



Travel > Beach

ISLE BE BACK Inside the hideaway paradise island with aquamarine waters, brilliant white sands and a sun that barely stops shining

Nick McQuade

Published: 19:09, 23 Jun 2023 | Updated: 19:09, 23 Jun 2023

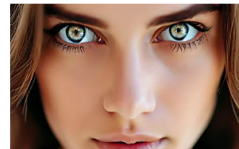


I NEVER fancied myself as a 21st-century Ernest Hemingway – until I went to the Maldives.

Much as I like a daiquiri, like the great man himself, I have hardly been a hard-living aficionado of hunting, shooting and fishing.



The Maldives are as close to paradise as it gets



Simple Trick Helps Restore Vision So Fast, You'll Throw Away Your Glasses

VISION RESEARCH GROUP



If you own a mouse, you have to play this game. No install. Play for free.

PANZER QUEST STRATEGY GAME





Nick with his catch of the day

But that — or some of it, at least — changed during a quiet sunset cruise off the [luxurious island resort of Nova](#).

As the sun began to drift into the warm waters of the Indian Ocean, me and my fellow fishing crew dropped a line and bait into the water. And waited. And waited. And waited.

So after a fruitless 20 minutes or so, there was a stirring of excitement when there was strong tug on my fishing line.

As I reeled it in, I expected a tidder — after all, I had never been fishing before. A red snapper, say, or one of the colourful rainbow fish that are plentiful in this part of the world.

READ MORE IN TRAVEL



ISLE GO Incredible exotic island with pink & white sand beaches & it's right next to...



CLEAN GETAWAY I'm a travel expert and you should never shower before early morning...

But what emerged from beneath the waves was what, I'm told, is known as a whopper — a giant Emperor Fish that was almost as big as me.

Eat your heart out, Ernest. I'll probably retire from fishing now. Anyway, that was far from the only thrill on my trip to the Maldives.

Take the glittering aquamarine waters, the brilliant white sands, the snorkelling, the watersports, a sun that barely stopped shining and five-star accommodation, food, drink and service.

I also loved the 30-minute hop on a seaplane from the Maldivian capital Male to Nova.

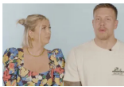
MOST READ IN BEACH



SHARM-ING DEALS Best value all-inclusive beach holiday deals to Egypt this autumn



MED MARKETS The best inexpensive food markets to visit in Europe during your summer holiday



LOVED UP Ex-Love Island couple Alex and Olivia reveal why they avoid the beach on holiday



HOL YEAH How to save and splurge on your Dubai holiday - 7-night hotel stays from £378pp

This is old-school flying — all propellers and engine noise with the pungent whiff of aviation fuel.

The captain and co-pilot — coolly clad in shorts and sandals as I saw through the open cockpit doors — even help load bags on the plane.

The aircraft touches down close to a small jetty then a boat whisks travellers to the island proper.

Nova is a small but perfectly formed island hideaway. But there is still plenty of choice for dining and drinking.



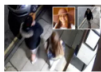
The swim-up bar is ideal for relaxing

Relax and unwind at the Solis pool bar for a cocktail or three — or at the Wink bar where there is live music and delectable snacks.

RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



BIG BUCKS Hendry set for Saudi move as 'fee revealed' - & it dwarfs what Celtic got for him



MONSTER Chilling CCTV shows Amber Gibson being lured to death before brother dumps evidence



ON THE SPOT Ally McCoist makes young reporter's day as he stops for impromptu interview



CAGED DAD Connor Gibson's dad jailed for sex abuse before son went on trial for murder

MORE FOR YOU



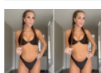
KILLER'S DECEIT Brother's chilling tribute to sister after he brutally murdered her



ON HIS WAY Rangers agree Danilo deal as contract details & completion timeline revealed



EURO DREAMS 4 things that stood out as Servette & Genk finely poised in battle to face Gers



REAL GOOD I got a \$6.99 Shein bikini that makes my boobs look fake - it's so flattering

Then there's the splendid Soul Kitchen – which serves up a delicious buffet breakfast and lunch. Not so much all-you-can-eat as all-you-want-to-eat. Delish. If only there was time – and room.

