

**INTERCONTINENTAL MALDIVES
LAUNCHES FIRST MANTA RETREAT OF ITS KIND**



Maldives, August 2022: Reaching out to adventure travellers and nature lovers, InterContinental Maldives Maamunagau Resort launches the first Manta Retreat of its kind in October 2022. In collaboration with the resort-based Manta Trust organisation, a thoughtfully curated programme has been put together to educate, explore and raise awareness for manta rays in their natural habitat.

The resort's unique location within the largely untouched Raa Atoll, just a few boat miles away from Hanifaru Bay, the largest manta ray feeding spot known in the world, and the resort island located within the unique Maamunagau lagoon, are perfect for spending time with manta rays all year round. Maamunagau is a known juvenile manta ray aggregation spot, where young manta rays spend their days in a sheltered area until they are large enough to travel the atolls.

While manta rays are snorkellers' and divers' favourites, many questions are left to answer, and further research must be conducted to understand these underwater acrobats fully. With the dedicated Manta Retreat, InterContinental Maldives and Manta Trust are working together to elevate their manta ray conservation and research efforts. Further, the retreat offers guests an opportunity to get involved and experience first-hand why manta rays need our protection and attention.

Participants of the Manta Retreat will gain exclusive insights into the work of the Manta Trust and get close to these gentle giants on several occasions. The retreat will take place over five days from 23rd to 28th October 2022 and include several snorkelling trips to search and identify the manta rays of the Maldives, as well as workshops and talks on several marine topics.

Jessica Haines, the resort-based Manta Trust Project Manager, will lead the retreat to guide the snorkelling trips to local manta spots and share research insights and knowledge. "It is important for us to make this retreat an enjoyable but also educational experience for all participants. And as we want to take this opportunity to raise awareness of how our marine life depends on each other, there will be many touch points on different topics." Participants will also learn about corals, coral propagation, turtles and how to ID a manta ray. "Of course, the mantas will be the stars of the retreat, but there is more to talk about. Understanding that the plankton in our ocean is the foundation for so much marine life is a great example. When you

observe plankton under a microscope, you only begin to understand how diverse marine life is. Our approach is to give the participants a holistic experience that is enriching and raises awareness for marine protection simultaneously.”

Naturally, during the retreat, participants also have the opportunity to enjoy the luxury resort’s facilities as well as their villa or residence accommodation. There is also plenty to keep family members and kids busy in case some family members or the travel partner is not participating in the retreat. There are additional activities that can be booked, or the stay can be extended if five days seem not enough to make the most out of the trip to the Maldives.

For certified divers options are available to ensure all guests find their individual way of interacting with manta rays. Dedicated dive spots are in the area around the resort that allows for divers to observe the natural manta ray ‘spa’, known as cleaning stations, showcasing the incredible symbiosis of marine life in the Maldives.

THE MANTA RETREAT

The Manta Retreat will take place from 23rd to 28th October 2022 at the InterContinental Maldives Maamunagau Resort. Prices start from USD 10,950 for a single participant and USD 15,250 for a couple, staying in an Over Water Pool Villa including half board for five nights and return seaplane transfers. Activities included are a welcome cocktail, three manta ray snorkelling trips, a house reef night snorkelling experience, a sunset cruise on a luxury yacht with champagne and canapes, several workshops about manta ray ID, plankton, turtles, coral restoration, manta research talks and more.

All prices are quoted in USD, including 10% Service Charge, 12% tax and USD 6 Green Tax per person, per night.

Additional experiences such as diving and snorkelling trips, cruises, excursions or spa and wellness treatments can be booked individually for additional charges. Upon request, one on one sessions with the Manta Biologist can be arranged privately.

Stay extensions pre- or post the Manta Retreat are available at an exclusive rate.

HOW TO BOOK

For more information, please visit <https://maldives.intercontinental.com/sustainability/manta-retreat> or contact the reservations team with the booking code "Manta Retreat" at reservations.icmaldives@ihg.com or contact us on WhatsApp at [+960 730 9300](tel:+9607309300).

ABOUT MANTA TRUST

The Manta Trust is one of the world’s leading manta ray research organisations. Using co-ordinated global research to aid conservation efforts surrounding manta rays, their relatives and their habitats, the Manta Trust aims to achieve global conservation through Research, Education and Collaboration.

Recognizing the unique privilege of occupying an island in such close proximity to a newly discovered juvenile manta feeding ground, InterContinental Maldives began working in collaboration with the Manta Trust in 2019. The area around InterContinental Maldives



Maamunagau Resort is home to a large and healthy population of manta rays which provides Manta Trust researchers based at the resort incredible access to study these animals.

Reef manta rays are listed as “vulnerable” and Oceanic manta rays as “endangered” on the IUCN Red List, the work we do here helps to increase knowledge and understanding, which can be used to guide conservation measures both here in the Maldives but also around the world where manta populations are much smaller, and often threatened. Our team of Manta Trust researchers welcome our guests to join them for educational presentations and sustainably ran excursions.

ABOUT INTERCONTINENTAL MALDIVES MAAMUNAGAU RESORT

InterContinental Maldives Maamunagau Resort is an exclusive destination getaway offering a unique opportunity for those looking to unwind and reconnect in an enviable island setting, where exclusive privileges go hand in hand with the personal touch of our signature service at InterContinental Hotels & Resorts’ first and only all-Club InterContinental resort. Located in the Raa Atoll; 35 minutes by seaplane from the Velana International Airport, InterContinental Maldives Maamunagau Resort is an award-winning island escape offering beach, lagoon and overwater villas and residences with up to three bedrooms. Curated dining and wellness experiences, an extensive kids club as well as the Retreat, an adult only enclave, along with a myriad of recreational adventures for families and couples alike are also available

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