

SUSTAINABILITY
AT VIRGIN LIMITED
EDITION

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responsibility initiatives

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1 Sustainable Operations

Reduce, reuse, and recycle?

Ditching the plastic

Operating in areas of the world where the local water supply doesn't always inspire confidence, we previously made bottled water available to our guests. As the result was a lot of discarded plastic bottles we worked with a supplier to source branded glass water bottles which are washable and can be reused again and again. A filter machine sits on site and the staff is trained in how to operate it hygienically. The result has been a reduction of 75% of plastic bottles used on Necker Island with similar results elsewhere.

Reducing our chemical usage

The two freshwater pools on Necker are currently in the process of phasing out the use of chlorine to make them more environmentally friendly.

Recycling and waste collection

Reducing the amount of waste we produce and recycling as much as possible is a great way to protect our environment. **Here are some of the things we're doing:**

- recycling paper / cardboard, glass and plastics
- bulk buying and use of reusable containers to reduce packaging
- eliminating disposable toiletry items in guest bathrooms
- use of cotton laundry bags
- reusable containers for picnic items
- introducing composting for bio-waste
- providing drinking water in reusable bottles in guest rooms

At Kasbah Tamadot in Morocco when we first started operating waste collection was itself not a given, let alone a recycling program. In the past few years we have organized a weekly waste collection service not just for the hotel but also for the local community, something that was tough to achieve. We are working with the local associations to educate the community on why waste collection is necessary. Where necessary we make use of efficient incinerators for the remainder of the waste generated.



Let's conserve our energy...

What we can (re)claim we're doing.

When refurbishing The Lodge, during initial build stage we used reclaimed timber for the main structure whilst the furniture was also made from reclaimed sources. The following steps have also been taken to make the chalet more energy efficient:

- **Where appropriate, lights are on a timer system and energy saving light bulbs are used. LED's are used for the outdoor lighting.**
- **We have motion detectors or timer devices on lights in communal areas**
- **We use master switches in all bedrooms making it easy for guests to turn off all lights when they leave their rooms**
- **The heating is centrally controlled whilst there's no need for air conditioning as we make the most of the fresh mountain breeze**
- **We make use of low energy consuming appliances in the kitchen and laundry**

- **Guests are encouraged to change towels mid week rather than daily to help save energy and water consumption**
- **Fire pits which are fuelled with sustainable sourced timber are used rather than patio heaters.**

Renewable energy

On Necker Island we have already installed a small wind turbine on the island and plans are to install larger units as well as implementation of solar powered hot water and co-generation from other heat sources.

At Ulusaba Private Game Reserve we wanted to make use of the abundant sunshine the area receives to generate electricity while at the same time reducing our consumption. On arrival at Ulusaba guests are welcomed in a building adjacent to the airstrip which is 100% solar powered, as is our star-gazing observatory in the bush. Another initiative has been to

gradually remove all conventional light bulbs and replace with energy saving light bulbs. Currently they have managed to replace 30% of the light bulbs on property.

At Kasbah Tamadot solar panels were installed to heat the main swimming pool. This project reduced 40% of its oil consumption over one year. In addition they have now installed solar panels for pre-heating the domestic water. The forecast is to reduce this percentage again by 25% for the use of oil through the year. All exterior lighting uses LED bulbs (low energy lamps) and motion sensor lighting has been installed.

- **Dual flush toilets in all guest rooms**
- **Optimum flow showers and taps**
- **Our "Save Water" Towel re-use program in guest rooms**
- **Collection of rain water for irrigating the gardens**



Our efforts to reduce water consumption

Saving water

At Ulusaba we monitor use of water from a local borehole. It also makes use of a natural filter system for waste water - an oxidation dam on the reserve which recycles water back into the environment.

We've enlisted help from local children installing 2 x FunPumps so that whilst the kids play on the round-a-about, clean, drinkable water pumps directly from an underground water borehole.

The Lodge operates two big powered ventilation systems for the pool and Jacuzzi area. Latent heat from these systems is used to heat the water in the pool and Jacuzzis.

