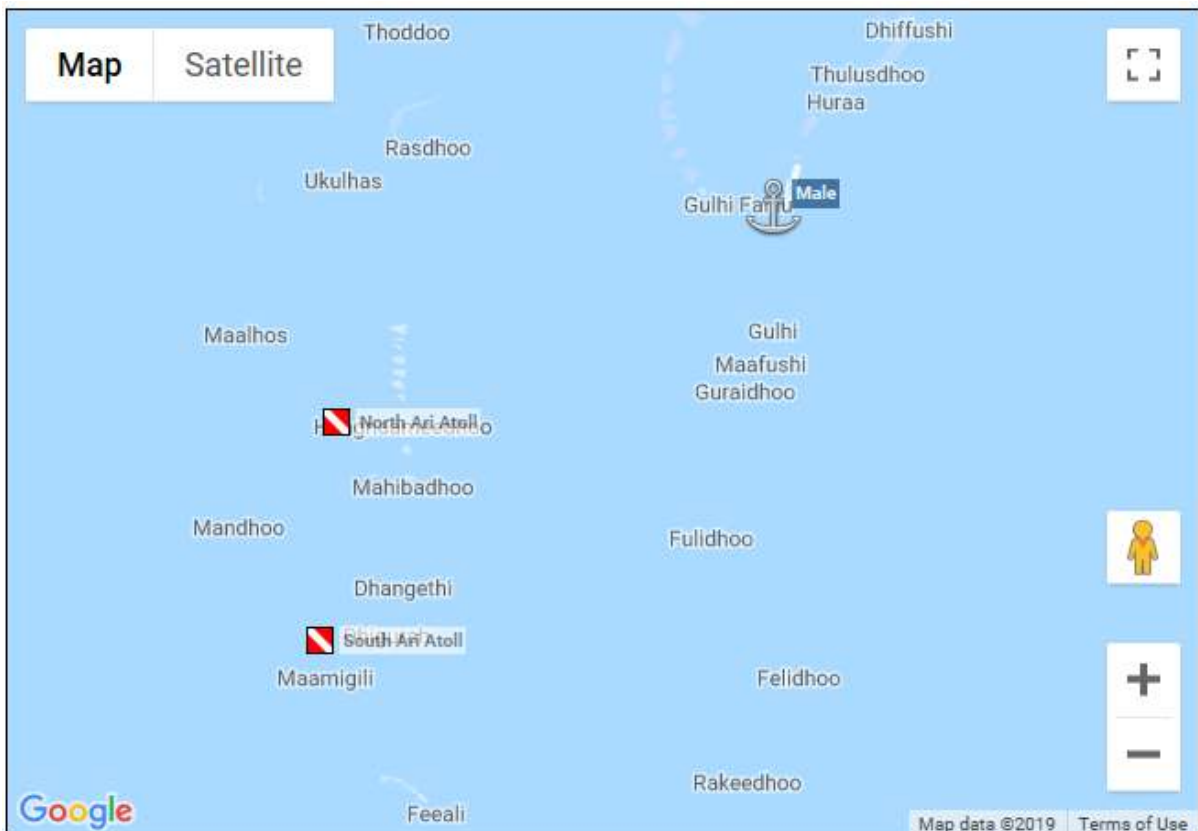


Pelagic Magic (April - July)

7 days

You don't need a minimum number of dives but you should be comfortable with drift dives, as currents can be unpredictable and strong. If you are an Open Water Diver, some dives are below 18m therefore we recommend having advanced experience or taking your PADI Advanced Open Water course on board to maximise your enjoyment from the trip. Inexperienced and beginner divers may find some dives challenging and may be asked by the Cruise Director to skip dives that are not suitable for their diving experience. All diving is made from dhonis to give precise entry and exit points.



- [North Ari Atoll](#): Grey Reef Sharks, Maaya Thila Night Dive, Multiple Manta Cleaning Stations
- [South Ari Atoll](#): Whale Sharks, Beautiful Pinnacles

On this route we take you on a manta and whale shark journey to the North & South Ari Atolls having crossed over from Male. Exact dive sites will vary depending on diver experience levels, local conditions and where the best sightings have been.

