



Vital Statistics: COMO Cocoa Island, Maldives

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Opening Date:	December 2002
Renovation Date:	December 2019
Owning Company:	COMO Hotels and Resorts
Managing Director:	Peter Nilsson
Executive Chef:	Federico Tidu
Interior Designer:	Kathryn Kng
Architect:	Cheong Yew Kuan
Renovation Architect:	Lekker Architects
Location:	South Malé Atoll, Republic of Maldives





Getting there:

COMO Cocoa Island is accessed via a short 40-minute speedboat transfer from Malé International Airport.

The following airlines fly to Malé International Airport: Emirates Airlines (emirates.com) and flydubai (flydubai.com) from Dubai, Oman Air (omanair.com) from Muscat, Etihad Airways (eithihadairways.com) from Abu Dhabi, Turkish Airlines (turkishairlines.com) from Istanbul, Sri Lankan Airlines (srilankan.aero) from Colombo and Tokyo, Qatar Airways (qatarairways.com) from Doha, Condor (condor.com) from Frankfurt, Aeroflot (aeroflot.ru) from Moscow, Vistara Airlines (airvistara.com) from Mumbai and Delhi, British Airways (britishairways.com) from London, Singapore Airlines (singaporeair.com) from Singapore, Bangkok Airways (bangkokair.com) from Bangkok, China Eastern (us.ceair.com) from Shanghai China, and Hong Kong Airlines (hongkongairlines.com) from Hong Kong.

Accommodation:

We have 33 overwater villas comprising:

8 Dhoni Water Villas (75sq m/ 807sq ft): Our split-level Dhoni Water Villas stand out for their unusual design: shaped like a traditional Maldivian 'dhoni' fishing boat, they make you feel like you're floating on the ocean. The generous living room is a calming space to relax, while the overwater private terrace has a staircase that leads to the lagoon's warm waters.

9 Dhoni Loft Water Villas (110sq m/ 1,184sq ft): Shaped like a traditional 'dhoni' fishing boat, our Dhoni Loft Water Villas have an expansive lower level living area and a master bedroom on the mezzanine, making them great for families. The design is about bringing the outside space in, with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the water, and a private terrace touching the ocean.

10 Loft Water Villas (123sq m/ 1,324sq ft): In these villas, the horizon feels like it extends forever as you look out from your private sundeck or watch the ocean roll past the floor-to-ceiling windows. The elevated loft features a king-size en-suite master bedroom, while the lower deck's large and airy sitting area doubles up as a sleeping space for families. There is also a secluded outdoor rain shower with steps directly into the ocean.



4 One-Bedroom Water Villas with Pool (125sq m/ 1,345sq ft):
These light-filled villas sit on their own secluded jetty, surrounded by the aquamarine ocean. Outside, there's a new private pool and a balcony with a daybed, where you can relax as the sun rises and sets on the ocean. Inside, the spacious living area with floor-to-ceiling windows provides plenty of space to unwind.

1 Two-bedroom COMO Sunrise Villa (300sq m/3,229sq ft):
Our two-bedroom COMO Sunrise Villa has separate wings, each featuring an en suite bedroom and a private terrace directly above the ocean. The wings are connected by the living and dining areas, with balconies on either side that let you step directly off the deck into the turquoise lagoon. There's also a secluded deck, with a new private pool that almost touches the edge of the ocean.

1 Three-bedroom COMO Sunset Villa (590sq m/6,351sq ft):
Our three-bedroom COMO Sunset Villa features two villas connected by a wooden walkway and is named for its spectacular sunset views. The one-bedroom villa has a master bedroom, a large terrace, a 10-metre private swimming pool and a gym. The two-bedroom villa has two wings, as well as its own private infinity pool. Both villas are suspended over the ocean and have living rooms and a private study. The wooden walkway can be closed off for privacy.

