

ESCAPE TO  
THE MALDIVES

# KOAMAS LUXURY ESCAPE

The Maldives is one of the most stunning holiday destinations in the world – but with 26 coral atolls and hundreds of islands, it can be difficult for travelers to find the Maldivian experience that is right for them. For travelers seeking a unique holiday, Koamas Luxury Escapes provides a dedicated and personal service to help each client discover the luxury getaway they've been dreaming of; offering a small but dedicated team of professionals, hands-on experience and outstanding customer service, Koamas Luxury Escapes serves as the perfect gateway to getaways in paradise.

A local-based agency such as Koamas Luxury Escapes has a great advantage over large international operators as they boast the hands-on knowledge necessary for crafting exclusive holidays. Their hand-selected resort portfolio has been carefully cultivated to match the needs of every type of traveler; catering for all budgets, personal style and travel party size, clients can guarantee that with Koamas Luxury Escape, their desires come first.





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## WITH KOAMAS LUXURY ESCAPES

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Koamas Luxury Escapes was co-founded by Michelle Flake, who drew upon 25 years' worth of experience in the tourism industry to start a new life and career in the Maldives. Working as an overseas holiday representative before reaching the position as Destination Manager, Michelle has worked with such leading companies as Thomson Holidays and Kuoni Travel and her career took her across the globe before she finally settled down in the place she now calls home.

After many years working in this stunning destination, Michelle decided in 2014 that it was time for to set up her own boutique, in-bound travel agency, Koamas Luxury Escapes. *The Luxury Travel Guide* spoke with Michelle about the inspiration behind her business, the best attractions the region has to offer and why Koamas Luxury Escapes is the best choice when planning a holiday in the Maldives.

# WHAT

MAKES THE MALDIVES A  
PERFECT HOLIDAY DESTINATION?

When you open a brochure and see pictures of the Maldives, you can't possibly imagine a place being as stunning as the pictures. All travellers are familiar with images of perfect white sand and crystal clear waters but as a local expert, believe me when I say the pictures don't come close to the real beauty of the Maldives! Serene and idyllic, the Maldives are truly the perfect destination to relax and unwind; evoking the atmosphere of paradise, not only are Maldives a leading choice amongst honeymooners, it is also one of the top diving destinations in the world and in recent years it has become a popular destination for families as well.

# TELL US

A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND  
AND YOUR INSPIRATION FOR  
KOAMAS LUXURY ESCAPES

I have over 25 years of experience working in the tourism industry and first visited the Maldives in 2000. I worked as a holiday rep and was based on Kurumba where I was immediately blown away by this stunning destination – when I left a year later I always thought I would come back but for a holiday. When I had an opportunity to come back in 2003 as a manager I couldn't resist the chance and I have been here ever since. I am very passionate about promoting the Maldives as a luxury destination and wanted to share my knowledge of and experience with others – particularly those seeking the best resort to suit their needs – so I set up Koamas Luxury Escapes in January 2014. 'Koamas' means dolphin in the local Maldivian Dhivehi language and when choosing a name, I wanted something that reflected both local culture and relevant tourist experiences – and what holiday maker wouldn't want to see dolphins in the Maldives?





## WHAT SETS KOAMAS LUXURY ESCAPES APART FROM OTHER TRAVEL AGENCIES OPERATING IN THE MALDIVES?

Koamas Luxury Escapes is a small boutique agency, and we pride our self on our professionalism, knowledge, honesty and the personal service we give to our clients. Being a local agent means we have a lot more product knowledge than international tour operators as we are able to visit and experience the resorts we sell for ourselves, therefore we are able to give first-hand knowledge.

As the Co-Founder of the company I play an active role in the day to day operations and personally assist my clients with their enquiries – unlike many other agencies in the Maldives, I do not simply just put my name to the company. Our clients know exactly who is behind the company and can book with Koamas Luxury Escapes with confidence.

