GREENER CHOICES

SUSTAINABLE LUXURY EXPERT JULIET KINSMAN SHARES SOME INSIGHTS FROM HER ECO-TRAVEL PLAYBOOK.

A founding editor of stylish-hotel guide Mr & Mrs Smith, London-based Juliet Kinsman has developed a singular understanding of sustainable luxury travel over her two-decade-plus career as a journalist. Among her more recent ventures is Bouteco (*bouteco.co*), an online platform that profiles design-led hotels with exceptional eco-credentials; she also serves as sustainability editor for *Conde Nast Traveller*. And September saw the launch of her new book, *The Green Edit: Travel*, part of a series in environmentally friendly living by the UK's Ebury Press. It's a slim but essential volume filled with Kinsman's expert guidance on how we can all travel more consciously and responsibly once it's safe to do so again.

DA: *What should travelers keep in mind when considering carbon offsetting?*
Juliet Kinsman: There are plenty of online calculator tools that enable us to determine how much carbon our trip is guilty of spewing out and then suggest paying an offsetting service so that we can romantically imagine our flight has been "cancelled out." The thing is, it's rarely as effective as it sounds. As Alexa Poortier, the founder of sustainable travel portal It Must be Now, always says to me, carbon offsetting is only a Band-Aid that buys us time. But better to offset than not, so I recommend the NOW Offset Carbon tool powered by South Pole [*itmustbenow.com*].

DA: *In* The Green Edit*, you single out Newfoundland's Fogo Island Inn as a "blueprint for a new model of luxury hospitality." What other pioneering hotels are on your radar?*
JK: The Datai Langkawi in Malaysia. I visited this extraordinary resort a couple years ago after it had implemented a slew of ambitious sustainability initiatives. I was wowed, and not just by the way the sleek design sits so harmoniously within an ancient rain forest. Their closed-loop zero-waste system is trailblazing, particularly in a corner of the world where organic refuse is often dumped into the ocean by folks thinking it's fine as it will act as fish food, but in fact is terrible for those ecosystems. As part of its highly advanced sustainability and outreach programs, The Datai has set up partnerships with local NGOs and social enterprises to support their environment efforts. It also works with local schools to educate children on green practices. The education of the younger generations in every corner of the world is crucial to a sustainable future.

DA: *What can travelers do to ensure that the money they spend stays local?*
JK: According to the United Nations, for every US$100 spent by a tourist from a developed country, only $5 typically stays in the local economy of a developing country. So try and leave as much cash with local businesses as you can. Visit markets instead of supermarkets, book guesthouses directly rather than through international chains, and buy eco-friendly indigenous crafts straight from the maker or artisan.

DA: *In what ways do you see travel changing post-pandemic?*
I would hope that since we'll travel less, we'll travel better, and we'll go away for longer and engage in a more meaningful way with the places we visit and the people we meet along the way. I also see a shift toward trusting established operators who can account for every link in their supply chain — Intrepid Travel, Responsible Travel, and Regenerative Travel come to mind. Those agents can intuitively cut through greenwash and really ensure you make the most of every moment away. ◉

TIM EVAN-COOK