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**GIVING PURPOSE
TO THE INTANGIBLE** PG2

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Ask Dr Gittens

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**MAR
2020**

GIVING PURPOSE TO THE INTANGIBLE



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Constitution Day Celebration 2019 - Ms Marcellia Henry of UNESCO and Ms Clara Reyes Head of Culture interviewed by Mr Lyndon Browne

By Dr. Antonio Carmona Báez
"For a colonised people the most essential value, because

the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above

all, dignity." - Franz Fanon
Can we divorce the tangible from intangible culture? I

would like to argue that we can, but that the consequences will not be favourable, as traditional

knowledge and practices (not to mention values) could easily be thrown into the world of commodification, sold to the first bidder while alienating the heirs of Caribbean history.

Ironically, the recent turn to making inventories and (digital) archiving intangible culture across the world and here in our region, was done with the intention of preserving artefacts of knowledge, talent and word. A noble venture indeed, as we see more of our linguistic dialects, music and oral histories continuously disappear with those of our elderly relatives who join the ancestors. However, the very need to rescue intangible culture stems from the fact that through the process of modernisation (whether it be industrialisation or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

SPACELESS GARDENS | ECO SXM PRESENTS

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GIVING PURPOSE TO THE INTANGIBLE... FROM PG 2

tourism-based economic development), the Caribbean woman and man have been violently separated from their land, forced to eat imported and processed foods, and educated to not to produce but to consume whatever is trending on the market. Intangible culture, unlike the tangible (museums, physical artefacts, monuments, etc.) is constantly changing; that is true. At the same time, oral histories, music and traditional practices become void of purpose and meaning when the context is forgotten. For what use is there to transmit knowledge on something like agricultural practices when society is shaped in order to delete our connection to the land? Our songs, our bush tea and even jollification become meaningless if the commons have

become privatised and taken out of the hands of the community.

Let's consider a couple of scenarios.

Puerto Rico, a country with a rich history of coffee production, now has most of its commercial brands roasted and sold by the Coca-Cola Company. Even Alto Grande, which was once hailed as "the coffee of popes and kings", has a reputation that now serves large multinational corporations.

Through the commercialisation of the coffee industry in agribusiness, unsustainable practices in the cultivation of the coffee plant, like growing it directly under the sun, are now the order of the day. Now none of the profits that the large coffee companies under Coca Cola make, actually stays in Puerto Rico. Some



local organic farmers dedicated to the intelligent use of land are now advocating for a return to cultivating the bean in the shadow, using traditional knowledge. Here, we see that the push for sustainable coffee production must go hand-in-hand with a re-thinking of how we treat our land and a discussion on not only how we can protect local knowledge

but how and where we can implement it as well.

On St. Martin, one of the most vibrant cultural events of late is the Emancipation Day Diamond Estate 26 Run for Freedom, initiated and organised by Head of the Department of Culture Ms. Clara Reyes. The stories told, the music and dance, food and drink, and the run through the bush at

midnight is a master class for Soualigans young and old; a way to honour and keep the memory of our enslaved ancestors alive.

However, due to land property rights, the continuity of the tradition at the Estate is not guaranteed. Where are the public grounds for such a tradition to flourish? What can we do with the knowledge of our forefathers?

What did our ancestors eat after reaching freedom in the French territory? Who is dancing the ponum and where?

In order to make the projects of preserving intangible culture heritage relevant to our existence, we need to relink traditional knowledge and practices to the life of struggle against the displacement and appropriation that has plagued our people for generations.

If we were to rescue and rediscover our intangible cultural heritage, it should be done with the purpose of answering questions that are relevant to our struggles as a people today, accompanied with a project for social transformation that guarantees our existence in harmony with nature (our land) and human dignity.

WEEK 3 ECO LEARNING - PLANT SCIENCE AND SOIL TYPES A SUCCESS

WEEK 3 was an amazing week despite the interruption of the rain.

The group's focused this week was on Plant Science and Soil Types. This session was important for them to grasp the basic understanding of the parts a plant, different soil type and amendments..

The mission is always to leave no one behind, while opening the minds to the great possibilities Agri-Culture may bring to our economy here in country St Maarten.

If you Missed Week 1 on Climate Change, Week 2 on Seed Germination and Week 3 on Plant Science and Soil Types then you may not have realized the importance of why \ how to plant a seed. Nevertheless, it is never to late to help nature play its part.

For Week 3 - Plant science and Soil Types , we took a deeper look in to the basics of the parts of a plant and the importance of their functionality. Just like the human body parts, each part of a plant has an important



Week 3 - Plant Science and Soil Types. Also present was former Minister of Plenipotentiary Ms Jorien Wuite, President of USM Dr Carmona Baez and guest.

role to play. Just as our body have parts, the parts of a plant also play a significant role towards maintaining their survival. Nevertheless, understanding the fundamentals of the plant, you will also know that a plant needs 3 important things to survive. Do know what they are ?

