

# CARRIER

THE PAPER

03

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YOUR CURATED GUIDE TO MEANINGFUL LUXURY EXPERIENCES

## THE GREENER PICTURE

*Sun, sea and philanthropy*

Holidays and learning unite through international conservation initiatives

## LIFE LESSONS

*With Tessa de Nassau*

The co-founder of Professors Without Borders talks education

## GARDEN OF EDEN

*Unseen treasures in the Seychelles*

From tortoises to parrots, witness the rarest species in the world

## REST, ASSURED

*Part of the community*

Spot the Big Five and tour vineyards in Africa with tips from local experts



# Welcome to CARRIER, The Paper

You don't have to throw away your passport to be a more conscious and considered traveller; there are other ways to support the environments and communities we visit. We care just as much as you about where you spend your time and money, and make it our mission to find thoughtful, smart brands, resorts and people leading the way in sustainable initiatives.


Discover why the Seychelles is leagues ahead when it comes to conserving its fragile ecosystem (p.26); gain first-hand insight into tribal traditions at Ulusaba in South Africa, dubbed 'the Necker Island of the bush' (p.22); or visit Six Senses hotels and resorts to make measurable positive impacts on the planet and your 'self' (p.12). Our curated experiences help you engage in a deep, meaningful way, whether through teaching school children new songs and numbers or diving to clear the ocean bed and preserve coral reefs.


Through Carrier Cares we take steps to reduce our carbon footprint and advocate for human rights and animal welfare. Our charitable partnership with Professors Without Borders also helps champion knowledge around the world – Carrier speaks to founding member Tessy de Nassau about providing students all over the globe with professional and inspiring learning for success in later life (p.10).


We're by no means perfect, but we hold our corporate and social responsibilities at the heart of everything we do in the hope others will do the same.

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## CONTENTS

06

### LUXURY SELECTION

What to love and where to be right now

10

### LIFE LESSONS

Tessy de Nassau on the importance of education

12

### THE GREENER PICTURE

Sun sea and philanthropy with Six Senses resorts

16

### LIFE AND SOUL

People and places making every journey count

20

### DREAM BIG

Feel part of something special at Rosewood

22

### REST, ASSURED

Care for the community in rural Africa

23

### BY DESIGN

Pushing boundaries in ocean discovery

24

### BOUNCING BACK

Why the British Virgin Islands are better than ever

26

### GARDEN OF EDEN

Uncover the rare treasures of the Seychelles

## Carrier cares

Here at Carrier, we look beyond simply your journey and your destination – we also recognise that we have a responsibility to help protect the fascinating habitats, cultural sites and communities that we experience when we travel. We're committed to reducing our carbon footprint and being an advocate for human rights and animal welfare; taking steps to ensure we have a positive impact on the world.



Carrier, The Paper is printed on Carbon Balanced Paper. Through World Land Trust projects, we offset emissions equivalent to 2,038kg of carbon dioxide to protect 1,426m<sup>2</sup> of critically threatened tropical forest.



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TIME IS PRECIOUS  
MAKE THE MOST OF IT

**Heathrow**

THE ULTIMATE  
AIRPORT EXPERIENCE

PRIVATE ENTRANCE  
BUTLER | LUXURIOUS SUITE  
EXCLUSIVE SECURITY EXPERIENCE  
CHAUFFEUR | PLANE

HEATHROW VIP

# Luxury selection

WHAT TO LOVE AND WHERE TO BE RIGHT NOW



## The Suitcase Edit

### 1 LOTIONS & POTIONS

Gentle and natural sunscreens for outings to the beach

It's important to meet standards of safety in the sun and you can do this while being kind to the planet and your body. When packing your bags, include one of these three chemical-free SPF creams to lessen irritation to your skin and damage to the environment.



#### GREEN PEOPLE, SCENT FREE SUN LOTION, SPF30, £22.50

Suitable for sensitive skin and prickly heat, the organic ingredients in this lotion come in carbon-neutral plant-based packaging. It's safe for the oceans and, as an added bonus, 30p is donated to the Marine Conservation Society.

#### KYPRIS BEAUTY, POT OF SHADE: HELIOTROPIC SPF30 SUNSCREEN AND PRIMER, £87

Packed with zinc for SPF protection, this luxurious natural cream is made with organic, wild-crafted and sustainably-grown ingredients, such as sweet iris stem cells and fatty acid-rich sunflower elements, so it can double up as primer under make-up.



2



#### AETHIC SÔVÉE TRIPLE-FILTER ECOCOMPATIBLE SUNSCREEN SPF40, £53

Individual ingredients in this formula have been scientifically proven to be entirely environmentally compatible with sea life, including coral, mussels and sea urchins, as well as offer protection against the most harmful rays.

## The Thought TRUNKS FOR TRUNKS

Saving elephants one swim at a time



Love Brand & Co kids trunks start from £50; men's from £100

Oliver Tomalin launched Love Brand & Co in 2010, driven by the threat that elephants would become extinct in his lifetime. The men's and children's resort wear company commits five per cent of its revenue to support conservation projects around the world, such as the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust's work with orphaned elephants. Match your pair with your little one's or channel your inner model in the style of Toby Huntington-Whiteley, who is the face of the latest campaign for the Staniel shorts that are made from 53 per cent recycled plastic bottles.

## The Taste

### CALM IN A TEACUP

A sip of Asia's finest blends

Jing travels the world to source the best leaves for the perfect cup of tea, working directly with local producers and motivated by renowned masters in the art of picking, packing and drinking tea. Inspired by ceremonial customs, every mouthful is designed to be engaging and calming. The Signature Green Tea Explorer Set is the perfect introduction to Jing as it guides you through Asia's finest selections from pan-fired Chinese Dragon Well to delicately steamed Japanese Sencha and comes with a specially-designed tray, cup and saucer, and a tea-iere (Jing's answer to a cafetière for tea lovers). Visit Jing's new London shop at 18-19 St Christopher's Place, W1U 1NN for the full experience.

JING Green Tea Explorer Set, £75, jingtea.com





*The Ultimate Accessory*

MADE TO MEASURE

Set your sights on a pair of Tom Davies glasses



Tom Davies is no ordinary optician. The bespoke service here feels like five-star treatment at your favourite hotel. Using the latest equipment, Tom Davies can delve into your ocular health and test your vision, then match the results with the ideal frames to suit your face – sometimes creating a completely new design. Each pair is handcrafted to the exact colour, style and design of your choosing, from silver and gold to vintage British silk layered with sustainably-sourced Indian horn.

