

# Thrilling Side of Life



## Fishing - Types of Fishing

Maldivians have always been living off from what they acquire from the ocean. Traditionally fishing was the main occupation and major livelihood of the Maldivians. It is now the second largest industry in Maldives with about 30 percent of the population working in the industry.

Haa Alif, Raa, Baa, Lhaviyani, Kaafu, Thaa, Laamu and Gaafu are the principal fishing atolls representing about 75 percent of the total fishing areas.

If you are travelling to Maldives and you want to catch some fish, you must be aware that strict fishing regulations are widely enforced in Maldives; reef fishing is not allowed, unless explicitly permitted, as most of the resorts and even local communities want to protect their colorful house reefs. Nevertheless, fishing from individual reefs that are not part of an island, or sandbank is allowed.

Some activities which are banned during fishing include:

- Use of dynamite or any other explosive for fishing or killing of fishes
- Use of any kind of gun for fishing or killing of fishes.
- Use of any kind of poison for fishing or killing of fishes.
- Use of nets to catch Mushimas (mackerel) schools or small reef fish that are found in the lagoons of inhabited islands.
- Killing any form of sharks for any purpose is prohibited in Maldives.

Considering the immense biodiversity of the Indian Ocean, you never know what you can get to encounter. Nevertheless there are different methods of fishing used to target specific species.

### Pole and Line fishing

Primarily used for skipjack tuna fishery (Kalhubilamas in Maldivian language); it is a live bait fishing, and you can usually go out for day trips. Pole and Line fishing vessels range from a length of three to five meters. Around ten to twenty people can fish simultaneously, standing on a platform running along the rear of the vessel. Tuna schools are located using either visual spotting; observing seabird behaviors, or by using fish finders. Traditional way of attracting tuna schools is by throwing live baits at them; continuously churn live bait and spray water to keep the school aggregated near the fishing vessel and tons of tuna are caught in few hours.

Skipjack Tuna are mostly caught in the Southern part of Maldives; from Gaaf Alif to Seenu Atoll.



### Live Bait Fishing

The pole and line method of tuna fishery requires enormous amounts of live bait which are caught from lagoons and reefs. It is estimated that 80 to 150kg of bait are used per fishing trip. The bait fish are caught daily by the fishing vessel prior to the fishing trip.

### Hand line and Trolling

The fishing method to catch Yellow fin Tuna (Kanneli in Maldivian language) was traditionally a live-bait pole and line fishery. The sizes ranged from 30-60cm which were mainly surface swimming juveniles. Hand line and Trolling was established to catch large size, more than 70cm Yellow fin Tuna; mostly caught in the central atolls of Maldives, on a regular pole and line vessel without any modification except for the use of hand line gear.

### Reef Fishing

Reef fishing is done through different gears, depending on the targeted species. The main gear used is a simple, single hook hand line. The type of bait also depends on the target species. Most common types of bait used to catch Trevally (Handhi) is jack mackerel. Live bait lining is also used when targeting jack and large snapper.

### Grouper Fishing

Grouper Fishing is mainly carried out through visual-aided snorkeling, whereby you can snorkel along with baited drop lines and a collection basket. Once a grouper is sighted, the baited line is dangled in front of the grouper and it is caught. In these fishing trips one will stay on board in sight of all fishermen in the water. Fishermen spend around 8 to 10 hours a day in water and they take breaks every 2 hours. Some fishermen still carry out the fishery in small dhonis using baited drop lines. The gears used in both cases are lines with normal hook and sinkers.

### Big Game Fishing

Fishing in Maldives during the wee hours of morning is called big game fishing. Just when the first streaks of morning sunlight strokes the blue seas, the boat (dhoni) sets sail for fishing, equipped with fish rods, fish finders and international fishing hooks. When the dhoni moves just around the atoll enclosure reefs you can enjoy big game fishing by catching spectacular fishes like Swordfish, Sailfish, Wahoo, Marlin and Yellow fin Tuna.

