



SCUBA DIVING ON KURAMATHI

Spectacular marine life, vibrant reefs, warm waters and big fish encounters make Kuramathi a diving destination not to be missed. Add this to the wonderful natural island beauty, comfortable accommodation and an excellent range of facilities and you have the perfect location for your diving holiday!

The Rasdhoo Divers team, under the Anglo-Austrian management of Instructor trainers, Matt Berry and Helmuth Steuber has been providing exciting, but safe dives for adventurous Kuramathi guests amongst the amazing marine life and warm waters of the Indian Ocean, since 1994. Our experienced, multi-lingual dive team provides a friendly and professional service to our guests and our enthusiastic instructors will inspire beginners to discover this amazing liquid world while learning to dive with SSI or PADI. Experienced divers will also find challenging dives with many types of sharks, mantas, turtles, rays, napoleons, barracuda, trevally and tuna as well as many of the smaller, but no less interesting inhabitants of the reef.

Kuramathi is blessed by having an amazing Hammerhead Shark Point a mere eight minutes away by boat – one of the few remaining places in the world where you can still see these magnificent creatures.



Comfort and convenience for diving guests on diving trips is assured with our spacious, 15 meter, purpose-built, modern, fiberglass diving dhonis equipped with freshwater shower, toilet and DAN twin cylinder oxygen and First Aid kits. The dive dhonis are also fast, so allow us to reach more than 20 spectacular local dive sites in an average boat ride of just 15 minutes. Our local Rasdhoo atoll trips are supplemented by half day and full day safari trips to dive some of the best sites in neighbouring North Ari atoll. Please find more info. about some of our dive sites and our weekly dive program in the later pages of this folder.





Our knowledgeable dive team is complemented by the resident marine biologist and the Eco Centre (complete with whale skeleton!) where you can find out everything you wish to know about marine life and improve your “fish” knowledge at regular presentations.

We mainly use Scubapro dive equipment with Suunto dive computers, while our compressors are Bauer Pure Air certified and NRC for nitrox. We also provide nitrox for free to offer divers that extra safety margin and we are well-supported by the Kuramathi Medical Centre and Hyperbaric Chamber.

So whether you are a young diver, a family, a complete beginner, a single diver, a couple or a group of experienced divers, we invite you to come and dive with us and join the adventure!

WHERE TO FIND US



We are located near the Main reception (where you first arrived on the island) in the same area as the Eco Centre, Aqua Excursions Centre and Kuramathi Medical Centre. We are often out diving, but every day we are always open for your enquiries or registration between **11.30 and 12.30** and again from **17.00 to 18.30**. Please stop by and see us!

LEARNING TO DIVE

Kuramathi is an ideal place to learn to dive with warm water (29°C), good visibility, a shallow lagoon for training on one side of the island and stunning reefs teeming with marine life on the other. Each year these near perfect conditions help us to introduce many guests to this incredible world. So if you have watched the breathtaking images of National Geographic or the Blue Planet with divers seemingly suspended in a blue void, surrounded by thousands of shimmering fish pulsating with the energy of a vast ocean and thought, “Wow that looks like an amazing world and I want to explore it too!” Now is your chance. Don’t be intimidated even if you are apprehensive – being a little nervous is totally normal - just stop by and try it. Our “cool, calm and collected” professional instructor team will guide you through the first steps and do everything to help you have an excellent first diving experience. Please read on in the next pages discover more information on Beginner courses.





DIVING FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Scuba diving is an excellent adventure for kids and can also be a wonderful family adventure. The Bubblemaker (max. depth just 2 meters) is the perfect introduction to diving for children of 8 or 9 or even older. It is simply about putting on a mini set of dive gear and swimming around just under the surface on Kuramathi House reef and making lots of bubbles.

From **10 years** of age, children can try diving with the Discover Scuba Diving or Try Scuba Diving course and even go on and obtain a junior diving certification. More and more children are learning to dive at a young age and many of their parents are joining them in this amazing experience. If this will not be the case with your family, our instructors will always take care of the kids and ensure they have a safe and fun experience. More details about diving for children and families, both for beginners and certified divers, can be found in the following pages.

