

• H O S P I T A L I T Y •

# MOSAIC

MALDIVES

**02** MALÉ'S SKYWARD LEAP: VELANA  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S BOLD NEW ERA

**03** ISLAND MAESTRO: ALAIN TREFOIS' VISION FOR  
OBLU HELENGELI'S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

**12** MALDIVES CAPTIVATES AT ITB BERLIN 2025  
WITH SUSTAINABLE LUXURY



**Velana International Airport**  
Male, Maldives

# EDITORIAL

## Editor in Chief

Mohamed Ajmal

## Consultant Editor

Imran Hassan

## Consultant

Dr. Vipula Wanigasekera

## CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Nilana Medis

## LAYOUT DESIGN

CDC Design Team

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Respective Sources

## Sales

Alan Ieng

news@mosaicmaldives.com

## PUBLISHER

Official PUBLICATION

of FHAM by

Dhivehi Expo Services Pvt Ltd

MJ & C Galholhu Aage,

Majeedhee Magu-20119, Male'

# Publisher Note.

Welcome to the third issue of Hospitality Mosaic Maldives —your gateway to the dynamic world of Maldivian hospitality. More than just a magazine, this publication serves as a hub for collaboration, inspiration, and storytelling, bringing together hoteliers, restaurateurs, suppliers, and hospitality enthusiasts who share a passion for excellence.

As the official publication of FHAM, Hospitality Mosaic Maldives continues to bring you exclusive insights and updates on this premier industry event, including the highly anticipated Culinary Challenge. This issue once again highlights the visionaries, chefs, suppliers, and industry professionals whose dedication and innovation continue to elevate Maldivian hospitality on the global stage.

Beyond event highlights, we explore into the culture, artistry, and unique lifestyle that define the Maldives. From luxury resorts and fine dining to the rich heritage of Maldivian cuisine, our content is designed to inspire, inform, and connect industry leaders and enthusiasts alike.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, let's continue shaping the Maldives as a world-class destination for hospitality and culinary excellence.

Editor-in-Chief





# Table of CONTENT

**01** MALDIVES MAGIC: SUSTAINABILITY AND WELLNESS SHINE IN 2025

**02** MALÉ'S SKYWARD LEAP: VELANA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S BOLD NEW ERA

**03** ISLAND MAESTRO: ALAIN TREFOIS' VISION FOR OBLU HELENGELI'S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

**04** CULINARY VIRTUOSO: CHEF DAVID GALERA'S FLAVORFUL JOURNEY AT BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU

**05** MIXING MAGIC: STEVE JAYASINGHE'S JOURNEY TO MOCKTAIL STARDOM AT ANANTARA KIHAVAH

**06** CULINARY CRAFT MEETS ISLAND ELEGANCE AT OBLU NATURE HELENGELI BY SENTIDO

**07** FHAM HOUSEKEEPING & BED DECORATING COMPETITION 2024 SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON MALDIVES' HOSPITALITY TALENT

**08** BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU: A MALDIVIAN HAVEN OF WELLBEING AND CULINARY ART

**09** FHA MALDIVES: STIRRING GROWTH & GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

**10** GRACE BENEATH THE WAVES: THE STORY OF MANTA RAYS IN THE MALDIVES

**11** PESTERMINATORS PVT LTD: A SUSTAINABLE REVOLUTION IN PEST CONTROL

**12** MALDIVES CAPTIVATES AT ITB BERLIN 2025 WITH SUSTAINABLE LUXURY

# **MALDIVES MAGIC** **SUSTAINABILITY AND** **WELLNESS SHINE IN 2025**

Welcome to the Maldives, where crystal waters meet cutting-edge hospitality. In 2025, this tropical paradise is stealing the spotlight with two trends that redefine luxury: sustainability and wellness tourism. From eco-chic adventures to soul-soothing escapes, the Maldives is crafting experiences that thrill the heart and nurture the planet. Here's why this island nation is your must-visit destination this year.

## **Sustainability: A Love Letter to the Earth**

The Maldives is more than a postcard-perfect escape it's a beacon of sustainability. With its coral reefs and marine life facing climate change's wrath, resorts are rolling up their sleeves to protect this paradise. Solar panels sparkle on rooftops, powering your stay with clean energy, while energy-efficient systems keep things green.

Waste is tackled with flair recycling and composting are the norm, shrinking the islands' environmental footprint. The real star? Marine conservation. Resorts are on a mission to save coral reefs and sea creatures, and you're invited to dive in. Plant a coral fragment or join an educational marine safari to connect with the Maldives' underwater wonders. It's sustainable luxury that feels personal, letting you leave a positive mark while soaking in paradise. Eco-conscious travelers, this one's for you.