Plants need sun, water and soil to maintain their livelihood. Sun allows the chlorophylafil in plants to absorb its light and transfer it into energy that

stimulates the roots to play its role. Soil helps to reserve minerals \ nutrients for the plant and water helps the roots to absorb nutrients from the soil. Transpiration is the process by which water moves up the stem of a plant from root to leaf when water is lost from the plant due to evaporation at the leaves.

Understanding these simple factors plays a great role towards helping you embrace your gardening experience.

Its also important to understand the different soil types and soil amendments that may help to make your gardening experience much more fun and successful.

There is a difference between bagged soil types such as Top Soil, Potting Soil, Container Soil, Peat moss and Professional Growing Mediums such as AP-Lambert LM-3 that we currently stock at the St Maarten Agricultural Research and Development Center. Top Soil is just plain soil with no additional amendments added, what you dig is what you get lol. Potting or container soil usually has a few things such as chipped wood or peat moss etc to add to its texture and allow it to be more suitable for circumstances such as better drainage and nutrients etc in a confined pot or container. Peat moss and professional growing medium

may vary based on the selection that works best for you garden project. Peat Moss: Sphagnum is a genus of approximately 380 accepted species of mosses, commonly known as "peat moss". Accumulations of Sphagnum can store water, since both living and dead plants can hold large quantities of water inside their cells; plants may hold 16 to 26 times as much water as their dry weight, depending on the species. The empty cells help retain water in drier conditions. So, this really helps to retain water in soil in dry areas where the O Horizon layer produces minimum or absent humus and tough top soil. Real great for adjusting soil in more drought related Caribbean islands. Add additional admanent such as perlite as a Lightweight Soil Conditioner which Loosens Clay Soil, Reduces Caking,

while also Improving drainage and aeration. It can be used to start seeds and propagate cuttings \ slips. Blend with Peat Moss and Horticulture Vermiculite which all retains water and attracts addition nutrients such as potassium, magnesium, calcium and phosphorus will make the a great growing medium that will express great drainage, root functionality and stimulation.

Getting ready continue our sessions soon as the place gets a bit back to normal , we plan to look at Plant Care and Maintenance. After all, why go through all the above and not be willing to take care of the seeds you germinated? Just as our children need care and we maintain that care, plants also need care, maintenance and most of all, Love !

Keeping in mind this Corona Virus Scare Epidemic, we plan to postpone until next Saturday 28 March 2020 just to monitor the situation. To help play our part in this whole, my good friend and myself just received an immune system booster comprised of neem, turmeric, garlic and olive oil, we encourage our members and group participants to stop by to get a shot for digestion lol.. This is how we feel we can help. There will be bottles available at \$10 to support the cause of the developer of the product.



Participants enjoyed a great meal from the garden packed with organic ingredients...

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

CARIBBEAN RESEARCHERS TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

By Dr. Antonio Carmona Báez
ON AN ISLAND-HOPPING tour from 2 to 14 March, a team of scientific researchers, governmental agencies, NGOs and grassroots organizations from the Caribbean and The Netherlands joined forces to address the catastrophic environmental challenges facing Caribbean islands and their inhabitants. Led by former University of St. Martin (USM) president Professor Dr. Francio Guadeloupe, now serving at the University of Amsterdam, and

Professor Dr. Corinne Hofman of Leiden University, the team arrived to St. Martin on Monday, March 2nd to hold meetings with key sectors of the community. The group, composed of researchers from Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Martin and their diaspora, and hailing from such diverse disciplines as archaeology, musicology, architecture and social science, aimed to develop method of designing research centering the needs, cultural heritage and aspirations of Caribbean populations. Consultations and

community outreach were held on all six islands composing the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. According to Hofman, an archeologist, "the Caribbean islands are at the center of the climate vulnerability debate. Islanders have been confronted with sea level rises, storm events, coastal erosion and degradation, and extreme periods of drought ever since the first occupation of the islands between 7800 and 4000 years ago. These adverse events have significant ecological, socio-economic, and



Caribbean researchers arrive in Saba. Among the group Dr. Antonio Carmona Baez University St Martin, Dr. Francio Guadeloupe University of Amsterdam, Professor Dr. Corinne Hofman of Leiden University, Jay Havisser of (SIMARC) and other great researchers from around the Caribbean. Photo by Wyatte



Caribbean researchers in St Maarten at ECO St Maarten Agricultural Research and Development Center enjoy a healthy meal after receiving a presentation from Mr Wyatte ..

cultural implications, with increasing impacts on living conditions and the preservation of cultural and natural heritage."