BEGINNER COURSES - LEARNING TO DIVE WITH US

If you like snorkeling, the chances are you'll **love** diving – so why not take your first step into the blue with Rasdhoo Divers!? Ever imagined how would it feel to be immersed in a giant aquarium of color, light and life or even swim eye to eye with a turtle or a huge manta ray? Well - if you've dreamt of any of the above, in your mind you're already a diver!

DISCOVER SCUBA DIVING/TRY SCUBA DIVING



Discover Scuba Diving (DSD) and **SSI Try Scuba Diving** are the well-established “try dive” courses for complete beginners and are an easy and fun introduction into diving. The course takes place in the shallow lagoon or on the stunning house reef of Kuramathi and with maximum four participants per instructor. It lasts just two hours, but you will discover the amazing appeal and wonder of scuba diving – the feeling of weightlessness, breathing underwater, swimming with and like a fish!

Duration: 2 hours; Price: check our current pricelist.





THE SSI or PADI OPEN WATER DIVER COURSE

After your first experience, you have several options if you want to do more: Ideally, you should continue on **THE OPEN WATER DIVER (OWD) COURSE** which only takes four days including the DSD. With three dives off the boat on the outside reef (and one in the lagoon) you have a great opportunity to see turtles, rays, sharks, morays and numerous other reef fish.



Duration: Four days including the DSD; Price: check our current pricelist.; including all equipment, four open water dives, confined water/lagoon lessons, instruction, certification, required student materials, logbook and boat fees.

Have you heard about nitrox? Nitrox is a great safety option for every diver and this is why we offer **the Open Water Diver course combined with Nitrox certification**. Please ask your instructor for more information about nitrox and its great advantages.

THE SSI or PADI SCUBA DIVER COURSE

Alternatively, **the Scuba Diver** is a 2 day course (including the DSD/Try Scuba) and includes one dive off the boat. This diver certification allows the holder to dive to max. 12m, but always accompanied by a SSI/PADI professional. The course is effectively the first half of the Open Water Diver course and is upgradeable to the OWD any time in the future. This course is perfect for guests who are short of time, but still want to get a certificate so next holiday they do not have to start as a total beginner again. This qualification is valid as a stand-alone certificate without any time restriction and of course the possibility exists to upgrade in two days to the Open Water Diver.



Duration: 2 days including the DSD; Price: check our current pricelist; including all equipment, two open water dives, confined water/lagoon lessons, instruction, certification, required student materials, logbook and boat fee.

If you just do not have time for a certification course, then you should at least try to do a **REPEAT DISCOVER SCUBA DIVE FROM THE BOAT** to really experience the fantastic variety of marine life living in this beautiful ocean surrounding Kuramathi. You will see many more fish and will be accompanied by an instructor or a divemaster throughout your dive.

Duration: 2 hours; Price: check our current pricelist.





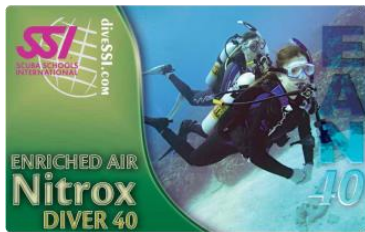
AFTER YOUR CERTIFICATION COURSE

Congratulations! – if you have done a certification course, you are now a certified diver. Maybe you are now addicted to the ocean and feel the need to do some more dives! If so, if you did the Open Water diver certification you may consider enrolling on the Advanced course (five dives–minimal theory), a nitrox course or even a specialty course like the Digital Underwater Photographer. Alternatively, if you feel you would just like to make a couple of more dives, then our pricelist “Simply Diving” can be found at the end of this folder.

ADVANCED COURSES - DEEPER INTO DIVING

NITROX COURSES

Do you think nitrox is some strange gas for hard core technical divers who dive to deep into the abyss? In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Nitrox is simply enriched air – i.e. more oxygen, less nitrogen and therefore you have the advantage of extended no decompression time. This provides great safety advantages for every diver and in addition, for some dives it is very rewarding to use some of that extra no deco. time to stay a bit longer at depth (i.e. on the Hammerhead dive). We now offer combination Open Water Diver + Nitrox and Advanced + Nitrox courses.



