



TRIPS OF A LIFETIME p 80



COOL FASHION FINDS p 22



OUR FAVORITE CHICKEN RECIPES p 68

[the nest]

from the knot

powered by thenest.com

summer's here (finally!)

the ultimate grill guide
our fave tropical drinks
backyard party must-haves

5 friends you need to ditch now

totally inspiring
window makeovers

do you lie?
(to each other)



Lauren's
obsessed with
design

Derek loves crafts
and quirky stuff



diy your home

like Lauren + Derek
did in their small
yet stylish space

win!
\$1600
window
treatments

The Nest, PO Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142

SUMMER 2008

LOVE
LIVING
LIFE



take the trip of a lifetime

Want more meaningful vacay photos than anyone you know? Voluntourism is a hot philanthropic trend that takes travel to the next level. Warning: Wussy couples need not apply.

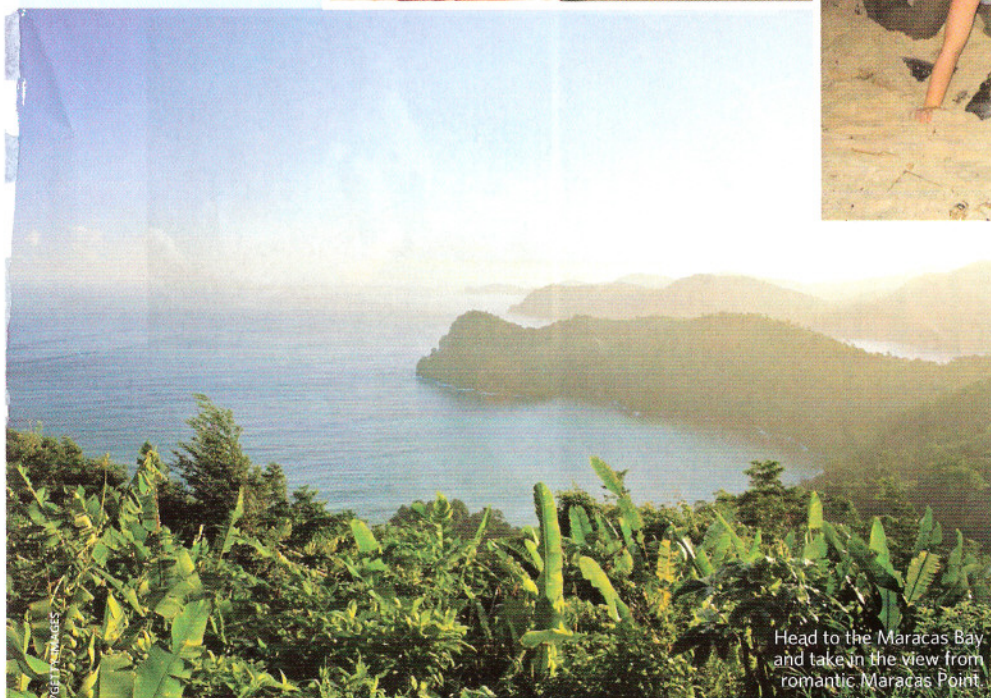
by **Cemile Kavountzis**



Baby leatherback sea turtles hatch at night (cute, huh?).



Lucas and Kate with a leatherback sea turtle. "I'm kind of a girly girl. This was probably the most humbling experience I ever had—but it was a blast," Kate says.



Head to the Maracas Bay and take in the view from romantic Maracas Point.

trinidad

the mission: wildlife conservation

PERFECT FOR THE COUPLE WHO loves taking beach vacations but wants to be more than boozy beach bums on their next trip. You're also animal lovers who would enjoy spending your time working with marine life on a beautiful Caribbean island.

WHY YOU SHOULD GO Ethnically diverse and ecologically rich, Trinidad has a lively culture that melds the best of the West Indies and South America. Just northeast of Venezuela, Trinidad is the Caribbean's southernmost island and has incredible biodiversity, with more than 600 types of butterflies alone.

It's also a nesting ground for endangered sea turtles, which have survived for more than 100 million years (outliving dinosaurs, in fact!). But recently, pollution and poaching have made them much more scarce.

THE PROGRAM Get involved with rescue efforts to protect Trinidad's endangered sea turtles. As a volunteer based in Matura, a small rural community minutes away from the rainforest and beach, you'll have a

chance to discover the real Trinidad; you'll meet locals and be fully immersed in the community's various celebrations.

At night, you'll get to tag and monitor endangered leatherback sea turtles. Since turtles lay their eggs at night and babies hatch at that time too, most work is nocturnal. Volunteers patrol with flashlights, tag adult turtles, and help hatchlings make their way to the ocean. Between patrols, you can kick back on a log and listen to the waves.