*The Insider*

INSPIRED THINKING

Eight paths to enlightenment

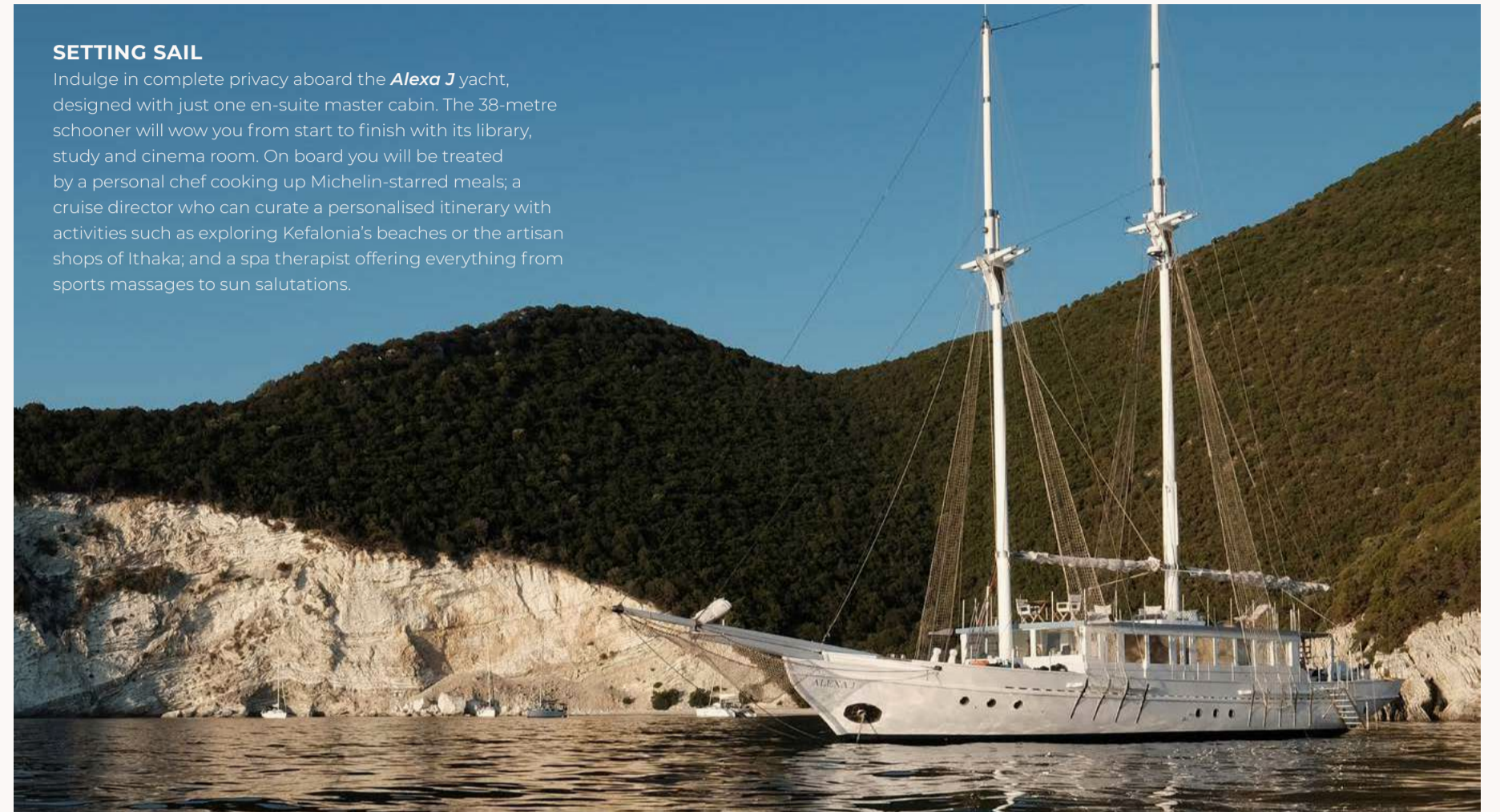


Count the ways you can make a difference by simply being more mindful while travelling.

- 1 Volunteer for worthwhile causes, whether for just an hour or for a whole day.
- 2 Buy locally to positively impact communities and their economies.
- 3 Ensure that any wildlife activities are appropriately certified and run by transparent and open companies.
- 4 Respect native customs and traditions to truly immerse yourself in new cultures.
- 5 Minimise waste by recycling and saying no to single-use plastics and plastic bags.
- 6 Choose sustainable accommodation and tour operators that actively work to support the environment and local people.
- 7 Lower your carbon footprint by renting a bicycle or walking to explore the area.
- 8 Educate your family, friends and colleagues about sustainable tourism to ensure a healthy travel legacy lives on.

SETTING SAIL

Indulge in complete privacy aboard the *Alexa J* yacht, designed with just one en-suite master cabin. The 38-metre schooner will wow you from start to finish with its library, study and cinema room. On board you will be treated by a personal chef cooking up Michelin-starred meals; a cruise director who can curate a personalised itinerary with activities such as exploring Kefalonia's beaches or the artisan shops of Ithaka; and a spa therapist offering everything from sports massages to sun salutations.



MASTERS OF DISGUISE >

Hidden in the *Ahuriri Valley* surrounded by snow-capped mountains, is *The Lindis*. Blink and you might miss it – the structure seamlessly blends into the rolling landscape below the icy peaks. Away from the main lodge, new Pods have been designed for extra privacy, but still reflect the impressive valley, quite literally, with mirrored glass walls on three sides. Luxuriously heated and totally secluded, experience the ever-changing environment in its most nuanced forms.



Credit: kiev.victor/shutterstock.com

THE SECRETS OF PARIS

Home to Coco Chanel, Christian Dior and Christian Lacroix, it's no wonder *Paris* is dubbed the fashion capital of the world. Indulge in Carrier's ultimate style experiences in the capital: spend the day with a fashion expert who will lead a tour around Karl Lagerfeld landmarks, including a selection of what were his favourite Parisian hideaways, as well as flagship stores Chanel, Fendi and Karl Lagerfeld. We can also organise a trip to vintage designer shops or Maison Ernest, where you can learn how to walk elegantly in heels.



BEACH LIFE

*Gili Lankafushi* in the *Maldives* is opening its doors in December to show off a new and improved look. The pièce de résistance is the resort's Private Reserve – the largest overwater villa in the world. The library and fresh furnishings add serious style, while the state-of-the-art cinema and slide from the top deck bring a sense of fun. Marine biology is still high on the agenda here – attend a wildlife talk at Gili Veshi, the resort's innovative marine biology centre, or join in with scuba reef cleaning.



*The News Flash*

TRAVEL UPDATES

Forest, beach or city: the choice is yours

PAWS FOR THOUGHT

Two miles down the road from the main village at *Paws Up, Montana* is the hidden tranquility of *The Green O*. The new resort is opening in 2020 with 12 private accommodations, each catering just for two. Each lodge reflects the world around it – choose from wooden stilts, a two-storey glass-faced building with a sedum living roof, colossal fireplaces or circular glass rooms. Added comforts of a hot tub, private guides to bring horses or quad bikes and an on-site spa, make this adult-only haven a true luxury among the pines.

# LIFE LESSONS WITH TESSY DE NASSAU

Words: Hannah Lemon

In the heart of rural Western Uganda, surrounded by burnt-orange earth and mango trees, a lesson is taking place. Eight groups of young adults are quietly playing cards, each group with a certain set of rules. After a while the students are asked, in silence, to mix up and play cards against individuals with different rules. As the teams overcome the ensuing chaos, they also learn the importance of communication, working through misunderstandings and the value in differing opinions. This is just one of the many different methods used by teachers at *Professors Without Borders* (PROWIBO).

The not-for-profit foundation was set up by three lecturers at Regent's University London, Dr Caroline Varin, Tessa de Nassau and Majeks Walker, who wanted to correct the imbalance of educational privilege and the obvious lack of access to first-rate, higher education in developing countries.

Through education, PROWIBO aims to bring progress, innovation, fun and positive values to local communities. From India and Thailand to Sierra Leone and Uganda, all courses, from between three and 10 days, are designed to develop professional knowledge while imparting essential and relevant interpersonal skills to the students. Using a liberal arts model, the range of topics is tailored to the local area and includes: communication, global finance, clinical public health, gender and development, and negotiation skills.

As a friend and sponsor of the charity, Carrier has an established relationship supporting the work of PROWIBO and, here, takes the opportunity to speak to founding member, Tessa de Nassau. The 33-year-old social entrepreneur, businesswoman, philanthropist, UNAIDS Ambassador, public speaker, activist and ex-military official, is also a mother to two sons, aged 12 and 13, with ex-husband Prince Louis of Luxembourg.

## How do you balance being a mother and a career woman?

It demands a lot of planning. I make sure that the time I'm not able to spend with my kids is spent well. I work with people I love and take on projects that inspire me. Most importantly, I talk to my kids about everything I do and take them with me wherever possible.

## You spent five years in the military and were deployed in Kosovo as a peacekeeper. How did this impact you?

My time in the military taught me so much. I met the most amazing people. It taught me about myself, my limits, and my calling: I want global empowerment for

women. I saw things in the army that shocked me, but which laid down the path that I'm on now.

**As co-founder, what does PROWIBO mean to you?** I love this project so much, not only because we give hundreds of young adults a better future, but because I am constantly learning too. I love working with my team, my frontiers, my teachers and my sponsors – we are very grateful that Carrier is our main sponsor. The impact has been enormous. After every summer school we think it can't get better, but each year it does. It's a really beautiful project that changes a lot of people's lives.

**How did your partnership with Carrier come about?** My beautiful relationship with Carrier has grown so much over the past few years. I was introduced to Managing Director Mark Duguid at a dinner. It became clear that we were both incredibly connected in what we believe. It was beautiful meeting a person who wants to give back, who listens, and who helps where

*Through education, PROWIBO aims to bring progress, innovation, fun and positive values to local communities*

he can. Carrier sponsors all of our teachers' flights, which is the biggest chunk of our budget every year. We are so grateful for that.

Carrier's support also goes beyond just the financial – this summer, we welcomed Byanne Akbor, one of Carrier's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committee members, to our Sierra Leone summer school to personally experience the impact PROWIBO has on the community. Spending time with students and developing a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the country, she was heartened to see textbook theory being transformed into something meaningful for them – and in turn, igniting inspiration in a younger generation.

