



Teresa Beall Expeditions

...Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take,
but rather by the places and moments that take our breath away.

Date: April 2007
To: Utterly Sophisticated Travelers
From: Teresa Beall Expeditions
Re: It's beach time! 11 Seaside Locations for those who don't take their sand lying down

For one person, perfection is eight hours on the beach and lolling in the sun with nothing more strenuous to do than get through the latest Oprah's Book Club selection. To the next person, that's 28,800 seconds of unmitigated hell – boring, wasteful hours better spent exercising or adventuring. Usually, these two people are married to each other. Fear not: Divorce is not the (only) answer. I've uncovered 11 great beach locations, each with a pulse-quickening activity near at hand – whether it's sea kayaking, hiking or hitting golf balls. So whether you're happier bodysurfing or chaise lounging, you'll both be having fun in the sun.

EXPLORING THE ABYSS:

- The Sport – Scuba diving and snorkeling
- The Arena – Turks + Caicos
- The Adventure – You can spend your entire time on wonderful beaches, but that would be like ignoring the inviting world just beyond your towel. Diving the Turks + Caicos is like plunging into a 166-square-mile aquarium, putting you face-to-face with parrotfish, grouper and horse-eyed jacks, and maybe even a humpback whale or hammerhead shark. In fact, these islands southeast of the Bahamas lay claim to some of the world's best snorkeling and diving. They have both shallow coral gardens and 12,000-foot trenches with dozens of dive sites, including the notorious 7,000-foot Wall and a dive trip to an 18th-century British warship. Snorkelers can drift along the offshore coral reefs whenever your whims (and the tides) dictate. Just don't get too overambitious... In these waters of the deep, you never know who might be hunting whom <cue music: theme from "Jaws">.

KISS THE SKY

- The Sport – Kiteboarding
- The Arena – Essaouira, Morocco
- The Adventure – Imagine a section of Marrakesh's mysterious medina moved 100 miles west (next to the sea) and you're picturing the ancient town of Essaouira where the smells of couscous and lamb mingle with the scent of ocean spray. Old and new influences intermesh here, especially as you look past the docked fishing boats to a newer type of seagoing, er, apparatus. Essaouira's steady but gentle 20-plus-knot winds are ideal for kiteboarding. The rock-free bottom and current-less bay make for a safe learning environment. Start off on the sand to learn the particulars of kite control before entering into the brisk sea. After several hours, you might graduate to a board. (Might is a key word: It isn't as easy as it looks.) Later, enjoy a spa treatment in local hammam. You'll need one after fighting a kite all day!

THE GREAT PADDLE

- The Sport – Sea kayaking
- The Arena – San Blas Islands, Panama
- The Adventure – With rhythmic strokes of a paddle, you're propelling a candy-colored kayak through gleaming turquoise waters. Ahead is an island of palm trees and simple wooden huts, but what you don't see is a hotel, casino or a boom-box beach blowout. This is sea kayaking along Panama's remote



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San Blas Islands, off the country's Caribbean coast. Panama has been earning a reputation for its great nature-bound adventures, à la Costa Rica and things are only getting better. Explore parts of the archipelago belonging to the indigenous Kuna people. Paddlers will encounter authentic villages, wonderful beaches for pitching a tent and snorkeling just offshore, and hundreds of untouched coral reefs. The kayaking is easy, just three to five hours a day, allowing for lots of time to interact with the friendly Kuna. And still not a boom box in sight.

RIDING GIANTS

- The Sport – Surfing
- The Arena – Bali, Indonesia
- The Adventure – The sport of surfing is as much about the mind as it is about the body. But surfing in Bali, where dramatic volcanoes, terraced rice paddies and Hindu temples face the lacy waves, is plain mind-blowing. For beginners, the tame beach breaks around the bustling town of Kuta are best. And, I guarantee you will be standing after your first lesson. Experienced surfers should head south to Uluwatu, where six- to eight-foot reef breaks crash in from the Indian Ocean. When you get home, you'll be able to honestly say that the beaches in Bali spirited you away.

THE GRAND ASCENT

- The Sport – Hiking
- The Arena – Washington State
- The Adventure – A stroll on the beach may be enough for most folks, but you aim higher. Hiking the coastal strip of the Olympic National Park is a Jack-be-nimble trick with scrambles over slippery rocks, leaps across tidal pools and traipses through coastal rain forest. (There are also sandy strips for the occasional sunbathing break – just to keep everybody happy.) The driest months are August and September and you'll encounter the fewest fellow hikers along the South Coast. Or you might go for the 17-mile North Coast Beach Travelway. It's mostly flat, but you'll need to ford rivers, climb rope ladders, and hoof a few steep pitches, which can be tough to do when you're gaping at the ocean and the bald eagles overhead. No need for a cheap paperback to put you to sleep at night, though - the park allows tents on the beach, so you can let the sound of the waves do it for you.

