

# ELLE

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THE BLUE ISSUE  
DESIGNERS GO ECO-CHIC

SUMMER PREVIEW  
THE BEST JEANS, SANDALS, DRESSES & SWIMSUITS  
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## ELLE JET-SETTER

Oakes meets a chameleon outside the Forest Center



## SPIRITUAL HOME: MOZAMBIQUE

A model-turned-activist finds herself in Africa

Ask model Summer Rayne Oakes, 24, to describe East African nation Mozambique and she'll tell you: "Imagine the entire United States eastern coast but with white sand beaches." And though the 5'10" Brooklynite can rock a bikini, she's not rolling in the African surf for *SP*'s next swimsuit issue—she's at the Mezimbite Forest Center, a community workshop in the desperately poor central Sofala Province, run by her South African business partner, Allan Schwarz. "Seventy-five percent of the forest has been obliterated by foreign loggers, so we plant, and train locals to create high quality housewares out of stump wood," says Oakes, who has become deeply attached to her work-heavy visits. "It's liberating; I could hitchhike the length of Mozambique without being afraid." (This is the country that Leonardo DiCaprio spoke of so fondly after filming *Blood Diamond* there.)

Oakes, a Planet Green channel host, has also just transformed organic cotton, jute,

hemp, tagua nuts, and recycled rubber into surprisingly pretty shoes for Payless.

Her annual commutes to Mozambique are tricky. She flies into Johannesburg and then drives or flies to Maputo or Beira. Once she arrives, here's where you'll find her.

**STAY:** At the built-on-stilts Flamingo Bay Water Lodge in Inhambane; at blissful eco-boutique-hotel Azura, which reopens after renovations this July ([azura-retreats.com](http://azura-retreats.com)); or pitch a tent at the Mezimbite Forest Center

**EAT:** At Zambi in capital city Maputo; at the Hotel Escondidinho in Ilha de Moçambique; or with friendly locals who catch and cook rainbow fish for a few meticaís

**SHOP:** For artisan-made products and Oakes' BOM lip balm at Mezimbite Forest Center ([allanschwarz.com](http://allanschwarz.com) and [bom-mozambique.com](http://bom-mozambique.com))

**SEE:** The museum Palácio de São Paulo, a former governor's place in Ilha de Moçambique; whale sharks up close at Barra Reef; lions at Gorongosa National Park ([gorongosa.net](http://gorongosa.net))

—JULIE VADVAL



Vases from the Forest Center

View at the Azura

AD Schwarz "Wave" bracelet

Oakes and Schwarz laugh with locals

BOM lip balm

Wedge for Oakes' Zoe & Zac Payless line



**WHERE I HIDE** "In a book. Reading has always offered me escape, more than films or TV; right now I'm entrenched in the CIA in Norman Mailer's *Harlot's Ghost*."—January Jones, on her favorite carbon-neutral getaway. Support Jones, in her important new role as Oceana spokesperson, and healthy oceans, at [oceana.org](http://oceana.org).

## HOW SLOW CAN YOU GO?

Slow travel, an offshoot of the slow food movement, encourages people to commit to one European destination per trip for a week or more, and to explore in concentric circles, first becoming familiar with the inner

circle, rather than dashing to distant must-sees. The latest recession-friendly iteration promotes such travel in North America, and a new generation of serene green inns, both urbane and luxe-rustic, has sprung up to serve adherents, like the Hotel Casa Bianca in Montreal (right) and Bardessono in Napa Valley ([bardessono.com](http://bardessono.com)). —MIRANDA PURVES



The new all-electric Mini E is the slow travel vehicle



A non-cloying B&B from which to languidly explore Montreal ([casabianca.ca](http://casabianca.ca))

## Now, Eco Voyager

Hostess gift solved! POP Earth. It's made from sustainably farmed grapes, the bottle is lighter than usual (less freight, pollution), and the recycled paper label is as tasteful as what's inside. \$49.99. [pommery.com](http://pommery.com)



Azura: courtesy of Azura; vases, bracelet, lip balm, and Payless wedge: Len Laguar; Jones: © Jeff Vespa/WireImage; Casa Bianca: Luna Begli; remaining images: courtesy of subjects