



Versatile Hospitality around the Globe Case Study on Cuisine and Culture in Hospitality Industry Country Maldives

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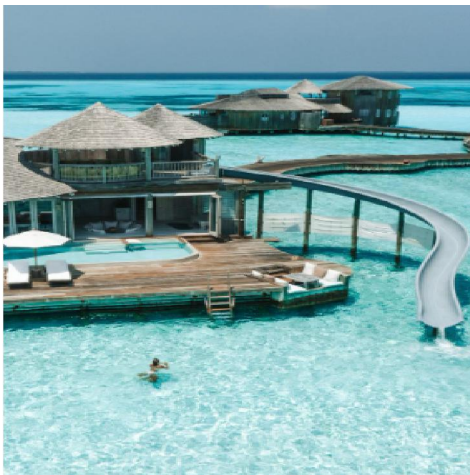
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Abstract: *The food of Maldives is a fusion of its neighboring countries like Sri Lanka and India. Since Maldives is mostly sea, fish is the main staple food. Coconut is another major part of Maldivian food used in different forms like milk, oil or grated on top of dishes. The traditional Maldivian cuisine is known as the Dhivehi Cuisine that provides a smorgasbord of flavors. The food in Maldives has a mild spiciness and a delicate sweetness and is prepared using techniques passed down from generations. Since Maldives is a major tourist destination having resorts spread throughout the island, there is a wide range of food options for tourists, even vegetarians.*

Being an island nation, Maldives' culture is based on the island lifestyle and revolves around the sea. The culture of Maldives is influenced by the cultures of the Indians, Africans, Arabs and the Sri Lankans. Maldivians have assimilated parts of all these and built a culture that is unique.

Cuisine in Maldives

The cuisine in Maldives offers the ideal chance to sink your teeth into delectable seafood prepared with traditional recipes. The food of Maldives is strongly influenced by Sri Lankan and Indian cooking styles, so you can expect plenty of curries with a range of flavors and spices on a Maldives holiday. Maldivians are spice lovers but coconut also has a special place in Maldivian kitchens. Agriculture is almost impossible in the Maldives, therefore fish, which is readily available, is a staple. Fish soups and curries are very popular and meat and chicken are served at special occasions.



Traditional Maldivian dishes rarely include vegetables and most of the food available at Maldives resorts are imported. Tailor-made Maldives vacations are likely to have you eat your heart out at the local restaurants! They dish out fantastic seafood and international cuisine, and the island nation is full of food stalls, popular with the locals, selling just about everything.

During your Maldives holiday, do indulge in evening tea and Sri-Lankan-style 'short-eats' as you watch a beautiful sunset on the horizon.: Cuisine in Maldives – What to eat

Do try the local cuisine of Maldives.

Mas riha: fresh tuna, diced, spiced and curried, served with flatbread and warm tea

Bajiya: Maldivian version of the samosa

Kukulhu riha: chicken cooked various spices

Khai phan: seaweed from the Mekong River and a speciality in Luang Prabang

Since the Maldives is almost 99% sea, fish (mainly tuna) is the most important staple. The cuisine found in the island nation is a mix of Arabic, Indian, Sri Lankan, and East Asian influences. But the tourist resorts scattered throughout the islands offer diverse international menus, so it's entirely possible to eat your way around the world while staying in luxury at one of these resorts. Sample Japanese teppanyaki, fine Italian cuisine, the spicy flavours of India and Thailand, traditional Chinese, fine upscale dining, or just a casual snack. Seafood plays a starring role, regardless of how it's prepared, but those who prefer their food to come from dry land will still have plenty of options.

Keywords: Immerse, Influence, Maldives, skipjack.

I. INTRODUCTION

Being an island nation, Maldives' culture is based on the island lifestyle and revolves around the sea. The culture of Maldives is influenced by the cultures of the Indians, Africans, Arabs and the Sri Lankans. Maldivians have assimilated parts of all these and built a culture that is unique.

Maldives Culture

A beautiful slice of paradise in the Indian ocean, the Maldives is a fascinating destination. Steeped in rich culture and tradition, the Maldives culture is heavily shaped by Indian, Sri Lankan, Malaysia, Arab, Persian, Indonesian and even African influences. Maldivians are incredibly warm, welcoming and friendly people who will go above and beyond to make your holiday truly unforgettable. Read on to discover some interesting facts about the Maldives culture and useful information for your next Maldives holiday.

Religion

Islam is the major religion in the Maldives. This is most evident through the many beautiful mosques located on the main island of Malé as well as the lack of alcohol and pork available on the mainland. But not to worry, resorts have a special license to serve alcohol, so you can still enjoy cocktails and beachside beverages in tropical paradises.