Combine your Nitrox course within your Advanced or Open Water course.

THE SSI ADVANCED ADVENTURER OR PADI ADVANCED COURSE

Do you already have your Open Water Diver certificate, but would like the freedom to dive a bit deeper (i.e. the Hammerhead Shark dive) or are you interested in learning more about a special area of diving such as night diving, underwater photography, our amazing marine life or keen to improve your buoyancy and air consumption? The Advanced course is just five dives and is great fun with minimal theory.

Duration: min. two days; Price: check our current pricelist, including 5 dives, certification, required materials.





REFRESHER COURSE

Already done a diving certification course, but life has been busy lately and you have not dived for year or two (or even more)? No problem. We do regular refresher courses for people just like you where we ease you back into diving with a few of the basic exercises and a nice, shallow dive in a beautiful ocean.

Duration: Approx. 2 hours; Price: check our current pricelist.

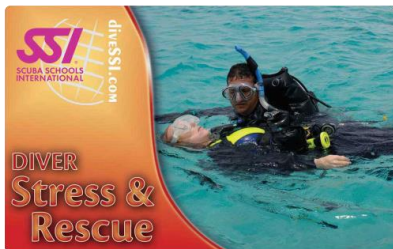
SPECIALTY COURSES

We offer a wide range of SSI and PADI specialty courses so you can learn more about a specific area of diving that may particularly appeal to you. A few great specialties especially for the Maldivian environment are: Enriched Air Nitrox, Digital Underwater Photography, Drift, Fish ID, Shark, Underwater Naturalist, plus many others such as Wreck, Night and Deep.

Duration: Specialty courses include zero to four dives depending on the individual specialty. Price: check our current pricelist, including required student materials, instruction and certification.



PADI RESCUE DIVER or SSI STRESS AND RESCUE COURSE (on request)



A challenging and rewarding course, but still great fun. Increase your confidence as a diver, improve your awareness about the diving environment and gain some experience in emergency management and prevention.

Duration: min. three days; Price: check our current pricelist, including certification and required materials.

DIVEMASTER COURSE (on request)

Dreaming about leaving the office and swapping your business suit for a wetsuit, then the divemaster course is an excellent choice and your first step to becoming a dive professional!

Duration: min. two weeks; Please enquire for prices and availability.





DIVING FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

We offer some great beginner courses especially for children and families, but if you or your children are already divers, we will do our best to make a small group just for your family and take you on some great dives suitable for all the diving members of the family. Apart from beginner courses and diving we also offer the Junior Advanced and other courses suitable for Juniors with more experience. Please simply ask your instructor. Ask about our seasonal family specials!

THE BUBBLEMAKER!

A fun and easy first dive experience for young kids. We have junior sized equipment for the young diver.



Requirements: Min. age 8 years; fit to dive
Location: Kuramathi House reef;
Maximum depth: 2 meters
Usual duration: 1 hour (30 minutes in water)
Price: check our current pricelist.

DISCOVER SCUBA DIVING (DSD)/TRY SCUBA DIVING

Is perfect for kids who just want to try Scuba diving and see how it is to breathe and swim underwater. Join us in our shallow sandy lagoon or on our beautiful house reef for a shallow dive.

Requirements: Min. age 10 years; fit to dive
Location: Kuramathi Lagoon or House Reef
Usual duration: max. 2 hours (45 minutes in water)
Max. Depth: usually 6 meters
Price: check our current pricelist.





PADI or SSI JUNIOR SCUBA DIVER COURSE

Is a 2 day course (including the DSD) and includes one dive off the boat. This diver certification allows the holder to dive to max. 12m, but always accompanied by a PADI/SSI professional. The course is effectively the first half of the Open Water Diver course and is upgradeable to the OWD any time in the future.



Requirements: Min. age 10 years; fit to dive;

Location: Lagoon and local beginner dive sites

Usual duration: 2 days at a relaxed pace

Max. Depth: 12 meters

Included: All equipment, two open water dives, confined water/lagoon lessons, instruction, certification, required student materials, logbook, boat fee.

Price: check our current pricelist.