Pelagic Magic gets you face to face with the famous whale sharks of Ari Atoll. As this itinerary devotes more time here, you are certain to get your whaleshark fix at Maamagili. Iconic dive follows iconic dive as you sail from Male through North Ari and then onto South Ari; your log book will fill with shark and manta sightings as well as outstanding reef dives. Then grab your snorkel and splash in to float only feet away from graceful whale sharks. Pelagics of all shapes and sizes await.

With around 17 dives, as well as opportunities to snorkel with the whale sharks, this is an action packed week. The pelagic sightings start right from the beginning. Manta Point (otherwise known as Lankan Finolhu) is a cleaning station with reliable manta sightings. Just settle down and watch the manta swoop in. Hafsa Thila and Maya Thila are yet more iconic dive site where sharks are plentiful. Look out for baby white tips under the large table corals. But it is at night that Maya Thila really comes alive. Reef sharks and marble morays hunt dinner out as morays slink between the coral blocks.

As you reach South Ari keep a look out for the whale sharks. Maamagili is the place to find whale sharks at this time as they follow the seasonal currents. Manta chase plankton trails too into the nearby lagoons. Between your pelagic encounters, the reef dives will not disappoint. Discover the lush corals and schooling fish at the likes of Reethi Thila and Kuda Rah.

This is a great itinerary for everyone. No matter what your experience level this is a Maldives itinerary you can enjoy. There can be some drift diving so some experience of diving in currents is advisable. Don't forget to take your reef hook to make shark watching all the easier. As so many of the best whaleshark encounters are snorkelling, everyone can feel the thrill of seeing these graceful creatures in their natural environment. Pelagic Magic runs when the pelagics sightings are at their optimum in North and South Ari. Don't delay - discover the biggest inhabitants of the Maldives for yourself.

North Ari Atoll

Ari Atoll (also called Alif or Alufu Atoll) is one of natural atolls of the Maldives. It is one of the biggest atolls and is located in the west of the archipelago. The almost rectangular alignment spreads the islands over an area of about 89x30 kilometres. It has been divided in two sections for administrative purposes, Northern Ari Atoll and Southern Ari Atoll.

Here are some possible sites you may visit:

- **Hafsa Thila** - Known for its grey reef shark cleaning station, this site is like fish soup. Pick the side with the current, drop in and swim through the fish until you see the pinnacle. If the sharks are already on top of the pinnacle then simply stay there mesmerised by the sharks in circle. Dog-tooth tuna, bonito and giant travelly shepherd the thousands of fusiliers, which creates quite a spectacle when the bonito finally decide to go for the kill and when the others follow suit you can feel the energy of thousands of fish accelerating in unison.

- **Maaya Thila** - Maaya Thila is one of the most famous dive sites in the Maldives and is known as a great spot for both daytime and night-time scuba diving. The marine life depends largely on the currents, which vary greatly; when the currents are not strong, it is an easy dive site, suitable for less experienced divers, but when currents are strong Maaya Thila is recommended for only advanced divers and they will need to use a surface balloon.
Maaya Thila is most famous for the white tip reef sharks that can nearly always be seen here, both during the day and night. A night dive at Maaya Thila also allows divers to encounter moray eels, turtles, octopus and stonefish.
- **Gangehi Kandhu** - Recommended only for advanced scuba divers, the Gangehi Kandhu dive site is located in the northern part of the Ari Atoll. Currents here can also be an issue, and the site should only be dived when the currents are flowing into the site. Gangehi Kandhu is known as one of the best dive sites in the Maldives for spotting sharks, including gray reef sharks, white tip reef sharks and the occasional leopard shark. Coral formations at this dive site are particularly colorful, and divers here can expect to see moray eels, nudibranch, mantis shrimp and trigger fish. Large pelagic species are also frequent visitors to the site.
- **Maalhos Thila** - Maalhos Thila is only suitable for experienced scuba divers because the best part of the dive site lies deeper than 25 metres. Maalhos Thila is an attractive dive spot, featuring several coral heads about 28 metres below the surface, all of which are covered with beautiful corals. Common visitors to the reef here include oriental sweetlips, white tip reef sharks and blue-lined snappers. Because of the strong currents at Maalhos Thila, a safety balloon must be deployed here to ensure the divers' safety.
- **Mushi Mas Mingili Thila (Fish Head)** - Fish Head, or Mushi Mas Mingili, is one of the most popular dive sites in Maldives. Prior to the site being declared an official Protected Marine Area by the Maldivian Government it was a common shark feeding spot among scuba divers. Marine life typically seen at Mushi Mas Mingili Thila includes gray reef sharks, white tips, napoleon wrasse, jacks and tuna.