The proposed research programme, entitled Island(-er)s at the Helm, involves the six Dutch Caribbean islands and focusses on human-environment interactions and social adaptation to environmental change from a deep-time perspective. It is geared towards the development of sustainable solutions to water management, food security, and shelter. It expects to develop tailored plans for environmental planning, sustainable tourism, and the protection of threatened heritage sites.

"Together, we will work on the production of sustainable solutions to climate change by considering all stakeholders", said Guadeloupe. "Our work is geared towards better-in-

formed policies and more effective implementation of sustainable practices, with regional and global significance", he added.

As an anthropologist, Guadeloupe is also interested in the use of traditional knowledge, as well as technology and local art and culture, as tools for understanding how islanders relate to climate change.

On St. Martin, invited researchers met with governmental agencies and NGOs such as Eco Sint Maarten Agriculture and Research Development Foundation, St. Maarten Hospitality and Trade Association and Sint Maarten Archeological Research Centre (SIMARC). "We are also really excited about the prospects of developing a long-term research and education programme that speaks to the needs and concerns of Caribbean islands and people,"

said current USM President Dr. Antonio Carmona Báez. Together with architectural engineer Dr. Filomeno Marchena of the University of Curaçao, Carmona is set to serve as Principal Investigator of one of the subprojects, while Hofman and Guadeloupe will serve as Programme co-Chairs if the proposal is accepted by NWO later this year.

Carmona stated that "for now, this seminar is an opportunity to connect our communities with top Caribbean researchers in a very tangible manner.

With the presence of top researchers on the island, and later in St. Eustatius (March 5), Saba (March 6), Bonaire (March 9), Curaçao (March 10) and Aruba (March 12), we were able to build a network of concerned scholars to tackle the most pressing issue of our era -and that is climate change."

WEEK 3 ECO LEARNING...FROM PG 4

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Instead of taking time build to

anxiety, lets take time to build up our immune system in these trial times.

Interested in learning more about about how to care of the plants you put

all this positive effort into? Of course you are, that's why you registered lol! Stay posted for up coming dates for ECO-Learnig Sessions ...

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THE FARMERS SEE: BAYLEAF

BAY LEAF BENEFITS FOR DIGESTION, WOUNDS AND DIABETICS



By **Kyra Oliver** | draxe.com

WHEN MOST folks think of bay leaf, they immediately recall the aroma of delicious Italian food cooking on the stove. This herb has been around for centuries for medicinal purposes

as well as for flavoring food. Used in cooking for a distinctive, savory flavor or fragrance for meats, soups and stews, and even as an ingredient in a cologne known as bay rum, you may find bay leaf in cosmetics, soaps and detergents

as well. The bay leaf is extraordinary for its many health benefits, such as helping treat cancer, gas and bloating and digestion. There's even some evidence it may help treat dandruff, muscle and joint pain,

and skin infections, though further research is needed to confirm those uses. Find out how to use this ancient herb in order to get some of these amazing benefits.

What Is Bay Leaf?

The bay leaf references various plants, including bay laurel, California bay leaf, Indian bay leaf, Indonesian bay leaf or Indonesian laurel, West Indian bay leaf, and the Mexican bay leaf. However, Turkish bay leaves are the most commonly used type from the ancient tree, *Laurus nobilis*.

It seems that various references to the bay leaf species of this aromatic plant can cause some confusion in regard to the true bay leaf, but to be a true bay leaf, it must come from the tree *Laurus nobilis*. It may also be called bay laurel or sweet bay.

The tree is an evergreen of the family Lauraceae, originating in the Mediterranean. The bay leaf is delicately fragrant with a bitter taste and holds about 2 percent essential oil. It's most common to use the dried version of the whole leaf when cooking, then removing the leaf from the dish before serving.

Nutrition Facts
One tablespoon (two grams) of crumbled bay leaf contains about:

- 5.5 calories
- 1.3 grams carbohydrates

- 0.1 gram protein
- 0.1 gram fat
- 0.5 gram fiber
- 0.1 milligram manganese (7 percent DV)
- 0.8 milligram iron (4 percent DV)
- 108 IU vitamin A (2 percent DV)

Benefits

1. Antimicrobial and Antioxidant Qualities

Bay leaf, including bay leaf essential oil, offers antimicrobial and antioxidant benefits. A study conducted at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University focused on the antimicrobial and antioxidant activities of specific essential oils from white wormwood, rose-scented geranium and bay laurel on fresh produce against *Salmonella* and *E. coli*. All three essential oils showed antioxidant properties, with the highest activity occurring in bay laurel essential oil.

