



# [ DESTINATIONS ]

[ CAPTION ]

The Maldives offers hundreds of resorts spread across its vast atolls. We highlight three that offer the ultimate island paradise escape.



[ MALDIVES ]

WHERE TO STAY

# ANANTARA KIHAVA MALDIVES VILLAS

BAA ATOLL

## CONCEPT

This all-villa resort was one of the first to introduce rooms on stilts, and these glorious villas are complemented by beach homes for those who need to feel the sand between their toes. Each home — from one to four bedrooms — has its own infinity pool and direct access to the ocean. The villas feature whitewashed walls offset by dark wood and bright blue soft furnishings that reflect the blue of the water. Lush foliage and clever placement heightens the level of privacy guests enjoy from their rooms, sun deck and lounge areas. Waking up, you're treated to uninterrupted views of the ocean and the horizon in the distance. Bikes are provided so you can cycle around the island, between the different restaurants, spa and activities. Otherwise your butler is available around the clock for everything from ice drop-offs to buggy pick-ups. The bathroom becomes another spot to relax, with a day bed and sliding doors that invite the outdoors inside. Gaze at fish through the glass-bottom bath, or enjoy an open air shower. The spa treatment rooms also have glass windows on the floor so you actually look down at the water during your treatment. A range of different wellness options are offered, and changed often for more diversity. A host of activities are offered, depending on how relaxed or active you choose to be.

## INFO

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Anantara Kihavah offers a range of activities so you can personalise your stay. From dining at an underwater restaurant to private film screenings under the stars, there's no end to what your butler can arrange for your stay. Staff are helpful, friendly and knowledgeable, and go out of their way to make you feel at home.



## THREE TO TRY

Spread across about 300sqkm, the Maldives is one of the world's most geographically dispersed countries. Resorts are on islands that form part of atolls, so not the easiest to navigate. All resorts offer a range of restaurants, but these are worth travelling to.

### NEST

Niyama Private Islands boasts an eclectic F&B offering including the African-inspired Tribes (great for authentic flavours from the mother continent, and the only venue in the country serving this cuisine), but Nest stands out. It serves modern Asian cuisines in a tree-top setting for a unique experience, complemented by a Teppanyaki bar on ground level. We recommend the lamb shank, and the luwak coffee brûlée.

[niyama.com](http://niyama.com)

### FISH & CRAB SHACK

Only open for lunch, the name says it all. Head here for long, relaxed lunches and great cocktails. Situated on its own strip of beach across the lagoon, this rustic setting serves an amazing fish taco, although the other seafood options also do the fresh fare justice — shrimp comes in bucket of ice, crab salad is elevated by a poached egg, and the fish in the classic fish and chips features an inspired batter.

[finolhu.com](http://finolhu.com)

### SEA

An intimate venue with degustation menus, this is underwater dining at its finest. The resort has done a lot to rehabilitate the reefs, so you're treated to great views of a myriad fish species. Yes, there's even a resident shark that pops by from time to time. The cellar, also below sea level, has more than 500 labels, and Dev the sommelier is extremely knowledgeable and happy to chat.

[kihavah-maldives.anantara.com](http://kihavah-maldives.anantara.com)





# NIYAMA PRIVATE ISLANDS

DHAALU ATOLL

## CONCEPT

Set across two islands connected by a bridge, this resort offers the perfect balance between lounging around and being active. It lives up to the tagline Nature's Playground, with beach villas that have the bathroom semi-outdoors amidst a luscious garden. In addition to your private infinity pool, you have direct access to your own little plot of pristine sand and the beach and sea beyond. As expected, the resort also has over-water rooms for that postcard experience, and both beach and water rooms come in a range of sizes, the flagship being The Crescent, a cluster of five pavilions offering over-water seclusion for up to 14 adults and eight children. All rooms feature Bose surround sound, full-size fridges, and we love the touch of including popcorn makers — they offer a great snacking option while indulging in the wide selection of movies. There's also a thakuru or butler service, for the ultimate luxury. Technology is used unobtrusively — bracelet keys provide access to rooms. It's waterproof, so you never have to worry about carrying keys. Blinds and curtains are also remote controlled. Each villa's deck is secluded, offering pure privacy — perfect for moonlit dips or afternoons basking in the sun. The resort has a relaxed small-town vibe, and guests get around on bikes or buggies. The spa is set in one alcove of the tropical jungle, not far from an open-air cinema both activities your thakuru can organise.

