COUNTRY & TOWN HOUSE



The best places to rest your head in paradise

Now is the time to start planning your next dream holiday. And, if you're looking for paradise, the white sands and turquoise seas of the Maldives might mean it's close to the top of your wish list. We've been embracing island life for this guide to the best resorts in the Maldives – offering everything from beach front rooms to overwater dining, these hotels will make your experience of paradise all the more perfect…

Why The Maldives?

This archipelagic country in the Indian Ocean sets the bar very high when it comes to island getaways. Overwater stays (often with slides from your bedroom to the sea) come as standard, and the secluded desert island vibe is guaranteed. World class hotels are in the majority, with many occupying their own private islands and hosting world-class spas, sustainability labs, underwater restaurants and more. There are also lush jungles to explore, as well as reefs to observe (and protect). Treehouse bars nestle along coastlines, lagoon spas offer the perfect place to relax, and conservation programmes set the standard high.

Choosing Your Island

Picking your Maldives holiday by island is almost impossible, since there are more than a thousand, most of which are tiny. It's much better to consider your destination by hotel, which is why we're here to help. Another consideration is the journey time and method, since some are reachable by boat, whereas others require a (more expensive) sea plane to reach.

When To Visit

The Maldives is a famous winter sun destination, offering a slice of white sand, blue sky and turquoise ocean amid the northern hemisphere's wintery gloom. That said, the Maldives is a dreamy location to visit year-round, so don't let the winter sun popularity deter you from pursuing your Maldivian dreams at another time of the year. *Check out our full guide on when to visit the Maldives here.*

Sustainability

Ecotourism and the Maldives is a tricky topic to navigate. Overtourism remains a huge risk for many of the world's most beautiful destinations, but ecotourism also represents a lifeline to many at-risk countries. Costa Rica provides a model of how tourism can transform a country at risk of environmental destruction. The Maldives relies on tourism for its economic survival, and increasingly sustainability initiatives provide a lifeline for the ecological survival of this archipelagic nation. Speak to your hotel about their sustainability initiatives and consider how you could leave a positive impact during your stay, whether this is a financial or physical contribution to the community and/or the conservation of this beautiful destination. *Check out our dedicated guide to sustainable resorts in the Maldives here.*

Ready to find your perfect Maldives resort?

The C&TH Guide To The Best Hotels In The Maldives



The Residence Maldives at Dhigurah

Dhigurah

Just 13 miles north of the equator, this resort is remote even by Maldivian standards. Too far from capital Malé to travel by seaplane, it can only be reached on a 55-minute domestic flight and final speedboat ride to secluded Gaafu Alifu, one of the world's largest and deepest atolls. The island itself is thick with jungle, sandy pathways weaving through banana and coconut trees for a real back-to-nature feel. There are 173 villas, from beachfront to overwater with either sunrise or sunset views, but none will disappoint. All are spacious but simply designed, with thatched roofs, neutral colours and teak and rattan interiors, and all come with private pools, bicycles and Insta-perfect views of the glowing, aquamarine sea and endless horizon beyond.

There are water-sports galore, dolphin-watching cruises, a kids' club, glorious 42-metre infinity pool, Clarins spa and the resort's own deserted island for an unmissable picnic lunch. Otherwise, feast on international flavours at the Dining Room, classic Cantonese fare at Li Bai and the Mediterranean menu at poolside Café del Sol, or cycle the stunning one-kilometre bridge to Falhumaafushi to sample the excellent restaurants at the resort's neighbouring sister property. A double delight.

BOOK IT: *cenizaro.com*

Read our full review of The Residence here

https://www.countryandtownhouse.com/travel/best-resorts-maldives/