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MALDIVES

Best family hotels in the Maldives

Whether you're a family of water babies, art lovers or adventurers, the Maldives will have a resort for you



Lee Cobaj | Friday August 18 2023, 10:00am

With its patty-cake islands, swaying coconut palms, platinum beaches, lapis lazuli waters and glittering night skies, the Maldives was once the exclusive preserve of honeymooners. Fast forward a decade or two and the newlyweds are now parents longing to return and make more memories with the newest members of the clan.

While there are still a few resorts that remain adult-only, the majority have pivoted to welcoming families, with larger multi-room villas, child-friendly facilities (shallow pools, no-tears amenities, mini bathrobes) and souped-up kids' clubs with fun but educational programmes.

Whether you've got toddlers, tweens or teens in tow, our guide to the best family hotels in the Maldives – from top-notch snorkelling spots to island idylls with amazing spas to design-led resorts – will help lock down the right resort for you and yours.

Main photo: Niyama Private Islands

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JA Manafaru

1. JA Manafaru

Best for an off-the-beaten-track stay

The longer journey time to JA Manafaru – it takes a 90-minute domestic flight from the capital

The longer journey time to Haa Alifushi — it takes a 90-minute domestic flight from the capital plus a 45-minute speedboat ride to reach the resort — is better suited to older kids with plenty of stamina. As is the resort, which has a seemingly endless array of outdoor activities, from cookery classes to parasailing, tennis, badminton and volleyball. Family villas come with private pools and the all-inclusive option is a boon for families, especially considering how good the food is. But the real star attraction here is the still untouched Haa Alif atoll, teeming with healthy multicoloured coral reefs, manta rays, turtles, eels and eagle rays.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price ££

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Avani+ Fares

2. Avani+ Fares Maldives Resort

Best for affordable luxury

This 176-room resort, set on the edge of the Baa atoll Unesco biosphere reserve, is the first in the [Maldives](#) to have its own dedicated kids-only restaurant, Petit Bistro, with mini dining tables, a pizza oven and a cookery school. There's also the AvaniKids Clubs, for children aged from four to 11, and a teens' club with video games and futbol tables. Accommodations range from spacious and pleasingly affordable studios (positioned four in a block), to two and three-bedroom overwater pool villas and a four-bedroom mansion rolling straight onto the beach. An all-inclusive option is also available.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price £££

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Four Seasons Landaa Giraavaru

3. Four Seasons Landaa Giraavaru

Best for tweens and teens

This swish island resort pulls off a neat trick, catering equally well to honeymooners, solo travellers and families. Found on swathes of clotted-cream beach or stilted over turquoise water, all of the villas are super-sized with private pools and acres of outdoor space, so the children can squeal and giggle without disturbing the neighbours. Adventurous programmes encourage munchkins to ditch the video games in favour of scouring the island in a series of puzzles and challenges — lizard-spotting, coral reef-scaping, wishing-tree walks — gaining stamps that can be traded in for toys and ice-cream sundaes.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price £££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)



Finolhu

4. Finolhu

Best for snorkelling

Grab your bucket and spade — the big draw at this flamboyant resort is its magnificent white-sand beach and sandbank, which swoops through the Baa Atoll like a comet. There's an inflatable waterpark set just offshore, a lagoon-shaped swimming pool and fantastic marine life with colourful corals and swirls of tropical fish in the house reef and spinner dolphins, sea turtles and manta rays all nearby. The Oceaneer's Club has a long list of daily activities — pirate workshops, sand art, kayaking competitions — and can throw birthday parties with gifts, games and cake.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price ££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)



Patina Maldives

5. Patina Maldives, Fari Islands

Best for fashionable families

Slick Patina Maldives has a few big draws for families. First, there's the location, just 45 minutes by speedboat from Malé. Then there's the sheer number of things to do. Patina is part of the Fari Islands, an artificial archipelago housing three resorts and a shared marina, with a beach club, water sports centre and multiple restaurants. The gently sloping main beach is sheltered on three sides, so it's always lake-calm and children get a free scuba-diving lesson, kayaks and paddleboard usage. There's a progressive kids' club with mad science classes, 3D printers and Glowforge laser cutters. You'll find the entry-level villas aren't the largest but the two-bedroom pool villas are very spacious and can accommodate up to six guests.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)





Amilla Maldives Resort & Residences

6. Amilla Maldives Resort & Residences

Best for dolphin spotting

This contemporary luxury resort is set in a beautiful lagoon — complete with its very own mini blue hole — where spinner dolphins, sea turtles and manta rays swing by on a regular basis. The 67 villas — some on the beach and some over water — are spacious, with Hamptons-chic decor, big living rooms, private swimming pools and plenty of outdoor space. Happily, the Sultan's Village kids' club has some of the longest hours in the Maldives, from 9am until 8pm, and entertains with next-level sandcastle-making, kombucha classes and a Friday night disco.