**What effect does PROWIBO have on different communities around the globe?**

Every year I travel to one of the regions we are working in, so I've been to Sierra Leone, Thailand and I'm going to India next year. In Sierra Leone, I found that the biggest gift you can give is encouraging self-esteem. It was clear at the beginning that students didn't believe that they themselves could be the change in these institutions. After the summer school, they were completely different people – they were thirsty for change.

## Many people see you as a role model for women's rights. How important is this to you?

It's very humbling that people look up to me. Obviously, that brings a lot of responsibility and I use that knowledge and strength to empower others, when they cannot. It's important to remember that we all have different skills; a different piece of the puzzle to create a beautiful picture.

## Who were your role models growing up?

My role model was – and still is – my dad. He is a fabulous human being. He taught me that it is OK not to be perfect. I have seen him struggle, fall and stand up again, but always with such grace and elegance that when I fell, I knew I would stand up again. I know some people have heavier crosses to carry than I do, but this positivity is something that has always stayed with me.

## What has been the most challenging moment in your life so far?

My divorce was a really difficult moment, my miscarriage, and, most recently, the loss of my late grandfather the Royal Highness Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg. That has been really hard for me. It just shows that life continues; you may fall into a dark tunnel but there will be a light and you will come out the other side. As long as you keep that in mind, the challenging times will always pass – because without cloud and rain, you wouldn't appreciate the sun.

## Why is travel important to you?

Travelling expands your mind, refreshes your spirit, and refuels your body with things you see, with love, with beauty, new cultures, new religions – everything. It encourages people to be more receptive to different opinions and not just stuck with the world-view of your community, your family, or your culture. It provides life lessons that aren't available in the classroom. Travel is also a luxury and it should be treated as such – it's the most rewarding thing in the world.



To learn more and support in educating, inspiring and empowering younger generations, visit: [carrier.co.uk/prowibo](http://carrier.co.uk/prowibo)

- 1 Tessa educating girls about coding
- 2 Tessa raising awareness for breast cancer
- 3 Tessa and her father
- 4 Pupils attending the fourth summer school in Sierra Leone
- 5 PROWIBO students working on budgets to boost economic growth
- 6 Tessa in Abu Dhabi for the Special Olympics World Games
- 7 An interactive session teaching students about building support, political will, coalitions and the importance of networking
- 8 United Nations workshops at Fourah Bay College – the oldest university in West Africa
- 9 Tessa with a child at a Montessori education centre
- 10 Tessa as guest of honour at Investing in Women conference in Lagos, Nigeria
- 11 Class of 2019 at the Avadh Girls' P.G. College in Lucknow, India
- 12 Tessa receiving an honorary doctorate from Paris College of Art
- 13 Tessa and her two sons Gabriel and Noah
- 14 The Co-Founders of PROWIBO
- 15 Institute of public management and administration in Freetown, Sierra Leone
- 16 Guest lecture by Tessa in Bangkok on contemporary communication
- 17 Class of 2019 at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok, Thailand

# The greener picture

Sun, sea and philanthropy? With an emphasis on travel that gives back, Carrier investigates how Six Senses is turning to science to pave the way to meaningful – and green – experiences

Words: Lauren Romano



From left: Six Senses Laamu; diving at Six Senses Laamu

**H**ow to travel without costing the Earth: it's a conundrum faced by many eco-conscious globetrotters. The answer, unfortunately, isn't always straightforward. After all, sustainable jet-setting involves more than sleeping in a yurt and shunning single-use plastics.

It goes much deeper than that. When it comes to protecting our planet for future generations, an emphasis on reducing, reusing and recycling is undeniably crucial – but to be truly immersed in a destination involves a commitment to conserving cultural heritage and natural habitats.

Carrier believes that travel should be purposeful and enlightening – and create genuine experiences that enable you to engage in a deeper, more meaningful way by tuning in to your surroundings. As these sustainable (and sumptuous) initiatives at Six Senses affirm, giving back is more than token gestures and greenwashing – it's about making connections that have a lasting legacy. Together, scientific research and long-term collaboration with local communities can have a positive impact for both people and the planet – here's how.

*To be truly immersed in a destination involves a commitment to conserving cultural heritage and natural habitats*



The award-winning team of marine biologists at Six Senses Laamu

## THE MALDIVES

### PROTECTING THE ECOSYSTEM

With the Indian Ocean lapping at its feet, **Six Senses Laamu** could have come straight from the pages of a Robinson Crusoe castaway travelogue. The remote atoll setting is as idyllic as they come: a palm-fringed paradise of sugar-white sands, sapphire seas – and, if you look closely, five hectares of seagrass meadows swaying in the shallow waters.

This grassy haven might be a hotbed of reef fish and endangered green sea turtles, but sadly it's not a common site across the Maldives. In a bid to create the crystal-clear waters that Instagram posts are made of, many resorts are choosing to deliberately remove the indigenous plants, which is why the 10-strong team of marine biologists at Six Senses Laamu has been spearheading a nationwide campaign to save them.

As well as re-introducing meadows to one side of the resort, the team are re-educating guests and the wider community as to how tourism and wildlife preservation can happily coexist. After all, what could be more mood-enhancing than the thrill of catching a glimpse of the atoll's furtive rays and parrotfish as they glide through the reeds?

"Whether it's watching green sea turtles feed metres from their villas or snorkelling alongside eagle rays, numerous guests have praised us for pledging to help protect our seagrass," says general manager Marteyne van Well.

But the conservation crusade doesn't end there. The resort has partnered with three NGOs (The Manta Trust, Blue Marine Foundation and Olive Ridley Project) to form award-winning marine conservation initiative, the Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI). The collective prioritises research, guest education and community outreach to promote greater awareness of the marine environment – and it's working.

At the last count, 420 resident sea turtles and 125 resident manta rays have been identified and protected by the team, while 1,500 community members have pledged to support sea turtle conservation.

Taking an active role in conservation is undoubtedly cathartic as it presents an opportunity to reconnect with yourself as well as with your surroundings – and those who want to dive in headfirst can do so at the local coral reef. In 2016, the Maldives experienced three weeks of 32°C water which caused many of the corals to expel their algae and perish. Since then, the marine team has been inviting guests to take part in diving missions to collect broken pieces of coral and plant them in a nursery where, once they have reached a larger size, they will be returned to the reef to assist in its recovery.

## BHUTAN

### NURTURING ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

The landlocked Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan is the world's only carbon-negative country, which is why **Six Senses Bhutan** (which is made up of five lodges: Thimphu, Paro, Punakha, Gangtey and Bumthang) takes its role as custodian of the surrounding untouched mountain ranges so seriously – and now guests have the opportunity to get involved too.

With valleys covered by a thick carpet of greenery for as far as the eye can see, each Six Senses residence in Bhutan is in the most sensational of settings – but finding joy in nature here is more than stopping to listen to the rustle of leaves in the breeze, or marvel at the kaleidoscope of verdant hues on the horizon.

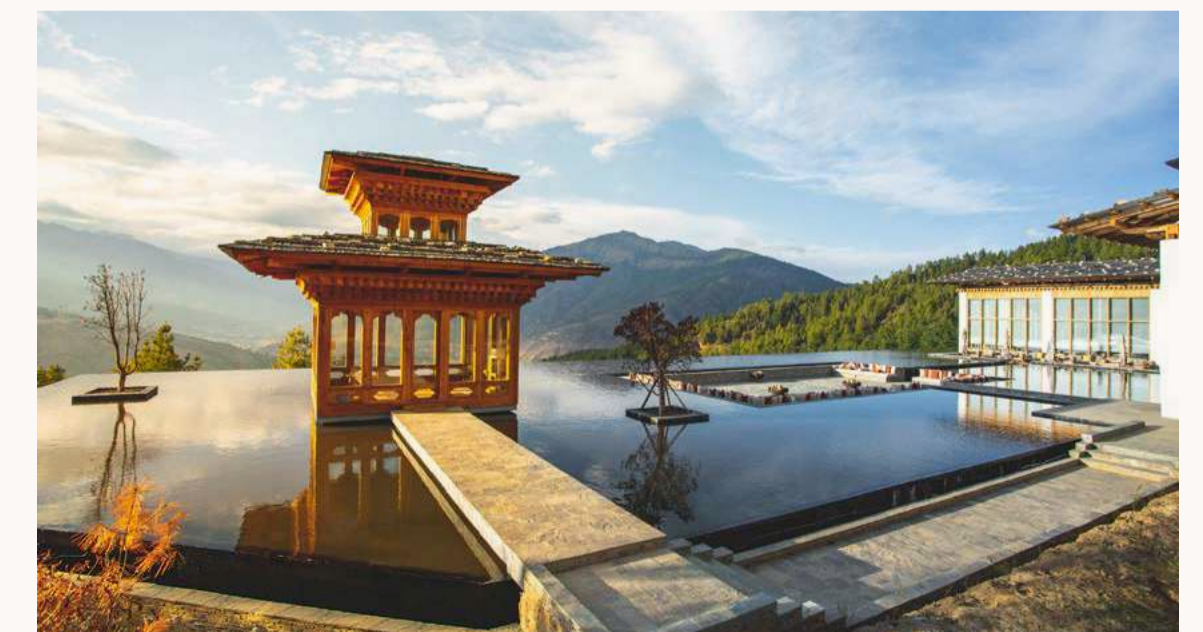
For its latest initiative, the Six Senses Bhutan collection has introduced organic farming to the valleys around its remote lodges. Together, the team of 90 staff grow and harvest 100 native varieties of vegetables, which you can sample from an array of authentic dishes (and experience in a range of heavenly spa treatments), with all surplus ingredients donated to local monasteries.

