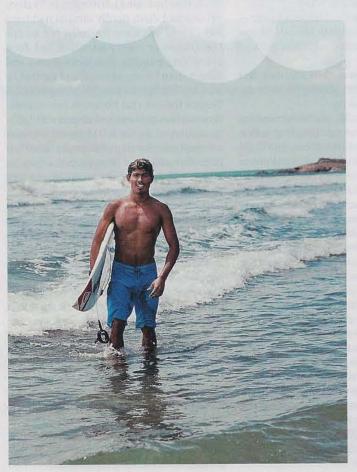
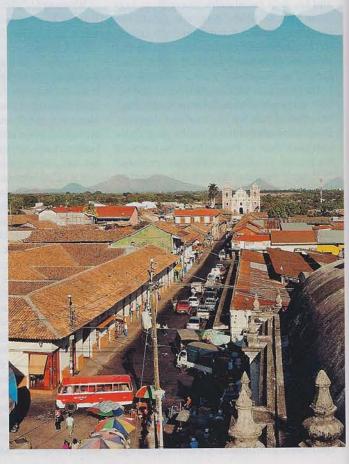
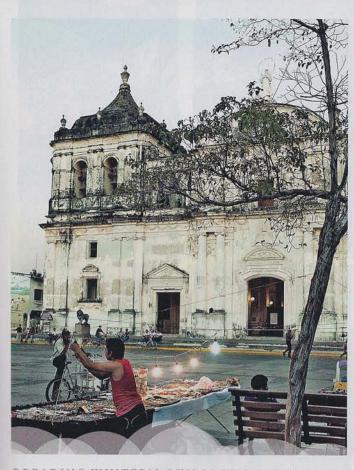


JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH





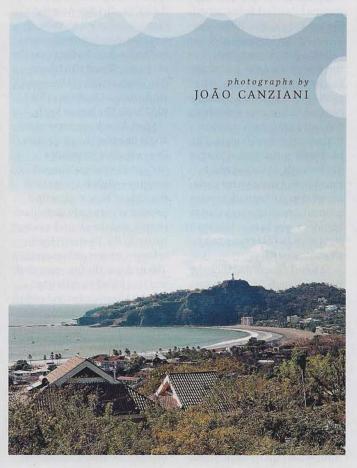
84 Outside destinations special





DREADING WINTER'S CHILL? IT'S ALWAYS SUMMER IN CENTRAL AMERICA, WHERE YOU CAN STILL SURF UNTOUCHED BREAKS, SUMMIT ACTIVE VOLCANOES, AND SCUBA-DIVE PRISTINE REEFS FROM GUATEMALA ALL THE WAY SOUTH TO PANAMA. BOOK NOW AND THANK US LATER.





Belize

Track jaguars and whales from a Caribbean eco-lodge

SANDWICHED between Mexico and Guatemala, English-speaking Belize boasts more than two million acres of forest, 180 miles of pristine Caribbean coastline, and dozens of innovative eco-lodges. Two of the best? The Hamanasi Resort has treehouse bungalows on a 12mile stretch of beach minutes from 100-foot waterfalls. The soundtrack is chachalaca birds calling raucously, and daily activities include tracking jaguar prints in the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary, ringed by the Maya Mountains. For diving, head to Francis Ford Coppola's posh Turtle Inn, where the Meso-



american Barrier Reef—the largest in the Western Hemi-sphere—is just offshore. From April to June, you'll dive with migrating whale sharks, which come to feed on coral spawn during the full moon.—B.T.

ACCESS AND RESOURCES

Doubles from \$195; Hamanasi Resort, hamanasi .com. Doubles from \$285; Turtle Inn, coppolaresorts .com. HOW TO GET THERE: American, Delta, and Continental fly direct to Belize City; take a puddlejumper to Dangriga (for Hamanasi) or Placencia (for Turtle Inn). WHEN TO GO: April to June, between the dry and rainy seasons. ALSO CHECK OUT: From San Ignacio, hike to Actun Tunichil Muknal, a rare archaeological wet cave lined with Maya relics and the tomb of a young maiden. Go with Pacz Tours, whose guides are certified in caving and wilderness rescue; pacztours.net.











El Lalvador

Explore the Libertad coast's Pacific breaks

THE CIVIL WAR is long past, but ongoing gang violencethough it rarely affects travelers-means robberies can happen. Which is why you'll see armed guards at the supermarket and why we recommend going with a guide. But don't wimp out, because this tiny country is packed with empty surf, 7,000-foot active volcanoes, and killer pupusas-fresh corn tortillas filled with refried beans and cheese. Plan a multisport trip with the locals at Cadejo Adventures. Start 30 minutes south of San Salvador on the La Libertad coast, where uncrowded Pacific breaks range from mellow El Sunzal to perilous Punta Roca, a legendarily long and bonecrushing right. Luxury can be had for less at Casa de Mar, a series of hillside cottages overlooking El Sunzal. After a few days of guided wave hunting, head inland to El Imposible National Park for two days of hiking and canyoneering through epic gorges, with rare emerald toucans and aardvarks for company. - B.T.

ACCESS AND RESOURCES

Weeklong trips from \$2,640 for two (lodging included); cadejoadventures.com. HOW TO GET THERE: American and Taca offer nonstop flights to San Salvador from major U.S. hubs. WHEN TO GO: November to May. ALSO CHECK OUT: Wakesurfing in the mangrove-lined tributaries of Estero de Jaltepeque. Ask Cadejo's owner, Roy Beers, to take you, SAFETY UPDATES: Read the State Department's current travel advice at travel.state.gov.