Price Y

Price Y

Price £££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)



Gili Lankanfushi

7. Gili Lankanfushi

Best for sustainable stays

Everything at Gili Lankanfushi feels like an adventure, from the fantastical thatched-roof water villas, some of which are cast out in the Indian Ocean and can only be reached by boat, to mealtimes, which can involve fishing or foraging. The entire resort is big on conservation and promoting Maldivian culture and that extends to the kids' club, which puts on wild art classes using palm leaves and coconuts, underwater treasure hunts with a marine biologist and boduberu drumming classes. While they're busy, parents can head to the wonderful Meera Spa for some unravelling ayurvedic treatments.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

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Fairmont Sirru Fen Fushi

8. Fairmont Sirru Fen Fushi

Best for arty types

It's not every island resort that has its own art gallery, never mind one that's underwater. But snorkel along Sirru Fen Fushi's shore and you'll find a semi-submerged steel box filled with mesmerising underwater sculptures, designed by Jason deCaires Taylor, which doubles as artificial coral reef. The artsy theme continues above the surface, where families can learn Maldivian painting techniques at art school and hang out in stylish family villas with private pools and free minibars. There's also miles of pearly beach and a kids' club for children aged four and above.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price ££

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The Residence at Dhigurah

9. The Residence at Dhigurah

Best for turtles

You're more likely to bump into sea turtles than guests on this sprawling jungly island in the remote Gaafu Alifu Atoll. Hawksbills, olive ridleys and green turtles make regular appearances, in the house reef but also along the shore and under the water villas – meaning you're pretty much guaranteed a daily sighting. It's attached to a sister resort by a kilometre-long wooden bridge and everyone gets around on bicycles, making runs from the beach to the gigantic infinity pool, cooking classes and the kids' club heaps of fun. Happily, you can reach it by commercial jet so you won't have to wrestle any nervous children onto a cramped seaplane.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price ££

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Soneva Fushi

10. Soneva Fushi

Best for large families

This forward-thinking eco-resort in the manta ray-teeming Baa Atoll has huge family villas with private pools, upstairs sun decks, direct beach access and up to nine bedrooms. It's big on facilities too; aside from its kids' club, The Den, there's a cookery school, a library, an outdoor cinema, a recycled glass-blowing studio, tennis courts and an observatory, where, on a clear night, you can marvel at the rings of Saturn. And then there are the animals: a veritable menagerie of fluffy rabbits, flapping chickens and fruit bats coursing around the island.

Spa Y

Price Y

Price £££

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JW Marriott Maldives Resort and Spa

11. JW Marriott Maldives Resort and Spa

Best for personal service

This family-friendly resort in dolphin-packed Shaviyani Atoll is primped and preened to sandy perfection, from the raked beaches and sea-view restaurants to the spa's glass-encased treatment rooms. It excels in the way it cares for families; the service is as warm as the Maldivian sun; duplex villas have two bedrooms, private pools and an upstairs den for movie nights; and the Little Griffins kids' club has a 13m pirate ship and over 100 activities a week. Babysitting is complimentary and children under the age of 12 eat for free.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price ££

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Vakkaru Maldives

12. Vakkaru Maldives

Best for little superstars

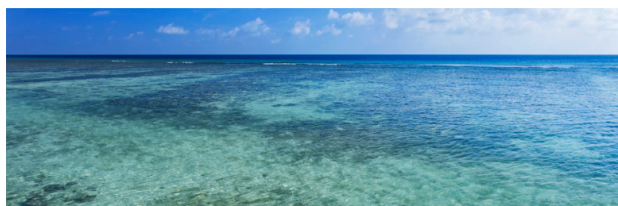
This low-key resort in the Baa Atoll has a long list of loyal guests, including Madonna who visited for a family holiday with her six children. On arrival, little ones are given mini bathrobes and slippers, comics and books, a parrotfish soft toy and an indoor tepee. Later, those aged between 3 and 12 can check into the treehouse-themed kids' club, while teens can take part in foosball and volleyball competitions at the Coconut Club. The beach is a beauty, while the house reef is easy to access and in excellent shape, teeming with clown fish (Nemos), powder blue tang (Dorys) and sea turtles.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

