

# EXCEPTIONAL



## Maldives Itinerary Trip Preparation Information

Below is valuable information which will help make your dive trip more enjoyable. If there are questions not covered below, please contact anyone at Explorer Ventures.

There are visual images and layout of the vessel online at [www.explorerventures.com/maldexp/](http://www.explorerventures.com/maldexp/)



### THE VESSEL

**20 guests**

**10 air-conditioned rooms with**

**Private bath & showers**

**220 V outlets in bath & near bed**

**1 adapter per room, no converters**

The *M/V Carpe Vita Explorer* comfortably accommodates 20 passengers in 10 very large double staterooms, all of which have private bathroom facilities and all of which can be configured to accommodate a couple or two singles. The staterooms are located on three of the vessel's four decks. The topmost deck is the sun deck which offers both shaded and full-sun areas for relaxation and a jacuzzi. The upper deck includes the al-fresco dining area, fully equipped bar, a small lounge area, the bridge and Suites 1 & 2.

**Large camera table**

**Recharging station**

The large main deck contains the air conditioned indoor dining/lounge area, TV viewing, sitting/library area and a buffet area, as well as the galley. Just forward there is an outdoor seating area. Also on the main deck is a common restroom, camera charging station, a large camera table, the office, dive equipment rental/storage area and Staterooms 3 & 4. There are two sets of stairs accessing the swim platform, where two in-water ladders hang for easy access to and from the water for a refreshing swim when the vessel is at anchor. Staterooms 5-10 are located on the lower deck, accessed via stairs from the main deck.

The *Carpe Vita Explorer* is also equipped with a telephone for incoming and outgoing calls worldwide at an additional charge. Cellular phone and internet access is available when in proximity to some of the islands if your phone is so equipped. Internet cards and cellular phone cards are available for purchase on board.



### DIVING CONDITIONS

**Water temps average 80°-85° F**

**Visibility 50-100+ feet**

**Water entry from a large custom dhoni (dedicated tender)**

The weather in the Maldives is tropically pleasant with a nice

sea breeze year-round. The air temperatures range from a low of about 78-79°F to a high in the high 80's or low 90's. There are two distinct, but mild monsoons (seasons) in this equatorial country and each is named after the prevailing wind direction during that time of year. The Northeast monsoon is from December through April and brings pretty consistently fair weather, but also often brings significant currents. The Southeast monsoon from May through October brings a bit more wind and occasional rain (usually short-lived), but generally not quite as much current.

The diving is outstanding throughout the year. The vessel's itineraries are designed to take advantage of the changing conditions and to take divers to the best diving areas for the different seasons. The visibility is usually at its peak in December/January (sometimes well over 100 feet!). Mantas can be seen throughout the year with the best feeding-station encounters typically during the May-November time frame. Whale sharks are also seen most every month of the year, with the highest concentration seen in the monsoon transition months of April-May and October-November. The water temperatures remain a toasty 80-85° throughout the year. Most divers are comfortable with a 3mm wetsuit.



### DIVING LOGISTICS


**Up to 4 dives offered daily**

**All diving is done from the large dhoni**

**Drift diving is the norm**

All of the dives aboard the *Carpe Vita Explorer* are offered at scheduled times, up to 4 times daily including one to two night dives per charter. This is to allow adequate surface intervals, provide the option for guided dives on as many sites as possible, and to allow the vessel to travel on a schedule to different locations. Please note that Maldivian regulations limit the maximum depth for all dives to 30m (100 Ft.).

Given the prevalence of drift diving in the area, your dives will be done from a large custom-built diving dhoni (tender). This is no ordinary tender! The dhoni is 65 feet long and has ample space for all divers, cameras and gear. There are individual gear bins for each diver, separate camera and wetsuit rinse tanks and a bathroom with toilet and hot water shower plus two fresh water showers on the dive



platform. Both the air and Nitrox compressors are on the dhoni as well. Typically, on one of the evenings of the trip, a barbeque on a deserted beach is offered. The crew prepares a remarkable feast for this very special evening and if you're lucky, may entertain you with some traditional song and drum playing.

