

Photos: TripAdvisor Unearths Top 10 Green Eco-Modations

Travelers' Choice Winner Tops List of Eco-Friendly Hotels

NEWTON, Mass., April 6 /PRNewswire/ -- TripAdvisor®, the world's most popular and largest travel community, today announced its top 10 eco-friendly accommodations, according to TripAdvisor editors and travelers. From rustic cabins in the forest to contemporary digs in the city, these green properties allow travelers to be environmentally conscious, while enjoying incredibly unique and beautiful places to stay.

To view the Multimedia News Release, go to: <http://www.prnewswire.com/mnr/tripadvisor/37680/>

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1. Eco-Adventure: Hamanasi Adventure and Dive Resort, Hopkins, Belize - Travelers' Choice Winner 2009: Best Bargain, Best Hidden Gem, Best for Romance - Average Nightly Rate: \$245

Set on 21 acres of coastal forest, this eco-resort's green practices ensure that nothing goes to waste, from composting all vegetable and fruit scraps to using old linens as cleaning rags. In addition, the resort's dive adventures educate guests to minimize the negative impact of human contact with the environment. According to one TripAdvisor traveler, "The fact that the resort advocated reusing towels, limiting sheet changing and using the surrounding natural beauty made us feel that we were contributing to the preservation of Belize."

2. Terra Firma: Hotel Terra Jackson Hole, Teton Village, Wyoming - Average Nightly Rate: \$371

Eco-friendly elements abound in the Hotel Terra, literally from floor (environmentally-friendly carpets) to ceiling (recycled roof shingles). Organic linens, low-flow toilets and solar-powered faucets can also be found in guest rooms, and even relaxation is green here, with organic spa products, and 100 percent natural mattresses made from recycled and organic materials. As one TripAdvisor traveler said, "We were ushered to our suite and discovered that not only was it the latest in eco-friendly hotels, but incredibly luxurious!"

3. Organic Accommodations: La Cusinga Eco Lodge, Uvita, Costa Rica - Travelers' Choice Winner 2009: Best Hidden Gem - Average Nightly Rate: \$166

While stunning views of the Pacific are reason enough to visit La Cusinga Eco Lodge, its eco-friendly programs and commitment to conservation make it all the more appealing. Set in the rainforest, the eco-lodge's electricity is generated by solar and hydropower, and the water is heated by the Costa Rican sun. Buildings are constructed from re-forested wood and local materials, and rely on natural air currents to cool them. As one TripAdvisor traveler commented, "The organic gardens were my personal favorite, and they use all the fruits and vegetables in their daily meals."

4. Tree House: Morgan's Rock Hacienda & Ecolodge, San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua - Travelers' Choice Winner 2009: Best for Romance, Best Luxury - Average Nightly Rate: \$257

It's all about trees at Morgan's Rock, which has planted one and a half million trees for farming to help reduce forest destruction, and added nearly 100,000 permanent new trees to the property to provide a home for wildlife. When the lodge was constructed, extra wood was used to build furniture in the rooms, and trees on the property are allowed to grow naturally, with some even growing through the cabin roofs. One TripAdvisor traveler says, "It's a totally unique experience, and it hits all of the right notes for friendliness, service, and comfort, with a conservation and community development focus."

5. Preservation Place: The Ambrose Hotel, Santa Monica, California - Average Nightly Rate: \$242

The first hotel in the U.S. to receive the United States Green Building Council's LEED Silver Certification, the Ambrose Hotel has put green practices in place all over the property, including composting, cleaning guest rooms with eco-friendly products, and recycling. According to one TripAdvisor traveler, "They are committed to protecting our environment and preserving our precious natural resources."

6. Nature Nook: Hix Island House, Isla de Vieques, Puerto Rico - Average Nightly Rate: \$200

Guests can get close to nature here, while also helping to sustain it. Solar panels contribute to heat the water on the property, and the shower water also helps water the fruit trees, and other plants on the site. Nestled on a natural refuge among native plants and animal species, the hotel is committed to tranquility, and does not allow disruptive items like phones or televisions. As one TripAdvisor traveler said, "You can sit for hours, admiring the natural beauty of the property. Lizards, birds, and other creatures will entertain you."

7. Wildlife by the Water: Alaska's Sadie Cove Wilderness Lodge, Homer, Alaska - Average Nightly Rate: \$300

Only accessible by boat, floatplane, or helicopter, this eco-lodge built from local and reused materials lets guests get up close and personal with the Alaskan wilderness. Water to the lodge comes from a mountain stream, and among a host of other eco-friendly programs such as recycling and energy-efficient lighting, the lodge offsets carbon emissions by planting a tree for each guest. Said one TripAdvisor traveler, "It is truly obvious that this lodge is keenly aware of the importance nature plays in our world. They practice eco-friendly living! Carefully selected leftover foods were fed to the wildlife each day at the lodge...it was breathtaking!"

8. Conservation with Coffee: Finca Rosa Blanca Coffee Plantation and Inn, Santa Barbara, Costa Rica - Average Nightly Rate: \$370

A pioneer in sustainable living in Costa Rica, Finca Rosa Blanca employs energy conservation practices and recycles extensively, but also focuses on raising guest awareness about the local environment. The Inn's 30-acre coffee plantation is certified sustainable, and offers guests the chance to learn about growing and processing organic coffee. According to one TripAdvisor traveler, "Add their environmentally-conscious recycling, and using their organic gardens to supply the restaurant, and you have an incredible hotel experience."

9. Sustainability Under the Stars: Concordia Eco-Tents, Virgin Islands National Park, St. John - Average Nightly Rate: \$130

Built from environmentally-friendly materials, these eco-tents employ solar power to heat water and run appliances, and recycle extensively. Guests can feel close to the natural wildlife while still enjoying comforts like hot showers and kitchens, not to mention sweeping Caribbean views. Elevated walkways help preserve the property, and odorless composting toilets save water. According to one TripAdvisor traveler, "The composting toilet, solar shower and refrigerator made life easy, a gentleman's version of camping...and the footprint of all of these buildings has almost no effect on plant and animal life here."

10. Paint the Town Green: Hotel Monaco Seattle - a Kimpton Hotel, Seattle, Washington - Average Nightly Rate: \$344

The Hotel Monaco brings green options to an urban setting with a variety of eco-friendly programs, such as donating unused toiletry bottles to local charities rather than throwing them away, and using recycled paper across the property. Guests' rooms are equipped with recycling bins, low-flow toilets, faucets and showers, and organic coffee and snacks. Plus, travelers can feel closer to nature with a pet goldfish available for free from the hotel for the duration of their stay. As one TripAdvisor traveler said, "I liked the Monaco because of the ambiance, the 'green' feel, and of course, Belle [the goldfish]!"

"These properties offer travelers the chance to experience incredible places while still being environmentally responsible. Staying at one of these hotels not only gives guests the opportunity to educate themselves about the environment, but to help sustain it as well," said Michele Perry, vice president of global communications for TripAdvisor.

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