



PARADISE FOUND
The 16-suite Laluna in Grenada has a picture-perfect beach and a newly opened spa and yoga pavilion (below)



SOUL FOOD

Juliet Kinsman meets the yoga guru behind a Caribbean holiday that will not only have you feeling your best but doing good for the local community too

It's all very well treating yourself to a holiday that'll have you looking and feeling wonderful within a week. But how many vacations also do good for less-privileged locals? The 'Eco Chic Retreat' yoga holidays taking place at Grenada's most special boutique hotel Laluna not only promise a stylish escape but they also help fund a charity that works to improve the lives of children on this poorer of the Caribbean islands. The man behind these extra-special trips is yogi, Neo Moreton.

REACH Grenada (reachgrenada.org) stands for recreation, education, agriculture, community and healthcare. How did the charity come about let alone lead to yoga holidays? 'I met one of life's true Mother Teresas, Karen Lawson, in an organic grocery shop in Long Island New York,' explains Neo who has taught yoga and meditation classes around the world (yogawithneo.com). 'And weeks later we were on a plane to the hurricane-devastated Caribbean island of Grenada to meet with the Prime Minister to discuss plans to create REACH.' The aim is to connect professional talent, medical supplies and unwanted goods like books and games to people who need them. 'Recently, we hand-delivered 4,000 used children's books to a community club and it made me appreciate how one person's castaway is another's diamond.' Their vision is also to revive the much-deflated cacao industry and help generate self-sustaining profits that can directly benefit the children of Grenada.

And what better a base for such mind, body and soul food than the utterly uplifting Laluna? Especially as the 16-suite hotel recently opened a beachside yoga pavilion and a sea-view Indonesian-inspired spa. A romantic retreat run by the ebullient Wendy and Bernardo Bertucci,



Laluna was never going to be a yoga trip fuelled by mung bean smoothies. Try melt-in-your-mouth bresaola, prosecco on tap and the best lasagna outside of Italy. Oh, and lashings of chocolate. Cacao (no, that's not just a sloppy spelling of cocoa), is in fact the plant which produces the pods (pictured, top left) which are made into what we know and love as chocolate.

'On our retreats, we use pure raw Grenadian cacao, which is some of the highest quality in the world,' adds Neo. 'As well as using it in smoothies and desserts, we give guests a lesson in raw food preparation.' One of nature's most potent superfoods, raw cocoa is packed with antioxidants and magnesium and sulphur – minerals often desperately lacking in our diets. So you don't have to feel remotely guilty about treating yourself. And no fear of carbs being blacklisted either. As Bernardo, the affable owner who hails from Calabria smiles, 'how often do you get to eat delicious homecooked pasta on a yoga retreat?' And even better, all that indulgence gives a little back to improve the Spice Isle's socioeconomic situation. How many yoga holidays can boast that high a feel-good factor? ■

ECO CHIC RETREATS AT LALUNA

March 5–12, April 2–9 and November 12–19. A week from \$5,980 per person (plus 18 per cent tax and service). A percentage goes to REACH.

- SEVEN NIGHTS in a deluxe suite with a private deck and plunge pool
- BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER made with organic local ingredients (drinks not included)
- DAILY YOGA AND MEDITATION sessions
- TWO MESSAGES in the Balinese spa
- BEACH AND A RAINFOREST WALK with a swim at the waterfall
- CATAMARAN SUNSET CRUISE with snorkelling at the marine park museum
- THE OPTION OF HALF DAY'S VOLUNTEERING as a cacao farmer
- TOUR OF A CACAO PLANTATION and processing plant
- CHOCOLATE WORKSHOP
- RETURN AIRPORT TRANSFERS

Laluna, St George's Grenada, West Indies (001 473 439 0001; laluna.com) As featured in the Mr & Mrs Smith hotel collection mrandmrsmith.com/laluna

Virgin Atlantic flies from London Gatwick to Grenada weekly. Fares start from £549 inclusive of taxes (08705 747 747; virginatlantic.com)



YOGIC POWERS
Neo Moreton (centre) and some of those who have benefitted from from his Eco Chic scheme