THE GRAND DESCENT

- The Sport – Mountain biking
- The Arena – Dominica
- The Adventure – The Caribbean doesn't necessarily summon images of labor-intensive pursuits, but one of the most divine experiences on this Caribbean island lies far above the golden halo of beaches. The 290-square-mile island of Dominica (which is between Guadeloupe and Martinique) has elevations of more than 4,000 feet allowing views of both the Atlantic and the Caribbean. Engage in daylong mountain-biking trips where you're trucked up to 2,000 feet and then bike down (so you won't work too hard). You'll be following dirt roads through the dense, beautiful mix of banana, avocado and mango trees, plus the occasional dip in a rain forest river for washing off the sweat and grime.

MASTER THE WIND

- The Sport – Sailing
- The Arena – Captiva Island, Florida
- The Adventure – While everyone else on Florida's Gulf Coast is stooping for seashells and trying to keep out of the wind gusts, you're on a 26-foot sloop...taming them. Even novice sailors can be coached in the art of trimming sails and differentiating which side of the boat is starboard (that's "right" to you landlubbers). You can choose from courses that teach you how to sail, race or bareboat (<http://www.ebare.com/bareboat-charters/xsplitwhatisbareboating.htm>), spending six hours a day on the water. Happily, I'll assure that your night berth is on solid ground!



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REELING IT IN

- The Sport – Fly-fishing
- The Arena – Isla Holbox, Mexico
- The Adventure – Isla Holbox is 40 miles northwest of Cancún, but it might as well be in another galaxy. The only things gone wild on this 26-mile-long island are the untouched beaches and the natural conditions for tarpon fishing – this is some of the best in the world. Here, spring break means gliding over the baby-blue depths for baby tarpon; summer sees fishermen netting whoppers of well over 100 pounds. Should one tire of hoisting up trophies, there are also snapper aplenty. I'll get you to the prime tarpon spots, allowing up to eight hours a day on the water. Not that you have to; I did mention the nice beaches too, right?

GET TEED OFF

- The Sport – Golf
- The Arena – Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- The Adventure – Ever since Tiger Woods teed off from the heliport of Burj Al Arab, the tallest hotel in the world, in 2004, Dubai has taken on a deep mystique for duffers. Shoot, if they've got alpine skiing in a snow dome, why not golf? The over-the-top city has seven public 18-hole outdoor courses, from the Bedouin-tented Emirates Golf Club, a stop on the PGA European Tour, to the Robert Trent Jones, Jr., designed Al Badia Golf Resort, where rivers of sand spoon with lakes and streams. But you'll never forget you're in the Middle East with mosques and minarets (and lots of construction cranes) serving as the backdrop. And, at Dubai Country Club, the greens are soaked in oil – really – for a much slicker shot! When it's time to get out of the sun, throw your clubs down and retire in one of the many Arabian Nights fantasy hotels. Remember, though, Dubai parties at night... change out of those plaid pants, please.

FLIP IT GOOD

- The Sport – Wakeboarding and waterskiing
- The Arena – Santa Rosa Beach, Florida
- The Adventure – The Gulf of Mexico's churning waves make it great for beach lovers, boogie boarders, and kiteboarders. But if you're a wakeboarder or waterskier who craves glassy surfaces, you're outta luck. So in 1985, some avid carvers built two 20-acre lakes in northwest Florida's Santa Rosa Beach. The satin-smooth waters are now the home of the Pickos Water Ski & Wakeboard Center, where world champion Cory Pickos trains both kids and adults in the two sports. Through 20-minute intensive lessons, you can learn basic skills, i.e. balance, stance, rope control, or show-off moves of grabs, spins and flips.

HANDLE YOUR BALLS

- The Sport – Tennis
- The Arena – Kiawah Island, South Carolina
- The Adventure – Thwock... Scuffle... Thwock. Perhaps the only thing more hypnotic than the crash of waves is the sound of a tennis match, particularly when you're crushing your opponent near the beach. Some 30 minutes from Charleston, South Carolina, Kiawah Island Golf Resort serves up 23 clay and five hard courts at two separate clubs, surrounded by palm trees, Spanish moss, and, oh, yeah, water. It's a tennis player's paradise (particularly if that tennis player would rather hit the salt water postmatch). How about a practice court with machines that not only toss tennis balls but pick them up afterwards? Now that's luxury! Singles and doubles alike score with round-robins Monday through Friday, mini-camps on weekends, and drill sessions every day of the week. There are plenty of nearby ace accommodations.

Let Teresa Beall Expeditions help orchestrate your journey of "beaching it" around the world.

Call us – 530-342-6999!