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Where the **WILD(ER)** things are II

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Dear Friends,

This month we continue to look at the incredible experiences that visitors can have deep in the heart of Guyana's rainforest, but with a big difference...this time it's from my personal experience!

Yes, I recently took a 5-day expedition into the remote, removed, remarkable Amazon rainforest, staying at the Mapari Wilderness Camp. In all honesty, a trip like this is way out of my comfort zone, but I had an incredible time. Being able to disconnect from the modern world and be surrounded by untouched nature was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Read all about it in this month's feature article.

Don't forget to check out the 'Guyana in the News' Section to see which 'top destinations for 2020' lists we made.

Happy 2020,

Jane Behrend

Lead Representative, North America

PERSON OF THE MONTH: Delene Pearl Lawrence



If there is one thing you can say about Delene Pearl Lawrence, it's that she is involved. While her primary job is serving as the Manager of Caiman House Lodge & Field Station located in Yupukari Village, Delene is also actively engaged with local education, conservation and women's health projects.

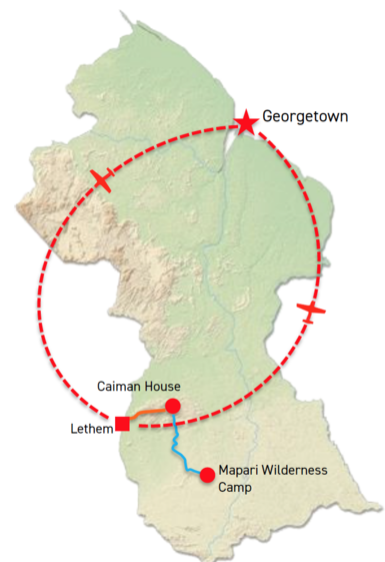
The Yupukari native is a member of the Village Council. She received her education at the Bina Hill Institute, where she studied tourism and business.

Delene is deeply invested in ecotourism as well. With all of this on her plate, she works tirelessly every day to help make her community a better place for both its members and those who come to visit.

FEATURED ITINERARY

A 6-DAY MAPARI EXPEDITION

This short, custom-built 6-day trip is perfect for those with limited amount of time wishing to get into the Kanuku Mountains Protected Area. You will enjoy all the pleasures of the remote, pristine Mapari Wilderness Camp, a hammock camp overlooking a small waterfall. Includes a final night at the Caiman House.



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WHERE THE WILD(ER) THINGS ARE II



Mapari Wilderness Camp is not your typical lodge. It is a remote and rarely visited place where wildlife presents themselves at every turn. Mapari is a hammock camp overlooking a small waterfall within the Kanuku Mountain Range. The mountains are in the southern half of Guyana and divide the Rupununi into northern and southern savannahs. In other words, it's out there.

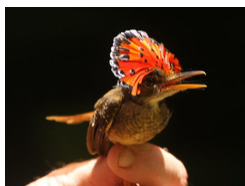
"We went for four days without seeing another human being," says Jane Behrend, Lead Representative, North America for the Guyana Tourism Authority. Jane recently took a 5-day expedition to Mapari and reports back with rave reviews. "We saw giant river otters, Brazilian tapir, two Harpy Eagles, a goliath frog, the largest ant in the world and the largest spider in the world."



The centerpiece of the Mapari Wilderness Camp is a 60'x20' thatched building with no walls and a sand floor. The building can accommodate up to 10 hammocks, which are provided (along with mosquito netting). "I was really concerned about sleeping in a hammock," Jane says, "but it was surprisingly great. I never realized a hammock could be so comfortable. A tip: sleep diagonally."

Meals are prepared by local cooks and served on a raised deck overlooking the creek and falls, which also provide a natural bathing pool. (As a slight nod to civilization, the camp utilizes a generator to keep perishables fresh and beer cold.)

Days at Mapari are spent bird watching, taking nature hikes, or going on boat rides – river drifts as they call them, each accompanied by experienced guides,



all English-speaking residents of local indigenous communities, who share their stories of the forest, its people, and its wildlife. Nights are spent around a campfire or taking a quiet river ride in quest of nocturnal denizens of the rainforest.

The Mapari Wilderness Camp is a joint partnership between Ashley Holland (founder of Guyana Truly Wild featured in [last month's newsletter](#)) and the local indigenous community that owns the land. This partnership and traveler visits directly help to sustain

and protect this environment by creating conservation-based training and employment for locals.

“Mapari is a dream for birders and people who want a wild experience,” says Jane. “We were well taken care of, and it’s an incredible opportunity to experience a virgin rainforest in its raw form - no roads, no lodges, no other tourists, just us, the river, the forest, and its wildlife.”



VIDEO OF THE MONTH

This short, but dramatic video will introduce you to not only the Mapari Wilderness Camp, but also many of the wildlife species you’re likely to encounter there. Spoiler alert—baby Harpy Eagles are, well...interesting.



GUYANA IN THE NEWS



The Telegraph (UK): has named Guyana as one of 20 global destinations that [travelers simply must visit](#) in 2020.

"In a world so connected, it's hard to imagine there are places still under the radar. But Guyana, a tangled mass of pristine rainforest on South America's north-eastern tip, is one of the few spots on scratch maps likely to have its shiny foil intact ... this stalwart of sustainability is determined to keep its true treasures safe."



Conde Nast Traveler named Guyana as one of the [20 Best Places to Go](#) in 2020.

"Though it has plenty of reasons to stand out—as South America's only English-speaking country, and with a strikingly diverse population of Indian, African, Chinese, European, and Amerindian descent—Guyana has long hovered under the radar. But this relative quietness isn't going to last long."



Travel + Leisure placed Guyana at No. 21 on their list of the [50 Best Places to Travel](#) in 2020.

"Guyana's unique offerings recall the Costa Rica of 40 years ago: nighttime ride-alongs with naturalists who are trapping and tagging wild caimans; horseback rides on the savanna in search of anteaters; stays at indigenous-owned eco-lodges in picturesque mountain villages. Over 75 percent of the country is rainforest and about seven percent is savanna, which means there's plenty of opportunity to catch a glimpse of one of the 900 animal species that make it their home."



January 2020

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