

An aerial view of URJA Naturopathy Island

# De-stress, in sync with nature

**Wellness at URJA Naturopathy Island was this t2 girl's takeaway from her trip to Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa**

A place where the rhythm of the ocean invites you to slow down, reconnect and savour each moment," was how Sean Mosher, general manager of Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa, described the sanctuary of repose. I had reached there after landing at the Velana International Airport.

There were tons of things to do, such as taking cooking classes, attending a movie night, enjoying a destination dinner or BBQ and a floating breakfast, trying yoga amidst nature, going diving, surfing, participating in water sports, trying sunset fishing, feeding the turtles and much more.

My eyes were, however, stuck on URJA Naturopathy Island, and my heart said, *hingaa dhaan* (let's go in Dhivehi, the language of the Maldives). A small boat took me to the island the next day. Of course, there was the sand and the ocean and divine sunlight, but the quietude was what was most endearing.

Anand Prayaga, a naturopath, patiently waited to hear my woes and worries before guiding me for further consultation. Hailing from Kerala, Prayaga studied at Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences and had previously worked at a wellness retreat called Prakriti Shakti by CGH group in Kerala.

URJA Naturopathy Island was inaugurated last December and officially launched in March this year. "I joined in June 2025, and then we started working on it, slowly introducing different programmes and discussing how we wanted to present this. We just had a normal spa before this. Naturopathy was never a part of Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa before. Since there is a lot of development happening in the world of wellness, we felt this was essential," he told me as I sat sipping a warm, revitalising drink.

*Urja* meant vital fire, said Prayaga, and at the wellness island, the idea was to address the root cause as a preventive measure and aid in reversing disease and overall well-being. "We make our guests understand the real cause, and then we treat that. Most of the problems that exist in this world, 70 per cent or even more, are lifestyle-related disorders. So, without correcting a lifestyle, medicines won't work. Otherwise, it is just disease management. Naturopathy is rooted in natural medicine and personalised diagnostics, without invasive techniques. The three areas we really focus on are food and diet, the second is rest and sleep, and the third is mobility and physical activity. If these three things are well-balanced, health starts improving," he explained.

A minimum of seven days is recommended if you take the consultation seriously. Prayaga says the first three days are for understanding all about naturopathy. In five days, the detoxification process starts as you step into your wellness era. By the seventh day, you are equipped to carry back everything you learned and continue with the same zeal at home. You will be given recommendations for diet and exercise suggestions to improve your lifestyle.

Sleep enhancement programme, joint care, and liver detox were the three most popular programmes at URJA Naturopathy Island. Visbody for posture and body composition analysis, an iris scan as a supportive assessment tool and Oligoscan (micronutrient scan) are the various in-depth analyses available.

Of course, my perceived stress scale was 27, indicating a high level of perceived stress. A relaxing Emma Kunz Harmoniser was just what the doctor ordered. With sweeping ocean views, the massage seemed to melt away all the stress, filling me up with a renewed vigour to rethink various life decisions.

"People are really interested. We think wellness starts after a certain age. I get more people between the ages of 20 and 35, who are keen to know how to preserve good health. They are well aware. I think Covid has enhanced that awareness about how we need to be healthy by ourselves, rather than just depending on any kind of medicines or any other modalities," said Prayaga.

On my way back, I met Sean at the Sunset Lounge. Did he intend to keep adding to the wellness bouquet? "Selectively, yes. The temptation in wellness is to keep adding new therapies until the guest needs a wellness treatment simply to recover from reading the menu! I would rather go deeper than simply go bigger. At URJA, every journey begins with a naturopathic consultation so that the experience responds to the individual rather than the other way around. Guests can then explore areas such as sleep, nutrition, detoxification, movement and restoration through different pathways, supported where relevant by diagnostics. We will absolutely continue to evolve it as knowledge and guest needs evolve, but every new addition must earn its place. Simplicity is valuable in wellness too," he said.

He also added that wellness experiences with substance and credibility behind them have the scope of growing exponentially. "People are becoming much more informed. They are not necessarily looking for an isolated hour of pampering anymore. They are asking about sleep, stress, movement, nutrition, energy and why they feel the way they do in the first place. There is a shift from "help me relax for an hour" towards "help me understand how I can feel better".

URJA was developed around precisely that idea. It brings naturopathic principles and scientific expertise together, with the aim of meaningful restoration rather than a temporary escape. The global growth figures for wellness travel are significant, but I think the more important story is that people are becoming much more intentional about what well-being means to them," he said.

Over a dinner at Reef Club, with the dark swirl of the ocean gurgling nearby, I picked Prayaga's brains some more. Was there anything he did that revitalised him? "Personally, I like yoga and being in the water, like swimming or just snorkelling. It is not only the physical activity, but it also relaxes the mind and brings balance to the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems," he smiled.

On my plate was seafood pizza, a huge portion of lobster and an utterly delicious dessert. Prayaga was talking about the importance of a balanced meal. My parasympathetic nervous system had kicked in. *Zindagi na milegi dobara*.

Prayaga smiled. He knew.

***Saionee Chakraborty***

Pictures courtesy: Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa and by the writer

*The writer was at Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa on an invitation from the resort*



I loved the Emma Kunz Harmoniser



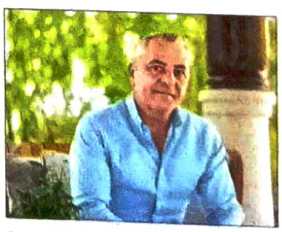
A boat ferries you from the Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa to the URJA Naturopathy Island



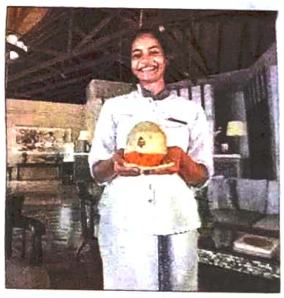
A view on the way to the spa



A view from my beach villa at Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa



Sean Mosher is the general manager at Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa



Warmth arrived through a smile and some fresh coconut water on arrival



My surfing instructor confirmed he got a lot of compliments for looking a lot like Novak Djokovic!



Dr Anand Prayaga, a naturopath, was my go-to at URJA Naturopathy Island