Kasbah Tamadot installed a water treatment plant which uses a natural oxygenation process coupled with an Ultraviolet Filter, which means that waste water can be made 100% safe and used to irrigate the gardens. Furthermore, the waste from the process is recycled and used as fertilizer for the fruit trees. "Save Water" cards are in each room to highlight ways in which guests can help the hotel reduce water by monitoring the number of towels they need changed. The hotel has also paid for a well to be installed in the nearby village as well as reliable power lines.

Water consumption has been reduced by approximately 35% in the last two years across the collection.

AT KASBAH TAMADOT IN MOROCCO THE SURROUNDING AREA HAS INCONSISTENT RAINFALL AND WATER MANAGEMENT IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ISSUE.

We have introduced the newest technology in solar water heaters, using solar panels to heat the water for our central hot water system, thereby reducing overall carbon emissions. We have also introduced a grey water treatment plant that treats our grey water and produces irrigation water to keep the gardens looking green.



What about our carbon emissions?

WE ARE INVOLVED IN EFFORTS TO REDUCE OUR EMISSIONS SUCH AS PROVIDING STAFF SHUTTLES FOR EMPLOYEES TO REACH THE PROPERTIES.

These are in daily operation at Ulusaba and at Kasbah Tamadot, and for staff living off Necker Island the staff boat makes morning and evening daily journeys. For those employees actually living on Necker Island or in Verbier near The Lodge the quickest way to get to work is to walk (in fact it's probably the only way!). Virgin Limited Edition does not operate any carbon offset schemes at present. Any carbon offsetting is voluntary for all guests.



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Maximizing Social and Economic Benefits

ACROSS THE VIRGIN LIMITED EDITION PORTFOLIO WHILST WE ACCEPT THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT WE AIM TO DO OUR BIT IN WHAT WE BUY AND WHERE WE BUY IT, ALWAYS STRIVING TO:

- purchase cleaning materials with low environmental impact
- purchase appliances with energy ratings from A+ to C (efficiency ratings to European Union standards)
- purchase refrigerants without CFCs or HCFCs
- purchase local produce whenever possible
- use wood from sustainable sources
- buy Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified fish or fish not on WWF's endangered list (i.e. from sustainable sources and not endangered species)
- buy Fairtrade produce where possible when not buying locally
- visit local suppliers and take steps to explore the procurement chain to ensure ethical policies and procedures are also being adhered to by our suppliers

Sourcing food locally

The percent of our food we serve from local sources varies according to



the operating territory as we operate in some of the most remote and less accessible locations – Ulusaba in the African bush and Necker Island at the extremity of the British Virgin Island chain. However 100% of items imported to Necker Island are sourced using locally-based agencies which group deliveries.

For Kasbah Tamadot approximately 90% of the food consumed at the property is sourced within Morocco and of this roughly 15% of this is directly from the local community. For example, all meats are sourced to European standards from Marrakech and its surrounding areas. Eggs are free range from a local supplier, fruit and vegetables come directly from the markets in the nearby village of Asni, and our own vegetable and herb gardens provides us with some of the essential spices.

At Ulusaba all products are sourced from within South Africa apart from a small number of internationally branded beverages and wines which are not normally sold in the region.



Spa products

In the spa treatment rooms we operate in all locations, the goal has always been to provide a local flavor, and we offer locally sourced,

organic and natural ranges in Morocco (Nectorome) and South Africa (Africology) which is made from natural products such as Marula Oil, African Potato, and Rooibos. In Morocco we bottle our own Argan Oil from trees indigenous to the area and this can be used both in spa treatments and also for cooking!

At Kasbah Tamadot, Ulusaba, The Lodge and Necker Island we offer a range of treatments from which 15% of the purchase price goes directly to the property's charity.

Local entertainment

All entertainment is sourced locally. Musicians play twice weekly at Kasbah Tamadot and local calypso bands entertain on Necker Island. A combination of our own staff and local entertainers wow our Ulusaba guests during the Bush Braais (that's barbecues to you and me!).

Handicrafts

Local entrepreneurs provide items for sale within our gift shops and for use in room and guest gifts.



We'd like to think we're known for support for community initiatives

Learning to speak each other's language

In the Atlas Mountains the native language is Berber, and with Arabic and French the other two dominant languages in Morocco there's not much time left in the school day to teach English as well.

