

Dec 6 – Depart USA

We depart the U.S. for an overnight flight to Dubai. Group air all trip details coming soon in AFS TripTips.

Dec 7 – Welcome to Sparkling Dubai (Trip officially begins)

We arrive at Dubai International airport where our local guide will meet us and take us to our hotel, the Hyatt Place in the Al Rigga neighborhood. It's a perfect location to explore the old world part of Dubai. We put all our groups here. It very near the waterway known as "The Creek" and markets, restaurants and shopping abounds. After briefing, our guide will point you were you want to go.

Overnight at Hyatt Place (4 nights)

Dec 8 – Dubai City Tour and Dhow Dinner Cruise **B D**

After breakfast we take in some of the oldest areas of this city which mixes ancient tradition with ultramodern. First up is the oldest part of the city, Bastakia. Here we find centuries-old houses of wealthy merchants with their towers built to catch wind and cool the buildings. We also see the Al Fahidi Fort, which has stood for almost two centuries, defending the old settlers against their enemies. It currently houses the Dubai museum

Walk through some local markets and make our way to the docks at Abras where we catch a water taxi to take us across the Creek to the area of spice and gold souks. You'll see both tourists and locals haggling over items.

Then it's off to learn about all things camel at a camel dairy farm. Camelicious has a host of products, all made with camel milk. View the camel herd and see the processing from milk to the end products which include chocolate!

In the evening, we board a traditional wooden dhow for an amazing Arabian Gulf buffet dinner cruise. These boats were used for centuries until the 1970s to transport goods from neighboring countries to the Emirates. You can still find them in use today by smaller companies and fisherman.

Overnight at Hyatt Place

Dec 9 – Desert Safari, Dune Bashing and Dinner Under the Stars **B D**

You are free until early afternoon to either relax or to explore this wondrous city. There are so many options from visiting the world's tallest building - **Burj Khalifa**, as well as the world's biggest shopping mall - Dubai Mall. Both will defy your senses. A tour of the Burj not only shows you the great engineering feat it was to construct this tower, but also take you through the exotic chronicles of Dubai's history. Experience a ride in the world's third fastest elevator that whips you through 124 levels above the ground!

We leave midafternoon to travel to the desert that is just outside of Dubai. You're then in for some great fun as we pile into air conditioned jeeps to crisscross mountainous sand dunes for an afternoon of Dune Bashing. We stop to watch the beautiful sunset before reaching our campsite where you have the opportunity to do a camel ride, sand boarding and try out a henna design on hand or feet. After working up an appetite, enjoy a delicious barbecue dinner. Before returning to Dubai watch belly dancing performance beneath a sky filled with stars

Overnight at Hyatt Place

Dec 10 - Free At Last Day! **B**

You have an entirely free day on your own to explore. As we mentioned in our trip description, there are innumerable options on how to spend your time.

Among them are:

- A Yellow Boat Ride – A new attraction in Dubai, this exhilarating tour takes you by speed boat around Palm Jumeirah and the Burj Al Arab and its marina. There's no better photo op than seeing these amazing places by water
- Tour of Abu Dhabi – you'll spend a whole day traveling to and exploring the capital City of the United Arab Emirates. This includes stopping on the way at the stunningly beautiful Sheikh Al Nahyan, this is one of the largest mosques in the world. You'll also see Emirates Palace, bustling the Abu Dhabi city center and then to the impeccably manicured Corniche, boasting cafes, restaurants and play areas. You'll also get to visit the unbelievable Ferrari World and Yas Island.
- Hot Air Balloon ride over the sands – choose either sunrise or sunset for a guaranteed adventure high above the dunes of Dubai's desert. Golden hues, wandering camels and emerald-green oases will add to the excitement of your hot air balloon experience.
- World's Longest Zipline – Stretching more than a mile and a half, the Jebel Jais zipline is located outside Dubai in Ras Al Khaimah in the Jebel Jais Mountains. Top speeds can be almost 90 MPH as you zip across this stunning terrain.
- The world's longest *urban* zipline - Set in Dubai Marina, the XLine is also one of the steepest and fastest ziplines around the globe, stretching over a half a mile, with an incline of 16 degrees and reaching speeds of almost 50 mph. The views of the glitzy Dubai Marina neighborhood, complete with bobbing five-star yachts and sleek high-rises are amazing. Also consider the museums, bunch at the famous Burj and fab Shaindhagla Cultural Village.