Dress

With a predominately Muslim faith, Maldivians are quite conservative and wear traditional dress. Males wear a sarong and white cotton shirt, while females wear a traditional libaa which is a long dress with gold and silver thread. Guests must also be fully clothed while swimming at the beaches on the mainland unless swimming at a designated bikini beach. However, this rule does not apply at the resort islands and guests are free to soak up the sunshine in whatever swimming attire they please.

Music & Dance

Music and dance are an integral part of Maldives culture and are heavily influenced by their surrounding nations. One of the most well-known Maldives performances is the "Bodu Beru". The dance is performed by large groups of 15 to 20 men and features a range of drummers, dancers and singers. Many of the resorts organise regular cultural performances to entertain their guests, so be sure to check one out on your next Maldives holiday.

Food

After tourism, the fishing industry drives the economy in the Maldives. You can expect to eat a lot of fresh tuna, snapper and lobster as well as a whole host of international cuisines on offer at your resort. Many resorts also offer all-inclusive holiday packages, so you can leave your wallet at home and indulge in a wide range of cuisines for breakfast,



lunch and dinner. Traditional Maldivian food is hot and spicy and features a lot of curries, soups and dishes served with rice. Coconuts, yams, mangoes and pineapples are also locally grown and super delicious.

Incredibly, the Maldives is 99% water so it is not fishing. Fish isn't only an integral part of the Maldivian economy; it is also an integral part of the Maldivian diet. Traditional Maldivian Cuisine is based around fish, coconuts and starchy items. The nation's favourite fish is skipjack tuna, which can be served fresh or dried. However, many types of tuna and other types of fish which can be found in the beautiful open waters are also loved, including yellow fin tuna (kanneli), frigate tuna (raagondi) and bigeye scad (mushimas). Maldivians don't eat raw fish, as do some other Asian countries, but do serve it freshly caught, boiled, smoked and sun-dried or just smoked. Combined with ingredients such as chilli, coconut, lime juice and onions, fish is served for virtually every meal of the day. The food of the Maldives is delicious and diverse, having been influenced by fine cuisines from across the world. In the past, the Maldives was an important location on many trade routes, and therefore many traders from the Indian Ocean region who visited or settled in the Maldives have had an effect on Maldivian cuisine over time.



[1]Here are some Maldives specialties worth sampling:

Garudhiya: a fish broth served with rice, lime, chili, and onions.

Mashuni: shredded smoked fish with grated coconuts and onions. This is considered the most popular breakfast food in the country.

Fihunu mas: barbecued fish that has been basted with chili.

Hedhikaa is the local word for snacks in the islands and some of the favourites are:

- bajiya: pastry that is stuffed with fish, coconuts, and onion.
- gulha: pastry balls that are stuffed with smoked fish.
- keemia: deep-fried fish rolls.
- kulhi boakiba: a spicy fish cake.
- masroshi: mas huni that has been wrapped in roshi bread and is then baked.
- thelui mas: fried fish cooked with chili and garlic.

Drink

When visiting the Maldives, it is best to stick with bottled water as this is safer, and when in doubt, always ask. As the islands are an Islamic nation, the population does not drink alcohol, however, it is available in most resorts. Locals instead prefer to drink sai or tea. Raa is a traditional drink and is a toddy that has been tapped from palm trees. It is sometimes left to ferment.

Festival

Celebrating festivals in the Maldives brings out a great sense of national pride. Almost every holiday leads to the green and red national flags covering the main streets as well as being displayed in people's houses. Everybody works together to prepare food, decorations and entertainment, which may include folk dancing, modern jazz or pop music, the marching of bands or a parade of smartly dressed children. Whether it is a religious festival or a national occasion, the Maldivian people celebrate in unity with great enthusiasm. The Maldives is a Muslim country and therefore



Maldivians celebrate the Prophet’s birthday, Ramadan, Kula Eid and Eid-ul-Al’h’aa. Other than religious festivals, there are also national holidays, which are celebrated with just as much excitement and enthusiasm. National Day celebrates the victory of Mohamed Thakurufaanu over the occupying Portuguese forces in 1573 and Independence Day, which marks the date in 1965 when the Maldives attained independence from Britain after being a British Protectorate for 78 years, is celebrated on the 26th July.



Handicrafts

A traditional aspect of Maldivian culture is the making of a wide range of handicrafts, such as mats, baskets, coir rope and many products using coconut shell. Many islands specialise in a particular handicraft, for example, the best lacquer work can be seen on the island of Thulaadhoo, where delightful pots, vases and boxes can be found. On Bandos Island, one can see mats being weaved by local people. The important tradition of craft making is still doing well due to the availability of key materials; for example, coconut leaves are often used for weaving mats and the shell is used to make products such as cooking utensils, jewellery and souvenirs. The combination of practised craftsmanship and creative methods has been passed down from generation to generation.

