MAGIC MALDIVES · TRAVEL GUIDE

Vaavu Atoll

Close to Malé, genuinely quiet, and the easiest place in the country to snorkel with nurse sharks and stingrays from the beach.

CAPITAL ISLAND **Felidhoo**	INHABITED ISLANDS **5**
FROM MALé **about 1 hr 10 by speedboat; public ferry about**	BEST MONTHS **January to April; nurse sharks at Fulidhoo**
AIRPORT **No airport — arrive by boat**	

Known for

Fulidhoo's evening nurse sharks and stingrays in the shallows, and Alimatha and Miyaru Kandu — two of the best-known night dives in the Maldives.

About Vaavu Atoll

Vaavu is the smallest atoll in the Maldives by population and one of the closest to Malé, which is an unusual combination. It is the easy answer to "somewhere quiet but not far".

Getting here

Speedboats take a little over an hour from Malé. The public ferry runs three days a week and takes about three and a half hours for a fraction of the price. There is no airport.

Fulidhoo

The main guesthouse island, and small enough to walk around in a quarter of an hour. Most evenings nurse sharks and stingrays come into the shallows by the jetty — you can snorkel with them straight off the beach, which is rare anywhere.

Diving

Vaavu's channels are known for night diving. Alimatha and Miyaru Kandu draw nurse sharks and grey reef sharks in numbers after dark. These are current dives; go with a local operator who knows the tide.

Highlights

- Nurse sharks and stingrays in the shallows at Fulidhoo most evenings
- Alimatha and Miyaru Kandu — famous night dives
- Just over an hour from Malé by speedboat
- Fulidhoo, Keyodhoo and Thinadhoo take independent guests
- Small properties and few visitors — the opposite of Maafushi

Getting there and getting around

Public ferry from Malé

From Malé: about 1 hr 10 by speedboat; public ferry about 3.5 hrs, three times a week

On a local island

Fulidhoo is small, walkable in fifteen minutes, and has a bikini beach. No alcohol on the island. It is one of the few places where a village still feels like a village rather than a tourism strip.

Common questions

How far is Vaavu Atoll from Malé?

About an hour and ten minutes by speedboat, or roughly three and a half hours on the public ferry, which runs three days a week.

Can you see sharks from the beach in Fulidhoo?

Yes. Nurse sharks and stingrays come into the shallows near the jetty most evenings and can be snorkelled with from the shore.

Is Vaavu good for a quiet trip?

It is one of the quietest atolls that is still close to Malé. The islands are small, the properties are small, and there are far fewer visitors than in Kaafu.