

41



Eat Sweet

Although you'll feel positively sinful savoring Grenada Chocolate Company's rich dark chocolate accented with bright citrus notes and subtle vanilla aroma, every bite is a virtuous one. This small company, created by New York-expat Mott Green, marries heritage and a modern concern for the environment. Their fine-quality chocolate is created from Trinitario cocoa beans grown on-island by an organic cooperative that shares a stake in Grenada Chocolate. The beans are processed by refurbished antique machines as well as new machines modeled after them, all powered in part by solar energy. While you can't tour the factory, you can get a real feel for how this award-winning chocolate is produced by visiting their partner Belmont Estate, one mile from the factory, where the organic cocoa beans are grown. Order online; one bar is \$5.95. grenada.chocolate.com — RG

SLEEP LIKE A QUEEN

Lundy Island, off the coast of North Devon, England, has been home to powerful Norman families, French pirates and British nobility. Now, through a U.K. charity called Landmark Trust, you can enjoy Lundy's charm by staying in one of its 23 historical buildings. Choose a castle built by Henry III in 1244 or a 1902 fisherman's chalet with weatherboard walls and views of the Bristol Channel. Take a warden-led ramble along the island's rocky shoreline to explore the tidal pools of England's only Marine Nature Reserve. Your nightly accommodation fee helps pay for the buildings' upkeep, allowing these historical landmarks to survive and prosper. Rates from \$135 (per night, two-night minimum). lundyisland.co.uk — JP

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See the Seychelles Located in the Indian Ocean 1,000 miles east of Africa are the beguiling cream-white beaches and granite grottoes of the Seychelles — 115 palm-tufted islands that remained uninhabited until 200 years ago. Nearly half the territory is protected by 14 national parks and reserves, and two UNESCO World Heritage sites. Private island resorts are doing their part, too; we've found three in the Inner Islands that practice what they preach. — JD

	[43] NORTH ISLAND	[44] COUSINE ISLAND	[45] BIRD ISLAND
ECO-SUCCESSSES	Eradicating alien fauna and flora; reestablishing locally extinct indigenous species like land tortoises and <i>coco de mer</i> palm trees	Planting close to 5,000 native trees; recolonizing the island with 100 pairs of sooty terns; monitoring hawksbill turtles with a comprehensive program	Developing projects which include tracking hawksbill and green turtles, density counts of bird species and regular beach patrols to check erosion and replace endemic vegetation
LOCAL CELEBS	500-pound land tortoises once hunted by hungry sailors	About 35 Seychelles magpie robins (one fifth of the archipelago's population)	Two million noisy, smelly and very beautiful sooty terns
MEET & GREET	Dive any of the 22 scuba sites. Keep your eyes open for whale sharks, a protected species in the Seychelles.	Take a guided nature walk; look for lowly giant millipedes and soaring greater frigate birds.	Go bird-watching; bring your binoculars to see wedgetailed shearwaters and elegant white-tailed tropic birds.
RATES PER NIGHT	\$2,223 per person, all-inclusive; north-island.com	\$2,119 per couple, including helicopter transfer, food and some drinks; cousineisland.com	\$452 per person; birdisland.seychelles.com



46 Leave a Legacy

For Howard Hulford, a former World War II pilot, owning the luxurious **Curtain Bluff Resort** on Antigua means more than just turning a profit: This is his home, and the resort staff is like family. That's why Hulford and his wife Michelle started the resort's Old Road Fund more than 25 years ago. "We wanted to give back to the local community because everyone has given us so much," said Hulford. Friends and visitors to Curtain Bluff can make tax-free donations to the fund, which helps hundreds of Antiguan children study abroad, receive computers and medical assistance and attend tennis camps in the U.S. Donations also help repair homes damaged by storms on the island. The fund has raised more than \$1 million and is currently sponsoring 12 Antiguan college students worldwide. curtainbluff.com — KAREN SCHALER

46



47

VOLUNTEER

For the past 23 years **Global Volunteers**, a U.S.-based not-for-profit organization, has sought to pair curious, well-intentioned travelers with needy communities around the globe. The company offers more than 180 volunteer-vacation options in 20 countries on six continents. For instance, in the South Pacific's Cook Islands, volunteers live and work with local communities on the main island of Rarotonga. You can tutor eager grade-schoolers in English at the Takitumu School, share life stories with the elderly "mamas" at the Are Pa Metua Senior Activity Center, or catalogue and shelve books at the public library. Volunteer work is done during the day, leaving your evenings and weekends free to explore the islands. The average stay is between one and three weeks, but extended-stay options of up to 24 weeks are also available. One week from \$2,095. globalvolunteers.org — SUSAN MOYNIHAN



48 Tour the Taro

Drive 10 miles past Hana to the paved road's end, and there you'll find the town of Kipahulu. Here at **Kapahu Living Farm**, a model of a self-sustaining native Hawaiian community circa 1778-1848, community members come together to plant and tend taro patches on centuries-old terraces. Then they pound the tuberous taro root into poi, a staple in the Hawaiian diet, which is shared at family celebrations throughout the year. The farm also harvests other culturally significant "canoe plants" — first brought to Hawaii on ancient voyaging canoes — such as heirloom varieties of banana, breadfruit, sugar cane and mountain apple. The community is then invited to partake in this harvest. Because Kapahu emphasizes education, they will reconstruct a 36-foot boat to teach youth about fishing and marine-resource stewardship for their next project. Visitors to the farm can tour the ancient patches, learn traditional taro-cultivation methods and, in season, pound taro into poi. kipahulu.org — KSR



Go Country

Countrystyle Community Tourism

is an organization dedicated to taking travelers beyond Jamaica's beaches for cultural encounters so they can see the value villagers place on their own heritage. These rootsy — and tasty — tours of remote villages in central and south Jamaica often begin in a local home with a breakfast of ackee and saltfish, Jamaica's national dish. Your tour continues with an in-depth look at Rastafarian culture, guided by Angel, a descendant of famed Nanny of the Maroons; a private concert by a traditional *mento* band (a musical predecessor to reggae); and the chance to sample exotic fruits, peppered shrimp, peanut soup and coconut *gizzarders*. You can even try a home stay, spending the night with a local family. Tours from \$60 per person, excluding transportation.

countrystylecommunitytourism.com — BOB FRIEL



51

49



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BE AWARE Responsible Travel

is an online resource that provides practical advice to travelers who want to be socially aware while seeing the world. What is a polite way to take someone's photo? Is that edible delicacy endangered? Is that trinket made of sustainable wood? Get the answers to these and other questions

at responsible-travel.org. — RG



Conserve Energy

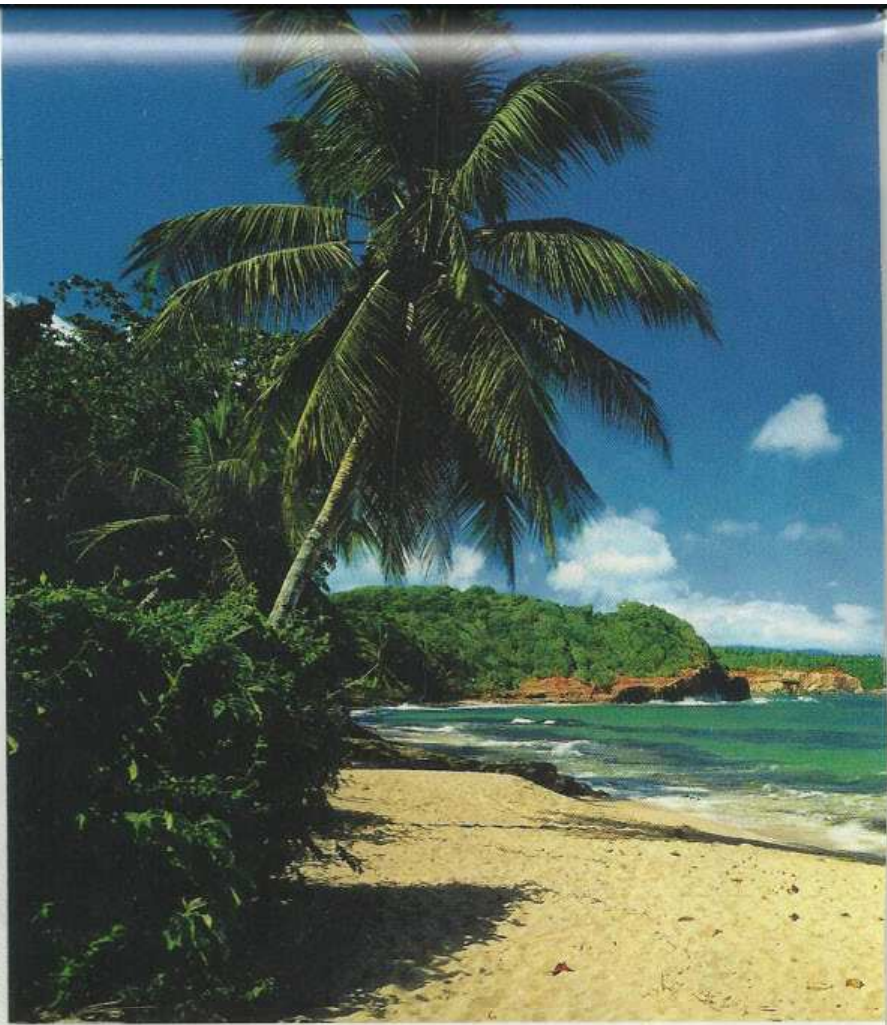
Looking back from the beach at the southeastern coast of Espiritu Santo's Big Bay in Vanuatu, you can see swaths of deep-green forest stretch in all directions. The local families that own this 9,000-acre wilderness, the **Vatthe Conservation Area**, regard it as a holy place. In 1994 they scrapped logging plans in favor of a full-scale conservation cooperative supported by profits from guided hikes of the preserve, birding expeditions and other activities for nature-minded tourists. Although recent earthquake damage has limited the Vatthe Conservation Lodge to only one available bungalow, guests can still camp

on site, refuel on local produce in the solar-powered dining room, and spend days learning about medicinal plants or observing the local chief. Bed and breakfast rates from \$2,000. forestandbird.org.nz/vanuatu — TJ

