PlanMyGapYear

MALDIVES CHILL OUT WEEKEND TRIP

We can't imagine anywhere more spectacular to chill out for a few days than the gorgeous Maldives. The 1,192 islands conjure up images of pristine beaches, azure seas and tropical reefs. Words like heaven, bliss and paradise have all been used to try and sum up what these 26 coral atolls have to offer.

You will be based on the island of Maafushi for 4 days and 3 nights where you can swing on a hammock and take in the rays. For those with slightly more energy there is snorkelling, scuba diving, spas and even a spot of fishing if it took your fancy.

The trip is open to all PMGY volunteers. We expect to have at least 6 people per trip so you can be guaranteed a fantastic social experience.

This trip is coordinated externally from the PMGY program. A member of the PMGY team will be help coordinate your plans, however will not accompany the group throughout the trip and this trip should be viewed as an independent experience.

We will be running the trip on the following dates:

8th January 2026 - 11th January 2026

22nd January 2026 - 26th January 2026

12th February 2026 - 15th February 2026

26th February 2026 - 1st March 2026

12th March 2026 - 15th March 2026

26th March 2026 - 29th March 2026

9th April 2026 - 12th April 2026

23rd April 2026 - 26th April 2026

7th May 2026 - 10th May 2026

21st May 2026 - 24th May 2026

11th June 2026 - 14th June 2026

25th June 2026 - 28th June 2026

9th July 2026 - 12th July 2026

23rd July 2026 - 26th July 2026

30th July 2026 - 2nd August 2026

6th August 2026 - 9th August 2026

20th August 2026 - 23rd August 2026

27th August 2026 - 30th August 2026

10th September 2026 - 13th September 2026

24th September 2026 - 27th September 2026

8th October 2026 - 11th October 2026

22nd October 2026 - 25th October 2026

12th November 2026 - 15th November 2026

26th November 2026 - 29th November 2026

10th December 2026 - 13th December 2026

24th December 2026 - 27th December 2026

* Additional departure dates can be added if there are at least 6 participants looking to take part.

Each trip leaves on Thursday and returns on the Sunday evening.

The following are included in the fee:

- Private transport to/from Colombo & Male Airports
- Speedboat transfers to/from Male to Maafushi
- Return flights from Colombo to Male
- Accommodation (same sex)
- Breakfast

BOOKING YOUR PLACE

If you've already signed up to one of our programs and would like to join our weekend trip then you can add it by clicking here.

If you haven't signed up already, you can add the weekend trip onto your trip during the online application form, which you'll find by clicking on the 'Apply Now' button on the relevant program web page.

Please note places on weekend tours are non-refundable and non-transferable. If you are in-doubt about joining one of these trips then you always have the option to sign up once you have arrived in Sri Lanka. Spots are subject to availability but in the vast majority of cases there are still spots available once you are on the program and it gives you more flexibility with your travel plans.

Please do not put our team in a difficult situation by asking for a refund or to switch dates simply because you have made alternative plans. The local team have to make prior commitments for these trips and therefore making changes are not as easy as it may appear.

ITINERARY

You may be pleased to hear that there is no set itinerary for this trip! For the next few days the islands are your oyster! Just 3 nights and 4 days of laid back bliss in this idyllic paradise. You'll be based on the island of Maafushi so take this as an opportunity to either kick back and relax with a really good book or explore one or two of the 1,192 islands. There is so much to do so enjoy the freedom and the chance to explore in your own time.

We have provided an example trip itinerary of how most groups tend to spend their days on the Maldives Chill out Weekend Trip:

DAY 1 (THURSDAY) - ARRIVAL INTO MAAFUSHI

Your flight schedules will dictate your arrival time into

Maafushi Island. This magical island is now your base for the next blissful 4 days in the Maldives! Our Sri Lanka team will be on hand to arrange all your logistics to get you and your fellow volunteers to Colombo International Airport to then fly into Male International Airport. Once you arrive into Male, a team member from our hotel partner team in Maafushi will be waiting for you in the arrivals section. It will then be a 30 minute speedboat ride to Maafushi where your Maldives experience will really begin!