Room Facilities:

King or twin beds with handmade Italian linen
Private sundeck with lounges and dining table
Bath and separate shower
Air conditioning and antique colonial ceiling fan
Private bar
Complimentary tea and Nespresso coffee-making facilities
Complimentary bottled water and fresh fruit daily
Satellite TV (42-inch LCD TVs with select movies)
Direct dial telephone
COMO Shambhala bathroom amenities
Hairdryer
Private safe
Complimentary Wi-Fi connection in all guest suites and villas
Complimentary beach bag and flip-flops
Bose sound bar (Bluetooth connection)
Yoga mat



Guest Services:	24-hour guest services and manager on duty 25-metre infinity-edge swimming pool 26-Airport transfers All day lounge and Internet room Babysitting on request Library (Internet and printing facilities) Wi-Fi COMO The Shop Foreign exchange Guest services In-room dining Laundry service (no dry cleaning) Multilingual hotel staff Butler (One-Bedroom Water Villas with pool and above) Travel and tour assistance
Restaurant:	Ufaa serves modern interpretations of Maldivian, Mediterranean and International cuisine with an emphasis on local produce, including seafood and COMO Shambhala healthy eating options
Bar:	Faru is open from 10.00am to late; adjacent to infinity pool, leads onto the beach
Executive Chef:	Ferderico Tidu
Dining Options:	Breakfast, lunch and dinner with all-day dining menu In-room dining is available 24 hours a day Private dining available upon request
Guest Wellbeing:	COMO Shambhala Retreat
Treatments:	Asian-inspired holistic therapies developed by COMO Shambhala, including reflexology, Therapeutic Massages and facials
Retreat Facilities:	Three double massage pavilions with outdoor shower/ tub in the garden One single massage pavilion with outdoor shower/tub in the garden Two-story building consisting of an open-air yoga pavilion with a 360-degree view of the ocean at the top and a gym on the lower floor



COMO
COCOA ISLAND

Gym with weights, cardio equipment and TRX
Hydrotherapy pool
Steam room (separate male/female facilities)
Cadillac-Reformer Pilates Studio

Outdoor Activities:

Yoga
PADI Dive Centre, for all levels of scuba diving
Snorkelling
Catamaran sailing
Windsurfing
Kayaking
Fishing
Dolphin and sunset cruises
Coral Propagation

Other Facilities:

25-metre infinity-edge lip pool
Resort boutique

Direct Reservations:

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GDS Access Codes:

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Amadeus **MLECOI**
Worldspan **MLECI**

Sabre **79169**
Apollo/Galileo **6820**

Photo Library:

<https://www.comohotels.com/en/media-centre/photo-library>



Resort Synopsis: COMO Cocoa Island, Maldives

In December 2002, COMO Hotels and Resorts opened its first private island resort, in the Maldives. Called COMO Cocoa Island, this landmark opening brought COMO's vision of privacy and stylish beach living to the Indian Ocean.

The Maldives is made up of a string of tiny islands – perfect dots of white in the turquoise waters. Each island is no more than a few kilometres across, most far smaller. Other summits sit just below the surface, creating smudges of milky indigo. Occasionally, frothy surf gathers on an island's windward flank, highlighting coral reefs.

COMO Cocoa Island, known locally as Makunufushi, is located among South Malé's coral atolls. Importantly, guests don't need seaplanes to access the island; it's just a 40-minute speedboat transfer from the international airport on Malé (the main island). In addition, COMO Cocoa Island is located in the opposite direction to the majority of resorts (concentrated in the North Malé atoll) and occupies a quieter, undisturbed area.

Despite a heady combination of good climate, white sand and warm seas, tourism developments have been sensibly controlled, displaying respect for the region's inimitable culture and natural resources. Outside the capital, there's no traffic and little noise. Tiny fishing boats slowly turn into distant specks that tip over the Maldives' mirror-flat horizon.

The resort looks out towards these calm, cerulean waters. The island is long and thin – about 350 metres long – with sand snaking out into a perfect spit that disappears with the evening tide. The natural landscape has not been interfered with, and the island features palms, wild sea grapes and hibiscus. The house reef, which encircles COMO Cocoa Island, delineates a gin-clear lagoon that's rich with sea life, including ray and baby sharks.

The resort aesthetic is by Singapore architect Cheong Yew Kuan – responsible for two other COMO Hotels and Resorts, COMO Uma Ubud in Bali and COMO Uma Paro in Bhutan. At COMO Cocoa Island, the style is deliberately restrained; a simple yet sophisticated mix of the contemporary and indigenous. Certain room types occupy 'dhoni' boats, based on the designs used by Maldivian fishermen. They are not unlike the houseboat typical of Kerala, the nearest Indian state.