Prior to the opening of Kasbah Tamadot Sir Richard Branson invited people from the local area to Kasbah Tamadot to learn English as well as hospitality skills with a view to the students then being taken on as hotel staff. The English classes were open to all comers regardless of whether they intended to pursue employment at Kasbah Tamadot. And it's not just the locals, cultural training is provided for expatriate members of staff, and some have made efforts to learn Berber, something few Moroccans from the cities ever attempt!

Giving back

Recent projects took Kasbah Tamadot even closer to the local community as it fully funds a number of projects in the neighboring villages including the refurbishment of the primary school in the nearby village of Asni. Kasbah Tamadot provides equipment and books which are essential for the education of the 700 children who have to attend schools in shifts due to lack of space and teachers.

Learning to swim

Despite being surrounded by water many of the children born in the British Virgin Islands are never taught to swim. The same holds for the children born near Ulusaba Private Game Reserve, but as they're in the middle of the African Bush their need is somewhat less pressing! We believe swimming is a lifelong skill everyone should possess, however, and staff members at both properties have donated their time to hold swimming lessons on a regular basis.

LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS

...in the Atlas Mountains

Eve Branson, Sir Richard's mother, leads the work of Virgin Unite in Morocco where they too have introduced various methods to assist the local Berbers. By partnering with local community leaders, Eve has spent time with the women in the nearby village of Tansghart and taught them skills so they can produce garments such as knitted goods and embroidered clothes. Kasbah Tamadot and Virgin Unite pay for two employees from the local community to help with Eve's projects and Kasbah Tamadot has also opened a Unite Maroc shop on site selling locally sourced and made souvenirs. All proceeds from the shop are then returned back to the projects.





... in South Africa

One project success story Pride 'n Purpose has been pursuing is for Cornelius, a local bead and wire artist. Pride 'n Purpose lent a hand by giving Cornelius financial support to buy his materials and also help with a business plan. He has since been busy creating key rings, placemats, bowls and South African animals, as well as coming up with new ideas. Cornelius has since visited the Richard Branson School of Entrepreneurship in Johannesburg and subsequently has received contracts to sell items at many of the neighbouring lodges in the Sabi Sand Reserve.

Education for all with help from Pride 'n Purpose

Pride 'n Purpose is Ulusaba's charitable arm, and we believe that early education is a fundamental building block for later learning. It costs just ZAR 600 (£54/\$88) to send a child to a crèche for an entire year however finding that amount can be a struggle for local families, especially those with several children. Pride 'n Purpose has a particular focus on pre-school and primary school education, and we have helped build three new crèches with 150 children now attending regularly. We also provide regular teacher training for the community's volunteer teachers as well as monthly food support for the villages. Many Ulusaba guests have

generously brought parcels for the children stuffed with essential goodies like paper, crayons, pencils, games and posters, all of which are gratefully received as they are in short supply! Pride 'n Purpose is working to set up a further two crèches and hopes to gain access to funds set aside by the South African Department of Social Welfare.

Tackling HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa

A partnership involving such diverse players as the US Government (PEPFAR/USAID), Virgin Unite, Anglo Coal, Virgin Limited Edition and the Ndlovu Medical Centre partnered in 2007 to advance a public-private partnership to mitigate the impact of AIDS and improve primary healthcare in the area near Ulusaba resulting in the construction of the Bhubezi Community Health Centre. The partnership has created a 'one-stop center' for basic primary health, TB, HIV/AIDS and malaria care at a local level. Collectively, the partners pooled approximately \$7.3 million to build the clinic and support its running costs. Bhubezi serves a community of 100,000 people from 12,000 households living in 21 villages and Virgin Limited Edition supports the clinic through its charitable arm Pride n' Purpose. In addition to staff from area game reserves the clinic also serves migrant mine workers, game and commercial farms, timber plantations, area pensions and the informal sector operating in the region.



WHEREVER POSSIBLE WE RECRUIT LOCALLY, OFFER INDIVIDUAL HOTEL AND VIRGIN GROUP BENEFITS AND PAY ABOVE AVERAGE WAGES IN EVERY TERRITORY. WE HAVE NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF CAREER PROGRESSION WITHIN THE PROPERTIES AND THE VIRGIN LIMITED EDITION COLLECTION.