At the hotel our supportive team will greet you with a welcome drink while you have the chance to settle in and acclimatise to your surroundings. Our Maldivian team will provide some information about the spectacular excursions and trips that can be arranged for you and your friends to ensure you can make the most out of your stay. These trips include some fantastic snorkelling experiences, reef hopping, boat trips and resort opportunities.

The island itself is quite small which make you able to take a nice walk and get from one end to the other in 20 minutes. It's lots of restaurants where you can try some exciting local dishes or go for a more western style option. The island also holds lots of cafes where you can chill out with a smoothie or iced coffee while you rest your eyes on the crystal-clear water. While strolling around the island you will come across some amazing viewpoints and a variety of shops, everything from local souvenirs to known brands. If you wish to stay on the island, you can sign up to a variety of water sports and you'll find the tourist beach to be the perfect spot to relax with a good book and a freshly cut coconut. And while you are at the beach, make sure the capture the magical Maldivian sunset. Outside of the touristy beaches and the resorts, you will find the island quite traditional and conservative just like most of the other islands in the Maldives.

DAY 2 (FRIDAY) - A TRUE RESORT DAY

A highly popular choice for all those that arrive onto Maafushi, is to experience a resort day with a true Maldivian vibe, huts on the water, white beaches and the bright blue ocean. There is a variety of gorgeous island resorts only a short speed boat ride away from Maafushi. You have plenty of great options and most of the resorts includes all-inclusive packages covering food, drinks and logistics to and from the island. There will typically be activities arranged on the resort such as volleyball, snorkelling, or shark feeding. It's also possible to take this day to fully relax, lean back and just enjoy a serene day with a bit of luxury. This day is yours to soak up the sun and enjoy pristine beaches and clear ocean views for miles.

Your resort day can be arranged directly with our hotel team on the day of your arrival and payment can be made locally. The team take care of all the logistics and arrangements to ensure you a delightful day at the resort. Prices can typically vary from 100 USD up to around 150 USD and usually the more glamorous and inclusive the resort package is, the more expensive it tends to be.

When you are back on Maafushi after a blissful resort day, the rest of the evening is yours to spend however you prefer. You can head out for a late evening meal, some drinks with friends or just watch the sunset while relaxing at the beach. While walking around you will see the friendly locals putting on some good vibe music and playing football which really adds to the islands local experience.

DAY 3 (SATURDAY) - REEF HOPPING SNORKELLING TOUR & SANDBANK LUNCH

From experience we know our volunteers love to explore the underwater life that the Maldives islands are so famous for. A great way to do this and get the most out of your time is by joining one of the daily trips such as the half day snorkelling tour. This incredible excursion will without a doubt allow you to get a glimpse of the incredible marine life that flourishes underneath the surface! We're talking tropical fishes in all colour and shapes, turtles and possibly dolphins. The volunteers usually find these trips to be great additions to their stay in the Maldives.

These day trips can be arranged directly with the hotel and usually costs around 30 USD depending on what trip you and your friends choose to sign up to. The package will usually include your snorkelling equipment, a guide, lunch, water and speedboat travel across various checkpoints and last around 5 hours.

A standard set up for these trips usually include an early morning breakfast at the hotel, followed by some essential

information from the team. Then you head out on the boat to explore a range of beautiful and enchanting reefs, this can for example include turtle reefs, palm reefs and nemo point before finishing on the giant sandbank where you will usually convene for a delicious beach lunch, some drinks, and fruits. They can usually cater for allergies and dietary needs if you ask in advance. After a good meal and some time to splash around in the water or chill on the sand, you will head to a dolphin spot. If you're lucky you can spot dolphins playing together! Then it's time to head back to Maafushi where you will have the rest of your afternoon and evening at your leisure. Be sure to head to a good viewpoint to take in a true Maldives sunset and find the perfect dinner spot.