In 2019, the resort underwent a transformative renovation as part of COMO Cocoa Island's ongoing commitment to an award-winning reputation. Under the careful eye of Singapore-based Lekker Architects, the resort was reimagined: adding private pools to both the One-Bedroom



Water Villas and COMO Water Villas, creating a new airy Pilates studio with a Cadillac-Reformer machine, adding a two-floor gym and yoga centre, and completely redesigning the interior of every villa.

Each of these 33 villas – which include eight Dhoni Water Villas, nine Dhoni Loft Water Villas, ten Loft Water Villas, four One-Bedroom Water Villas with Pool, a newly-added One-Bedroom COMO Sunset Villa (only one of its kind), and one Two-Bedroom COMO Sunrise Villas – sit offshore on the southern side of Cocoa, overhanging the lagoon. They are reached by planked overwater walkways. Structures combine New Zealand pine with Kajan thatched roofs. Natural materials are carried through to the interiors, with high raftered ceilings and glossy teak flooring.

The inside/outside space merges on the horizon-side, with floor-to-ceiling glass windows opening up to a substantial deck for slipping in and out of the water. These same decks provide privacy for lounging in the sun, or a place for quiet, al fresco dining.

The island's serenity is reflected in the clean-lined, airy interiors combining whites and blues – more Hamptons beach hut than the usual rough-rustic aesthetic favoured by other Maldivian hotels.

The Dhoni Water Villas are split-level, with steps that lead into the warm lagoon. The bathroom is large with a double-ended tub backed by a mirrored wall. The Dhoni Loft Water Villas, which stretch to 110sq metres, are distinguished by bedrooms on a mezzanine level beneath the rafters (with an en-suite bathroom). This ensures commanding views through the floor-to-ceiling windows, the ocean light softened by sheer white drapes. Loft Water Villas are similar in style to the Dhoni Loft Water Villas, though each has an outdoor shower with steps directly into the sea.

The four One-Bedroom Water Villas with Pool are located at the ends of walkways on the sunrise side. Their interior style is similarly chic – whites, teaks and contemporary hand-finished furniture inspired by the colonial traditions of southern India. But they boast a larger living area, with bathrooms that open into private shower areas with the sea visible below.

For families, our Three-bedroom COMO Sunset Villa and Two-bedroom Sunrise Villa are ideal. The Three-bedroom COMO Sunset Villa features two villas connected by a wooden walkway – that can be closed off for privacy – and is named for its spectacular sunset views. The two-bedroom Sunrise Villa has separate wings, each featuring an en suite bedroom and a private terrace directly above the ocean. Butler service is provided at both Villas.

In-room facilities are decadent in their detail. Guests can choose between air conditioning or overhead ceiling fans. Beds are draped in the finest Italian linens. Other facilities include 42-inch LCD flatscreen TVs with satellite channels, select movies, Bose sound bar and minibars.

As with all COMO Hotels and Resorts, cuisine is considered a crucial element of the guest experience. The restaurant is called Ufaa, meaning 'happy' in Maldivian. The Cheong-designed, foot-in-the-sand space – seating 60 diners in both covered and uncovered areas – flanks the



resort's infinity-edged pool, in natural wood and Kajan thatch. Ufaa serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. An all-day dining menu is also available.

Menus display a rigorous reliance on well-sourced seasonal ingredients from nature's larder – organic vegetables and the evening's catch, supplied by local fishermen and farmers. Dishes also take inspiration from India's Malabar Coast, and its traditions of spicing – coriander, ginger, tamarind, okra and green chilli – while the true flavours of fresh produce are finished off with light-handed, contemporary flourishes. Coconuts, found everywhere in these islands, also feature significantly.

Beyond the Resort: Activities at COMO Cocoa Island, Maldives

COMO Cocoa Island has a fully equipped watersports centre offering kayaking, windsurfing and catamaran sailing from the beach. Guests may also take up activities with the resident Marine Biologist. There is also a comprehensive COMO Shambhala Retreat. Beyond the island, a number of snorkeling excursions are available, taking guests further into the compelling archipelago of coral reefs, one being COMO Cocoa Island's impressive House Reef.