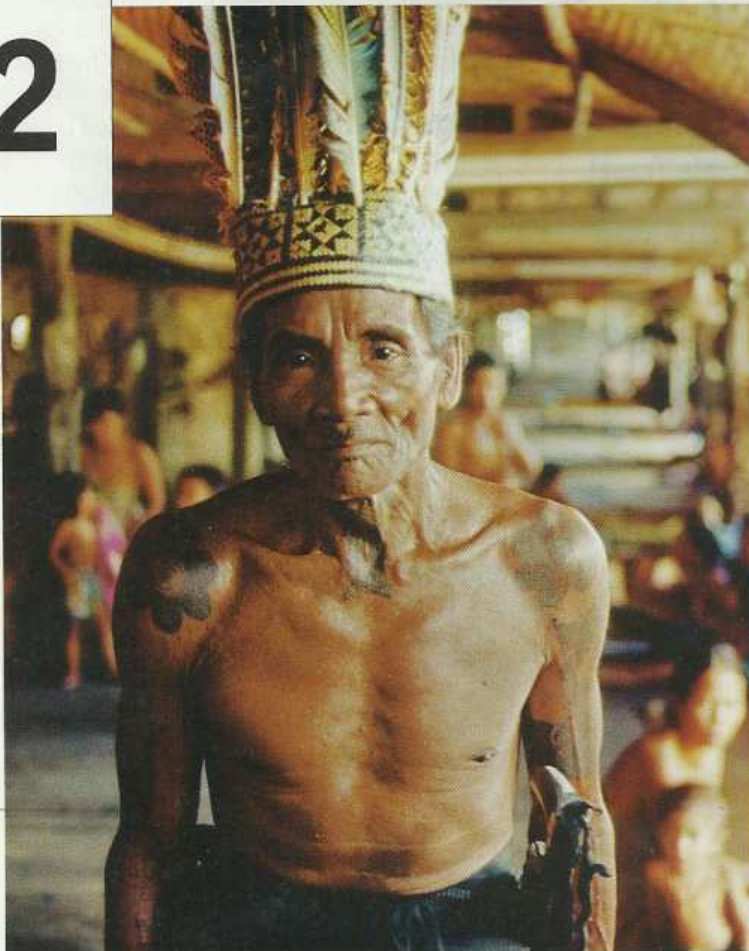


LOUNGE IN A LONGHOUSE

As you start your Longhouse Experience with **Borneo Adventure**, you'll putter up the remote Ai River in a longboat, past jungle-lined riverbanks and a backdrop of rugged hills that are home to one of Sarawak's last wild populations of orangutan. The Borneo-based Malaysian travel company has 20 years of experience developing trips that help rural communities conserve their local environment and culture. Home base for this three-day trip is an isolated Iban community called Nanga Sumpa. Here residents will welcome you into their longhouse, or communal living quarters. You might catch Iban songs at a local wedding or Gawai festival and enjoy potent rice wine before you overnight in a simple jungle lodge. In the morning, trek through the jungle with village guides who will explain how such small-scale tourism provides a sustainable livelihood for their community. Longhouse Experience from \$360. borneoadventure.com — PAUL MILES



52

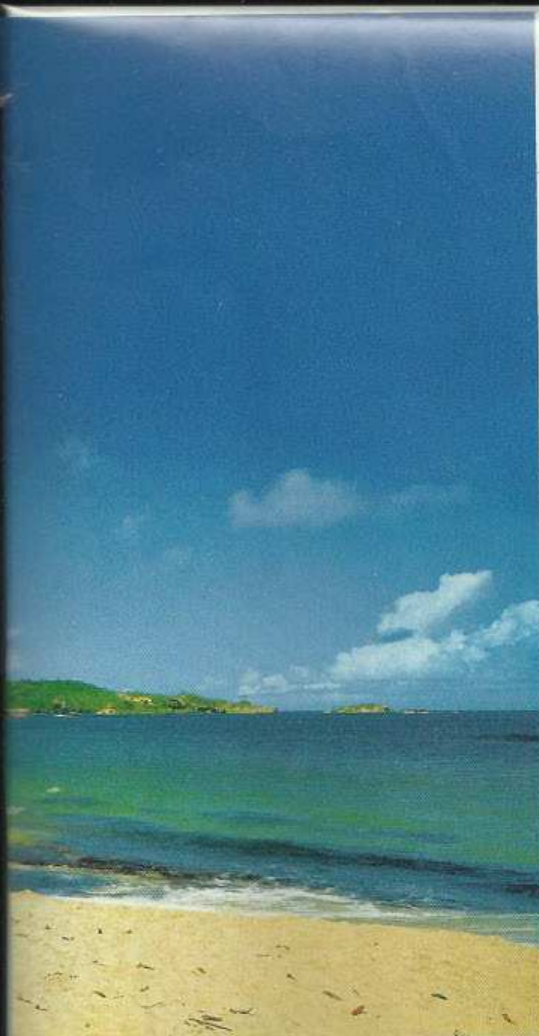


Go to Nature Island

With a half-century government legacy of protecting its mountain rainforests and Caribbean shore, the **Commonwealth of Dominica** was the first country benchmarked by Green Globe, an internationally recognized program certifying sustainable environmental and cultural tourism. In Dominica's Morne Trois Pitons National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage

53

site and one of three national parks created here since 1975, hike past blood-red anthurium lilies speckled beneath a canopy of orange-blossomed immortal trees. Then explore more of this rumpled green island's natural wonders at the eerie Valley of Desolation, where geysers and mud pots hiss and spit. At the island's recently opened Kalinago Barana Autè cultural center, you can watch craftsmen carve dugout canoes from massive *gommier* trees and discover how Dominica's indigenous inhabitants have long lived in harmony with nature. Kalinago Barana Autè admission is \$21; activities are \$5. discoverdominica.com — JD



Experience Paradise

In a laudable effort to neutralize its carbon footprint, Grenada's **Paradise Bay Villa Resort and Spa** includes in its rates a payment for carbon-offset credits to fund a tree-planting project in Ethiopia. The resort uses solar panels plus a wind turbine that produces more energy than the resort uses. Learn about wind power at one of the resort's workshops held every Saturday. There are tastier ways to learn, too: Try a cooking class where dishes like curried lobster are taught, based on the availability of fresh local ingredients. Or attend gatherings like Fish Friday, where you can socialize with islanders. Rates from \$98. paradisebayresort.net — RG

54



55-57

OFFSET YOUR CARBON

The average airplane flying between New York and Honolulu emits between two and three tons of carbon dioxide per person. Carbon offsetting allows travelers to calculate the impact of their flights and voluntarily fund their share of carbon-reducing initiatives, from renewable-energy research to energy-efficiency projects and reforestation. The **Climate Trust's** Carbon Counter helps people estimate their annual carbon footprints and calculate the cost of offsetting those emissions. In much the same way, the offsetting program **NativeEnergy** uses those funds to build wind turbines in Alaska's Toksook Bay and elsewhere, significantly reducing the need for diesel-powered generators in those communities. **Sustainable Travel International's** MyClimate program takes it one step further, pairing travelers with eco-aware airlines, hotels and tourism operations worldwide that are already taking positive steps toward lowering their carbon emissions. For about \$12 to \$15 per ton of carbon dioxide emitted, all three programs allow you to travel guilt-free, knowing you are funding earth-friendly initiatives around the world. carboncounter.org; nativeenergy.com; sustainabletravelinternational.org — TJ