## **MINIMUM AGE RESTRICTIONS** **Under the age of 15 must dive with parent/guardian**

The minimum certifiable age for divers is 10 for most SCUBA certification agencies; normally, the agencies restrict 10 and 11 year olds to a maximum depth of 40 ft. Explorer Ventures therefore allows children as young as 10 years to participate in our trips, with the following restrictions:

1. All children under the age of 15 must travel and dive with their parent or guardian, unless undergoing active training with an instructor.
2. Our itineraries offer very few diving opportunities at depths less than 40 feet; diving opportunities for 10 and 11 year olds will be significantly less than those for older divers.

For this reason, a minimum age of 12 for divers is strongly suggested.

## **SAFETY STANDARDS**

To ensure your safety, we require the following of all divers:

1. All divers must be certified as open water scuba divers by an internationally recognized certification organization.
2. All divers should have logged at least one dive within the 12 months prior to boarding the vessel, or are encouraged to participate in a refresher course on board.
3. All divers must adhere to the buddy system.
4. All divers must log in and out of the water with a member of the diving staff.
5. All divers must have a submersible console including SPG & depth gauge, timepiece or dive computer with these functions.
6. On night dives, a cyalume lightstick or marker beacon must be worn by each diver.
7. Decompression diving is not allowed under any conditions. The maximum allowed depth is 100 Feet.
8. Diving activities must cease when the consumption of alcohol begins.
9. Please note that, due to a combination of staff and equipment logistics, insurance requirements and local diving regulations, neither rebreathers nor diver propulsion vehicles (DPVs) may be used aboard Explorer Ventures vessels.
10. DAN (Diver's Alert Network) Membership and dive accident insurance or equivalent is required. If you arrive without proof of a policy, you'll be required to purchase a short term policy valid for the duration of your stay in the Maldives for US\$20 (subject to change).

## **WHAT TO BRING** **Soft luggage for easy storage** **Very casual attire** **Special attire for visiting Male**

Packing for a liveaboard trip is much easier than packing for a land-based vacation. Dress aboard the vessel is very casual. The climate doesn't require much more than shorts, T-shirts, and swimsuits. Please bring at least one set of more modest clothing for visiting the town of Male. In town, local custom dictates that the body be covered from at least the shoulders to the knees, with short sleeves being preferable to sleeveless tops. Soft luggage is recommended as it takes up very little space when empty. Sun screens, sunglasses, a visor or hat is recommended. In case of rough weather or if you have a tendency towards seasickness, come prepared with motion sickness medications or Transderm patches from your doctor. If you have favorite CD's or DVD's, feel free to bring them.

### **All linens are supplied** **Soaps, shampoo are supplied** **There are hairdryers onboard**

All linens (including sheets, comforters, bath towels, hand towels, dive towels, and wash cloths) are provided on board.

### **Carry-on packing**

If possible, pack your regulator, dive computer, mask, certification & dive insurance cards, swimsuit, change of clothes, necessary medications & toiletries in your carry-on bag. Having these items will make an unexpected luggage delay far more bearable.

### **Prohibited items**

There is a long list of items which are prohibited in the Maldives. This includes but is not limited to firearms, narcotics, alcohol (including for personal consumption), pornography, pork products and religious idols (except for personal use). Bags are routinely searched by customs agents upon arrival.

