



Soneva

25 YEARS
OF SUSTAINABLE LUXURY

PRESS PACK

APRIL 2021





Introduction

In 2020 Soneva turned 25, celebrating a quarter century of breath-taking locations, stylish and sustainable accommodation, one-of-a-kind experiences and a personalised, intuitive service, tailored to guests' every need. Founded in 1995, Soneva crafts rare and authentic experiences for guests, while pioneering sustainability across every level of its operations. Soneva is a world leading, award-winning sustainable luxury resort operator that owns and manages Soneva Fushi in the Maldives (1995), Soneva Kiri in Thailand (2010), and Soneva Jani in the Maldives (2016). Soneva in Aqua, an ultra-luxurious yacht was launched in the Maldives in 2015.

Soneva is a privately owned company, backed by 25 years of operational success, leading the world in the development of sustainable luxury resorts and private residences. We own and operate all of our properties, enabling us to ensure that the outstanding standards for which the Soneva brand is renowned are consistently maintained.

We are committed to leading the hospitality industry in environmentally responsible tourism. Annual environmental performance improvements mean we are continually building on our initiatives and programmes.

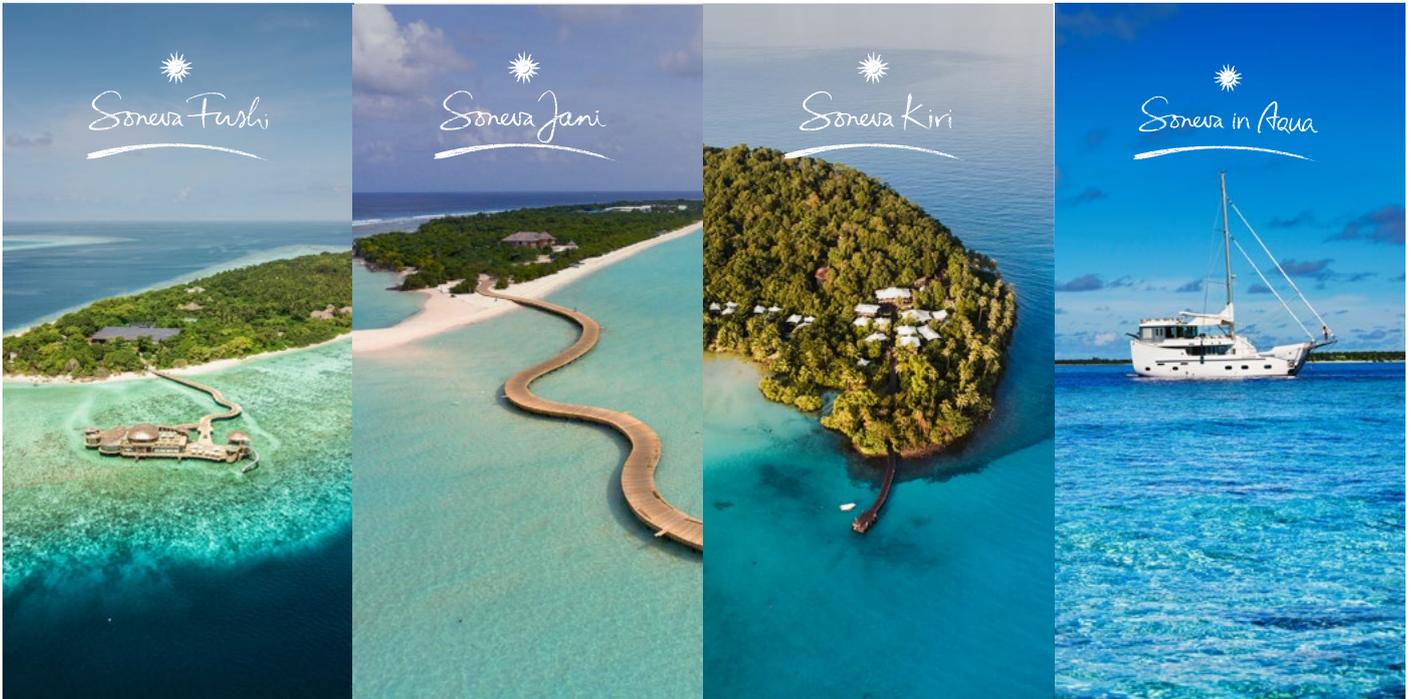
Today Soneva has many imitators, but no equals. It is still the original barefoot luxury brand, and still one of the travel industry's greatest innovators.