### Night Fishing

Dhoni leaves the island and anchors at the outer atoll reefs just when darkness sets in. The lines and sinkers are dropped in the reef waters from all sides of the Dhoni, you would be able to catch emperors, snappers, squirrelfish, jacks and other reef fish.

You can often travel to fishing villages all over Maldives to enjoy exquisite fishing as most of the resorts, hotels, and safari boats conduct fishing trips; catch the wonderful fish while you are in Maldives and savor their tastes in grilled restaurants cooking it either your way or Maldivian local way.



VisitMaldives.com

THRILLING SIDE OF LIFE

## Introduction about water sports activities

There is no complete description of the boundless beauties of the Maldivian islands and its vibrant and multicolored waters. Imagine a country with 99 percent of it covered by water, and tiny islands spread throughout.

Although the appeal of these isles is their isolation, there is plenty to do and you can choose to be as active as you wish. With dive spots and reefs scattered throughout the country, Maldives provides you with a playing ground for all kinds of water sports enthusiasts. There is a whole lot of water to enjoy!

From skimming the Indian Ocean waters on a jet-ski to parasailing, kayaking and surfing, Maldives is the ideal destination for an active beach holiday.

Almost all the resorts in Maldives offer guided water sports activities; they also have excellent facilities with the best equipment. Enjoy the incredible ocean; explore the multicolored waters with their underwater beauty, launch a kite and feel the wind take you over the stunning turquoise lagoons, or learn how to sail a catamaran and explore some of the deserted islands around the atolls.

The resorts that prefer to maintain a more tranquil and peaceful setting offers you non-motorized water based activities such as canoeing, kayaking, catamaran sailing along with diving and snorkeling. Others offer water-skiing, jet-skiing, banana ride, water scooters, kite boarding, knee boarding, wake boarding, parasailing and so on.

## Surfing - Surfing locations



Maldivians have been surfing using planks for a long time. It has always been popular as it has some of the best waves in the world. Modern surfing made its debut in Maldives, the country with endless surf breaks, in the late 70s.

There are some great surfing spots in the country, with some of the spots accessible from resorts, while the best breaks are on the outer reefs on the southeast sides of the atolls. There are surf travel operators who organize surfing cruises to the outer atolls around the country.

Most of the spots are very close to each other, so getting a memorable surf experience in Maldives is easy. Some of the spots are nameless and yet to be found in central and southern atolls. This paradise, with its higher latitude and its South-East exposure offers cooler and less hardcore surfing. Almost every surfing trip offers with quality surfs for both short boarders and long boarders. Expect offshore winds most days with equal number of lefts and rights averaging chest high to overhead waves which can be surfed on all tides.

The surf season coincides with the southwest monsoon and runs from February to November. March and April provide a combination of excellent surfing and weather conditions; there will be consistent surf up to 12 feet.

Some of the most famous surf points in Maldives are mainly located in North Male' Atoll: **KUDA VILLINGILI**, which is an uninhabited island located in North Male'. Another well-known surf point that is worth a visit is **THULUSDHOO** which is also located in North Male'. **GURUS** is another popular surf point in Eastern reef of Male'. Popular among the youth, **HONKY'S** is another surf point in Male', situated in **THAMBURUDHOO**, which is also an uninhabited island. **JAILBREAKS**, situated in Himmafushi, was recently opened to surfers as it is located right across what used to be the main prison in the country.

There are other popular breaks in North and South Male' Atoll which offer a mix of lefts and rights for both recreational and qualified surfers, averaging 3 to 8 feet waves. These breaks can be accessed either by a resort in Male' Atoll or charter a surf cruise if you choose to stay aboard.

Even though the **SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL ATOLLS** don't get the same size of waves as Male' Atoll, their popularity has also been increasing; its breaks continue the Maldivian tradition of providing consistent surf and pristine barrels. The outer atolls contain at least a dozen, potent world class breaks that are rarely surfed with the right winds occurring generally from February to April and September to November. These breaks, which are now gaining popularity, can be accessed by means of a well-equipped surf charter cruise or resorts in these areas which are well geared for surfing can organize special surfing cruises.