DAY 4 (SUNDAY) - FAREWELL MALDIVES & BACK TO SRI LANKA

Depending on your flight scheduled back to Sri Lanka, you may have some extended time across the morning and into the afternoon to soak up the sun one last time in Maafushi, maybe grab some lunch and get that last coconut! Regardless of your flight time, we will ensure you can have one final breakfast at your hotel accommodation. The team at the hotel will then ensure they arrange your speedboat back to Male in good time of your return flight back to Sri Lanka. On the journey back, you can sit back, enjoy the breeze and keep your eyes on the open sea as it's sometimes possible to spot dolphins!

On arrival back into Colombo International Airport, our Sri Lanka team will be ready and waiting to collect you. They will transport you back on the 2 hour journey to Ambalangoda where you can return to the Volunteer House and get ready for a good night sleep and then to continue your volunteering project. No matter how you choose to spend your few days on the Maldives, we are sure it will be an unforgettable experience for you!

ACCOMMODATION

For your time in Maafushi, you will stay at one of our trusted partner hotels from Thursday to Saturday night. Rooms are shared and allocated between volunteers. The hotel is centrally located on the island, around a 5 minute walk from the main tourist beach, with shops nearby and a good selection of local restaurants close by.

Accommodation in Maafushi is always clean, comfortable, and well-maintained, with good amenities to ensure a pleasant stay. You can expect western-style toilets, hot showers, and Wi-Fi, although connectivity can be intermittent at times. Breakfast is included each morning and served in the hotel restaurant area.

MEALS

You will be provided with breakfast each morning at the hotel. Lunch and dinner are not included and will need to be budgeted for. Depending on your choice of excursions, lunch and/or dinner may also be included in the package. On the island there are also lots of nice restaurants to grab a good dinner and cafes to get coffee or some snacks!

TRANSPORT

We will arrange your transfers to and from each airport. This will be by bus for your airport transfer in Sri Lanka and by speedboat for your airport transfer in Maldives. In addition, your flights and accommodation will all be arranged by the PMGY team.

If a trip falls on the same weekend that you are due to finish your program, it may still be possible for you to join. In this situation, the best option is usually to add the weekend trip and book your return flight from Sri Lanka for Monday, allowing plenty of time for a smooth transfer back to the airport after the trip. Alternatively, you may find it more convenient to fly home directly from the Maldives at the end of the weekend trip, depending on your onward travel plans.

VISA CONSIDERATIONS

Most nationalities are eligible for a free visa on arrival when entering the Maldives.

If you are planning to join the Maldives trip and will be staying in Sri Lanka for more than 30 days, we recommend scheduling the Maldives trip within your initial 30 day period and doing the earliest weekend trip available. Your

initial 30 day ETA for Sri Lanka allows double entry, which means you can travel to the Maldives and re-enter Sri Lanka without any issues during this time. If you extend your visa before travelling to the Maldives, you would need to apply for a new ETA from overseas in order to re-enter Sri Lanka, and depending on your total length of stay, you may also need to pay again for a further visa extension. Planning the Maldives trip early in your travels helps keep the process simple and avoids unnecessary costs or complications later on.

DAY TRIP OPPORTUNITIES

Half Day Trip - around 30 USD - Get ready for an exciting day full of underwater fun! Start your day with a tasty breakfast at your hotel, then hop on a boat to explore the vibrant reefs of the Maldives. Enjoy the sight of the beautiful tropical fish as they swim around in their natural habitat. Keep your eyes open in case you spot the wild turtles gliding gracefully through the water at the next stop. If you're lucky, you might even get to swim alongside them!

After working up an appetite with all that snorkelling, you will be ready for a delicious lunch prepared by our team. Enjoy your meal on a gorgeous sandbank, where you can chill out in the sun or take a refreshing dip in the water. End your day on a high note by spotting playful dolphins before heading back to Maafushi.