[soneva.com](https://www.soneva.com)





Our Presence



Biographies

Sonu Shivdasani

Born in England, the youngest son of Indian businessman Indoo Shivdasani and his wife Lakshmi, Sonu studied at Eton College and Le Rosey in Switzerland, later graduating from Oxford University. Sonu and Eva travelled frequently to the Maldives. It was during those trips that Eva and Sonu developed a dream of one day living there. Whilst the role of CEO and Joint Creative Director of Soneva keeps him quite busy, Sonu finds time for water sports, reading, art, architecture, wine, travelling, skiing and wellness. *To access high resolution imagery of Sonu, please click here for his page on the Brand Centre*

Eva Malmström Shivdasani

Eva Malmström Shivdasani is Creative Director and Conscience for Soneva, where she creates and oversees the design process. During the 70s and 80s, Eva was a fashion model appearing on the covers of more than 100 magazines worldwide. Eva also had a successful clothing company in Paris, L'EVA. Her real flair is in her impeccable taste, innovative and unconventional ideas and an overall daring approach that ensures a different feel for each project. *To access high resolution imagery of Eva, please click here for her page on the Brand Centre*





Soneva – A Dream Partnership

Twenty-five years after Soneva Fushi first opened its doors to guests in 1995, Soneva remains at the forefront of sustainable luxury resorts. This year, Soneva's resorts will be hosting a calendar of events and celebrations to recognise many of the ground-breaking achievements and industry firsts the brand has made during its 25-year journey that all started with a dream.

Soneva is a combination of Sonu's and Eva's names. Sonu had the means and the management expertise; Eva the style and design concepts. Together, the young couple wanted to develop a resort that would satisfy their desires for a dream destination for those who liked to travel in luxurious style. They both also had an overwhelming desire to protect the environment. What was conceived was a unique philosophy of simple sophistication and returning luxuriously to nature.

Sonu and Eva opened their first property, Soneva Fushi, in the Maldives in 1995, creating a high end market in what was formerly a mass market destination. Soneva Fushi pioneered the trend of luxury holidays in the Maldives, especially back-to-nature holidays. Sonu and Eva are founders of the Evason group of hotels and Six Senses Resorts and Spas. In 2012, they sold the two companies to focus on Soneva-owned resorts with private residences as part of the "One Owner, One Operator, One Philosophy, One Brand" strategy.

Soneva continues to lead the industry in sustainable luxury. Soneva resorts have won numerous awards, including the Conde Nast Traveller's 'Best of the Best' award for Soneva Fushi. Each Soneva resort uses only natural and sustainable building materials. Plastic is banned and as much produce as possible is grown or caught locally to reduce carbon footprint and support the local economy. Sonu and Eva's concept was the forerunner and inspiration for a host of imitators who saw the potential in going green.

The Shivdasani's also established the Soneva Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation committed to supporting the development and operation of projects and campaigns that have a positive environmental, social and economic impact.





Boilerplates

About Soneva Fushi

In 1995, the award-winning luxury resort Soneva Fushi set the standard for all desert island barefoot luxury hideaways in the Maldives. Located in the Baa Atoll UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Soneva Fushi blends castaway chic with sustainability.

Stay in one of the 63 private island villas, ranging in size from one to nine bedrooms. Each comes with their own stretch of beach, most have their own pools, and are hidden among dense foliage within touching distance of a pristine coral reef. Soneva Fushi now has eight new Water Retreats, the largest in the world, bringing the total number of villas to 71. These one- and two-bedroom overwater villas all have their own pool, retractable roofs and 19-metre water slide into the ocean. Intuitive service is provided by a Barefoot Butler. Soneva in Aqua is a luxury two-cabin yacht that sets sail from Soneva Fushi. It can be chartered for bespoke diving and snorkelling excursions.

