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Press Release

## **Soneva to Welcome Dubai Chef Hattem Mattar to the Maldives for Exclusive Residency this Eid Al Fitr**

***The first GCC chef to join the prestigious Soneva Stars programme will showcase the art of fire cooking across four days at Soneva's Maldives resorts***

**March 27, 2023.** This Eid al Fitr, luxury resorts brand [Soneva](#) will welcome acclaimed Dubai-based chef [Hattem Mattar](#) to the glittering roster of visiting chefs in the Maldives as part of its exclusive [Soneva Stars](#) programme. Chef Hattem Mattar, the iconic 'pit-master' from the UAE who has made waves in the Middle Eastern dining scene, will showcase his unique style of 'live fire-cooking' at Soneva Fush in the Baa Atoll and at Soneva Jani in the Noonu Atoll from April 20 to 30.

Mattar's residency at Soneva Fushi and Soneva Jani will place a unique island twist on some of his signature dishes including *Raw Flounder with garden greens and fingerlime ponzu*, *Coral Trout Kofta with grape salad, burnt eggplant and fresh pita*, and *Charcoal Scallop Skewer with hokkaido scallop, citrus herb glaze, red onion and basil*. The eclectic menus will incorporate local ingredients picked from the resort's organic gardens and will emphasise Mattar's signature open-fire style with an elevated twist to inspire discerning palates. Over the course of his residency, Mattar will host exclusive dinners with bespoke menus, masterfully curated with Soneva's culinary teams.

One of Dubai's best-known culinary talents and influential figures in the region's dining industry, Mattar is a gastronomic mastermind and entrepreneur, also known as the world's first Arab 'pitmaster'. A true icon of the Middle East's luxury food scene, Mattar has represented both the UAE and USA governments as a Culinary Ambassador and has cooked for many celebrities and high-profile clients.

"I am thrilled to have the opportunity to cook for guests at Soneva and to join its exclusive Soneva Stars programme. Soneva has a rich legacy of world-class cuisine with a strong emphasis on well-sourced, quality ingredients. My restaurants follow the



same philosophy so there is a great synergy in our collaboration. My mission is to make the grill an essential and delicious part of daily cuisine and to bring my unique style of cooking to as many people of different nationalities as possible. While on the islands, I can't wait to bring the warmth of Arab hospitality to guests and inspire them with the art of live-fire cooking."

The Soneva Stars calendar is a year-round roster of acclaimed visiting experts and one-of-a-kind activities, delivering upon Soneva's promise of inspiring a lifetime of rare experiences. Soneva Stars delivers an utterly unique and thought-provoking line-up that includes Michelin-starred chefs, best-selling authors, daring explorers, sporting heroes, leading wellness practitioners, motivational speakers and more. Throughout the year, guests can enjoy bespoke experiences with the luxury destination's selected talent, from hosted dinners to engaging talks or bespoke one-on-one sessions.

Past celebrated guest chefs have included two Michelin-starred Tom Aikens and Julien Royer, co-founder of Asia's best restaurant, Odette. From the world of sport and fitness, Soneva has welcomed champion free diver Umberto Pelizzari, rugby legend James Haskell, tennis superstar Jonas Bjorkman and football icon Ronaldinho. From art, culture and science, visiting experts have included celebrated Italian glass artist Lino Tagliapietra, acclaimed astrophysicist Sarafina Nance and best-selling author and historian Peter Frankopan. And from the realm of wellness and healing, leading practitioners Sandra Laznik and ayurvedic expert Dr G. N. Lakshman have enjoyed residencies at Soneva's resorts, too.

To book your stay at Soneva this Eid Al Fitr and embark on a culinary journey with Hattem Mattar during his exclusive residency, visit [www.soneva.com](http://www.soneva.com).

To learn more about the Soneva Stars programme, visit [www.soneva.com/events](http://www.soneva.com/events).

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**About Soneva**



Founded in 1995, Soneva is an award-winning sustainable luxury resorts operator. At Soneva Fushi, Soneva Jani and Soneva in Aqua in the Maldives, and Soneva Kiri in Thailand, true 'luxury' is defined by peace, time and space. Guests are encouraged to discover the SLOW LIFE, reconnecting with themselves and the natural world through rare, unforgettable experiences. A pioneer for responsible tourism, Soneva combines a conscientious approach to sustainability with exquisite luxury and intuitive, personalised service. Soneva has been fully carbon neutral since 2012 and a mandatory 2% environmental levy is added to every Soneva stay, with proceeds going towards the not-for-profit Soneva Foundation.

### **About Hattem Mattar**

Hattem Mattar has called the UAE home since 1998 and has been grilling for the UAE masses almost as soon as he landed. He is now the world's first Arab pitmaster, the first Dubai taste maker, the first culinary ambassador to the UAE Embassy in Washington DC and the founder of Mattar.ae, Dubai's first and only artisan smokehouse. Hattem and his live fire menus have been featured all over the world and the country.

He has represented the UAE as far away as The Smithsonian in the USA and has represented the UAE and the Arab world at large at the global BBQ festivals in Brazil, Australia, the UK and the US. He is the only chef to have done the entire circuit in one year.

In the UAE, Hattem and the Mattar team have opened live fire kitchens and concepts to showcase the hospitality of the region and the versatility of the cuisine.

From fine dining at Emirates Palace to sold out popups across the city, Hattem has made it his mission to make BBQ culture a part of the fabric of the country's food scene. With a strong belief in local produce and livestock and a strong emphasis on live fire and third culture cuisine, Hattem believes these unite the world at a common table around a common fire. Hattem aims to make the grill an essential and delicious part of daily cuisine and storytelling for everyone to get know this part of the world better just as the UAE has done for over 190 nationalities and made it a place to call home

For more information, please contact:



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