You will be encouraged to get green-fingered; plans are in the pipeline to develop a farm-to-plate concept that will enable participants to learn how to both handpick and prepare seasonal produce through a series of cookery masterclasses.

But it's not just each resort's kitchen that will benefit – Six Senses Bhutan is also investing in local farming by establishing an eco-village near to its Paro Lodge in Damchena. An education centre for the local community, created in partnership with local farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the eco-village offers training courses on best farming practices, nutrition, recycling and waste management.



Top left and left: the organic garden near the Six Senses Paro lodge; Below: Praying Pavilion at Six Senses Thimphu





Six Senses Zil Pasyon

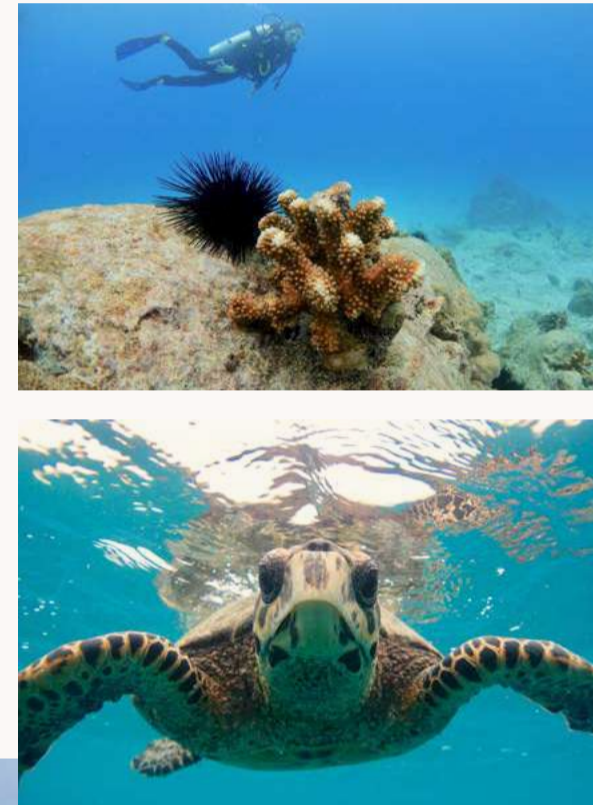
**THE SEYCHELLES**

RESTORING ENDANGERED SPECIES

Skirted by prehistoric-looking jungle foliage and craggy rock formations, *Six Senses Zil Pasyon* is a slice of Eden. As the sole occupant of the far-flung island of Félicité, the resort teems with flora and fauna that looks as though it has thrived there since the dawn of time – except that swathes of it have only recently been replanted.

For the island is on a mission to restore its indigenous and endemic plants, shrubs and trees, which for a time were driven to the brink of extinction due to a number of invasive species taking root on Félicité. The landscaping team, led by the resort's ecologist Steve Hill, have worked tirelessly for a decade to reinstate the island's ecology. So far, three critically endangered plant species and counting (Wright's gardenia, *Vateriopsis seychellarum* and *Drypetes risleyi*) have been saved, which is good news for certain rare birds that had previously vanished from the island and avid ornithologists who want to become acquainted with the island's inhabitants. Today, you can spot species such as the Seychelles Magpie Robin, Paradise Flycatcher, White-eye, Warbler and Fody darting between the newly-reinstated undergrowth where once a tangled mass of invasive coco-plum had thrived. With coastal habitats also now much improved, it is hoped that seabirds will return to the island in numbers to nest, so have your binoculars at the ready for a chance to glimpse this memorable moment just as nature intended.

From top: monitoring artificially transplanted corals; a juvenile Hawksbill Turtle from the Monitoring Program; trekking in Ramos National Park as part of the Island Rehabilitation Program; all images courtesy of David Estelles



Clockwise from left: Six Senses Kaplankaya; the Earth Lab; Six Senses Kaplankaya villa

*The resort hopes to inspire others to follow in its footsteps, and make small changes that will stay with you forever*

**TURKEY**

RECONNECTING WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

*Six Senses Kaplankaya* is steeped in history. With archaeological sites on its doorstep, including two of the Seven Wonders of the World, the cypress-covered domain has changed little over the centuries. In a bid to preserve this pristine natural idyll, the resort is combining time-honoured traditions with innovation at its Earth Lab – a concept that exists at all Six Senses properties. As the moniker suggests, the Earth Lab takes a scientific approach to nurturing the landscape. From creating alternatives to plastic straws and distilling natural insecticides from plants to composting food waste, the dedicated eco area is where the resort's sustainability initiatives are shared with guests who are encouraged to roll their sleeves up and get stuck in. There are a range of activities to take part in: children can learn about

foraging, farming and recycling during Grow with Six Senses workshops, while eco-warriors of all ages can benefit from some handy life hacks, such as extracting essential oils from herbs or making compost and chemical-free detergent. You can even continue the good work long after your visit as the Earth Lab's seed bank enables you to choose and grow organic produce back home. Finally, local hosts and community members are on hand to share their experiences of how sustainable tourism can have a positive impact on the environment and the people who live there. Ultimately, by showcasing the science behind some of its sustainability initiatives, the resort hopes to inspire others to follow in its footsteps, and make small changes that will stay with you forever.



**THE POWER OF YOU**

Six Senses is not only conscious about the planet but also about 'self' and wellbeing. From the food you eat to the way you sleep, wellness is integrated into your whole Six Senses experience. Personalised wellness programmes dive deeper to discover what your body really needs and with dedicated specialists in the fields of nutrition, sleep, neuroscience and cardiovascular health, doctors combine science and best practices to achieve optimum outcomes. These are the most rewarding of holidays, where you can take measurable action and have a positive impact not only on the planet and communities, but also on yourself.



# Life and soul

PLACES AND PEOPLE WITH A COMMITMENT TO MAKING EVERY JOURNEY COUNT

We can all do a bit more to protect and nurture this planet, helping to save endangered species or simply focusing on the people that make a place special. Where you travel to and who you travel with are choices that can lessen your impact on the world and the destinations you visit. At Carrier, we search high and low to find fulfilling experiences to help improve, not only ourselves, but also the communities around us.



*Each handcrafted element keeps alive centuries of knowledge passed down through generations*

## KEEPING TRACK

Belmond go above and beyond to support the places and people that surround them, so swap the plane for a train on the *Venice Simplon-Orient-Express*. There's a new level of luxury on board with three new opulent suites occupying an entire carriage. Belmond sourced artisans at the top of their game in delicate and vintage traditions to reflect

the Art Deco heyday of the most storied carriages. Celebrating and supporting local craftsmanship, glassblowers, mosaicists and masters in marquetry were selected to carefully design every intricate feature from marble tiles to carved cupboards. Each handcrafted element keeps alive centuries of knowledge passed down through generations delivering authenticity in the tiniest of details.

## PRIME OF LIFE

Set in the heart of the Blue Mountains within a 7,000-acre nature reserve, is Australia's first conservation-based resort. *Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley* raises the bar in ultra-luxury and sustainability with a team dedicated to a range of complex programmes, such as planting over 200,000 indigenous trees, preserving biodiversity, restoring a historic homestead building, as well

as introducing large-scale energy and waste reduction initiatives. During your visit, make a hands-on contribution to protecting Australia's cultural and natural heritage by spending time tracking and supporting vulnerable wombats and birds, and getting your hands dirty protecting the environment. In magnificent seclusion and splendour, these inspiring initiatives will leave a lasting impact as you become part of the 'Wolgan' story.



