

2008 World Savers Awards

WORLD SAVERS AWARDS 2008

The 38 companies celebrated on these pages are turning the travel industry's enormous potential to improve the planet into reality. Travel worldwide will generate \$8 trillion in revenue this year, and these, our annual World Savers Awards, are one indication of how the industry is measuring up to that opportunity. The trend is striking: We received applications from 142 companies this year—a record during the 14 years of the awards, and a twofold increase over 2007.



The 17 judges—academics, activists, CEOs, and philanthropists (see page Jeffrey Sachs)—looked at five areas: poverty alleviation; cultural and environmental preservation; education; wildlife conservation; and health. But the process of arbitrating the awards belies the human drama of the achievements themselves. From building schools and furnishing much-needed medical supplies to restocking wildlife reserves and dispensing micro-loans, these World Savers are models for their peers—each story an inspiration for others to follow. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, here's hoping that this year's winners are flattered by every other airline, cruise line, hotel, and tour operator on earth.

THE JUDGES

RALF BUCKLEY, director, International Centre for Ecotourism Research, Griffith University, Australia

MARK CONROY, president, Regent Seven Seas Cruises

LOUIS D'AMORE, president, International Institute for Peace Through Tourism

LAURIE DAVID, NRDC trustee; environmental activist; producer, *An Inconvenient Truth*

MARCIA GAY HARDEN, environmentalist; Oscar-winning actress

MARTHA HONEY, director, Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development

MARK HOPLAMAZIAN, CEO, Global Hyatt Corp.

NEEL INAMDAR, senior adviser, ecotourism, Conservation International

SVEN LINDBLAD, president and CEO, Lindblad Expeditions

RON MADER, director, Planeta.com

JAMES McCARTHY, professor of biological oceanography, Harvard University

BRIAN MULLIS, president, Sustainable Travel International

DENNIS PINTO, managing director, Micato Safaris

SAM RAPHAEL, owner, Jungle Bay, Dominica

JEAN-CYRIL SPINETTA, CEO, Air France

SHANNON STOWELL, president, Adventure Travel Trade Association

TIMOTHY WIRTH, president, UN Foundation

World Savers Awards 2008: Spreading the Wealth

What is the responsibility of a luxury travel outfit in a poor country? From Kenya to the Caribbean, these companies are improving the livelihood of the people they touch

WINNER

Small Resort: **Campi Ya Kanzi**

When Luca Belpietro, managing director of an Italian consulting firm, moved to Kenya to open a safari camp in 1996, he didn't dream of amassing a fortune from his wealthy guests. His wish was to ensure the protection of the wilderness, the wildlife, and Masai culture. He made a deal with the Masai on the Kuku Group Ranch: If they would set aside 280,000 acres as a nature reserve, he would finance a solar-powered safari camp that they could staff. Once the camp was running, Belpietro started the Masai Wilderness Conservation Trust, which has helped build schools, sponsor scholarships, pay for medical supplies, and employ game scouts. Last year, Campi ya Kanzi injected some \$650,000 into the community. (Guests pay a \$70-per-day fee that goes to the trust, though many give more.) Travel tip: Visit the homes of Masai who own the safari camp, or tour Campi ya Kanzi-supported schools (www.maasai.com)

RUNNER-UP

Hotel Chain: **Accor**

In Cambodia, Accor—think Sofitel, Novotel, Ibis, Motel 6—has trained more than 100 farming families to improve and diversify produce (growing mushrooms, for example). The company also combats a Third World plague: child sex tourism (accor.com).

HONORABLE MENTIONS IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Airline: **Cathay Pacific**

The carrier supports UNICEF's Change for Good program, asking passengers to contribute their spare change, and sponsors the Life Education Activity Programme, which teaches Hong Kong students about the dangers of substance abuse.

City Hotel: **Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa**

This Cape Town property—also recognized for its energy efficiency—sources 80 percent of the goods in its gift shop from local groups like the Iziko lo Lwazi Craftworkers, which teaches poor women skills such as papermaking and beading (12apostleshotel.com).

