

TRAVEL +LEISURE



- ▶ Subscribe Now!
- ▶ Get 2 RISK FREE Issues
- ▶ Give the Gift of Travel + Leisure
- ▶ Customer Service

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

-  [E-mail](#)
-  [Print](#)
-  [RSS](#)
-  [AddThis](#)
- [Yahoo! Buzz](#)

- Page:
- [1](#)
- [2](#)

2008 Global Vision Awards

Plus

- [The Travel + Leisure 2008 Global Vision Awards Judges](#)
- [Global Vision Awards 2008 Runner-ups](#)

Ecological Conservation

Amigos de Sian Ka'an (ASK): Riviera Maya, Mexico

The beginning of this tale is familiar: a prime swath of beachfront, untouched and filled with rare species such as jaguars and Morelet's crocodiles, catches the eye of developers, who begin erecting luxury resorts up and down the coast. But the story of Mexico's Sian Ka'an Biosphere, along the Riviera Maya just 81 miles from Cancún, has a happier ending, thanks to the work of a group of forward-thinking locals, the Amigos de Sian Ka'an (ASK). With the guidance of the Nature Conservancy, the United Nations Foundation, Conservation International, and UNESCO, ASK has used tourism (as well as scientific research) to help protect the 1.3 million acres of tropical forests, mangroves, and coral reefs that form Sian Ka'an. Since 1986, the organization has helped to fund and

support successful community-based tourism projects, such as snorkeling and birding tours, whose profits go back into local economies and conservation efforts. Most recently, ASK began collaborating with area hotels and cruise lines that dock in the Riviera Maya to find ways to lessen their impact on the region's fragile ecosystems. As ASK widens its efforts throughout the province of Quintana Roo, it is sending a powerful message around the globe: development doesn't have to come at the expense of the environment.

Community Outreach

Andaman Discoveries: Thailand

After the 2004 tsunami, more than 50 NGO's set up in Thailand. Today, Andaman Discoveries is one of only two that remain. Founded by Bodhi Garrett, an American who lost both his home and his job to the waves, Andaman Discoveries began as a disaster-relief organization intent on rebuilding Thailand's Andaman coast. The organization has since evolved into a grassroots tour operator that leads travelers through the region—becoming an economic lifeline for its 12 coastal communities. Since 2006, Andaman's tours, which include farmer-led boat excursions, visits to crafts cooperatives, and trips to fishing villages, have generated an additional \$20,000 in income—a large sum in a place where the average annual income is about \$2,000. In addition, Andaman's English-language and vocational workshops for guides have made locals better equipped to manage their own tourism industry.

Green / Eco Hotel

Marriott International: Bethesda, Maryland

With 3,000 properties in 67 countries and territories, Marriott is the largest hotel company in the world—which means it can wield some serious environmental clout. And this year, in collaboration with Conservation International, it did just that, announcing a green strategy that commits to reducing fuel and water consumption by 25 percent during the next 10 years, installing solar panels at 40 hotels by 2017, and encouraging the adoption of LEED's green standards in 2009. The company, which has a \$10 billion supply chain, can also provide the economy of scale needed to encourage top suppliers to create inexpensive green products. (Already, Marriott has purchased 1 million gallons of low-VOC paint.) Most inspiring is the company's decision to help offset its carbon emissions by spending \$2 million to help protect the Juma Sustainable Development Reserve, a 1.4 million-acre swath of rain forest in Amazonas, Brazil.