2. May Prevent Candida and Contain Wound-Healing Benefits

Bay leaf has been shown to provide antifungal properties. A study published in the Archives of Oral Biology was conducted demonstrating the antifungal potential of the essential oil of bay laurel against candida. In the study, the bay laurel disrupted adhesion of candida to cell walls, therefore reducing its ability to penetrate the

membrane, making it a great addition to a candida diet in order to combat this condition.

In addition to fighting candida, bay leaf has been used as an extract and in a poultice to heal wounds in rats. While it wasn't as effective in healing wounds as quickly or as effectively as the *Allamanda cathartica*. L. extract, the bay laurel extract did show improved wound healing compared to the control group.

3. May Help Fight Cancer

Evaluation of the use of bay leaf extracts showed that both the leaves and fruits were potent against breast cancer cell models. The study notes bay leaf as a potential natural agent for breast cancer therapy by comparing cells that were induced with the extracts and those that were not. Cell death occurred in those that were induced, making bay leaf a possible natural cancer treatment option.

Further research published in Nutrition and Cancer suggests that it may help fight colorectal cancer. In vitro studies were conducted using extracts of the bay leaf against colon cancer cell growth.

MORE IN APRIL 2020 EDITION

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HEALTH BENEFITS OF CINNAMON PT 2



By *organicauthority.com*

ONE OF the benefits of cinnamon and honey, another antimicrobial ingredient, is that using both together can boost skin health even more and may be beneficial for acne, rosacea and skin allergies. You can use either raw honey or Manuka honey and cinnamon for skin relief.

11. Reduces Allergy Symptoms

Those with allergies may find relief thanks to the multitude of beneficial compounds packed into cinnamon. In fact, cinnamon may help fight common allergy symptoms because it's been shown to reduce inflammation and fight histamine reactions in many animal models.

12. Sweetens Up Recipes Without Sugar

Because of its nat-

urally sweet taste, adding cinnamon to foods and recipes can help you cut down on the amount of sugar you normally use, effectively lowering the glycemic load of your meal. Cinnamon already has anti-diabetic effects that slow sugar absorption and may help curb cravings by stabilizing blood sugar, but using cinnamon for its naturally sweet taste is yet another added benefit that can boost blood

sugar control

Cinnamon contains no added sugar and minimal calories yet is high in many nutrients, making it an extremely healthy addition to many meals.

Try using cinnamon in coffee, tea, baked goods, yogurt, on fruit or in oatmeal instead of adding extra sugar. This can help you to reduce your sugar intake and cut down on extra calories to aid in weight loss and fight Candida, diabetes and low energy.

13. Acts as a Natural Preservative

One of the lesser-known cinnamon powder benefits is that it can be used to preserve food. Because cinnamon has antibacterial abilities and acts as an antioxidant, it can be used as a preservative in many foods without the need for chemicals or artificial ingredients.

A recent study reported that when pectin from fruit was coated with cinnamon leaf extract, it yielded high antioxidant and antibacterial activities and stayed fresh for longer.

Cinnamon also possesses antityrosinase activities, which can be useful in stopping the discoloration of fruits and vegetables as they oxidize and begin to rot.

BY ALLRECIPES
Recipe by: Alli Shircliff

VEGATERIAN AND VEGAN RECIPES BLUEBERRY SMOOTHIE BOWL



"Quick and easy blueberry smoothie topped with coconut, almonds, and banana."

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1/2 banana
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon cashew butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Toppings:

- 1/2 banana, sliced
- 1 tablespoon sliced almonds
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened shredded coconut

Prep 10m | Blend 2m | Ready In 12m

DIRECTIONS

Step 1

Blend blueberries, 1/2 banana, water, cashew butter, and vanilla extract together in a blender until smooth; pour into a bowl.

Step 2

Top smoothie with sliced banana, almonds, and coconut.

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WITH ONLY THREE OFFICIAL CASES, AFRICA'S LOW CORONAVIRUS RATE PUZZLES HEALTH EXPERTS..PT 2

BY-FRANCE24.COM

FAVOURABLE climate factors have also been raised as a possibility.

“Perhaps the virus doesn't spread in the African ecosystem, we don't know,” said Professor Yazdan Yazdanpanah, head of the infectious diseases department at Bichat hospital in Paris.

This hypothesis was rejected by Professor Rodney Adam, who heads the infection control task force at the Aga Khan University Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya. “There is no current evidence to indicate that climate affects transmission,” he said. “While it is true that for certain infections there may be genetic differences in susceptibility...there is no current evidence to that effect for Covid-19.”

Nigeria well-equipped

The study in The Lancet found that Nigeria, a country at moderate risk of contamination, is also one of the best-equipped in the continent to handle such an epidemic.

