Maldives resorts: as peaceful as ever?

Darmstadt, March 28th 2018 *** The political situation in Malé, capital city of the Maldives, has been tense since the beginning of February. Due to the social unrest and the state of emergency from February 5th to 22nd, many travelers are wondering if a trip to the Maldives is safe, given the circumstances – not realizing that the political turmoil only affects the capital Malé. In order to find out more about the situation at the island resorts and how it is perceived by hotels and travelers, Green Pearls® interviewed representatives of its partner resorts on the Maldives.
What is the situation on the resort islands like?

Enjoying the unspoilt nature on the Maldives and leaving the daily routine behind – this is what characterizes vacations at the sustainable island resorts Gili Lankanfushi, Reethi Beach and its associated resort Reethi Faru. Over the last months, the relaxed atmosphere at the resorts has not changed, as the interview partners Zayan Fayaz, communication manager at the Reethi resorts, and Tammy Gan, communication manager at Gili Lankanfushi, state unanimously. Fayaz explains why: “Since most guests pass through Malé International Airport (Velana Airport), they don’t have to face the occasional situations that happen in the busy city of Male.” This is because the airport is not located directly on the capital island Malé, but on Hulhule Island. From there, tourists are directly transferred to their resort. Even “the short-lived state of emergency did not affect tourists visiting the region”, as emphasized in an official statement from Gili Lankanfushi, “and all flights and resorts operated as planned during the 45-day period.”
How do the guests react?

“The atmosphere amongst Gili Lankanfushi’s guests remains positive and relaxed”, notes Tammy Gan. “Our staff have had a small number of queries from guests”, she observes and adds that they can assure them of their safety within the resort and the wider region. The Reethi Beach and Reethi Faru resorts, too, are “as peaceful as ever”, says Fayaz. “Occasionally we do get questions about the situation Maldives is facing with occasional unrest in the capital city – but the question tend more in the direction of ‘How come the island is so peaceful but news sources say otherwise?’ You see, something that may be a little difficult to perceive from watching or reading about Maldives from another country is that the division into more than a thousand islands really does help maintain a peaceful atmosphere in most of the islands and resorts.”
Is it still possible to go on excursions?

What’s more, 125 of the 1,196 islands of the Maldives are reserved exclusively for tourists – so on the vacation islands there is usually no contact to the locals, except for the resorts’ staff. Therefore, the Reethi resorts organize excursions to local islands, always making sure that guests have a comfortable experience. Asked if guests keep going on excursions to local islands in spite of the situation or if they are frightened to leave the resort, Fayaz says, “As long as we have been in operation I can’t recall any guests who were frightened to go on trips or excursions, as our team always accompanies guests on such trips. At the moment, we haven’t taken guests to local islands, but we do go to sandbanks and lagoons for snorkeling and diving. Fear is not a word that generally exists with the Reethi Faru and Reethi Beach experiences.”
Are there also excursions to Malé?

The Gili Lankanfushi team has a similar approach. In answer to the question, if the resort still offers excursions to Malé, Tammy Gan says: “We can still arrange excursions to Malé on request, with guests accompanied by a certified tour guide from the resort, but most guests opt to relax at Gili Lankanfushi and enjoy the wealth of activities and experiences available within the resort and the surrounding seas.” However, many guests at Gili Lankanfushi still wish to get in contact with locals: “We are still arranging visits to local islands for guests, where they have the opportunity to meet local communities, learn about authentic Maldivian culture and experience the laidback island way of life.”
No reason to avoid the island nation

Thinking of locals, one should also remember that most of them are dependent on tourism. A lack of visitors would be a financial disaster for many Maldivians. Travelers looking for a sustainable holiday experience that does not only contribute to environmental protection, but also benefits the local residents – as is the case with Green Pearls’® partner hotels – should always keep this aspect in mind. Of course, seeking information on the current situation is always advisable. However, as long as it does not change fundamentally, there is no need to worry when traveling to the Maldives. “We continually monitor all political situations in the region, and maintaining our guests’ safety and peace of mind is our priority”, Gili Lankafushi states. So, if travelers are concerned, they can always contact their resort for more information.
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