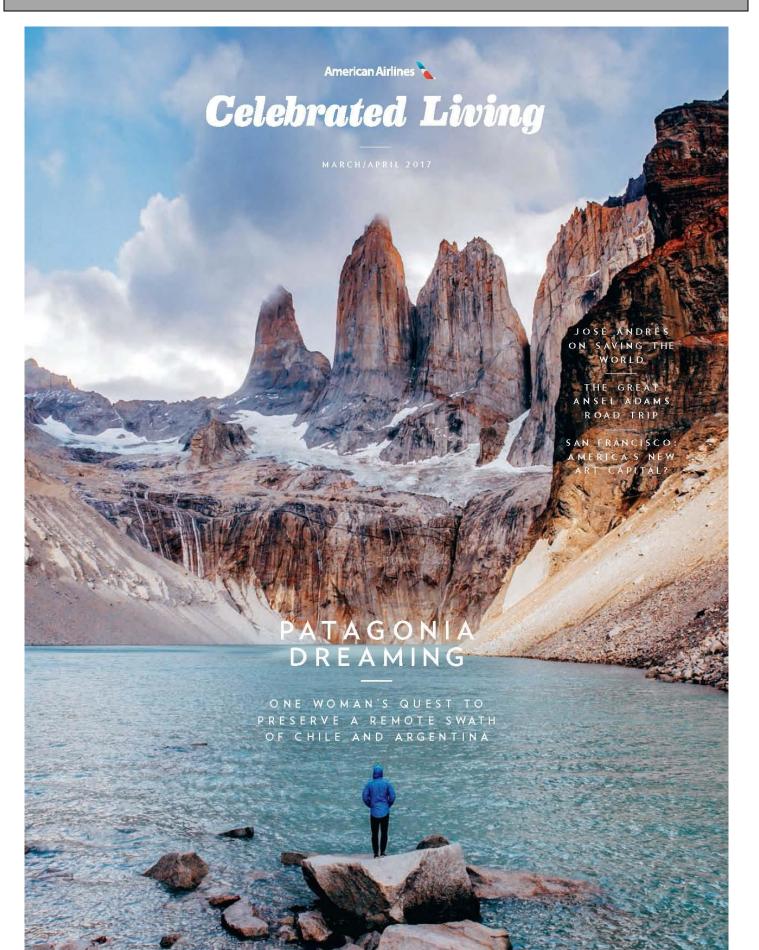


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FOOD

Fancy foraging

A new culinary trend invites resort guests to visit nearby gardens and plantations to commune with their food

wooden basket in the crook of his arm, chef Michele Martino strolls about the vegetable garden at Helena Bay, a luxury lodge that opened last November in New Zealand's unspoiled Northland. He stops at a Napolitano basil plant, plucks a purple leaf, savors its spicy fragrance. "Bellissimo," he sighs, and kisses his fingertips.

He's not just hamming it up. Moments later, the Italian chef directs guests from the lodge to pick succulent eggplants, plum San Marzano tomatoes, delicate zucchini blossoms and whatever else might appeal to their



palates. "Allora, for a chef, it is a dream to wake up in the morning and harvest what he will cook that day," he says, "and to share that experience."

Farm-to-table has become a familiar culinary mantra. Now, many high-end hotels are taking the idea further by having guests not only dine on fresh produce, but also see, touch and smell the place where their food is produced. At Helena Bay's 800-acre retreat, this involves hiking around hills shimmering with grass, upon which Wagyu cattle and sheep roam freely, and visiting organic gardens with the head chef to snip, uproot and pluck what will end up on people's plates in just a couple of hours.

For its part, Peru's Inkaterra Hacienda
Urubamba's contemporary take on haciendas
invites guests to visit its 10-acre plantation,
where produce like quinoa, heirloom potatoes
and medicinal herbs thrive at 9,515 feet above
sea level. It fits the location, Sacred Valley,
where Incans experimented with innovative
farming for millennia.—CBANKY KWAK
helenabay.com: inkaterra.com

CULINARY



Winvian Farm,
Connecticut
A working farm is at the
heart of this Relais &
Châteaux member, tucked
away in the Litchfield Hills.
Its organic gardens supply
the property's "seed-totable" menu and provide a
stage for cooking classes.
winvian.com



Jade Mountain,
Saint Lucia
The coastal Jade
Mountain combines a visit
to the island's famous
Sulphur Springs with a
stop at the resort's organic
Emerald Farm, where
the drupes and herbs from
the dinner table grow.
Jademountain.com



Aleenta Hua Hin
Resort & Spa, Thalland
The eco-friendly Aleenta
minimizes its carbon
footprint by cooking with
solar ovens and hot sand.
All the food is grown
within 20 miles of the
property, including at its
innovative co-op farm.
aleenta.com/huahin