## HOW DO YOU SELECT WHICH RESORTS TO WORK WITH?

With over 100 resorts now operating in the Maldives I don't think it makes sense to feature every single accommodation option, so instead I have chosen a superior selection of resorts to suit different budgets, markets and types of traveller. We feature great value for money three and four star resorts, outstanding family options and smaller boutique resorts ideal for couples, in addition to an excellent selection of high quality luxury resorts and world class brands, such as Conrad Resorts, Jumeirah Resorts, Anantara Resorts and Banyan Tree. At Koamas, we also think it is important to support the locally owned and operated resorts as well.

# WHAT

ARE THE MOST POPULAR  
ACTIVITIES YOU OFFER?

Diving and snorkelling are the most popular activities in the Maldives and, generally speaking, even if clients are not divers they will still want to experience the stunning marine life on a snorkelling excursion. One of the most popular products I sell is the "Yasawa Princess" Cruise, a 33 cabin vessel ideal for divers, non-divers, couples and single travellers. A great way to experience more of the Maldives on a leisurely all-inclusive cruise, this option is also exceptional value for money and provides an informal and relaxed setting, complete with professional and friendly staff. There's plenty of opportunity for divers to visit some of the best dive sites in the Maldives and non-divers can spend their days snorkelling and visiting sand banks or uninhabited islands. It's relaxing and so much fun!

# WHAT MAKES THE MALDIVES SO SPECIAL AS A WEDDING OR HONEYMOON DESTINATION?

Who doesn't want the perfect wedding album, with photos of the happy couple framed by clear blue skies, turquoise waters and white sandy beaches? For honeymoon couples who are not only looking for a stunning location but also heightened privacy, many of the resorts we work with feature unique over-water villas with private plunge pools, open air showers and even butler service. When people think of the Maldives, they think of romance, and they certainly will not be disappointed.





# WHAT SERVICES CAN YOU OFFER TO COUPLES?

Not only do we take care of booking the resort and transfers for our clients, but we offer our meet and greet service and all our clients are given a welcome gift from Koamas Luxury Escapes. Our Concierge Service allows us to help couples book special events, dinners, spa treatments and excursions prior to their arrival and, if family members or friends want to arrive a surprise for the happy couple, such as flowers on arrival, champagne or a special dinner, they can contact us directly and we will handle the arrangements with discretion. At Koamas Luxury Escapes, we want all of our clients to have an amazing holiday or honeymoon and always strive to exceed expectations.

# WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN OFFER TO COUPLES PLANNING TO MARRY IN THE MALDIVES?

It is important for couples to note that a wedding ceremony in the Maldives is purely symbolic (not legal) as Islam is the only religion recognised in the Maldives. All arrangements for the symbolic ceremony or renewal of vows will be handled by the resort wedding coordinator and we will assist with booking the specific package and any extras the clients would like. Weddings/ renewal of vows will usually take place in the afternoon around 4pm, as it will be cooler but still beautiful at this time of day. Light clothing is recommended for both the bride and groom as it can get very hot!

IN ADDITION TO BEING A  
**GREAT**  
DESTINATION  
FOR COUPLES, DOES  
**KOAMAS**  
CATER TO FAMILIES?

We feature some incredible family resorts in our portfolio and many offer great family deals such as free child places including meals and free transfers. Many of the family resorts we feature also boast well-equipped children's clubs that offer free activities throughout the day and often in the evening. Our [website](#) has a section dedicated to family holidays.

AS A LOCAL EXPERT,  
CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE  
**BEST**  
HIDDEN  
ATTRACTION  
OF THE MALDIVES?

What makes the Maldives so unique is that it is the only destination to feature a 'one island, one resort' concept. Just like every island in the Maldives is different, so is every resort – whilst many offer similar facilities and room types, the atmosphere and experience found on each one is completely individual. The marine life is also one of the Maldives' greatest attractions, and we find that many tourists dream to swim with mantas or whale sharks – luckily for visitors, such marine life is a regular occurrence here in the Maldives, unlike many other destinations in the world!



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