Haa Alif Atoll: islands, resorts and how to get there

Haa Alif Atoll

The far north, closer to India than to the southern Maldives, with fourteen inhabited islands and very few visitors.

CAPITAL ISLAND	ISLANDS IN TOTAL
Dhidhdhoo	**43**
INHABITED ISLANDS	RESORT ISLANDS
14	**3**
AIRPORT	CURRENCY
Hanimaadhoo (HAQ) and Hoarafushi (HRF)	**Maldivian Rufiyaa**
LANGUAGE	
Dhivehi, English widely used	

Complete travel guide - 2026 / 2027 Edition

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Your complete guide to Haa Alif Atoll

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Magic Maldives

The far north, closer to India than to the southern Maldives, with fourteen inhabited islands and very few visitors.

The northernmost of the administrative atolls, made up of the Ihavandhippolhu natural atoll and the northern part of Thiladhunmathi.

Thuraakunu is the northernmost island in the country, and Utheemu is the site of the Utheemu Ganduvaru, the palace of Sultan Mohamed Thakurufaanu.

Ihavandhippolhu is separated from India's Lakshadweep by the Maliku Kandu channel.

1. THE ATOLL IN NUMBERS

Capital island	Dhidhdhoo
Islands in total	43
Inhabited islands	14
Resort islands	3
People	24,598
Airport	Hanimaadhoo (HAQ) and Hoarafushi (HRF)
Getting here from Malé	no ferry from Malé; fly to Hanimaadhoo or Hoarafushi

Haa Alif is the northern tip of the country. It has real history, real villages and almost no visitors.

2. GETTING HERE

There is no ferry from Malé - the network is regional and this is the furthest zone from the capital. Fly to Hanimaadhoo or Hoarafushi.

3. UTHEEMU

The wooden palace on Utheemu is the birthplace of Sultan Mohamed Thakurufaanu, who ended Portuguese rule in 1573. It is one of the few pre-modern buildings in the Maldives you can still walk through.

4. WHERE PEOPLE LIVE

14 inhabited islands in Haa Alif Atoll. These are the islands with guesthouses, shops, ferries and a community - not resorts.

- Baarah
- Dhidhdhoo

- Filladhoo
- Hoarafushi
- Ihavandhoo
- Kelaa
- Maarandhoo
- Mulhadhoo
- Muraidhoo
- Thakandhoo
- Thuraakunu
- Uligamu
- Utheemu
- Vashafaru

5. RESORT ISLANDS

Each resort in the Maldives has its own island. These are the resort islands in Haa Alif Atoll, with the island name first.

Island	Resort
Dhonakulhi	Hideaway Beach
Manafaru	JA Manafaru

6. WHAT IT IS KNOWN FOR

Utheemu Ganduvaru - the wooden palace of the sultan who drove out the Portuguese in 1573.

7. WORTH YOUR TIME

- Utheemu Ganduvaru - a preserved 16th-century wooden palace
- Fourteen inhabited islands and almost no tourism
- The driest corner of the Maldives

8. WHEN TO GO

January to March; the north is the driest part of the country

9. BEFORE YOU GO

A small guesthouse scene on a handful of islands. Confirm arrangements with your guesthouse in

advance. No alcohol on the islands.

10. COMMON QUESTIONS

Is there a ferry from Malé to Haa Alif?

No. The public ferry network runs within regions and Haa Alif is the furthest region from Malé. Fly to Hanimaadhoo or Hoarafushi.

Everything in this guide is bookable with local Maldivian operators.

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