FUN PERKS During the day, you'll be able to go on guided tours of the community and the surrounding rainforest; you can visit gorgeous waterfalls, see playful howler monkeys, and snack on scrumptious wild mangoes and pineapples. Or you can just

relax on the porch and watch the parrots fly by. Just make sure you wander into town for some delicious homemade ice cream.

HOW LONG? 13 days

HOW MUCH? A tax-deductible \$2,746 per person program fee covers accommodations, food, and airport transfers; airfare not included.

ROOM AND BOARD The volunteer guesthouse has shared rooms, electricity, standard flush toilets, laundry facilities, and running water—but it's rainwater that collects in rooftop barrels, so expect cool showers. For meals, the locals will prepare flavorful, down-home Trinidadian staples like chicken, rice and beans, and swordfish.

HOW DO I LEARN MORE? Earthwatch Institute, earthwatch.org; (800) 776-0188. >



Go on a weekend safari near Mount Kilimanjaro.



"This was something we wanted to do before we started a family," says Katie, with her husband, Neil. Neil is now going into teaching because of his Tanzania experience.

tanzania

the mission: community outreach

PERFECT FOR THE COUPLE WHO is ready for a Brangelina-style adventure that's exotic and philanthropic. You've been dying to see the incredible wildlife in Africa and be immersed in the community rather than taking the typical touristy route.

WHY YOU SHOULD GO You'll be blown away by how lush and green this part of Africa is, particularly during the rainy season, when the areas around Mount Kilimanjaro are blanketed by crops of coffee plants and banana trees. Of the 120-plus tribes here,

the Maasai are its most familiar; often photographed standing tall in red cloaks that have the same visual cache as a Tibetan monk's orange robes.

THE PROGRAM For as much as Tanzania has to offer in natural beauty, you can offer a ton in terms of making the community better: You'll help care for children at local orphanages and visit those suffering with

HIV/AIDS. Depending on your interests and skills, the mornings are spent working at orphanages, medical centers, and schools; then you'll have lunch at the home base. Afternoons are mainly focused on cultural activities.

FUN PERKS Volunteers have the weekends off to take short trips—but even these quick getaways are full-on experiences, like going on a safari or taking a beach break on Zanzibar. After you complete the program, take a longer trip to the vast Serengeti National Park, the famed crossing grounds for millions of migrating animals.

HOW LONG? 3 to 12 weeks

HOW MUCH? A tax-deductible \$2,885 per person base fee (spouses will get a \$262 discount). You can also add \$297 for each

additional week. This amount will provide you with accommodations, food, and airport transfers; airfare not included.

ROOM AND BOARD The home base is dorm style: communal rooms with bunk beds that are separated into boys and girls (sorry, newlyweds...you'll have to suck it up!). There's electricity, Internet access (sometimes), and hot and cold running water.

But the water pressure and temperature are as fickle as the Internet connection, so bucket showers come in handy. You'll dine on East African specialties made with local ingredients, such as bananas with *ugali* (a starch created from maize flour).

HOW DO I LEARN MORE? Cross-Cultural Solutions, crossculturalsolutions.org; (800) 380-4777.

save \$\$\$

All program fees on these pages are tax deductible!

tip [Apply for free couples' airfare through Travelocity's Travel for Good Initiative. travelocity.com/t4g]

thailand

the mission: education/outreach

PERFECT FOR THE COUPLE WHO enjoys roughing it and wants a complete detox from inboxes, traffic, and stress. For your honeymoon, your parents gave you brochures about Hawaii, and your friends suggested that you venture to the Caribbean—you laughed and went backpacking through Peru instead.

WHY YOU SHOULD GO Less than an hour away from Bangkok, the Wang Noi district is composed of tiny villages, ancient temples, and Buddhist shrines. You'll be surrounded by peaceful rice paddies while you nosh on incredible Thai food. Your hosts will take you to see colorful palaces and vibrant markets. You'll meet members of the community and even learn how to prepare Thai specialties.

THE PROGRAM Your everyday skills, like speaking English and using a computer, can help underfunded schools. There's no set program, but activities include teaching kids at an orphanage math, English, and hygiene, building playgrounds, and helping student monks practice English (which gives you a chance to visit centuries-old monuments).

FUN PERKS Since the focus of the trip is cultural exchange, excursions are a big part

of it. Your hosts will take you to Lop Buri, dubbed "Monkey City" because its Khmer ruins are overrun by adorable chimps. Or go shopping at a local market for spices and vegetables; then take a Thai cooking lesson.

