

SPRING 2007

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SPA & TRAVEL *By Ligne St Barth*

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY THROUGH BALI

SNOW SKIING IN
DUBAI

CUISINE
AND **CULTURE**
ON THE ALGARVE

A STROLL DOWN
LONDON'S MOST
FASHIONABLE STREET



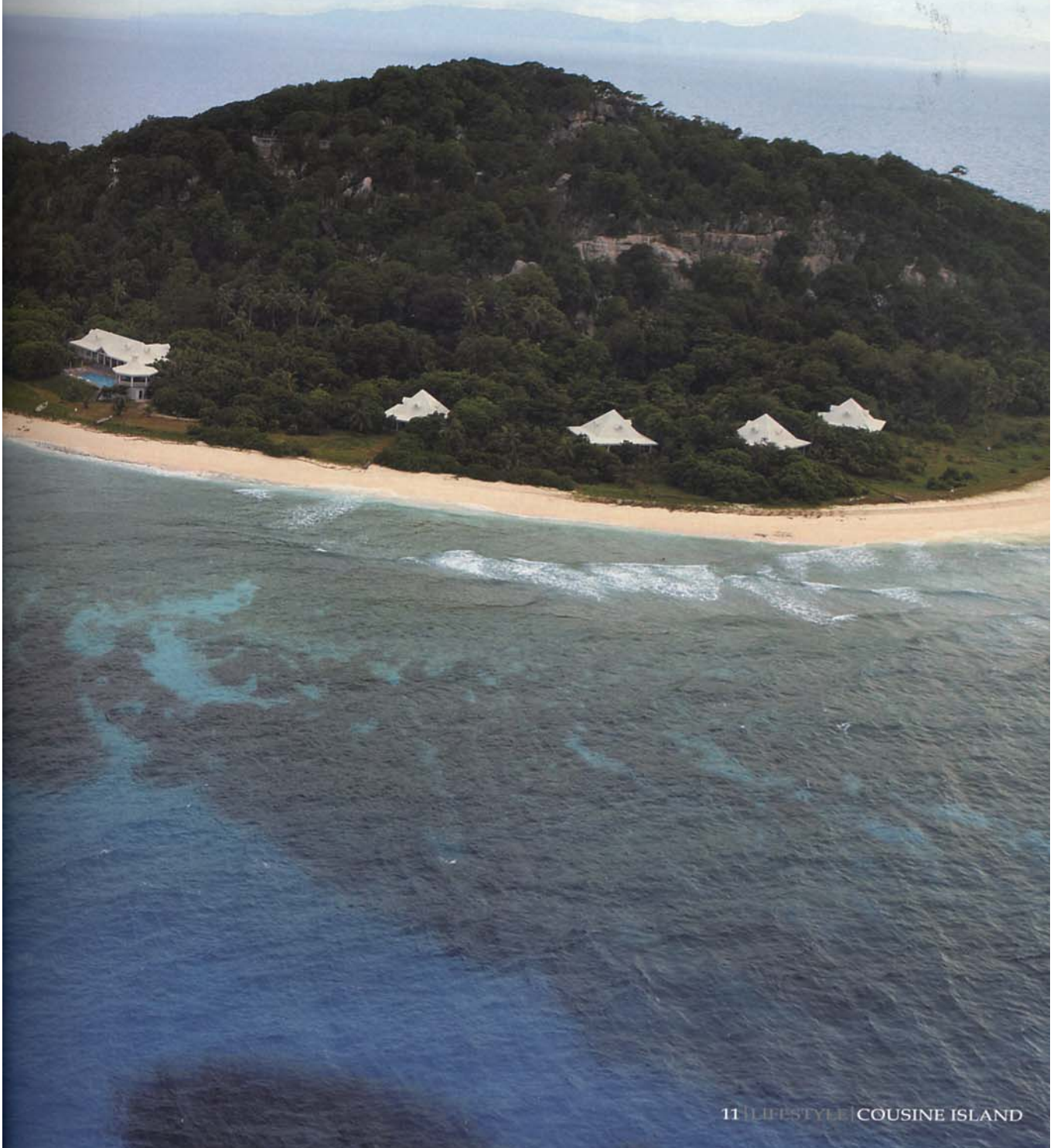


SEYCHELLES – COUSINE ISLAND
**HEAVEN ON
EARTH**

CAN BE DESCRIBED IN A SINGLE
NAME ... COUSINE. IT'S AN IS-
LAND IN THE SEYCHELLES WHERE
CONSERVATION IS JUST AS IM-
PORTANT AS A "LUXURY HOTEL
EXPERIENCE".



