



Welcome to Euro-Divers Vilamendhoo

Your guidebook for information about everything concerning the underwater world of the Maldives:

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Dear Diver,

Welcome to the Maldives and to your Euro-Divers Base.

We are here to help you enjoy the best of what the Maldivian waters have to offer. We would like to make your visit unforgettable and put at your disposition a team of fully qualified professional PADI Instructors.

We speak: English, German, French and Dutch.

You will find on the following pages information about the services we offer.

Pre-booked Guests

If you have pre-booked a diving package, please inform your Dive Centre Manager on the day of arrival, even if you do not wish to start your package until later during your stay.

When you check-in at the Dive Centre, please bring your voucher, together with your certification card and log book.

Repeater Guests

Welcome back to Maldives and Euro Divers and thank you for your renewed confidence.

When you visit a Euro-Divers dive base as a repeater you get 15% discount on courses and diving.

For any further information, please do not hesitate to visit us at the Dive Centre.

Check In

Daily between 11.30 and 12.30 or 17.00 and 18.00 is our check in times.

Please come around after your arrival to do the paperwork and take your certification, logbook and medical with you, so you can start directly the next day at 10.45 with the orientation dive.



Welcome to the Underwater World

The Atolls and the Reefs

The Maldives are islands on 26 natural Atolls in the middle of the Indian Ocean. The islands are coral and a living reef surrounds all of them.

Water temperature varies on the reefs (0-30 m.) only from 26-30 degrees Celsius. In the lagoon the water temperature may reach slightly higher levels.

On the reef you can see many different kinds of coral in different shades and shapes and surely you will agree that it is one of the wonders of the world.

Coral are temperature sensitive organisms. When the water temperature rises above 31 degrees Celsius, the microscopic algae living within the corals start disappearing. These algae do not only contribute to making the coral colorful, but also provide them with food. If the situation persists for a longer time, the coral does not get enough food and eventually dies.

In 1998 there was coral bleaching in the Maldives. Coral bleaching happened because the summer was particular hot and a hot stream of water went through the Maldives. This meant that the water in the lagoons was more than 35-40 degrees Celsius and since corals can only survive a very short time in those temperatures a lot of the coral died.

Now a lot of the coral is coming back slowly, but also since the yearly spawning it is easy to see that new blocks are on the way again. Some scientists believe that coral bleaching happens from time to time, as what is a natural process of the nature. It is also believed that global warming and "El Nino" had part in this bleach.

So, please note this when you see the reef, be careful not to step on or touch the corals especially as broken corals take a long time to grow back.

The living reef

On the reef you can also see beautiful colorful reef fish like the Sweet lips, the Triggerfish, the Butterfly fish, the Porcupine fish and many, many more. You will find an amazing variety of fish in different colors and shapes. Stonefish, Scorpion fish and Lionfish can have a dangerous sting, but they are only to be found on the reef and mainly under the coral blocks, not in the sandy lagoon. So, these fish are not a problem, but please, watch where you put your feet to be on the safe side.

Around Vilamendhoo, even in shallow water, you have the possibility to see Sharks and Rays.

These creatures are considered harmless when treated in a proper manner in the whole of Maldives. This is a great opportunity for you to have a closer look. You can see baby Black Tip Reef sharks when you go for a walk on the jetty or along the beach in the lagoon. Also the shallow water near the sunset bar is a good spot to see these cute little sharks.

At the reefs around Vilamendhoo the Manta season is between June till October. We have plenty at this time around Vilamendhoo and we do diving excursions several times a week to the 'Manta Point', where they hover over the heads of the divers, often at closer than 1 meter distance!



Other rays you can see on the reefs around Vilamendhoo are: Blotched fantail ray, porcupine rays, Mangrove whip-rays, Torpedo Rays, and different kinds of eagle rays. Vilamendhoo is famous for the Whale-Shark sightings all year long. Since summer 2009 we have the first Whale Shark National Park of the Maldives in the area of Mamigili, where we go several times a week for our full day trips.

Other sharks you can see on the reefs around Vilamendhoo are: White Tip Reef sharks, Grey Reef sharks, Silvertip Shark, Nurse sharks, Guitar sharks, Zebra sharks (variegated shark).

It is also possible to meet the Hawksbill turtle and the Green turtle. The Hawksbill turtle is the most frequent one and they are quite curious creatures. For this reason they sometimes come very close to have a look at you and you can also find them on our house reef.

Please don't forget that Sharks, Rays and turtles are beautiful ancient creatures that should be treated with respect, so please don't try to touch.

Spinner dolphins are also quite common on the Maldives and can often be spotted in both north and south side channels around Vilamendhoo. The dolphins are very shy creatures so the closest look you are likely to get is by boat either island hopping, snorkelling or diving of course!

The House Reef

Vilamendhoo is an island like other islands in the Maldives that has emerged from the sea. The islands are built up by millions of years of coral growth. Therefore every island has a natural reef surrounding it.