Ulusaba

Ulusaba employs 107 staff, and of that 76 team members (72%) are from our surrounding villages: There are 55 men and 52 women, leading to about 60 households benefiting from at least one income. On average one salary will support nine other family members, with an estimated total supported of around 540 individuals.

Some Ulusaba success stories:

King Nhubunga: King started at Ulusaba as a gardener, worked his way up by volunteering to spend time in reception out of working hours until he was promoted to reception assistant. When the receptionist left, King took over the role. The

reception was moved to our new airstrip building giving King added duties and he took charge of all arrival and departure activities for the entire lodge. King was further promoted recently to Central Services Administrator.

David Khoza: David started work at Ulusaba as a waiter, was promoted to a General Assistant and later promoted to Safari Lodge Manager. David also won the AA Award for South Africa for being the person in the Hospitality industry who is most willing to go the extra mile. David now works as our Pride 'n Purpose Projects Co-ordinator (Pride 'n Purpose is Ulusaba's charitable arm).

Kasbah Tamadot

Before Kasbah Tamadot opened in 2005 most of the local residents had never worked in a formal job before and almost none spoke English however in the run-up to opening we organised English classes and training schemes in all aspects of hotel operations. It is estimated each person who works at the property can now support up to seven additional family members. Kasbah Tamadot employs 112 staff in total, 105 (94%) of which are from the local communities.

Necker Island

On Necker Island, 44 of the 66 staff (66%) are from the British Virgin Islands or the Caribbean region.



How do we keep our guests updated on all the initiatives?

Cultural briefings

The in-room directory at Kasbah Tamadot, called Marbha (welcome in Berber) includes plenty of information on the local customs and cultures including information on the most common Muslim traditions and practices. These include the fasting month of Ramadan and the importance of prayer which are key pillars of the Islamic faith. The directory also contains guidance on observing local customs when venturing beyond the hotel.



Newsletters

Much of the work being done by the various charitable arms at both Kasbah Tamadot and Ulusaba in particular is communicated in a variety of ways. In addition to our blogs which are updated on a regular basis there are also printed newsletters made available to guests at Kasbah Tamadot. We also make use of social networking sites, in particular Facebook, to get the message out on what we're working on.

iPads at Ulusaba

Anyone who's spent time in Europe or North America over the past couple of years will have noticed the large number of Apple-made 'smart devices' everyone seems to be carrying round. At Ulusaba we want to make sure we stay ahead of the technology trend, and so we've developed an iPad application we're calling our 'in-room concierge' – so much of the content will be similar to our existing printed in-room directory, but that's just the beginning. There is a lot more content which will educate guests on the landscape, maps of the reserve, daily itineraries and plenty of facts on the game which our team of Rangers and Trackers have written for us. When they are ready they will initially be offered to guests staying in some of our suites at Rock Lodge.

Rolling up your sleeves and getting involved...

AT ULUSABA, WE'VE INTRODUCED "VOLUNTEERING SAFARIS" FOR GUESTS TAKING THE ELEMENT OF "GIVING BACK" TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

Prior to their stay guests can find out which projects are ongoing to coincide with their dates and skill set! Whether it's painting a crèche or local home to creating a kids play area, all help is gratefully received and invaluable. Arrangements will be made for project participation during the guests stay. Aside from this while staying at Ulusaba, guests can go on a variety of community tours with all proceeds donated to the local community.



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Supporting Cultural and Natural Heritage

Lemurs on Necker Island

Due to ringtail lemurs quickly becoming extinct and as part of a worldwide effort to preserve the species, Sir Richard Branson recently chose to bring a small group of these animals to Necker Island ahead of relocating them to nearby Mosquito Island so they can breed and the species can be maintained. Since their arrival in mid-2011 there has already been one local group of schoolchildren who have visited the colony.



Saving the white rhino

South Africa is one of the last bastions of rhinos in the wild, and the white rhino's northern cousin has effectively been destroyed by hunting, with only a few still surviving in captivity. Ulusaba is lucky enough to be sited in an area where white rhinos are still free to roam, but the threat to their lives is constant. Ulusaba Ranger Samjohn Ramsden and his partner and Ulusaba Head Beauty Therapist Melanie Oosthuizen recently took part in an annual cycling challenge riding 360km over two nights in Namibia to raise awareness for the plight of the white rhino. 100% of the funds raised will be going towards the Save the Rhino Trust and towards the Sabi Sand Anti Poaching team.

