



Castara Retreats

CARIBBEAN ECO LODGES

REGENERATIVE TOURISM STRATEGY 2024_2025

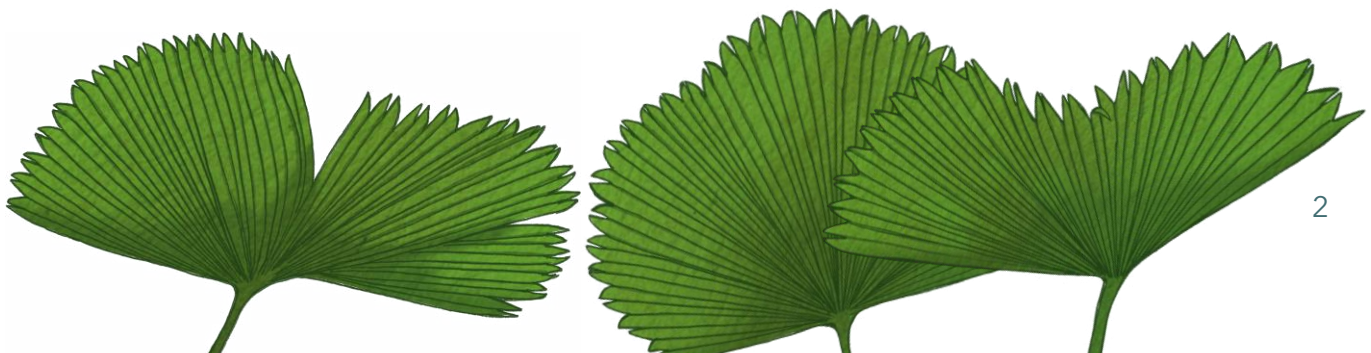
VISION

Castara Retreats is a regional role model for the regenerative tourism accommodation sector, resilient, prosperous, and inclusive, thus inspiring a 'community of practice' which shares the opportunities of tourism to benefit local culture, our environment, and economy.



REGENERATIVE TOURISM STRATEGIES

Environmental	1.	Improving biodiversity, ecosystem-services, climate change resilience, and conservation in the North-east Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
Social	1.	Improving social justice
	2.	Improving livelihoods and wellbeing in our host community
	3.	Supporting individual wellbeing of staff and clients
Governance	1.	Engaging and empowering staff to embrace and implement activities aimed at achieving Castara Retreat's Regenerative Tourism Vision
	2.	Informing our tourism stakeholders
	3.	Improving fair working conditions and staff recognition
	4.	Meeting the Green Key Certification Criteria



STRATEGY 1

Improving biodiversity, ecosystem-services, climate change resilience, and conservation in North-east Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Activities:

- Form a long-term, income sharing partnership with an experienced, networked, and reputable local NGO strengthening its conservation and regenerative development efforts in the North-east Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve by providing unrestricted financial support.
- Attract BSc or MSc students to annually evaluate the impact of CR's Regenerative Tourism Strategies.
- Adhere to relevant national legislation and international best practise in the areas of environment and health (as far as applicable and achievable).

STRATEGY 2

Contributing to social justice.

Activities:

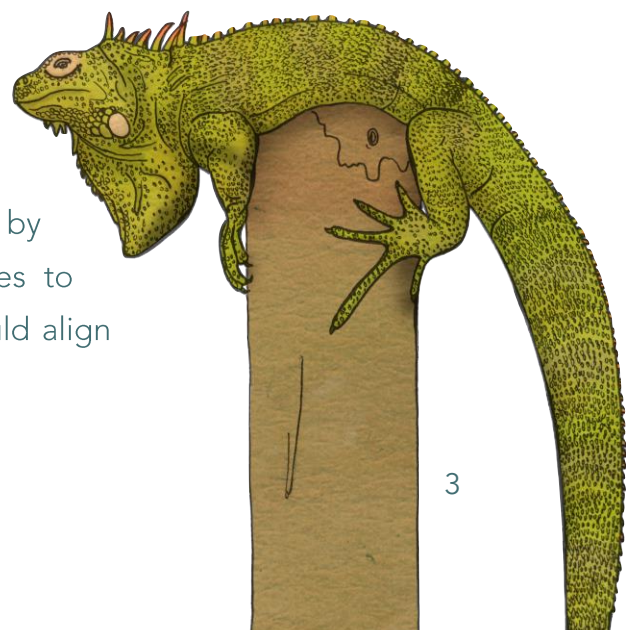
- In recognition of all that Castara Retreats, as a British Enterprise, has received from Tobago and in reparation for historical harms caused by colonialism on Tobago, even before our company existed, we commit to provide annual funding for local projects to protect and enhance local culture and biodiversity.

STRATEGY 3

Improving livelihoods and wellbeing in our host community.