**ISLAND LIFE**

Nestled within the impressive rainforests and beaches of the Koh Rong Archipelago in **Cambodia** is **Song Saa Private Island**. Built from local materials by local hands, this is a luxury retreat committed to maintaining the natural assets that make this location so unique. From water conservation to Cambodia's first-ever marine preserve, the resort's

initiatives partner with villages, schools, governments, investors and donors to improve livelihoods. Gain hands-on experience with specialists and scientists – get to know the native ecosystems on an island safari or cement your belonging here in a traditional blessings ceremony led by local Buddhist monks. You'll live in complete serenity with a deep connection to a unique environment like no other.



**IN HARMONY WITH NATURE**

On South Beach's famous Collins Avenue, with the sand and sea on your doorstep **1 Hotel South Beach's** cool and minimalist design allows you to reconnect with nature in the most authentic ways. Nature shapes the way you arrive, depart, sleep, eat, relax, interact and ultimately how you feel. Regional, reclaimed and repurposed materials are used wherever possible,

including Colorado beetle kill pine to create headboards, Ipe wood from the property's original boardwalk for planters and driftwood for door handles. In your spacious room you will also find yoga mats, terrariums and hangers made of recyclable paper. Don't forget to discover the property-wide 'Daylife' programmes, spanning wellness, fitness, and family, designed to cultivate positive connections with the community and local environment.



*Nature shapes the way you arrive, depart, sleep, eat, relax, interact and ultimately how you feel*



**MAKING WAVES**

**Kanuhura** in the **Maldives** offers an unparalleled slice of paradise all year-round, not just for honeymooners and families seeking memorable moments, but also a small fleet of endangered turtles. Five of the world's seven species – Leatherback, Loggerhead, Hawksbill, Green and Olive Ridley – flock here to nest and hatch on the beach. Play a pivotal role in the survival of these endangered species by having the most extraordinary opportunity and honour to witness them in action. Join in the efforts of the Atoll Marine Centre to rehabilitate the baby hatchlings and care for any turtles in need. Long after you return home, you will feel the infectious passion of all those at Kanuhura who celebrate and protect these rare creatures.



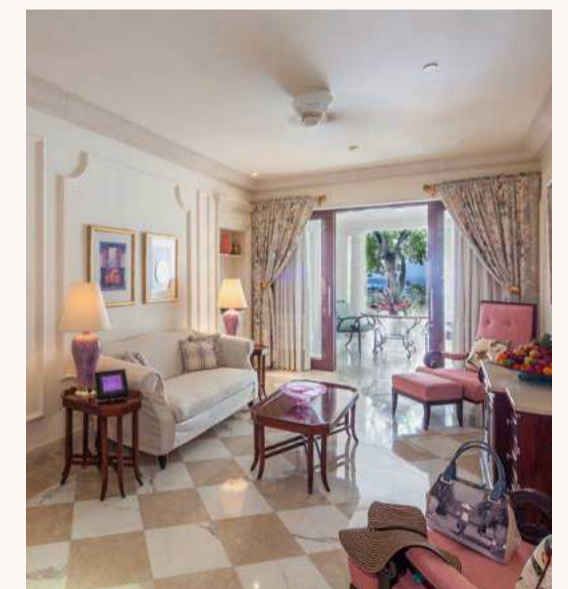
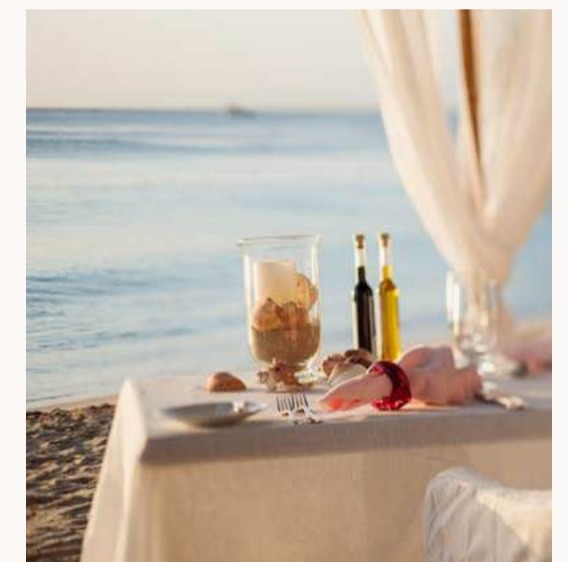
**A ROYAL ITINERARY**

**The Royal Portfolio** is focused on uplifting local communities and promoting conservation. Craft a unique itinerary to two of its South African properties, **The Silo** in **Cape Town** and **Royal Malewane** in **Kruger National Park**. The Silo is Cape Town's most exclusive hotel – it exudes style and timeless glamour and has a long list of sustainable credentials, from displaying local artists' work to saving energy and caring for their staff's welfare and health. Community is also at the heart of its sister resort Royal Malewane; here you can join the most qualified guiding team in Africa meeting three of only seven living Master Trackers in the world, who lead the way in anti-poaching initiatives. This will be one of the most inspiring, heartfelt and perceptive safaris you will experience.



From top: The Silo in Cape Town; the guiding team at Royal Malewane; Royal Malewane spa in Kruger National Park

*Join the most qualified guiding team in Africa meeting three of only seven living Master Trackers in the world*



**A SEA CHANGE**

Overfishing, anchor damage and climate change all have an effect on coastal erosion and marine degradation. **Sandy Lane** in **Barbados** is embarking on a multi-million dollar beach and marine regeneration project, designed by expert coastal engineers from the UK, to address these issues. Temporary nurseries have been created to foster and protect the remaining surviving coral and a breakwater is being formed to reduce the forceful effect of the waves, so you can marvel and enjoy the majestic ocean and beach in the knowledge that it's in safe hands.



# Start small, dream big

We look behind the scenes of one of the world's most successful hotel groups to find out how they make every guest, no matter where they are in the world, feel part of something special

Words: Hannah Lemon

Since launching in 1979, **Rosewood Hotels & Resorts** has established itself as an international group dedicated to incorporating the unique culture and history of each destination it chooses. From the white sands of the Riviera Maya to prime city hotspots in Washington D.C. and Vancouver, as soon as your foot crosses the threshold, you will be the lucky recipient of impeccable service suited to your every whim and wish. But how is it possible for homely and welcoming details to be implemented by an organisation that spans five continents?

"Since Rosewood's inception, our guiding philosophy has been A Sense of Place", explains Radha Arora, President of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, "which means that we look to the culture and heritage of a destination as inspiration for the experience offered at our properties." This is particularly evident at **Rosewood Luang Prabang**, a resort that is located just ten minutes' drive from the historic city and UNESCO World Heritage Site of its namesake in **Laos**. Surrounded by thick forest, the meandering Mekong and Nam Khan rivers and thundering waterfalls, you can immediately see why this setting is regarded as sacred.

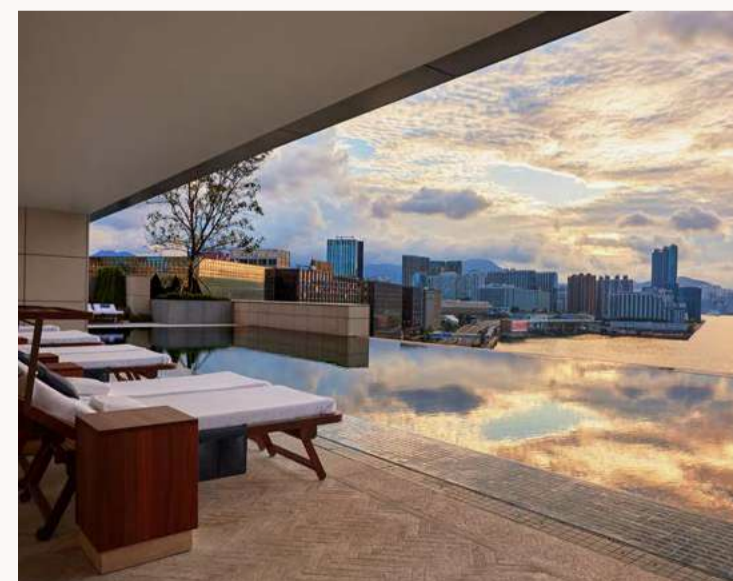
Rosewood has sensitively and charmingly embraced the traditions of the area. The town is known for its French-Lao architecture, with French colonial villas standing alongside glittering centuries-old Buddhist temples, and this is reflected in the design of Luang Prabang. Inside the resort's extravagant Hilltop Tents, the interiors feature colours, textiles and patterns used by the area's indigenous hill tribes, who still inhabit the surrounding wild mountains. While the Waterfall Pool Villas here embrace indoor-outdoor living with rain showers and wooden bathtubs, the Riverside Villas are decked out with vintage furniture hinting at bygone eras of adventurous traders and explorers.