Arbor Month

At Ulusaba the guest experience goes beyond the adventures of the bush and into the lives of the surrounding communities as it joins forces with Food and Trees for Africa (FTFA) to celebrate 'Arbor Month' for the entire month of September each year. Pride 'n Purpose, Ulusaba's charitable arm, invites guests staying during September to buy and help plant 400 shade and fruit trees in households located within the local village of Dumphries. In 2010 fundraising totalled ZAR 35,000 and the target of planting over 400 trees achieved. Guests are able to get their hands dirty by helping to plant a tree themselves! Each guest is asked to pay ZAR450 which includes the community tour as well as the purchase and planting of a tree. Once a tree has been planted, Ulusaba will happily update those involved on the progress of the tree and the family. If there isn't time to plant a tree, one can be planted on a guest's behalf by a member of the Ulusaba team for only ZAR 100.

How our guests can help...

The Virgin Limited Edition blogs

All properties in the Virgin Limited Edition collection have at least one blog tied into the property's website, and in some cases more than one. Each blog is generally written by a member of staff on property and is a mix of news and updates. The 'Bush Telegraph' blog at Ulusaba alerts our guests to what efforts are ongoing to preserve the reserve for future generations, especially with regards to issues like rhino poaching.



How we aim to support cultural heritage, events and traditions

Supporting the Berber language and culture

Since Kasbah Tamadot started operating in 2005 we have made attempts to make sure the Berber language was prominent in all our marketing collateral, especially as until very recently it was not officially recognized by Morocco's government despite being spoken by at least 7 million of its citizens.

The sole official language in Morocco until very recently was Arabic with French being used on a de facto basis in many business situations and in higher education. In the hotel all the rooms and tents have individual Berber names, as do the restaurant (Kanoun), the spa (Asounfou) and even the in-room directory (Marhba). Within this directory we include a page on basic Arabic and Berber phrases and encourage guests to

practice on the Berber members of staff. The Berbers are renowned for their hospitality which is why a stay at Kasbah Tamadot is designed to feel more like a stay in a private home, and communicating this message has been a key goal of our marketing efforts.



ULUSABA TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY ITS POLICY TOWARDS CONSERVATION AND THE SURROUNDING AREA'S NATURAL HERITAGE BY:

- Respecting the natural habitat through controlling the number of game drive vehicles on the road minimising the impact that the vehicles have on the habitat.
- Avoiding unnecessary off-road driving and when there is off road driving avoiding driving over micro eco systems such as termite mounds.
- Monitoring the condition of all wildlife species on the reserve in order to alert wildlife or local veterinarian services of any diseases or potential life threatening situations for the animals.
- Working with the local communities to protect the animals from poachers.
- Improving the local environment through the implementation of organic food gardens.



ULUSABA PRIVATE GAME RESERVE IS SET IN THE HEART OF THE SABI SAND GAME RESERVE IN SOUTH AFRICA. WORKING ON A NON-PROFIT BASIS, PRIDE 'N PURPOSE IS ULUSABA'S CHARITABLE ARM COMMITTED TO HELPING DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES LIVING ADJACENT TO THE RESERVE.

Pride 'n Purpose's work is achieved both through the provision of basic needs, such as access to food, water and health services, and by empowering communities with sustainable development initiatives. Pride 'n Purpose works with the community to provide HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria education and support; care for orphans and vulnerable children; food security; water solutions; early education and mentorship of local entrepreneurs.

Some of the achievements so far include:

- Two Literacy Centers opened at the local primary schools that both include a library and computer classroom
- Over 35,000 people across six communities benefit from Pride 'n Purpose. 3 x Crèches opened for 171 children
- Six OVC homes completed, supporting 29 children, many of whom are orphans
- An additional 60 permanent jobs created through the creation of a health clinic and various other ad hoc employment opportunities
- Three local entrepreneurs have been encouraged and supported to open their own businesses
- Five permaculture organic food gardens has been created which now help to feed approximately 1,500 people

