

TWO GRAND WINS FOR THE NATION

Maldives Is The World's Leading Destination For The 3rd Year In A Row!

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In a moment of triumph for the nation, the Maldives has successfully secured the title of the World's Leading Destination for the third year in a row at the World Travel Awards 2022. Announced at an event held late Friday evening, the Maldives received several awards including the most prestigious title in the global tourism industry for the third year running. The Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (CEO & MD of MMPRC / Visit Maldives), Mr Thoyyib Mohammed, and the Minister of Tourism of the Maldives, Dr Abdulla Mausoom, accepted the award on behalf of the nation at the awards ceremony held at Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Oman. The Maldives beat out 18 other countries for this title- Dubai, Portugal, Indonesia, and Greece among them.

In addition to this prestigious title for the Maldives, MMPRC attained the title of the World's Leading Tourist Board this year - the first time that the Maldives has secured this award. Some of the largest tourist boards in the world with extensive reach and budget were nominated for this award. MMPRC won this award competing with 28 other prominent tourism boards including Incredible India, Tourism Australia, and Visit England.

"This accomplishment is a testament to the popularity and vibrancy of the Maldives as a tourist destination. The industry's achievements throughout the past three years reflect the resilience of the Maldives tourism industry amidst any crisis - and that united, we can achieve anything." Minister of Tourism H.E Dr Abdulla Mausoom stated, speaking at the ceremony.

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Speaking at the ceremony, CEO & MD Thoyyib stated that “It is truly an honour to win the prestigious title of World's Leading Destination for the third year in a row. This year is our Golden Jubilee of Tourism in the Maldives, and I couldn't have asked for a better achievement to mark 50 years of welcoming visitors to our shores. This award is thanks to the guidance of our government, the support of our partners, and the hard work of the tourism industry as a whole. And of course, our visitors- we are blessed that people from around the world love the Maldives so much. This is also the first year that MMPRC, also known as Visit Maldives, secured the title of the World's Leading Tourist Board. It feels like an affirmation of the hard work of our team over these past few years, pushing through the toughest global crises of recent times. Thank you to everyone for voting for the Maldives, and I hope to welcome you soon to the Sunny Side of Life.”

Tourism pioneer and celebrated local entrepreneur, Mr Hussein Afeef, also commented on the success achieved by the Maldives at this year's World Travel Awards. He stated that he considers it a blessing that our entire tourism industry, the cornerstone of our economy, has come together for the betterment of the country. He congratulated all tourism industry stakeholders, organisations, and every citizen of our nation for this outstanding success. Mr Afeef added that MMPRC's efforts to raise the Maldives to new and radiant heights are appreciated by people around the world, congratulating the organisation, our board members, and employees for securing the World's Leading Tourist Board title this year.

Securing The Title For The First Time Amidst The Worst Of The Pandemic

The Maldives first secured the title of the World's Leading Destination in 2020, in the midst of the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nations struggled as world borders closed and international travel ground to a halt. It was the same in the Maldives as well, at least for a few months, as the travel and tourism industry was disrupted as it had never been before, and the future looked grim.

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That was until we decided to switch the online platforms and continued marketing the Maldives, advising people around the world to dream of us now, and Visit Maldives later. The Government's efforts and plans for the reopening of our borders were drafted with the contribution of the entire industry, emphasising the unique geographical formation of the Maldivian islands as the key USP of the one-island-one-resort concept. These characteristics make the Maldives one of the safest destinations for visitors even amidst the pandemic. The rest of the world was constantly being made aware of the stringent safety measures and procedures in place for tourists. Our nation reopened our borders for international travel on July 15th, 2020, while most other countries were still struggling with stunted travel options. More importantly, we reopened our borders with extensive safety guidelines and measures in place so that every traveller could visit the Maldives with peace of mind.

As for MMPRC, we carried out over 412 different marketing activities in 22 global markets, partnering with our international PR agencies to ensure that every visitor in every market still continued to see the beautiful sights of the Maldives despite global border closures. 314 activities were carried out during this pandemic as part of the crisis recovery plan; some of these include fairs (online as well as offline), webinars, FAM trips, online roadshows, outdoor campaigns, digital media campaigns and more.