But the scientists had not anticipated that the first case recorded in sub-Saharan Africa would be an Italian working in the country.

Little more than a week ago, “our model was based on an epidemic concentrat-



ed in China, but since then the situation has completely changed, and the virus can now come from anywhere,” Mathias Altmann, an epidemiologist at the University of Bordeaux and one of the co-authors of the report, told FRANCE 24 on Friday. The short shelf-life of studies testify to the speed of the epidemic's spread.

The Italian who tested positive for the coronavirus in Lagos had arrived from Milan on February 24 but had no symptoms when his plane landed. He was quarantined four days later at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Yaba. Several people from the company where

he works have been contacted and officials are trying to trace other people with whom he might have had contact.

For Altmann, an expert in infectious diseases in developing countries, the fact that coronavirus appears to have entered sub-Saharan Africa through Nigeria is “actually good news”, because the country appears to be relatively well prepared for confronting the situation.

In a continent that “has had its share of epidemics and whose countries, therefore, have a huge knowledge of the field and real competence to react to this kind of situation”, Nigeria is in a very good position

to confront the arrival of Covid-19, Altmann said.

“The CDC [Center for Disease Control] responsible for the entire region of West and Central Africa is located in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, which means that their organisational standard in health matters is very high,” he added.

The country was already renowned for “succeeding to pretty quickly contain the Ebola epidemic in 2014,” Altmann points out. It took the Nigerian authorities only three months to eradicate Ebola in the country. The World Health Organization and the European Centre for Disease Prevention

and Control at the time congratulated Nigeria for its reactivity and “world-class epidemiological detective work”.

But despite Nigeria's strengths, the coronavirus pathogen represents a particular challenge, in that it is hard to detect. The virus may be present in an individual who has few or no symptoms, allowing it to spread quietly in a country where, like everywhere in Africa, there is “a shortage of equipment compared to Western countries, especially in diagnostic tools”, Altmann said.

Neighbouring countries like Chad or Niger have “less func-

tional capacity to handle an epidemic,” Altmann said. But they also have an advantage: these are agricultural regions where people are outdoors more, “and viruses like this one prefer closed spaces and are less likely to spread in a rural setting,” he added.



RAS ITAL ENDORANCE

NO MATTER TIME nor day dem caant get di black man fi stray. Long time we immune build up strong from we we a eat all type thing, exposed to all type a bacteria from birth and modified to with stand the wickedest times. No matta the increase amongst the black population ova the next month dem, I man sure we a di lease fi dead off. Mi really hav fi try wonder why dem try kill we off? More money? More power? More Control? Dem naah see dem a just get more problem, when di people endurance run out di window tru dem lock up whole time !

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BY RUDYARD
KIPLING

IF YOU CAN keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too:
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same:
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings,
And never breathe a word about your loss:
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much:
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,

WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

THE SUPPA DUPPA MORNING SHOW
W/ SUPPA | WEEKDAYS 7AM - 10AM

THE AM/PM WORKLOAD SHOW
W/ GEE MONEY | WEEKDAYS 10AM - 2PM

THE POWER HOUR
W/ THE CUT CREATOR DJ OUTKAST | WEEKDAYS 2PM - 3PM

SAGAN'S PLAYGROUND
W/ SAGAN | WEEKDAYS 3PM - 6PM

SPECIALITY SHOWS

DIRTY DUTCH MUSIC
W/ CHUCKIE | FRIDAYS 10PM - 11PM

DI-NAMIX TOP 40 COUNTDOWN
W/ JOE WARRICK | SATURDAYS 3PM - 6PM

DJ POWER MIX SHOW
W/ DJ POWER | SATURDAYS 9PM - 10PM

A STATE OF TRANCE
W/ ARMIN VAN BUUREN | SATURDAYS 11PM - MIDNIGHT

WADE-O RADIO SHOW
W/ DJ WADE-O | SUNDAYS 12PM - 2PM

FEEL RADIO
W/ KP LONDON | SUNDAYS 3PM - 4PM

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10 ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS TO ADD TO YOUR **BUCKET LIST** FOR 2020 PT 3

By Jaclyn Yost
ASIA PALAU

PALAU IS a tiny cluster of islands in the Pacific that is making a significant impact in the world of sustainable destinations. In an unprecedented effort to instill conscious efforts into its visitors, the country makes you sign the immigration stamp in your passport pledging to "tread lightly, act kindly, and explore mindfully". And according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, this initiative has been working on tourists and their actions.

On top of the eco-pledge, the local government has also begun to enforce nation-wide regulatory practices; such as capping the number of visitors who come to the destination, focusing mainly on attracting experienced divers to conserve the coral reefs, and setting laws to protect 80% of their waters from commercial fishing and mining. For such a small country, its commitment to safeguarding its land from the negative stresses of mass tourism is inspiring.