**Ocean Pollution**  
(Photo available online)



**Maldivian Corals and Sea Creatures**  
(Photo available online)

## Wellness Tourism: Your Zen Haven Awaits

Need a break from the hustle? The Maldives is your wellness wonderland. Resorts are transforming into sanctuaries where mind, body, and soul find harmony. Picture yourself in a yoga retreat, stretching beside a tranquil lagoon as the sun rises. Mindfulness workshops, led by pros, guide you to a calmer version of you. Ready for something extraordinary?

Hydrotherapy circuits with underwater massages and thermal pools melt stress away. For those chasing the ultimate rest, sleep-focused therapies—think guided meditation and dreamy sleep setups—are a game-changer. Blending ancient Maldivian healing with modern wellness, these experiences are as unique as they are rejuvenating. It's no wonder travelers craving balance are flocking here.

## The Future Is Now

The Maldives isn't just keeping up it's setting the global standard. By weaving sustainability and wellness into every stay, these islands are redefining what luxury means. It's travel with purpose, where every coral planted and every mindful moment helps preserve this paradise for generations. As the world leans into purpose-driven, health-focused journeys, the Maldives is leading the charge, proving you can indulge without compromise. So, grab your sunscreen and dive into a destination that's as good for the planet as it is for your soul. The Maldives is calling, will you answer?



# Malé's Skyward Leap: Velana International Airport's Bold New Era

Tucked away on Hulhulé Island, a stone's throw from the vibrant capital of Malé, Velana International Airport (VIA) is the Maldives' gateway to the world. Known as the "aircraft carrier in the Indian Ocean," this bustling hub is undergoing a dazzling transformation set to redefine travel to the Maldives. With a sleek new terminal slated to open by July 2025, VIA is poised to elevate the island nation's tourism game, blending cutting-edge infrastructure with the Maldives' signature charm. Here's why this airport makeover is the talk of the travel world.

## A Terminal Built for Tomorrow

Velana's current terminal, a relic of the 1980s designed for 1.5 million passengers, has been stretched to its limits, handling 4.3 million travelers in 2023 alone. The new 78,000-square-meter international passenger terminal is a game-changer, crafted to welcome up to 7.5 million visitors annually by 2030. Inspired by Maldivian culture, its wave-like outer walls and intricate stone-carving patterns echo the nation's ancient mosques and oceanic heritage. Aero bridges, modern baggage systems, and a treasure trove of dining, retail, and lounge spaces promise a seamless, luxurious experience. With over 85% of construction complete as of November 2024, the terminal is on track to open its doors by mid-2025, with testing of aero bridges already underway.

This isn't just about capacity—it's about redefining the journey. The new terminal boasts early check-in and baggage storage services, plus an immigration section 280 times larger than the current one, ensuring travelers glide through with ease. Designed with flexibility in mind, the concourse can expand from six to nine gates, future-proofing VIA for decades of growth.



## A Billion-Dollar Vision

The \$1 billion expansion project is a bold bet on the Maldives' tourism-driven economy. Beyond the terminal, VIA is rolling out a new runway, cargo complex, fuel farm, and the world's largest seaplane terminal, catering to the Maldives' unique resort-hopping culture. A new fuel farm and hydrant system, inaugurated in November 2024, boosts efficiency and sustainability for long-haul flights.

Funded by loans from the Saudi Fund for Development, Abu Dhabi Fund, and OPEC Fund, this ambitious overhaul reflects global confidence in the Maldives' future. The World Bank projects that the terminal's completion will fuel a 5.7% GDP growth in 2025, underscoring its economic impact.

## Elevating the Maldives Experience

Velana's transformation is more than infrastructure, it's a love letter to travelers. As the primary entry point for 99% of the Maldives' tourists, VIA sets the tone for the island adventure. The new terminal's design, with its nod to local craftsmanship, immerses visitors in Maldivian culture from the moment they land. Enhanced connectivity, including plans for more domestic airports and airline partnerships, will make exploring the Maldives' 200+ resorts easier than ever. Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer has called the project a "pressing priority" for tourism, inviting global investors to join the journey.

## Ready for Takeoff

As Velana International Airport prepares to unveil its new terminal in July 2025, the Maldives is soaring to new heights. This isn't just an airport—it's a statement that the Maldives is ready to welcome the world with open arms, blending modern flair with its timeless allure. Whether you're chasing sunsets or serenity, your Maldivian adventure starts here, in a terminal as breathtaking as the islands themselves. Get ready to land in paradise like never before.



