



MASTER
LIVEBOARDS

Know Before You Go - Maldives

General Trip & Destination Information

Flights and Transfers

Itineraries which cover northern or southern atolls require domestic flights, which are not included in the liveboard price but we can arrange them on your behalf.

Please check your booking details carefully for embarkation and disembarkation locations and the itinerary-specific information sheet for domestic flight requirements and transfer arrangements.

Transfers from the embarkation location airport to Blue Voyager and from the liveboard to the disembarkation location airport are by dhoni and included in the liveboard price.

Transfers from the airport are at specific times only, as noted in the itinerary information sheets. ***We can not arrange pick-up and transfers from hotels.*** Guests staying in a hotel or resort before their liveboard need to arrange transport to arrive at the airport in time for the earliest transfer to Blue Voyager.

Advice on International Flights

Malé-Velana International Airport (MLE) is served by many worldwide airlines and charter companies.

We recommend ideally spending one night in Malé before and after your liveboard to avoid potential problems caused by international and domestic flight delays and to ensure you are well rested. Alternatively, we advise booking an *early morning International arrival* and a *late afternoon/evening International departure* to ensure you have plenty of time to make your flight connections.

PLEASE NOTE: *It is illegal to bring alcohol into the Maldives; if you purchase any duty-free alcohol on your inbound travels, or bring your own from home, it will be confiscated by customs officials upon arrival at Malé International Airport.*

However, duty-free can be purchased at Malé International Airport before departure of your homeward-bound flight.

Passports & Visas

Although Master Liveboards endeavours to keep information as current as possible, the following is provided as guidance only. *Regulations and requirements can change* and we can not guarantee the information here is always up-to-date. *The traveller is responsible for checking government and travel advisories before making travel arrangements.*

Passport Validity

Passports must have at least one month's validity beyond the date of entry into the Maldives. Please note however that *some airlines will not allow travel with less than 6 months' passport validity*. Please check with your airline to ensure you meet all travel requirements.

Visas

Nationals of all countries can obtain a 30-day tourist visa, free of charge, upon arrival, as long as they meet the basic entry requirements.

We strongly advise checking your home country's government travel advisory, Maldives Consulate, or the Maldives Immigration website (www.immigration.gov.mv/tourist-visa/) for the most up-to-date information.

Traveller Declaration

All travellers to Maldives must complete a Traveller Declaration (IMUGA) within 96 hours of their arrival and departure.

This is an electronic arrival and departure self-declaration form which can be submitted, free of charge through the official IMUGA portal: <https://imuga.immigration.gov.mv/>. When you have completed and submitted the required information online you will receive a QR code, which you need to present to immigration officials at the airport.

Domestic Arrangements

The domestic departure terminal at Malé Airport is a short walk from the international terminal; Upon exiting the international arrivals hall, turn right and walk for approximately 100 metres; the ocean will be on your left and the domestic terminal will be on your right.

Domestic flight check-in closes 1 hour before the scheduled departure time.

If your domestic flight is scheduled to leave within 2 hours of your arrival in Malé, you should make your way directly to the domestic terminal to check in for your flight.

If your domestic flight is scheduled to leave more than 2 hours after you arrive in Malé, or if your itinerary starts from Malé and you have time to fill before the embarkation transfer time, the following options are available at Malé Airport:

- Use the airport hotel facilities (Hulhule Island Hotel) - day-use packages range from 75 USD – 185 USD per person
- Put your bags into storage for a few hours and take a water taxi to Malé to explore the island. To utilise the luggage storage, please go to the information desk in the arrivals hall. Storage costs 6 USD for each normal-size bag or, 10 USD for oversized bags/heavy items.
- Enjoy the shopping and refreshments available at the airport.

Itinerary Embarkation / Disembarkation Airports

- Central & Southern Atolls / Far South: Gaafu Alifu - Kooddoo Airport (GKK)
- Northern Atolls: Haa Dhaalu - Hanimaadhoo International Airport (HAQ)

Domestic baggage allowances:

- Hand luggage: 5kg per person
- Checked luggage: 20kg per person*

*Divers are allowed 25 kg of checked luggage but must be carrying diving equipment for this increased allowance to apply.

Additional checked luggage can usually be purchased at check-in and costs approximately 4 USD / kg, subject to availability on the day.

