



# the jungle



José Koechlin The conservation activist behind Peru's Inkaterra on inventing eco-tourism

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he first time I went to the Amazon I was ten years old. It changed my life. I remember it clearly: it was organised by a Jesuit mission. Oddly enough, I recall the priests carried a portable projector on the trip, and we'd watch Laurel and Hardy movies in faraway villages in Andean cloud forests. This was 1956. And I was amazed. I knew then I wanted to be here; to work in nature, for nature. Later in my life, I decided tourism is how I would do that. I would bring people to Peru, and use the money to support the local culture and its biodiversity.

The big break came in 1971 when I met Werner Herzog. He had a grant to make a film on Lope de Aguirre, the mad conquistador who led a Spanish expedition to find the fabled El Dorado in the 1500s. I've always believed in the power of cinema to promote a destination. So I offered to co-produce the movie. We did a deal on a handshake. Released in 1972, Aguirre, the Wrath of God was one of Werner's first features and was a big hit in Europe. It played in Paris for three years. And, as I suspected, visitor numbers to Peru increased. So I opened my first resort in Madre de Dios in the Amazon



Using tourism as a way of supporting the environment was a new idea, but so was using a movie to advertise a destination

rainforest with a concept that didn't exist at the time: "eco-tourism".

That was 1978. The idea that tourism could conserve the environment and local culture was totally new. But it's how all of Inkaterra's eco-lodges operate: sustainable development, with all the money going back into ecological research to understand and support Peru's biodiversity. And it's incredible. Since we opened, we've recorded 934 bird species, 313 butterfly species, 365 ant species, the list goes on... Our inventories have added 29 new species to science since the 1970s. And we're still learning. That's why, this summer, we opened Inkaterra Guides Field Station in the Tambopata Nature Reserve. We realised travellers had changed: they knew the world was changing with climate change and they wanted to get more involved, learn more. So our new resort is more like a lab, really, and it allows our guests to work alongside our scientists to really understand what they're doing. But it's also a chance to connect with the power and beauty of one of the most diverse natural environments on the planet. And get the same feeling I had as a young boy: real awe. It might just change your life.

inkaterra.com



# Sleeper hits



**Emily Price** The Fast Company tech writer on three apps taking on Airbnb



#### Overnight

What? Lets you rent "sameday stays" from members of your own social network. Tell me more Instead of potluck with a random host, you can opt to crash in your Facebook bud's swish Manhattan studio. Extras Trust is a valuable commodity. Plus, while you don't have to be connected to a host to rent, there's special mates' rates if you are. The upshot For last-minute stays, a solid contender.



## FlipKey

What? A big player in the high-end home-share market. It's also owned by TripAdvisor. Tell me more On the face of it, it's pretty much the same as Airbnb, but it claims its listings are way better. Extras It also shows flight and hotel deals, so you can see how a private condo stacks up next to a nearby five-star. The upshot The focus on quality-only listings is a boon, and the more sign-ups, the better it will become.



## Onefinestay

What? Posh, plush and usually pricey stays in London, New York, Paris, Los Angeles and Rome. Tell me more Like a luxe do-over of Airbnb, basically, with some seriously swanky stays on its books. Extras It's set to merge with French home-share app Squarebreak to mount the biggest counter-strike yet against Airbnb.

The upshot Promised fast growth makes it a good bet.