

MANTA
EXPEDITIONS

MALDIVES

The 500 miles journey!

26 March -
9 April 2023
(14 nights)

4,100 USD*
per person

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THE EXPEDITION

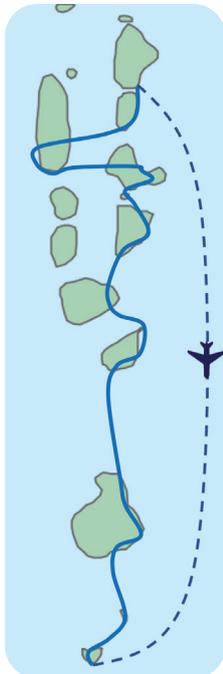
On this manta expedition we will visit 11 of the 26 Maldivian atolls experiencing the best diving the country has to offer on a journey of well over 500 miles! Starting in the southernmost point of the Maldives, we timed this expedition to coincide with the arrival of the [giant oceanic mantas](#) in Fuvahmulah, a small island that acts as a magnet to many other [large pelagic species](#) such as whale sharks, tiger sharks, thresher sharks and more!

The far south of the Maldives is shark territory and here we will have the opportunity to dive in some of the most shark-populated channels where schools of [dozens of grey reef sharks](#) are typical! [Tiger sharks](#), [whale sharks by night](#), the occasional [thresher and hammerhead shark](#), schooling eagle rays and resting turtles are just some of the many other attractions we are likely to encounter on this unique expedition.

As we move north into Huvadhoon atoll we will have the unique opportunity to swim with [whale sharks by night](#), a magical experience that will leave you breathless! Huvadhoon and the other southern atolls are also renowned for their stunning channel dives...where we will encounter large schools of patrolling grey reef sharks, eagle rays, resting turtles and maybe the occasional hammerhead too!

Moving further north into Laamu, Meemu and Ari atolls, we will also get the chance to encounter [cleaning reef manta rays](#) at a number of different sites. Vaavu atoll will offer us some spectacular dives on reefs covered in [colorful soft corals](#), further chances to encounter hammerhead sharks and an amazing night dive with dozens of nurse sharks and stingrays. Ari and South Male atolls will finally provide a more diverse diving experience as we will dive some famous sites with breathtaking landscapes and high fish diversity.

With this 14 nights expedition, we have put together a trip which will offer us the chance of encountering [both species of manta rays](#) and experience some of the most spectacular dive sites the Maldives has to offer, guided by the knowledge of The Manta Trust's experts Guilherme Kodja and Jess Haines.



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TRIP LEADERS

JESS HAINES

For as long as she can remember Jess had always dreamed of being a marine biologist. Jess went on to pursue a BSc Honours degree in Zoology at the University of Exeter, and trained to be a PADI Diving Instructor. From University-led research trips to summer holiday volunteering opportunities, Jess began building up her underwater experience, igniting her passion for the ocean and dream to work in Marine Conservation even further.



In 2016, Jess ventured off to the Cayman Islands to work as a Marine Educator and Research Assistant for the Central Caribbean Marine Institute (CCMI). Jess initially moved to the Maldives in 2017 as a Resort Marine Biologist and Diving Instructor, and it was here that she encountered her first manta ray under water. Her fascination in these animals led her to the Manta Trust, where she has now been working as Project Manager for the past three years; she is currently based in Raa Atoll and is completing a Masters by Research to better understand the behaviour, ecology and habitat usage of juvenile reef manta rays.

GUILHERME KODJA

Guilherme Kodja, 46, diver since 2000, PADI AI since 2003. He started his life as a marine conservationist in 2004 and in 2008 published as coauthor the first international scientific publication that placed Brazil in the world map of the regular occurrences of the Oceanic Manta Rays.



From 2010 to 2012 Gui attended five research trips to Tofo, Mozambique. Member of IUCN assessment team for *M. birostris* he also deployed from 2010 to 2012 the first satellite tags on mantas in the South Atlantic. In 2013 he provided technical basis to the Brazilian government to support the CITES proposal by Ecuador and the was a key member in getting manta rays protected in Brazil where the fishing of all mobulids is now prohibited along its entire coastline.

Head of several Diving Expeditions in Brazil, Mozambique, Ecuador and Mexico, Gui is also the founder of "Projecto Megafauna Marinha do Brasil", member of Manta Trust and of the "Latin American Oceanic Manta Ray Alliance".

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

CITIZEN SCIENCE - GET INVOLVED!

On this expedition, you'll have the opportunity to experience and participate in cutting edge 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.

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 coordinate 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 | M/Y CONTE MAX | LUXURY & WELLBEING

Back in 2004, the Maldives did not offer many boats that boasted the same comfort and standard for non-divers as the country's various island resorts. With the launch of the Conte Max that year, the concept of a cruise that combines the rejuvenating experience of diving in the Maldives, with the wellbeing of an on-board ayurvedic spa, was born.

Since its launch, the Conte Max has become one of the best-known and best-loved boats amongst those that regularly visit the Maldives. At 33m (108 ft) in length, she offers eight elegant and comfortable cabins, each with their own spacious en-suite bathroom and air-conditioning. Scuba diving excursions are delivered by a traditional Maldivian dhoni that accompanies the main vessel. If taking a break from the underwater world, the Conte Max offers three sundecks, a bar, two restaurants, onboard WiFi, and TV + CD/DVD player facilities, with a wide-collection of music and movies on offer to help you relax. And of course, there is the Massage Centre, with an onboard Indian masseur offering Ayurvedic treatments to help you unwind.

BOOKING

To reserve your place on this Maldives Manta Expedition, please send an email to [Niv Froman](mailto:Niv.Froman@info@mantaexpeditions.com) at info@mantaexpeditions.com

Trip costs for this 14-nights expedition in full board accommodation and three dives / snorkelling excursions per day includes transfer Male airport/vessel and return, drinking water, coffee and tea and GST tax. **Free NITROX** included!

* Cost does not include Domestic flight Male-Addu (USD 250), Green Tax (USD 6 per person per day), Service Charge (USD 10 per person per day), rental dive gear and alcoholic beverages.