Guests can visit Malé, the capital of the Maldives, visiting the gold-domed Islamic Centre, the Presidential Palace, Friday Mosque and the fish and fruit market, shopping among rows of colourful little stores.

Boat charters include private charter of the COMO Princess yacht, sunset cruises on a speedboat to watch dolphins at play and flying fish skirt across the water. Alternatively, the resort can arrange powerboat rides around the islands, cruising along reef lines.

Fishing is also richly rewarding – COMO Cocoa Island's kitchen can prepare the catch for your lunch the following day.

But it is diving for which COMO Cocoa Island has its most formidable reputation. The team of staff – all PADI instructors, who can teach courses for all levels, from beginner to specialty certifications up to Divemaster, and in English, Japanese, French and Spanish – have in-depth knowledge of local waters, the coral reefs, wrecks and seasonal highlights.

All divers are required to hold an International SCUBA diving license. It is recommended to bring along your logbook as well. In addition, divers may have to take part in an orientation dive as part of Maldivian regulations. Safety at COMO Cocoa Island is considered absolutely paramount.

COMO Cocoa Island's rental equipment includes Scuba Pro BCDs and regulators with 11 litre tanks. Wetsuits are long-leg and short-arm, and available in all sizes. The resort also provides Gull and Mantis masks, Technisub and Scuba Pro fins, and Suunto and Aladin dive computers. The compressor is a Bauer V-20.



The nearest decompression facility is at Bandos Island, approximately one hour away by speedboat.

Every day the dive boats (dhonis) leave COMO Cocoa Island up to three times exploring any of 20 sites within a 30-minute radius. The range includes gentle drop-offs, small reefs and more challenging channel dives with powerful currents. Night diving is available on request.

Highlights include:

Cocoa Thila: Located in the middle of Cocoa Channel, this dive site – among the 10 best sites of the Maldives – is just to the rear of COMO Cocoa Island. We descend down into the blue water and let the current drift us on to the reef, where huge schools of fusiliers, red snapper and bigeye trevally congregate on the Thila corner. Large tuna and giant trevally ride the currents, and as we drift along the Thila edge, there is frequent sightings of up to five or 10 spotted eagle rays. On top of the reef, beautiful table corals, reef fish and big green turtles can be seen. Drifting towards the end of Thila, grey sharks and whitetip sharks are common, although these creatures are very shy.

10 minutes by dhoni boat

Guraidhoo Corner: Starting the dive along the outer reef provides a spectacle of many fusiliers and dog-toothed tuna. As we drift, you may spy schooling bannerfish feeding in the current that indicate the corner to the channel. Stopping on or near the corner, we hold onto the bottom to watch the action of frequently seen whitetip sharks, grey sharks, spotted eagle rays, giant trevally and large napoleon cruising in the current. If you are lucky, a friendly napoleon will approach, making for excellent photography. From May to November, with the right conditions, hammerhead sharks may also be sighted.

20 minutes by dhoni boat

Sand Dune: A popular site during manta ray season. With the right currents, three or four manta rays can be seen at any one time circling the single rock, waiting to be cleaned. We spend a minimum of 20 minutes waiting or watching mantas circling only metres away. On the rock are many different species of shrimp, anemone fish and juvenile angelfish.

20 minutes by dhoni boat

Kandooma Caves: A group of four large caves in a row, with one over 70 metres long, make Kandooma Caves one of the biggest underwater cave complexes in the Maldives. Beautiful sea whips, fans and soft coral populate the entrances. Inside, bright yellow sponges dot the roof like stars. Here you will find soldier fish, morays and often turtles or stingrays sheltering from the strong currents outside – which can make for a wonderful dive.

15 minutes by dhoni boat



Medhufaru: This is a very scenic dive with beautiful soft coral, and often thousands of scalefin anthias swirling in the strong currents (a number of overhangs give good shelter). Large tuna are quite common and sometimes whitetip sharks can be seen in numbers near the channel entrance. What makes this dive site unique are the regular sightings of large schools of giant trevally – sometimes 20 or more.

