

site



CRYSTAL  
AWARDS



CREATIVE  
TRAVEL  
a family story since 1977

FMC  
SOLUTIONS

# CREATIVE TRAVEL INDIA & FMC SOLUTIONS SOUTH AFRICA

## PROGRAM LOCATION: THE MALDIVES

**AWARD CATEGORY** EXCELLENCE IN INCENTIVE TRAVEL: ASIA PACIFIC

**PROGRAM NAME** DISCOVERY STAR AWARDS

**CLIENT** DISCOVERY LIMITED, SOUTH AFRICA



site



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**“This is Creative’s 8th SITE Crystal, and one that’s perhaps extra special as we delivered a program during the most challenging of times. Working with a client who was willing to move forward with their incentive program even during the pandemic truly tested the skills of the DMC and agency. Delivering in unusual times is what makes the difference between good and great. A client like Discovery works on complete trust with its partners. This is what makes for a dream project. We are all super proud of this achievement.”**

**Rajeev Kohli, Joint Managing Director, Creative Travel India**

Talking about “crisis” in a case study about incentive travel excellence might seem strange — but when an otherwise spectacular program runs into trouble, it’s clear why you want industry experts like Creative Travel India and FMC Solutions South Africa in charge.

The two organizations proved their deep expertise and the power of strong working relationships during a November 2021 program in the Maldives, both to deliver the planned incentive experience and manage unexpected hurdles they encountered, too.

This program for 175 guests from Discovery Limited, a South African financial services company, started off with the traditional hallmarks of an excellent incentive. Designed to reward and recognize employees aligned with Discovery’s core values of purpose and ambition, organizers focused on creating a program that would leave participants with a stronger sense of belonging within the company, motivation to amplify future performance, and enhanced well-being.

Creative Travel and FMC Solutions had also crafted this program around destination-specific challenges such as limited resort availability and high costs in a country that relies almost entirely on imports. Their program was proving how ingenuity, research, and teamwork can make a “magical” incentive experience possible, that is unique, cost-effective, and engaging.

However, disaster struck when the discovery of the Omicron COVID variant upended the group’s travel arrangements with the panic-driven cancelation of virtually all commercial flights back to South Africa.

Creative Travel and FMC Solutions immediately got to work arranging new return travel, relying on a close industry partnership the teams were

able to leverage to secure private air transfer. They encountered further turbulence though when confirming departure times — a complication that required contacting the Maldives’ Minister of Civil Aviation to sort out, and skillful negotiation with the resort team so guests would be kept comfortable despite the disruptions.

The crisis continued once the group took off from the resort. During a layover in Malé, further delays required Creative Travel and FMC Solutions to immediately deliver a creative solution to secure lodging and food for qualifiers on an island even less prepared to host this large group than the one they’d just left.

The teams tapped into limited destination resources and secured lodging, transport, and plenty of food & drink to make sure participants’ needs were met and to keep the group calm. Flights eventually took off, with all guests accounted for and well-looked after.

Coordinating this incentive turned into an adventure packed with more than anyone involved had bargained for. It was by far the most complicated and difficult incentive Creative Travel and FMC Solutions have ever run, but one that ended as a grand success.

Despite the disruptions, the incentive award was kept in place and the team preserved the 5-star experience so guests were not impacted by the behind-the-scenes drama. This was truly a case of not letting operational challenges disrupt the end goals of the trip, with the reward kept upfront at all times and spirits held high!

**Creative Travel India & FMC Solutions South Africa**

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