# ISLAND MAESTRO: ALAIN TREFOIS' VISION FOR OBLU HELENGELI'S SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Amid the Maldives' turquoise lagoons, Oblu Nature Helengeli by Sentido thrives as a sustainable luxury haven, led by Alain Trefois. A Belgian hospitality veteran, Trefois' journey began with a 1984 degree from Ter Duinen hotel school, sparking a global career across France, the UK, Switzerland, and Spain. From Michelin-starred kitchens to Relais & Châteaux and St. Regis, his 15-year Maldives passion was fueled by its pristine shores. "The Maldives' beauty is a hospitality canvas," Trefois says, embracing the challenge of a remote island resort.

Trefois' leadership blends strategic precision with visionary spark, rooted in his APEX Culture (Atmosphere Process Excellence). He drives data-informed strategies and proactive solutions to keep Oblu competitive, while inspiring innovation. "Collaboration is key," he insists. Empowering staff, fostering open communication, and celebrating wins create a tight-knit team delivering tailored guest experiences think beachfront dinners or coral reef dives. This inclusive culture ensures every stay feels magical.

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged Oblu, but Trefois' quick thinking—strict health protocols and tech like contactless check-ins—kept experiences safe and seamless. Sustainability drives his mission. In February 2025, Oblu's second solar power project cut fuel use, with solar-powered speedboats adding eco-chic guest transfers. Waste reduction, energy-efficient systems, and guest-led coral planting protect the Maldives' ecosystem. "Sustainability is our duty," Trefois affirms.

Oblu's vibrant team culture, fueled by Trefois' hands-on style—regular check-ins, training, and idea-sharing empowers staff to excel. "A happy team makes happy guests," he says, evident in glowing reviews for warm service. Innovations like plant-based menus and virtual marine tours blend sustainability with delight, keeping Oblu cutting-edge.

Trefois envisions Oblu as a sustainable luxury leader, introducing underwater art or wellness retreats. For Maldives tourism, he advocates responsible growth, emphasizing conservation and community. "We're crafting a lasting legacy," he declares. With Alain Trefois at the helm, Oblu Helengeli is a testament to hospitality's power to innovate, inspire, and preserve paradise.

# CULINARY VIRTUOSO: CHEF DAVID GALERA'S FLAVORFUL JOURNEY AT BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU

In the Maldives' turquoise haven, Chef David Galera is redefining dining at Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru and Dhawa Ihuru. With over 20 years of culinary mastery, this Spanish chef has shaped kitchens in Barcelona, Oman, and now, the Maldives. As the Executive Chef, Galera infuses creativity and sustainability into every dish, crafting unforgettable dining experiences.

Galera's career ignited in Barcelona, where his knack for fusion cuisine led to leadership roles in Michelin-starred restaurants and luxury resorts. From Spain to Oman, he curated innovative menus, blending global flavors with local ingredients. "Food tells a story," he says, a philosophy that guides his work. His expertise earned him accolades in prestigious venues before the Maldives called.



At Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru and Dhawa Ihuru, Galera's artistry shines. He designs menus that fuse Maldivian seafood and tropical produce with international flair, from intimate beach dinners to grand events. His precision ensures every plate dazzles, while leading dynamic teams to deliver seamless service. Guests savor flavors that linger long after the meal.

Sustainability drives Galera's vision. He sources local fish and island herbs, minimizing waste and environmental impact. "We must protect this paradise," he insists, aligning his cuisine with the resorts' eco-ethos. His sustainable practices elevate dining while honoring the Maldives' natural bounty.

Chef David Galera is a culinary storyteller, weaving culture, innovation, and sustainability into every bite. At Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru and Dhawa Ihuru, his dishes transform meals into adventures, proving paradise is as delicious as it is beautiful.



**CHEF DAVID GALERA**  
EXECUTIVE CHEF  
BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU & DHAWA IHURU  
(Photo available online)

# MIXING MAGIC: STEVE JAYASINGHE'S JOURNEY TO MOCKTAIL STARDOM AT ANANTARA KIHAVAH

At Anantara Kihavah Maldives Villas, Steve Jayasinghe is redefining mixology with a splash of creativity and a dash of passion. As Bar Supervisor and Head Mixologist, his nine-year odyssey from novice to maestro is a testament to his love for the craft. Mastering molecular mixology, Steve crafts mocktails with homemade syrups and bitters, turning drinks into sensory stories. "Bartending is my art, my way of connecting with people," he says, his enthusiasm as vibrant as the Maldives' turquoise lagoons.

