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SWA  
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CRAFT:PEGG  
ANOTHERARCHITECT  
LADR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
JAMES CORNER FIELD OPERATIONS  
KAMEL LOUAFI LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTS  
RANKINFRASER LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE  
CIVITAS AND W ARCHITECTURE &  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
BUREAU B+B IN COLLABORATION  
WITH ORSO.PITRO ARCHITECTS



# Mukul

SWA



At Mukul, maintaining the dry rainforest and placing the mountaintop casitas in a way that preserved as much of the native mountain as possible was a primary concern. Most of the buildings were built on stilts versus traditional foundations - an exercise in grading and building placement. Cuts into the mountain were minimized and great efforts taken to preserve the beach, existing trees and wildlife habitats. There was special consideration for the beachfront development not to disturb any turtle nesting areas. Years of studies were done in advance of design to identify specific “envelopes” for construction, where an advantageous combination of sun and wind would reduce excessive use of energy for cooling or heating. Gray water provides irrigation. And while sustainability was a guiding principle, so was luxury. The landscape architects ensured stunning views for every guest, breathtaking paths through the wilderness surrounding the resort and carefully arranged the placement of structures to ensure maximum privacy for guests.

SWA provided resort design and landscape architectural services for Nicaragua’s secret “Mukul,” a 25-acre retreat poised to become the hideaway of choice for a new generation of travelers seeking authentic and sustainable destinations.

The design team brought sustainable design principals to this pristine portion of Nicaragua by connecting the built environment to the land. The design minimized disruption of the site, maximized preservation of the native flora and the site’s many geologic features, and repaired disturbed vegetation.

The area’s rich and varied botanical species were rearranged to create an environment alive with seasonal change, vibrant with color, and perfumed with garden fragrance. Structures are designed to optimize natural ventilation, collect rainwater for treatment and reuse, and harness solar power for the electrical vehicles and bicycles used for transportation around the site.



*For travelers seeking luxury compatible with their values, here is a twist on the “eco-luxury” story: how landscape architects employ sustainable, low-impact development practices at high-end resorts.*





**MUKUL**  
**Guacalito, Nicaragua**

Landscape Architect | SWA  
Client | Pellas Development Group  
HKS Architects  
Architect | HKS Architects  
Size  
Site | 25 acres (10 hectares)  
Project | 18 acres (7.3 hectares)

Photography | David Lloyd