Gan, Laamu Atoll: a complete island guide

Gan, Laamu Atoll

The most developed island in the atoll, divided into the wards Thundi, Mathimaradhu and Mukurimagu.

ISLAND **Gan**	ATOLL **Laamu Atoll**
NEAREST AIRPORT **Kadhdhoo (KDO)**	ATOLL CAPITAL **Fonadhoo**
CURRENCY **Maldivian Rufiyaa**	LANGUAGE **Dhivehi, English widely used**

Complete travel guide - 2026 / 2027 Edition

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Your complete guide to Gan, Laamu Atoll

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Magic Maldives

1. WELCOME TO GAN

The most developed island in the atoll, divided into the wards Thundi, Mathimaradhu and Mukurimagu.

Laamu Atoll stood in for the planet Scarif in Rogue One: A Star Wars Story in 2016, with filming on Baresdhoo, Kudafushi, Kudarah and Gan.

2. ESSENTIAL FACTS

Atoll	Laamu Atoll (L)
Population	4,815 (2022 census)
Size	With the adjoining island of Maandhoo, the largest geographical island in the Maldives
Distance from Malé	250 km south of Malé
Atoll capital	Fonadhoo
Nearest airport	Kadhdhoo (KDO)
Language	Dhivehi; English is widely understood where there are guesthouses
Religion	Sunni Islam. This is an inhabited island, so alcohol is not sold and modest dress is expected away from the tourist beach.
Currency	Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR); US dollars are accepted by most guesthouses
Time zone	UTC+5, no daylight saving

3. GETTING THERE

Gan joins Maandhoo to its south, Maandhoo is linked to Kadhdhoo Airport by a short causeway, and Kadhdhoo adjoins Fonadhoo. The four islands stretch about 18 km, the longest run of dry land in the country.

Reaching Laamu Atoll from Malé: no public ferry; fly to Kadhdhoo in about 55 min.

4. HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Large ruins survive from the Buddhist era, including Gamu Haiytheli in Mukurimagu ward, 91.5 m around and 7.3 m high, which local tradition calls the last Buddhist temple of the Maldives, and the Munbaru ruins at Kuruhinna, investigated by H. C. P. Bell in 1923. They were the best preserved Buddhist ruins in the country when Bell excavated the stupa and vihara; vandalism since has left scattered stones and mounds of coral rubble.

5. WHAT THERE IS FOR VISITORS

Laamu Atoll stood in for the planet Scarif in Rogue One: A Star Wars Story in 2016, with filming on Baresdhoo, Kudafushi, Kudarah and Gan.

6. ON THE ISLAND

After the 2004 tsunami the French Red Cross and other foreign governments built a new school, a multi-purpose building, a hospital, a bank, primary and secondary schools, a water plant, a police station and power houses. Gan Regional Hospital is the highest referral centre for the South Central Province.

7. BEFORE YOU GO

The linked islands make Laamu unusually easy to move around without a boat. Check bikini beach arrangements with your guesthouse. No alcohol on the islands.

Inhabited islands follow local rules rather than resort rules. Swimwear belongs on the designated tourist beach only, alcohol is not sold, and shops and offices pause for about fifteen minutes at each of the five daily prayers.

Bring cash in small notes. Card acceptance is patchy outside the larger islands, and not every island has an ATM.

8. WHEN TO VISIT

January to April for diving; surf season runs roughly March to October

9. AROUND THE ATOLL

This island is part of Laamu Atoll. The atoll guide covers every inhabited island and every resort island in it, how the ferries run, and what the atoll is known for.

Everything in this guide is bookable with local Maldivian operators.

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