Insurance

Insurance which covers scuba diving is mandatory aboard all of our vessels. Your insurance must cover all of your scuba diving and snorkelling activities, including the costs for recompression chamber treatment and emergency air evacuation. We therefore strongly recommend purchasing diving-specific insurance to cover any diving-related eventuality.

All guests are also required to carry full travel and cancellation insurance, as outlined under section 3 of our [Terms and Conditions](#). We cannot be held liable for delays occurring during the cruise, nor any delays or cancellations of flights, accommodations, or tours and transfers that we organise on your behalf.

For further details of why travel insurance is a crucial part of your holiday arrangements, take a look at our blog - '[Do You Really Need Travel Insurance?](#)'

Master Liveboards act as a referrer for DiveAssure who offer dive and travel insurance policies, including short-term and multiple-trip policies. Their comprehensive 'Dive & Travel Plus' plan has been specifically developed for diving liveboard holidays and covers expenses in the event of missing your liveboard departure due to flight delays or missed connections, and also provides cover for lost diving days if for any reason the boat is required to abort the cruise; for instance, due to a guest injury, mechanical breakdown of the ship, air supply failure, inclement weather conditions, etc.

Please consult our webpage for details and a direct link to DiveAssure's booking portal: www.masterliveboards.com/insurance.

Diving Information

Maldivian Government legislation states that the ***maximum depth for all scuba diving in the Maldives is 30 metres***; gloves, solo diving and technical diving are not allowed. Carrying an SMB with a spool or reel and the use of a dive computer is mandatory on every dive.

Diving in some areas of the Maldives, especially in the northern and southern atolls, can be challenging even for experienced divers due to strong, sometimes unpredictable currents. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that divers have previous experience and are comfortable diving in similar conditions to those expected on their chosen itinerary.

Blue Voyager has a 19 metre, custom-built dhoni for transferring divers between the main vessel and the dive sites. The dhoni has a spacious dive deck with individual set-up spaces and under-bench storage for all 26 guests + dive crew. She also has two compressors with a nitrox membrane for filling scuba cylinders, a sundeck, toilets and showers. Our dhoni are happy to assist guests who need help with their equipment and exiting the water.

Guests' Level of Diving

The minimum certification and experience requirements for each itinerary are based on the diving conditions in the areas they cover. Please refer to the itinerary information sheets, which can be downloaded from the Master Liveboards website, to ensure the suitability, before confirming your liveboard booking.

Any divers who do not fulfil the specified minimum requirements, or who the crew feel have insufficient experience in certain conditions, may be denied participation in some or all dives during the liveboard.

You will need to provide copies of your certification card(s) when completing your pre-embarkation [API](#), and may also be asked to show them, and a record of your logged dives, as proof of experience when you board.

Fit to Dive

All divers are responsible for ensuring that they are fit to dive and are required to provide a completed medical statement before their liveboard departure. ***Guests who are taking medication, or have any medical conditions or symptoms that could be restrictive to diving need to obtain a doctor's evaluation and clearance to dive before travelling.***

The medical statement is available in English, German, Mandarin and Spanish and can be downloaded from the Master Liveboards' website at www.masterliveboards.com/forms.

IMPORTANT: There are no facilities for guests to obtain medical evaluation and clearance for diving in the Maldives. *If any of the categories on the medical questionnaire apply to you, you MUST seek clearance from a physician in your home country and bring a copy of their approved evaluation with you.*

If you are unable to complete the medical statement as required, or provide a current doctor's certificate (less than a year old) clearing you to dive, you accept that you may not be able to take part in scuba diving activities on the liveboard you have booked with us.

Diving Safety

All divers are responsible for their own dive profiles, must stay within the limits of their certification and respect local regulations at all times, which includes using a dive computer on every dive and ***SMB deployment before surfacing which requires the addition of a reel or spool.***

We ask all guests to always remain well within the limits of their dive computer and comfort levels, follow the instructions of the cruise director and guides and make a *safety stop at the end of each dive.*

Diving Emergencies

In the unlikely event that a diving accident occurs, there are 5 hyperbaric facilities available in the Maldives. The largest and longest operating recompression chamber is on Bandos Island (15 minutes by speedboat from Malé). The others are located at Kuredu Island Resort (Lhaviyani Atoll), Kuramathi Resort (North Ari Atoll), Kandima Maldives Resort (Dhaalu Atoll) and ADK Hospital in Malé.