Activities:

- Support one Castara-based entrepreneur per year (in response to request) supported by providing operational guidance and linkages to CR's clients. The selected entrepreneur should align



with CRs social and environmental guidelines, and provide products or services that are of interest to CR clients.

- Provide information on community-based products and services to CR's clients via website, virtual concierge (if applicable), signage, etc. to encourage local spending.
- Support quarterly engagements at the Castara Primary School through outsourced school outreach experts to raise the awareness of children on the challenges faced by nature as the climate changes as well as tourism opportunities and inspire them to become climate activists and champions.

STRATEGY 4

Supporting individual wellbeing of staff and clients.

Activities:

- Provide incentives to encourage staff to take up CR's health and wellbeing offerings in the yoga studio and restaurant.
- Offer at least one capacity building incentive to support wellness department staff to enhance their professional experience and qualifications.
- Expand the current offer of complimentary therapies.
- Expand the number of in-house residential yoga retreats offered through building on existing networks and word-of-mouth promotion.
- Design and facilitate an immersive mindfulness experience set in the surrounding rainforest.

STRATEGY 5

Engaging and empowering Tobago and UK staff to embrace and implement activities aimed at achieving Castara Retreat's Regenerative Tourism Vision

Activities:

- Engage a local NGO with demonstrable regenerative tourism expertise to monitor and mentor the



implementation of CR's regenerative tourism strategies on the local level.

- Hire an Assistant to the General Manager & Regenerative Tourism Manager, responsible for coordinating the implementation of Castara Retreats' Regenerative Tourism Strategies and liaising with the above-mentioned NGO partner organisation.
- Publish CR's Regenerative Tourism Strategies, evaluate against defined indicators (e.g., "activities") and update annually.
- Recruit an experienced hotel professional as general manager, based in Tobago, with a positive person-centred approach and the values, creativity, and drive to lead Castara Retreats to its sustainable future.
- Improve the capacity of staff to use their increased personal knowledge to inform and inspire guests regarding CR's regenerative efforts as well as health and wellbeing offerings in the yoga studio and restaurant.
- Ensure that the local management team understands and embraces CRs sustainability agenda before the strategy will be published
- Set SMART quarterly milestones and empower all local staff to implement those.
- Involved all staff (Tobago and UK) in quarterly training and development workshops to enhance their knowledge and understanding on sustainability, and to participate in setting sustainability objectives year on year.
- Encourage all staff to implement CR's regenerative tourism strategies in their roles and challenge bad practice.
- Strengthen the restaurant team's capacity in sourcing, provisioning, storing, and delivering a modern Caribbean menu driven by locally sourced, low waste, sustainable principles.
- Strengthen restaurant leadership and management capacity through either developing current staff members and recruiting a qualified professional.



STRATEGY 7

Engaging our tourism stakeholders.

Activities

- Publish CR's Regenerative Tourism Strategies on our website to inform tourism organisations and individuals interested in promoting Tobago, Castara community, and Castara Retreats as a green destination.
- Make information about Green Key visible for guests and staff onsite and online including information on how they can play a part and including the opportunity to compensate their emissions through a local carbon offset scheme or donations.
- Optimise CR's website regarding searches for green accommodations in the Caribbean.
- Leverage CR's PR and marketing networks to internationally promote Castara community and the North-east Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve as a community-led green tourism destination.
- Accumulate international and regional recognition, through achieving awards and certification for sustainability/green practices. .
- Leverage the 2024 Blue Flag/Green Key annual global conference in Tobago to promote Castara and the North-east Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve as a green destination, and widen our network of international partners
- Update agent networks and booking platforms on Castara Retreats' sustainability credentials so they are better prepared to identify and promote Castara Retreats as a green destination of choice.
- Inform and engage visitors about and in our regenerative tourism goals and provide options on how they could play a part.
- Leverage PR/media networks to promote Castara Retreats and the North-east Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve as an eco-destination with sustainability and protecting biodiversity at the heart of its tourism strategy.



STRATEGY 8

Improving fair working conditions and staff recognition.

Activities

- For Tobago staff, adhere to all national legislation and best including equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practise regarding labour conditions.
- Equitably hire women, differently abled, and vulnerable persons including in management positions.
- Maintain CR's commitment to employing at least 90% of our staff for all roles from the local community.
- Implement a bonus programme to create the feeling of stewardship amongst employees with payments determined by annual profit, length of employment, and annual performance.
- Continuedly support staff members to become stakeholders in tourism through establishing their own tourist-facing services at Castara Retreats, promoted to guests as a means of enhancing individual livelihoods and financial autonomy.
- Build staff capacity to take up alternative job opportunities through the induction and on-the-job training meeting international eco-resort standards at Castara Retreats.

STRATEGY 9

Meeting the Green Key Certification Criteria.

Activities

- Annually review the [Green Key Certification Criteria](#), and ensure that all mandatory criteria as well as an increasing number of optional criteria is met resulting in an annual renewal of the Green Key Certification.