Steve's competitive spark ignited in 2019 at Heritance Aarah Maldives, where he debuted at the Food & Hospitality Asia Maldives (FHAM). "FHAM was a game-changer. It pushed me to innovate and grow," he recalls. His coffee-mixology fusion in the Nestlé Nescafé Creative Coffee Competition won a Top Gold Medal, while the Lavazza Barista Competition earned him 2nd Runner-Up. In 2021, at Anantara Dhigu, he claimed another Nescafé Gold but stumbled in the Fabbri Mocktail Competition. "Setbacks teach resilience," Steve reflects, embracing growth over glory.



Steve Jayasinghe performing at  
the FHAM 2019 Finals  
(Photo by FHAM)



Steve Jayasinghe performing at  
the FHAM 2023 Finals  
(Photo by FHAM)

Promoted to Head Mixologist at Anantara Kihavah in 2022, Steve's leadership soared. In 2023, he mentored a team member to the FHAM Barista Challenge finals, earning praise as a trainer. "Seeing my team shine is pure joy," he beams. His own Silver in Nescafé and 1st Runner-Up in Fabbri Mocktail competitions highlighted his consistency. In 2024, Steve led a five-member team through two months of intense FHAM training. His Nescafé Creative Coffee entry secured another Top Gold, while his team clinched the Barista Challenge Championship and 2nd Runner-Up titles. "Training them to succeed was my proudest moment," he says, crediting teamwork and managerial support.

Anantara Kihavah's food and beverage team, a tight-knit family, thrives on Steve's innovative ethos. From sustainable local syrups to guest-engaging presentations, every drink tells a tale. FHAM has been his crucible, shaping his skills and inspiring others. For 2025, Steve plans to blend classic and modern drink profiles while mentoring his team.



"If you're a bartender, barista, or chef who's passionate about what you do, FHAM is your stage. It's more than just a competition. It's a chance to challenge yourself, showcase your skills, and grow in ways you never imagined." Steve Jayasinghe's journey is a mocktail of resilience, creativity, and leadership, proving that in the Maldives, every sip can spark a legacy.

# CULINARY CRAFT MEETS ISLAND ELEGANCE AT OBLU NATURE HELENGELI BY SENTIDO

In a dazzling fusion of flavour and flair, OBLU Nature Helengeli by SENTIDO recently hosted a three-day culinary celebration that redefined guest experiences. Orchestrated by DERTOUR's SENTIDO team, this exclusive event brought together global culinary visionaries and local talent to create an unforgettable gastronomic journey.



Oblu Nature Helengeli by  
Sentido Resort  
(Photo available online)

Born from a strategic renovation partnership in 2023, the collaboration between Atmosphere Core and SENTIDO has consistently elevated Helengeli's hospitality offering. This year, it reached new heights with the arrival of Chef Frank Funke, Corporate F&B Manager at SENTIDO, and Manuel Perez, globally ranked #3 in mixology. Their visit was not only a treat for the senses but also a powerful investment in training and uplifting the resort's F&B team.

At the heart of the event was a Maldivian-inspired degustation experience. Chef Frank, in partnership with island Executive Chef Ajay Sahoo, crafted inventive dishes such as “Hiki Mas” – diced tuna with coconut-lime dressing – and a reimagined Caesar salad with charred coconut, crispy curry leaves, and smoked fish flakes. Mains included Angus beef with Maldivian black pepper sauce and a local twist on fish and chips, served with breadfruit purée and purple yam fries. A decadent Maldivian Bounty Tart featuring coconut ganache and polvoron shortbread.

Meanwhile, Mixologist Manuel Perez transformed the bar into a flavour laboratory. Foraging fresh island herbs and fruits, he served up refreshing creations like Green Mango & Mint Iced Tea, Spiced Hibiscus & Date Brew, and a Coconut & Vanilla Bean Iced Coffee finale. His storytelling approach turned every sip into a sensory narrative of the island.

Beyond the guest experiences, the event served a deeper purpose: knowledge-sharing and skill-building. Culinary workshops, mixology sessions, and behind-the-scenes collaboration empowered Helengeli’s associates, raising service standards and morale.

General Manager Alain Trefois summed it up best: “This visionary duo didn’t just impress our guests—they transformed our team. Their time, talent, and passion have left a lasting legacy at Helengeli.”

