

FITNESS NUTRITION WELLBEING TRAVEL ECO SPA **FREE**

# Liv.

HONG KONG'S WELLNESS MAGAZINE

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**IT'S OUR  
FIRST  
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as reviewed by an  
exercise newbie

## Caring Cambodia

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FUDGE  
RECIPE?**  
we show  
you how

# Eat clean now!

We meet Hong Kong's  
new superfood gurus

**WIN** spa treatments, dining vouchers and gourmet goodies on page 14





*LIV | MORE*

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## *WISH YOU WERE HERE?*

This dreamy scene is from **Song Saa**, a private island getaway in Cambodia. Not only does the resort focus on health and wellness as a priority, it's all made from sustainable raw materials and is committed to protecting the marine reserve it calls home. Plus, Song Saa assists the local community by providing healthcare, education and agricultural supplies. Find out more on p.34.





◀ Explore rural Cambodia with AboutAsia Travel

✓ Song Saa's private villas are all made from ethically sourced raw materials



## THE FINE PRINT:

The training program costs about US\$1,900 per student, per year. The Shinta Mani Resort covers 50 percent by allocating US\$5 from every room per night to the center, which covers administrative fees and salaries. Donations usually provide for the remainder of the tuition. Rooms from US\$162 per night. Learn more at [shintamani.com/foundation](http://shintamani.com/foundation).

## The Issue: The Environment

While mass tourism hasn't quite caught up with the coast of Cambodia, the remote islands in this fragile ecosystem are facing threats of overfishing and deforestation.

**Song Saa Private Island's** founders Melita and Rory Hunter stumbled upon the little island in the Koh Rong Archipelago on the promise of a clear Scuba diving site. "While circumnavigating the area, we stopped off on this island where there was a small community," recalls Melita. "The head of the family was talking about how it was over-

fished and how he wanted to return to the mainland to farm rice. So he asked us, 'Do you want to buy my island?' And so we did".

As Melita and Rory explored the island, they encountered residents and offered to pay them to help clean up the rubbish. "We talked to the islanders about setting up a marine reserve that would protect this big coral reef that's thousands of years old," says Melita.

Six months later, the Hunters began noticing some promising changes. "We started seeing this beautiful white sand emerge from under all the black rubbish," says Melita. "It went from nothing to an abundance of sea life: we have huge barracudas, little baby sea turtles, sea horses and spotted stingrays".

While legalizing their ownership of the island, Melita and her husband came up with the idea for Song Saa Private Island: a private island escape with just 27 villas. An interior designer, Melita designed the place herself, making use of naturally occurring resources, such as sandstone and driftwood - all beautifully re-imagined to suit the rustic location.

The Hunters later established Song Saa Foundation, a registered

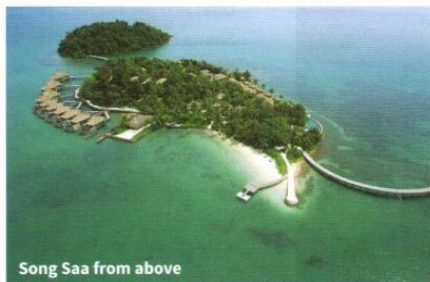
nonprofit which addresses problems in three key areas: sea, land and people. Among its many projects, the foundation has created a marine research center, developed reforestation initiatives, built waste management facilities on nearby islands and implemented programs to conserve and study the surrounding marine life.

"There will always be the kind of tourism that is not so sensitive", says Melita. "But there has been a ground swell of 'conscious travelers' coming to Cambodia looking for operators who give back, respect the people, and take a restorative approach to tourism".

Song Saa's  
private  
beach

## THE FINE PRINT:

Approximately 0.5 percent of Song Saa Private Island's gross operating profit funds the Song Saa Foundation, with the rest covered by donations, charity campaigns and the hotel's "Journeys of Change" program that donates the profits of three four-night stays per month to the Foundation. All-inclusive rates from US\$1,440 per night, based on double occupancy. Learn more at [songsaafoundation.org](http://songsaafoundation.org).



Song Saa from above