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*The conservation of
natural resources is the fundamental problem.
Unless we solve that problem it
will cost us little to solve all others.*
—THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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PERFECT GETAWAYS

Keen on luxury travel, but worried about the impact it might have on the environment? Bailey Robinson, a tour operator with a conscience, can help

Now that we all know about global warming, carbon emissions and all those other travel-related environmental issues, choosing where we go on holiday is more complicated than it used to be. Where we decide to go and how we decide to get there have become matters to think about seriously, since they have real consequences for the planet.

Bailey Robinson, a UK-based, tailor-made luxury travel company with worldwide expertise, understands this completely and can help allay any fears you might have about your holiday's impact on the environment. The company offers an amazing range of options, many of which share rock-solid environmental credentials.

You might, for instance, look into one of Canada's best-kept secrets, **King Pacific Lodge**—the first hotel to offset the carbon emissions of its guests' round-trip air travel. The 17-room lodge sits on the edge of four million acres of pristine wilderness; it was founded on a commitment to sustainable eco-tourism, leaving the lightest imprint possible on the land and sea, and developing a strong relationship with the local indigenous people.

Its green credentials, then, are excellent—but what is there to look at? Well, start with the rare Kermode bears, black bears, humpback whales and orcas, porpoises, sea lions, seals and sea otters. Then there are the 1,000-year-old hemlocks and cedars, the network of untouched watersheds, cascading waterfalls, fjords and alpine ice fields, the sheer mountain-faces, vast forests, white sandy beaches, countless islands and inlets...

Fancy a warmer option? Try **North Island**, one of the most beautiful of the 115 small islands that make up the magnificent Seychelles archipelago. North Island—named after the English naturalist Marianne North—was abandoned in the 1970s, following the collapse of the coconut industry. Sadly, it was not left in good shape and had been colonised by alien flora and fauna. But in the past few years an extraordinary transformation has taken place.

The ecological clock has been turned back two centuries, and the island has been transformed into a sort of Noah's Ark for endemic plants and animals. Tortoises and dozens of rare

native birds have been reintroduced, together with indigenous trees such as the takamaka, badamier and the legendary coco de mer palm. Nestled discreetly in the middle of all this is one of the most luxurious eco-resorts in the Indian Ocean—known simply as North Island, since you don't just get a villa here, you get a whole island with it. In short, if you're looking for a guilt-free island paradise, this is the one.

From the Indian Ocean to the Great Sand Sea... A completely different kind of fantasy defines the atmosphere of Egypt's **Adreer Amellal** (Berber for "white mountain"), which is equal measures desert palace and eco-resort, in the middle of endless sand dunes, overlooking a shimmering salt lake. It is the brainchild of Mounir Neamatalla, one of Egypt's most prominent environmentalists and head of EQI, a company devoted to keeping the area pristine and unpolluted.

The lodge was built using indigenous materials; water is carefully recycled; oil lamps, candles and coal braziers mean you won't even notice the absence of electricity. Instead, soak up the limitless horizons and desert chic: Bedouin carpets, doors made out of palm trees, beds of palm fronds. Adreer Amellal has been judged a resounding success by environmentalists from all round the world—including Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, who compared notes and gardening tips with Mr Neamatalla on a recent visit.

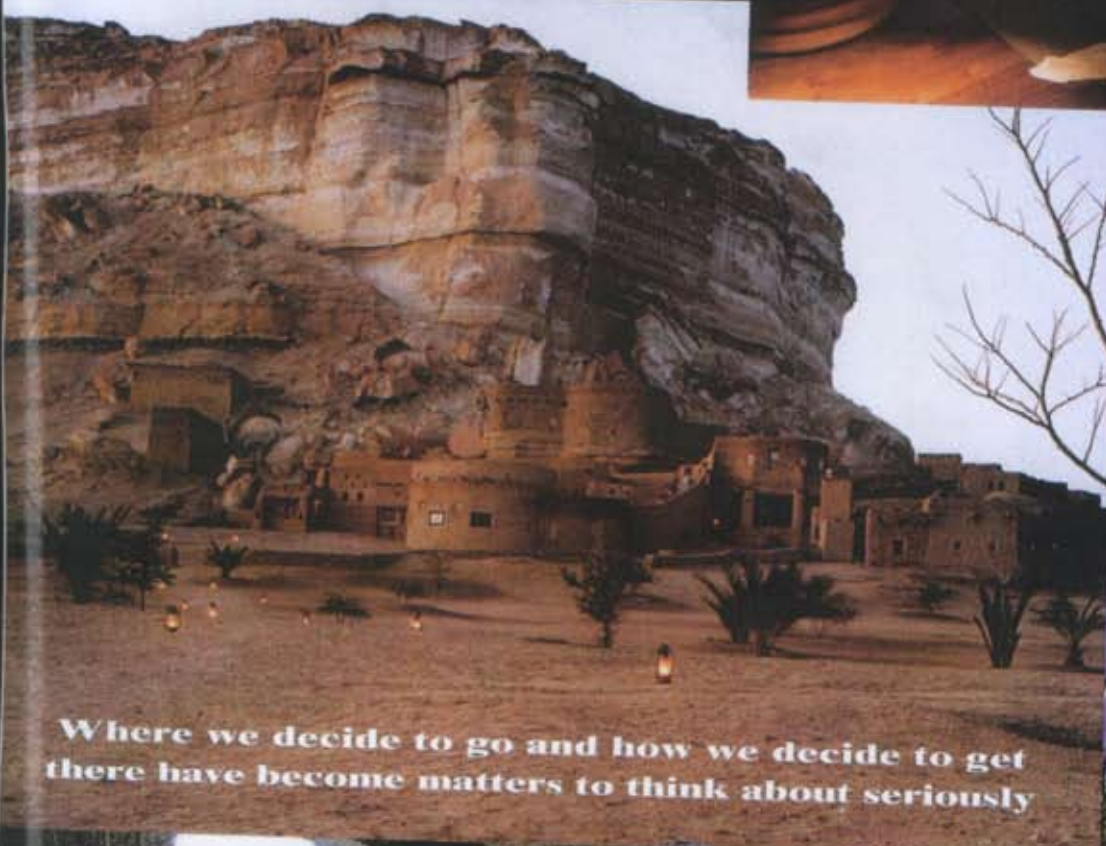
A couple of thousand miles to the south, in the mist-shrouded mountains that overlap the Uganda-Rwanda-Congo border, is **Gorilla Forest Camp**, a small but perfectly formed (and perfectly eco) group of eight huge tents with polished wooden floors and lovely bathrooms. The area is known as the Impenetrable Forest; it is proper, dense, difficult African jungle, home to 120 mammal species—and half the world's mountain gorillas.

This is the most endangered primate on earth and is found only in small areas of this protected mountain range. The authorities are, quite rightly, fiercely protective of these magnificent creatures, limiting permits for daily visits to three groups of six persons and actual viewing time to one hour. One hour, though, that you will certainly never forget.

For more information on these and other properties around the world, ring 01488 689700, visit www.baileyrobinson.com or email travel@baileyrobinson.com.



VANITY FAIR PROMOTION



Clockwise from top, a Kermode bear near King Pacific Lodge, Canada; a luxury villa on North Island, Seychelles; birdlife at Murchison Falls, Uganda; young gorillas near Gorilla Forest Camp, Uganda; 11th-century-style architecture at Adreya Amellal, Egypt; the cliffs from which Adreya Amellal takes its name.

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