

SAMPLE

GROUP TRAVEL
 Clockwise from left: Crystal Cruises in Antarctica; an Abercrombie & Kent safari; Elizabeth Dearborn Hughes at the Akilah Institute for Women; Zoë Tryon with the Achuar.



RAIN FOREST IMMERSION

British activist **Zoë Tryon** has been organizing frequent expeditions deep into the Ecuadoran rain forest for more than a decade. The trips mix first- and third-world transport—helicopters and dugout canoes—with long stays in lush eco-lodges and remote villages that are home to tribes like the Achuar and the Kichwa, whose territories have now been opened to oil company bids by Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa. Travelers participate in village life, drinking chicha and performing shamanic rituals, and then go out and help set up freshwater cisterns to provide an alternative to groundwater that has been poisoned by previous drilling by the likes of Chevron and Texaco.

LIVING WITH A FAMILY

What **Global Citizen Year** offers requires more than travel. Participants spend a year with a family in a rural area of Africa or Latin America. The program is designed for students as a bridge year between high school and college. Those who are accepted must raise \$2,500 from commitments in their own community, and then, after an eight-day boot camp at California's Occidental College and Stanford University, live for nine months with a host family while working on local initiatives such as digital literacy, health clinics, and agricultural projects. •

GIVE AND GO

Some people on vacation like to roll up their sleeves and pitch in. Here are a few ways to lend a hand and travel the world at the same time. **BY KEVIN CONLEY**

FIVE-STAR VOLUNTOURISM

It's not news that there are spectacular tours available at the highest levels of luxury. But it may be surprising to learn that two of the best of these outfits—**Crystal Cruises**, a Japanese company that offers white glove accommodations on its two liners (private balconies, personal butlers), and **Abercrombie & Kent**, a British company that creates bespoke itineraries, some including private jets, with expert guides (archaeologists at Machu Picchu, primatologists in Uganda)—can help you set aside time to visit and participate in local relief efforts or ecological projects all over the world, including Antarctica.

WORK & PLEASURE ECO-TRAVEL

For those ready to commit to serious and active engagement, several far-flung tours include involvement in local relief efforts and ecological projects. **Terra Incognita Ecotours** will combine, say, whitewater rafting on the Sarapiquí in Costa Rica with visits to the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve; in Rwanda you can track the endangered mountain gorilla with Gorilla Doctors, then

visit the Akilah Institute for Women, which readies rural people for the workforce. **Elevate Destinations** offers a menu of hands-on service in hard-hit places such as Haiti, Borneo, Cambodia, and Namibia.

HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Alexander Souri is the son of a French mother and an Indian father who was packed off to a military school in the foothills of the Himalayas as a boy, and only came back to the region after he'd gotten fed up with producing films. He has created **Relief Riders International**, for which he leads regular two-week rides on Marwari horses to the remotest regions of the Rajasthan desert in northwestern India. Those who sign up for the rides help provide all manner of relief, from delivering deworming medicine and educational supplies to helping doctors provide free dental care and cataract surgery in hardscrabble areas where an entire village can live below the international poverty line (\$1.25 a day).

TO THE RESCUE Alexander Souri, of Relief Riders International, leads a trek through the Rajasthan desert.



GAVIN FORD (SAFARI); JONATHAN TORGOVNIK (AKILAH INSTITUTE); MARC LECUREUIL (SOURI)