With this successful showcase, OBLU Nature Helengeli by SENTIDO continues to shine as a destination where global innovation meets authentic Maldivian warmth—one plate, and one cocktail, at a time.



# FHAM Housekeeping & Bed Decorating Competition 2024 Shines Spotlight on Maldives' Hospitality Talent

The FHAM Housekeeping & Bed Decorating Competition 2024, held in collaboration with the Maldives Housekeeping Association (MHA), celebrated the artistry and dedication of housekeepers across the Maldives. Hosted as part of the Food & Hospitality Asia Maldives (FHAM) 2024, the event brought together 42 participants from 21 resorts, showcasing their creativity and precision in transforming guest rooms into stunning displays of hospitality excellence.

This vibrant competition underscored the critical role housekeepers play in elevating guest experiences within the Maldives' world-renowned tourism industry. Beyond a showcase of skill, the event provided professional recognition and development opportunities, fostering pride and growth among participants. The MHA's support ensured a platform that honored the often-unsung heroes of hospitality, highlighting their commitment to perfection.

The winners, Mr. Ahmed Shameem and Mr. Mohamed Zidhan from Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa, captivated judges with their impeccable bed decorating finesse. The first runner-up title went to Mr. Adam Naseer and Mr. Hassan Najah from Milaidhoo Maldives, while Mr. Ismail Rasheed and Mr. Hussain Niyaz from Ifuru Island Resort secured the second runner-up position. Their achievements reflect the high standards of craftsmanship in Maldives' hospitality sector.

FHAM, the Maldives' premier hospitality trade show, has been a cornerstone of the industry since its inception. It connects global suppliers with local businesses, offering a dynamic platform for networking, innovation, and professional development. Featuring exhibitions, competitions, and workshops, FHAM drives excellence in food, beverage, and hospitality services, reinforcing the Maldives' reputation as a global tourism leader.

The 2024 Housekeeping Bed Decorating Competition not only celebrated talent but also strengthened the industry's commitment to nurturing skilled professionals, ensuring unforgettable guest experiences in paradise.



# **BANYAN TREE VABBINFARU: A MALDIVIAN HAVEN OF WELLBEING AND CULINARY ART**

Nestled in the North Malé Atoll, Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru is a barefoot paradise where turquoise waters and powdery sands set the stage for unforgettable escapes. Just a 25-minute speedboat ride from Velana International Airport, this intimate resort, with 48 all-pool villas, blends eco-luxury with Maldivian charm. In May 2025, the resort unveils Banyan Tree Connections, a private wellbeing journey for two, rooted in the Banyan Group's 8 Pillars of Wellbeing.

"It's about slowing down and reconnecting through movement, mindfulness, and rituals," the resort shares, offering guests a curated experience in a serene island sanctuary. This global program, launching also in Phuket, Mayakoba, and Anji, reflects each locale's unique culture and nature.

Beyond wellbeing, Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru dazzles with culinary artistry led by Acting Executive Chef David Galera. With over two decades of expertise from Michelin-starred kitchens in Spain and Oman, Galera crafts menus that fuse Maldivian seafood and tropical produce with global flair. From the Thai-inspired Saffron to the Japanese Yakitori at Madi Hiya, his sustainable, locally sourced dishes elevate dining into storytelling. "Food is a story," Galera says, ensuring every plate at the beachfront Ilaafathi or Sangu Garden is a vibrant narrative.

Guests dive into vibrant coral reefs via the PADI dive center or explore the Rannamaari shipwreck at sister property Dhawa Ihuru, accessible by complimentary shuttle. The Banyan Tree Spa, renowned for Asian-inspired treatments, soothes with coconut-infused therapies. Recognized as the 'Most Sustainable Resort' at the TTM Awards, the resort's Marine Lab leads coral restoration and biodiversity efforts, inviting guests to

Banyan Tree Vabbinfaru is a romantic and family-friendly retreat, offering catamaran cruises, water sports, and PADI Bubblemaker courses for kids. With its blend of holistic renewal, culinary excellence, and green credentials, this Maldivian gem redefines luxury as purposeful and authentic.



# FHA MALDIVES: STIRRING GROWTH & GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

The Food and Hospitality Asia Maldives (FHAM) 2025, scheduled for September 7–9, stands as a cornerstone event in the Maldivian hospitality sector. Bringing together international and local stakeholders, including culinary professionals, resort operators, and suppliers, FHAM serves as a platform for showcasing innovations and fostering collaborations in food and hospitality.

