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Panama's Morrillo Beach Eco Resort Leads the Way in Sustainable Travel

Former Colorado ski patrollers pursue their dream to create adventurous and meaningful travel experiences for guests

 Samantha Bryant, Neighbor

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Cari and Ryan Mackey, owners of Morrillo Beach Eco Resort (Morrillo Beach Eco Resort)



[Morrillo Beach Eco Resort](#) began as a dream for former Summit County and Telluride, Colo. ski patrollers Cari and Ryan Mackey. Their passion for outdoor adventure and deep appreciation for the people and culture of Panama inspired them to turn their vision into reality. Today, Morrillo Beach

Eco Resort, a five-time recipient of the prestigious TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice "Best of the Best" award, has become a haven for travelers seeking meaningful, nature-inspired experiences. Morrillo Beach Eco Resort, located in Morrillo Beach, Panama, prides itself on being much more than a hotel. The resort's commitment to ecological practices defines its identity as a true boutique eco-resort.

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“Living in a Spanish-speaking country was something we had on our bucket list, but we weren't always planning on operating a business, much less building one. Like many ski-town people, we would pack up a car with our friends, grab our surfboards, and head to Mexico for a month because it was warm and dry,” said Cari Mackey, Morrillo Beach Eco Resorts Owner. “We then started traveling to South America to kayak in April or October for the off-seasons. That's when we really became inspired to run a business that would allow us to have a lifestyle that was easier on our bodies than ski area work and living. We knew it had to be what we called “soft adventures” like surfing, hiking, snorkeling, and cultural adventures so that families could safely experience adventures and nature,” she added.

Located in a region renowned for its unspoiled beauty, Morrillo Beach Eco

Resort is nestled on a jungle hillside with easy access for guests to enjoy a wide range of activities. From surfing, stand-up paddle boarding, sea kayaking, snorkeling, exploring nearby Cerro Hoya National Park, [Panamanian immersion experiences](#), waterfall and boat tours, [goat milk soap lab tours](#), and cooking and weaving classes, there is something for every guest.

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Beyond the plethora of activities, Morrillo Beach Eco Resort allows guests to fully appreciate nature by participating in eco-initiatives. The resort's team is deeply passionate, dedicated, and committed to protecting the jungle that surrounds it.

“Our goal in sharing this magical place with our guests is to create an inspiring workplace, all while motivating others to be part of conserving our beautiful planet. Our mere existence, business, and resort’s infrastructure impact the land, but we have strived to minimize this impact and maximize coexisting with the wildness surrounding us,” added Mackey. “Travel

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needs to change. Conscientious travelers need better options. We believe in this kind of paradise where one is sheltered by a canopy of trees, we dance to the sounds of the jungle, are entertained by the animals we share the land with, and get our exercise through human-powered adventures.”

Morrillo Beach Eco Resort proudly upholds the definition of being a boutique eco-resort by strongly sticking to supporting the environment and community:

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People: Morrillo Beach Eco Resort, the largest employer in the area, believes in a sustainable workforce. Through the resort’s local Conservation

Foundation (FUNDAT), local families and their businesses are mutually supported, fostering the health and sustainable growth of the surrounding community. Whether it is an appreciation for the way of life of the Panamanian family, learning how to make their traditional sandals or weaving a bag, or even learning how to make a favorite dish. These are the kinds of lasting memories the resort strives to create for families.

Planet: With over 3,000 species of trees that live in the jungles of Panama, a walk around the property is nothing short of fascinating. The Morrillo Beach Eco Resort team created a trail of biodiversity for all to enjoy learning about the trees and plants. From June through September, guests are welcome to plant a tree and be a part of making the planet a better place. Guests can visit their tree over the years to see how it's doing and enjoy the fruits of their labor. The single easiest thing the resort does to protect the living jungle is to simply turn off the lights at night. All outdoor lights are on timers to turn off at 9 p.m., and guest terraces use red lights at night, which do not disorient animals such as sea turtles, which are easily disoriented by house lights.

Wildlife: Morrillo Beach Eco Resort works with scientists and educators of FUNDAT to work tirelessly to conserve the Sea Turtle population. Using a holistic approach, the team at the resort has developed yearly Sea Turtle Programs for guests to experience. Guests can participate in daily baby sea turtle releases and educational experiences. Through reforestation programs, Morrillo Beach Eco Resort is bringing back the canopy for the monkeys. The team has rescued and released monkeys and has plans to create a Primate Rescue Center on site in 2025. The focal point for guests will be education, while primate specialists and veterinarians will oversee the care of the primates.

Sustainability: All of the fresh food and meals provided at Morrillo Beach Eco Resort are locally sourced. The resort works with a local farmer, Ray Ranjit, who grows organic greens, vegetables, and herbs. Additional vegetables are purchased from a local woman who distributes her veggies from the farms of Eastern Panama, where the climate is a bit cooler for the higher elevations to grow tomatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, and potatoes.

The resort raises its own chickens with love and purchases pork and beef directly from two families who raise their animals like family. The resort's water comes from its own private well and goes through a filtration and UV purification system to ensure it is safe to drink and delicious, too. All amenities, disinfectants, and laundry soaps are locally hand-made. As for energy, Morrillo Beach Eco Resort proudly installed a massive solar panel system and prides itself on being energy efficient. The resort also has efficient composting and recycling programs.

“From the moment we arrived, Cari and Ryan welcomed us into their home and made us feel like family. The buildings, rooms, and common areas are beautifully designed- spacious, artful, simple yet elegant. Whether I was in the mood for privacy, or hanging out with other guests (who quickly became friends) any place I chose provided immediate access to the jungle that surrounds,” said Maribeth Rothwell, a visitor from Missoula, Mont., in a [TripAdvisor review](#). “Thanks to Cari and Ryan’s guidelines, we learned how to behave as respectful guests in the home of the many varied creatures who live there and were rewarded by their allowing us to observe them up close: the howler monkeys with their haunting calls, iguanas, butterflies, and birds of all colors, sizes, and songs,” Rothwell added.

Morrillo Beach Eco resort has six rooms and is two stories high, with three

rooms on each level. There are double queen, single queen, and single king options available. Each room has its own private viewing balcony with a hammock that makes guests feel like they are in their own tree house with picturesque views of the estuary, the lush surrounding jungle, and all the animals that thrive there.

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A variety of packages are available, which can be viewed [here](#). To learn more about Morrillo Beach Eco Resort, please visit the [website](#) and [blog](#).

About Morrillo Beach Eco Resort

Nestled along the pristine shores of Panama's Pacific coast, Morrillo Beach Eco Resort offers a unique blend of sustainable luxury and authentic cultural experiences. Dedicated to environmental stewardship, the resort integrates eco-friendly practices into every aspect of its operations, from solar-powered facilities to conservation initiatives that protect the region's rich biodiversity. Morrillo Beach Eco Resort is an idyllic destination for adventure seekers, wellness enthusiasts, and nature lovers alike. Guests can enjoy various activities, including surfing, snorkeling, hiking, and yoga, or simply unwind in the resort's tranquil setting. With a commitment to supporting the local community, Morrillo Beach Eco Resort partners with nearby artisans, farmers, and guides to provide guests with an authentic taste of Panamanian culture. For more information, visit Morrillo Beach Eco Resort's website or follow us on social media [@MorrilloBeachEco](#).

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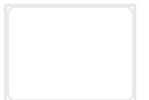
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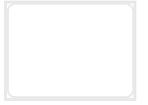
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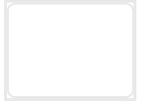
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