

ES

Magazine

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BAGS to
RICHES:
The RISE and
RISE of ANYA
HINDMARCH

WHAT'S LUXURY
NOW?

FASHION'S
KING OF BLING
Philipp Plein
exposed

Plus:
VICTORIA
BECKHAM'S
little black book
and THE MOST
INDULGENT GIFTS
MONEY CAN BUY

Glamour
makes a
comeback

ESCAPE

EDITED BY DIPAL ACHARYA



An aerial view of the island

WHY GO

Never has the term 'picture-perfect' been more accurate — the beaches are palm fringed and the sea is turquoise and clear. All you need do is relax and swim: this is every frazzled urbanite escapee's fantasy of barefoot, castaway luxury.



WHERE TO STAY

The tiny oval-shaped island of Manafaru, just under a mile in circumference and a total of 36 acres, is situated 300 miles north of the capital, Male. From here, you can reach the north cluster of islands via a 75-minute sea-plane hop. Three hundred friendly staff run the beautiful resort (above), where accommodation is either in a beach suite villa or perched on stilts in the ocean. Both come with outside bathrooms and private pools, though only the water villas allow you to slip straight into the sea. Stays in a beach bungalow start at £875 a night based on two people sharing on a B&B basis (jaresortshotels.com)



FAIR ISLE

Manafaru, among the Maldives' northernmost islands, is a winter suntrap and one of the world's most luxurious places. Floating in the Indian Ocean, south-west of Sri Lanka and India, you'll find the beaches immaculate, the surrounding sea gin clear and those iconic water villas on stilts even more breathtaking than in the Insta-snaps. So leave the club kids to soothe their hangovers on Finolhu atoll and the Have Yachts to ogle at the swish new Soneva Jani — it's at Manafaru that you'll get the classic Maldives hospitality that honeymooners have long bragged about, says *Sophie Paxton*



Not so basic beach: the shore at Manafaru; below, Maldivian cuisine



WHAT TO EAT

The question is: what not to eat? Restaurant options include sushi, Teppanyaki, Italian and a seafood grill. Don't miss the traditional Maldivian curry at Kakuni. Coconut-based with added fresh diced tuna and known as mas riha, this is served accompanied by freshly made roti. *Maldivian night at Kakuni, £88 per person*



WHAT TO DO

Try cruising around the island in a see-through kayak while marvelling at the native turtles, stingrays and colourful fish living in the reef, or get up close with the sealife by taking scuba-diving lessons and heading out for hours in search of the shy manta rays that hover around the coast. *From £70pp including equipment*



WHEN TO GO

The dry season, known as Iruvai in the local language of Dhivehi, runs from December to April. The tropical climate can mean that weather is changeable but let's face it, when you are drinking a cocktail in your swimsuit, life looks pretty good whatever the weather.