HOW LONG? 1 week

HOW MUCH? A tax-deductible \$1,090 per person program fee will cover all your accommodations, food, airport transfers, and day trips; airfare not included.

ROOM AND BOARD Lodgings lack running water and electricity (but you can charge cameras and cell phones). However, there are plenty of clean bathrooms. Beds are tatami-like floor mats outfitted with pillows, blankets, sheets, and mosquito nets. Food includes delicious Thai dishes served all day.

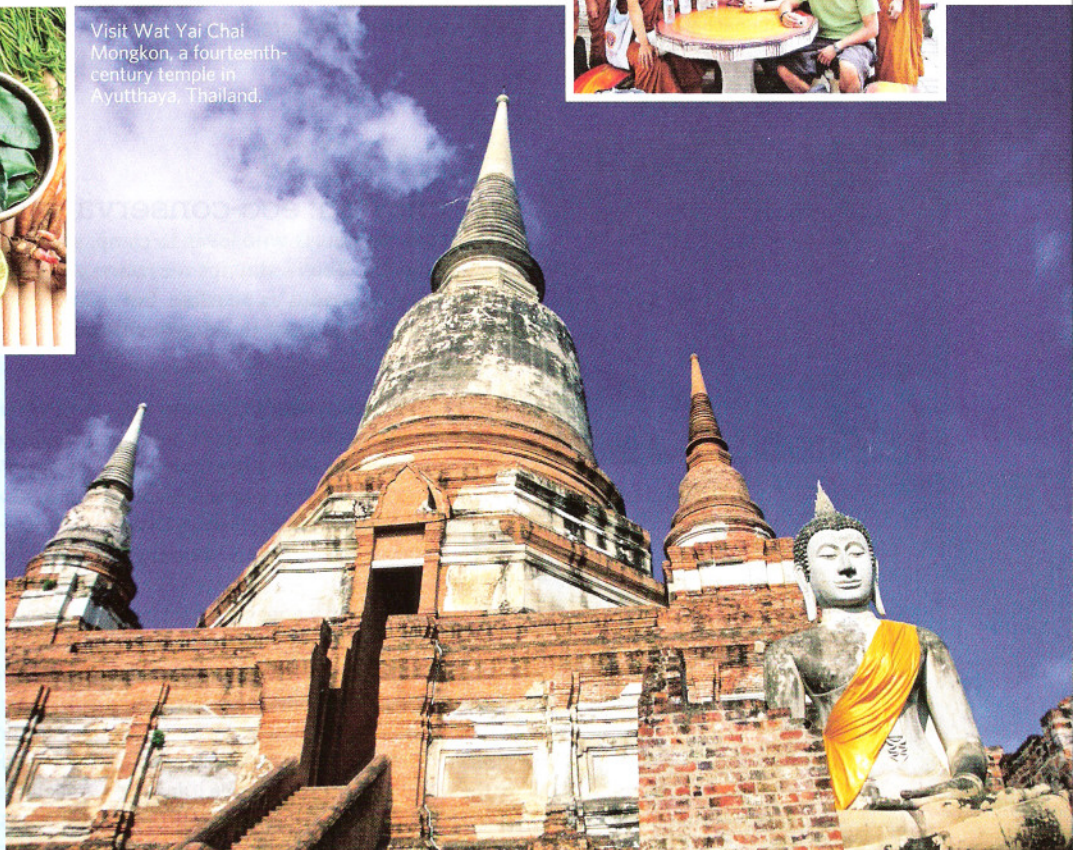
HOW DO I LEARN MORE? Globe Aware, globeaware.org; (877) 588-4562. >

"I'd love to help people and discover other cultures again as a couple," says Antonio (in the white T-shirt, center) in the Wang Noi district with student Buddhist monks.



Sample Thai dishes with coconut milk, chilies, kaffir leaves, and lemongrass.

Visit Wat Yai Chai Mongkon, a fourteenth-century temple in Ayutthaya, Thailand.



click

Find more do-gooder getaways at thenest.com/volunteer



new orleans

the mission: disaster relief

PERFECT FOR THE COUPLE WHO embraces the DIY spirit and are both big-time foodies, with a musical appetite to match. You're fans of tasting plates and love the shuffle option on your iPods; you're definitely not "that couple" who stopped partying after you got married. You also have a strong affinity toward community service.

WHY YOU SHOULD GO New Orleans is a treat for all your senses. Enjoy Cajun and Creole fare, listen to great music from Zydeco to R&B, and tour the flower-draped Garden District, all while helping this city bounce back by building homes with the New Orleans chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

THE PROGRAM Join local volunteers and other people from around the country to help build houses in response to the devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. You'll work with a professional construction crew, doing everything from laying the foundation to putting on a roof. On near-complete homes, you'll be painting or landscaping.