PADI or SSI JUNIOR OPEN WATER DIVER (OWD)

The course takes four days including the DSD. With three open water dives off the boat on the outside reef (and one in the lagoon) junior divers will have a great opportunity to see turtles, rays, sharks, morays and numerous other reef fish.



Requirements: Min. age 10 years; fit to dive;

Location: Lagoon and local beginner dive sites

Usual duration: 4 days at a relaxed pace

Max. Depth: 12 meters for 10 & 11 year olds; 18 meters for 12 year olds and above.

Included: All equipment, four open water dives, confined water/lagoon lessons, instruction, certification, required student materials, logbook, boat fees.

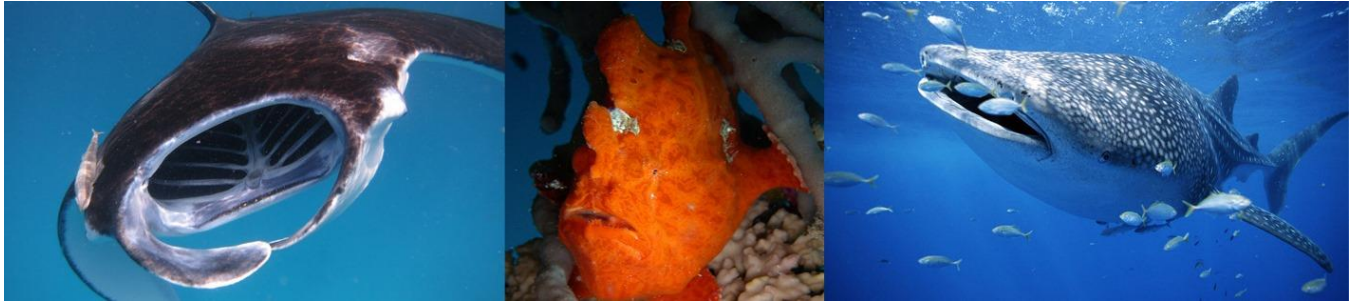
Price: check our current pricelist.

If you would like your children to have the opportunity to try Scuba Diving, then please stop by the dive school and we can explain all the options and answer any queries or concerns that you may have. In addition, there are many Advanced courses also available for children and families. Please ask your instructor about the many opportunities!

SPECIAL OFFERS FOR FAMILIES

Please ask your instructor for details of any seasonal family specials currently on offer!





OUR DIVE PROGRAM AND OUR DIVE SITES

We offer a wide variety of dive trips and dive sites to suit all abilities and levels. Please read on for our typical schedule and general information:

- 6.00 am (!) Hammerhead Shark Point dive – at least three times weekly
- 6.00 am (!) - Half day two dive safari to North Ari – three times weekly on Mondays Wednesdays and Saturdays
- 6.00 am (!) - Full day three dive safari to North Ari on Thursdays.
- 8.30 – Morning dive
- 9.00 – Morning dive
- 14.15 – Afternoon dive
- 18.00 – Night dive – at least four times weekly
- In addition: unguided house reef diving for those with min. the Advanced certificate and 50 logged dives (if conditions suitable).

Rasdho Atoll is a comparatively small atoll and we almost always dive on the outside reef which means we have deep water (+-160m) and this attracts many pelagic species. We have **different types of dive sites** which vary between channels, walls, reefs and thilas. We even have **three wrecks** (40m, 34m and 7m long) in the atoll, the first of which we dive regularly (as a night dive). Drift diving with the current along the outside wall of the atoll is usually easy while channel dives can have more current and are more challenging. (Please find more information about some of our 20 local sites at the end of this section.)

The **fish life** here in Rasdho Atoll is diverse and abundant. You can see several different types of sharks here, eagle rays, sting rays, manta rays (our manta season is really Nov-Apr), turtles (green and hawksbill), barracuda, tuna, napoleons, schools of trevally, groupers, morays, leaf fish, frogfish, ghost pipefish, ribbon eels and much more. Very occasionally we can see the elusive whale shark in Rasdho Atoll or North Ari atoll.