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Ritz-Carlton Maldives Resort and Spa

13. Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands

Best for energetic families

Run by a smashing team, Ritz Kids is hidden inside a *Teletubbies*-style grassy knoll with a mega-climbing frame, swimming pool, water slides and water jets at its centre, while indoor spaces include a gaming room and napping pods. For older children, there's a separate activity centre with pool tables and a photography studio. The whole family can enjoy cycling around nearly two miles of sandy lanes and at the excellent Jean-Michel Cousteau Ambassadors of the Environment programme (the only one in the Maldives) you can learn about ocean conservation using drones and underwater robots.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)



Halloween fun at Kandima Maldives

14. Kandima Maldives

Best for affordable fun

It's unusual to find a resort in the Maldives that brings anything other than pricy private villas, but this large, cheerful resort in the barely developed Dhaalu Atoll has more affordable rooms and family-sized apartments, as well as water villas and beach villas. Children under the age of six can stay and eat for free (every restaurant, including the fine-dining restaurant and the teppanyaki grill, have children's menus) and there's an action-packed kids' club, Kandiland, with a climbing wall, trampoline and waterpark, open from 9am to 7pm every day.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £

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Lux* South Ari Atoll Maldives

15. Lux* South Ari Atoll

Best for sporty types

Parents will love the hip Ibiza-esque design, feel-good spa treatments and choice of five different bars. Children, meanwhile, will love the club houses (one for wee tykes and one for teens), beach sports and adventure trips. The all-inclusive is likely to keep everyone smiling; it covers everything from tennis and yoga classes to in-room minibars and barista-made coffee, as well as unlimited ice cream and non-motorised watersports. Family lagoon villas are the accommodation of choice, rolling straight onto bright white beach and into placid Tiffany-blue waters.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price £

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Six Senses Laamu

16. Six Senses Laamu

Best for budding marine biologists

At Six Senses Laamu children can learn to be a marine biologist before they even get their feet wet, with a free ten-week junior marine biologist online programme, video tutorials, downloadable colouring-in books and worksheets, and home experiments. Any newfound skills can be put into action when they arrive in the remote Laamu Atoll (which also doubled as Planet Scarif in the Star Wars movie *Rogue One*), with swims through fields of seagrass (the favourite food of green sea turtles), snorkels with manta rays and kayak tours through shadowy mangroves.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price £££

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Sun Siyam Iru Fushi

17. Sun Siyam Iru Fushi

Best for keeping little ones entertained

The five-star Sun Siyam Iru Fushi provides plenty of creature comforts for stressed-out parents — not least its award-winning Balinese-style spa — as well as a dedicated kids' club to keep youngsters entertained too. They can burn off energy thanks to ping-pong, billiard tables and splashing about in the family pool, while parents can escape to the hair salon, enjoy wellness and yoga sessions, and swim in the adult-only pool. Live entertainment and DJ sets — and enough restaurants to dine somewhere different each night for a fortnight — mean that any little ones are unlikely to get bored. You can opt to go all-inclusive, though options for B&B, half-board, and full-board holidays are available too. Up to two children can stay and eat on the same basis as their parents, free of charge.

Spa Y
- - -

Pool Y
Price ££

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Jumeirah Maldives

18. Jumeirah Maldives

Best for TikTokers

This easy-to-access property in the north Malé Atoll, a 50-minute speedboat ride from the airport, has some of the biggest entry-level beach and water villas in the Maldives. Every villa comes with a large private infinity pool and a rooftop deck perfect for family movie nights complete with boxes of popcorn. Access to the kids' club (open to children aged from three to 11, from 9am until 7pm) is included in the rate and kayaks, SUPs and other non-motorised water sports are free to use, as are the tennis courts and football pitch.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price £££

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Conrad Maldives Rangali Island offers boat trips (Justin Nicholas)

