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JUST FOR C A N A D I A N

DOCTORS

life + leisure

SUN + SPICE IN
GRENADA

HOT + COLD IN
KOOTENAY

win

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Waterproof Pocket
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+ a Tilley
gift pack!

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- + TANGO in
Buenos Aires
- + LONDON
calling
- + EUREKA in
ARKANSAS

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inside: CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION CALENDAR

where will you meet? LONDON / TEL AVIV / BALTIC / MACAU / BERLIN >>

plunge in! Immersed in *Spanish* in Costa Rica

It's distracting when monkeys hang from the trees over your homework. At the Intercultura campus in Samara, Costa Rica, there are many things to take your mind off studies: a surfing beach just outside the gateway, water so warm you barely feel it, yoga and salsa dancing after school. It's a wonder that any homework gets done: but you can't avoid learning Spanish here.

The classes are not a push over. Spanish *only* is spoken, and class size is six or less. This is not

the place for those wanting to hide in the back and listen. Cheating is difficult since most of the other students are from Europe and speak little English. Instructors patiently draw out the most reluctant speaker. They are imaginative communicators, so students always know, more or less, what is going on.

Ticos are friendly and patient people, and the village locals are accustomed to being interviewed by students on assignment. Students can live with a family, and

augment their learning with stories told around the dinner table. (Everything is more dramatic in Spanish!) But be warned, this may not be the most comfortable choice. Some families are friendlier than others, and all live simply, no air-conditioning, bugs in the bathroom, and bland cooking.

Intercultura's students are part of the community and contribute to the local economy in several ways. Many of the instructors are from nearby, and the school itself is integrated with the village.

The school's donations range from roof repairs to computers for the elementary school, and they also provide art and music programs for local kids on campus.

No question, these week-long, immersion classes are a memorable way to learn more Spanish. Just watch that the monkeys don't eat your homework. —Janet May

For more information, check out interculturacostarica.com and samaralanguageschool.com

classroom

sunny days

the quite culinary CAYMAN ISLANDS

food fest For those well travelled, the Cayman Islands is a destination long known for culinary excellence. These three idyllic islands, tucked in the western Caribbean, have a loyal following of repeat visitors who enjoy an array of top-drawer dining options. The tiny trio of islands has over 150 dining choices, offering both locals and travellers great diversity, quality and selection.

Grand Cayman is the home to Seven Mile Beach, a seemingly endless strip of white powdery sand and impossibly blue water. As each sun-drenched day comes to a close, the scene transitions from the beach to the culinary offerings along West Bay Road, and more recently, to George Town's Camana Bay. Restaurants and patio lounges fill with patrons seeking custom cocktails and dining options that rival South Beach, Vancouver or Toronto. What other sun destination can offer eight Wine Spectator-rated restaurants within a few miles of each other?

Those close to the food scene in Grand Cayman speak of a culinary renaissance—an urban chic movement—that is drawing international attention. Newly built Camana Bay, a town development adjacent to the capital city of George Town, has stunning modern design, upscale shops and a vibrant urban sensibility. There's a definite vibe happening here on the patios and long bars of Abacus and Michaels Genuine Food and Drink at cocktail hour. And a quick trip over to Morgan's Harbour takes you to casually swank Osetra Bay,

a chic waterside dining experience with flowing white linen gazebos and a hip indoor lounge. It's uptown in a beautifully relaxed Caymanian way.

Foodies will flock here this January, when the Cayman Islands host the world's most talented chefs at the third annual **Cayman Cookout**. Venerated **Chef Susur Lee**, touted by *Food & Wine* magazine as "one of the best chefs of the millennium," will be featured alongside Chef Eric Ripert (creator of the acclaimed restaurants, Blue and NYC's Le Bernardin). Representing Canada, Lee was personally invited by Ripert to join what has become an unparalleled experience for gourmands and oenophiles in Grand Cayman.

Cayman Cookout, sponsored by the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman and *Food & Wine* magazine, is a four-day feast of epicurean experiences including demonstrations, tastings and excursions, as well as personal encounters with participating world-class chefs and sommeliers. This year's super-star line-up, hosted by Ripert, includes Lee along with culinary masters Anthony Bourdain, José Andrés, Rachel Allen, Michael Schwartz, Charlie Trotter, *Food & Wine* magazine's Gail Simmons, and wine and spirits experts Ray Isle, Anthony Giglio, Denis Cakebread and Bo Barrett.

For such an idyllic Caribbean setting, the Cayman Islands clearly enjoy a secure footing in the international culinary world—and polished Canadian travellers are quickly catching on. Join the feast!

The Grand Cayman Cookout takes place January 13 – 16, 2011. Go to caymanislands.ky/cayman_cookout for more information.



Osetra Bay



Chef Susur Lee



Abacus