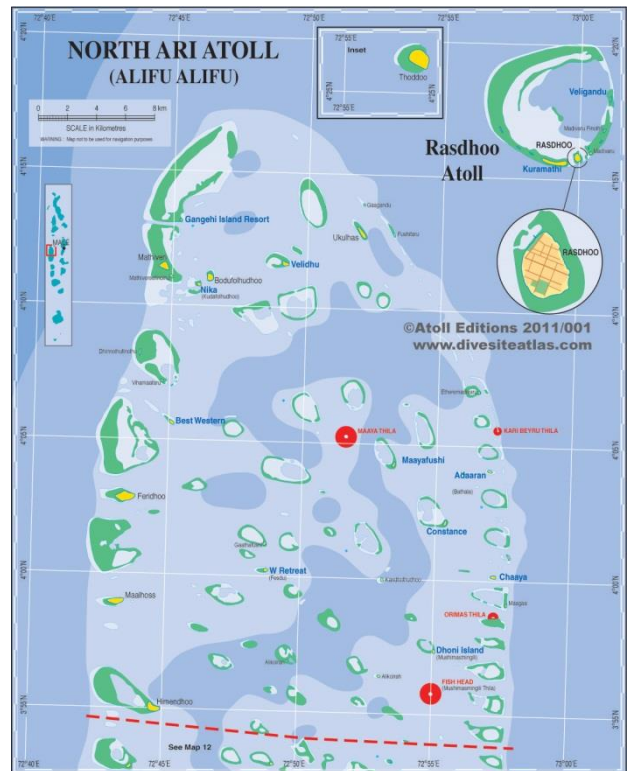




One dive is not enough? Come with us on safari.

Our **weekly full or three times weekly half day dive safaris to North Ari atoll** on Thursdays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays respectively (minimum number of divers required) are not to be missed! We make either two or three dives on some of the famous sites there. Breakfast is included in the half day trip boat fee and also lunch on the full day trip. With the right conditions, this is a wonderful diving adventure and memorable day out on the magnificent Indian Ocean. We often select a few sites from: Maaya Thila, Hafza Thila, Dega Thila, Hohola Thila, Kandholhudhoo Thila, Fishhead, Malhoss Thila, Donkalo Thila, Gangehi Pass, Malhoss Bodu Thila, Bathala Maaga Kanthila, Bathala Thila, Kandholhu house reef, Panettone, Himendhoo Thila, Fesdu Wreck, Orimas Thila, Moofushi Kanduu, etc. depending if we are out for a half day or full day trip. We leave at 6.00 and return around 13.00 on the half day and 17.30 on the full day. Nitrox is of great benefit on both safaris.

Price: check our current pricelist.



Divers can dive unguided with their buddy on **the house reef**, but we specify that they should have at least the Advanced certificate and 50 logged dives, as there is only one and the same entry/exit point and it is not always an easy dive!



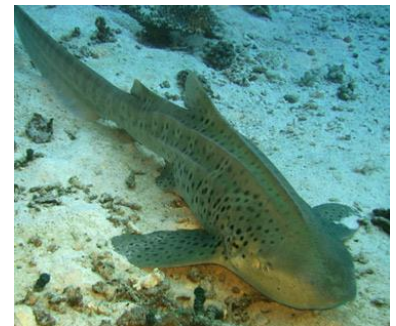


Night diving is available on a 40 m long wreck or on the house reef at least four times a week. Night diving cannot be done unguided.

If you are concerned (or fascinated) about **sharks**, you will see sharks here and even juvenile black-tip reef sharks directly off the beach, but we do not have great whites! Divers will see sharks on most dives with frequent sightings of white-tips, black-tips, grey reef sharks and hammerheads, but leopard sharks, nurse sharks and silvertips can also be spotted. Many visitors, including some divers, are uneasy about



sharks, but usually recognize from observing their behaviour that they are quite wary of us. Most divers find the experience of seeing sharks a fascinating encounter and one of the highlights of their diving adventure here. None of us working here has ever experienced or seen a shark attack and between us we have more than 25,000 dives!



So whether you are a beginner, a young diver, an experienced diver or someone who used to dive and wants to start again, we hope we have convinced you to come and dive with us and experience the beauty and adventure of diving in the Maldives with the Rasdhoo Divers team!





