

MALDIVES

9th - 21st October 2023 (12 nights) | From \$2,600 per person*



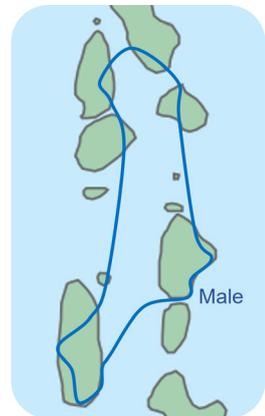
MANTA PASSION TRIPS: Are you obsessed with mantas? Do you never tire of diving with these gentle giants? Does your heart beat faster every time a manta swims above your head? Do you dream about spending hours and hours with these majestic creatures, while actively helping protect them and learn more about their mysterious lives? Then this expedition is **MADE FOR YOU!**



THE EXPEDITION

This expedition has been specifically designed for people who are **IN LOVE with manta rays**, and are eager to see as much of them as possible! The trip is timed to coincide with the most productive monsoon winds and lunar currents, which strongly influence the movements and feeding habits of reef manta rays. The aim of this trip is to use the knowledge of Manta Trust experts to find feeding aggregations, and allow guests to experience the wonder of immersing themselves amongst a feeding frenzy of these gentle giants.

Differing from other Manta Expeditions, on this trip we aim to **dive almost exclusively with mantas**, carrying out long surveys on both cleaning and feeding sites, exploring and looking for new manta aggregation sites and undertake more in-depth research activities. Activities planned to be undertaken on this special expeditions include animal wing span measurements, ultrasound scanning for pregnancies and photo identification!



Baa Atoll is off the main route for the majority of dive liveboards. We will venture into this more northern atoll for a few days specifically to seek out the spectacular feeding mantas of Hanifaru Bay (and hopefully a few whale sharks as well!). To see one of the world's largest fish feeding amongst dozens of one of the world's largest rays is something most people will never forget.

On this particular expedition we will venture even further north into **Raa and Noonu Atolls**. Here we will conduct surface and in-water surveys, with the aim of identifying new manta aggregation sites whilst gathering critical data on the mantas inhabiting these remote atolls, of which very little is currently known.

Ari Atoll hosts the second largest manta population in the country, and we will have chances of finding both manta feeding and cleaning aggregations. The highlight of this atoll is the opportunity of swimming with **mantas feeding at night** within one of the local lagoons. While the weather in the Maldives at this time of the year is likely to be more variable, these monsoonal conditions are exactly what create the planktonic blooms upon which the mantas and whale sharks aggregate to feed. Furthermore, we can never guarantee these natural events, but we have put together a trip which maximises our chances of being in the right place at the right time, guided by the expertise of one of the Manta Trust's Project Leader, Niv Froman.

CITIZEN SCIENCE - GET INVOLVED!

On this expedition, you'll have the opportunity to experience and participate in **cuttingedge conservation** research to protect one of the ocean's most majestic animals. Manta Trust scientists will be collecting photographic identification images of all mantas encountered throughout the expedition - a task that guests are welcome and encouraged to participate in. All new manta rays will be added to the database and guests will be invited to name these new mantas.



TRIP LEADER

NIV FROMAN

Niv has been passionate about nature for as long as he can remember. His dream has always been to live in close contact with the world's wild places and to try to



understand their fascinating mysteries. After graduating summa cum laude with a degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Milan, Niv completed a Masters degree in Environmental Management, focusing primarily on animal behaviour and evolution.

In 2010, Niv started working as a marine biologist in the Maldives, an experience that brought him closer to marine life and developed his passion for the underwater world. Building on his background as a professional swimmer, Niv quickly became a proficient freediver and qualified as a Dive Master.

Following his first encounters with the Maldivian manta rays, their complex and poorly understood behaviour drove his desire to learn more about these majestic animals and work to aid in their conservation. It was this drive that brought Niv to the Manta Trust, with whom he worked as the Project Leader for the Maldivian Manta Ray Project from 2013 to 2017.

In 2017 Niv moved on to lead the development of the IDtheManta platform as Global Database Manager and began in 2018 his PhD on the reproductive ecology of the reef manta population of the Maldives at Cambridge University. This exciting new project aims to shed new light into the mysterious life of these gentle giants and aid improving their conservation status.

Throughout the expedition, Niv will be providing lectures and informal talks on manta ray and whale shark research and conservation. In addition, Niv will conduct general presentations on marine biology, with a focus on the diverse and productive marine ecosystems of the Republic of Maldives.

THE MANTA TRUST

A UK registered charity, the Trust's mission is to advance the worldwide conservation of manta rays and their habitat through robust science and research, by raising awareness and providing education, influence and action. The Manta Trust was formed in 2011 to co-ordinate global research and conservation efforts for these amazing animals, their close relatives and their habitat.

Data Collection: The Manta Trust has a number of research projects worldwide, incorporating population data, research on manta movements, and genetic analyses - to name a few - in order to better understand the general ecology of manta and mobula rays.



THE BOAT | IRUVAI

Iruvai, which means sunny season in Maldivian language, is a traditional 30 mt long wooden vessel built by local craftsmen in 2008. The boat is divided into three decks with ample indoor and outdoor space including a bar, lounge area and relaxing sundeck with a hot tub! The boat has a total of 9 double/twin cabins, all with a private bathroom and air conditioning and the Master suite has even a bath tub. Iruvai is one of the few Maldivian liveaboards which retain the characteristic and charming Maldivian style, with finishing made in beautiful palm tree wood. This vessel has been recently renovated and continues to offer unforgettable moments to guests from all over the world!

BOOKING

To reserve your place on this special Maldives 'Manta Passion' expedition, please send an email to Niv Froman via info@mantaexpeditions.com.

Payment and booking for this trip will be handled directly by Manta Expeditions. Trip costs for this 12-nights expedition includes transfers from Malé, full board in twin/double shared cabin, unlimited drinking water, American coffee and tea, up to three dives/snorkelling excursions per day and **free NITROX**.

* Cost does not include international flights, Hanifaru park entry fee (USD 20 per person), Green Tax (USD 6 per person per day), rental of dive gear, and Crew Tips to be paid onboard.

** This trip will include a minimum of 13 people, and a max. of 17. The trip price will be reduced according to the number of guests, to a minimum of approximately USD \$2,600 with 17 guests. Upper deck cabin supplement USD \$100 per person, Master suite supplement USD \$300 per person.