TEXT **JOCK HENWOOD & JANINE SAMUEL**
GENERAL MANAGERS, COUSINE ISLAND
PHOTOS **MORITZ HOFFMANN**





As the full moon rises over the Island of Praslin, it illuminates a silver path over the Indian Ocean and casts light onto an island where nature thrives and man is a silent observer.

A SHORT HISTORY. Rescued from near ruin through neglect in 1992, Cousine Island in the Seychelles, was acquired by a man with a single vision. His vision was to ecologically restore the island, with a view to creating a haven for endemic species, into an ecological paradise. Eight years later, four private villas were built on the island, both to enable guests to experience the island's success first hand, and to fund the continuing ecological restoration in perpetuity.

CONSERVATION. Cousine Island is a leading example of conservation through restoration, a living proof of how man and nature can coexist in harmony. It was set aside for conservation in 1992, with the goal of total rehabilitation to its original ecologically pristine condition. Today the condition of Cousine is closer than any other island in the region to the way in which it would have been before the arrival of man in the Seychelles islands during the 17th century. It is one of the most important ecological sites in the Seychelles.

Two full-time island ecologists work side by side to initiate, conduct and supervise all the research and conservation work on the island. The Seychelles magpie robin and hawksbill turtle Monitoring programmes are the most high profile projects running at present, and Cousine is the national leader in the knowledge and conservation of these species.

In 1995, three magpie robins were introduced from Fregate Island. A year later three more joined the Cousine population, and today the island has a thriving population of 30 birds, which is still increasing. The Magpie Robin is a critically endangered species, with a global population of only 160 individuals, found on just four islands in the Seychelles.

Once hunted for their beautiful shells, the hawksbill turtles a critically endangered species. An intensive monitoring program has been set up on Cousine to measure the nesting, breeding and hatching success of these amazing marine creatures.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME. Four elegant French Colonial villas are located thirty metres from the beach that stretches nearly a kilometre from along the east coast of the island. Guests have a sense of ownership, sharing the



island with a maximum of only three other couples and sixteen staff. Service is unobtrusive and guests feel at home from the instant their helicopter touches down on Cousine.

A LIFELONG INVESTMENT. By staying in a villa on Cousine, the guests contribute directly towards sustaining the island's research and conservation projects, and they are therefore, albeit perhaps unknowingly, investing in the future of both Cousine Island and the Seychelles as a whole. Cousine is the only island in the Seychelles where guests have the opportunity to experience a true natural paradise. None of the money paid by guests for their stay leaves the island; all revenue is channelled directly back into the island and its ecological work programmes.

YOUR HOSTS. Cousine Island's management couple collectively has more than 7 years of experience on the island and are dedicated conservationists.

Jock Henwood grew up in the hotel business. His family has owned a series of hotels in South Africa, so to him this occupation comes naturally. He loves nothing more than to stand on the beach looking up towards the granite peaks of the island, watching the variety of endemic birds flying amongst the lush vegetation.

Janine Samuel assists Jock with the logistics of managing and marketing the small island hotel.

Dylan Evans and Frankie Hobro, the two island ecologists, joined the team in October 2005. Together Dylan and Frankie have over twenty years of experience in ecological management. They are both passionate about their work and have a very successful track record in flora and fauna rehabilitation, particularly with critically endangered species.

"MY FAVOURITE THING ABOUT COUSINE IS THAT IT HAS SO MUCH TO OFFER, WHEREVER YOU LOOK NATURE IS SHOWING YOU SOMETHING UNIQUE." (JOCK HENWOOD)

HOW COUSINE MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Cousine is the only island in the region with a conservation-based model into which the hotel structure fits. Here, conservation remains the overall priority, while every other island hotel in the Seychelles is contrary to this. This difference may seem slight, but it is crucial both to the success of the conservation and ecological restoration of the island, and to the way in which the island is managed as a whole. In this way Cousine makes a real and visible difference on many different levels.



