



Current Issue
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 Table of Contents »

- HOME
- SUBSCRIBE!
- WEEKEND ESCAPES
- INTERNATIONAL TRIPS
- RATINGS
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- SURVIVAL
- VIDEO
- GEAR
- BLOGS
- 50 Top Ecologies World Map
- Photo Gallery
- Desert
- Jungle
- Mountains
- Savanna
- Islands
- Adventure Travel Companies Rated

WORLD MAP



50 Top Ecologies
 Find your ultimate green escape with our guide to the world's best ecologies.

ECOSYSTEM



Islands
 Find an amazing beach retreat in Zanzibar, the Virgin Islands, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Dominica, the Bahamas, and more.



Savanna
 Sustainable travel that really gives back in Kenya, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, and Tanzania.



Jungle
 Delve into the green of India, Costa Rica, Australia, Belize, and more.

50 Top Ecologies: Mountain

Published: November 2008

- ADVERTISEMENT -



Top Mountain Lodges

The sustainable high life

Text by Global Travel Editor Costas Christ and Kate Siber
 Photograph Courtesy of Kasbah du Toubkal

BLACK SHEEP INN, ECUADOR

Key Features: active adventures, local culture

The Black Sheep Inn, perched at 10,500 feet in the Ecuadorian highlands south of Quito, has transparent roofs to let sunlight into the indoor flower gardens, with views of the Rio Toachi Canyon. Everything else at this simple eight-room eco-retreat and bunkhouse follows in irrepressible green style. After hiking through remote Andean villages and canyons, feast on a vegetarian dinner from the organic garden, sit in the sauna, then cap it all off with a glass of Ecuadorian rum.

+ Doubles from \$80; blacksheepinn.com

CROSSWATERS ECOLOGDE & SPA, CHINA

Key Features: luxury, local culture

As China's first ecolodge, perhaps it's fitting that two-year-old Crosswaters is a celebration of

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Desert

Immerse yourself in the sands of Egypt, India, Namibia, Mongolia, Australia, and more.



Mountains

Find the sustainable high life in China, Nepal, Greece, Switzerland, and more.

TRAVEL TOOL



The ADVENTURE Ratings

Search through 200 top-rated adventure travel companies, specializing in safaris, cruises, luxury adventure, and more. Sort by price, activity, destination, and more.

bamboo—the country's common ultra-renewable building material—and feng shui principles. Just a two-hour drive from Hong Kong, the lodge offers low-key activities like stargazing and hiking in the lush, towering bamboo forests. But the 46 villas, spa, teahouse, and lotus and rice gardens tucked in China's southern Guangdong Province are really about accessing your Zen.

+ Doubles from \$220; crosswaters.net.cn

EL MONTE SAGRADO NEW MEXICO

Key Features: luxury, active adventures, local culture

If entering El Monte Sagrado, in downtown Taos, immediately invokes a sense of calm, perhaps it's because New Age spatial-energy workers advised on the placement of the adobe cottages (made from recycled materials). East of the cottages, a unique eco-friendly water-filtration system cleans brook water for the lodge's use. On the quiet lawn of the Sacred Circle, guests do yoga after hiking, consult with local Native American healers, and lounge after treatments in the organic spa.

+ Doubles from \$680; elmontesagrado.com

HIGHLAND CENTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Key Features: active adventures, wildlife, family

The Highland Center was built in 2003 as a showcase of green design, with triple-glazed energy-efficient windows, recycled steel, and a biomass- and wood-burning boiler. But most guests come to Crawford Notch, four miles from Bretton Woods, simply to hike the rugged White Mountains and for the free naturalist tours. In the evenings, they gather for games by the fire before sharing a communal belly-warming meal with homemade bread.

+ Doubles from \$162; outdoors.org

KICKING HORSE RIVER LODGE, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Key Features: active adventures, family

Golden, BC, lures skiers and mountain bikers to the steep slopes of Kicking Horse Resort year-round. But even diehards often find themselves lingering at the Kicking Horse River Lodge, a geothermally heated log cabin and ski dorm. Amenities extend far beyond the standard après options: Eco-themed films are screened, community theater events benefit local charities, and the collegial Bugaboo Café dishes up seven kinds of eggs benny.

+ Doubles from \$125; khrl.com

MILIA MOUNTAIN RETREAT, GREECE

Key Features: active adventures, local culture, family

Local Cretans built Milia out of the ruins of their ancestors' rural stone village and reforested the farm-ravaged gorge in the early 1990s. Now, staying in one of the 16 unique rooms, outfitted with wood-burning stoves, candles, and handwoven blankets, is akin to time travel. After hiking the surrounding peaks, guests dawdle over local wines and learn to cook dishes like grape leaves stuffed with rice and herbs grown in the organic garden.

+ Doubles from \$102; milia.gr

O'REILLY'S RAINFOREST RETREAT, VILLAS, & LOST WORLD SPA, AUSTRALIA

Key Features: active adventures, wildlife, local culture, family

The O'Reilly family first moved to the McPherson Range outside Brisbane in 1911 to dairy farm, but instead they developed a guesthouse that has become a model of sustainable practices. Family-friendly activities abound in the surrounding rain forest of Lamington National Park, from glowworm walks to canopy zipline rides with local Yugembek guides.

The newest of the 48 villas, run by a third generation of O'Reillys, sit on stilts and have outdoor hot tubs with views over the forest.

+ Doubles from \$327; oreillys.com.au

ONLINE EXTRAS

TIGER MOUNTAIN POKHARA LODGE, NEPAL

Key Features: active adventures, local culture

Located outside the trekkers' capital of Pokhara, 125 miles from Kathmandu, Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge resembles a typical Nepali hiker crash pad—with a plush eco-twist. Staff members deliver organic coffee to the hand-cut stone bungalows in the morning, and private verandas offer views of three 8,000-meter peaks, including Annapurna. Hiking these Himalayan foothills is a must, but the lodge also provides rare luxuries like ayurvedic massage and private yoga sessions.

+ Doubles from \$500; tigermountain.com/pokhara

WHITEPOD, SWITZERLAND

Key Features: active adventures

James Bond meets Conrad Anker in Whitepod's nine groovy, ultra-insulated geodesic domes, outfitted with cowskins, wood-burning stoves, and retro-chic furniture. Situated high in the Swiss Alps, Whitepod is a train ride, a car ride, and a short walk from Paris or Geneva, so guests have the vistas, private ski lifts, and pistes almost all to themselves. Après-ski, paraglide above the Alps or take a dogsledding tour, then gather around a campfire for aperitifs and fixed-menu dinners like cheese fondue.

+ Doubles from \$532; whitepod.com

KASBAH DU TOUBKAL, MOROCCO

Key Features: active adventures, local culture, family

Sipping a cup of sweet mint green tea and admiring North Africa's highest peak from a terrace at Kasbah du Toubkal, you'll be just as likely to meet a film star as a college-age backpacker. The Kasbah's Berber hosts hope to offer access to the arid High Atlas Mountains to all walks of life, so the lodging, two hours from Marrakech, ranges from dorm beds to palatial apartments. A self-imposed tax on rooms funds community projects.

+ Doubles from \$230; kasbahdutoubkal.com



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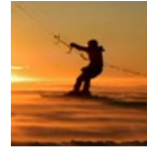
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