There's also the tastebud-treat Flames, with the freshest local fish, seafood and meat grilled to perfection.

I had a tantalising ceviche of reef snapper to start with some excellent yellowfin tuna as a main. Both addictively moreish.

But before all that, I had one little taste of life back home.

After all, you don't expect to hear the phrase "peely-wally" in the Maldives.

But when we sat down to eat at Flames, I told the friendly waiter that I was from Scotland.

"Ah, peely-wally," he replied mischievously.

Of course, he had met us pale-skinned types before while working – so had picked up some of the Scots vernacular.

Meanwhile, on the day of my Jaws-style exploits, I got to actually eat something I had caught a few short hours earlier.

At the fine dining restaurant Mizu, I was treated to some freshly made sashimi from my monster catch – followed later by some succulent grilled white flesh. Again, delish.

At Mizu, the chef cooks up a storm on a hotplate in front of diners so we watched as dish after dish was skillfully prepared. Sauteed edamame with garlic and carrot-ginger dressing, miso soup, teppanyaki egg and garlic fried rice with king prawns. All topped off with banana flambe and pandan coconut ice cream.

There was so much food I probably looked pregnant as I toddled off into the night. But I had that warm glow that only spending time as a latter-day Mr Hemingway can provide.



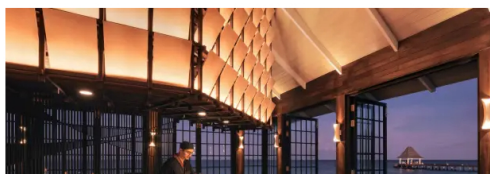
Even Ernest would have balked at this adventurous activity

My derring do wasn't derring done yet, though.

I appeared to have left my comfort zone back in Glasgow as I gingerly popped on my life jacket for some parasailing. Bet even Mr Old Man And The Sea might have balked at that.

But as the speedboat picked up pace I was hoisted hundreds of feet up above the ocean in a parachute attached to the craft. It was a curiously peaceful – and oddly meditative – affair.

As close as you can get to flying, I reckoned, without having those wing things that birds find rather useful. But as with all such things, it was over all too soon. And down came Ernest 2.0 to land safely on the speedboat.



MORE FROM THE SUN



FLIGHT PLANS Major airline launching exciting new flights from Glasgow Airport



SANDS COOL Beach bar loved by Kate Moss & Beckhams with 9-litre wine bottles & €100 sunbeds



HOT MESS Italian airport reopens after closing for several hours because of wildfires



BAG IT UP 'Perfect' bag that means you won't have to pay for hand luggage & it's only £13



There are some incredible places to eat



The villas have their own private ladders into the sea

How could I not mention my spectacular Sunset Beach Villa – half way down a curving walkway above the water with seemingly endless views across the iridescent waves.

The decor is tastefully minimalist – neutral whites with an abundance of natural light and warm materials. There is a bottle of Prosecco chilling in a cooler on arrival.

There is little better than a glass of fizz on the private terrace while getting one's bearings.

Only beaten by a glass of Prosecco in the villa's outdoor jacuzzi – before taking the few short steps down a private ladder into the ocean itself.

I was getting used to the VIP treatment. If only life back home in Glasgow's West End was so chilled, soulful and luxurious.

For a coffee addict like me the Nespresso coffee machine – after all, Mr Hemingway enjoyed a brew – was a perfect touch.

Still, I had to make up for the caffeine with a visit to Nova's tranquil spa.

A 60-minute massage was a soothing antidote to the pressures of emulating a Nobel Prize-winning novelist.

In fact, by the end of it I felt deeply calm. With those pesky knots in the shoulder dealt with by the masseuse's expert hands.