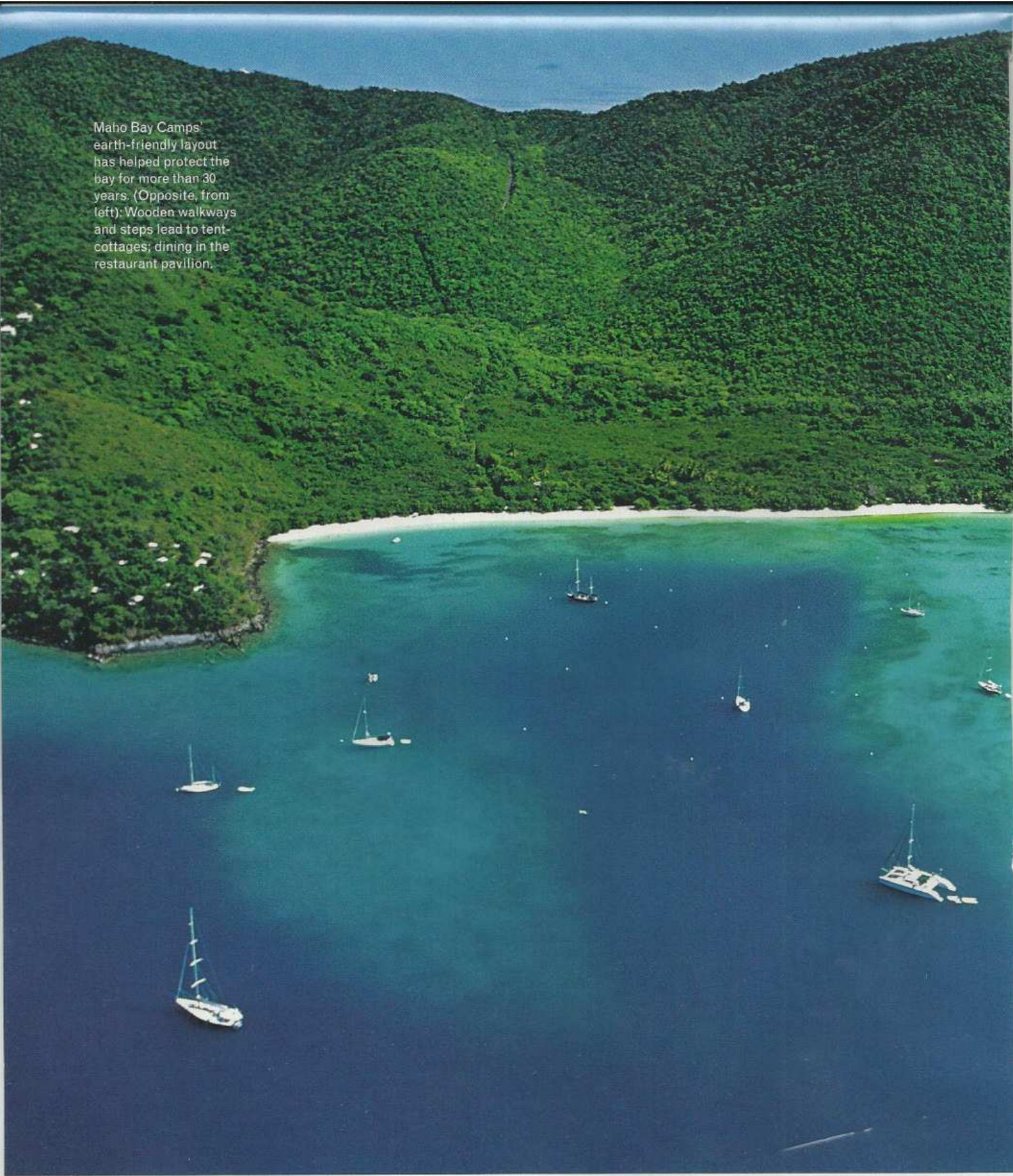
58 **Revere the Sea** Hawaiians have long worked together to harness the power of the ocean. Now two neighbors on Maui, the Pacific Whale Foundation and Maui Ocean Center, use the allure of local marine life to preserve Hawaiian culture and the sea that defines it.

On **Pacific Whale Foundation's** popular snorkeling and whale-watching tours, ocean lovers can snorkel alongside a green sea turtle, swim past a school of raccoon fish or watch humpback whales leap from the water beside the boat. The nonprofit organization uses the proceeds of its trips to teach Hawaiian schoolchildren about marine life at its free Discovery Center. They also research whale populations and migratory routes in Hawaii, Ecuador and Australia. pacificwhale.org



59 Next door, **Maui Ocean Center** employs Hawaiian Cultural Advisor Charles "Uncle Charlie" Maxwell, who preserves island traditions by "talking story" about sharks — specifically the tiger shark, his *aumakua*, or ancestral spirit guide. Following the tradition of his Hawaiian ancestors, Maxwell has personally blessed the hammerhead, tiger and sandbar sharks that fill Maui Ocean Center's 750,000-gallon tank, which is open to certified divers three times a week. Other aquarium exhibits include a traditional fish pond like those the ancients developed to farm-raise fish in the event of high seas or slim catches. Vast tanks of reef fish, rays, octopuses, turtles and moon jellies showcase the wonders of indigenous ocean species so important to native Hawaiians. mauioceancenter.com — ELAINE GLUSAC

Maho Bay Camps' earth-friendly layout has helped protect the bay for more than 30 years. (Opposite, from left): Wooden walkways and steps lead to tent cottages; dining in the restaurant pavilion.



Camp Out

Eco-pioneer Maho Bay: still in the vanguard of conscientious design.



→ BY BUILDING A MODEST RESORT ON ST. JOHN IN 1976, **Stanley Selengut** didn't set out to create a new model for eco-tourism. After signing a long-term lease on the 14-acre plot above Maho Bay surrounded by the Virgin Islands National Park, he heeded the advice of the park superintendent who voiced concern that construction would lead to erosion, runoff and eventual reef damage. Selengut, whose resume included developing third-world craft co-ops at the behest of President John F. Kennedy's administration, lifted his compound of 114

tent-cottages off the ground, connecting the structures with a web of boardwalks to preserve hillside vegetation. The communal bath complexes have composting toilets, and guests can learn to make paper from the resort's recycled refuse in the art center.

"People who come to Maho love to communicate with their neighbors and care about the environment," Selengut said. "For me, the gratification is that I'm attracting people I want to know."

His lease at Maho expires in 2012, and the future of the original camp is unclear. But its success has made sustainable development the focus of his career. Now 78, Selengut is expanding his tent-resort concept to Estate

Entrepreneur Stanley Selengut is expanding his tent-resort concept to Estate Concordia, a progressive iteration of his eco-building approach that uses solar power and collects rainwater.

Concordia, a progressive iteration of his eco-building approach that uses solar power and collects rainwater. Accommodations will soon include air-conditioned apartments cooled by super-insulated walls and cistern-cycled water, ensuring comfort without cost to the climate. Maho Bay Camps' rates from \$80; Estate Concordia from \$95. maho.org — EG

An aerial photograph of a dense, green forest on a mountain slope. A zipliner is visible in the lower-middle section, suspended on a cable that runs diagonally across the frame. A small waterfall flows down a rocky path in the center of the forest. In the background, more forested mountains are visible under a slightly hazy sky. A large white box containing the number '61' is positioned on the left side of the image.

61

RACE THROUGH THE TREES

There's more to Skyline Eco-Adventures than a screaming good time while zipping through silver-leaved canopies of koa trees on west Maui. This company devotes extensive time and money to Maui's environment. In fact, many of the koa trees you'll see were planted by Skyline's employees, who in return for planting trees and volunteering with an assortment of nonprofit groups, accrue paid service days they can use for time off. The company also pays for curbside recycling for all its employees and donates a percentage of its profits to the Nature Conservancy, the Maui Coastal Land Trust and other local nonprofits so they can preserve Hawaii's beauty for years to come. Tours from \$79. zipline.com —KSR

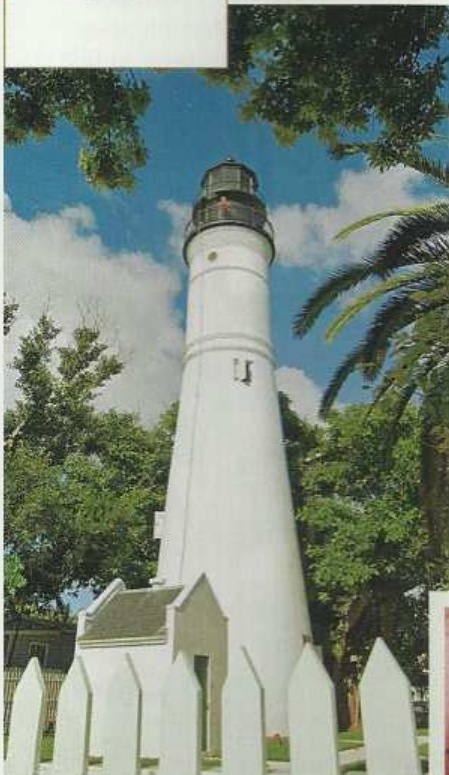


SEE THE LIGHT

In the Florida Keys, the 25-year-old **Monroe County Tourism Development Council** works to sustain the character of this nearly 1,700-island archipelago. Supported by funding from a state-mandated bed tax (collected from local lodgings), the council has spent more than \$20 million preserving unique cultural landmarks, including the 1980s restoration of Key West's famed 19th-century lighthouse, using its original plans. More recent projects include renovation of an 1891 customs house to create the Key West Museum of Art & History, the creation of three artificial reefs that provide new habitats for marine life and the 2006 opening of the Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center in Key West,

where you can learn about the Keys' fragile environment. fla-keys.com — SG

62



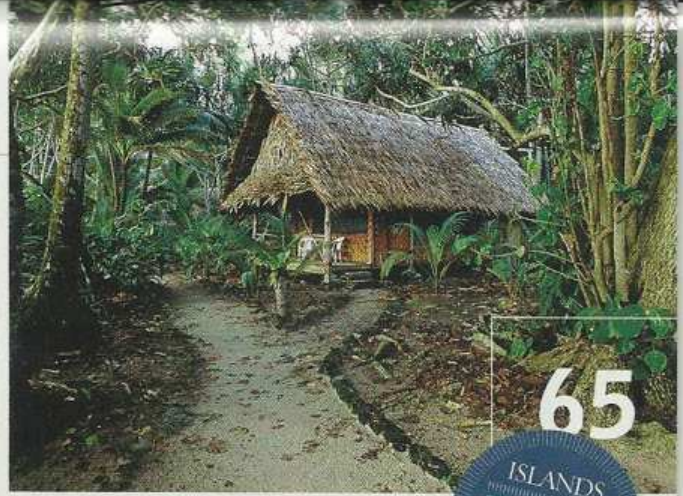
63 Barhop Guilt-Free

Cruise your way to zero emissions aboard **The Sunshine Express**, a St. Lucian-built solar-powered ferry run by Discovery at Marigot Bay, a resort on the island's west coast. Roof-mounted photovoltaic cells power the two 4.8-horsepower outboards that propel the 15-passenger boat to fun stops like silky La Bas Beach. Batteries store sunshine for night trips (the ferry runs 24/7). discoverystlucia.com — JD