While the biggest draw to the country is diving, sting-less jellyfish lakes, bird watching, and cultural events are all other famous native experiences that can keep tourists busy during their island time. To make sure that your entire experience stays green from where you stay to your participation in water activities, Dolphin Bay Resort is an eco-accommodation that also assists with booking ethical experiences.

Nepal

Due to being extremely rich in consideration to socio-culture, heritage, and

natural aspects, Nepal has been named one of the top 2020 eco-destinations to watch. Amazingly, the Nepalese government has put together a tourism development plan entirely revolving around sustainable environmental, socio-cultural, and economic objectives. It has even been suggested that the country is likely to have this extra motivation to focus on tourism, as the travel industry can provide the country with economic opportunity to relieve some of the impoverished stressors relevant to the nation.

As you likely know, the most popular destination in Nepal is Mount Everest. But if summiting the highest mountain in the world is not for you, there are many other green options... such as Her Farm Nepal that encourages visitors to volunteer at a local homestay that provides a safe home for Nepali women and empowers them through employment; allowing them to thrive against the oppression of patriarchy happening within the country.

Oceania Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia

For big ocean lovers, swimming with whale sharks is likely at the top of your to-do list. Millions of people venture to at least 10 different destinations across the globe each year to experience swimming with the biggest fish in the sea. Nonetheless, some destinations don't always consider ethical interactions. The Ningaloo Coast in Western Australia is different.

An estimated 300-500 whale sharks aggregate each year in this location between March to the end of



Nepal is extremely rich in consideration to socio-culture, heritage, and natural aspects. Photo by greenisthenewblack.com

July. And because the Ningaloo Coast is a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation World Heritage Site, all operating tourism bodies in the area must follow their criteria as it is protected under these regulations to support the best intentions for these wild creatures.

Ningaloo Discovery is a great company that educates its guests and makes sure that all on board are following respectful practices; like staying at least 3 metres from the animal at all times, only spending an hour following one specific whale shark, and allowing no more than 10 people in the water at once. For sustainable places to stay in the area, the Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef beachside safari camp in the Cape Range National Park is designed to have a minimal impact on the surrounding bush environment — as it utilises the natural coastal breeze to save energy, generate 100% of its power by solar panels, compost all waste, provide all-natural and organic amenities, and donate 5% of all business profits to the Department of Parks and Wildlife Western Australia conservation

fund.

New Zealand

While New Zealand is not a lesser-known destination, it is worth mentioning due to its conservation efforts towards the natural environment. With

more than 14 national parks, at least 30% of the entire country is considered to be conserved land, paying particular attention to protect the unique wildlife within. And with only 4.5 million inhabitants, New

Zealand prides itself in only contributing 0.2% of total worldwide greenhouse gas emissions; it was also one of the first countries to pledge a carbon-neutral future. The country has so many eco-initiatives in place that it has picked up the motto 'Green, clean New Zealand'.

One of the most popular ways to see New Zealand among travellers is renting a campervan and road-tripping between natural sites. Britz, an Oceania-based car rental company, recently released a fully electric campervan so that all the natural sites can be enjoyed while keeping CO2 emissions to a minimum.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

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Enhancing Agritourism

By Dr. Antonio Carmona Báez

FOR DECADES now, farming communities across the world have looked to agritourism as a means to secure economic diversification and rural socio-economic development. More recently, as commercial and mass tourism (cruise ships, resorts and more recently AirBnB) find the need to reconcile its business practices with the impact of climate change, gentrification and the marginalization of local communities, agritourism has been identified as a solution for promoting sustainable, community-centred development that seeks to balance our human need to explore and the preservation of cultural landscapes.

Agritourism is broadly defined as activities that attract visitors to farms or agricultural production sites. From Iran to Italy, the Philippines and St. Martin, agritourism may involve visits to workplaces where agricultural products are elaborated by community artisans. According to Chase, L.C. et. al. (2018), there are five main categories of activities related to agritourism. These are: direct consumer sales at the farm or workstation; agricultural education (schools visits to farms), hospitality (farm-stays overnight or for entire vacations), recreation (hikes, guided tours, horseback riding or participating in production) and entertainment (cultur-



Visitors of the Caribbean Culture Foundation visit the Agricultural Research and Development Center.

al activities, harvest meals, drinks). Agritourism allows communities to discover and harness the often-hidden talents, traditional knowledge and practices that make their geographical area and history unique.