Arora comments: "From engaging local craftsmen and artists during the construction and design stages, to partnering with nearby farmers, ranchers and purveyors, to sourcing the cuisine delivered at our dining outlets, we are thoughtful

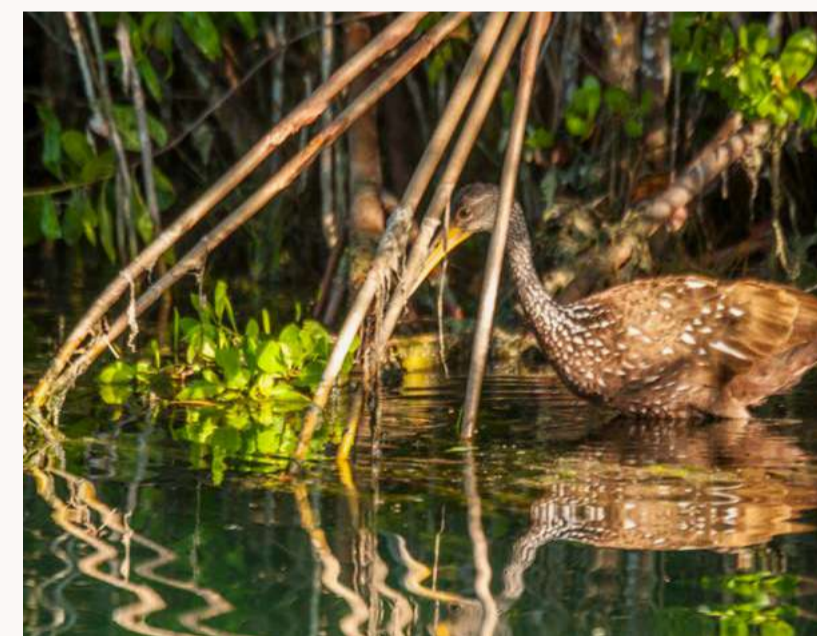
in our approach to creating one-of-a-kind hotels, resorts and experiences that are truly authentic."

During your stay here you can try your hand at rice farming, visit an elephant sanctuary, or go for a gentle cruise down the river. Coincide your visit with the Festival of Lights in October and witness Luang Prabang transform into something out of a fairy tale as wax candles gently light up pagodas and hundreds of colourful crepe paper lanterns hang from the windows of local homes. It's these rare moments that can incite a sense of something greater than the ordinary routine of life with which we can become accustomed.

"As our lives become more hectic, travellers are increasingly focused on physical, emotional and spiritual exploration," explains Arora. "Understanding this growing need, we are looking



From top left: Waterfall Pool Villa at Rosewood Luang Prabang; Ceiba Garden & Kitchen at Rosewood Mayakoba; wildlife at Rosewood Mayakoba; Asaya spa at Rosewood Hong Kong; Hilltop Tent at Rosewood Luang Prabang



forward to launching our first urban outpost of Asaya, our new holistic wellness concept that offers a personalised approach rooted in self-acceptance and self-discovery, at the newly opened **Rosewood Hong Kong** in January 2020."

The Asaya Hong Kong is set to be the largest dedicated wellness space in an urban hotel and will offer a haven of calm in a busy and bustling city. Conveniently situated on the Kowloon harbourfront, on a historic site where the city's future as a global trading hub was first established, it seems that building inner balance has never been more apt. Aware that exploring your true potential isn't achieved overnight, Asaya can offer you retreats and expert consultation to set you on the right path alongside traditional methods of relaxation such as massages and facials.

Find a new direction through self-reflection in the Emotional Balance therapy series, which can help you express stifled emotions and pursue meaningful relationships. Through a psychological consultation you can also enhance your ability to achieve goals, build a sense of hope and happiness, and learn to deepen your gratitude. Alternative healing comes in the form of Art Therapy, too, which uses storytelling, movement, music, drama and visual arts to foster growth, development, insight and healing.

Rosewood Hong Kong is only one of a host of new Rosewood destinations popping up all over the globe, where you can experience the brand's innovative, modern and progressive approach to luxury hospitality. "We are very excited to announce two new hotel openings in 2020,

including the highly anticipated Rosewood Little Dix Bay set to open in January and our first property in South America, Rosewood São Paulo to open late next year. Beyond our expansion efforts, we are dedicated to offering new services and experiences that respond thoughtfully to the priorities of today's traveller."

There are endless ways in which this is achieved at **Rosewood Mayakoba**, which is built along winding lagoons and a mile-long arc of pristine Caribbean beach nestled just north of the waterfront town Playa del Carmen in **Mexico**. Inspired by Mayan traditions, this 620-acre, Rainforest Alliance Certified resort blends harmoniously with the natural landscapes and will encourage you to do the same on arrival.

"As a brand, Rosewood has long been dedicated to creating opportunities for guests of all ages to establish a deep and meaningful connection not only with one another, but also with new cultures and destinations around the world," says Arora.

Take the family on a wildlife tour to learn about the abundant flora and fauna, with a particular focus on the rehabilitation and protection of precious sea turtles. Guided by a resident sustainability expert, you and your children can witness the exciting release of nesting sea turtles into the Caribbean Sea and the little ones can indulge in beach games that highlight fun facts about the different native species.

This is in line, as Arora iterates, with "Rosewood Hotels & Resorts' pledge to 'Value the Earth's Resources and Demonstrate Environmental Sensitivity' at all our properties". He continues: "Every hotel in the Rosewood collection follows the 'Verdes Responsibility' principles, which ensure the respect of each unique setting and environmental sensibilities."

No more so than at the Ceiba Garden & Kitchen at Rosewood Mayakoba, which pays homage to authentic Mayan cuisine and heritage. The Ceiba tree is in fact one of the Mayan culture's most sacred symbols, signifying the universe and offering protection, insight and prosperity. You can sit under its ancient branches for a communal meal and enjoy the innovative menu of both classic and modern Mexican dishes created from fresh ingredients direct from the garden. Partnering with local farms and producers, the restaurant encourages you to savour mouth-watering morsels in a sustainable way. Bold regional flavours are enhanced by Chakay Farm lobster, vegetables from Oxkutzcab, salt from Celestun and pineapples and papayas from Bacalar.

Rosewood Mayakoba also supports Centro Educativo K'iin Beh, a school built in 2017 for the children of its employees and local youth, located 15 minutes away and solely financed by friends and family of the resort. More than 200 students receive bilingual, full-time education here at elementary and middle-school level. You can join the school's group of generous supporters by purchasing stationary supplies such as pencils, paper and markers, or get stuck in with hands-on, on-site projects like reading or computer lessons.

"We feel that true hospitality is found in the strong relationships that we build with our guests, our communities and our associates," says Arora. "It is this warmth and charm that keeps our guests coming back year after year."

*"As our lives become more hectic, travellers are increasingly focused on physical, emotional and spiritual exploration"*

Perched high on a rocky kopje, *Ulusaba* overlooks miles and miles of Lowveld bush, with the views stretching to the Drakensberg mountain range in the distance. Located in the *Sabi Sands Reserve*, Ulusaba, dubbed 'the Necker Island of the bush' gives you the unrivalled opportunity to experience South Africa's renowned wildlife such as its national animal – the springbok – as well as, of course, the Big Five: lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant and Cape buffalo.

Local expert guides will shepherd you through this magical landscape on safari walks and game drives so you can witness these majestic creatures in their natural habitat. In fact, most of the resort's staff are Shangaan, hailing from the communities that border the game reserve, so they can offer you an insight into their tribal traditions and the land they have called home for generations, which few have access to.



## Rest, assured

Spot the Big Five or catch a glimpse of daily life in a rural Kenyan village with Virgin Limited Edition retreats and luxury hotels safe in the knowledge that care for the community goes hand-in-hand with every excursion

Words: Francesca Lee-Rogers

This African destination is part of Virgin Limited Edition, a curated collection of Sir Richard Branson's most exclusive and stunning locations. While going the extra mile is something that is part of the company's philosophy – as it is for Carrier – supporting local communities is also at the centre of everything it does.

