

SUB AQUA

DIVE CENTER

THULHAGIRI ISLAND RESORT & SPA,
NORTH MALE (Kaafu) ATOLL, REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES
Email: info@subaqua-divecenter.com Website: www.subaqua-divecenter.com

Ali Baba Caves

About 20 minutes south-west of Thulhagiri, within the atoll, is Ali Baba Caves. It is an easy dive with usually very little or no current, and a great dive site for 'small stuff' so take your time to explore when diving here.

The wall goes from 4m to 20m and near the bottom are a string of shallow caves with sandy bottoms, filled with glass fish. Exploring the caves you may find sting rays and moray eels, or sometimes nurse sharks and turtles!

Coming shallower you are greeted with lively schools of banner fish on the edge of the reef. Bring a torch on this dive site to appreciate it the most!

Aquarium

Everybody's favourite dive site! Aquarium is located 60 minutes away by boat to the north-east of Thulhagiri and it is quite simply like diving in an aquarium!

There can be a strong current on the corner at the start of the dive but this brings lots of fish. In the large bay at the corner is where the real 'fish soup' begins with so many schools of different variety fish all in one concentrated area. Small overhangs hide large groupers at around 27m, and white tip sharks often rest on the sandy bottom down deeper. Eagle rays and napoleon wrasse frequently join this dive so we dive slowly in this area before ascending to finish the dive on top of a plateau at around 10 meters.

Banana Reef

A famous North-Male Atoll dive site, Banana Reef can have medium to strong current, and therefore can be somewhat challenging but for the more experienced diver, you will love this dive site!

The north-east corner of the dive site has overhangs forming large caves. Some big pinnacles at 12-30 meters form canyons make for nice swim-throughs. Marine life includes huge schools of snappers, fusiliers and banner fish, as well as tunas, napoleons, turtles and occasionally a nurse shark taking rest.

Bandos Rock

Only 20 minutes south of Thulhagiri Island, within the atoll is the house reef on the east side of Bandos Island. The very shallow edge of the slope is covered in large table corals, where small schools of reef fish gather and cruising black tip sharks can often be seen.

In one section of the reef there are tiered overhangs and a few meters of the reef is a nice canyon for divers to swim through. Strong incoming currents means this is a drift dive but mostly an easy, relaxed dive for all levels of diver.

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Barracuda Giri

One of the most famous dive sites in North Male Atoll, Barracuda Giri consists of three small pinnacles. An incredible amount of fish can be seen here. Fusiliers, hunting tunas and jacks, large schools of snappers, banner fish, groupers and larger marine life such as napoleons and rays.

The reef itself and its overhangs are covered in multicoloured soft coral, large gorgonians and bushes of black coral. The top of the pinnacles are alive with clouds of anthias and other fish. Current can be quite strong so good current management is necessary.

Emmathi Faru

Just 20 minutes north-west of Thulhagiri is the dive site of Emmathi Faru. The dive site is the north-west corner of a large faru inside of the atoll. The wall forms little bays with several overhangs housing lobsters or moray eels, or even nurse sharks sleeping in the shelter of glass fish crowds. Go slowly and explore this dive site to find lots of macro life. This is a relaxing dive for all levels of diver.

Hannes Reef

35 minutes south-east of Thulhagiri, inside the Atoll, is Hannes Reef. This dive site is a small tila on the west side of the Maagiri faru, below a large sandy slope. It is protected from most of the typical currents and can make for a relaxing dive, but also an extremely colourful and vivid dive. The top starts at around 20m falling off to slightly below 30m and is thus only accessible to advanced divers.

There are several overhangs on its steep slopes, crowded with glass fish, crabs and the occasional nudibranch. Finishing the dive, you can swim north towards the big faru. It is usually worth to spend some time hanging on the sandy slope looking into the blue because often there are mobulas or napoleons passing by.

HP Reef

Probably the most famous reef in North Male Atoll; often frequented by liveaboard boats as well as day trips. The reef is near Himmafushi Island, around 40 minutes north-east of Thulhagiri. Currents can be really strong here if not dived at the right time and even then good current management is a must.