In St. Martin, we can find such examples and cases of agritourism as Loterie Farm, Vicky's Key, and Spaceless Gardens. There are many farmers who do not classify their activities as agritourism per se but whose restaurants and other businesses are directly linked to local organic food production (e.g. I-tal Shack). Nevertheless, the potential is

far greater than that which has already been tested. In order for St. Martin to release its potential in this area, there needs to be closer collaboration and communication among different local producers and artisans. Moreover, with a high concentration of schools in St. Peter's district, a valley that historically was dedicated to significant agricultural production for the entire Netherlands Antilles, school boards and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport can insert aspects of agriculture into academic curricula. In a word, agritourism requires collective effort and

support in the form of public-private partnerships.

In 2019, the University of St. Martin (USM) and Eco-Sint Maarten Agriculture Development Centre launched its first undergraduate-level (BA) course in Agroecology (SCI 301), whereby students participated in basic farm fieldwork while learning theory in class. Due to its success, USM hopes to identify other areas in which students and researchers can engage with local farmers and create spaces

for the sharing of experiences. Participation in these spaces can of course benefit those involved in agricultural production and their surrounding communities; this leading to St. Martin's much-needed economic diversification.

To strengthen agritourism, strong operable networks are needed island-wide as well as in our Caribbean region. Many of those who work in agriculture on St. Martin already have natural links to other surrounding islands and other countries within

the Caribbean part of the Dutch Kingdom. These social, cultural and economic ties can be used as a springboard for enhancing the attention brought to sustainable practices and community-centred prosperity. With three universities and one teacher training college in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom, agritourism can also count on technical, ICT and academic support, and problem-solving research. As St. Martin continues to wrestle with its single-pillar economy, the promotion of agritourism can represent a complex but also workable method of social transformation which uplifts local culture and attracts more intelligent visits by those genuinely interested in getting to know our island and its people.

Readings:

Chase, Lisa C.; Stewart, Mary; Schilling, Brian; Smith, Becky; Walk, Michelle (2018-04-02). "Agritourism: Toward a Conceptual Framework for Industry Analysis", Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development. 8 (1): 13-19

Neda Torabi Farsani, Sahar Samani Ghotbabadi & Mazyar Altafi (2019) Agricultural heritage as a creative tourism attraction, Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 24:6, 541-549

10 ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS TO ... FROM PG 12

A Greener New Year

Whether you choose to travel to one of the above 10 ecotourism destinations or elsewhere, remember that there

is always the opportunity to make your travels a little bit greener.

This checklist can help you get familiar with indicators to look out for when

choosing responsible travel-related companies, and you can find some suggestions here of choices that minimise your carbon footprint.



Visitors enjoy cultural treats, local fruits and produce at Carnival 2017

Ask



Dr. Gittens

Focusing on topics that can make a difference.

AS I PULLED out on Simpson Bay road a drive I have taken over one thousand times, I found myself revisiting the vision that I had recently observed on National news of the Las Vegas strip with no lights and completely shut down.

Simpson Bay mimicked that image and instilled an immediate fear within me. I realized at that very moment that things would be very different on the island.

Abruptly and without much warning, Ms. Coronavirus, the guest with a pandemic filled suitcase and no formal invitation nor reservation, exploded her unwarranted, catastrophic calamity upon us.

It was evident something was erratically different, up and down both sides of Simpson Bay Road, it was unequivocally

PARADISE CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

still and airily silence rang throughout the streets like an old, rusted church bell. There were no cars, no people, no sense of normalcy and most importantly, **NO TOURISTS.**

The beautiful Sint/St. Maarten the paradise of the Caribbean. The island that satisfies unimaginable dreams, celebrates magnitudes of diverse occasions, a tropical gem that both promotes and delivers spectacular vacations, concerts, international gatherings and inhales and exhales excitement, while simultaneously offering epic serenity and peace, was now in a mandated, frozen state of tranquility.

It was only two weeks ago, when I would smile at the happiness displayed

by tourists straggling along the road side. Some in short pants, others in beach shorts that shouted to the world, "I'm on vacation, don't you see me!" Their female partners wearing island style floral regalia, that illustrated their pride in our culture and provided them with an opportune time to show-off that their new threads were purchased at a local shop.

It was not too long ago, I found myself shocked and with my mouth wide open, as if I was planning to eat a "whole" mango with illuminating bright red, orange and yellow bursting colorations, observing practically naked tourists emphasizing to all, they were free and proud to be released from their

frigid winter temperatures and dark, dismal gray clouds.

The memories didn't end there; I recall observing Yachtees memorized by the sweet taste of the island's Rums all laughing, chuckling nestled safely

inside unassuming bars and restaurants, exhibiting good cheer and joy as if it was New Year's Eve all over again.

Every traveler had their own special little piece of the island, some became overnight Superstars as they utilized their vocal talents to escalate the roaring applause from the zealous Topper's Karaoke crowd.

