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Dear Colleague,

Keeping tourism revenues in the destinations in which they're generated is one of the fundamental tenets of sustainable tourism. It allows locals the opportunity to maintain (or elevate) their quality of life without jeopardizing the natural and cultural treasures that draw visitors there in the first place. It helps to support the logic that the rainforest is worth more intact with travellers paying to experience it, than it is cut down.

Guyana is blessed to have a number of community-owned and operated tourism establishments — primarily indigenous villages and eco-lodges—that allow local communities to benefit from tourism. It also provides travellers with the chance to enhance their experience and knowledge by connecting with and learning from the locals. This is just one of the many ways tourism is a force for good in the world today.

Next month (September) is Indigenous Heritage Month in Guyana, where the Indigenous Peoples are celebrated. We hope this gives you just a little insight of some of the best experiences they can offer.

Warmly,

Jane Behrend
Lead Representative, North America

Upcoming Webinar

Jungle Survival Course in Guyana | [Register Here](#)

PERSONS OF THE MONTH: DICKY AND ROVIN ALVIN



When you arrive at the Rewa Eco-Lodge, there's a very good chance you will be welcomed by either Dicky and/or Rovin Alvin. The two brothers are deeply involved in both the lodge and their native village of Rewa. Dicky has been the manager of the lodge since it opened in 2005. Rovin has worked as a guide since the same time, but today he specializes in helping visitors experience sustainable catch and release fishing of the arapaima, the largest freshwater scaled fish in the world. If you want to get a 400-pounder on your line, Rovin is your man. Like all members of the Rewa community, Dicky and Rovin are happy to welcome travelers to the Rewa Eco-lodge and share insights into their culture and traditions.

Enter to Win a Trip to Guyana



Win a trip for 2 to South America's colourful, vibrant country—Guyana. Explore rainforests, savannahs, rivers and more. Encounter exotic wildlife and meet indigenous people. An unforgettable adventure.

FEATURED ITINERARY

Guyana's Indigenous Communities Welcome You

This journey introduces you to the rich, traditional culture and pristine ecosystems environment of Guyana while focusing on sustainable tourism experiences and eco-lodges owned and operated by indigenous communities.

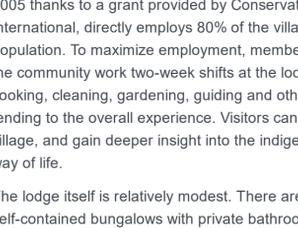


Because Guyana is an English-speaking country, you will be able to interact directly with your hosts, guides and community members experiencing first-hand the authentic hospitality and culture of Guyana's first peoples.

[See Full Itinerary](#)

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY

The idea behind community-led and owned tourism is simple. The money that comes into a community-owned and operated tourism enterprise stays within that indigenous village, providing economic benefits to the entire community. From the guides and the cooks to the drivers and support staff, all employees are members of the local community. Best of all, your hosts want to share their culture and show off the iconic wildlife that live in - the ecosystems they've been stewards of for millennia. Your visit provides an incentive to protect wildlife habitat and preserve traditional culture.



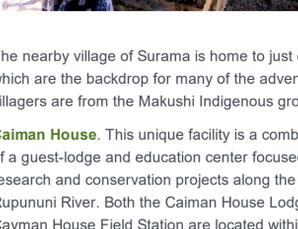
It is a fundamental tenet of sustainable tourism, and one you'll find numerous examples of in Guyana. There are many community-owned and operated eco-lodges travelers can enjoy in Guyana, each with its own unique charm and appeal.

Because Guyana is the only country in South America where English is the native language, visitors can interact with the indigenous locals of the villages without the need for an interpreter. This is definitely a travel plus.

Rewa Eco-Lodge. This lodge, which was founded in 2005 thanks to a grant provided by Conservation International, directly employs 80% of the village's population. To maximize employment, members of the community work two-week shifts at the lodge, cooking, cleaning, gardening, guiding and otherwise tending to the overall experience. Visitors can visit the village, and gain deeper insight into the indigenous way of life.