## Economic Impacts on the Maldivian Economy

Tourism is pivotal to the Maldivian economy, contributing approximately 28% to the GDP and over 60% to foreign exchange earnings. Events like FHAM stimulate economic activity by attracting international participants, which in turn boosts demand for local services such as accommodations, transportation, and dining. This influx supports local businesses and creates employment opportunities, thereby reinforcing the economic fabric of the nation.

## Influence of International Participants on Maldivian Systems

The participation of international professionals introduces global best practices and standards to the Maldivian hospitality industry. Competitions and exhibitions at FHAM expose local talent to international culinary trends and service excellence, fostering skill development and innovation. Moreover, the event encourages knowledge exchange, leading to improvements in operational efficiencies and service quality within Maldivian establishments.



Local and International visitors at the FHAM Exhibition  
(Photo by FHAM)



Local and International visitors at the FHAM Exhibition  
(Photo by FHAM)

## Broader Implications for the Hospitality Sector

FHAM's emphasis on diverse areas, including culinary arts, housekeeping, and beverage services, aligns with the Maldives' strategic goals to diversify its tourism offerings. By promoting excellence across various hospitality domains, the event contributes to enhancing the overall visitor experience. This, in turn, can lead to increased tourist satisfaction and repeat visitation, further bolstering the economy.



# *Grace Beneath the Waves:* **THE STORY OF MANTA RAYS IN THE MALDIVES**

There is something otherworldly about seeing a manta ray glide through the turquoise waters of the Maldives. With wingspans that can reach up to 7 meters and a grace that defies their size, manta rays are among the most enchanting marine creatures in the Indian Ocean. Their presence has become an essential part of the Maldives' marine identity—mesmerizing divers, inspiring conservationists, and captivating tourists from every corner of the globe.

## **A Brief History of the Gentle Giants**

The Maldives, with its unique geography of 1,192 coral islands and extensive reef systems, has long been a haven for marine megafauna. Manta rays, especially the reef manta (*Mobula alfredi*), have been sighted here for centuries, but it wasn't until the early 2000s that they gained serious attention from marine biologists and tourism operators. The Hanifaru Bay in Baa Atoll, now a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, became internationally recognized for the phenomenon known as a 'manta aggregation'—where dozens, sometimes hundreds, of mantas gather to feed during the southwest monsoon.

The Maldives is now home to one of the largest and most studied manta populations in the world, with over 5,000 individuals identified through unique spot patterns on their bellies, thanks to the work of organizations like the Manta Trust.

**Magnet for Marine Enthusiasts**

Manta rays are now a cornerstone of the Maldivian ecotourism experience. Their predictable movements—tied to the plankton-rich waters brought by seasonal currents—make them a reliable attraction for divers and snorkelers. Resorts and liveboards promote manta excursions, offering guests unforgettable encounters with these serene giants.

For many, swimming alongside a manta ray is a life-changing moment, sparking awe and a deeper appreciation for ocean conservation. As one diver put it, "It's like flying underwater with angels."