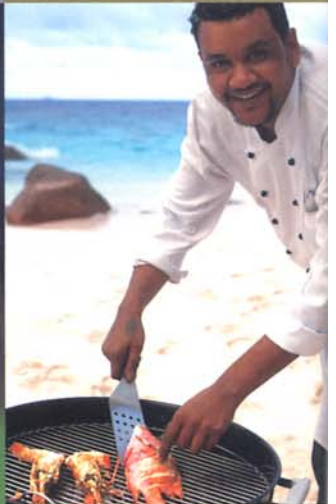
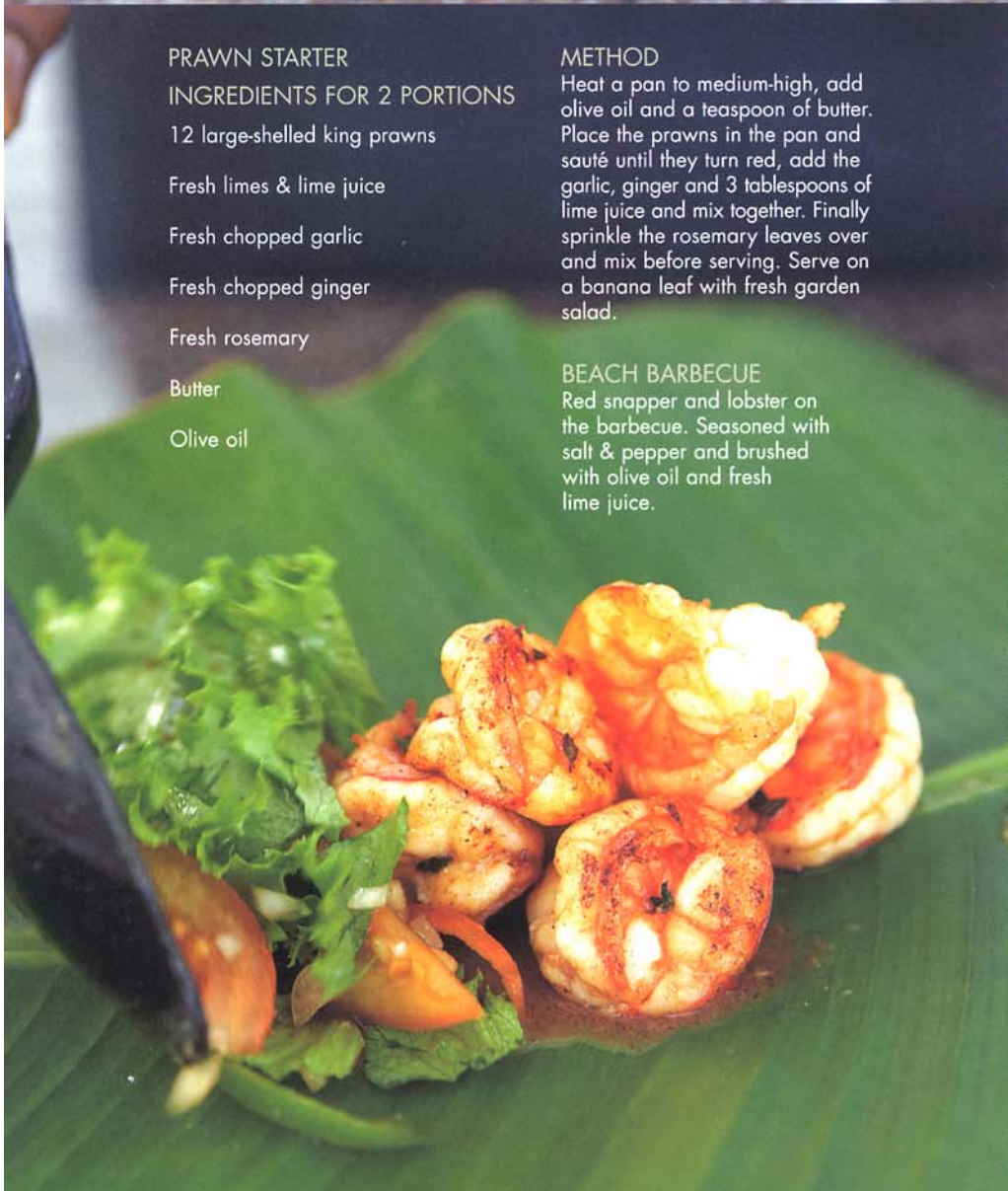
PASCAL NICOLE, HEAD CHEF