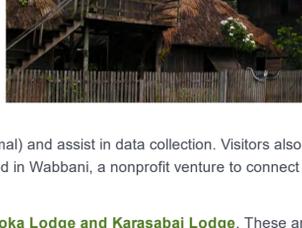
The lodge itself is relatively modest. There are five self-contained bungalows with private bathrooms, and two "benabs," traditional, round, thatched-roofed buildings, each with two bedrooms and shared bathrooms and showers (18 beds total). Meals are served in the main dining benab, which you can also relax under and be entertained by stories of the village and landscape from the guides and staff.



Surama Eco-Lodge. Opened in 1996, this was Guyana's first community-run lodge. It is an ideal place from which to explore the Rupununi savannahs. Like Rewa, Surama incorporates indigenous traditions in the design of the lodge. There are four simple bungalows, a larger thatched structure that contains four en suite bedrooms, and a large benab, which serves as the main dining area and has a second story filled with hammocks and chairs for you to relax and enjoy the views of the Pakaraima Mountains.

The nearby village of Surama is home to just over 300 people, and is surrounded by the mountains which are the backdrop for many of the adventures you can have around the area. Most Surama villagers are from the Makushi Indigenous group.

Caiman House. This unique facility is a combination of a guest-lodge and education center focused on research and conservation projects along the Rupununi River. Both the Caiman House Lodge and Cayman House Field Station are located within the Yupukari Village, which provides the workforce for each



Visitors have many opportunities to observe – or become involved with – the projects at Caiman House, two of which focuses on the black caiman and yellow-spotted Amazon river turtle. A popular night time excursion allows guests to observe caiman tagging (the capture, measure, and release of the animal) and assist in data collection. Visitors also have the opportunity to meet local craftspeople involved in Wabbani, a nonprofit venture to connect remote artisans with customers to create local jobs.



Warapoka Lodge and Karasabai Lodge. These are two of Guyana's newer community-owned lodges. They're still in the development stage, but open to trepid travellers looking for a more rooted to the earth and rustic experience than the other lodges profiled. Warapoka is known for its excellent catch and release sport fishing, proximity to Shell Beach Protected Area and resident harpy eagles who often nest near the village. Karasabai is one of the only known placed globally where you can see the sun

parakeet. It also offers some exceptional hikes.

Moraikobai Guest House and Wakapou Rest House. For travellers looking for an even more intimate, authentic experience near Georgetown, the villages of Moraikobai and Wakapou deliver. They both offer very basic lodging. Moraikobai's elders are known for their evening storytelling. Village tours and recreational fishing are other popular activities. Wakapou offers swimming, samples from a small-scale coffee production enterprise, and a hike to what are believed to be fossilized whale bones.



Scaling up community-led and owned tourism is just one of the ways Guyana is taking a leadership position in sustainable tourism, and how we continue to provide our visitors with extraordinary and unforgettable experiences.

VIDEO OF THE MONTH

Take a peek at how some of Guyana's Indigenous Peoples go about fishing, cooking, making handicrafts and more. These traditional techniques have been around for centuries, and continue to be a part of their daily lives.



GUYANA IN THE NEWS



The Crazy Tourist outlines the [15 Best Places to Visit in Guyana](#)

"Enticingly off-the-beaten-track, Guyana is a real hidden gem of South America. With colonial influences including all of the Netherlands, Britain and France, some pretty post-colonial town centers and a wild and untouched backcountry that goes from mist-topped tepuis to wild virgin rainforests, it's hardly surprising there's so much to see and do."



Travel Agent Magazine ran a [special report on Guyana](#) with a cover story that takes a firsthand look at the [South American destination](#).

"We found a country with a unique, natural environment that included rainforest, savannah and a coastal city, as well as a destination serious about developing a sustainable tourism product."



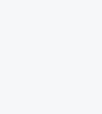
Sher She Goes posted a blog, [Georgetown, Guyana: the Best Thing to See and Do in 2 Days](#).

"It turns out that Guyana's colonial past and cultural makeup reflect the Caribbean more than the rest of South America. The small country has a very island vibe, with colorful pastel homes and swaying palm trees."



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