With this in mind, Ulusaba's charity arm, Pride 'n Purpose, takes on extra special meaning. You can experience the local culture while giving a little something back to others, such as teaching children anything from new songs to the school numbers and alphabet, or building shelters in the local village. Bespoke itineraries can be curated based on your own skills and interests so you can personally get involved in helping to improve the quality of life for many of the communities and children.

Partner this trip with a visit to *Mont Rochelle* in the friendly town of *Franschhoek*. Located an hour's drive from Cape Town, this stunning 26-bedroom hotel is surrounded by a picturesque vineyard and mountainous landscape. You can eat and drink to your heart's content:

seasonal South African ingredients make up a five-course menu for the Winemaker's Dinner paired with the world's best vintages. The resort's local winemaker, Dustin Osborne, is on hand to talk you through it and highlight some of Mont Rochelle's best bottles.

While Carrier ensures you can explore this jaw-dropping setting with al fresco picnics among the vines, wine excursions and a private tour of its 150-year-old wine cellar, you can rest assured that your visit is having a positive impact. Mont Rochelle proudly supports FRANCO, which aims to coordinate

social programmes and charitable organisations within the Franschhoek Valley, including support groups for the elderly and disabled. And while you relax in the spa with a herbal hammam or grape stem facial, 15 per cent of the spa's revenue goes to the Kusasa Project, which promotes academic and life skills training for underprivileged children in the Western Cape.

Head north to the Kenyan retreat of *Mahali Mzuri* for one of the most authentic insights into the world-renowned Maasai population. Step outside one of 12 lavish tents in the luxury camp for an enriching and fuller flavour of rural Kenyan life with a visit to one of the local villages in the Mara. All the tour fees will go to the

local village community and a variety of projects. Mahali Mzuri works in partnership with the local community across all its activities and offerings to protect the wider *Maasai Mara Ecosystem*. There is a collaborative effort across tourism, agriculture, development, conservation and charcoal production to guarantee a fair income for all homes and families in the area.

In addition, the camp's location within the private Olare Motorogi Conservancy guarantees unrivalled access to the wildlife in the area, from an abundance of cats to tremendous sightings of up to one million wildebeest in the Great Migration.

Wherever your heart takes you on your journey through Africa, local guides, communities and families are there to share their stories and listen to yours in a truly unforgettable experience.



### LOTS OF LOVE FOR UTHANDO

For the past four years, Carrier has proudly supported Uthando. Meaning 'love' in the local Xhosa language, the non-profit organisation works tirelessly to raise money and awareness for countless development projects in South Africa with the help of the tourism industry. As well as organising local experiences for visitors, Carrier also donates R200 from every Africa booking received, to help improve the lives of local South African communities.



Clockwise from top: Wildlife and lodges at Mahali Mzuri; a luxury tent at Mahali Mzuri; Mont Rochelle vineyard; a Mont Rochelle suite; Ulusaba Rock Lodge; Ulusaba's trackers and rangers

# By design

Dedicated to pushing boundaries in ocean discovery, Scenic Eclipse is leading the way in responsible travel and luxury cruising

Words: David Taylor



To explore the world by ocean – it's a tempting idea. Enveloped in ultimate, all-inclusive six-star luxury while visiting the world's most beautiful and remote destinations, *Scenic* is ahead of the game when it comes to cruising the seas in the most sustainable way possible. The luxury cruise liner partners with Climate Friendly, an Australian organisation helping to counteract large greenhouse gas emission by funding renewable energy projects.

The jewel in the crown of Scenic's fleet is *Scenic Eclipse*, labelled the world's first discovery yacht. One of the most luxurious cruise ships available with state-of-the-art innovation, its engines are designed to reduce emissions below future global standards, with 12 per cent higher fuel efficiency. This comes, in part, from the use of Marine Gas Oil, the highest class of marine fuel that also contains the lowest concentration of sulphur and minute particles that have become a huge strain on the seas.

The unique opportunity to explore the

Polar regions is one that the Eclipse wasn't going to miss. It's a fully-fledged member of Polar Code, follows the framework's pollution prevention measures, and is compatible with the strict emission requirements cruising near the Poles demands.

It's not just fuel consumption that damages the oceans, which is why the Eclipse's Azipod propulsion system makes sure that noise and vibrations are as low as technologically possible, meaning much less disturbance to marine life, while the GPS on board allows the ship to stay in the same place without using an anchor – vital in fragile environments.

A specially-designed deck overhang minimises light pollution, and an advanced treatment system recycles any waste into high-quality water that can be poured into even sensitive water areas without restrictions. Small touches are just as valuable, too, with each guest given a refillable water bottle at the start of the journey, and all bathroom products available in refillable porcelain dispensers.

All of these meticulous design details

support everyone's mission for exploration. A fleet of discovery vehicles – including kayaks, e-bikes, Zodiacs and helicopters – will help you to get closer to each destination. The Eclipse also houses an exceptional bit of kit: the Scenic Neptune. The Eclipse's own seven-seat submarine can take you to places once inaccessible to the ordinary traveller, diving to 300 metres up to eight times a day. Passengers rest on seats that swivel 280 degrees to take in underwater views from both sides of the craft: spectacular volcanic pinnacles, majestic wrecks and vibrant, tropical reefs teeming with diverse marine life.

Whether you venture deep into the Arctic or Antarctic, navigate the amazing Chilean fjords or follow in the footsteps of Vikings, you'll reach places beyond your wildest dreams. With nearly one member of staff to every person on board, it's easy to find a renewed sense of tranquility, as if on your own private yacht. Embark on a chance in a lifetime to make unforgettable memories and forge intimate encounters with nature's most wondrous creatures.

Clockwise from left: Lumière dining area; Scenic Eclipse; Scenic Lounge; a Deluxe Verandah Suite; Senses Spa; Scenic Neptune submarine



From left: The beach on Necker Island; Exploring the BVI with Dream Yacht Charter; Rosewood Little Dix Bay



## Bouncing back

After Hurricane Irma, the British Virgin Islands is back on its feet, ready with tipples of rum, untamed lush greenery and the wondrous wildlife it's known for, but delve a little deeper and you will find out how the community has gone above and beyond to make an impressive comeback

Words: David Taylor

Benjamin Franklin, the founding father of the United States depicted on the British Virgin Islands (BVI) \$5 coin, is said to have remarked that out of adversity comes opportunity. This is certainly true of the stunning archipelago. After losing more than 90 per cent of its accommodations and attractions, its strength of community is shining through as locals and business leaders continue to bring positive change to the area.

Take **Rosewood Little Dix Bay**, for instance. The eco-friendly resort situated on 500 acres of Virgin Gorda's untamed natural gardens, rugged hills and isolated beaches, considered some of the world's finest, was one of the first Caribbean resorts to promote sustainable luxury. Founded in 1964 by major conservationist Laurance Rockefeller, Little Dix Bay has always been ahead of its time, focusing on the natural environment at the heart of its design. Spanning half a mile of beach, the resort will re-open early next year having undergone a multi-million dollar renovation for its golden anniversary.

Continuing Rockefeller's spirit of sustainability, indigenous materials have been incorporated into the architecture, and if it's a week or two of slow living that's missing from your chaotic lives, Little Dix provides the space, silence and seclusion to do just that. For a true sense of place, take in the 25-mile panoramic

views from Sense, a Rosewood Spa, which is set high on a bluff at the cliff's edge. Meander through the spa's tropical gardens before indulging in a Caribbean-inspired treatment fused with indigenous botanical resources from the grounds of the resort.

It's not just on Virgin Gorda that upgrades have been made. Sir Richard Branson's two private islands, **Necker** and **Moskito**, which can be hired exclusively, offer a rare escape from the grind of daily life. Community and environmental efforts are high on the agenda here – new solar and wind power initiatives generate almost all of the island's power.

Wildlife sustainability is also a top priority. Necker's wildlife team spends approximately 300 hours each week managing the variety of species on the island, including lemurs, flamingoes, giant tortoises, ibises and iguanas. The team is currently working on having all lemurs free ranging across the island, meaning you may be in for a few rare surprise meetings.

Alongside resorts leading improvement in the area, there are various initiatives to support those who live and work in the BVI. The Dive Association has launched non-profit organisation Beyond The Reef, which nurtures marine life through community projects, such as artificial coral reefs made from old plane wreckage, and teaches local children how to swim. On one of the main islands, Jost Van Dyke, the

world-famous Soggy Dollar Bar launched a campaign to replant the many palm trees it had lost during the storms. The social media and neighbourhood following was so huge that the bar not only managed to raise enough money to replace its trees, but also all the trees along the entire shore.