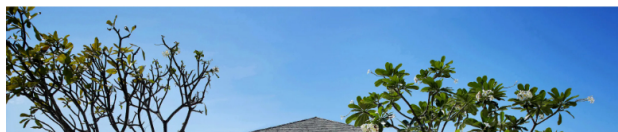
19. Conrad Maldives Rangali Island

Best for water babies

It's not every resort in the Maldives that has manta rays in the backyard — in fact, it's pretty rare to find the creatures outside of certain atolls at certain times of year — but cross the bridge that links the Conrad Maldives Rangali Island's two beautiful all-natural islands and the chances are you'll spot at least a couple of the magnificent mobulidae pirouetting along the surface. Book a boat trip and you'll also encounter whale sharks, green sea turtles and dolphins. Back on land, there's a complimentary kids' club for three to 12-year-olds and plenty of free activities for older kids, including scuba diving intros in the pool and windsurfing along the beach. Food won't be an issue either, with 12 superb dining options, including underwater restaurant Ithaa.

Spa Y
Pool Y
Price ££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)





The spa at Le Meridien Maldives Resort and Spa

20. Le Meridien Maldives Resort and Spa

Best for beach

It's sandcastle heaven at this pretty island resort located in the Maldives' northern Lhaviyani Atoll. The natural island is ringed by a long band of broad white sand flecked with coral, seashells and tiny hermit crabs, which gently slopes into the warm shallow Indian Ocean — perfect for tots. All of the villas come with outdoor space but the beach villas feel more spacious, even if the decor is a bit businesslike. The kids' club, with its soft play area and slides, allows parents to enjoy some grown-up time at the adult-only pool and excellent spa.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price ££

[BOOK A STAY >](#)



Ozen Reserve Bolifushi

21. Ozen Reserve Bolifushi

Best for action-packed all-inclusive

There's no shortage of all-inclusive resorts nowadays but Ozen Reserve Bolifushi is a cut above the rest in terms of facilities and value for money. The island itself is large enough to comfortably accommodate 91 pool villas, including water villas with slides whooshing into the ocean, as well as a communal infinity pool, a sea-facing gym, an ice-skating rink, an overwater spa, a kids' club and a teens' lounge. The Reserve Plan includes all five restaurants, theme nights, unlimited champagne and aged whiskies, free laundry and a spoiling three hours of daily spa treatments.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

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Niyama Private Island

22. Niyama Private Islands

Best for surf school

This twin-island family-friendly resort in the southern Dhaalu Atoll has its own surf break within paddling distance of the shore. Lessons cover every level and every member of the family, beginning with the basics in Niyama's tranquil blue lagoon before graduating to duck dives and cutbacks in the open sea. Back on land, you'll also find an all-singing, all-dancing kids' club, a treehouse restaurant, an underwater restaurant, an overwater spa and big family villas, both on the beach and stilted above the Indian Ocean.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

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Joali Maldives

23. Joali Maldives

Best for laid-back luxury

This hip luxury resort is the place for a family holiday that feels more personalised than some of the big international chains. The kids' club at Joali has especially long opening hours, from 9am to 8pm, and every activity is complimentary, from cooking classes and ceramic art classes to tennis coaching and DJ workshops. All of the cathedral-like villas come with private infinity pools and there are a number of two, three and four-bedroom residences available if you want to bring the whole clan. No one will go hungry or thirsty either, with five restaurants, a sunset bar, a whisky and cigar lounge and an ice-cream parlour to choose from.

Spa Y

Pool Y

Price £££

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Velaa Private Island

24. Velaa Private Island

Best for heirs to the throne

If *Succession's* Kendall Roy built a private island escape it might look something like this oval-shaped island in the resplendent Noonu Atoll. Aside from having its own private seaplane, and the requisite supersized luxury villas, Velaa packs in a wealth of facilities, including a golf academy and seven-hole course designed by José María Olazábal, a holistic overwater spa with a snow room, and space-age restaurant tower with a secret wine cellar. Heirs to the throne are catered to with a kids' club that has its own waterpark; water jet boot lessons with staff dressed as superheroes (Spider-Man, Superman, Iron Man); and padel lessons with ex-tennis pros on fan-cooled courts.

Sna Y

Pool Y
Price £££

velaaprivateisland.com

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