Vilamendhoo House Reef is one of the most spectacular house reefs on the Maldives for both diving and snorkelling! Located at the rim of the South Ari Atoll a continuous flow of nutrients through both north and south side channels guarantees lots of fish! Around the island there are 10 different entry- and exit-points to the house reef, which on most points starts only a few meters from the beach.

The Lagoon

From the beach at the west side of the island, where the sunset bar is located, you can see the lagoon, which stretches much further to the west. The lagoon has this nice bright blue colour that is so famous in the postcards. The lagoon is an excellent place to play and practice water skills for children and grownups with less experience to water.

The surroundings are protected and the average depth is about 1 - 1 ½ m.

Vilamendhoo is one of the few still very natural islands with lots of vegetation and no water bungalows. From the outside you almost can not see it is a tourist island.

Top of the House Reef

The top of the House Reef is average 1-2m depth and on the out side sloping down to max. 30m.

On the house reef you can find around 150 different species of Reef fish. Also you can see schools of Fusiliers and quite spectacular are the big schools of Jackfish, Banner fish and Oriental Sweet lips. Very often 4 to 5 eagle rays are circling in the current about 15 meters next to the house reef.

Several hawksbill turtles live on the reef around Vilamendhoo. They can easily be spotted and approached while diving or snorkelling and seem to enjoy having their picture taken.



Sometimes resting under a coral block or nibbling away on a juicy piece of sponge. Enjoy a close look at this ancient creature, but please remember...do not touch.

Since the House reef offers a wide variety of coral and reef fish, it is a good idea to equip yourself with a "reef guide" that gives a good description of the many different kinds of creatures you can meet around Vilamendhoo House Reef. The Dive Centre and also the souvenir shop have a good selection of reef guides. The staff in the diving school is happy to help you with any questions you might have about the underwater environment.

Discover Scuba Diving

Did you think about doing a little bit more than just snorkelling and did you always wonder how it is to dive – every one can dive....so why not you?

Here are your possibilities:

If you would like to try how it is to breathe under the water with a scuba unit, if you would like to try how it is to be able to stay under the water longer to watch the fish and the beautiful environment... here is where you start!

Discover Scuba Diving is one introductory dive in the lagoon with your instructor where you do a few skills with the equipment to make you feel confident using it. After you will go for a swim under water to make sure you feel right in the new environment.

After the introductory dive you move on to the dive itself. You will go with your instructor on the nice House Reef where you will have the possibility to see the many beautiful reef fish, turtles, rays and even a shark if you are lucky. Your maximum depth will be 12m and your instructor will guide you at all times.

After the dive it is possible for you to do more 12m diving from the Lagoon, for the rest of your holiday. Please ask in the diving school for a schedule.

If you are interested in becoming a certified diver, which allows you to dive everywhere in the world, you have the opportunity to continue. It is easy, because what you have done already is the start of both the Scuba Diver course and the Open Water course.

If you want to do the Scuba Diver course which certifies you to go to 12m with an instructor or a Dive Master you have already done 1 lagoon session and 1 open water dive, so you only have to do two more lagoon sessions and 1 more open water dive (1 ½ days more) to do...

Diving Courses

We currently work with The Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) and Scuba Schools International (SSI), both are well known recreational diver training organizations represented worldwide. This means that PADI and SSI certifications are recognized and accepted internationally. All courses are structured to be safe, enjoyable and easy to learn. The following courses are available:

PADI COURSES

- [Scuba diver](#)
- [Open Water Diver](#)

SSI COURSES



- Scuba diver
- Open Water Diver

Diving and Diving Schedule:

If you are already a certified diver we would like to invite you for a free orientation dive.

Orientation dive is done every day at 10.45 a.m., FREE of charge!

So please check in the evening before when you feel ready and don't forget your certification card, log book and medical.

On an orientation dive your instructor will go with you in the Lagoon to do few skills to make you feel comfortable back in the underwater environment and also to assure that your buoyancy is in order with the right amount of weights. Before the dive you will get information about the diving school, how it works, how to sign up for diving, prices and other practical information.

We can offer you more than 45 different dive sights in a distance from 5 min. to 1,5 hours away by boat.

We offer morning dives, meeting time is **at 8.45 a.m. (departure time 9.00 a.m.)** and an afternoon dives, meeting time is **at 2.00 p.m. (departure time 2.15 p.m.)**.

Several times a week we organize full day Whale-Shark dive excursions and in the season we are looking for Mantas too! Meeting and departure **at 8.00 a.m.**

During our full day trips we organize 2 to 3 dives. Return to Vilamendhoo in between **4.30 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.** These dives are for divers of all levels.

Further we offer several times a week 2-tank-trips either in the morning or day-night.

The house reef is available for night diving every evening of the week, and it is actually one of the best night sites of the Maldives. Jackfish, snappers, lionfish, moray eels are often following you and hunt in the light of your torch. Several times a week we organize a guided house reef night-dive, for those divers not quite so experienced yet at night.