PRAWN STARTER
INGREDIENTS FOR 2 PORTIONS

- 12 large-shelled king prawns
- Fresh limes & lime juice
- Fresh chopped garlic
- Fresh chopped ginger
- Fresh rosemary
- Butter
- Olive oil

METHOD
 Heat a pan to medium-high, add olive oil and a teaspoon of butter. Place the prawns in the pan and sauté until they turn red, add the garlic, ginger and 3 tablespoons of lime juice and mix together. Finally sprinkle the rosemary leaves over and mix before serving. Serve on a banana leaf with fresh garden salad.

BEACH BARBECUE
 Red snapper and lobster on the barbecue. Seasoned with salt & pepper and brushed with olive oil and fresh lime juice.

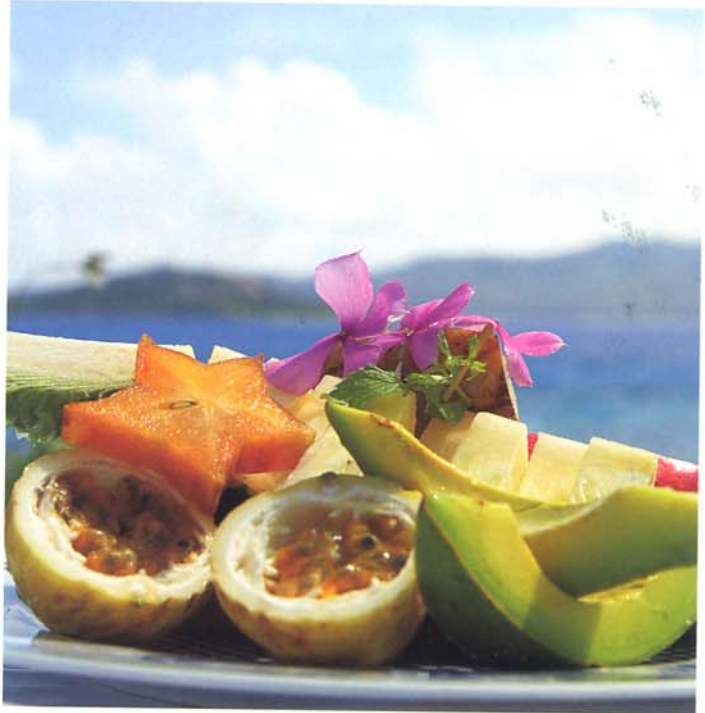


Cousine contributes directly to the regions' biodiversity conservation simply by doing what it does on a day-to-day basis. The island is one of the most ecologically important private islands in the world.

The ultra-luxury, truly eco friendly model upon which the island's philosophy is based is unique, and is hopefully the beginning of the turning of the tide with regards true eco-tourism. We believe that eco-tourism is not about sitting and watching, but rather that it should involve direct and tangible benefit to the resource.

ADVOCACY AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES initiated and co-funded by Cousine allow the dissemination of best management practice to other island and ecological managers in the region and beyond. Presently Cousine is involved in the construction and management of a new "Island Conservation Centre" on neighbouring Praslin Island. This centre will allow the environmental education of local people and school groups, as well as international visitors to the region, and it will also provide a focus for all environmental and ecological work in the area, a resource which is currently lacking.

Guests are invited to participate with the conservation work on the island to whatever extent they feel most comfortable. This can take many forms, from the simple but important act of the planting of a tree from the island's nursery of endemic species, to assisting the island ecologists with the monitoring of critically endangered marine turtles or by simply relaxing on the beach enjoying the natural surroundings. Guests always leave Cousine with a deeper knowledge of environmental issues than they had when they arrived. Even if our guests choose not to be involved at all, they are still supporting the ongoing conservation and restoration programmes simply by visiting Cousine. ■



At a Glance.....

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