Cruise Line: **Disney**

The cruise line donated 6,000 hours of volunteer work in Caribbean ports last year. Disney characters also visit schools and children's hospitals in the ports of call, bringing small gifts.

Large Resort: **Phinda Private Game Reserve**

CCAfrica runs a ranger training school at Phinda, the only safari company to do so; many graduates come from the community and start as trackers at the reserve.

Tour Operator: **Journeys Within**

Journeys Within Our Community runs a Village Microfinance Fund with profits from its tour business and guest contributions. Once a recipient has paid back the original loan (beginning at \$100) and interest, he or she can take out another, larger loan.

World Savers 2008: Protecting the Planet

WORLD SAVERS AWARDS 2008

Reducing energy consumption saves money—which is a good thing. But these companies are looking beyond the bottom line to reduce their footprint and protect local culture

CO-WINNER

Hotel Chain: **Vail Resorts**

It's no surprise that climate change is a major concern at a company which owns five ski resorts. Two years ago, Vail Resorts decided to take action by offsetting the entire corporation's electricity use. For every megawatt-hour consumed at Vail's ski slopes, golf courses, hotels, and offices (approximately 150,000 per year), the company purchases credits that support the development of wind farms, mostly in the western United States. The windmills add clean, renewable power to the U.S. energy grid, cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 211 million pounds per year—the equivalent of taking 18,000 cars off the road. Vail is also reducing its energy use by getting employees to turn off lights and computers at night, shutting down sections of buildings in slower seasons, and banning vehicle idling for longer than five minutes. Travel tip: One dollar of each season pass, lift ticket purchased online, and room night goes to the National Forest Foundation, a nonprofit partner of the U.S. Forest Service (vailresorts.com).

CO-WINNER

Small Resort: **Cristalino Jungle Lodge**

Almost single-handedly, Cristalino owner Vitoria Da Riva Carvalho has brought the world's attention to her swath of jungle in Brazil's Amazon Basin. In 1992, she bought 1,730 acres and built a lodge in a region that is one of the most biodiverse in the Brazilian Amazon. Eight years later, when loggers threatened to purchase a nearby plot of old-growth forest, Carvalho scraped together the money to buy it herself and subsequently created a 24,000-acre private reserve of primary forest that borders a state park which she also helped to create. Travel tip: Birdwatchers flock to this lodge, since more than 550 avian species can be spotted (cristalinolodge.com.br).

HONORABLE MENTIONS IN PRESERVATION (ENVIRONMENT/CULTURE)

Airline: **Virgin Atlantic Airways**

Richard Branson's company is at the forefront of the search for alternative sources of jet fuel. He has committed all his airline and rail profits over the next ten years to a fund that will invest in renewable technology (virgin-atlantic.com).

City Hotel: **Montage Laguna Beach**

This Southern California hotel devoted nearly half of its 30 acres to public parkland, allowing access to beaches that had been hidden behind a trailer park for more than 60 years (montagelagunabeach.com).

Cruise Line: Disney Cruise Line

The Disney Wonder was the first cruise ship to utilize a revolutionary hull coating that minimizes surface resistance and increases fuel efficiency (disneycruise.com).

Large Resort: Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa

Since Six Senses took over this Thai beach resort in 2001, it has cut energy use by 30 percent (while adding features and facilities) by changing timers on lights and pumps to reduce use at peak times, solar-heating the water, burying electric cables to reduce energy loss, and using the design properties of a waterfall to cool parts of the hotel (sixsenses.com/evason-phuket.com).

Tour Operator: Journeys Within

This Southeast Asia company builds cultural experiences into all of its trips—visiting a Khmer dance class in Cambodia, a rice paper producer in Laos, or a weaving village in Vietnam (journeys-within.com).