Please note that, depending on the itinerary and location of Blue Voyager, transfer to the nearest available chamber may require emergency evacuation by speedboat, which needs to be paid for at the time it is requested.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your insurance will fully cover and reimburse all evacuation costs as well as recompression chamber and/or hospital treatment. We strongly urge all guests to purchase specific dive insurance before their trip.

As outlined in our [Terms & Conditions](#) dive insurance and travel insurance are mandatory.

Flying after Diving

Current studies indicate that you should wait at least 18 hours before you fly after repetitive dives or multiple days of diving although we recommend 24 hours. Please bear this in mind before you book your onward international or domestic flights.

Water Temperature and Exposure Suits

Water temperatures throughout the Maldives are fairly constant at 26°-29°C (78°-84°F) throughout the year, although some areas in the south can drop to 24°C. Generally, most guests are comfortable in a 3mm shorty or full-length wetsuit; However, those who are prone to feeling cold should consider additional thermal layers or a 5mm suit.

Rental wetsuits on Blue Voyager are 3mm shorties.

Diving Equipment

In compliance with Maldivian Government regulations, ***all divers must use a dive computer on every dive and have an SMB with a reel to enable deployment underwater during safety stops.***

Dive gloves are not allowed.

Reef hooks are strongly recommended.

Diving equipment is available to rent for an additional charge but is subject to availability and must be pre-ordered.

A single 11.1 Litre cylinder (80 cu ft - **referred to as 12L on board**) with air fills, weights, weight belt and an SMB are provided free of charge.

There are a limited number of 13 litre cylinders (100 cu ft - **referred to as 15L on board**) available on request and at an additional cost which must be pre-booked.

Equipment rental and Nitrox costs can be viewed under 'Extras' on the vessel and itinerary pages of our website.

Please pre-book rental equipment and cylinders at the time of confirming your liveaboard holiday to ensure your requirements can be met.

Rebreather Diving

Blue Voyager is equipped to support rebreather divers; Booster pumps are installed to ensure rebreather cylinders can be filled to 135 bars/ 2000 psi and we have stage tanks available for your use. We can also facilitate the purchase of Sofnolime scrubber although there are additional charges for both this and oxygen.

Pre-booking of any rebreather supplies is essential to guarantee availability. Please contact our reservations team to place your order and for up-to-date prices.

If rebreather diving is permitted on your itinerary and you intend to participate in rebreather diving during your cruise, please complete the technical diving release form, which can be found at www.masterliveboards.com/forms/ and email it to dive@masterliveboards.com to ensure we can cater for your equipment and gas requirements. This needs to be completed no later than 3 weeks before departure.

Underwater Photography and Videography

Our vessels offer specialised features for underwater photographers and videographers. These include:

- Indoor workstations for the preparation and maintenance of cameras with individual storage drawers for cameras and peripheral items
- An outdoor camera table with an air gun and charging station
- Large rinsing tanks with fresh water changed frequently
- Our crew is thoroughly trained in the handling of delicate camera equipment and will bring your cameras to/from the dhoni for you.

General Information

Advanced Passenger Information (API)

There are certain details that we require for the airlines and our administrative purposes before you travel. Guests are required to submit the required information via our secure online portal at www.masterliveboards.com/portal.

Forms

All guests are required to complete the following forms before the commencement of their liveaboard itinerary: medical statement, liability releases and standard safe diving practices statement, which can be found at www.masterliveboards.com/forms.

To save time, and to ensure you have no pre-existing conditions that could affect your diving, please download the forms from the above link, fill in, and bring them with you. By completing and signing the forms, you are confirming that you have read, understood, and agree to the conditions outlined in the forms.

If you are unable to complete the forms as instructed, you accept that you will not be able to take part in certain aspects of the holiday you have booked with us.

Time Zone

Local time in the Maldives is UTC / GMT +5 hours.

Money Matters

The local currency is the Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR). Most visitors may never see or use the local currency as the US dollar is the preferred currency throughout most of the Maldives. EUR and GBP are also accepted in many places although change will be given in Rufiyaa.