On this adventure, you'll be provided with snorkelling gear, water, beach towels, and a satisfying lunch. Plus, if you want, you'll receive some cool underwater photos and videos to remember your experience. Get ready for a day filled with unforgettable underwater encounters!

Shark Bay – around 50 USD - Are you brave enough to embark on the Shark Bay excursion? Start your morning with a yummy breakfast at the hotel before setting off on a boat journey topped with excitement. Your first stop will bring you face to face with playful dolphins, offering a magical snorkelling experience you won't soon forget.

Next, you'll have the unique opportunity to snorkel with sharks in the crystal-clear waters of the Maldives. Don't worry, these sharks are friendly and not at all dangerous, allowing you to observe them up close in their natural environment. This is such a cool experience!

As the day unfolds, you'll explore some of the stunning Maldivian islands, each offering their own charm and beauty. After your island exploration, make your way to a scenic sandbank where you'll enjoy a delicious lunch surrounded by the tranquil beauty of the ocean.

You'll be provided with snorkelling gear, water, beach towels, and a great lunch. You can also receive some cool underwater photos and videos to remember your experience. Get ready for a day with dolphins and sharks!

Real Break – around 80 USD - Get ready for the ultimate underwater adventure with the "Real Break" excursion, this trip has it all! Fuel up with a delicious breakfast at your hotel before setting off on a thrilling day of exploration. Your journey begins with a spectacular shipwreck snorkeling adventure, where you'll dive into the underwater world and discover the hidden treasures of the sea.

Next up, prepare to be amazed by a magical dolphin cruise that will bring you up close and personal with these graceful creatures in their natural habitat. After greeting the dolphins, you are scheduled to visit the unique Fulidhoo island, where you'll have the chance to feed stingrays and witness these incredible sea creatures up close.

As the adventure continues, you'll have the opportunity to snorkel with sharks, observing these magnificent creatures in a safe and controlled environment. Don't be afraid, these sharks are known to be super friendly. Cap off your day with a well-deserved lunch and a leisurely stroll along a picturesque long walkway sandbank, where you can bask in the beauty of the Maldives' stunning landscapes.

You'll be provided with snorkelling gear, water, beach towels, and a great lunch. You can also receive some cool underwater photos and videos to remember your experience at the "Real break"!

Whale Shark Trip – Around 100 USD - Prepare for an unforgettable encounter with the magnificent whale shark, the largest fish in the sea! After a solid breakfast you are ready to dive into a day filled with wonder and excitement as you embark on a two-hour boat trip to catch a glimpse of these gentle giants. While sightings are not guaranteed, if you are lucky enough to encounter a whale shark, it will truly be a once-in-a-lifetime experience that you will cherish forever.

Immerse yourself in the crystal-clear waters as you get up close with these majestic creatures, witnessing their stunning beauty in their natural habitat. Your adventure will be enhanced with the provision of snorkelling gear, water, and a delicious lunch to keep you energized throughout the day. To help you preserve these precious moments, you'll also have the option to receive stunning underwater photos and videos, capturing the magic of your whale shark encounter!

RESORT DAYS

Experience the essence of Maldivian paradise with a range of resort day options available. A favourite among visitors to Maafushi, is to embark on a resort day that offers a true taste of the Maldives - overwater bungalows, pristine white sands, and the mesmerizing blue ocean. Just a short speedboat ride away from Maafushi, you'll find a selection of stunning island resorts waiting to welcome you to a day of luxury.

From all-inclusive packages covering divine food, refreshing drinks, and logistics to and from the island, these resorts have everything you need for a perfect day in paradise. Engage in activities like beach volleyball, snorkelling among vibrant marine life, or even witness shark feeding. If relaxation is more your vibe, simply kick back and have a day of tranquillity.

Let the team at the hotel handle all the details for your resort day, from booking to arrangements, ensuring a seamless experience. Whether you opt for a modestly priced package at 100 USD or something more lavish all-inclusive offering that stretches up to 150 USD, the choice is all yours.