Highlights include the open-air Cinema Paradiso, exploring the cosmos at the high-tech Observatory, the home-made chocolate and ice cream rooms, five hundred wines to choose from, nine different restaurants both on the island and at Out of the Blue, the two-storey overwater structure, and countless destination dining options. Explore the treasure trove that is the children's Den, that comes with an 8,000 piece Lego room, dress up room, two pools, a water slide and more. There is a multi-purpose facility that encompasses the Maldives' only hot glass studio, Soneva Art and Glass, where guests can learn the art of glassblowing.

If the experiences are magical, the philosophy is simple: no news, no shoes.





About Soneva in Aqua

Soneva in Aqua, the pioneering concept of experiential luxury, sails from Soneva Fushi. An ultra-luxurious and highly refined yacht, Soneva in Aqua measures 23 metres in length and 6.40 metres in width, with exceptionally spacious interiors.

Highlights of the yacht include spacious decks with daybeds and dining areas, an outdoor Jacuzzi, and a glass-bottomed Jacuzzi in the master bedroom. Our highly skilled and trained crew on board includes a Captain, Mechanic, Barefoot Butler, Head Chef of the Galley, and Wellness Therapist. A Dive Master, Surf Instructor, Photographer and Astronomer can be added on request. The yacht can be chartered for one, two, three- and seven-night adventures to explore the untouched beauty of far-flung Maldivian atolls.

The two-cabin yacht combines Soneva's iconic barefoot luxury with a sense of freedom and exclusivity of a private boat charter, while being at the price-point of a two-bedroom villa at Soneva Fushi.

About Soneva Kiri

Award-winning luxury resort Soneva Kiri is located on Thailand's fourth largest but least populated island, Koh Kood - just one hour by private plane southeast of Bangkok. It offers an unrivalled combination of luxury, an integral environmental approach, authentic Thai experiences and mouth-watering organic food, a lot of which is grown in the resort's own gardens.

Soneva Kiri's 34 vast pool villas on the beach, hillsides and cliff tops, vary in size from one to six bedrooms. All of the villas have island-chic furnishings, personal electric buggies or bicycles and impeccable service courtesy of a Barefoot Butler. Dive and snorkel the bay, or head to the nearby National Marine Park to get up close to the vibrant marine life of the Gulf of Thailand. For families, the manta ray shaped Den is where children's imaginations and curiosity can be unleashed, while the Eco Den, for those aged one to five will let them take part in age-specific activities.

When it comes to dining, guests can choose from eight restaurants and bars. At Kruua Mae Tuk, a restaurant on stilts amidst the mangroves, traditional Thai cuisine is the star. With views out across the sea, The View offers modern bistro cuisine. Colours of the Garden is a plant-based dining experience in the organic gardens, where four menus highlight the four culinary regions of Thailand.

Other highlights include the open-air Cinema Paradiso, complimentary resort-made chocolates and 60 flavours of ice cream, a high-tech observatory a spa, and the spectacular Treepod Dining experience that takes fine dining to new heights in the rainforest canopy.





About Soneva Jani

Soneva Jani is located on the island of Medhufaru within a 5.6-kilometer lagoon in the Noonu Atoll, and has uninterrupted ocean views in all directions. The lagoon is 35 minutes by seaplane from Malé International Airport, and one hour by speedboat from Soneva Fushi. The recently opened Maafaru International Airport in the Noonu Atoll is just a 15-minute complimentary speedboat ride from Soneva Jani.

Stay in one of 24 Water Retreats, or one of 27 Water Reserves. The Water Reserves fall under Soneva Unlimited, which lets guests immerse themselves fully in the slow life with unlimited food and beverages, wines and alcohol, experiences, spa treatments, and each Reserve villa comes with a dedicated private Barefoot Butler. Five islands encircle the lagoon, each one with soft white sand and covered in rich tropical vegetation. Four of the five islands will remain untouched, making Soneva Jani the lowest density development in the Maldives. The overwater villas are spaced across the expansive lagoon, offering privacy and extensive views over the Maldives' turquoise waters.