64

Buy Local

Kauai Made, a program created by the county of Kauai, represents products made by islanders using local materials. Look for the Kauai Made logo — a pair of hands offering a traditional Hawaiian *ho okupu* (honored gift) wrapped in a ti leaf — which was chosen to reflect the deep respect the people of Kauai have for their land and culture. More than 100 unique products, including passion fruit wasabi mustard, koa wood paddles and shell jewelry, are listed in an official shopping guide available online. kauaimade.net — JM



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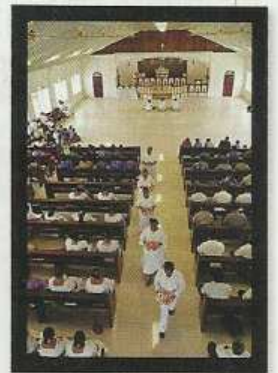


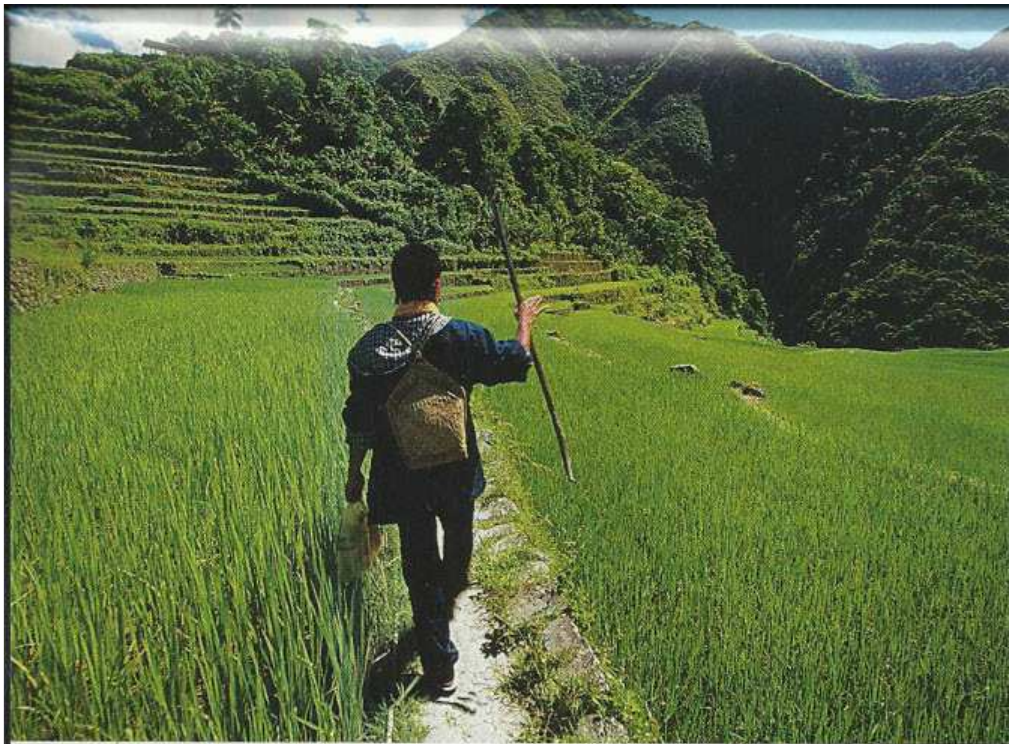
Go Deep

If you've traveled to Micronesia's Kosrae, you're probably a diver: The marine life is incredible, from the large (bump-head parrotfish) to the tiny (ghost shrimp). That's why Katrina Adams and Bruce Brandt, an expat California couple, and Madison Nena, a Kosraean, opened **Kosrae Village**, an eco-resort on the island's east side, where they began a coral-monitoring program to keep the reefs healthy. Arrive in September or October, and you can monitor the reefs, too, by collecting data during dives. You'll see hundreds of species of coral and even more species of fish. The 12-year-old program has successfully provided data that helps maintain a healthy fish population and, thus, healthy reefs.

Back on land, you'll be encouraged to experience the rainforest on a hike to visit 800-year-old ruins, during which you'll pass beneath huge elephant-ear leaves and learn to make hair conditioner from local plants. These hikes are another initiative of Kosrae Village through the Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization, which educates the community on sustainable activities. Locals now make a living by leading tours rather than logging the forest for cash. You could say that Kosrae is the couple's utopia. "Bruce and I moved to Kosrae because we wanted to live and work in a place where our activities could have an effect,"

Adams said. In 2008 coral monitoring takes place in September. The two-week event can be adjusted to fit volunteers' schedules. Travel and accommodation arrangements are made through Oceanearth, a charitable organization, and Kosrae Village. Rates from \$135. oceanearth.org; kosraevillage.com — SG





↑ Hit the Rapids

Follow your **Eco First Adventures** guide up 1,000-year-old rice terraces, emerald-green staircases reaching into the highlands of Luzon Island in the Philippines. After visiting artisans in a local village, you'll don a helmet for your next adventure on this five-day Highland Terrace Whitewater tour: rafting down the class II through class IV rapids of the roaring Chico River. On this trip, as on all Eco First hiking, biking, rafting and surfing tours around the Philippine islands, the company follows a philosophy of "tread lightly," traveling in small groups, employ-

ing locals as guides and partnering with local environmental organizations to support conservation projects. Eco First also runs First Tracks, an outdoor leadership program that teaches environmental conservation to young islanders, who will be future adventure tour guides. Highland Terrace Whitewater tours from \$525. ecofirstadventures.com — BILL FINK

66

67

JAM WITH A BAND

Jem Winston, owner of the Green Globe-certified **3 Rivers Eco Lodge** in eastern Dominica, calls the resort's community-immersion tours a "win-win" for everyone involved.

They produce income for local residents, give insight for guests and create goodwill for the resort. On the tours, guests might work on a dasheen farm, jam with a reggae band or tour a garden with medicine man Simon George, learning how tree-of-life plants will heal cracked feet and sweet broom will ward off anyone "playing with you." These tours are just part of 3 Rivers' overall commitment to the community and environment. Winston also invites school groups to visit the resort for eco-tours, recruiting the next generation in the fight to preserve the Caribbean's greenest island. 3riversdominica.com — EG

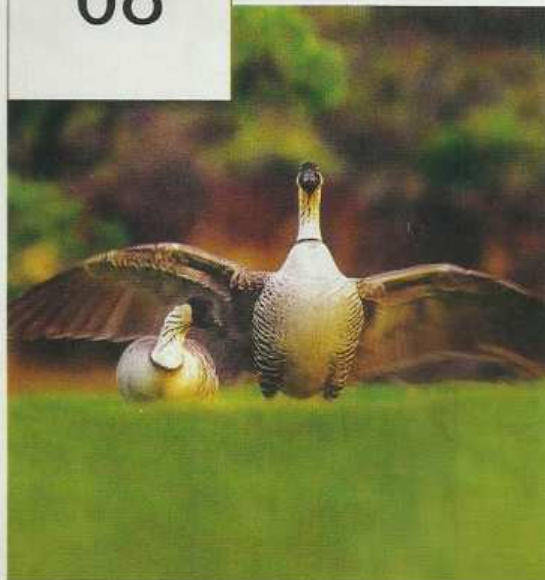


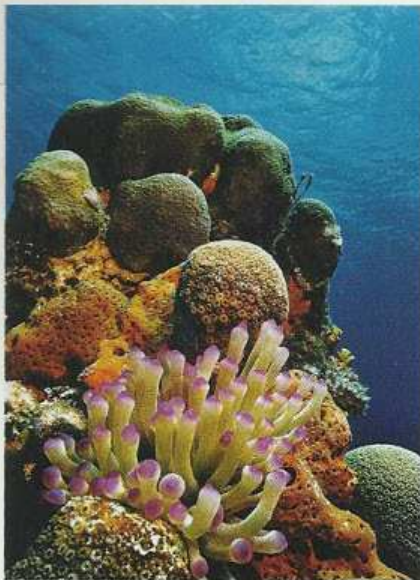
↓ LEARN TO LOVE

For more than 30 years, **Elderhostel**, a nonprofit organization offering worldwide educational programs for travelers ages 55 and over, has combined the love of learning with engaging environments and extraordinary experiences. On the Elderhostel Best of Kauai's Natural and Cultural Wonders trip, you'll learn to weave long strips of pandanus leaf into your own *lau hala* ornaments and bracelets with the help of a Hawaiian *kupuna*, or elder. Hear the cry of the endangered *nene* (Hawaii's state bird) flying overhead as a naturalist shares how the native bird was saved from extinction. Smell the aromatic *awapuhi* (a plant in the ginger family) as a docent tells of its ancient medicinal uses as you walk through a tropical garden. Staying true to the Elderhostel mission, you'll learn about cultural and environmental practices in the traditional way: from one person to another, one culture to another. Six-night trips

from \$1,002 per person. elderhostel.com — KSR

68





69 Energize Bonaire Determined that their island should serve as a model for the world, Bonaire's leaders recently launched the **Bonaire Sustainable Energy Project**. The goal is that by 2010, everything — air conditioners, mini-fridges, TVs, in fact the entire island's electrical grid — will be powered by natural, renewable energy sources. An early step is a wind farm planted on the breezy, northeast-facing side of the island where a dozen turbines will supply 40 percent of Bonaire's electrical needs. A diesel power plant partially running on biofuels will kick in the balance of megawatts and keep Bonaire on the cutting edge.