At the split point of the current you can see schools of fusiliers, tunas, jacks and white tip sharks cruising around. The reef and overhangs are covered with beautiful soft corals. Starting at 15m there are some big blocks forming nice canyons, and often hiding turtles and large groupers. Anywhere along this reef you may encounter eagle rays, big napoleons and green turtles. This is really a world-class dive site!

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Hulagu Maathi Faru

Maathi Faru is a large reef consisting of a long reef wall, reef plateau and a sandy lagoon. It is inside the Atoll, just 15 minutes north of Thulhagiri Island. It is a great dive site for macro life. The west side of Maathi Faru reef is a long and irregular reef with numerous little bays and overhangs harbouring glass fish, black corals and the typical small crustaceans regularly found in such formations. Currents are usually small but given the length of the reef, this dive can sometimes be a bit of a drift dive. The most interesting area of the reef is at depths of 9 to 15m which makes this dive site a great option for beginners or as a relaxing second/third dive of the day.

Jenkins Point

Jenkins Point is a long reef inside a channel, about 35 minutes boat ride south-east of Thulhagiri Island. This is a great dive if you want to experience close encounters with sting rays! You can simply hang in one section of the reef and Jenkins Whip Rays gather around you hunting for food. There are also more moray eels than you will find on any other dive site, in all different variety – honeycomb, white-eyed, fimbriated, undulate and giant morays can all be found here with often different species of moray eel sharing the same hole in the rock! Large schools of banner fish are also characteristic of this dive site. It is shallow, with divers rarely having to go below 12-14 metres to enjoy the best of this dive site.

Lankan Reef

In manta season (May to August), mantas can be found only 35 minutes east of Thulhagiri Island at Lankan Reef. Dives here generally begin on the outer reef, heading towards the south. The rocky reef slope goes from 5m to 30m and more, and has hard corals and boulders. This is a typical outer reef dive in that 'big fish' are often spotted along the reef, including white tip reef sharks, big tunas and jacks.

During the south-west monsoon we stop at the cleaning stations for a good chance of spotting mantas getting cleaned. During the north-east monsoon we continue around the corner, looking for green turtles in the overhangs.

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Lobster Station

This dive site is only 5 minutes away, just south of Thulhagiri's house reef. You will find 2 small tilas with a reef flat in between. You can explore the coral blocks on the sandy slopes, looking for morays, shrimps and octopus. The two tilas are then connected by a rope stretched out across the reef flat and it is possible to see sting rays along this section. Closer to the southern tila, at the end of the rope, you will find many fish and often nurse sharks resting. This is not only for day-dives; if there is little current, it makes for an awesome night dive too!

Maagiri Caves

On the north wall of Maagiri reef is a section with lots of overhangs and different depths between 10 and 30 meters. One big pinnacle just off the reef forms a nice canyon to swim through at 20m, with lots of schooling fish hiding from the current. The outside of the big pinnacle at 30m should also be explored.

Along the wall you can often see turtles, napoleons, honeycomb moray eels and schools of different fish. With strong current it can be a drift dive, but care should be taken with up- and down- currents along the wall.

Maagiri Tila

This dive is a combination of a shallow, sandy faru and a small beautiful tila just off the main reef. The tila sits on a sandy slope and goes from 24m to 10m. Close to the bottom are small overhangs with glassfish, big morays and groupers, and lots of shrimps and pipefish. The top of the reef is one big cloud of orange anthias. It is beautiful!

The dive can be started or finished on the faru, where honeycomb morays and schools of banner fish are common. Currents are typically small during the north-east monsoon but otherwise current is medium-strong here.

Maathi Faru

Only 15 minutes north of Thulhagiri is Maathi Faru dive site. Usually divers start on the wall, peeking into the small holes and overhangs to find big lion fish, morays, shrimps and nudibranchs. On the sandy bottom sting rays can be seen. Big bushes of black corals sometimes hide ghost pipe fish and beautiful wandering anemones.

Towards the end of the dive, you can ascend to the reef plateau to look for turtles and schooling fish, or even swim into the shallow, sandy lagoon to do the safety stop in complete shelter. Macro lovers will enjoy this dive site a lot! Torch light is recommended to find the smaller macro life.