The island villas are tucked into the lush greenery, providing the ultimate privacy, and all within steps of the beach. Soneva Jani's main guest facilities are located at The Gathering, the heart of the resort. This dramatic three-story structure is home to the main dining outlets, in addition to the Soneva Spa, library, boutique and wine cellar. It is located next to the Maldives' first overwater Observatory. Dine on succulent Sri Lankan Mud Crabs, Alaskan King and Kamchatka crabs and more at the Crab Shack. It was voted the 'Most Romantic Restaurant in the World' by CNN Travel. For dishes inspired by the produce grown in the organic garden and caught in the Indian Ocean, Overseas by Mathias Dahlgren is the newly opened overwater restaurant. Here diners can expect a selection of pescatarian, vegetarian and plant-based dishes for lunch and dinner. The new So Primitive features a central fire pit where every dish is prepared using the element of fire. At So Wild by Diana Von Cranach, guests can explore historical recipes from Nepal to Indonesia through a fully plant-based menu.

Facilities on the island include the overwater Cinema Paradiso, the Eco Centro Waste-to-Wealth centre, organic gardens, tennis courts, water sports champa and the pristine North Island, a deserted island in the lagoon, perfect for intimate beach barbecues and picnics.





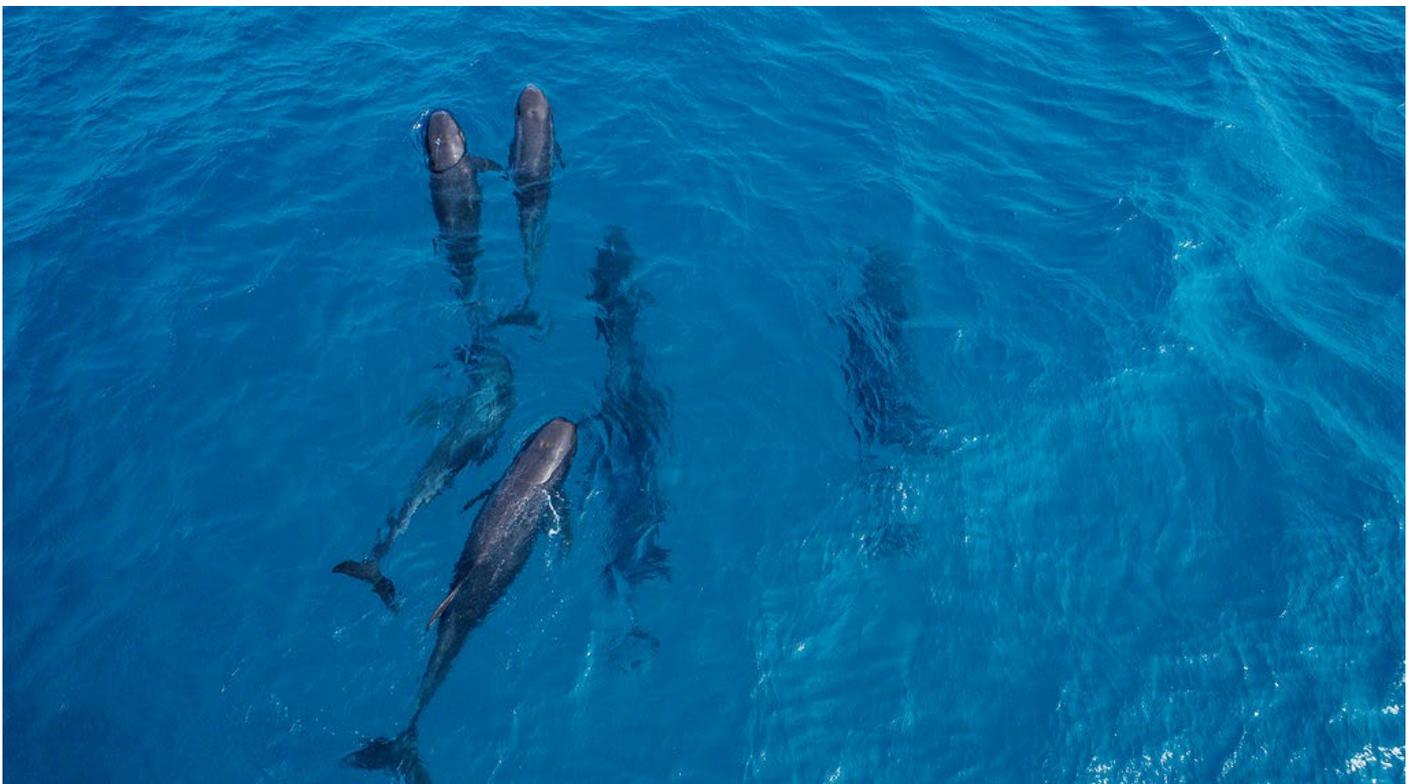
Rare and Treasured Moments

As a Soneva guest, share rare and treasured moments with friends and family in the breathtaking natural beauty of our properties.

Indulge in the luxury of a lazy day or choose to fill your days with invigorating pursuits. From sunrise breakfast on a sandbank or a spot of morning yoga, to snorkelling along the house reef with our Marine Biologist. Cool down with water sports such as sailing, windsurfing, kayaking or go on a picnic and discover your own deserted island.

Imagine intoxicating aromas of the jungle inside your outdoor bathroom and impeccable, intuitive service. It's the kind of place that makes you feel like a child again. Bicycles to explore the island, never knowing when you might have to swerve to avoid rabbits, lizards or turtles.

As the day winds down, sip champagne on a dolphin cruise, watch the stars beneath the stars at our outdoor Cinema Paradiso or count Saturn's rings from our observatory. Or, better yet, take inspiration from our ubiquitous bunny, and have the ultimate luxury - do nothing.





Awards

A selection of recent International Awards. **A full list of awards is available on our website.*

LUXURY LIFESTYLE AWARDS 2020

Best Luxury Eco-Resorts in Thailand – Soneva Kiri