70 Dive Bonaire Realizing that its coral reefs put Bonaire on the map as a treasured scuba-diving spot, locals saw great value in a healthy marine ecosystem and began protecting the near-shore waters back in the 1970s. Today the entire island is surrounded by the **Bonaire National Marine Park**, which is user-supported by the nature fees happily paid by everyone entering the island's waters.

71 Climb Bonaire The best view of the marine park — other than seeing it through a dive mask — is from the top of Subi Brandaris, Bonaire's highest point and the focal point of the **Washington Slagbaai National Park**. Established in 1969, this was the Netherland Antilles' first nature sanctuary, protecting the entire northwestern end of the island. Some 23,000 visitors hike, bike, kayak, snorkel or just four-wheel it through the park each year, enjoying beaches, wetlands, salinas and dry forest, and all the flora and fauna that flourish there due to the park's progressive conservation measures. Though nearing its 40th birthday, Washington Slagbaai is nonetheless cutting-edge when it comes to sustainability. Its solar power and rain-catchment practices and its dedication to educating visitors and locals about Bonaire's natural habitat make it a model among Caribbean parks. — BOB FRIEL

72

TRAVEL SMART

Tourism can lead to poverty and social crises when the hospitality industry does not work with or for the benefit of local people. U.K.-based organization **Tourism Concern** recommends solutions to governments, raises public awareness and promotes Fair Trade tourist practices. In addition to its **Ethical Travel Guide** (see pg. 56), the group offers educational resources, including magazines, videos, lists of approved tours and more. tourismconcern.org.uk — RG

 **Find Meaning**

Looking out on the placid Indian Ocean, it's hard to imagine a wall of water rising from the horizon and racing toward the shore. Three years after tsunamis killed almost 22,000 Sri Lankans on the island's southwest coast, you need only pivot in the debris-littered sand to see that the recovery goes on. Aiding the project is **i-to-i Meaningful Travel**, an organization that pairs volunteers with rebuilding efforts in Sri Lanka (among their 500 volunteer-based projects on five continents). In Sri Lanka you'll plant wave-breaking trees along the shore, paint classrooms or rebuild homes by day; at night, you'll give informal English lessons to homestay hosts, promoting self-reliance and job skills among the local population. Costs include a 40-hour online Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) course. Rates from \$1,095 per person for two weeks. meaningfultavel.com — TJ

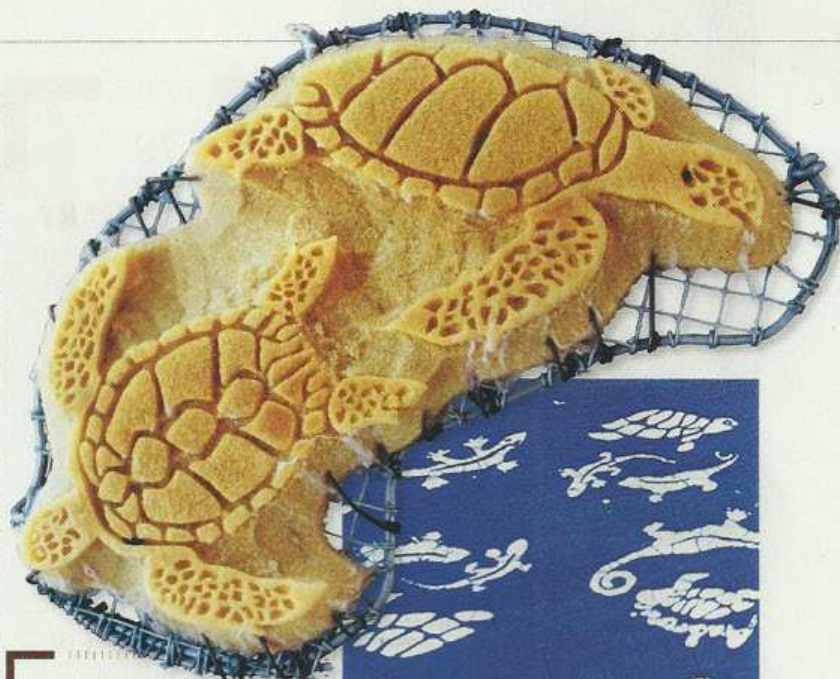


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74 Shear a Sheep

Border collies race into the foothills of New Zealand's Southern Alps, corralling merino sheep that you'll learn how to shear during your stay at this high-country ranch, the Wilderness Lodge Arthur's Pass, one of two South Island eco-lodges known as the **Wilderness Lodges of New Zealand**. Wool sheared at the ranch goes to Italian fashion houses, but profits work to conserve this 3,000-acre nature preserve 80 miles west of Christchurch. The lodges are owned in part by ecologist Dr. Gerry McSweeney, former director of New Zealand's largest environmental organization, the Royal Forest and Bird Society. Arthur's Pass' sister lodge, located 150 miles north of Queenstown at Lake Moeraki, is surrounded by 1,000-year-old rainforests. Of course, you can do more than shear sheep: enjoy hiking in search of wild alpine buttercups, picnicking beside a glacier or spotting the Southern Cross while on an evening stroll. Rates from \$442, mostly all-inclusive. wildernesslodge.co.nz — TJ



75

Go Big

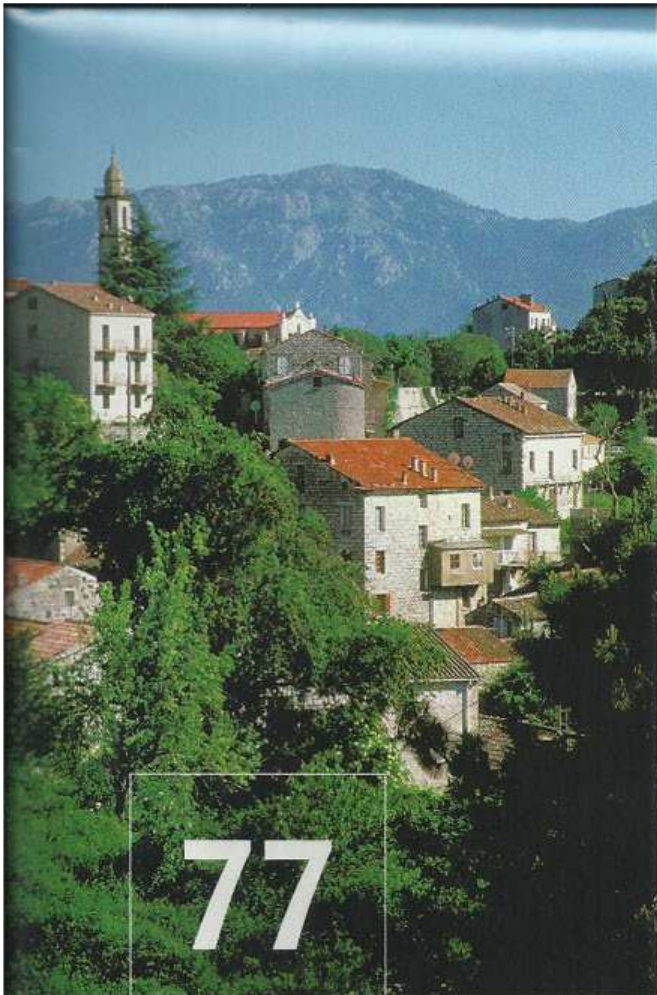
As your kayak skims mangrove-lined Bottle Creek on North Caicos in the Turks and Caicos Islands, the water's surface sparkles like diamonds, and the luxe condominiums of Providenciales' Grace Bay Beach seem a million miles away. Your guide, tour operator **Big Blue Unlimited**, is committed to introducing visitors to the untrammled corners of this fast-developing archipelago in a low-impact way. While kayaking, you'll encounter nurse sharks, rays and turtles along the shore, and terns on the sands of East Bay Cay Nature Reserve. On a later bicycle ride, you'll marvel at the unmistakable pink denizens of inland Flamingo Pond. It's a great way to observe the T&C, which captured the hearts of fishermen and water enthusiasts long before they became the latest chic destination. bigblue.tc — JT

BUY BATIK

Before the Bahamas gained independence in 1973, there were two main ways to make a living: a handful of government jobs or subsistence fishing and farming. Rosi Birch, wife of Dick Birch (founder of local Small Hope Bay Lodge), created a third when she and Dick established **Androsia**, a craft center producing batik fabrics and garments. Using wax, dyes and natural fibers, 18 full-time workers create a rainbow spectrum of cloth stamped with sea-life patterns. The meaningful work and livable wages have given many women a sense of pride and financial independence. Today the cloth is considered a de facto national art and is exported around

76

the world. Stop in for a factory tour, meet the artists and try your hand at batik. androsia.com — JD

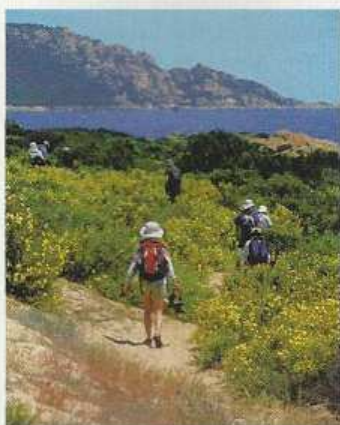


77

Discover the Past

Ramble along untouched coasts, sample goat cheese at a shepherd's farm and stroll through mint- and myrtle-scented fields in French Corsica and Italian Sardinia as you learn directly from the locals about agricultural and cultural traditions that go back to pagan times. **Wilderness Travel's** 11-day trip includes interesting hikes combined with visits to fishing cooperatives, small farms, historical sites and rural towns. Your guide is

Stefano Baldi, an Italian native and organic farmer, but leading the way are the company's goals of environmental conservation and cultural preservation. Rates from \$4,795 per person. wildernesstravel.com — JB



78

SAY "OM"

Ulpotha, a village in central Sri Lanka, lets visitors partake in yoga, meditation and relaxation. The proceeds of your pilgrimage sustain the village and help Ulpotha treat patients at its free Ayurvedic clinic. At this Ceylonese Brigadoon, wattle-and-daub huts look out on rice paddies, and candles illuminate impromptu parties by the lakes. There's no electricity here, and the sacred peaks surrounding the village silence all cell phones. Rates from \$1,330 per person per week. ulpotha.com — JD



Save a Lemur

On Madagascar, 80 percent of the flora and fauna is totally endemic. Such a unique environment requires the special care offered by **Global Vision International** volunteers. You'll work with staff from the country's zoological and botanical gardens to research endangered lemurs, or you may learn the local language, Malagasy, as you volunteer on

79

sustainable-livelihood projects like honeybee keeping or fruit drying. You'll experience remote

village life in a landscape that includes tropical rainforests, deserts and awe-inspiring prehistoric limestone formations. GVI works with charities and NGOs in 30 countries to pair interested travelers with expert trainers to resolve social and environmental needs. Four-week trips from

\$2,730 per person. gvi.co.uk — RG



Join Forces

In the Dominican Republic, teamwork helps hotels go green.