Oh yes, that captivating smell of Captain's D's Roadside Grill the mecca of Barbeque on

the Simpson Bay strip. The visitors flocked the picnic tables and surprisingly would fall in love with locals and the DJ that spoke with a flavorful, spicy island monotone as he proudly played "old school" anthems.

The tourist somehow knew that a Saturday night was not a real Saturday night unless they stopped by Snoopy's Bar. It was apparent that their Soca moves were new and instantly created but it never stopped them. They gradually blended in with the locals and were cordially provided with a FREE Soca Whine lesson.

On this drive, I did not see those images, sadly. They were displaced and found themselves in a distant part of

my memory for safe keeping.

The lights were not bright that night; the music was on mute indefinitely and the spirit of the streets that had once amplified with excitement, happiness, joy, good cheer and good old Sint/St. Maarten hospitality was astray.

The only thing that gave me a subtle hint of joy was to see the famous Hollywood Casino, Las Vegas look alike signage flickering as it always did providing me with a glimmer of hope.

As my drive concluded, I was left with one pressing, unanswered question.

"When will SXM ever return to normalcy?"

DO YOU NEED TO TRAIN YOUR STAFF?

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TRAINING – NUTRITION TIPS TO STAY HEALTHY AND HAPPY IN SPORTS PT 2

Post by Stephanie M. Howe, PhD, Endurance Runner & The North Face Athlete

I LITERALLY will say out loud to myself "Stephanie you are running so great right now!" I never beat myself up or say negative things, even just in my mind. It doesn't help and can actually make you feel worse. The more positive and present you can be the better the experience.

* Don't compare yourself to others. This is maybe one of the toughest parts of training. It's so tempting to compare yourself to what others are doing. But, it's not helpful. In fact, most of the time it's hurtful. Each person is unique in what they can handle mentally and physically. You don't have to train as much as someone else to be your best. It's best to tune inward and really pay attention to your body and how you feel. Often the best training is not the most training, but the smartest training. And comparing yourself to others does nothing for learning about your physical, mental, and psychological capabilities. It's ok to recognize and acknowledge what others are doing,

but don't plot yourself against them. Be your own person and be grateful for that.

Nutrition

What you eat is almost more complex than training. Usually with training and sport, there is a coach or leader to look to for guidance about the sport. With nutrition, there is not one person or organization to look to for good, solid nutrition advice. Anyone with a blog or social media can broadcast their opinion about diet and nutrition to the masses. And often it's just that... an opinion. To optimize your nutrition I recommend taking a step back and thinking about it less. Yes, think about it less. Although that sounds counterintuitive, as a society we think WAY too much nutrients, superfoods, and diet fads. Eat this, avoid that and you will be healthy. However, it doesn't work like that. Real food is so good for us and our bodies need a variety of foods to function. Any diet or nutrition plan that requires you to restrict a certain food or food group is not healthy or sustainable.

* Eat Real Food. This is my first rule of nutrition. It's the golden rule. Eat.



Real. Food. What does this mean? Well, it means consuming foods that are in their natural state, such as an apple. Not foods that have been broken down, processed, and engineered into something totally different. The easiest way to do this is limit the amount of food that comes out of a package. Anything that is found in the state it grows in nature is a better choice. Of course, I believe that all things in moderation is part of a healthy diet. Emphasize real foods for the majority of your meals and add in other options to fill the gaps.

* Don't follow fad diets. This is the best

way to throw your body out of whack and create a headache. Fad diets promise a quick fix and often operate on the premise of restricting or emphasizing certain foods or food groups for health or performance. That is your first clue. Healthy eating does not mean you should

only eat a list of approved foods. The foods you choose to eat is your diet, not vice versa. Any diet with strict rules is not sustainable or healthy in the long run. Eating should be an enjoyable experience not a mathematical equation with limited food choices.

* Listen to your body cues. Our bodies are really good and telling us what we need...if we listen to it, that is. There are SO many internal signals within the body to drive appetite and fullness and to help us determine when and how much to eat. But so often we ignore or override these signals. The best way to listen to your body is to pay attention: really think about how you feel before you eat, when you eat, after you eat. How hungry are you? How full are you? How do you feel after eating a certain

food? Once you start to understand your body's cues it's much easier to match energy intake to energy expenditure. Keep in mind that your body is not a checkbook. Energy in ≠ energy out. Our bodies are so much more complex than that. If you "eat 500 calories" it doesn't mean you can exercise to "burn 500 calories". Our bodies are not even close to being that simple. Think less about numbers and pay more attention to feeling and hunger levels. That's the best way to get in tune with what your body needs.

* Aim to be a B+. You don't have to perfect your diet every single day. There is room for some good days and not so good days.

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