All extras in your hotel will be billed to your room in USD and can be settled by credit card. **USD banknotes must be in good condition**, without damage, tears, creases or stains. Local banks - and therefore hotels, shops and our vessel in the Maldives - will not accept old versions of USD banknotes: the newer **\$100 banknote should have a blue security strip**, and the **\$20 and \$50 banknotes should not be dated older than 2006**.

Language and Religion

The local language is Dhivehi although English is widely spoken throughout the country. Islam has been declared the state religion in the Republic of the Maldives since 1153, and it is prohibited to publicly practice another religion.

It is illegal to bring anything into the Maldives that is deemed contrary to Islam, including 'idols for worship', bibles, pork products and alcohol. All luggage will be scanned by customs officials at Malé International Airport and prohibited items will be confiscated.

Alcohol

Most resorts and liveaboards have special licenses permitting them to sell alcohol to tourists although this is strictly regulated. Alcohol can only be consumed where it was purchased which means it is also illegal to bring alcohol purchased in a resort onto the liveboard vessel.

Duty-free can be purchased at Male Airport, when leaving the country.

Health

Medical facilities in the Maldives are limited; there are 2 hospitals on Malé Island and 2 on Hulhumale. There are also health centres on most of the atolls.

We advise all guests to ensure their routine vaccinations are up to date and to check with their doctor or local travel health clinic well before departure for the latest vaccination advice for the areas they will be visiting.

We also recommend that travellers take sensible precautions with local food, and drink purified/ bottled water only to minimise the risk of stomach upsets, as well as using insect repellent and covering exposed skin to reduce the risk of insect-borne diseases.

If you are travelling with medication, please bring your physician's prescription with you.

Climate and Weather

The Maldives enjoy a warm, tropical climate all year round. The dry season with lots of sunshine lasts from November to April; the wet season is roughly mid-May to October. Year-round temperatures do not vary much: around 23°-25°C (73°-77°F) at night and 31°C (88°F) during the day.

Sun protection

We recommend bringing high-strength, reef-friendly sunscreen with you to the Maldives. We also suggest hats, sunglasses, protective clothing, and utilising shade as easy and environmentally-friendly ways to further protect yourself from sun damage.

Life on Board

The main features of the vessel can be seen on the Blue Voyager page of the Master Liveboards website: www.masterliveboards.com/boats/blue-voyager/

All safety and dive briefings onboard will be provided in English. If you do not speak and fully understand English please let us know before arrival.

Accessibility

The layout of the boat may provide challenges, or be unsuitable for guests with limited mobility, and is not suitable for wheelchairs. Please contact us for further details if you have any concerns.

Accommodation

Maximum capacity on Blue Voyager is 26 guests in 13 double or twin occupancy cabins. Single occupancy may be available on request and is subject to a supplemental charge.

Cabin Facilities

All cabins have individually controllable air-conditioning and en-suite bathrooms with centrally heated hot water. Other facilities include towels and shower gel.

Food and Drink

Meals are provided on a full board basis including a light breakfast, full breakfast, lunch and dinner served buffet style in the indoor, air-conditioned dining area.

We offer a wide choice of international and locally inspired cuisine served buffet-style and can cater for most special diets with advance notice.

Complimentary tea, coffee, drinking water, snacks and fresh fruit are available at all times; Carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices are also available for an additional charge, as are beer, wine and spirits.

Should you have any specific dietary needs or food allergies please advise your sales consultant when confirming your liveaboard trip to ensure we can make provisions for you.

Please note: It can be very difficult to find soya, gluten-free, low-fat and various other items that are common elsewhere. While we always do our best to accommodate dietary requests, please be aware that there are limitations and consider bringing certain food products with you if the lack thereof may constitute a health risk or seriously compromise your enjoyment of your holiday. However, please bear in mind that it is illegal to bring pork products into the Maldives.

ALCOHOL

Although it is illegal to bring alcohol into the Maldives, alcohol is available for guests to purchase on Blue Voyager and in resorts. However, as it must be consumed where it was purchased, *bringing alcohol from a resort onto the boat is deemed as smuggling and is illegal.*

Our crew will not provide service (i.e. storage, refrigeration, bar service, glasses, ice, etc.) for alcohol that has been smuggled onto the boat, regardless of where it came from. Guests are only allowed to consume alcohol which they have purchased on board.

