# Even in gay honeymoon paradise, a little rain must fall



Patina can’t control the weather, apparently. Which is surprising because they seem to have a handle on pretty much everything else.

When we touch down in Malé, we’re already aware there is a weather issue. The bucking plane told us. That meant the forty-minute sea crossing to the newest, sparkliest resort in all the Maldives over in the Fari Islands archipelago actually took well over an hour of being slapped against the sea. But there they were, the staff, all out on the jetty to greet us clapping and waving as if weather was nothing for us to worry about. And it turned out it wasn’t.

By the time the little golf buggy had taken us through winding lanes between palm trees past beaches and outsize artworks to the end of the jetty that lead out to the over-water villas, things had calmed down a little. And who cared a hoot anyway when it was clear from the beauty of our villa we were going to be spending a lot of time in here anyway, weather or no weather.

Everything at Patina is designed by an actual architect instead of a hotel designer and you can tell the difference. It feels homely… if home is a superstar glass box on stilts with uninterrupted ocean views, a bath on your terrace just beside the pool and the swinging hammock and a bathroom so big you could back a truck into it. And that real architect, Marcio Kogan of Studio MK27, apart from being inspired by the tropical beaches of his home country Brazil, has kept sustainability front and centre of everything he has done at Patina.

For a start, the villas – there are beach villas too, even ‘cheap’ accommodations for the staff you might want to bring along even though we would have been more than happy to stay in them ourselves as they were gorgeous – are invisible to the eye as they have been built below the treeline, which means that even if you’re swinging in a bucket seat strung to a palm tree steps away from the beach bar, it still feels like you’re on some deserted island. It’s a simple trick that makes all the difference.

And the trees on the island were rescued from neighbouring islands where they were facing industrial clearing. Materials are renewable – like the sticks made into a screen in our villa to shield us from prying eyes as we frolic in our pool – power is solar (well, they do mostly have the sun), they don’t only recycle their own waste but have programmes to clean up the sea and recycle what they find (not that we ever saw so much as a sweet wrapper) and the vegetables come from the organic gardens. All bathroom products, meanwhile, are from Haeckels, the sustainable, 100% vegan, Margate-based company that uses local seaweed, among other very clever plants, in its manufacture.

But apart from not behaving like most Maldivian resorts, Patina doesn’t look like them either. The architecture is slick and modern with no phony South Seas thatched nonsense. Furniture is contemporary, albeit completely made from natural materials, while the public spaces are spacious and open and airy and delicious.

Our first meal, for instance, was in the main restaurant, which is just through the library (we actually got work done!) and open to the pool and then the sea. But that was just one of 12 ‘concepts’, meaning even if you’re here for a fortnight, you can still change it up every evening. Chinese (our favourite), vegan (good on them), a Greek beach restaurant, a Japanese/Nordic fusion restaurant, the Fari Beach Club for pre- or post-drinks or a light French dinner right on the sand, Brasa for those meat moments…

You can even just grab a free gelato (including vegan!) or a burger from their retro food truck. Oh and don’t forget Veli Bar for pizza and burgers and a happy hour with your feet in the sand, while there are wine and cheese options, Lebanese… And all the locations are so beautiful in every detail, up to and including the food. The breakfast buffet, by the way, is world-leading.

Obviously, the spa is beautiful with reflecting pools as well as a fully stocked, and highly popular, gym, while the whole property is dotted with contemporary artworks, including big ones like James Turrell’s Skyspace Amarta, a huge pavilion – big enough for a party – that plays with the way the light comes in. Gorgeous. Even the rooms have photographs printed on reclaimed wood, which makes them seem somehow like found treasures.

The weather, of course, settled into daily sunshine (though you should check what season you’re going in if you demand 100%) but I still remember that first afternoon, in my villa (which just happens to be on the cover of the latest issue of Design Hotels magazine!), laid on my bed – and later in the outside bath – watching the rain on the sea and thinking how lucky I am to be in Patina, whatever the weather.

patinahotels.com

## Bibliography

* <https://patinahotels.com/maldives-fari-islands/sustainability> - This page details Patina Maldives' commitment to sustainability, including coral propagation projects and the use of renewable materials in construction, aligning with the article's mention of the resort's eco-friendly initiatives.
* <https://www.designhotels.com/culture/conscious-eye/our-conscious-eye-on-patina-maldives-fari-islands/> - This article discusses the biophilic design of Patina Maldives by Marcio Kogan, highlighting the integration of natural elements into the architecture, which supports the article's description of the resort's design philosophy.
* <https://www.wallpaper.com/architecture/marcio-kogan-patina-hotel-maldives> - This piece provides insights into Marcio Kogan's architectural approach at Patina Maldives, emphasizing the use of natural materials and sustainable practices, corroborating the article's mention of the resort's design and sustainability efforts.
* <https://cnaluxury.channelnewsasia.com/experiences/patina-resort-maldives-212426> - This review highlights Patina Maldives' commitment to sustainability, including the use of prefabricated construction to minimize waste and the importation of rescued trees, supporting the article's points about the resort's eco-friendly practices.
* <https://maldives-magazine.com/news/patina-maldives-sets-a-new-standard-for-eco-friendly-hospitality-with-innovative-practices.htm> - This article outlines Patina Maldives' innovative sustainability practices, such as coral propagation and plans to expand solar energy use, aligning with the article's discussion of the resort's environmental initiatives.