



PRÍNCIPE ISLAND

Sustainable Tourism

Sustainability
Team work
Authenticity
Respect
Safety



ROÇA

SUNDY · PRÍNCIPE ISLAND

A SWEET NEW PLACE TO STAY - LOVINGLY RESTORED COCOA PLANTATION HOUSE ON THE AFRICAN ISLAND OF PRÍNCIPE

A beautifully restored cocoa plantation house on the tiny island of Príncipe in West Africa will be opening its doors in April, offering an affordable tropical eco-retreat comprising just twelve ensuite rooms for lovers of nature, sustainability and escape. Back at the start of the 20th Century, Roça Sundry was a splendid estate house at the heart of one of the largest cocoa plantations on the islands of Sao Tome and Príncipe, which together make up Africa's second smallest nation. For much of the 1900s, the islands were one of the world's largest producers of chocolate, but following independence from Portugal in 1975, cocoa production diminished significantly. Today, the plantation houses (Roças) more often provide a focal point for local communities to meet and live in and around the spacious squares that are created within the walls of these gracious architectural structures.

At Roça Sundry, the two main houses have been lovingly restored, primarily by local craftspeople using mainly recycled materials. Over 90% of the staff have been recruited from the local community, following an intense 12 month training at the Azores Tourism School. The rooms, which sleep between one and six people, have been furnished with traditional colonial style pieces and all have spacious balconies overlooking the square or the lush garden. The villagers of Sundry use the Roça's square for gathering and games and guests will be welcomed to mingle, join in with a game of football or just sit and observe the comings and goings of local life. In the lush and shady garden, there's a statue of Albert Einstein – and with good reason. Einstein's theory of relativity was confirmed for the very first time here by an experiment carried out by British scientist, Arthur Eddington during a solar eclipse in 1919.

Beyond the house, activities on offer include half and full day hikes through the UNESCO biosphere reserve; whale and dolphin watching tours, birdwatching, snorkeling, kayaking, cookery courses, massage and yoga. Guests are encouraged both to support and participate in the local community through activities including jewelry making, matting, canoe-making, traditional dance and fishing with local fishermen. Sundry Roça will also offer a Cacau & Coffee Route showing the complete process of chocolate making, from the harvest until the final tasting.

The restaurant will feature a menu created from locally sourced, organic produce grown within the property's own garden or fairly negotiated with local producers. As you would expect, there will be a strong focus on dishes using the high quality, organic chocolate that is still produced by a handful of producers across the islands.



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São Tomé and Príncipe is little known in the UK, yet easily accessible with direct daily flights from Lisbon with TAP Air Portugal. The country offers white sand beaches, jungle hikes, a UNESCO biosphere reserve, pretty fishermen's villages, colonial architecture and wildlife that includes whale watching, turtle nesting, mona monkeys and the African grey parrot.

Five years ago, South African entrepreneur, Mark Shuttleworth, invested millions in the country, creating its first high quality accommodation and investing in local communities and infrastructure, including a new airport. Whilst his involvement has reduced now, the commitment to sustainability through his company, HBD, remains strong and the creation of Roça Sundry is part of the sustainable tourism plan developed by HBD in partnership with the Regional Government of Ilha do Príncipe.

A one-night stay at Roça Sundry will cost from 220€ on half board basis, at Plantation house yard view.

For reservations visit www.hotelrocasundy.com