Be aware we have a VERY early morning ahead of us tomorrow, so plan activities accordingly.

Overnight: Hyatt Place

Dec 11 – Flight to paradise, the Maldives

B, D

Our flight to Male departs Dubai at 4:35 am, so we will need to leave the hotel by 2am. Yes, crazy early, but sleep inflight and then enjoy the benefit of early arrival here for more time to play.

City tour Malé.

We land in Malé before 10am and will leave the airport with our local guide who will take us to a ferry to the city/ We have a 2 hour walking tour of some important sites in this capital of the island nation, including Mulee'aage, the "Official Residence of the President of the Maldives" which is located in the ward of Henveiru in the historic center of Malé. We'll also see the Malé Hukuru Miskiy, also known as the Old Friday Mosque, which is one of the oldest and most ornate mosques the Maldives and also one of the largest in South Asia, admitting over 5,000 people. Another landmark is the Islamic Centre (officially named Masjid-al-Sultan Muhammad Thakurufaanu Al Auzam) and we should have time to visit the local market, Fish Market and Sultan park.

After the tour, we'll head back to the airport to catch out 2:25pm flight for Kudahuvadhoo. The flight is only about 40 minutes. You will love our 8 seater seaplanes over the bluest waters for your best photos.

At Kudahuvadhoo, we will transfer to nearby jetty from and catch our speed boat to our hotel,

Kandima Maldives. Much more than just a hotel, it is a game-changing destination which offers a seriously stylish island setting with extraordinary restaurants and bars and plenty of on-site activities to choose from. Your private villa offers endless tropical views out over the Indian Ocean.

Located on the largest island in Dhaalu Atoll, Kandima Maldives has the longest outdoor swimming pool in the Maldives, an abundance of water-sports, the largest beach club and tennis and basketball courts. It offers a marine biology center, an art studio and cooking classes and 10 restaurants from which to choose.

Start unwinding as soon as you arrive. Dinner is at your leisure at the hotel.

Overnight: Kandima Resort & Spa Maldives

Dec 12 – Splish n Splash Day at Leisure

B, D

Today is an entirely free day to enjoy this exquisite resort. Relax and unwind or discover the blue around Kandima Maldives with an incredible range of aquatic activities that you can enjoy here. The resort has an amazing snorkeling platform set on the edge of the Kandima lagoon, allowing guests to snorkel at the reef's edge and experience the awesome marine life Kandima has to offer.

Other possibilities include diving on the Dhaalu atoll. This is one of the most pristine regions in the country. The atoll's waters are perfect for beginners, as well as advanced divers can still explore greater depths and enjoy the thrill of drift diving in stronger currents.

And don't forget the Award winning esKape Spa. If relaxation is more your thing, then the esKape Spa is the perfect escape, offering everything from exfoliation to healing therapies with numerous signature treatments. There's also an onsite steam room and plunge pool.

Overnight: Kandima Maldives

Dec 13 - Free Day

B D

Another free day. Anything you missed yesterday – try today. Or, just do it all over again. The friendly staff will assist you of what to do.

At night you can check out the 5 new underwater restaurants and a nightclub.

Overnight: Kandima Maldives

Dec 14 – Head home

B

Our morning is free but in the afternoon, we transfer by speed boats and fly by seaplanes to Kudahuvadhoo and transfer to Dhalu airport. We fly Manta Air MA #405 at 4:05, arriving Male at 4:35.

Our tour ends in Male so make sure you book your flights home to depart from here. Note group air package will be on Emirates: Flight to Dubai, Dubai to Maldives, Maldives via Dubai home.