

THE BEST OF THE CENTRAL ATOLLS : NORTH AND SOUTH MALE, FELIDHOO & ARI

This itinerary is an exciting mix between submerged landscapes and breath-taking views. At the centre of this long archipelago, which is situated from east to west, lie three of the most famous atolls of Maldives: North Male, South Male and Ari.

The cruise sets out to the south, letting divers get used to the comfortable water temperatures with the exploration of a trawler which sank over 30 years ago and turned into a house for the typical micro fauna of these waters. You'll find needle fish and scorpion fish inhabiting the outside decks along with clefts full of glassfish.

The fishermen island of Gurahidoo is surrounded by dive sites that have rivers of currents in the pass, which in turn bring large predators like white tip and grey reef sharks. It is not unusual to encounter large napoleons and green turtles between the protrusions of Kandooma Thila.

The crossing to the west of South Ari atoll is often accompanied by large groups of dolphins. These waters are characterised by rowley shoals dives. They are unique because of the abundance of fish and both hard and soft coral gardens. In fact, the area is famous for its spectacular dive sites such as Five Rocks with its blue sea fans and Kuda Thila Raa with its schools of squirrelfish and yellow striped blue snappers, soft corals and long black coral whips.

Before sailing back to the central areas, it is a must to look for the great lord of the ocean, the whale shark.

In the western part of the atoll, when dry winds blow from the northeast, there are several points where you might meet the great manta rays that come close to the reef to enjoy the many cleaning stations that are rich with plankton.