20 minutes by dhoni boat

Waggiri: This sheltered reef is home to many interesting small marine creatures and soft coral including nudibranch, shrimp and fire and arrow goby. There's every chance you'll see the long-nosed hawkfish that inhabits the small black coral trees.

Inner reef current: Small currents

20 minutes by dhoni boat

Cocoa Corner: Drifting along the outer reef you can see many fusiliers and turtles with sometimes whitetip sharks and spotted eagle rays. As you come into the channel expect small overhangs with beautiful coral, sea fans and sponges.

Outer reef and channel: Small currents

15 minutes by dhoni boat

Back Kandooma: This leisurely dive incorporates numerous schools of fish located on the edge of the drop-off. You can see blue-striped snapper, two-spot snapper and fairy basslets, with black pyramid butterflyfish and turtles.

Along the outer reef: Small currents

15 minutes by dhoni boat



Key Biographies: COMO Cocoa Island, Maldives

Peter Nilsson, Managing Director, Maldives: With over 30 years of experience in luxury hospitality, Peter Nilsson leads the teams at COMO Maalifushi and COMO Cocoa Island. Before joining COMO, he served as Chief Operating Officer at Banwa Private Island in the Philippines and held leadership roles at renowned resorts such as Laucala Island in Fiji, Soneva in the Maldives and Thailand, and Ritz-Carlton Langkawi. A Swedish national, Peter brings a wealth of expertise in driving operational excellence, strategic growth, resource optimisation, and team engagement, all while ensuring an exceptional guest experience and enhancing operational cohesion.

Federico Tidu, Executive Chef: Federico Tidu's culinary journey spans Michelin-starred restaurants and luxury resorts worldwide. His experience includes celebrated venues like Tivoli Restaurant and Hotel Tyrol in Italy, Pilu at Freshwater, and Cable Beach Resort in Australia. In Tokyo, Federico honed his skills at the prestigious Bvlgari Restaurant, ranked among Asia's 50 Best, immersing himself in Japan's rich culinary heritage. His dedication to crafting exceptional dining experiences reflects a passion for creating unforgettable moments through his artistry.

Cheong Yew Kwan, Architect

Cheong divides his time between Bali and Singapore. His past projects include Begawan Giri Estate on Bali, and for COMO Hotels and Resorts, COMO Parrot Cay in the Turks and Caicos. He has also worked on a number of high-profile private houses. Formerly with Kerry Hill Architects in Singapore, his style is defined by a keen awareness of indigenous traditions, creating satisfying, sensitive volumes for modern living. His most recent projects include COMO Uma Paro in Bhutan.

Lekker Architects, Renovation Architect

Lekker Architects is a Singapore-based studio specialising in the design of meaningful environments and experiences. They have worked intensively in the areas of art and fashion retail, as well as for projects with high social impact. Lekker are winners of numerous awards, including Singapore's President's Design Award, Maison & Objet's Rising Asian Talent Award, and a Heritage Award from the Urban Redevelopment Authority. Their work has been published internationally.



Destination Overview: COMO Cocoa Island, Maldives

'By God, I envy this man his island, and wish that it was mine to withdraw to'
Ibn Battuta, adventurer, explorer and visitor to the Maldives in 1583

COMO Cocoa Island once belonged to a pioneer-photographer, Eric Klemm. Although no shipwrecked Battuta – one of the Maldives' earliest known foreign visitors – Klemm possessed something of the 14th-century explorer's pioneering spirit. He arrived in the Maldives in 1976 where he set up home, and in 1980, built a four-bungalow hotel, photographing the island with a singular passion.

COMO Cocoa Island looks little changed from those images. This is true throughout the islands because of intelligent government policies. New buildings, for instance, cannot exceed the highest palm trees. In addition, Maldivian tourism does not cater to mid- to low-market developments that favour volume over content and environmental considerations.

As a result, the 754km-long string of 1192 dots located south of India and west of Sri Lanka, is unusually pristine. Most of the islands are less than two kilometers square with land no higher than two metres above sea level. Around 202 are inhabited, including 90 given over to tourism. The majority are located north of the capital Malé.

