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SHOBA NARAYAN

## KEY NOTES: OUR NATIVE VILLAGE, INDIA

11.16.07

This **20-room rustic hideaway** bills itself as India's "only 100 percent eco-friendly back-to-basics lifestyle resort." In plain English, that means solar power, windmills, composting, bio-gas plant (no, it doesn't smell), organic gardens, and a "zero-waste" policy that recycles everything including water from washbasins and toilets to irrigate the garden. A couple of hours from Bangalore, where I live, it attracts young techies who seek its peace and solitude before they go back to being "Sam" or "Carla" at their tech-support call centers.

### WHAT'S THE BIG WOW?

The beds are supremely comfortable for rooms so Spartan. The massive Indian folk art paintings that adorn the walls of every room are wonderful. The all-natural swimming pool uses no chemicals for its maintenance and is kept clean through aquatic plants that oxygenate and regenerate the water.

### LIKED BEST:

The fresh mango juice made from organic local mangoes—the best I've had, and that's saying a lot for someone who lives in India. The cheery staff who, thankfully, don't sport that earnest holier-than-thou air that seems to permeate every eco-resort.

### LIKED LEAST:

The earnest holier-than-thou signs that explain everything from how the bio-gas plant breaks down "slurry" to how the windmill works. The simplicity of the decor was refreshing, but the place could use some style.

### WHO SHOULD STAY THERE?

Earth mothers, do-gooders, tree-huggers, and anyone who wants to save anything will be perfectly at home here.

### WOULD YOU GO BACK?

Not until I feel the need to buy more carbon points.

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