Mat weaving is definitely one of the most important forms of Maldivian craftsmanship. The mats (kunaa) have many uses; sleeping, sitting, praying and wall hangings among others. The mats are woven with traditional patterns, and are dyed to black, brown and yellow with natural dyes, but there are variations from weaver to weaver. Besides a simple loom, only a knife is necessary, which makes it all the more astounding that these uncomplicated tools created such wonderful mats that they were used as royal gifts in the past and even now are presented to foreign dignitaries. These mats were sometimes adorned with gold lace work to make them even more beautiful. The art of mat-weaving is traditionally passed down from mother to daughter, ensuring that the craft will live on for a long time yet!





Boduberu

Another important aspect of Maldivian culture is a form of music called Boduberu, which is both the most familiar and most popular form of indigenous music, particularly in the Northern Atolls. It is a type of music which is very similar to that of eastern and south-western Africa and as such it is believed that it may have been introduced to the Maldives by sailors coming from East Africa or somewhere else in the Indian Ocean region in the 11th century or possibly even earlier. Boduberu is a group activity; it is typically performed by about 15 people, including three percussionists and lead singer, as well as a bell, a set of double-headed drums also known as a bodu beru, and a small stick of bamboo called an onugandu, which has horizontal grooves and is scraped to make the required sounds. People of all age groups can participate and do so enthusiastically, with spectators joining in by clapping and dancing.

II. SUMMARY

The Maldivian Cuisine stands on three whales - fish, rice and coconuts - which together or separately form the basis components of the Maldivian food. Historically, the cuisine of the Maldives is filled with Arabic and Indian flavors, and the emergence of a new culture has always contributed a bit to the traditional food of the islanders. Many flavors come from Kerala and Sri Lanka, being very spicy and hot. [2]Chillies, onions, basil leaves, and lime juice are used with many recipes. The use of alcohol and pork is contrary to Islamic culture, however, the tourist areas in the Maldives - do not lack these products.

Tuna and dishes from this fish is the main highlights of the Maldivian table. Particularly popular meat of skipjack tuna, tuna frigate and yellowfin tuna. Wahoo, Mahi-Mahi and the big-eyed scad are also gastronomical favorites. Fish is fried, boiled, baked, smoked, dried, canned and dried in the hot Maldivian sun.

Maldivian fish - comes as a fillet, or in small portions, as a seasoning for other dishes. Often fish meat is used as a filling for local pies. Chicken is used only on major holidays, or in the preparation of special dishes.

From traditional food on the beach to homely interpretations of Maldivian cuisine, these are our favourite dishes to try in the Maldives.

As a result of a rich and colorful heritage, food from several countries of the Indian Ocean basin can enter into your mouth, in one place, with a small merger between them. Fish and rice are of course the main food, but the Maldivian cuisine uses many spices and coconuts in its dishes.



The best way to discover the real taste of Maldivian dishes is head to Malé and to visit local restaurants, which are actually tea and snack bars. These are the favorite gastronomic points of the locals, who are ready to spend time here for hours.

III. CONCLUSION

Maldives Food! There is one very important aspect to open yourself up to while traveling to another country. What's that, may you ask? Absorbing the culture of the place. Specifically, the food culture. Surely, one of the most trivial parts of travel is the 'Food Part'. [3]And it's not simply eating at a fancy hotel with your fancy cutlery and the 5-star food they serve. Of course the food may be exquisite but you won't be experiencing the real taste of the place, straight from its original roots. The same applies to Maldives food and Maldives cuisine. More or less.

The study identified the extent that local food was used in Maldives tourism marketing materials through a detailed analysis of both printed and web-based marketing materials. The sample of printed and web-based marketing materials included tourist resorts and hotels, promotional agencies, tourist guide books, travel agents and cruise operators. The research was designed to draw parallels between the current role of local food in tourism promotions and development and the opportunities that exist to create linkages between local food and tourism. Industry and local tourism expert perceptions on the importance of food and tourism link were then analyzed using on-line surveys conducted with tourism operators and experts. In the surveys, 12 operators and six

experts participated. Current tourism marketing does not feature local food as an important part of the Maldives tourism experience. Food in marketing was largely focused on overseas food items and presentation styles. At present food in tourism marketing represents foreign cultures more than local culture and traditions. Most of the images and descriptions of food in marketing materials were focused on foreign foods. In the images where tourists were pictured with food, they were featured mostly with foreign food.

Proper traditional attire to be worn by staff on "Maldivian nights": Staff at tourism establishments usually wear uniforms. While the uniforms of some establishments have some semblance of Maldivian cultural attire, not all establishments follow this rule. Given that there are not many opportunities for tourists to experience Maldives culture and local ways of life, "Maldivian nights" projects an opportunity to exhibit the unique traditional attire of Maldives and the richness of the culture that it portrays. – Displaying tradition and culture in the presentation of dishes and cultural dances: Currently, tourist establishments practice foreign methods in decoration and presentation of food, such as vegetable, fruit and butter carvings. Food display, decoration and presentation have special ways and styles in Maldivian cuisine and culture that use local products and techniques

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