## **EQUIPMENT LIST** **Bring your application/liability release forms** **Certification card** **Rental equipment is available onboard** ***(please indicate need on application)***

The vessel provides tanks, hard weights, and weight belts for your use. If you prefer to rent the rest of your equipment from us, we have all of the equipment that you will need. Please indicate on your application form what equipment you will require. Otherwise, the following items are the diver's responsibility:

- Certification Card & proof of DAN dive accident insurance
- Diving Log Book & dive computer manual (strongly encouraged)
- Mask \*
- Snorkel \*
- Fins \*
- Booties (if you wear them)

- Buoyancy Control Device (required) \*
- Regulator w/alternate air source \*
- Submersible pressure and depth gauges (required)\*
- Underwater time piece (required)
- Dive light \*
- Wet suit – 3 mm to 5 mm \*
- Repair kit w/ spare parts

\* Available for rent on board



## ARRIVAL

**Passport required**

**Valid return airline ticket**

**30 day free tourist visa issued at airport**

**Arrival the day before is encouraged**

The airport code for the international airport in the Maldives is MLE. Please note that a passport is required of all visitors arriving in the Maldives. A valid return or onward airline ticket is also required. A 30-day tourist visa is issued by immigration officials when you land in the Maldives. Americans, Canadians and most other countries' citizens do not need an advance visa. If in doubt, please contact the nearest consulate. We encourage you to arrive at least a day early so you have a "cushion" if there are flight or luggage delays, and so that you arrive aboard refreshed.

**Transfer costs are included**

**Arrangements are made to pick you up**

Airport transfers on the day of embarkation and disembarkation are included in your package. If you are arriving on the day of the boat's departure, you will be met at the airport by a crew member, taken to the dhoni and then on to the *Carpe Vita Explorer*. The dhoni ride from the airport to the vessel is about 15 minutes.

**If delayed call**

**1.800.322.3577 (US/Canada)**

**or 011.96.0793.7790 (local cell)**

If you miss any of your flights and are not able to make it to the *Carpe Vita Explorer* on schedule, please call the USA booking office at 1.800.322.3577 or the local contact's cell 011.96.0793.7790. Notify the crew of your updated arrival time should you have that information, and where you may be reached in the meantime. The *Carpe Vita Explorer* will not leave port until after the last arrival on the day of departure.



## SAMPLE ITINERARIES

Days aboard *Carpe Vita Explorer* generally involve a cold breakfast from 6:00 am followed by a first morning dive, Full breakfast, second morning dive, lunch around 12:00 pm, two afternoon dives and dinner at 6:30 or 7:00 pm. On the day or days when night dives are offered, dinner is typically around 8:00 pm.

**Please note also that these itineraries are examples only, and will change depending on weather and logistics at the Captain's discretion.**

## 10 night/11 day Itinerary – November-April North & South Male & Ari Atolls

**Sunday:** Male. Guests board vessel around 12 noon; lunch will be served around 1 pm; Captain's briefing, documents; check out dive. Approximately 1½ hr crossing from port to North Male.

**Monday:** North Male, 1 dive; North Ari, 3 dives.

Approximately 3 hr crossing from North Male to North Ari and approximately a 2 hr crossing time between site in North Ari. Night spent anchored.

**Tuesday-Wednesday:** North Ari, 4 dives daily. Night spent anchored.

**Thursday:** North Ari, 1 dive; South Ari, 3 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Friday-Saturday:** South Ari, 4 dives. Nighttime crossing to Vaavu, approximately 3½ hr (as weather permits).

**Sunday:** Vaavu, 4 dives.

**Monday:** Vaavu, 3 dives; South Male, 1 dive. Approximately 2½ hr crossing from Vaavu to South Male after third dive.

**Tuesday:** South Male, 1 dive. May have additional dives based on guest flight schedules and the 24 hour recommendation before flying.

**Wednesday:** Depart the vessel by 8 am.

**Due to the necessity of readying the vessel for our next cruise, we must strictly enforce the 8 am departure.**

## 7 night/8 day Itinerary – November - April North & South Male & Ari Atolls

**Sunday:** Male. Guests board vessel around 12 noon; lunch will be served around 1 pm; Captain's briefing, documents; check out dive. Approximately 1½ hr crossing from port to North Male.

