

MALDIVIAN *Chic*

Maximizing its swoon-worthy setting in the Baa Atoll, Anantara Kihavah-Maldives Villas sets the bar on overwater design excellence

TEXT BY PAUL RUBIO
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF ANANTARA KIHAVAH-MALDIVES VILLAS



AS SEEN IN
NAPLES EDITION
FLORIDA DESIGN



ABOVE: Imagine paradise ... on the private island of Kihavah, with its pristine beaches and natural habitat unspoiled, as overwater villas fuse Indian Ocean, Arab and Portuguese design motifs with indigenous materials.

LEFT: Dine on a deserted sandbank or let the forces of nature captivate the mind's eye with wondrous stargazing at the resort's SKY Bar rooftop lounge, an experience further elevated by the largest telescope and observatory in the Indian Ocean.

Dramatic natural backdrops are a dime a dozen in the Maldives, rendering design as a prime differentiator between a good, great and exceptional Maldivian resort. Taking full advantage of the island nation's blue-ombre waters, biodiverse sandy shallows, and palm-laced parcels without overpowering them with man-made excess requires a fine balancing act, one which Anantara Kihavah-Maldives Villas has superbly achieved.

Deep within the country's most definitive dreamscape, Baa Atoll, the thatched-roof overwater pool villas at Anantara Kihavah honor the vast oceanic surrounds through grand yet unfussy productions of transitional indoor-outdoor space. A sleek — and sizeable — infinity edge pool anchors each villa, perched on what feels

UBIQUITOUS GEOMETRIC-PATTERNED MIRRORS ON THE CEILING AND WALLS ENHANCE THE TROPICAL FISH SPLendor AND HEIGHTEN THE SUBTERRANEAN TECHNICOLOR TRIP AT THE UNDERWATER RESTAURANT, SEA.



ABOVE: Soak in a glass-bottomed bath with views of the marine life below and the infinite horizon from the Over Water Pool Villa. Doors slide open to an infinity edge pool, while steps descend from the sundeck into the shallow lagoon.

LEFT: At the astronomy-themed bar, SKY, intricate lightwork hovers above, strewn across wooden panels and mimicking iconic constellations. Champagne and cocktails are served beneath the stars as the sunset tapestry unfolds.

RIGHT: Over Water Pool Villas are a distinctly Maldivian luxury. Wake up to ocean views. Sunbathe in over water hammocks. Swim with tropical schools of fish and the occasional sea turtle. Enjoy casual fare perched over the water.

like the edge of the world. The pool replaces a traditional living area, offering direct access from all nooks: the bedroom's floor-to-ceiling, retractable glass side doors; the bath's sunken, glass-bottomed deep-soak tub and sprawling day bed; and the deck's hanging swing bed and duo of thick, twined hammocks which sway over the ocean blues.

A slew of next-generation, greater resort amenities also impress. At the otherworldly underwater restaurant, SEA, glass walls serve as windows to the Baa Atoll's prolific marine life. Back above water, cocktails are served at the bi-level bar, SKY. On its rooftop lounge, a backless concentric circular daybed with full 180-degree recline lends to unparalleled stargazing. There's arguably no better place on Earth to let your mind drift to a fantasy galaxy far, far away — or simply revere the one you're currently in. anantara.com