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELLER MIDDLE EAST READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2020

Favourite Spa Hotel (International) - Soneva Fushi – Winner

DEPARTURES 2020 LEGENDS AWARD

Unique Eco-Initiatives and Community Impact - Namoonaa Baa and the Fresh Start Clean-up Initiative - Soneva Fushi

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER CHINA

Gold List 2020 - Best Hotels and Resorts in the World – Soneva Jani

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELLER MIDDLE EAST READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2020

Favourite Romantic Hotel (International) - Soneva Jani - No. 2

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELLER MIDDLE EAST READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2020

Favourite Family Hotel (International) - Soneva Fushi - No. 2

LUXURY TRAVEL INTELLIGENCE

Decade's Best Luxury Hotel - Soneva Jani

VOYAGE AWARD 2019

Best Oversea Hotel of the Year - Soneva Kiri

LUXURY LIFESTYLE AWARDS 2019

Best Luxury Beach Resort in Thailand 2019 - Winner - Soneva Kiri

WORLD RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS 2019

Best for Reducing Carbon Silver Winner - Soneva

WORLD RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS 2019

Best for Reducing Plastic Waste Silver Winner - Soneva

HICAP SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS 2019

Lifetime Achievement Award for Sonu Shivdasani

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELLER ME READER'S CHOICE AWARDS 2019

Favorite Sustainable Luxury Hotel - Soneva Kiri

RESPONSIBLE THAILAND AWARDS 2019

Best Eco-Lodge / Eco-Hotel - Soneva Kiri

BILANZ HOTEL AWARD 2019

Best Hotel in the World - No. 35 - Soneva Fushi

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2019

Top 30 Resorts in the Indian Ocean - No. 15 - Soneva Jani

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2019

Top 30 Resorts in the Indian Ocean - No. 7 - Soneva Fushi

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2019

Top 20 Resorts in Asia/Thailand - Winner - Soneva Kiri

HOTEL OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2019

Best Luxury Resort Casual Dining Restaurant Worldwide 2019 - Winner Benz's Restaurant - Soneva Kiri

HOTEL OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2019

Best Romantic Luxury Resort Worldwide 2019 - #5 Soneva Fushi

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2018/19 (MIDDLE EAST)

Favourite Sustainable Hotel - Soneva Kiri





Soneva Villa Ownership

Soneva's Villa Ownership programme was launched in 2011 to promote a limited number of Private Residences for sale.

