

## **Responsible Tourism**

Until recently, tourism was restricted to the Maldives resorts, built on uninhabited islands where all services are offered within the island, with no contact with the local people. Guests rarely move away from the resorts, managed mostly by foreign multinationals, whose revenues only minimally go to the local economy. Recently the legalization of tourist facilities took place on the islands inhabited by locals, to create new jobs and allow more people to enjoy the gains from tourism.

Beach Heaven Guest House started in 2014 with only 3 rooms, but we are growing helped by local people!

You should please comply with certain rules of behaviour to avoid embarrassing the inhabitants of the island. Islam is the official religion and worship of other religions is not allowed. The holiday is on Friday, when the ferries are not operating. And it's forbidden to promote or participate in any activity contrary to the Muslim religion or that threatens the peace and harmony of the inhabitants. It is not allowed the use of drugs, alcohol and pork. Before entering a house exists the custom of taking off your shoes. Men generally wear at least shorts and T-shirt, while the garments that cover women are from the shoulders to the knees. The foreign guests can wear a bikini on the boat, during visits to uninhabited islands and in Huraa "bikini beach". Nudism and topless sunbathing are prohibited in the Maldives.

### **Important notice**

Do not expect a resort-like accommodation, you'll arrive in an island where local people life is not as you see from postcards! You'll see a side of Maldives that's hidden to resort visitors.

Guest houses in Maldives are on local inhabited island, where local people haven't economical resources as resorts. Just 100 m in front of our guest house, customers staying in resort pay 2000 US\$/night!!! With all that money, there is staff people cleaning beaches all the time, sophisticated water filtering plants, garbage incinerators. Note that Huraa is one of the few local inhabited islands where garbage collection is operating, otherwise in other islands all garbage is thrown in the sea or open air burned. I had bath lot of times at the Huraa bikini beach and water is crystalline as the one of the nearby resorts. You can get floating plastic garbage on a desert island beach too, there are billions of people in the world using the oceans as a dump, when Maldives population is less than 400.000 persons. In Maldives nearly all fruits, vegetables and meat, except for fish, is imported and very expensive. We wish to offer lots of fresh fruit juice to all our guests, but we should ask a higher price. Our prices for a room accommodation with conditioned air and private bathroom are from 45 to 60 US\$/night per person FULL BOARD (3 meals a day, bottled water, coffe and tea included)!!! Accommodation is in "local style" houses, where it's normal that some rooms have windows only towards the living room. These are the same kind of houses where Maldivians live, but Maldivians often do not have conditioned air, electricity is too expensive! Smell that can arrive sometimes from shower water is due from hydrogen sulfide in well water and it's not dangerous for health. We have bought an air pump system to fix the problem, but from time to time sulfur odor may return. I hope that you understand our effort to give the best possible service at affordable prices. Thank you for helping the Maldivian people with this little business opportunity!