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Pulse experiences annual growth of 6 per cent

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Kandima Maldives will be home to a new state-of-the-art adventure park, set to open in Q3 2024, offering go-kart rides and giant swings with panoramic views

Manta Air has received approvals for international flights from the Civil Aviation authorities of the Maldives and its first route will connect Maldives' Dhaalu Atoll and Bengaluru in India, says Althaf Mohamed Ali, Chief Operating Officer of Pulse Hotels & Resorts, which has a stake in the airline. The move is a testament to the footfall Maldives is seeing from Asia.

This is especially true of China, which helped Pulse beat the crash in tourism after the boom of COVID-19, when it was one of the few holiday destinations still accepting travellers. "Reopening of the China market has kind of compensated whatever travel fatigue the other source markets had. This year, we are seeing an annual 6 per cent growth," he says.

Pulse Hotels owns three properties on the Maldives archipelago: Kandima Maldives, Nova Maldives and Nautilus. Each of these, promises Mohamed Ali, is about catering experiences – each one offers a different vibe.

GIVING EXPERIENCES

The company, Ali says, is forward-looking. It therefore tries to identify opportunity at every turn. When the islands were just being looked at as just places home to sun, sand and sea, he explains, they realised they had to go a step further. "So that's the reason why we conceptualised Kandima, back in 2017 as a lifestyle product. It's about offering different types of experiences, to customise to the different demographics of travellers. We've started this journey much earlier [than others]. So we were able to be able to quickly diversify into these kinds of niche segments in order to sustain the kind of business that as always was organically coming post pandemic," he says.

Pulse also capitalised on a change in law that allows resorts to sell subleases to individuals. "We are creating luxury condos for long term [use] like the Dubai Palm where you can own your own luxury condo on an exotic island. And you get the usage of stay there for a certain period of time. And the rest of the time you pull the property back into the resort inventory and earn revenue. So that's something new that we are introducing to the world. And then you can use the facilities whenever you are around plus owners will have your own dedicated facilities apart from being able to use the resort facilities," he says.

Speaking of facilities, Pulse is behind an amusement park that is under development in Kandima, slated to open in Q4 2024. It's said to be a state-of-the-art park with a bowling studio, gaming zones and a 500-metre electric go-karting experience.

THE PROPERTIES

Kandima Maldives opened in 2016 and targets couples, families, and an active, party-loving crowd. UK visitors have embraced the Kandima concept, making them the second-largest group for arrivals, responsible for over 6,500 room nights in 2023.

Nova Maldives, meanwhile, has a great location; near it are three dive sites that are among the top 10 in the world. For peak season 2024, Nova will be unveiling new private pools for 16 of their beach and water villas, further enhancing the top-quality guest experience.

The five-star resort The Nautilus Maldives is 15-minutes away from the only UNESCO-certified biosphere in the Maldives, Baa Atol, where you get to see the largest collection of manta rays in the world, between May to October.

Pulse is all about supporting local artisans, says Ali. "In Kandima, as a policy initiative, we have started something called Kula, which is the Pulse social responsibility project to support local artists. We contribute something called Kula, which is the Pulse social responsibility project to support local artists. We contribute \$1 from every guest booking towards this fund to support the local artists. So every year during the festive season, we invite all different types of local artists that cover henna artists, painters, sculptures to Kandima and we bring them over, give them a platform to showcase their talent to the world."

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