Soneva made history by being the first developer to offer magnificent homes for foreigners in the Maldives. The first Private Residence owned by a foreigner, the sprawling 4-bedroom Jungle Reserve villa, was handed over to a thrilled owner who is creating memories and stories with friends and family while enjoying the rental income the property is generating.

Soneva's exquisite Private Residences are built to meet their owners' individual requirements, whilst remaining sustainable with as little impact on the planet as possible.

A limited number of spectacular Private Residences are available to purchase, each of which is uniquely designed and carefully located to combine maximum privacy and tranquillity whilst being close enough to enjoy Soneva's first-class services and amenities.

Ranging in size from two to nine bedrooms, and benefiting from abundant natural light, lush foliage and picturesque views, the spacious villas are made of sustainable materials and comprise detached living areas joined by wooden walkways, offering the luxury of space to villa owners and their families.

All bespoke residences include an infinity-edged swimming pool, generous outdoor living area and large outdoor bathrooms, one master bedroom and several guest suites, a walk-through dressing area, walk-in kitchen and wine vault, steam and sauna rooms, large terraced areas with sun loungers, a prestigious dining area, Bose sound systems with docking station that can be connected to personal smartphones and tablets, and large, flat-panel television sets.





Our Commitment

At the heart of our company and brand is creating unforgettable, enlightening experiences whilst treading lightly on the earth. By making small changes to our business model, we have been able to help initiate and nurture positive change in our industry, without any negative impact on either our profitability or on our guests' perception of our products.

By adding a two per cent environmental levy to guests' bills, Soneva has raised around USD 6.2 million towards environmental projects, which will mitigate one million tonnes CO₂ over seven years; far exceeding Soneva's carbon footprint including guest flights. So far, the projects have benefitted more than 185,000 people. Similarly, the company also banned imported water in 2008 and produces all drinking water on site. This has reduced carbon emissions and also avoided the estimated 1.7 million plastic bottles that would need to be disposed of. The savings achieved from this have been used through the Soneva Foundation to give over 750,000 people access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Soneva launched the Namoonaa Baa initiative in February 2020. The partnership between three local islands (Maalhos, Dharavandhoo and Kihaadhoo), Soneva, marine plastic foundation Common Seas, and the government of the Maldives has created a prototype that could reimagine waste management in the Maldives. At the heart of the initiative is a radical reduction in the volume of plastic arriving on the islands.

Soneva assisted the council of Maalhos to establish a water bottling plant that desalinates and mineralises sea water before bottling it in reusable glass bottles, using the same system as Soneva resorts.

Recycling and the responsible disposal of waste forms the second strand of the programme. Maalhos is the first island to open a Soneva-sponsored Eco Centro with machinery that will include a wood chipper and a glass crusher. The third component is to inspire a love of the ocean and the local environment. Namoonaa Baa is nurturing the next generation of ocean stewards in the Maldives. Soneva also recycles over 90 per cent of its waste through its state-of-the-art Eco Centro 'Waste to Wealth' programme.





Soneva is also a global influencer, as we have pioneered the development of a Carbon Calculator and environmental profit and loss tool in order to measure and further reduce the environmental impact of our operations and supply chain.

Online Resources

- Our latest **press releases**
- Our **Soneva Brand Centre** for images, factsheets and videos
- Instagram - @discoversoneva
- Facebook - @discoversoneva

For more information, please contact:

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Soneva

25 YEARS
OF SUSTAINABLE LUXURY



Inspiring a Lifetime of Rare Experiences

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