
Sailing stop over in the Maldives

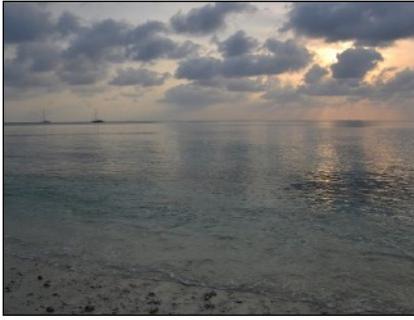
Brief Report March 2019

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Summary

We have been debating hard before we decided for a one week stop over in the Maldives. Fees appeared tremendous making us feel that cruising yachts are not welcome in this country. That was before we went. Our experience in Uligan, on the most northern atoll of the Maldives was a totally different one. We met amazing hospitality and one of the warmest welcomes, since we started cruising back in Europe. Fuel and fresh provisioning has been organised for us and fees in the end weren't as bad as expected. Uligan is a beautiful island, but it was the people that made our stay unforgettable.



Formalities & Agent

- **Agent:** We have been working together with Assad (Asadhulla Mohamed) from Real Sea Hawks (assad@realseahawksmaldives.com). He was always responding to our email/ whatsapp within minutes and managed our stay perfectly. His involvement largely exceeded in and outbound clearance, he also organised package delivery, fuel, a tour over the island and a welcome dinner (all of which he did not charge). Prior to our arrival he provided a yachting guide covering all relevant information about the Maldives including best spot for anchoring at Uligan.

- **Inbound clearance:** We arrived on a Friday afternoon (weekend) in Uligan and were able to clear in at the same day (without additional overtime fees). Four people visited us on board: Immigration, Navy and Customs officers as well as Assad, who brought a package of ice cream and some local pastry for doing the paperwork over a coffee. Remarkably, everybody was taking off their shoes before entering Moya without being asked. We have been in contact with Assad before we left our last destination Sri Lanka and supplied him with all relevant papers (copy of the ship certificate, ship details, crew list, last 10 ports of clearance, medicine list, stock list and crew effects) and updated the estimated time of arrival under way. Paperwork then was working totally smoothly, as all papers have been printed and sorted by Assad, missing only the boat stamp and captains' signature. In addition to that, officials only checked our passports, ship certificate and sanitation report and provided documents for inbound clearance.

- **Outbound clearance:** The day before departure Assad collected the passports, sanitation report and the documents provided at inbound clearance, which were returned the next day together with an international clearance.

Important remarks (according to our Agent)

- It is NOT possible to clear and stay in the Maldives without an agent, also not for 48h.
- A cruising permit is NOT required for a visit of up to 7 days. Without a cruising permit it is NOT allowed to leave the anchorage in Uligan.

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- Inbound clearance in Uligan is recommended over Male, as there is no adequate (safe) anchorage in Male next to the harbour, where officials will board the vessel, and as overtime fees have to be paid on the weekend (friday and saturday).
 - If a valid sanitation report (issued within the last six months) exists, no new one has to be issued and some money can be saved.
 - Alcohol is strictly prohibited on the island.
 - Locals are not allowed to visit yachts without clearance from customs.

Fees

All together we payed 246 USD as quoted in Maldivian Rufyia (USD also possible).

- Customs: In and outbound clearance, each 68 USD
- Port: Control permit 13 USD, entrance fee 13 USD, light dues 7 USD
- (Health: Sanitation report 68 USD, not applicable, as we already had one)
- (Sign on/ off 35 USD)
- Agent: 50 USD
- Vat: 12%

Money, Fuel, Internet & Provisioning

- There is neither fuel station, bank or ATM on Uligan, however Assad organised jugs and a speed boat to Ihavandhoo (30 minutes ride, 48 USD), which also has a bank and an ATM.
- Fuel: we fuelled at 0.95 USD/l Diesel
- Internet: wifi is available in the anchorage, user name and password were provided. Alternatively, a sim card can be obtained (we don't know the rates, as we used the wifi network)
- Provisioning: Uligan has four little shops offering mainly non perishable supplies, frozen chicken, eggs, onions and potatoes. When a supply ship from Male arrives they are also offering a greater selection of fresh produce. Ihavandhoo has also several small shops, selection of fresh produce was better. We purchased apples, cabbage, leech, melon, pumpkin, peppers, lime, cucumbers, tomatoes and grapes. On Uligan there is also a little farm offering egg plant, tomatoes, cucumbers, melon and pumpkin, ask Assad. Costs for provisioning are increased as compared to Sri Lanka but still reasonable.

Mooring

We anchored in 5m over sand on a large sand spot between the reefs (10.39 N, 62.68 E). This spot has been recommended by Assad.

On Land

We have been invited twice for dinner. In addition to the welcome dinner, a sailors dinner (for four cruising yachts) was organised and delicious local food provided. We visited many of the beautiful beaches of the island and came in close contact with the locals, with whom we even made friends. When we visited the island, I always wore long sleeved shirts and pants, for christian and the children shorts and T shirt were ok.

Uligan has a small cafe in proximity to the mosque, where we enjoyed italian cappuccino. We spotted some colorful reef fish when snorkelling of the boat and had dolphins visiting, but the coral is not in a good shape.