

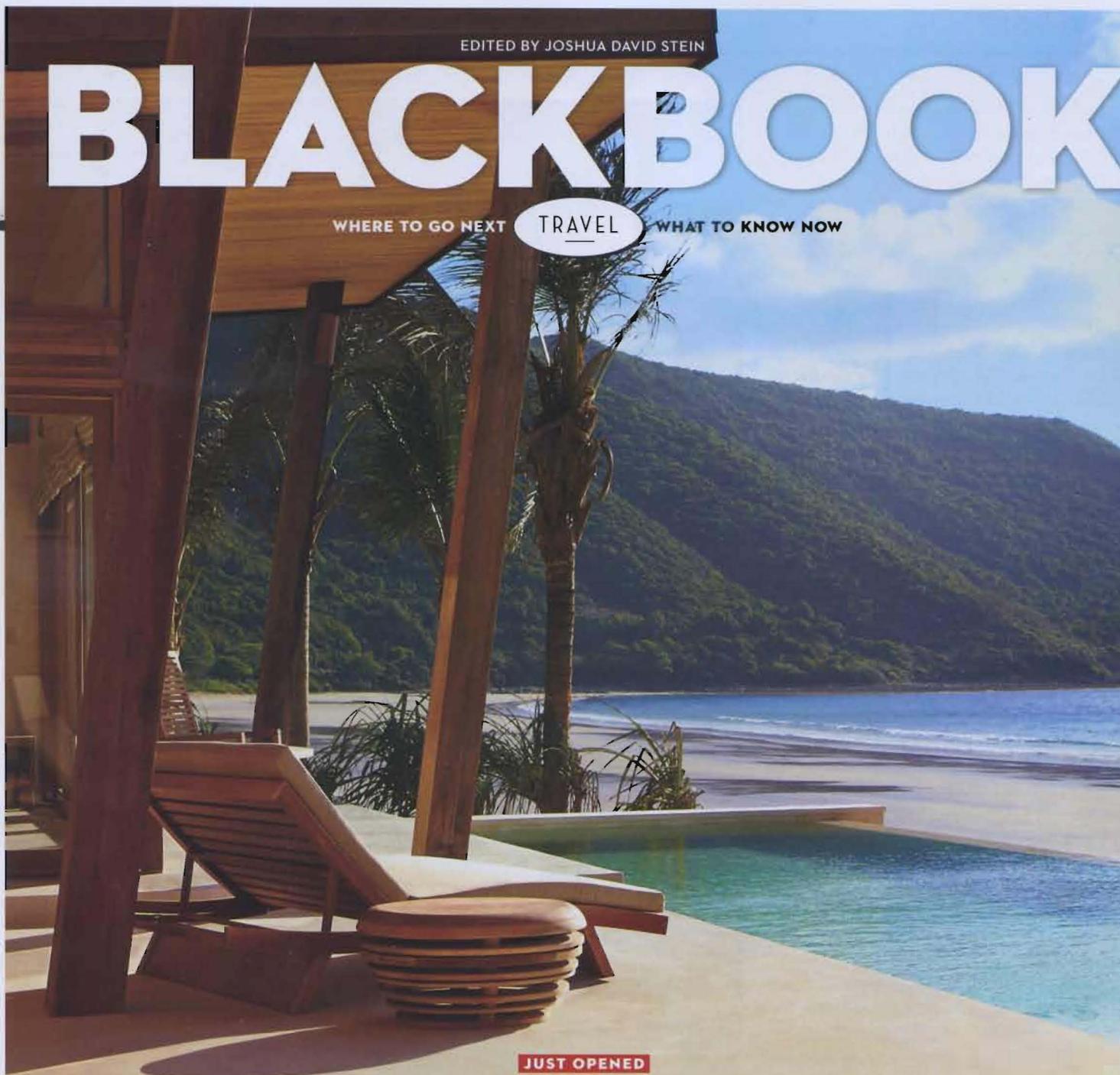
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BLACK BOOK

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WHAT TO KNOW NOW



JUST OPENED

Resorting to Vietnam

On a remote island off the Vietnam coast, the new Six Senses Con Dao is the perfect marriage of luxury and sustainability. **CARI GRAY** reports.

We just missed Brangelina. The Jolie-Pitt clan left Vietnam's remote Con Dao archipelago right before my husband and I arrived, and there they apparently enjoyed an active yet low-key holiday.

We had the same plan when we booked a delayed honeymoon at the new Six Senses Con Dao, part of a boutique resort chain known for its sustainable yet stylish practices. **CONTINUED »**

Located on the island of Con Son, just a 45-minute flight from Ho Chi Minh City, the 50-villa resort, which sits on a private golden-sand beach against the gorgeous backdrop of an elephant-shaped mountain, nevertheless feels like a world away from the urban chaos. Each one-, three- or four-bedroom villa boasts an infinity pool, an outdoor shower, a wine fridge, wireless Internet, local paraben-free bath products and bikes for exploring the area. The villas have been designed to allow natural ventilation, which encourages guests to sleep without the need for air-conditioning. And the quietly elegant beachside dining room features nightly specials ranging from sushi buffets to torch-lit seafood barbecues.

There's no need to sacrifice luxury for **SUSTAINABILITY AND GOOD HEALTH.**

Six Senses chairman Sonu Shivdasani is committed to proving there's no need to sacrifice luxury for sustainability and good health, and he's working hard to make all his properties carbon-neutral by 2020. In another nod to sustainability, Six Senses Con Dao employs mostly local staff, and our butler, Thuy, kept us busy, scheduling massage appointments, cooking classes and activities outside the resort.

Most of the Con Dao archipelago is a protected marine and national park and features some of the best diving and snorkeling in Vietnam. Unfortunately, unseasonable winds kept us from swimming among the fish, but we did enjoy bodysurfing in the South China Sea, followed by massages at the Six Senses spa and adventures in the jungle. Led by our petite powerhouse guide, Ha, we hiked along narrow paths, where the chattering of squirrels and the calls of playful monkeys created an exotic sound track. A delicious dinner awaited us back at Six Senses, as did our king-sized bed and the lap of ocean waves, all of which provided a coda of exquisite serenity. ■

DETAILS

Six Senses Con Dao is a 45-minute flight from Ho Chi Minh City, via Air Mekong or Vietnam Airlines. Rooms start at \$600; 84-64/383-1222; sixsenses.com.



An oceanfront villa; a beach-view bedroom; the pool of a four-bedroom villa.