→ WHETHER SNORKELING AMID THE CRAYOLA-colored reef fish off Isla Saona or marveling at the same brilliant hues in a native painting at Altos de Chavon Cultural Center, you immediately sense that there's something special about the La Romana-Bayahibe area of the Dominican Republic. With clean, powdery sand, clear water, thriving local villages, an extensive park system that protects sensitive ecosystems and important historical artifacts, this stretch of the Dominican Republic's coast is blessed with a lot of attractions — all of which could be easily lost to misguided development. Seven years ago, local resorts realized that the area's tourism successes could damage the very reasons people were coming to La Romana-Bayahibe in the first place, so they formed the nonprofit **La Romana-Bayahibe Hotel Association** with the goal of going green.

Like doctors, their first goal was to do no harm, so the members all developed environmental quality-control plans. Results were fast and impressive. The area's beaches became the first in the Caribbean to earn the coveted Blue Flag certification, which carries strict guidelines for preventing pollution. Next came certification

programs to mark successes in water conservation, energy use, waste treatment and the support of local communities (three of the five members currently maintain Green Globe certifications). The association has created a strong community of stakeholders in the tourism industry through adult-literacy programs and training and financial aid for local tour guides and the farmers and artisans who supply the hotels' kitchens and gift shops.

At the association's summertime fiesta, Vive Bayahibe, you can see this community come together to celebrate local arts and crafts, live music and the area's culinary specialties. Try the seafood *criolla* or chicken with rice and beans and *platanos* (deep fried plantains) along with a fresh *jugo* (juice) or cold Presidente. The frenetic pace of the merengue you'll hear at this festival and throughout the country is matched by the blazing growth of the Dominican Republic's tourism industry.

So it is especially encouraging to find a group of tourist operations dedicated to making this corner of the island a model of sustainability. Vive Bayahibe is a celebration of that success. explorelaromana.com — BOB FRIEL

The frenetic pace of the merengue is matched by the growth of the Dominican Republic's tourism. It's encouraging to find a group of tourist operations dedicated to making the island a model of sustainability.



← Eat Well

Visit a culinary epicenter of the Mediterranean — Greece — where it's all about using the freshest homegrown ingredients. Learn how to cook Cretan style with **Crete's Culinary Sanctuaries**, where you'll meet artisan beekeepers, organic olive-oil producers and cheese makers. Sustainable production of healthy foods has been a part of Greek culture since Minoan times, and it continues to be, thanks to founder and director Nikki Rose's dedication to preserving the island's environment and gastronomy. Traverse Crete's countryside, visiting a network of culinary sanctuaries, local chefs, organic farmers, botanists, eco-lodge owners, historians and mountaineers who offer cultural-culinary immersion seminars that uphold time-honored traditions. Six-day tours from \$2,175. cookingincrete.com — JB

81



82

Have a Beer

At the annual **Kona Brewers Festival**, which celebrates the microbrewery revolution in Hawaii, you can tap into beer from more than 30 microbreweries around Hawaii and the mainland. But this festival serves more than pints: Since its start 12 years ago, it has raised more than \$225,000 for local environmental and educational organizations. Beer is served in commemorative, refillable glass mugs to reduce waste, and the gourmet eats cooked up by local chefs may be served on banana or ti leaves instead of paper plates. Food waste is gathered and donated to local pig farmers. Tickets \$45. konabrewersfestival.com — KSR

CUDDLE UP WITH A CRITTER



83



84



85



86



87

BARBADOS SEA TURTLE PROJECT

Monitor and aid nesting sea turtles on Barbados.

BIG PICTURE

Professor Julia Horrock and the University of the West Indies

THE PLAYERS

Scan beaches for signs of turtle activity and aid researchers in identification and tagging.

GET INVOLVED

Rescuing confused hatchlings and releasing them into the Caribbean

HIGH POINT

June-Oct.; barbadosseaturtles.org

WHEN & HOW

KANGAROO ISLAND WITH EARTHWATCH INSTITUTE

Monitor prickly echidnas and goannas, relatives of the Komodo Dragon.

Earthwatch Institute volunteers and Australian researcher Dr. Peggy Rismiller

Locate and track both animals across the island, logging behavior and interactions.

Radio-tracking animals through virgin woodlands, crossing paths with kangaroos

Last trip: Jan. 19-Feb. 1, 2008; earthwatch.org

ARIDE ISLAND NATURE RESERVE

Stroll among more than 1.25 million birds on the Seychelles' northernmost isle.

Owned by U.K.-based Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts

Spot sooty terns and brown noddies, or volunteer to collect data for a month or more.

Standing atop cliffs among the Seychelles' largest frigate-bird population

Sept.-May; arideisland.net

UTILA WHALE SHARK RESEARCH

Dive with and photograph whale sharks off Utila.

Deep Blue Utila, which sends data to the ECOCEAN Whale Shark Photo-ID Library

Snap whale shark pics to be digitally matched with past pics, aiding worldwide studies.

Following a 40-foot shark along a 3,000-foot drop-off, with photos to prove it

Feb.-April; utilawhalesharkresearch.com

ARUBA'S DONKEY SANCTUARY

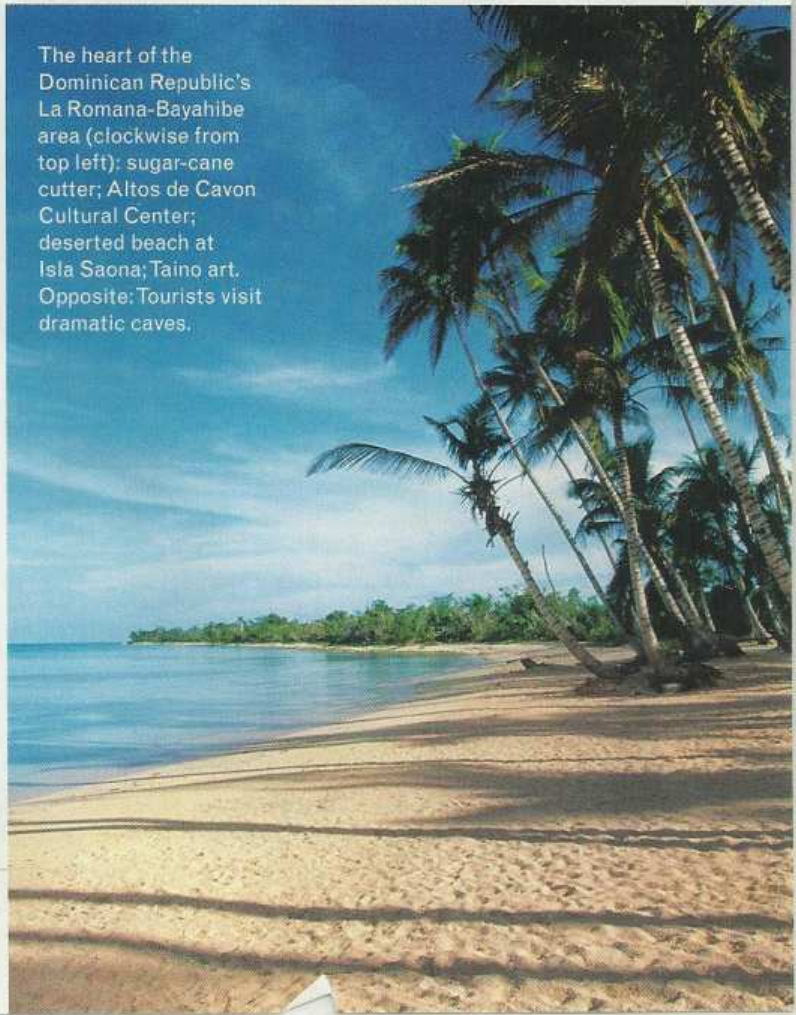
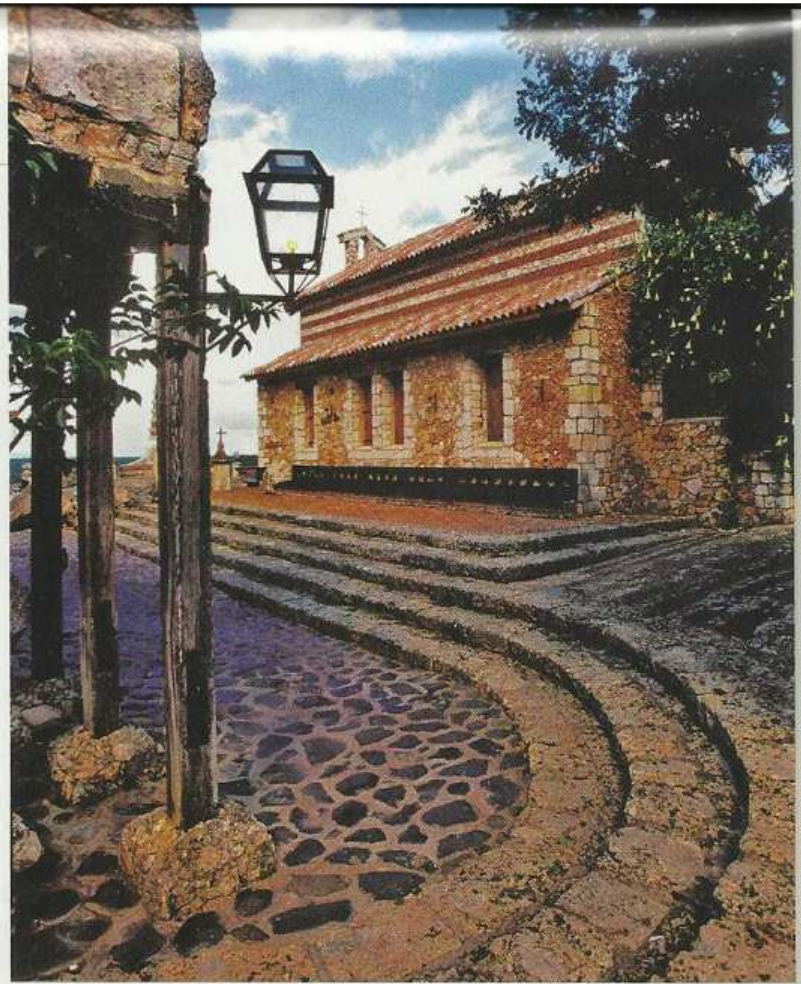
Groom and pamper Aruba's wild donkeys.