SOME OF OUR DIVE SITES:



Manta Block is a manta cleaning station inside North Channel; the past couple of years during the manta season (November to April) we have always found mantas being cleaned on this large single coral block. The bottom here lies at just 13 meters, but provides for spectacular close encounters with large rays and is a favourite of many divers irrespective of experience level. We often have current here as even though the block lies deep inside the channel, at this relatively shallow depth the water movement is still notable.

Madivaru is a spectacular dive site due to both the topography of the reef and the marine life inhabiting it. This horseshoe-shaped reef structure lies next to the island of Madivaru and the island wall makes up part of the divesite rising to a few meters below the surface. The top of the outer reef lies between 15 and 22 meters and at depth features overhangs and promontories. Healthy corals are plentiful and a large sand patch at 26m is a central feature of the dive site. Madivaru is always a great dive, some dives are just more breathtaking than others. Here we can often find a school of grey reef sharks, large dogtooth tunas, schools of eagle rays and mobulas, large schools of trevally and jacks, white tip reef sharks, sting rays, a school of barracuda, mantas in season, napoleons and turtles. Very occasionally we also have dolphins sucking garden eels out of the sand like spaghetti, the odd guitar shark, a few scalloped hammerheads or a lone great hammerhead, a few silvertips and almost anything else you can think of big or small that lives underwater in the Maldives! It rarely disappoints even with poor visibility or on “quiet” days.



Caves is approximately a 20 minute boat ride from Kuramathi and is located on the western end of the atoll past the sandbank. There are many large overhangs here, but also two caves through which divers can swim. In the caves and overhangs we can often find white tips, stingrays or even nurse sharks. Only advanced divers will be able to reach both caves and most of the overhangs, but open water divers can also reach one cave and the shallower overhangs. A favourite of many repeat diving guests.





HAMMERHEADS !! – diving with Hammerhead sharks is our specialty! World famous **Hammerhead Shark Point** is situated a mere five minutes boat ride from Kuramathi, and we make this Advanced dive at least three times a week. It is one of the few remaining places left in the world where you can still see these magnificent animals. Nevertheless, you still have to get up early if you want to dive with the hammerheads. The best time is around sunrise which means about 6.00 am! It's a spectacular dive and there is something

special about jumping into the 29C water in the soft light of dawn and letting yourself descend 30 meters into the blue. The sparkling blue plankton lights our path and the surgeonfish accompany us as we hover in the deep waiting for the hammerheads (up to 4 meters long) to appear from the depths. If you see a large hammerhead up close and personal, the image will probably remain with you long after your holiday is over. Even if you are unlucky and the hammerheads decide not to show, most divers still find this dive a fascinating experience.



Rasdho Channel is a big scenery, big fish, advanced channel crossing between Kuramathi and the neighbouring local island of Rasdhoo. An excellent dive with the right conditions – ideally with medium current pushing mainly across and slightly in - to provide good visibility and an easy passage drifting from one thila to the next. These thilas are huge coral blocks which are mounted on the 30 meter sandy bottom of the channels outer edge before it drops into the open ocean and a depth of almost 200 meters. The top side of these large thilas is found between 22 and 27 meters so it is a

deep dive and a great dive on nitrox. Rasdhoo Channel often features grey reef sharks, white tips, stingrays, napoleons, turtles, eagle rays, lots of big groupers, many large snappers and sometimes you really do not know where to look. Even on quieter days, the channel is a memorable dive just for the impressive landscape of the thilas and the sand between them and there is somehow an odd feeling of accomplishment in achieving the crossing from one island to the other.





North Channel is about twenty minutes by boat and in season is one of our best spots for mantas. The channel is relatively shallow and we rarely dive deeper than 20 meters here so it is in range for competent open water divers and much of the dive is spent at between 10 and 15 meters. Nevertheless the current can run hard here so choosing the right time to visit is important. Mantas can be seen at several shallow cleaning stations in the channel or on a massive thila named Veligandu Thila which borders the Veligandu side of the channel and can offer an exciting dive by itself. If manta season has come and gone, the channel is still a great dive where divers can find a huge school of jacks, many napoleons and groupers, white tips and the occasional grey reef shark, honeycomb moray eels, stingrays, lionfish, leaf fish and an amazing variety of brightly painted reef fish.