## Sailing - Parasailing, Kayak, Paddle Boarding

If you want to discover Maldives, a sailing trip is just the thing. Almost all of the resorts offer you with this exciting activity of delight.

The calm, shallow waters provide the perfect learning ground for beginners while open water can offer challenges for the more experienced.

The dry seasons sees light to moderate winds from the northeast. The wet season sees moderate southwesterly winds, making

Maldives a year-round sailing destination with the seas at their calmest during November to April.

There are myriad hotels/resorts/dive centers in Maldives that offer different types of sailing; catamaran sailing, parasailing etc.

### Parasailing

Fly like a bird over the lagoon when you try parasailing. It gives you a fabulous opportunity to explore the Maldives archipelago. It is a real fun trip, which is very much like water-skiing, except that you get a parachute strapped to your back before taking off. Once an optimum speed is reached, the parachute is deployed and the skier is lifted in the air while being pulled by a high-speed boat. Parasailers can travel up to 100 feet upwards into the air. Flying above the ocean is one of the most refreshing and fascinating experiences that you can have. The view of your paradise-island from a bird's eye view is breathtaking and the turquoise blue ocean glitters under your feet. Trained professionals are always on site to ensure your safety.

### Kayaking

Explore the shimmering expanse of the island lagoons under your own power in a solo or tandem kayak. You can keep it simple with classic ocean kayaks. There are even glass bottom kayaks that let you witness all the marine life below you. It is an excellent way to discover marine life without snorkeling. Paddle away towards the sunset or take a break by landing on a little sandbar on the edge of the lagoon. Enjoy this water sport, paddling the boat yourself and driving it in the vast ocean is real fun.

### Paddle boarding

Paddle boarding is one of the latest trends in water sports which is a lot of fun. Paddle through the crystal clear blue lagoon and have extraordinary glimpses of the underwater world below you.

## Underwater Scooter

Underwater Scooter is created to provide scuba diving experience to virtually anyone without any of inflexibilities required for the diving experience. No certification, no attached gear and no experience required. Just sitting in, breathing environment and travelling at a speed of around 2m/hour, you can experience new and exciting underwater views. The controls operate like a motorbike; just turn the handlebars for directions and push the batons for speed and depth.

We have resorts and local islands, which operate this water sports activity, and offers you to rent underwater scooters at an affordable price, taking you to the best spots where you can see the vast and complex underwater beauty.

It adds a whole new dimension to a dive experience, and lets you go places normally not possible. It allows you to venture into places too far for divers to go to, gives you the chance to see more of a dive site and stop whenever and wherever you want.



The underwater scooter, which is designed to look and function like a petite submarine, is equipped with a large oxygen tank that supplies air inside the helmet.

To rent the underwater scooter, no prior experience or training is required; explore the underwater beauty in a whole different perspective.

## Free diving

Free diving, an incredible addition to the selection of water sports, is a form of underwater diving that relies on a diver's ability to hold his/her breath until resurfacing, rather than using a Scuba gear. It is a very modern yet ancient water activity, practiced by many different cultures for centuries, which gained popularity in Maldives as a sport and recreational activity over the past four years.

Free diving has lots of benefits; it promotes health, fitness and wellbeing. Most of all it is the most natural and serene way to explore the depths of the oceans allowing you to enjoy the beauty and silence of the marine world without disturbing its habitats.

There are resorts, liveaboards and hotels in Maldives which have internationally approved free diving centers that offer you free diving activities, promote free diving education system and provides certification that are recognized worldwide.

There are even dive centers located in local islands which offer you with the chance of diving in these splendid waters with lessons on enjoying the beauty of free dive. They even offer you all levels of diving courses; basic, advanced and master.

Free diving is a phenomenal water sport offered to guests, especially when we are blessed with such stunning marine biodiversity.

Dive in Maldives; experience the real feeling of relaxation and meditation.