Nast Johansens Awards for Excellence. This November the boutique luxury resort was honored by being named "Best for Green Practices & Sustainability", resulting from Milaidhoo’s efforts to protect and nurture the fragile environment and natural beauty of the island and the surrounding water world.

Milaidhoo is a small island in the renowned UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Baa Atoll. The resort which is surrounded by a lively house reef and close to world-famous Hanifaru Bay does not only promote awareness for sustainability practices but also arranges coral propagation and educational programs for guests to join in the sustainability efforts. The Green Globe certified resort supports Maldives based organizations such as Manta Trust and related projects, to help the local wildlife and communities.
WHO is committed to working with the tourism sector, and we encourage all countries to ensure stronger cross-sectoral collaboration.

- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General
WHO
LOCAL CUISINE

SAAGU BONDIBAIH (SAGO PUDDING)
By: Hasaana Hassan

Saagu Bondibaih or sago pudding is a well-loved dessert in the Maldives. It is no surprise that sago, which is extracted from palm trees, is used as one of the main ingredients in this dish. This dessert is served at various occasions whether it be a small family gathering or a large party. This delicious dish can be prepared in a few simple steps.

First soak the sago in water for 15 minutes. Then boil a pan of water and slowly add sago seeds while stirring. Cook the mixture until the seed is almost transparent. Drain the seeds and rinse with cold water until the starch is washed away.

Then in a different pan boil water and sugar in low heat till the sugar is dissolved. Then add the sago that was prepared earlier to the mixture and cover it with a lid for 25 minutes. Then add rose water, condensed milk and pandan leaves and simmer for about 5 minutes. The dish is then ready to be served.

This dish is enjoyed both warm or cold depending on the person’s preference. Few drops of food colouring can be added for appearance purposes. You can also garnish it with different fruits such as mango. Once you taste this soft, light and fluffy dessert, you will see why this dish is so popular among Maldivian households.