Additionally, it is illegal to take alcohol purchased on board off of the boat.

Clothing and Footwear

Dress on board our vessels is very casual and most guests feel comfortable in little more than swimwear, shorts and t-shirts. A sweater is advised for cooler nights, particularly after multiple dives.

We request that guests respect the wishes of others by donning clothing for meal times. Most guests prefer bare feet on board the vessels; however, island visits may require sturdy sandals or cross-trainers.

Electricity

UK-style, 3-pin (Type G) plugs are standard throughout the Maldives. Power outlets on board are mostly UK 3-pin although guest cabins and common areas also feature USB sockets and a combo of European two-pin sockets/UK 3-pin at 230V.

Staying Connected

Should you wish to have internet access during your liveaboard itinerary, 1GB, 2GB or 5GB data packages can be purchased on board Blue Voyager; prices start from 10 USD for 1 GB which is payable on board only and subject to Maldives GST. Please note that, although internet connectivity is available in the majority of areas across the Maldives, we cannot guarantee a continuous service for the entirety of your cruise, especially when travelling between atolls, or visiting some of the more remote areas.

Smoking

Smoking on board is permitted in designated outdoor areas only.

Environmental considerations

Although there are recycling programs and facilities in place in Maldives, they are limited. We therefore ask our guests to consider the following to help with our mission to reduce our environmental impact.

Batteries

While some batteries may be available to purchase on board, please bring extras with you if your equipment requires a unique size, or is likely to need a lot of replacement batteries during your trip. We kindly request that guests take spent batteries home so that they can be recycled or disposed of properly. Alternatively, consider using rechargeable batteries as there are plenty of sockets to plug in a charger on board.

Water Bottles

We are dedicated to becoming single-use plastic-free across all of our fleets. Plastic straws and stirrers have been banned on all of our boats and we do not provide single-use plastic bottles on board.

If you own a sports bottle, we simply ask that you bring it with you, or you can purchase one on board. If you don't have one and you don't want to purchase one, we have plenty of cups on board that you can use to ensure you remain well hydrated.

Plastic bags and wrappers

We do not provide plastic bags for purchases made on board, although reusable canvas bags are available for sale. Please help us minimise plastic waste by removing plastic wrappers and packaging from items before travelling. If you bring plastic bags with you, please reuse them, and take them home.

Toiletries

We kindly ask that guests consider the type of products that they are bringing with them and, where possible, to bring environmentally friendly toiletries for use on board, and to take partially or unused products home with them.

Payments on Board

Local Fees & Taxes

The Maldivian Government collects a Green Tax for all visitors, which is currently charged at 6 USD per person, per night and must be paid in advance of your trip departure.

Maldivian Government Goods and Services Tax (currently 16%) applies to all payments made on board and will be added to your on-board bill for equipment rental, nitrox, drinks and other optional extras that have not been paid for in advance.

- On itineraries that include Baa Atoll, if it is possible to visit **Hanifaru Bay** a **30 USD visitor fee** applies per person. This is a government-controlled charge, **payable on board in USD cash only**, and is subject to change without notice. (GST does not apply).
- On itineraries that visit **Fuvamulah Atoll**, there is a charge of **30 USD per person for each dive at Tiger Harbour**. This fee is charged by the local dive centre, is **payable on board in USD CASH only**, and may be subject to change without notice. (GST does not apply).

Optional Extras

Additional charges on board for items such as soft drinks, alcohol, Master Liveboards merchandise, etc. as well as equipment rental and nitrox which have not been paid for in advance, can be paid in cash or by credit card.

Alcohol and soft drinks can not be paid for in advance.

Equipment rental and Nitrox costs can be viewed under 'Extras' on the relevant vessel page of our website: www.masterliveboards.com/boats/blue-voyager/. All onboard prices are in USD.

We can accept payment in USD cash, or by debit card and all major credit cards; however, a 3% surcharge will apply for credit card payments. Guests are advised to bring \$300–500 USD cash to cover any additional sundry costs and crew gratuities.

All taxes, surcharges and onboard prices are subject to change without notice.

IMPORTANT: USD banknotes need to be in good condition; without damage, creases, tears or stains. Local banks (and therefore the vessel) will not accept old versions of USD banknotes: the newer \$100 banknotes should have a blue security strip, and the \$20 and \$50 banknotes should not be dated older than 2006.