World Savers Awards 2008: Food for Thought

WORLD SAVERS AWARDS 2008

Who's going to hire a person who can't read or who doesn't understand how the world works? Through educational programs, these companies are giving kids a chance

WINNER

City Hotel: **Montage Laguna Beach**

Contrary to popular belief, not every family in California's Orange County lives in a mansion—and not all of the local schools can afford the nearby Ocean Institute's award-winning science programs. That's why the Montage Laguna Beach hotel's employee-driven outreach effort, Hearts of Montage, sponsors kids like four-year-old Shanti Nunn (who attends a Boys & Girls Club preschool for low-income families) to go on Ocean Institute field trips, where they can peer through microscopes and even spot sea lions by boat. "Shanti got to touch marine life," says her mother, Natalie. "Now she makes sure nobody leaves trash on the beach." Hearts of Montage has donated \$45,000 for marine and language education in the local school district and more than \$20,000 to arts programs at the Boys & Girls Club. Travel tip: Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the Santa Ana Zoo—to meet the zookeepers and see how the animals are fed, cleaned, and exercised—courtesy of Montage Laguna, one of the zoo's benefactors (montagelagunabeach.com).

RUNNER-UP

Chain Hotel: **Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts** Last year, this hotel group launched the Seedlings program, which supports at-risk teens living near dozens of its Asian resorts and spas. The kids are matched with volunteer mentors from the resorts (who are trained at the University of Wales), and they can apply for scholarships (banyantree.com).

HONORABLE MENTIONS IN EDUCATION

Airline: **Lufthansa**

Lufthansa donates the German newspapers and magazines from its planes to 40 Oregon schools and universities for their language classes (lufthansa.com).

Cruise Line: **Disney**

The cruise line runs a three-year environmental-education program for elementary classes in the Cayman Islands; the winning class receives a field trip on board the Disney Magic (disneycruise.com).

Large Resort: **Phinda Private Game Reserve**

Phinda, in South Africa, has constructed more than 90 new classrooms, renovated many others, built 3 libraries and a science lab, and provided playground equipment, toys, school supplies, and more than 150,000 books to local schools (ccafrica.com).

Small Resort: Nkwichi Lodge

This remote safari lodge in Mozambique has constructed and refurbished primary schools in 7 nearby villages, providing a better learning environment for 800 children (mandawilderness.org).

Tour Operator: Abercrombie & Kent

This tour operator's foundation—Friends of Conservation, which supports a variety of environmental and social causes—opened a school for 600 children in Tanzania and has funded environmental learning centers and conservation clubs in 50 Masai schools in Kenya so that students can learn to admire and protect their natural surroundings (abercrombiekent.com).

World Savers Awards 2008: Creature Comforts

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Day by day, wildlife habitats are increasingly threatened by mankind. These companies are finding innovative ways to protect and reintroduce, one creature at a time

WINNER

Large Resort: **Phinda Private Game Reserve**

Eighteen years ago, the 57,000 acres that make up this South African safari reserve would have been the last place you'd look for wildlife. Nearly all of the animals had been killed by farmers, ivory hunters, and the government (part of a misguided tsetse fly-eradication program). But when CCAfrica bought the land, it engaged in an ambitious stocking program, and more than 2,000 animals—white rhinos, elephants, cheetahs, lions, giraffes, zebras, wildebeests, and antelopes—were reintroduced. The program serves as a model throughout the continent. Black rhinos transferred to Phinda by the World Wildlife Fund—15 of just 3,500 left in the world—flourished and even reproduced. The staff are now focusing on small carnivores such as servals and jackals, which may not have the star appeal of big game but are just as integral to the ecosystem. Travel tip: Explore seven distinct habitats within the Phinda Private Game Reserve—ilala palm savanna, montana grassland, riverine forest, acacia thornveld, sand forest, open grassland, and natural pan systems (ccafrica.com).

RUNNER-UP

Cruise Line: **Disney Cruise Line**

At Castaway Cay, Disney's private Bahamian island, researchers are trying to transplant long-spined sea urchins, which will in turn control algae and encourage coral growth. The Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund has distributed \$11 million to protect wildlife in more than 110 countries (disneycruises.com)

HONORABLE MENTIONS IN WILDLIFE

Airline: **Cathay Pacific Airways**

The carrier has transported four tiger cubs from the Shanghai Zoo to a camp in South Africa, where they are learning to survive in the wild. The South China tiger is almost extinct in the wild, but these cubs may one day help repopulate the species (cathaypacific.com).