**Monday:** North Male, 1 dive; North Ari, 3 dives.

Approximately 3 hr crossing from North Male to North Ari and approximately a 2 hr crossing time between site in North Ari. Night spent anchored.

**Tuesday:** North Ari, 4 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Wednesday:** North Ari, 1 dive; South Ari, 3 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Thursday:** South Ari, 4 dives. Nighttime crossing to South Male, approximately 4½ hr (as weather permits).

**Friday:** South Male, 4 dives. Night spent anchored.


**Saturday:** South Male, 1 dive. May have additional dives based on guest flight schedules and the 24 hour recommendation before flying.

**Sunday:** Depart the vessel by 8 am.

**Due to the necessity of readying the vessel for our next cruise, we must strictly enforce the 8 am departure.**

## 10 night/11 day Itinerary – May - October North Male & Ari, Baa & Raa Atolls

**Sunday:** Male. Guests board vessel around 12 noon; lunch will be served around 1 pm; Captain's briefing, documents; check out dive. Cross to North Male from port approximately 2½ hr



1 dive. Nighttime crossing to Baa Atoll, approximately 4 hr (as weather permits).

**Monday-Tuesday:** Baa, 4 dives daily, Nights spent anchored.

**Wednesday:** Baa, 1 dive; Raa, 3 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Thursday:** Raa, 1 dive; Baa, 3 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Friday:** Raa, 2 dive; North Ari, 2 dives. Approximately 3½ hr crossing from Raa to North Ari after second dive. Night spent anchored.

**Saturday:** North Ari. 4 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Sunday:** North Ari, 4 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Monday:** North Ari, 2 dives; South Ari, 1 dive; North Ari, 1 dive. Approximately 3½ hr crossing from North Ari to South Male. Night spent anchored.

**Tuesday:** North Male, 1 dive. May have additional dives based on guest flight schedules and the 24 hour requirement before flying.

**Wednesday:** Depart the vessel by 8 am.

Due to the necessity of readying the vessel for our next cruise, we must strictly enforce the 8 am departure..

## **7 night/8 day Itinerary – May - October North Male & Ari, Baa & Raa Atolls**

**Sunday:** Male. Guests board vessel around 12 noon; lunch will be served around 1 pm; Captain’s briefing, documents; check out dive. Cross to North Male from port approximately 2½ hr 1 dive. Nighttime crossing to Baa Atoll, approximately 4 hr (as weather permits).

**Monday-Tuesday:** Baa, 4 dives daily. Nights spent anchored.

**Wednesday:** Baa, 1 dive; Raa, 3 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Thursday:** Raa, 1 dive; Baa, 3 dives. Night spent anchored.

**Friday:** Baa, 2 dives; North Male, 2 dives. Crossing from Baa to Male approximately 4½ hr. Night spent anchored.

**Saturday:** North Male, 1 dive. May have additional dives based on guest flight schedules and the 24 hour requirement before flying.

**Sunday:** Depart the vessel by 8 am.

Due to the necessity of readying the vessel for our next cruise, we must strictly enforce the 8 am departure.

## **MEALS**

**Please list on the application form any dietary needs you have  
Beer & wine with dinner included**

Aboard the *Carpe Vita Explorer* evening meals and lunches usually consist of vegetables, rice, pasta, soup, chicken, beef or fish with occasional local specialties offered as additional options. Breakfast is the usual fare of eggs, beef bacon, pancakes, French toast, potatoes, cereal and fresh fruits.

If you have any dietary restrictions or requests, please indicate so on your application form. Please note that specific brands of drinks, dressings and foods are often unavailable in the Maldives and

that it can be very difficult for us to find low-fat or soy products, fresh fruit, shellfish and other items common elsewhere. Pork and pork products are not served aboard. While we will do our best to accommodate your requests, please be realistic and consider bringing some of your own foods if the lack thereof may constitute a health risk.