Tipping

At Master Liveboards we believe that tipping is a matter of personal choice. Should you feel that your crew has made your holiday extra special; then they will certainly appreciate a tip. If you are unsure how much to tip, we recommend 25 USD per guest, per day. Please note **we can only accept tips in cash**. For your convenience, an envelope will be provided by your cruise director and gratuities will be divided equally amongst all of the crew, including the captain and dive guides.

Safety on Board

Emergency Management & Equipment

All Master Liveboards crew members undergo rigorous training in emergency management procedures. A thorough boat safety briefing will be provided by your Cruise Director at the start of your trip. Practice scenarios may be performed during your cruise to assist our crew in keeping their skills sharp. The boat is equipped with modern safety features such as automated life rafts, EPIRB, satellite communication and emergency pumps.

First Aid

Master Liveboards vessels are equipped with a fully stocked medical first aid kit for treating minor injuries and ailments as well as for assisting trained medical professionals in remote locations. Each yacht has a full complement of medical-grade oxygen, which can be administered to divers through portable kits and a large O2 fixed station. You will also find on board an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) which has been proven to greatly increase the survival rate in the eventuality of cardiac fibrillation.

Our dive teams are all qualified emergency responders. Should you feel unwell at any point during your cruise, please seek the advice of your cruise director who will be able to assist you.

Extending your holiday

Travelling to/from and within the Maldives can be made exceptionally easy when you book with Master Liveboards. As well as domestic flights, we can organise hotels, excursions and tour packages, which can be arranged for before and/or after your liveboard.

A popular stopover or extension that combines well with your Maldives liveboard diving holiday is a visit to Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is renowned for its golden beaches, stunning natural scenery, majestic elephants, the famous Ceylon tea, interesting history and much more. When you just cannot get enough of the Indian Ocean, diving in Sri Lanka is beautiful; featuring gorgeous coral reefs brimming with life and quite a few shipwrecks resulting from an eventful colonial and trade history.

Ask for our full list of excursions in Sri Lanka that will help you get the most out of your holiday. Kindly contact our reservations team at dive@masterliveboards.com.

FAQs

If you have any questions that have not been answered here, please visit our website's [frequently asked questions](#), or email us at dive@masterliveboards.com.

Contact Information

Thailand Office - Master Liveboards

10/512 Moo 3,
Tambon Vichit,
Muang Phuket 83000,
Thailand

Open Monday - Friday 08:30 - 18:30 and Saturday 09:00 - 17:00 ICT (UTC+7)

Web: www.masterliveboards.com

Email: dive@masterliveboards.com

Thailand Office: +66 (0) 76 367 444

UK number: +44 (0) 208 099 2230

USA (Toll Free): +1 866 258 6398

WhatsApp: +66 (0) 93 574 4529)

Local Contacts

Destination Manager (Rainer): +960 77 77341

Emergency only: +201220840755

Blue Voyager Cruise Director

Tel: +960 77 71 360 3

Master Liveboards 24-hour emergency number (calls only):

Please, only use the Master Liveboards 24-hour emergency number if you are unable to get a response from the local numbers listed above. Please do not SMS this number.

Mobile: +44 7862 126398

What to Bring

Our blog, [Packing for a Scuba Diving Liveaboard](#) provides useful tips on what to pack.

You can download a complete packing checklist [here](#), or from the Master Liveaboards [downloads page](#), under General Information.

The following is a list of essential items that you should ensure you bring with you for your trip.

Passport

6 months validity with at least 2 empty pages for visa stickers and stamps

Travel Documents

Flight tickets - International & Domestic; hotel booking; excursions

Cash & Credit Card for emergencies

Recommended amount: 300 - 500 USD

Diving Certification & Logbook

Including Nitrox Card if certified and intending to use Nitrox

Travel and Diving Insurance Documents

To include emergency medical evacuation

Essential Diving Items

Dive computer with full battery

Toiletries & Medications

Including insect repellent and Reef-safe sunscreen
Inform the booking team of medical conditions

Essential Clothing Items

Swimwear, hat and lightweight jacket

Guests are strongly advised to carry essential items in hand luggage in case of lost or delayed luggage through International or Domestic Flights.