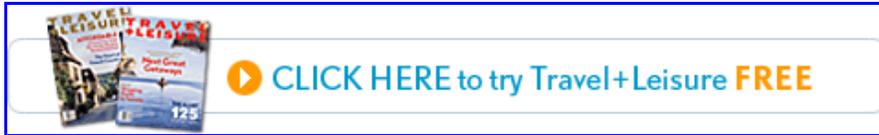
Historic Preservation

The Leh Old Town Conservation Project: Tibet

In many Himalayan regions, historic cities are being razed in the name of modernization. Lhasa, the 1,300-year-old capital of Tibet, has fewer than 100 historic buildings left; other cities in the region have lost almost all of their traditional buildings. Working to counter this destruction is the Tibet Heritage Fund, an international nonprofit focused on sustainable development throughout the Tibetan cultural realm, which extends from India and China to Mongolia. One of its greatest successes has been its work in Leh, the capital of the former Tibetan kingdom of Ladakh (now part of India) and a rare example of an intact medieval-era Tibetan city. When the fund arrived in 2003, the city's historic Old Town was essentially a slum of decrepit buildings, with little infrastructure. Since then, together with local government and community groups, the fund has restored public monuments, including mosques and Buddhist temples; built up infrastructure, such as adding covered drains in the alleyways; and, by offering cofinancing and free planning advice, helped residents rehabilitate their own houses. By training locals in all aspects of restoration work, from preserving murals to waterproofing roofs using indigenous materials, the fund has catalyzed a conservation and urban-rehabilitation movement, proving that upgrading historic quarters for modern living can be feasible, affordable, and sustainable.

Also within this article:

- [The Travel + Leisure 2008 Global Vision Awards Judges](#)
- [Global Vision Awards 2008 Runner-ups](#)
- Page:
- [1](#)
- [2](#)



Travel Tools

- Find [hotels](#) anywhere in the world.

CREATE EXTRAORDINARY COCKTAILS

VISIT GREYGOOSE.COM FOR RECIPES

PALMHOUSE MARTINI APPLE CRISP CLEMENT COULEUR RASPBERRY WISP PEAR POIRE

GREY GOOSE
World's Best Tasting Vodka

SIP RESPONSIBLY; IMPORTED BY GREY GOOSE IMPORTING COMPANY, MIAMI, FL. VODKA 40% ALC. BY VOL.; FLAVORED VODKAS EACH 40% ALC. BY VOL. - DISTILLED FROM GRAIN

VISIT AMERICAN EXPRESS TRAVEL TO:

FLIGHTS HOTELS VACATIONS CRUISES CARS

Marketplace

- [Make your Starpoints® multiply at Sheraton hotels while experiencing Latin American destinations](#)
- [Live the SUITE life at Mandalay Bay Las Vegas Special room upgrade package when you book and pay with any American Express® Card!](#)
- [Find the perfect cocktail food pairing for your holiday party.](#)
- [SunSational Saving Await in St. John Get a Complimentary Night and Resort Credit at The Westin](#)
- [One Day. Seven Exotic Cars. You Behind the Wheel.](#)
- [United introduces Door-to-Door Baggage with convenient next day delivery via FedEx Express®.](#)
- [I'm ready for retirement in every way. Except financially. Talk to Chuck](#)

▶ GET 2 RISK-FREE ISSUES OF TRAVEL+LEISURE

Name:



Address:

City:

St/Prov: --

Zip/Postal:

Email:

[How we use your personal identifiable information](#)

Continue

Presenting **Gold Card Destinations** [LEARN MORE >](#)

Helping make travel easy, safe, and valuable.

Exclusive offers | Valuable extras | World-class benefits

TRAVEL + LEISURE | Check-In

Win a Weekend Getaway at Sheraton Resorts

[ENTER NOW >](#)

ALL NEW CHEVY TRAVERSE

EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER WISHED FOR... AND THEN SOME.

[EMAIL SIGN-UP >>](#)

[SEE EVERYTHING >>](#)

Visit our other American Express Publishing Web sites:

[Food & Wine](#) | [Departures](#) | [T+L GOLF](#) | [T+L Family](#) | [SkyGuide](#) | [Executive Travel](#)

SUBSCRIPTIONS: [Manage Your Subscription](#) | [International](#) | [Billing](#) | [Change Your Address or E-mail](#)

[Advertise](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [RSS Feeds](#)

View [Website Terms and Conditions](#) and [Privacy Statement](#) of American Express Publishing Corporation. Users of this site agree to be bound by the terms of the American Express Publishing Corporation Website Terms and Conditions. Copyright © 1997 - 2008 American Express Publishing Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

ROAD & TRACK LIVE

A DAY DRIVING 6 OF THE WORLD'S FINEST EXOTIC SPORTS CARS

MAKE YOUR DREAM A REALITY [RESERVE TODAY](#)