



While visiting Aruba, snorkel and help clean its coral reefs, tour Arikok National Park (below left) and indulge in the Green Globe-certified spa at the Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort, Spa and Casino (below right).

S'mores on the beach, anyone?



PACIFIC STAR

Two hot Hawaiian properties offer authentic experiences just steps outside your door

BY ADAM PITLUK

Ah, Maui. The land of soft-sand beaches, grass skirts and Don Ho. The fine folks over at Starwood Hotels & Resorts are serving up some other reasons to visit this lush Hawaiian island, in the form of leisure activities right outside of your room.

SEASIDE S'MORES

Start your vacation by checking in to the **Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa**. Smartly hemmed by the legendary Black Rock (where Hawaiians have been cliff diving for centuries) and Ka'anapali Beach, the Sheraton Maui recently introduced its initiative "Beachside S'mores Now Roasting." Instead of the standard marshmallows and Hershey's, the local version includes Maui cookies, macadamia-nut pieces, li hing mui sugar, bananas, pineapple, strawberries and a selection of chocolates, along with graham crackers and marshmallows. The resort's fire pits are open nightly and are located oceanfront, right below Cliff Dive Grill, where guests can watch the nightly cliff-diving ceremony. Sheraton-maui.com

HAWAIIAN CULTURE

Five minutes up the road at the **Westin Ka'anapali Ocean Resort Villas**, make sure to carve out some time (and peel yourself from the 26-acre beachfront playground that is the hotel) to visit the Pu'uhonua Cultural Center. Opened in 2015, the center introduces guests to ancient Hawaiian society with language classes and a new historical walk of Lahaina town, all under the watchful eye of director Makalapua Kanuha. Westinkanapali.com

Sun, Sand and Sustainability

An evolving **Aruba** is starting to make a name for itself as the greenest island in the Caribbean

THERE ARE all sorts of reasons that Aruba deserves its "One Happy Island" nickname, but a new one is on the way: Aruba has stated its goal to become the world's first totally green country by 2020, which means having 100 percent renewable energy and zero dependence on fossil fuels. In line with Clean Up the World Weekend (Sept. 16-18), here's a glimpse at how to experience Aruba the eco-friendly way (it's not hard).



1 / DO

For an eco-friendly exploration, take a tour with **Aruba Nature Sensitive Tours**. The hiking tours take you to Arikok National Park, abandoned gold mines and more, while Jeep tours provide visits to local favorites like Baby Beach and the Ayo Rock Formations. Looking to really make a difference? On Sept. 25, the island's largest volunteer initiative, the **Aruba Reef Care Project**, brings together more than 800 locals and visitors to clean up the island's most popular beaches, as well as heavily visited dive and snorkel sites. NatureSensitivetours.com

2 / SEE

Take a scenic drive out to the wind turbines at **Vader Piet Windpark**, situated on Aruba's rugged northern coast. The turbines provide 20 percent of the island's energy, and a second island wind farm that's in the works will soon double that. On the way, don't miss a stop at the nearby **Fontein Cave**, where ancient Arawak Indian glyphs smatter its expansive ceilings.

3 / STAY

The solar-powered, Green Globe-certified **Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort, Spa and Casino** offers a little bit of everything, from an innovative compost area to a full Green Team to oversee sustainability efforts. **ZoiA**, the luxurious hotel spa, uses decor made from recycled materials and all organic products. For a feel-good meal, Ruinas del Mar's menu offers fresh seafood, steaks and hearth-oven specialties chock-full of local, seasonal ingredients. For fall, try the pumpkin soup made from locally harvested gourds, followed by the broiled lobster tail dished out with island-grown tomatoes. Eating green never tasted so good. Aruba.regency.hyatt.com —A.O.