All soft drinks, packaged juices, drip coffee, tea and water are included. Two glasses of beer or wine during the evening meal are included in your package price. Due to the difficulty of importing alcohol into the Maldives, additional beer or wine or freshly made juices or any hard liquor will be added to your on board bill.



## **CURRENCY**

**US dollars are widely accepted**

**Most major credit cards are accepted**

In the Maldives, US Dollars (cash) and credit cards are widely accepted, as are Euros, although change may be given in the local currency, the Rufiyaa. Be aware that obtaining foreign currency in the Maldives is very difficult, although currency exchange is available at banks in Male and at the airport. Only US dollars and Euros are accepted on board.



## **DEPARTURE**

The *Carpe Vita Explorer* arrives at its final destination port on in the afternoon of the day prior to disembarkation. An optional visit to the city of Male is offered on the final afternoon for itineraries ending near Male. Passengers spend the final night and have disembarkation day breakfast on board. There will be sufficient time to catch a flight out at any time on the day of disembarkation. The dhoni will take you and your luggage to the airport after breakfast (or earlier if you have an early flight). If you have a flight late in the afternoon or in the evening, the airport hotel offers luggage storage and pool/beach/shower use for the day for a fee. If you’ll be staying at one of the outlying resorts after the charter, the dhoni will take you back to the airport so you may meet your resort’s transfer boat.



## **ON BOARD CHARGES**

**Major credit cards are accepted on board  
Travelers or personal checks are not**

Though all meals, most beverages, transportation between islands, and much more has been taken care of with your trip payment, there are additional items which you may charge to your on board bill. These include retail items, incoming & outgoing telephone calls, scuba instruction, rentals, nitrox, port/hotel tax and crew gratuities.

The bill may be paid at the end of the trip using Visa, Mastercard, American Express or cash (US dollars or Euros) Personal or traveler’s checks are not accepted on board, and we are unable to provide cash for credit card charges more than invoice amounts.



## COMMUNICATIONS

**Vital messages may be passed to guest by calling the booking office at 1.800.322.3577**

**Internet access is available aboard**

The local agent for *Carpe Vita Explorer* can be reached from North America via phone at 011.96.0793.7790, and will be able to contact the vessel (whose phone number is not yet available). Outgoing calls may also be made. Please be aware that a charge is assessed for both incoming and outgoing calls. Cellular phone and internet access is available when in proximity to some of the islands if your phone is so equipped. Internet cards and cellular phone cards are available for purchase on board.



## CREW GRATUITIES

Crew gratuities are not included in your package. The crew works very hard, 7 days a week and many weeks at a stretch, providing the best possible service for our guests. The industry standard for crew gratuities on dive trips (if of course you are happy with the service which you have received) is between 10% and 15% of the package price per passenger. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated!

## PACKAGES INCLUDE

- 7 nights/8 days or 10 nights/11 days aboard vessel
- 3 meals daily, plus snacks
- Up to 4 dives daily
- Use of tanks, weights and belts
- Airport transfers on the days of embarkation/disembarkation
- Non-alcoholic beverages and 2 glasses of beer or wine with dinner

## PACKAGES DO NOT INCLUDE

- Rental, instruction and retail charges
- Crew gratuities
- Dive accident insurance (required)
- Trip Cancellation & Dive Insurance (recommended)
- Port/hotel taxes

## OVERVIEW

**Below is a list of additional expenses not covered in base trip price.**

- **Airline ticket to and from vessel.**
- **Dive Accident Insurance**
- **Rental equipment**
- **Courses taken while aboard**
- **Retail items purchased aboard**
- **Crew gratuity**  
Typical is between 10% and 15% for trip cost but is at the discretion of the guest.
- **Port & Hotel tax**  
US \$8 per person per night aboard.

**All prices are subject to change.**  
Please feel free to call us if you have any questions.

Vessel is locally owned & operated.

**Have a wonderful trip aboard the *Carpe Vita Explorer!***

## Explorer Ventures

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