However, the Maldives have struggled with other environmental factors, including global warming – rising seas are threatening the lowest-lying islands – and significant coral bleaching from 1998's El Niño. This affected the hard coral. But today, the underwater world shows positive signs of recovery. The water temperature remains around 27-30 degrees Celsius all year, although there are two distinct seasons.

The dry season runs from December to March. Mid April and late November are best for diving, with calm seas and exceptionally clear water. The rainy season runs from May to November. These are only tropical storms, with sunshine reliably breaking through the clouds. Divers should note that September is the best time to see whale sharks and hammerheads, and the manta season runs from May to October.

The Maldivians are 100 per cent Muslim. The people, who largely work in tourism or fishing, share many features with the Indian Subcontinent's population – most obviously, a smiling, well-meaning national character. To find out more about the Maldives's land and culture, guests of COMO Cocoa Island can take advantage of the resort's highly informed local staff.



About COMO Group and COMO Hotels and Resorts

COMO Hotels and Resorts, part of the COMO Group, is a multi-award-winning, family-owned business with 18 hotels and resorts worldwide — each one different from the other but sharing the same core values: a deep commitment to holistic wellness, exceptional nutrition-rich cuisine, passionate service, contemporary design, and inspiring destinations that honour the spirit of place.

Our city hotels include COMO Metropolitan hotels in London, Perth (Australia), Bangkok and Singapore. COMO The Halkin in Belgravia is also in London — a boutique hotel and the first we ever opened, in 1991.

Our country resorts include COMO Uma Paro and COMO Uma Punakha in Bhutan; COMO Uma Ubud and COMO Shambhala Estate in Bali and COMO Castello Del Nero in Tuscany, which includes a newly converted twelfth-century farmhouse, Podere San Filippo and a headline five-bedroom headline villa, Villa San Luigi. In 2022, the brand opened COMO Le Montrachet in Burgundy's prime wine country and in 2023, COMO Alpina Dolomites, situated on one of Italy's most beautiful high-altitude plateaus joined the portfolio as our first ever alpine resort.

COMO's beach portfolio encompasses four private island resorts — COMO Parrot Cay in the Turks and Caicos, COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi in the Maldives and COMO Laucala Island in Fiji. COMO Point Yamu has a cliffside location on Phuket, and COMO Uma Canggu is on the Bali shore.

Founded by Mrs Christina Ong, the COMO Group encompasses the international luxury fashion retailer Club 21, the award-winning wellness brand COMO Shambhala, food concepts, COMO Cuisine and COMO Dempsey, the philanthropic COMO Foundation, and Comoclub. For the first time, COMO Orchard on Bideford Road in Singapore brings many of these strands together in a fully integrated lifestyle experience when it debuts in autumn 2023.

For more information on COMO Hotels and Resorts, visit our website comohotels.com, follow our adventures on [Instagram](#) @comohotels, or chat with us on our [Facebook](#) page.



About COMO Shambhala

COMO Shambhala is an award-winning wellness concept developed as a sister brand to COMO Hotels and Resorts. The company is headquartered in Singapore under The COMO Group. Running as a thread through COMO properties worldwide, COMO Shambhala promotes a healthy way of living, learning and eating well. The pursuit of balance is central to the approach, the word Shambhala translating as 'peace' in Sanskrit.

The COMO Shambhala resort experience combines Asian-based therapies, nutrition, exercise and yoga with a results-driven agenda managed by experts in holistic health. Weight loss, anti- ageing and stress management can all be addressed while staying in a spectacular part of the world. Facilities are state-of-the-art and usually include yoga rooms, Pilates equipment, hydrotherapy and Ayurveda. The flagship retreat is COMO Shambhala Estate in Bali, an award- winning wellness resort.

The COMO Shambhala city spa experience is attached to COMO's Metropolitan properties in Bangkok and London, as well as a standalone wellness centre including resident experts in Singapore.

COMO Shambhala Cuisine has been developed for those seeking better health through nutritional, low-calorie eating. Largely organic and often locally sourced, the cuisine replaces refined foods with naturally occurring sugars, and bad fats with nutritious nuts and oils.

COMO Shambhala also produces a range of skin and bodycare products, COMO Shambhala At Home, made from all-natural ingredients. COMO Shambhala Active Living is the company's resort and activewear line, launched in 2007.



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