Securing the title of World's Leading Destination in 2020 was a remarkable testament to the hard work of the Maldives tourism industry. Every relevant government agency, organisation, and stakeholder in the industry came together and made continuous contributions to revive and restore tourism in the Maldives. In 2020 Maldives competed against 22 other destinations including Dubai, Malaysia, Spain, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka to win the title.

The Second Consecutive Win In 2021

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By the time 2021 rolled in, more and more countries around the world began to reopen their borders for international travel. While this meant that more travellers could start visiting us again, it also meant more competitors were reemerging for the Maldives. The tourism industry itself evolved as hybrid activities became the norm, and the number of visitors looking up information online about our nation skyrocketed and the Maldives officially became the most googled destination in the world. The aforementioned one-island-one-resort concept, our distinct geographical features, and our constant promotion continued to give the Maldives an added advantage over other destinations.

At MMPRC, we decided to take this opportunity to tap into an under-utilised market segment of tourism, the MICE travel segment, as travellers around the world began to experience the inevitable 'zoom blues'. Our 'Redefining MICE' campaign was a great success and prompted even more travellers to see the Maldives truly as a destination with something for everyone. Several marketing activities and campaigns were carried out in 2021, providing a platform for tourists from around the world to relive their happy memories and rediscover the wonders of Maldives. MMPRC carried out 209 different marketing activities in 24 global markets in 2021. These include 109 marketing campaigns, 60 fairs & virtual events, 10 roadshows and 30 familiarisation trips. With interviews and other participation, over 400 activities were conducted in 2021.

Winning this title for the second year in a row in 2021 proved to us that the hard work of the Maldives tourism industry was appreciated by visitors and organisations from around the world. Our tiny nation won the top title competing against 18 other destinations including the biggest names in global tourism such as Dubai, Indonesia, Spain, Vietnam, USA and Greece.

World's Leading Destination For The Third Year In A Row - A Triumph For The Nation

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There were many who did not expect the Maldives to retain the top spot once all other nations reopened their borders and initiated their efforts to revive tourism in their respective countries. Retaining our place at the top while competing with fully-active destinations from around the world is the greatest proof that people all over the world love the Maldives and voted for us time and time again.

MMPRC conducted a total of 149 activities in 22 global markets over the first three quarters of 2022, targeting the travel trade and consumers alike, with a reach of over 8.6 billion. One of the key focuses of our strategies was to maintain brand visibility in the global markets. Apart from promoting the Maldives as a premier luxury destination with various affordable options and diverse experiences, our messaging was clearly communicated to build confidence in the destination. We augmented this with our Tourism Golden Jubilee messaging, to veer visitors towards the celebratory mood in the Maldives tourism industry this year, to great success.

Winning this award a third year in a row, especially during our Golden Jubilee Year of Tourism, has not only fortified our nation's place as a tourism hotspot but also as a leader in the global travel trade.

Thank You For Making The Maldives The World's Leading Destination 2020, 2021, & 2022

Old Maldivian tales tell us we had treated travellers and castaways with the utmost care and respect even before the inception of our nation. After all, we Maldivians are travellers ourselves. Our songs, poems, and folktales speak of long journeys across the thousand isles. This unyielding hospitality is inherent in Maldivian culture, and it is this hospitality that transformed the Maldives into one of the most successful tourist destinations over the past 50 years. "The Sunny Side of Life" is not an easy slogan to live up to, but these awards, and our arrival figures, speak volumes. Even amidst the pandemic, we welcomed over half a million tourists in 2020, 1.3 million in 2021, and are close to reaching our 1.6 million milestone in 2022.

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**MALDIVES MARKETING &
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Press Release

We wish to express our gratitude to everyone who voted for the Maldives in the 29th World Travel Awards 2022, and for voting for MMPRC as the World's Leading Tourist Board 2022. The Maldives winning the title of World's Leading Destination again this year is something that we as a nation can be proud of, as this is the first time our country has won such a prestigious tourism title for three consecutive years. It is a moment of triumph for the nation, and a worthy occasion for celebration.

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