Some more information for boat dives:

All our Dive Sites are divided in 3 groups:

ALL LEVEL

Easy, possible to dive shallow, less current,

All divers (Level 1 and higher) can join

ADVANCED

Dive sites more exposed to currents, require quick descent and experienced divers.

Interesting points are often deeper than 20m.

Divers with Level 2 or higher can join.

Nitrox recommended

ADVANCED

Dive sites probably with strong currents,

Require quick descending and experienced divers to dive in independent buddy teams.

The instructor here is a guide "only" and will not "help you down"!

Interesting points are often deeper than 20m.



Divers with Level 2 or higher can join.

Nitrox strongly recommended

Conditions can change very quickly and are sometimes unpredictable.
Euro-Divers keeps the right to change the dive sites due to ability of the diver.

Under Maldivian Law the maximum depth of Level 1 divers (PADI OWD, SSI OWD, CMAS 1*,...) is 20 m, for Level 2 or higher it is 30 m.

Join our [DEEP ADVENTURE DIVE](#) to dive to 30m.

REMEMBER:

We always carry our surface marker buoys and deploy it during the safety stop at 5m for 3 min.

Don't do any decompression dives and be back on the surface after maximum 60 minutes.

For more details regarding the dive sites please [click here!](#)

The Dive Base

The Dive Base is located close to the restaurant next to the diving jetty.

We are open every day:

8.45 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

1.45 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

We have special office hours between:

11.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

5.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

If you have any questions about the under water world, please do not hesitate to visit us in the diving school.

Advanced Diving Education

PADI COURSES

- **Adventure Diver**
- **Advanced Open Water**
- **Specialties:**
 - **Fish ID**
 - **Peak Performance Buoyancy**
 - **Underwater Digital Photographer**
 - **Deep**
 - **Nitrox**



- Others
- Rescue Course
- E. F. R.
- Go Pro

SSI COURSES

- Advanced Adventurer
- Advanced Open Water
- Specialties:
 - Digital Photography
 - Deep Diving
 - Enriched Air Nitrox
 - Wreck Diving
 - Others
- Diver Stress and Rescue Course
- Dive control specialist

Safety Procedures

In general

It is very important, that you drink a lot of fluids, especially during daytime. The body very easily dehydrates when the water reservoirs in the body are running low. To make sure you stay all right you should drink at least 2-3 litres of water or juice. Remember, that most soft drinks, coffee, tea and alcohol are dehydrating. You should never drink alcohol and go swimming, snorkelling or diving.

Evaluate your condition and do only water sports within your own limits.

When staying in the sun, remember that you are only a few degrees from Equator and the sun is very strong. Use a sun factor that is well above what you normally use (and here in the Maldives real men do use sun lotion too...).

After you have been in the sea, please remember to wash your ears with fresh water to avoid the chance of getting an ear infection. The heat and moist in the air create perfect conditions for bacteria. To be safe, wash every time and straight after. Just flush with fresh water from the shower (softly) for 10-15 sec., in each ear.

For more advice, please see your travel agency brochure or safety advice leaflet.

Especially for divers

You know that there are several circumstances that make you susceptible to decompression illness. To remind you these factors are:

- Fatigue and/or vigorous exercise during a dive
- Dehydration, due to for ex. Diarrhea, or overexertion from other sports, like tennis (think about, that you normally in the Maldives should drink at least 2,5 – 3 litres of water a day.) or your international flight
- Feeling cold
- Older age
- Illness (also seasickness)
- Injuries (also old ones, like broken legs, arms etc. earlier in your life)



- Alcohol consumption (also the evening before the dive)
- Being over weighted
- Certain medications
- For women: taking the contraceptive pill or other hormones
- Min. 18 hours before flying you should not dive

If you fall into one or more of the groups above:

- a) Don't hesitate to contact the instructors for more information and
- b) Plan your dives extremely safe i.e. max. 5 min. to NDL on your computer when diving at any depth
- c) Plan your repetitive dives shallower than 20m
- d) Ascend slowly, not faster than 18m/min and end ALL your dives with a safety stop at 5m/3min.

We have 2 recompression facilities on the Maldives, all are reachable by seaplane from Vilamendhoo in 25minutes.

“NITROX” is a term that has been around in scuba diving for a number of years and has aroused a large number of different views.

Used in the beginning as a “deco gas” for technical dives, the gas was viewed as a tool only usable by professional, technically orientated divers. The advantages of Nitrox are however more substantial since the gas allows for a reduced nitrogen intake, when existing dive profiles are retained – **increase the safety margins!!!!**

Compressed air has never been the best, but only the most commonly used and least expensive gas for scuba divers. Limited training opportunities, low availability and high prices have also contributed to prevent the spread of Nitrox in scuba diving. Fortunately things have changed.

More and more divers are asking for Nitrox – enriched air – to dive more safely. Extending bottom times has a lower priority – it is intended to make existing dive profiles even safer than they are today.

Thank you for reading our information map. Please don't forget that the instructors in the diving school are here for you.

If you have any question please don't hesitate to contact us.

We are looking forward seeing you soon at Vilamendhoo!

Your Euro-Divers Team