**Dream Yacht Charter** was the one of first companies to get tourism fully back on track after the hurricanes, not just for its love of the sheer natural beauty of the islands, but more importantly to support those who rely on the tourism industry. As the undisputed sailing capital of the Caribbean, the BVI are a prime destination for sailors the world over, and one that has engendered strong loyalty and affection. It's no surprise then that alongside immediately relocating boats from other areas to the BVI and other affected areas, an employee fund was set up by many of Dream Yacht Charter's owners and customers, dedicated to helping staff that live on the islands. Now fully back on track, you can choose from an extensive fleet of monohulls and catamarans. To enjoy the azure waters in the utmost luxury, take a fully crewed and catered catamaran and explore the beautiful coves and beaches only accessible from the sea.

With community spirit stronger than ever before, and a communal drive for redevelopment, the BVI are at their very best.



## New heights

With wellness and sustainability at its heart, Virgin Atlantic's new A350-1000 has launched a host of in-flight essentials that reflect the airline's commitment to flying the cleanest, greenest and youngest fleet in the world

Back in September, Virgin Atlantic's A350-1000 took to the skies with the aim of revolutionising the services on board, down to the very toothbrush keeping you refreshed. With expert design input from Galileo Watermark, Virgin Atlantic has transformed its airline amenity kits into the most sustainable 'Goodie Bags' in the sky.

Across the fleet in both Upper Class and Premium cabins, each Goodie Bag is made from responsibly-sourced, FSC-certified recyclable kraft paper and filled with sustainable travel essentials to enjoy onboard, or to take away and reuse at home.

In Economy, sustainable items such as eye masks, ear plugs, dental kits, socks and pens will be available on request, ensuring a reduction in single-use products and waste production.

Comparing the old amenity kits to the new Goodie Bags, there is a saving of 945 tonnes of plastic per year, equal to the weight of more than six Airbus A350-1000 aircrafts.

Two beauty houses offer the very best ways to be kind to skin and the environment as well.

In the Upper Class amenity kit and Clubhouse bathrooms, you can find creams and balms with REN Clean Skincare with natural bioactive ingredients, and there are eco-friendly Aveda haircare products, designed with plant essences, in the Clubhouse showers and spas.

Not only that, Virgin Atlantic's much-loved Upper Class sleep suits have also undergone a complete makeover. The new 'Loungewear' range is made of a soft cotton-blend jersey fabric in three different sizes and comes in a reusable bag. Available to all customers on night flights and on request on day flights, its subtle design can easily be worn off the plane, through the airport and into your living room.

Keep an eye out for a few more stylish details, such as new almond gold Wilbur and Orville salt and pepper pots (famously the most pinched item aboard Virgin Atlantic), metal napkin rings, bedding designed to reduce wash loads, and a padded and fitted sheet for enhanced traveller comfort. Each element, thoughtfully selected and designed by Virgin Atlantic, will ensure you have a restful and bright future of flying ahead.



### IN FOR A TREAT

Upper Class Goodie Bags

- REN Clean Skincare products – including lip balm, hand cream and face cream
- A full size @BambooBrush toothbrush
- A light-blocking satin eyeshade with Velcro fastening to fit all shapes and sizes
- Socks with a contemporary design inspired by the destinations they fly to
- Ear plugs in paper packaging
- White Glo toothpaste
- Kraft paper pen

# Garden of Eden

It's hard to see beyond the aesthetic treasures the Seychelles is renowned for, with its lush rainforests, crystal-clear waters and white-sand beaches that are soft as icing sugar. However, much of its beauty lies beneath the surface of the Indian Ocean and beyond the facades of its five-star resorts, making it inimitably different to other heavenly hotspots

Words: Marianne Dick

In 1609, when the captain of the English East India Company, John Jourdain, and his crew were diverted to Africa's deserted 115-island archipelago, they believed they had found 'an earthly Paradise'. This report was further attested in 1881 when General Charles Gordon visited and was sure that the granite and coral isles were home to the Garden of Eden.

The islands were abundant with tropical birds, fish, flora and fauna that are still considered curious today – including the elusive coco de mer that Gordon regarded as the forbidden fruit. The large, sensually shaped nut is native to the country, and grows in the Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where it is fiercely protected by rangers; this is just one example of how the archipelago is leagues ahead of the rest of the world when it comes to conserving its bountiful environment, which boasts approximately 80 unique species.

Much of the land in the Seychelles was used to farm copra up until the industry collapsed in the 1970s, when the country began to restore its biodiversity. Part of its success can be attributed to the proactivity of the high-end resorts the archipelago is known for. The Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve shares Praslin island, the second largest after Mahé, with *Raffles Seychelles* – perfect for those with a taste for the very best and an adventurous spirit. Large contemporary villas with spectacular views will be your launch pad from which to explore the surrounding gems.

In amongst the verdant palms of the Vallée de Mai dwells another precious being, which guests at Raffles are most likely to lay eyes on. The black parrot is endemic to the Seychelles, and is one of the rarest species in the world. The resort's excursions don't begin and end on Praslin, though. A short boat ride will take you to the quiet, idyllic island of La Digue where the preferred mode of transport is a traditional bicycle and where another rare bird, the black paradise flycatcher, resides. It's also home to the Anse Source d'Argent beach, which, with its arresting granite boulders reminiscent of a prehistoric film set, is one of the most photographed shores in the world.

Take a longer taxi boat from Raffles to the Aride Island Nature Reserve, where the only inhabitants are the guardians of the land. The Seychelles' northernmost isle is considered an accurate insight into how the rest of the archipelago looked 250 years ago, before it was inhabited. The hotel's favourite boat trip for families however, is to Curieuse Island, where around 500 Aldabra giant tortoises roam freely across the dusty red earth.

The land isn't the only element that this sublime destination is concerned with; it's also a leading force in marine conservation. The archipelago is a decade ahead of the United Nations' deadline for the Life Below Water goal, which lists 14 aims including preventing and reducing marine pollution of all kinds. Carrier



This page, clockwise from top: Anse Lazio Beach at Raffles Seychelles; visiting vanilla plantations with Raffles Seychelles; spotting manta rays with Blue Safari; the coco de mer plant; snorkelling the reefs with North Island



has introduced a pioneering new style of distinctive lodging and experiential travel with *Blue Safari* to the Outer Islands, a one-hour flight south-west of Mahé, where you can immerse yourself in the conservation efforts of this pristine region. Each of the four atolls has its own character and story; divers can contribute by clearing the ocean of any waste and by photographing the coral reefs and the sleek, serene manta rays as they swim alongside them. Those who prefer to remain on ground level can join the Island Conservation Society (ICS) team as they track the movements of the turtles that nest on the beaches of these more remote atolls.

The main lodge on Alphonse Island is at the heart of the experience, with simple yet sophisticated suites complete with a restaurant, bar and spa – the other accommodations offer desert island-esque seclusion. The Cosmoledo atoll, for example, is made up of 21 islands, however there are only eight eco pods for adventurous guests to stay in. You'll have your own private chef and eat and drink communally on an evening, after a day spent spotting endemic land-birds such as the souimanga sunbird, the Madagascar turtle dove and the Madagascar white-eye, or discovering new dive sites.

Tourism can pose a threat to the Earth's fragile ecosystems, but not at *North Island*. Just west of Praslin and north-east of Mahé, this exclusive private island resort accommodates just 11 rustic villas made from local materials, allowing them to blend seamlessly into the environment. Get involved in the work of the resort's conservation rehabilitation project, 'Noah's Ark', which has seen alien species removed from the land, and the habitat of creatures, like the Seychelles blue pigeon, the wedge-tailed shearwater and the white-tailed tropicbird, restored. This eco-sensitive resort will ensure your footprints will be the only evidence of your visit to the island's vast, untouched beaches. This is a private sanctuary for the conscious traveller.

It has only taken half a century for the rewards of Seychelles' conservation efforts to be reaped, which is around half a lifetime of one of the archipelago's most famous stalwart residents, the Aldabra giant tortoise, and a fleeting few years in the lifespan of the coco de mer palm, which can bloom for up to eight centuries. There's still plenty that can be done, but hope for the rest of the world radiates from this five-star eco sanctuary. The coat of arms of the country puts it succinctly: 'Finis coronat opus', or, 'The end crowns the work'.





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