The Maldives is a fair old way away from Scotland. But that's kind of the point. There is nowhere else quite like it. And that counts.

GO: MALDIVES



GETTING THERE: Virgin Atlantic has three weekly direct flights to Male in the Maldives from Heathrow with fares from £761pp.

See virginatlantic.com

STAYING THERE: Five nights full board at the 5H Nova Maldives in July starts from £1,865, two sharing.

Available only at nova-maldives.com

MORE INFO: For more on visiting the Maldives see visitmaldives.com ■

On my last night I enjoyed a potent margarita with a regret that my journey here was almost over.

Looking over the water, calm with a hint of a cooling breeze, listening to the lapping waves, it can't be far off paradise. That was certainly what my fellow travellers to the Maldives reckoned, anyway.

READ MORE ON THE SCOTTISH SUN



GLOW UP Gardening fans are rushing to buy £1.99 bargain from 'B&M meets The Range'...



CHEEKY! Love Island's Mary Bedford flashes her bum in barely there thong bikini

So you can bet one thing. It won't be my last trip there.

No doubt next time I shall return in Ernest.

Topics [Food And Drink](#) [Travel Deals](#) [Glasgow](#) [Maldives](#) [Scotland](#)



YOU MIGHT LIKE



HOT ORDER Red Hot Chili Peppers' huge order revealed as they spend £429 at Scots restaurant



GOLDEN GIRL Celtic Wag 'labelled most beautiful woman' stuns in bikini on sunshine getaway



'PUNCH IN THE STOMACH' S Club reveal panicked phone calls to Paul Cattermole on day he died



KILLED BY BIG BRO Amber Gibson's evil brother guilty of her murder after vile sex attack



STRIP SEARCH Every Scottish Premiership club's '23-24 season strip RANKED by fashion expert



TRAGEDY Amber Gibson's family share heartbreaking tribute as brother found guilty of murder



STAR BURST Fans convinced busty sports host has 'strongest buttons in history of buttons'



FINAL FAREWELL Celtic, Rangers & Scots heroes pay respects to legendary boss Craig Brown



PLAYTIME'S OVER Inside lotto winner's trashed former mansion that was 'wilder than Playboy'



HORROR SIGHT Chilling moment man carries his sister's severed head after she 'eloped'





DOUBLE BOOST Major Cameron Carter-Vickers injury update as Maik Nawrocki awaits green light



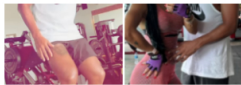
STORM ON Tallia Storm cosies up to huge Hollywood star as she stuns in plunging red dress



BLINKING LOVELY Big Brother legend Helen unrecognisable 22 years after quitting fame



VIP CLUB Liel Abada tops world passing charts and Celtic team-mate joins him on elite list



'NO EXCUSES' Alfredo Morelos spotted in the gym with wife amid long wait to find new club



BLADE BATTLE Shocking moment man tackles knife-wielding thug on UK's 'roughest street'



FOLLOW THE SUN



SERVICES

[Sign Up To The Sun](#) | [About Us](#) | [Editorial Complaints](#) | [Policies and Ethics](#) |
[Clarifications and Corrections](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [Syndication](#) |
[Contact Us](#) | [Help Hub](#) | [Contact Preferences](#)

©News Group Newspapers Limited in England No. 679215 Registered office: 1 London Bridge Street, London, SE1 9GF. "The Sun", "Sun Online" are registered trademarks or trade names of News Group Newspapers Limited. This service is provided on News Group Newspapers' Limited's [Standard Terms and Conditions](#) in accordance with our [Privacy & Cookie Policy](#). To inquire about a licence to reproduce material, visit our [Syndication](#) site. View our online Press Pack. For other inquiries [Contact Us](#). To see all content on The Sun, please use the Site Map. The Sun website is regulated by the [Independent Press Standards Organisation \(IPSO\)](#)

Our journalists strive for accuracy but on occasion we make mistakes. For further details of our complaints policy and to make a complaint please click [here](#).