

GO GREEN

RICHARD HAMMOND'S

Top five green operators for active breaks...

» **Wilderness Scotland:** Specialising in adventure holidays to the Highlands and Islands, it starts many of its trips at train stations, to encourage guests to travel by rail rather than fly. It also provides financial support to the John Muir Trust, a nature conservation organisation, and Trees for Life, which works to preserve and restore the Caledonian Forest. www.wildernessscotland.com

» **Nature Travels:** Focuses exclusively on small-scale, low-impact eco-tourism in Sweden, including kayaking off the coast of West Sweden, ski touring in the mountains of Dalarna and timber rafting down the Klarälven. It's operated by locally owned partners in Sweden using only guides and services from the area. www.naturetravels.co.uk

» **Symbiosis Travel:** Runs small-group trips to South-east Asia offering alternatives to standard package tours, such as trips to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands as well as more mainstream destinations, such as Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia. It works with locally owned and operated businesses, and pledges to ensure tourism income filters back to the local community. www.symbiosis-travel.com

» **Adventure Alternative:** This Northern Irish firm runs small group adventures to Kenya, Tanzania, Borneo, Russia and Nepal. It won an industry award for its long-term development plans for two rural village communities in the Nepalese Himalaya, where it helped build a hydro-electric plant and improve facilities at schools, as well as set up a medical camp. www.adventurealternative.com

» **Tropic Ecotours:** An Ecuadorian operator that's pioneered small-scale trips to meet remote nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes in the Amazon, such as the Huaorani (with whom it's helped set up a small ecolodge and 3,000-hectare nature reserve) and more recently the Secoya People in the upper Amazon Basin. It also runs walking trips in Ecuador, from the cloud forests and highlands of the Andes to the mangrove forests on the Pacific Coast. www.tropiceco.com