## A Model for Marine Conservation

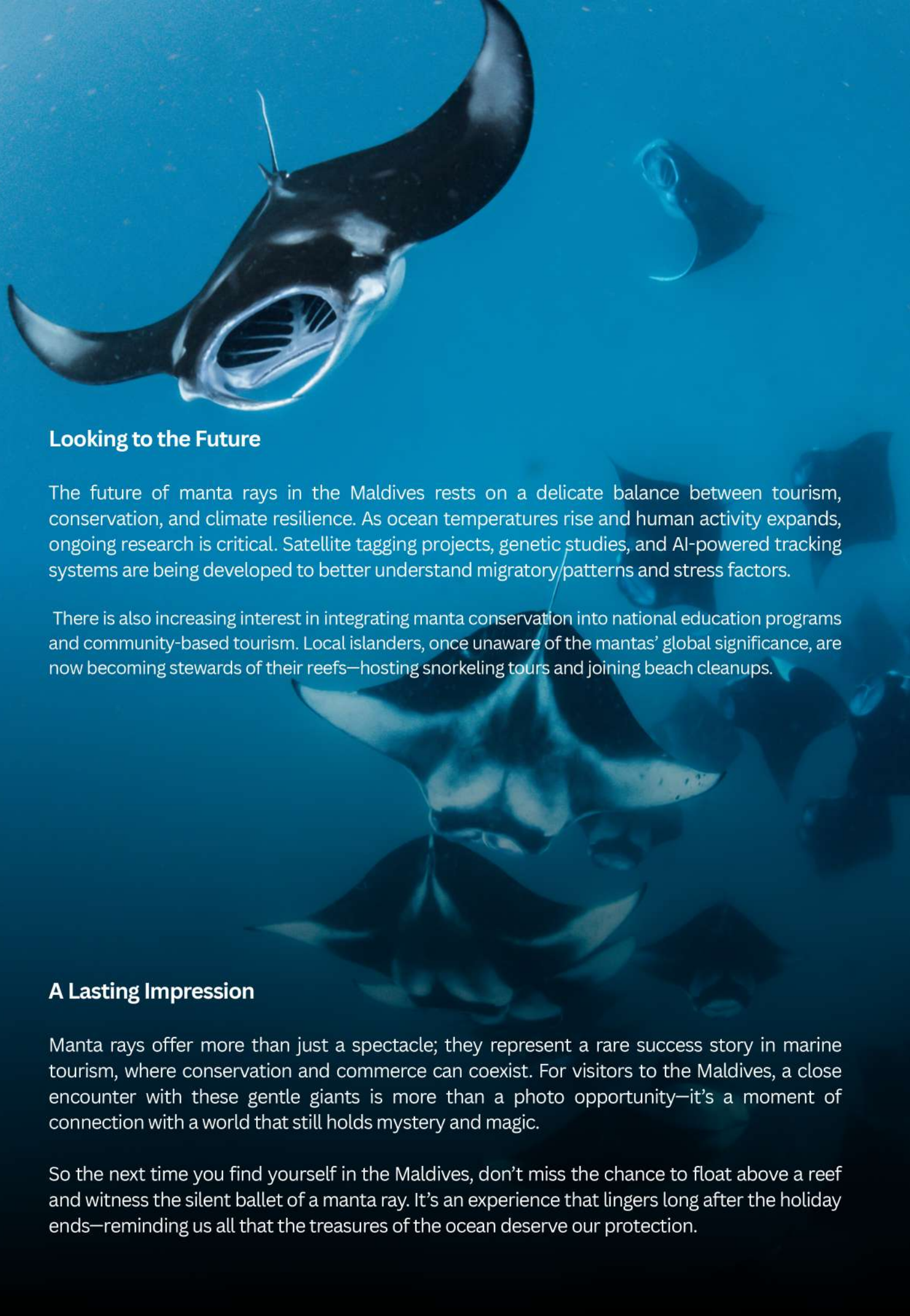
Recognizing their ecological and economic value, the Maldivian government has taken significant steps to protect manta rays. In 2014, all species of manta rays were officially protected under Maldivian law, making it illegal to capture or harm them. Hanifaru Bay was designated a Marine Protected Area (MPA), with strict rules on visitor numbers and behavior to ensure minimal disturbance during feeding aggregations.

Partnerships between the Ministry of Fisheries, Environment Protection Agency, and non-governmental organizations like Manta Trust and the Maldives Marine Research Institute have bolstered research and monitoring. Dive operators are also trained in sustainable practices, including maintaining safe distances, avoiding flash photography, and limiting group sizes.

## Recent Events and Discoveries

In 2024, researchers from Manta Trust made headlines with the discovery of new juvenile aggregation sites in the southern atolls—suggesting that manta rays may have regional nursery grounds previously undocumented. This finding is crucial, as it could inform better protection policies and marine spatial planning.

Moreover, eco-tourism campaigns have increased public awareness about mantas' vulnerability to warming oceans and plastic pollution. Several resorts now sponsor manta conservation through guest donations, naming programs, and citizen science initiatives where tourists can upload photos to ID databases.



## Looking to the Future

The future of manta rays in the Maldives rests on a delicate balance between tourism, conservation, and climate resilience. As ocean temperatures rise and human activity expands, ongoing research is critical. Satellite tagging projects, genetic studies, and AI-powered tracking systems are being developed to better understand migratory patterns and stress factors.

There is also increasing interest in integrating manta conservation into national education programs and community-based tourism. Local islanders, once unaware of the mantas' global significance, are now becoming stewards of their reefs—hosting snorkeling tours and joining beach cleanups.

## A Lasting Impression

Manta rays offer more than just a spectacle; they represent a rare success story in marine tourism, where conservation and commerce can coexist. For visitors to the Maldives, a close encounter with these gentle giants is more than a photo opportunity—it's a moment of connection with a world that still holds mystery and magic.

So the next time you find yourself in the Maldives, don't miss the chance to float above a reef and witness the silent ballet of a manta ray. It's an experience that lingers long after the holiday ends—reminding us all that the treasures of the ocean deserve our protection.