The Save Our Donkeys Foundation and proud Adopt-a-Donkey parents

Spend a morning feeding, watering and cleaning up after hairy new friends.

Maneuvering bales of hay past tall cacti and 37 hungry, Dutch-speaking donkeys

Year-round; arubandonkey.org — TJ



The heart of the Dominican Republic's La Romana-Bayahibe area (clockwise from top left): sugar-cane cutter; Altos de Cavon Cultural Center; deserted beach at Isla Saona; Taino art. Opposite: Tourists visit dramatic caves.

88

SLEEP ON THE BEACH Frothy waves lick your shins as you wade ashore at **Mnemba Island Lodge**, a casuarina-cloaked island barely bigger than a Manhattan block. Just three miles off Tanzania's Spice Island — Zanzibar — Mnemba is run by the safari company Conservation Corporation Africa. The entire island and surrounding coral reefs are a protected marine area, and the resort's philosophy is all about having a soft touch on the planet. Your fan-cooled *banda* (a bungalow handcrafted from palm mats) is one of only 10. Every May the bungalows are completely removed to give the island a month to breathe. Though the lodge's impact on the island is light, it strongly impacts neighboring Zanzibar, where the resort has erected a windmill that provides safe drinking water for 2,600 villagers, has built and supplied two classrooms and constructed a doctor's house. Rates from \$755; lodge is closed April and May. mnemba-island.com — JD





89

↑ Dine for Sustainability

At the **Virgin Islands Sustainable Farm**

Institute, a working educational farm on St. Croix devoted to agro-ecology, the mission is to “farm with nature, not against it.” The farm conserves resources and increases productivity by using ecological and indigenous farming methods and teaching others to do the same. On their 100-plus acres, they grow organic produce, including mangoes, papaya, passion fruit, coconut, cucumbers, rosemary, dill, tarragon and cilantro. Enjoy a meal made from these ingredients during the farm’s Creque Slow Down Dinner Experience, where 90 percent of your meal, including the meat, comes from right outside the dining-room door. Dine on lamb skewers with mango-mint sauce or a salad of *tat soi* lettuce with ginger-honey-and-lime vinaigrette, and finish with a fruit flambé or cranberry-hibiscus sorbet.

Dinners support workshops, college programs and community open houses. For seconds, come back to study agricultural economics, alternative energy, composting, forest foraging or herbal healing. Donation of \$50 suggested. visfi.org — RICH RUBIN



90

Green Globe is a global benchmarking and certification program for sustainable travel, based on the United Nations’ Agenda 21. Businesses must meet strict guidelines for energy consumption, ecosystem and water conservation, management of cultural and social issues, and more. Check out Green Globe online to find certified resorts and tour operators worldwide. greenglobe21.com — RG

↓ Climb a Hill

From the terrace of **Hotel Mocking Bird Hill**, Jamaica’s north coast stretches beyond the green hills of the Port Antonio region. To ensure the verdant vistas remain for future visitors, owners Shireen Aga and Barbara Walker partnered with Jamaica Conservation Development Trust to plant blue *mahoe* (soapwood) and other trees in deforested areas. Their favorite description of Mocking Bird Hill is “guiltless indulgence.” They collect and use rainwater, recycle yesterday’s paperwork into tomorrow’s stationery and contribute to Sustainable Travel International to offset the hotel’s carbon footprint. Rooms feature locally printed fabrics, Jamaican-made coconut soaps and lotions, and panoramic views from hammock-hung balconies. More indulgences? Check

the e-brochure; they’ve eliminated those made from paper. Rates from \$125. hotelmockingbirdhill.com — RR

91





↑ Pull a Yam

Children squeal with laughter as you pry a fat yam from a garden on the island of Kiriwina in Papua New Guinea. This is just one of the things



92

you'll experience if you sign up for the Trobriand Islands Culture Tour with **Ecotourism Melanesia**, a guiding outfit that seeks to preserve the endangered cultures of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Your cultural-immersion experience will generate community income. You'll be paired with a village family for your multi-day stay: Your hosts will help you roll out your sleeping mat in an open-air hut and take you diving for crayfish at night. As for that yam, after you harvest it, they'll teach you how to cook it for lunch. Four-day tours from \$1,802 per person. em.com.pg — JD

93

FARM FRESH

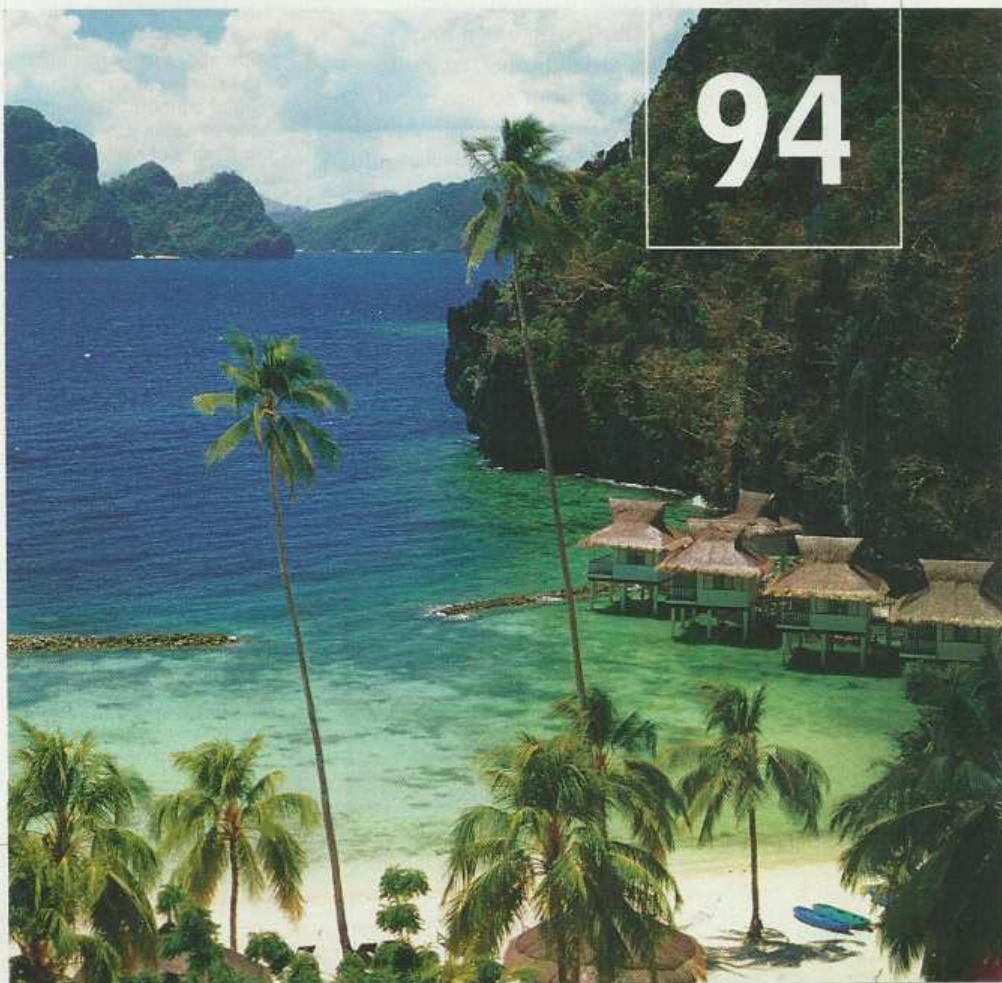
Smell Waimea lavender and pick spinach at an organic Big Island farm; learn the history of a 1928 ranch from a *paniolo* (Hawaiian cowboy); then dine on farm-fresh ingredients like braised lamb and vine-ripened tomatoes at Merriman's Restaurant. This agri-tour, Merriman's Farm Visits & Dinner, is offered by **Hawaii AgVentures**, a project created by the Big Island Farm Bureau, which represents 450 local farms and ranch families. Tours subsidize farmers so they can continue with agricultural production, and so future generations can enjoy the sight of green open spaces, barns and livestock, too. Merriman's tour \$155. hawaiiagventures.com — JM