South Ari Atoll

Ari Atoll (also called Alif or Alufu Atoll) is one of natural atolls of the Maldives. It is one of the biggest atolls and is located in the west of the archipelago. The almost rectangular alignment spreads the islands over an area of about 89x30 kilometres. It has been divided in two sections for administrative purposes, Northern Ari Atoll and Southern Ari Atoll.

Here are some possible sites you may visit:

- **Maamigili Beyru** - 11km of reef stretches along the south of Ari Atoll, which is home to whalesharks coming up for a feed. Thought to be a 'nursery' for whalesharks, the South of Ari Atoll is a place where you can find juvenile whalesharks all year round. Normally, if we find one, we snorkel with it but sometimes we get lucky and see them on the dive too!
- **Rangali Madivaru** - Madivaru is Dhivehi (Maldivian language) for Manta Point and Rangali Madivaru doesn't disappoint! As one of the best manta cleaning stations in the Maldives during the north east monsoon (December - April), this long stretch of reef starts at 8m going down to a sandy bottom at 24m - 30m. Teeming with cleaner wrasse as well as moray eels, scorpion leaf fish and lionfish. Mantas come in for a clean after having a feed; and with the reef acting as one long cleaning station from 8m to 12m, this is a great site for getting photos of mantas with good light.
- **Rahdhiga Thila** - A beautiful pinnacle just 10 minutes from Rahdhiga Island and a popular stop for the 'BBQ on the Beach' under the stars. Rahdhiga Thila is impressive from the second you swim down to 30m to look at some grey reef sharks, then moving

up to the overhangs with their beautiful dripping blue, yellow and orange soft coral between 8m and 18m. Then finish the dive at 3m to 6m with some impressive table-top coral for a pleasantly relaxing safety stop.

- **Broken Rock** - Named for a large broken rock at the center of this dive site, Broken Rock is home to a beautiful array of soft and hard coral formations that attract a wide variety of reef. Where the rock is broken, there is a channel that divers can swim through, giving the dive an interesting dimension. Broken Rock varies in depth from 40 to 100 feet. Sometimes, there can be very strong currents at Broken Rock, so divers should be cautious to avoid being thrown against the coral. Among the marine life often seen at Broken Rock, common sightings include the puffer fish, trigger fish, moray eels and napoleon wrasse.
- **Kudarah Thila** - Declared a "Protected Marine Area" by the Maldivian government, Kudarah Thila is a popular dive site which enjoys many incoming currents. Coral reef formations at Kudarah Thila are bright and colorful, including a variety of soft and hard corals. Thila means "Pinnacle" in Dhivehi, and at Kudarah Thila there are actually four pinnacles, which can be all visited in one dive. A swim-through at the south-east corner of the dive site makes this a particularly popular dive, as does the rich variety of marine life, which typically includes trumpet fish, snapper, gobies, dartfish, oriental sweetlips and groupers. A little further away from the reef, divers are likely to see gray reef sharks, napoleon fish and sea turtles.
- **Pannettone (Kalhahandi Kandu)** - Kalhahandi Kandu has earned the nickname Pannettone from the many Italian divers who believe it resembles the traditional Italian fruitcake. It is an attractive dive site, recommended mainly for advanced scuba divers, except for when the currents are not strong. There are some spectacular coral formations here, featuring a variety of soft and hard coral species, which attract a wide selection of fish including angelfish, basslets, butterfly fish, scorpion fish, trigger fish, puffer fish and . The corals here are in good condition and weather conditions at Pannettone mean the dive site can be explored year-round.