Veligandu North is a finger-like reef protruding out of the island of Veligandu. A favourite of some of our dive guides because of the marine life that sharp-eyed divers can find and photograph there. We travel a mere 15 minutes to reach the site on our fast comfortable dhonis and we dive on the outside edge of the finger. The top of the reef lies at between 3 and 6 meters and once below the reef top, the current runs reef parallel and we enjoy an easy drift dive. The reef contains many small overhangs and it is

within these overhangs that we can usually find several members of the rare ghost pipe fish family and leaf fish family. This reef is also “moray city” as it is full with many different species of moray, the most spectacular being the honeycomb moray or the white mouth moray. In addition, with a little luck we find feeding turtles, napoleons and a few white tip sharks as we progress along the reef. In season mantas or mobulas are also regularly sighted. The dive is suitable for all levels and the most interesting marine life is found between 8 and 18 meters though the reef descends to between 35 and 40 meters before reaching a scrubby plateau.





Rasdho is an interesting site with the wall of the island of Rasdho on one side and massive coral blocks (or thilas) mounted on the outside steep drop-off of the atoll. These two features create a corridor of sand between the inner reef and outer thilas, in places only 20 meters wide. The aqua dynamics of this corridor seem to attract mantas in season, and on the sandy bottom we often find resting stingrays and white tip sharks. The thilas provide encounters with hunting jacks and trevally, white-tip and grey reef sharks, eagle rays and occasionally large diamond rays. The individual thilas are inhabited by a beautiful resident blue ribbon eel, mantis shrimp and many morays and various reef fish. Napoleons are often spotted on Rasdho along with hawksbill turtles, plentiful sweetlips and snappers.



Fan Reef is a great dive and divers are often amazed by what they can see just two minutes boat ride from the main dive jetty. Fan reef is situated on one corner of Kuramathi island and if the current is running west we often jump in the narrow sand patch between Kuramathi house reef and the first thila of Rasdho Channel. This is an excellent point to start the dive as even though it is somewhat current exposed, this small area often provides an immediate sighting upon descent either of eagle rays, napoleon, barracudas, white tip and grey reef sharks, stingrays or a leopard shark and the descent with good visibility can open up a magical panorama below you. Fan reef is an easy wall dive and so is perfect for beginners and open water divers and most of the good stuff can be seen at shallow depths. However it is also a dive much appreciated by experienced divers and photographers. It is not a straight wall and features several large bays, a spectacular plateau and craggy coral blocks with overhangs, cracks and crevices. In the bays we often find white-tips sleeping, black tips patrolling and a leopard shark or two dozing. Eagle rays and tuna often fly by or circle in the bays and horse-eye jacks hunt fusiliers and other small fish with astonishing speed and agility. The shallow reef top at the eastern end is bedecked with huge healthy table corals and stunning reef fish. Up to a dozen semi-mature black tip reef sharks (1.2 to 1.4 meter) often circle on a highly photogenic shallow plateau and make this dive a thrilling experience, even if they are still juveniles – they are not shy! Turtles, napoleons and stingrays are often seen in the area too.





Boduga means big block (bodu-ga) in the Maldivian language of “Dhivehi” and indeed a large coral block sits just 2m under the surface at the end of the island of Kuramathi near the sandbank. This block is enveloped in reef fish. Descending from the block, one finds a sandy plateau at 25m where coral blocks litter the floor. Here we can often spot white-tips and jacks chasing fusiliers and stingrays or a leopard shark resting on the sandy bottom. Eagle rays often pass in the blue or circle in the mildly turbulent current sometimes found here. Deeper a large overhang is found at 30m. The coral blocks mounted on the plateau are full of fishlife varying from sweetlips, to snappers to groupers and other species. Once we leave the plateau, the dive develops into a steep wall dive along which we drift with the current and keep our eyes open for sharks and rays in the blue and morays and turtles sheltering on the reef. The dive is suitable for all levels as ultimately this is a wall dive starting at 5m, but open water divers will remain shallower and not descend to the plateau.



More dive site descriptions will follow soon.

