Gan, Seenu Atoll: a complete island guide

Gan, Seenu Atoll

The southernmost island of the Maldives. The name comes from the Sanskrit grama, meaning village.

ISLAND
Gan

ATOLL
Seenu Atoll

NEAREST AIRPORT
Gan International (GAN)

ATOLL CAPITAL
Hithadhoo

CURRENCY
Maldivian Rufiyaa

LANGUAGE
Dhivehi, English widely used

Complete travel guide - 2026 / 2027 Edition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Your complete guide to Gan, Seenu Atoll

1. Welcome to Gan
2. Essential facts
3. Getting there
4. History and heritage
5. What there is for visitors
6. How the island lives
7. On the island
8. Before you go
9. When to visit
10. Around the atoll

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1. WELCOME TO GAN

The southernmost island of the Maldives. The name comes from the Sanskrit grama, meaning village.

Equator Village resort and a hotel. The wreck of the British Loyalty, scuttled in the atoll lagoon in January 1946, is a popular dive.

When the base closed, former British military employees - most of them fluent in English - moved into the young tourism industry. The island now has a hotel.

2. ESSENTIAL FACTS

Atoll	Seenu Atoll (S)
Population	1,104
Size	2.256 km² - the second largest island of the atoll after Hithadhoo
Distance from Malé	The southern end of the Addu causeway chain
Atoll capital	Hithadhoo
Nearest airport	Gan International (GAN)
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

Causeways connect Gan to Feydhoo, Maradhoo and Hithadhoo, and the former British airstrip is now Gan International Airport.

Reaching Seenu Atoll from Malé: no ferry from Malé; fly to Gan in about 90 min.

4. HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Lived on since ancient times, and in the pre-Islamic era the head island of Addu and a Buddhist place of learning. H. C. P. Bell investigated its Buddhist ruins in 1922, the southernmost such site in the Maldives; the mound and vihara foundations were bulldozed when the airport was built. The Royal Navy set up the base "Port T" here in 1941, and the German submarine U-183 torpedoed the tanker British Loyalty nearby in March 1944. The base passed to the RAF in 1957 as RAF Gan and stayed in intermittent service until

the British withdrew in 1976.

5. WHAT THERE IS FOR VISITORS

Equator Village resort and a hotel. The wreck of the British Loyalty, scuttled in the atoll lagoon in January 1946, is a popular dive.

6. HOW THE ISLAND LIVES

When the base closed, former British military employees - most of them fluent in English - moved into the young tourism industry. The island now has a hotel.

7. ON THE ISLAND

Gan International Airport.

8. BEFORE YOU GO

Addu is a city as much as an atoll, with a different feel from a small guesthouse island. No alcohol outside the resort. The linked islands make it the easiest atoll in the country to get around independently.

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.

9. WHEN TO VISIT

February to April; December is one of the wettest months this far south

10. AROUND THE ATOLL

This island is part of Seenu 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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