

## A serene sanctuary



Maldives has several luxury resorts, a recent addition is Madifushi Private Island in Meemu Atoll and it was truly a serene experience feels **Chandragupta Amritkar**

Co-ordinating with the dynamic Steve Ng, Group GM, Madifushi Private Island, Hulhule Island Hotel and Maldives Inflight Catering and the delightful Sofia, Revenue and Reservation Manager, I planned the trip to the resort that believes in providing guests to unwind and reconnect with nature while rejuvenating and relaxing in tranquillity.

While I have been to Maldives 6 times, I have been trying to cover at least two resorts on my visits since COVID. This visit was to cover two resorts (COMO Maalifushi and Madifushi Private Island) and an island hotel (Hulhule Island Hotel). This was the first time I was going to fly on a seaplane – surprisingly to both resorts. As the property can be reached by seaplanes, the transfer was arranged by the hotel. The seaplane is totally a different experience and the new sea terminal is quite beautiful. The new seaplane terminal is just a 5 minutes' drive from the International airport. I was amazed to see the seaplane terminal (was informed it can accommodate more than 50 seaplanes) as seaplane is the

preferred mode of transport several resorts for those located in outer tolls. The four-story building has spacious lounges many dedicated to particular luxury resorts, arrival lobbies and boarding gates. The seaplane takes approximately 40 minutes from the terminal. The window seat helps one in admiring the archipelago from a bird's eye perspective.

Arriving by the seaplane at the hotels private jetty, I was received by the staff. Check in was smooth and I was led to my Serene Pool Villa. The room was spacious, with great views. This coastal getaway features a total of 80 beach and overwater villas. The island's forefront is surrounded by 26 Serene Pool Villas, 3 Two-Bedroom Serene Pool Villas and 1 Grand Madifushi Serenity Pool Villa. In addition they have 46 Aqua Pool Villas, 3 Tranquil Aqua Pool Villas and 1 Grand Madifushi Aqua Pool Villa. The size of the villas range from 1,324 square feet / 123 m2 to 4,768 square feet / 443 m2. All villas and suites are complete with a terrace that leads to a private pool with access to the palm-fringed beach or perched over the Indian Ocean with either a sunset or sunrise view.

The resort is an expansive turquoise lagoon. These intimate sanctuaries are complete with a terrace that leads to a private pool, with access to the palm-fringed shore or perched over the Indian Ocean with either a sunset or sunrise view. The resorts accommodation types ensure that all travellers find the retreat

Don't forget to complete immigration through IMUGA - the online platform, which is used for immigration services. All travellers are required to submit the Traveller Declaration within 96 hours to the flight time, during arrival and departure.



that's right for them, from families to, from romantic getaways for two to stress-free solo travels. For one night I moved to the Aqua Pool Villa, a beautiful overwater villa.

### Gastronomy

The resort has many delicious dining options, from beachfront bites to exquisite private dining, for an authentic flavour of local and international cuisines. Serving breakfast and dinner with a



beachfront view, chefs prepare tasty meals in an open kitchen providing a choice with Italian, Indian, Mediterranean and Asian fare.

I relished daily buffet breakfast at their all day dining Bluefin restaurant and was able to enjoy several Indian delicacies as the resort has Indian chefs. There was free flow of selected beverages (Alcohol/Non-Alcohol) from 2pm - 7pm at Splash Bar. The trend for floating breakfast at such luxurious resorts is quite popular and at Madifushi Private Island one can relish it.

### Activities

The resort offers an array of thrilling activities - exploring the pristine waters around Madifushi Private Island on a high-speed watercraft. One can go snorkelling or visit a sandbank or on a dolphins tour or a marine tour. There are several water sports that are quite popular with guests like Jet ski Tours, Wakeboarding, water skiing or knee boarding. Guests can put up a mask and glide into the water with the electric waterjet or Fly over the water with our state-of-the-art equipment from Zapata and Seadoo.

For the naturalists and environment lovers who love to relish underwater wildlife can go in for scuba diving. The resort has a PADI 5-star diving centre with highly qualified scuba instructors who offer courses to beginners and divers of all levels. Daytime snorkelling trips offer guests the chance to explore the reefs around the resort's crystal blue water.

Sunset Cruise on a Maldivian traditional Dhoni to view the sunset while sipping a glass of wine and watching out for dolphins. Island Hopping is another option as you visit a local island to experience the local way of life.

Madifushi Private Island stresses a lot on sustainability and environmental practices. "We are committed to sustainability and have implemented numerous eco-friendly practices. In such a short span we have already got lot of appreciation and won Awards too," said Omer Songur, GM, Madifushi Private Island.

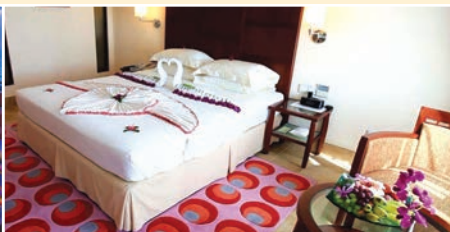
### Mandara Spa

Madifushi Private Island is home to unique spa experiences. Mandara Spa offers guests a total sensory experience with all-natural treatments drawn on the ancient health and beauty traditions of Asia. Facilities include dry and wet saunas, a spa boutique, a relaxation lounge and treatment rooms with highly trained experts to guide you in your wellness journey.

## Hulhule Island Hotel – Maldives

On my return from Madifushi Private Island, I decided to spend a night on the groups Island hotel – Hulhule. The location is ideal for tourists who have an early next day flight or when your flight arrives after the last resort transfer of the day or you want to just have a stopover on the way home as it's less than a km from the terminal.

The hotel is quite impressive and provides amazing views from the rooms overlooking the beach. It has 130 + Rooms with a mix of king size and twin beds and intimately designed 3 Suites (that includes a living room). The swimming pool looks pleasingly attractive and a perfect place to unwind and enjoy refreshing cocktails. The hotel has a restaurant, a bar, a spa along with free airport transfers.



For F&B Uduvilaa, located on fourth floor, is the hotels fine dining restaurant with an extensive menu showcasing local flavours blended with western influences. They have an Indian thali which is not only yummy but also provides a wholesome meal. They have a Champs Bar too, but which was closed during my visit.

On the MICE front there is the huge Ras Maalan Ballroom (that can also be divided into two functional rooms) and a boardroom, Rani Kotari, that can accommodate 10 guests in a pre-set arrangement. Both are located on the ground floor.

On my departure day had the pleasure of interacting with Steve Ng and gaining valuable insights from his 30+ years' experience in the hospitality industry.