City Hotel: **Montage Laguna Beach**

Resort-funded docents educate the public about how to explore tidepools without harming the wildlife—from barnacles to crabs and perch (montagelagunabeach.com).

Hotel Chain: **Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts**

The company's Green Imperative Fund supports environmental projects, including an endangered sea turtle hatching program and coral regeneration in the Maldives. The company matches all guest contributions to the fund (banyantree.com).

Small Lodge: **Campi Ya Kanzi**

The lodge's trust employs scouts to arrest poachers on its preserve and in the nearby national park. It pays Masai herders for livestock slaughtered by lions, so they won't kill the cats (maasai.com).

Tour Operator: **Metropolitan Touring**

While others sponsor cleanups of the touristed areas of the Galápagos, this South American tour operator has paid fishermen to remove almost 50 tons of trash from non-tourist areas where sea lions and other species are threatened (metropolitan-touring.com).

World Savers Awards 2008: Hope in Health

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What's the first step toward building a better life? Wellness. From Cambodia to India, these companies are helping to improve health in and beyond their communities

WINNER

Tour Operator: **Journeys within our Community**

When Andrea and Brandon Ross moved to Cambodia in 2003 to start a tour company and a bed-and-breakfast, they discovered that nearly two-thirds of the population lacked access to clean water, contributing to serious health problems. Little by little, the Rosses are changing that. They launched Journeys Within Our Community (JWOC), a nonprofit that offers scholarships for university students, holds free English classes, provides micro-loans for small businesses, and builds village water wells. Puzzled by the recent fad of Americans doing construction work on volunteer vacations, JWOC instead hires locals, helping to solve unemployment problems, as well. "You don't use someone with a Harvard degree to build a well," says Brandon. So far, JWOC has added more than 180 wells to the landscape around Siem Reap, helping nearly 4,000 Cambodians to escape water-related disease. Travel tip: For \$300, you can pay for the construction of a well that will supply about 20 people with water and then visit the families and communities it benefits (journeys-within.com).

RUNNER-UP

Airline: **Air France**

The carrier's foundation gives more than \$2 million annually to the needy and last year distributed 20,000 books about acceptance of HIV-positive kids in French-speaking Africa. Air France also supports HIV-infected orphans in South Africa and teens in Romania (airfrance.com).

HONORABLE MENTIONS IN HEALTH

City Hotel: **Jai Mahal Palace**

This Indian hotel in Jaipur, Rajas-than, provides medical care and AIDS education to the surrounding community and partners with FXB, a Swiss NGO, to provide daily meals to HIV-infected street children. The hotel also supports Indian culture by employing local craftsmen (tajhotels.com).

Cruise Line: **Holland America**

Last year, the cruise line donated dental suites—each worth about \$90,000—from 13 ships to various dental programs around the world (hollandamerica.com).

Hotel Chain: **Six Senses**

The Asian luxury chain contributes 0.5 percent of all revenues (about half a million dollars annually) to a fund that supports health, education, and environmental projects. It helped start a

blood disease screening and education program in the Maldives that will treat 10,000 people in the next three years (sixsenses.com).

Large Resort: Phinda Private Game Reserve

Phinda has built a medical clinic that serves 42,000 patients annually. The company launched a health program to help villagers prevent and live with AIDS, and has also distributed 233 "hippo water rollers," enabling women to transport clean water from distant wells (ccafrica.com).

Small Resort: Nukubati Island Great Sea Reef

Nukubati, the only locally owned luxury resort in Fiji, maintains a solar-powered unit enabling nurses to keep medications refrigerated (nukubati.com).

Condé Nast Traveler: Make A Difference

How You Can Make a Difference



Regular coverage of social responsibility and travel, a partnership with Population Services International, a commitment to the Clinton Global Initiative, and the creation of the annual World Savers Congress underscore *Condé Nast Traveler's* desire to Make a Difference