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Paradise Rock

This is really one of North Male Atoll's best dive sites! It can also be one of the most challenging in terms of current and conditions.

The most interesting feature of the dive site, which sits just 25 minute boat ride from Thulhagiri Island, is the selection of big pinnacles to the east of the reef. With tops between 18 and 25m they drop off steeply towards the outside.

Along the entire east side of the main reef are overhangs between 12 and 20m, and all faces and overhangs are covered with soft corals, large sea fans and bushy black corals. Snappers and sweetlips hide in the overhangs while napoleons and turtles are common sightings on the reef top. Stunning dive but good current management is really necessary!

Potato Reef

35 minutes by boat to the south-east of Thulhagiri Island is Potato reef. This is a small tila rising as an oasis of color and life in the middle of a sandy desert. On the north and south the reef slopes down from just 5m to 25m. On the east and west sides there are sandy bays that come as shallow as 10m. The north-east corner has the highest concentration of fish; schools of banner fish, jacks and tunas hover at the split point of the current so look to the blue also!

This reef is home to at least 6 different species of moray, plus a variety of other critters. The shallow reef top is a good place to explore for scorpion fish and maybe a turtle joins you for your safety stop!

Thulhagiri Kuda Tila

Only 5 minutes from Thulhagiri Island is Kuda Tila. This is a 200+m long reef that is 20m deep at the north end but comes shallow to less than 4m depth on the south end.

Between the tila and Thulhagiri's house reef is a sandy channel (16-18m depth), and on the outside of this, the reef drops to 30+ metres.

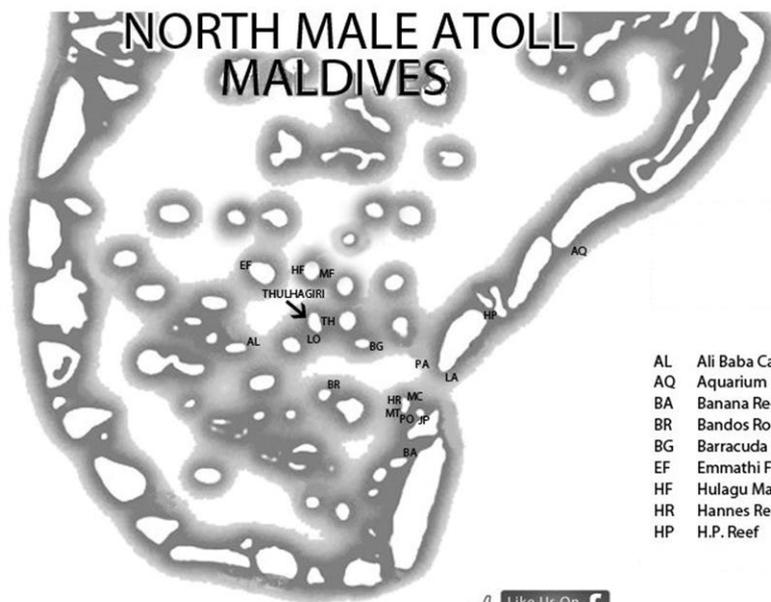
Exploring the deeper part of the tila it is possible to find large groupers, sting rays, and octopus. Ascending shallower, look for lobsters on the tila itself and enjoy the scenery of the swaying leather corals and kaleidoscope of coloured fish.

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Here is a list and map of our most visited dive sites from Thulhagiri Island.
 This is not an exhaustive list and can be subject to change but we hope this list (together with the dive site descriptions) gives you an idea of what it is possible to see while scuba diving with SUB AQUA DiveCenter, Thuhagiri.



AL	Ali Baba Caves	JP	Jenkins Point
AQ	Aquarium	LA	Lankan Reef
BA	Banana Reef	LO	Lobster Station
BR	Bandos Rock	MC	Maagiri Caves
BG	Barracuda Giri	MT	Maagiri Thila
EF	Emmathi Faru	MF	Maathi Faru
HF	Hulagu Maathi Faru	PA	Paradise Rock
HR	Hannes Reef	PO	Potato Reef
HP	H.P. Reef	TH	Thulhagiri Kuda Thila



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