↓ Dive into Paradise

Recline in a straw-roofed cabana and gaze at kayakers cutting through the blue cove of Miniloc Island, Philippines, against a backdrop of sheer limestone cliffs. **El Nido Resorts** works hard to maintain this paradise, supporting a staff of local workers and respecting the community and its traditions. A local worker who once took reservations is now the resort's direct-sales supervisor, thanks to a scholarship subsidized by El Nido. Another islander tends the resort's gardens with water reclaimed from El Nido's treatment plant; the resort encourages her to share her culture in evening dance performances. If you'd like to lend a hand in the resort's conservation efforts, El Nido guides guests on free Scubasura cleanup dives to remove trash from troubled reefs. All-inclusive packages from \$200. elnidoresorts.com — BILL FINK

94





95 **Go Birding With a Bushman**

A Lekutu bushman pauses along a rainforest trail to point out orange doves and the rainbow-colored plumage of collared lorikeets in the canopy above. Tweets, chirps and caws rain down as your Vidawa Rainforest Hike continues deep into the 37,000-acre **Bouma National Heritage Park** on the Fijian island of Taveuni. The experience was made possible by a 1980s agreement between four island tribes, creating a forest reserve that protects about 80 percent of the island's rainforests. Islanders have found food, water, medicine and their identity in this forest for generations, and today they share this knowledge with visitors. Park fees help maintain this environment for the future and support community education and development projects. Vidawa Rainforest Hike from \$40 per person. bnhp.org — TJ



96

GO ON SAFARI

A swimsuit and fins are not standard attire for African safaris, but as your kayak surges through an island in Kenya's Lamu archipelago, a drive through the Bushveld starts to sound a bit dull. Fishing dhows cross your bow, and a night of camping on an uninhabited island lies ahead. This is only day one of a **Gamewatchers Safaris** kayak trip through the Kiunga Marine Reserve. Guests paddle about six miles a day, stopping to snorkel with sea turtles, observe trans-Indian Ocean migratory birds and explore the remains of 16th-century ivory trading posts. Gamewatchers Safaris employs local guides, buys local food and plans stopovers in communities with sound environmental practices, bolstering local trade. \$10 per guest per day is earmarked for conservation and community development projects. Five-day trips from \$950. porini.com/kayaking_safaris.html — TJ

97 **Just Relax**

You might fall in love with Indonesia's massive ironwood trees that tumble to empty bone-white beaches, but it's the smiles of the villagers that'll truly steal your heart. That's what happened to Claude and Petra Graves, who founded a **Nihiwatu** resort on the west coast of Sumba Island. Their passion for this impoverished island begat the Sumba Foundation, which has raised more than \$2 million (a third contributed by resort guests) toward health and education initiatives. The catalyst that converts vacationers to philanthropists? You'll know when you join a six-person village tour in the highlands and dine on sweet potatoes while an elderly woman teaches you how to create a colorful and highly prized *ikat* weaving. Her betel-nut smile — as red as a valentine — will be the giveaway. Rates from \$390. nihiwatu.com — JD



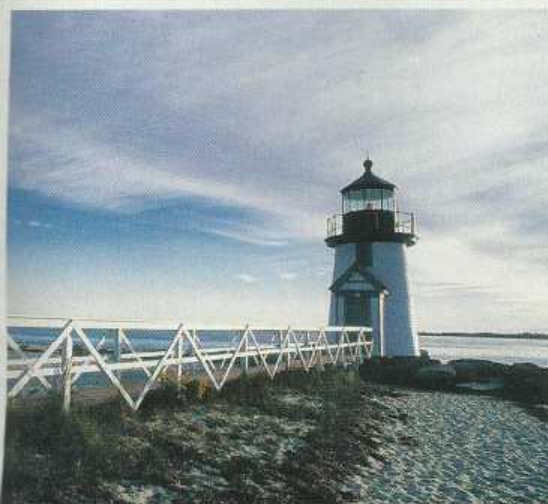
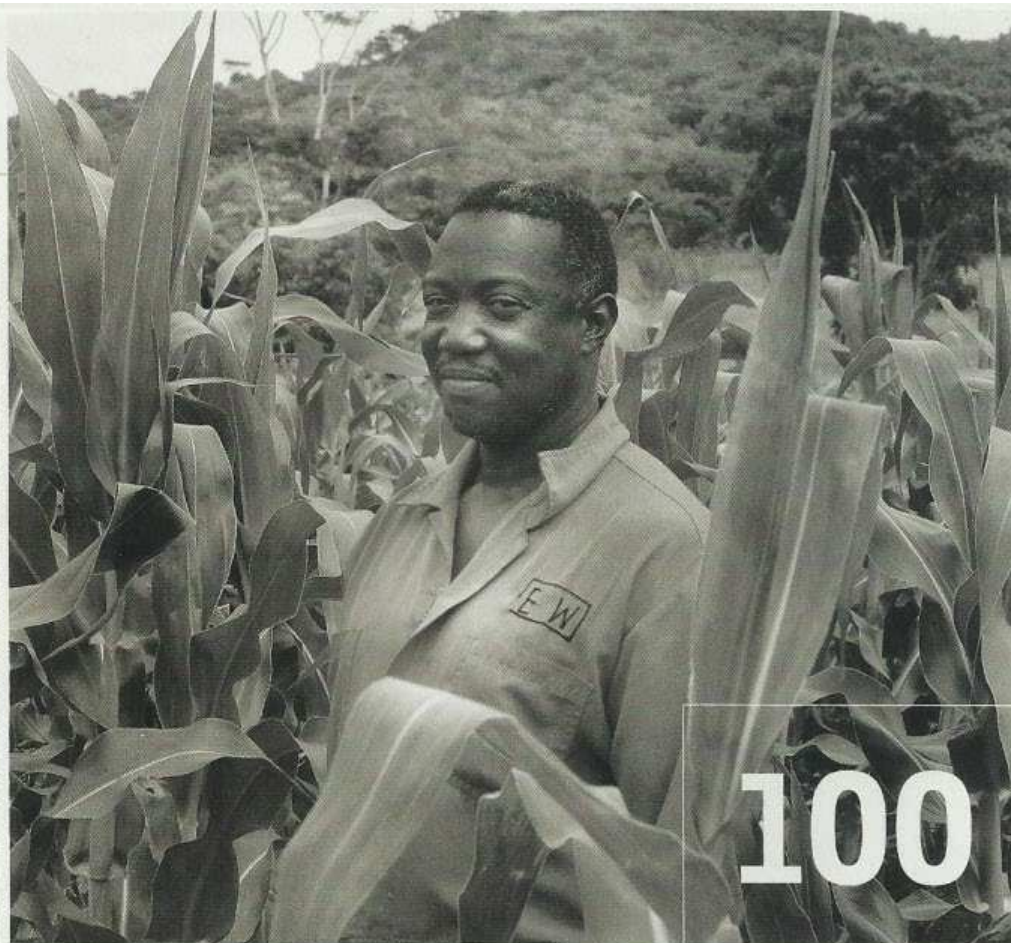
↓ Ride a Bike

Ride your way across the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket on a **Bike Riders'** bicycle tour, and thanks to pedal power, you'll leave nary a carbon footprint

behind. On the six-day trip, you'll cycle past gingerbread cottages in villages like Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard. In

98

Sconset by the Sea on Nantucket, you'll see saltbox houses that speak to the island's historic whaling past. Refuel by dining on Atlantic lobster and steamers aboard a lobster boat, as well as slow-simmered, homemade seafood chowders at the nationally renowned Black Dog Tavern. Trips from \$2,480. bikeriderstours.com — RG



99

Learn Pijin

Tetepare, the largest uninhabited island in the South Pacific and part of the Solomon Islands, was mysteriously abandoned by its human population some 150 years ago. Today their descendants, who live throughout the Western Province, invite hardy adventurers to visit the eco-lodge on their ancestral island. Income from tourists and worldwide attention from researchers are the only barriers between the island's timber-rich rainforests and constant threats of logging. The boat crossing may be rough and accommodations on the island a little basic, but this paradise has wildlife worth visiting, including rare skinks, coconut crabs, saltwater crocodiles and Blyth's hornbills. Volunteer to monitor turtle nesting and assist rangers in bird counts, or just snorkel and learn Pijin. "Octopus" is *aet-fela-finga*. Rates from \$36. tetepare.org — PAUL MILES



↑ SPLURGE ON DINNER

With the goal of returning Tobago to its agriculturally rich heritage and reducing the importation of foodstuffs from off-island locales, **The Travel Foundation**, a U.K. charity committed to sustainable travel, has set up the Adopt a Farmer program that partners local farmers with the tourism sector. Farmers can raise their produce knowing they have a strong local market, and hotels get their choice of freshly grown food. After joining the program, farmers earn 30 to 100 percent more for their produce. Dine at participating resorts, including the Hilton Tobago Golf and Spa Resort, to "adopt" local farmers and fishermen while savoring dishes such as sweet flying fish smothered in spicy creole tomato sauce and local herbs, and exotic desserts made from mango, sapodilla and guava. thetravelfoundation.org.uk — RG ✦