

BAROS

maldives

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BAROS

maldives

Fantasy islands

With so many luxurious island resorts to choose from in the Maldives, which one would be your perfect honeymoon hideaway?

If you've got your heart set on a honeymoon to the Maldives, it can be difficult to narrow down your choice, when all 87 island resorts offer some of the most luxurious accommodation in the world, not to mention crystal-clear sea and white-sand beaches. So we've done the hard work for you and selected three resorts that stand out for offering that little bit extra.

Best for: foodies

BAROS MALDIVES RESORT & SPA
Not only does this bijou resort boast three restaurants (a rarity on such a small island), but it's also home to one of the Maldives' most celebrated – The Lighthouse. With its five-star service and vast wine cellar, it has all the ingredients for a fabulous gastronomic experience – and that's before you even taste the food! The Lighthouse is renowned for its degustation menus, with tempting combinations such as cognac-fused lobster bisque and carpaccio of yellow fin tuna with pan-fried foie gras. Staff can even arrange a romantic private dining experience for you on the beach.

Need to know: Only 25 minutes by boat from Malé airport, Baros (www.baros.com) prides itself on its tranquillity. There's no pool or disturbing watersports – simply an incredible reef, which is ideal for snorkelling, and a laid-back spa. When picking your accommodation, we'd recommend one of the newly opened beach villas, each with its own pool, or a water

villa with steps down into the warm shallows of the Indian Ocean.

Honeymoon must-try: Don't leave without booking a sunset cruise on the resort's private 19ft dhoni (traditional boat). As the polite but discreet staff serve you catapulas and Champagne, you can simply lay back on cushions, snuggle up and enjoy the ride.

Best for: spa lovers

ANANTARA RESORT MALDIVES
The three islands that make up this laidback resort (www.maldives.anantara.com) share the use of not one, but two, world-class Anantara spas. The first is found at the end of an over-water wooden walkway on Dhigu island, and offers an idyllic open-air relaxation deck, complete with Jacuzzis and cold plunge pool, plus glass-bottomed suites where you can choose between Thai, Ayurvedic or Hawaiian massages. Just a short boat ride to neighbouring Veli island, and you'll find another smaller spa, which is just as luxurious. In fact, as it's hidden away in the heart of the island's lush greenery, it feels even more exclusive.

Need to know: This Thai-influenced resort is 30 minutes by boat from Malé airport. Guests can take their pick from villas or suites on family-friendly Dhigu island or couple-focused Veli island. A short boat ride separates the two, and residents can enjoy the use of facilities of both islands. Alternatively, splash out on accommodation



Dine on modern Japanese cuisine at One&Only's Japanese restaurant



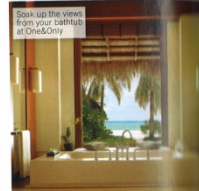
A sumptuous welcome awaits you at One&Only



Enjoy gastronomic dining in The Lighthouse at Baros



Relax on the terrace of your secluded overwater suite at Anantara Dhigu



Soak up the view from your bathtub at One&Only



Baros prides itself on offering utter tranquillity



Watch the sunsets from the chill-out area at Anantara spa

indianocean

at the uber-exclusive Naladhu island (a favourite with Kate Moss and Co.).
Honeymoon must-try: Book a spa suite for two at either Anantara spa and enjoy a signature detoxifying ritual, which includes a fragrant floral foot bath, a rich mud exfoliation and a cleansing massage.

Best for: adventure seekers

ONE&ONLY REETHI RAH
Set on one of the Maldives' largest islands, One&Only Reethi Rah (www.oneandonlyresorts.com) is ideal for couples looking for more than just a place to sunbathe and relax. It offers guests an ESPA spa, tennis courts and an outdoor infinity pool, plus a leading watersports centre, which has everything from canoeing, kayaking and deep-sea fishing to parasailing, catamaran sailing, windsurfing, diving and snorkelling. The resort can also arrange visits to local islands.

Need to know: This all-villa resort, an hour by boat from Malé airport, is so large you'll be given access to a golf buggy or bike on which to get around. Each villa comes with its own host who's on hand to help with anything from unpacking for you on arrival to booking your spa treatments. You'll wonder how you ever managed without them!

Honeymoon must-try: A private beach barbecue is the perfect way to end your stay. A small team of catering staff will arrive with trays of fish and meat, which they'll cook as they set up a table on the sand, complete with cushions for you to relax on between courses. As gentle tunes play from the stereo, this is one honeymoon memory you'll remember forever. ■

Getting there

Kuoni (01306 747008, www.kuoni.co.uk) offers four nights in a deluxe villa at Baros, three nights in a deluxe sunrise beachfront villa at Anantara Resort Maldives and three nights in a beach villa at One&Only Reethi Rah from £3,195 per person, including breakfast, flights with Sri Lankan Airlines from Heathrow, transfers and access to the VIP lounge at Malé airport on departure.

Good to know

- The best time to visit is between December and April, when temperatures are high, and there's little risk of rain.
- Flying time from London is 12 hours, and the Maldives is six hours ahead of the UK.