

# Arrival Trends in The Maldives



As Maldives is considered a long-haul destination, any economic downturn impacts the world economy, or an outbreak of a disease, affects the travel patterns of tourists who look for to travel to long-haul destinations. Tourists would prefer visiting destinations nearer to them for shorter break or not travel at all. Maldives inbound tourism was affected by the recent global recession, especially by the high oil prices over international markets. The spread of the virus H1N1 in some Asian countries in 2009 also affected the number of tourists visiting the Maldives.

## Source Markets for Maldives

Europe represents the major sourcing region of arrivals to the Maldives followed by tourists from Asia. Total number of incoming tourists by the end of year 2010 reached over 700 000 arrivals. All sourcing regions had shown a steady increase of number of tourists.

## TOP 10 TOURIST MARKETS

In terms of arrival numbers, the highest figures of tourist arrivals in the past 5 years have been from the markets drawn on the table. Previously the Italian market was the biggest for Maldives; however the number of Italian tourists started to decline since 2006. The UK market also showed a decline since 2008 but year 2010 brought an increase. China as a sourced market has shown a rapid increase – both from the Asian region and overall.

## Numbers and Types of Accommodation Facilities

By the June of 2011, there were a total of 24 647 tourist beds in operation in the Maldives. At the same period the registered bed capacity in tourist resorts, hotels, guesthouses, and safari vessels was 26 287.

The number of resorts in the Maldives has been quickly increasing over the years as many unoccupied islands were recognized as ideal for development tourism infrastructure. At the end of June 2011, there operated 119 resorts in the country and an additional 72 under development, which will create an addition 11 032 beds. Hotel developments have not gone so well as resorts as inbound tourism succeeded in the country, mainly due to the preference tourists and the wide range of resorts available. As a result, there were a total of 15 hotels operating in 2010, an addition of 2 hotels under development and should be launched by June 2011, that bring an increase of over 100 beds in the Hotels segment.

## New Travel Market Segments, Diversification and Marketing



Conventionally, the Maldives is widely known as a Robinson Crusoe destination, where tourists could escape from the busy lifestyle, enjoy the nature and to explore the underwater world. Today the majority of holidaymakers in Maldives are honeymooners or those who look for a romantic destination. However, in recent years concentration has increasingly been given to attract visitors from diverse market segments and for further diversification and development from new sources.

New segments sourced include Meetings Incentives, Conferencing and Exhibitions (MICE) markets, health and wellness, family holidays, special interest groups and senior markets.

Resorts have begun to offer family packages in a bid to develop and appeal to those wishing to come to Maldives with their families. Health and wellness is well on its way towards making a name for itself within the international market by the introduction of various spa treatments and their subsequent developments on all the resorts. The seniors market is being targeted, as this group of people would normally have the ability to afford the time and money to be expended on a holiday in the Maldives. More activities that can be included on the itineraries of guests to Maldives include, but are not limited to, big game fishing and dolphin cruises.

Date: 2012-05-01

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/travel-tourism-magazine-arrival-trends-in-the-maldives-growing-inbound-tourism-article1827>