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## THREE TO TRY

Island getaways are all about kicking off your shoes and relaxing. We recommend these three very different options to do just that.

### SKY

Part of the cluster of F&B outlets that encompasses over- and underwater dining, Sky serves light bites and drinks in the afternoon, but truly comes into its own as the day wanes. It has a selection of shisha flavours and a homegrown tea blend and the *pièce de résistance* — unmatched views over the Indian Ocean. Make this your sundowner destination. [kihavah-maldives.anantara.com](http://kihavah-maldives.anantara.com)

### SUBSIX

While Surf Shack is great for laid-back afternoon drinks and sundowners as well as the weekly events where guests get to mingle with staff, head to Subsix for some upmarket fun. The totally unique experiences Subsix offers — from bubbly breakfasts to subaquatic lunches and gourmet dinners — are made even more unusual by the fact that it's only accessible by speedboat. Dining aside, the venue is popular for its glow parties every Wednesday and Saturday, when guests party like it's 1999 among tropical fish 6m below the surface.

[niyama.com](http://niyama.com)

### 10AK BEACH CLUB

Every night is a great night out at the 10AK Beach Club. After dinner, relax to soothing jazz by a live singer, before the resident Area 51 team of acrobats, mermaids and stilt walkers take over. Upbeat music keeps the dance floor full between sessions, while the mixologists keep everyone hydrated. Upstairs offers a more chilled lounge with 180-degree panoramic views, and a cinema room. There's also a pool table, old-school arcade games such as Pinball and PacMan and various other accoutrements. [finolhu.com](http://finolhu.com)







[ MALDIVES ]

WHERE TO STAY

# FINOLHU

KANUFUSHI ISLAND,  
BAA ATOLL

## CONCEPT

Finolhu takes seriously its claim to being a place where yesterday's dreams are tomorrow's memories. Modelled on the Swinging Sixties, the resort doesn't take itself too seriously, and focuses on fun. Case in point: depictions and models of sheep crop up everywhere — a nod to its location in Baa Atoll. So yes, ditch your flip flops and leave your serious self at the seaplane. You're greeted by Mojo Magic, a VW Bus turned into a bar that sets the tone at the resort. IOak Beach Club forms the heart of the resort with its centrally located pool, although guests have access to a host of other activities including tennis courts. Finolhu features a range of lagoon, ocean and beach villas with outdoor bathrooms and rain showers, and private pools in some. The interiors are an homage to the romantic charm of a classic era with muted tones and light woods; rattan furniture abounds. In keeping with the retro vibe, each comes with a vintage-looking Marshall sound system. A barber shop, called Man Cave by Gentlemen's Tonic, complements the salon and spa with its treatment roomes named for Hollywood glamour icons. Set on the tip of the island, Finolhu's premium dining venue Kanusan offers amazing views and authentic Asian flavours. And when the time comes to leave, you can always tune into Finolhu radio from home, anywhere in the world.

## INFO

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# THREE TO TRY

While you'll be forgiven for not wanting to venture much further than the beach and pool, these experiences would complete your stay in paradise.

## CHEESE TASTING

While Finolhu takes a more rustic approach to vacations, its sister resort Amilla Fushi is decidedly more luxury-focused. A mere 30-minute speedboat ride away, the resort has made a name for itself with its massive beach villa residences that go up to eight bedrooms. Right near the epicentre of the resort, The Wine Shop & Cellar Door welcomes guests for popular private tastings of products in its 8,000-bottle cellar. This is complemented by a range of cheeses from around the world and an unbeatable charcuterie.  
[amilla.mv](http://amilla.mv)

## SNORKEL

The best way to appreciate the effort Anantara Kihava Maldives Villas has put into rehabilitating the reefs destroyed by rising sea temperatures is to go snorkelling. The resort's watersport centre has enough to keep even the most active holidaymaker busy, but on an outing with one of the staff they draw your attention to points of interest. And they even have a few pairs of goggles with prescription lenses.  
[kihavah-maldives.anantara.com](http://kihavah-maldives.anantara.com)

## SURF

Niyama Private Islands boasts the best waves in the country, making it a popular year-round surfing destination. While many surfing enthusiasts bring their own boards, the resort also caters to those without. It even offers surfing lessons for every skill level — beginners learn the ropes in a protected bay, while experts are taken into the open waters to perfect their technique.  
[niyama.com](http://niyama.com)