FUN PERKS Pick your vice: music, food, or drink? The Big Easy is brimming with options. Donna's (donnasbarandgrill.com)

is a classic for music; Café du Monde (cafedumonde.com) is a must for beignets; and the Carousel Bar (hotelmonteleone.com) serves yummy sazeracs.

HOW LONG? Anywhere from just 1 day to upward of 2 weeks

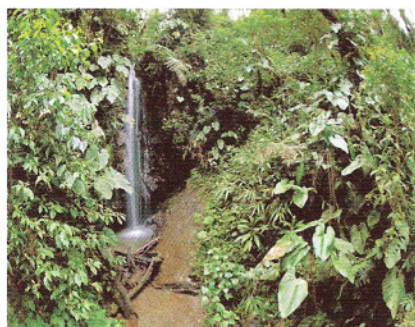
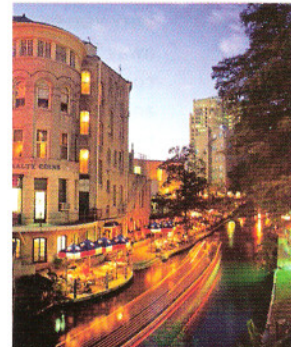
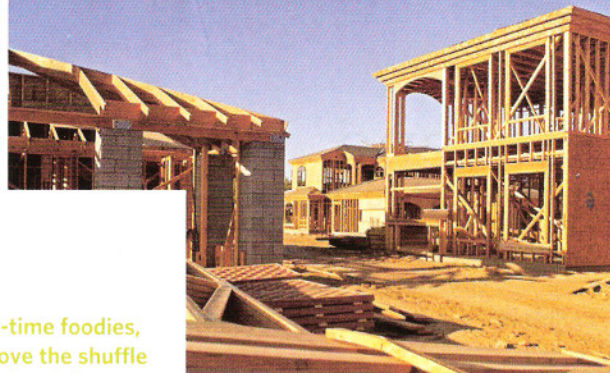
HOW MUCH? The cost of airfare, accommodations, and food; there's no program fee.

ROOM AND BOARD Camp Hope is a budget option in nearby St. Bernard Parish; it has bunk bed-style accommodations for \$30 a night. For tonier digs, there's the Loft 523 (loft523.com) and French Quarter's Soniat House (soniathouse.com). You're on your own for meals; sample po'boy shops and upscale August (restaurantaugust.com).

HOW DO I LEARN MORE? Habitat for Humanity, habitat-nola.org; (504) 861-4121.



By day, get your hands dirty constructing new homes for hurricane victims (above). At night, get your party on at the many bars, restaurants, and music venues in downtown New Orleans (right).



ecuador

the mission: eco-conservation

PERFECT FOR THE COUPLE WHO loves to camp, shop organic, and is dying to see South America. You're staunch recyclers; you always carry a mesh bag and try to be as green-conscious as possible. But eating Rainforest Crunch ice cream just doesn't cut it—you want to actually visit one.

WHY YOU SHOULD GO Nestled between the sea and mountain, North and South, this gorgeous country's name comes from the famous line it sits on: the Equator. Ecuador's Galápagos Islands are where Charles Darwin did his landmark research on biodiversity and species survival. Here's where you come in: Ecuador's once-teeming rainforests are being negatively impacted by climate change, and you can do something about it.

THE PROGRAM Help rainforest researchers by recording effects of climate change on canopies, the treetop ecosystems where most of the wildlife lives. Tasks include IDing and photographing animal tracks and setting up cameras to snap photos triggered by animal movements. You'll use remote-controlled helicopters to capture bird's-eye images of the treetops (yes, you, MacGyver).

FUN PERKS Soccer (aka fútbol) rules in this South American paradise, so join in a pickup game. Volunteers can also take river swims, hike to waterfalls, or for a day's adventure, you can make your way into the nearest town for dances and celebrations.

HOW LONG? 12 days

HOW MUCH? A tax-deductible \$2,546 per person program fee covers lodging, food, and airport transfers; airfare not included.

ROOM AND BOARD Stay in a protected forest at the no-frills Santa Lucia Lodge. Prepare for candlelit evenings (no electricity), conventional and compost toilets, semi-outdoor showers, and shared rooms (pay more for a private cabana). Dine on produce so fresh, it'll make Whole Foods pale in comparison.

HOW DO I LEARN MORE? Earthwatch Institute, earthwatch.org; (800) 776-0188. [n]

You'll be working in cloud forests like the one above, tracking ecosystem changes. Keep your eyes peeled for a variety of beautiful native creatures, like this Ecuadorian hummingbird (left).