# PESTERMINATORS PVT LTD: A SUSTAINABLE REVOLUTION IN PEST CONTROL

Leading the Way in Eco-Friendly Pest Management in the Maldives

In the heart of the Indian Ocean, where pristine beaches meet luxury resorts, Pestterminators Pvt Ltd is quietly transforming the way pest control is done. Founded in 2015 and based in Malé, this homegrown Maldivian company has grown into a national leader in science-based, environmentally responsible pest management solutions.

Whether it's safeguarding a five-star resort, a hospital, or an industrial site, Pestterminators delivers tailored services across the Maldives. Their expertise spans urban pest management, mosquito vector control, rodent solutions, fly management, and stored product pest protection. Their hospitality-specific programs prioritize visual discretion, guest safety, and sustainability—crucial in high-end resort settings.

Pestterminators stands out by embracing low-toxicity, WHO- and EPA-compliant products, and by integrating biological control options through collaborations with partners like Oxitec. Innovations such as Mtego monitoring systems, BioVe+ fly traps, and Larvitrap set them apart in an industry often criticized for its environmental footprint.



**Pestterminators Pvt Ltd crew**  
(Photo by Pestterminators Pvt Ltd))

The company is certified under four major ISO standards—including ISO 9001, 14001, 22000, and 45001—demonstrating excellence in quality, environmental care, food safety, and workplace safety. In a landmark achievement, Pestterminators became the first carbon-neutral pest control company in the Maldives in 2023.

With a team of over 120 trained professionals, Pestterminators is not just a service provider—it's a movement towards sustainable pest control. By actively participating in international forums and driving innovation in tropical environments, the company is reshaping what pest management looks like—for the Maldives and beyond.

# MALDIVES CAPTIVATES AT ITB BERLIN 2025 WITH SUSTAINABLE LUXURY

At ITB Berlin 2025, held from March 4 to 6 at Messe Berlin, the Maldives solidified its status as a premier global travel destination, drawing the spotlight with a 200-member delegation led by the Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC). Representing 89 tourism stakeholders, the nation showcased its unparalleled blend of luxury, sustainability, and cultural allure, with a strategic focus on captivating the German-speaking market.

The Maldives' 504-square-meter double-decker stand was a vibrant hub, immersing visitors in the islands' magic. Featuring a 360-degree photo booth, a traditional Maldivian corner, meeting spaces, and a VIP lounge, it fostered connections with travel professionals and media. A standout event, the seminar "The Next Chapter of Maldives Tourism – Berlin Edition," unveiled initiatives to boost bookings, explore new market segments, and champion sustainable practices, reinforcing the Maldives' forward-thinking vision.



Germany, a key market with 157,246 visitors in 2024, remains a priority, alongside Switzerland (41,062 arrivals) and Austria (29,425). By February 2025, 14,119 German tourists had already arrived, underscoring strong demand. MMPRC's tailored campaigns, including German-language promotions and partnerships with giants like TUI and DER Touristik, enhance accessibility and appeal, aligning with the region's growing appetite for eco-conscious travel.

Sustainability took center stage, with MMPRC highlighting marine conservation, renewable energy, and responsible tourism. These efforts resonate with European travelers' values, positioning the Maldives as a leader in eco-luxury. Premium branding campaigns further elevate its allure for high-end visitors seeking pristine beaches and vibrant marine biodiversity.

Building on 2024's milestone of over two million tourists, MMPRC's robust presence at ITB Berlin 2025 signals a commitment to sustained growth. "We're showcasing a destination that's both aspirational and responsible," an MMPRC spokesperson noted. With strategic partnerships, localized marketing, and a focus on sustainable hospitality, the Maldives continues to enchant as a safe, luxurious haven, inviting travelers to its sunny shores.



# Industry APPOINTMENTS



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Ibrahim Faisal**  
on your new appointment as  
Sales manager  
At BAROS MALDIVES



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Leroy Colin Dias**  
on your new appointment as  
Resort Manager  
At OZEN RESERVE BOLIFUSHI



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Ms. Sujitra Worapotpirom**  
on your new appointment as  
Spa manager  
At BAROS MALDIVES



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Nasrulla Mohamed**  
on your new appointment as  
Resort Manager  
At OBLU SELECT Lobigili and  
OBLU Xperience Ailafushi



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Sribanta Acharya**  
on your new appointment as  
Resort Manager  
At Oblu SELECT Sangeli



## CONGRATULATIONS

**Mr. Varinder Preet Singh**  
on your new appointment as  
Executive Assistant Manager  
At OBLU SELECT Lobigili and  
OBLU Xperience Ailafushi