

# Male' Tour Guide

Male' is a tiny island, heavily crowded with various vehicles and busy people all the time. It is the capital city and one of the largest islands of Maldives. Mah-lay as it is pronounced, is a thickly populated Muslim city located across on the adjacent island of Hulhule where the Male' International Airport is located.



You can easily reach Male' by boat from the Airport jetty. Today, the small island of Male' is completely occupied with tall colorful buildings with the turquoise blue water all around. It's very easy to walk around to all the places in Male'. Life follows a simple pattern in Male'; bright blue sky, round-the-year sunshine, great diving and snorkel spots, pristine beach waters, thousands of dotted islands, affordable and luxury resorts and a country that embraces travellers from all over the world. Tourists can enjoy their holiday freedom here, but the basic Muslim faith runs deep in the island. The cultural history of Male' and Maldives have been influenced by the near by Sri Lanka and Southern India.

## Tourist Attractions in Male'

There are quite some places to see in Male' and you can walk to each of them within 15–20 minutes. Most of Male's landscape is adorned with exquisitely built Mosques, which are all off-limits to non-Muslims. Apart from the architectural wonders in Male', you can easily wander to the neighboring islands on a boat to enjoy the clean beaches there. Some of the top places worth visiting when you are in Male' are listed below.

### Friday Mosque (Hukuru Miskiiy)

Intricately built in the 17th Century by Sultan Ibrahim Iskandar I, has Arabic inscriptions and ornamental works.

Independence Square (Jumhooree Maidhaan):

The main square in the center of Male', there is a giant Maldivian Flag atop the flag pole. Most political meetings and demonstrations happen here, and the Police HQ near by adds to the security presence in this area. Almost all spots in Male' can be walked from this Square.

Islamic Centre:

One of the best landmarks in Male' known for its architectural works, situated south of Jumhooree Maidhaan. It houses the largest Mosque Masjid-al-Sultan Mohammed Thakurufaanu-al-A'zam in Maldives with a beautiful golden dome on top. Outsiders and visitors can enter during non-prayer hours,

however photographs of the interiors are not allowed.

Sultan Park and National Museum:

The only surviving building of the yesteryears Sultan Palace, is now the Maldives National Museum. English explained exhibits, moon rocks, old photographs and royal regalia are some sights you can see here. The Sultan Park around here is open all day long. The Park and Museum are clearly visible from the tender-boat piers where you land at Male. Museum open Saturday to Thursday between 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The pier-hut for the tender-boats:

All cruise passengers and tourists transferred from the near by airport reach Male' through this covered pier-hut. A good place to sit and watch the port activities without being harassed by souvenir traders.

Theemuge – The presidential Palace:

It used to be the palace of the President till Abdul Gayoom period, near the fish market. Now it is converted into the Maldives Supreme Court. Visitors are not allowed, but you can have a peek from outside.

Mulee-aage – the old Presidential Palace:

One of the gems of architecture in Maldives, the Mulee-aage is a colonial former presidential palace. Once again, visitors are not allowed into this palace, but don't miss to see the ornamental and decorated palace gate visible from outside. Huskuru Miskiiy Mosque is another masterpiece of ethnic workmanship and architecture at Male' worthy to be mentioned.

Wander to the nearby Islands:

If you are staying only at Male', you can still easily wander to neighboring islands like Hulhule island, Hulhumale island where the Airport is built and the Vilingili island, located to the west of Male'. Hulhumale situated just 30 min boat ride from Male' is an artificial island with a nice restaurant above the Airport jetty and a beautiful artificial beach on the other side of the ferry with excellent surfing conditions. Vilingili island is located to the west of Male' also just 30 minutes by slow boat. It has good Snorkelling spots, Corel and dolphin watching. The sea here is always quite, mesmerizing and beautiful.

### **Activities in Male**

Male' offers a taste Maldivian life to the visitors than the things to do and see here. Most tourists are off-loaded at the airport and get transferred to their resorts in remote islands which organize diving, snorkeling, high speed boating, sea plane tours, stroll on the pier, sun bathing, whale watching and surfing.

If you are at Male', you could take a boat ride to the airport ferry and walk to the artificial beach across the island. There are no coral here, but surfing is good here. You can also try the unique Whale Submarine trip which takes about 40 minutes to get a good exposure of the ocean life beneath Male'.

Male' is a typical Asian capital city, with its crowded markets, towering buildings, shopping centers and restaurants squeezed into tiny corners. You can get a real feel of the Maldives and their life here when you visit Male'.

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