



## Naturism in Serbia in the Age of COVID-19



In the time when naturism is still not a topic that many would gladly and openly talk about, besides obvious improvements in a sense that being without clothes is not a serious sin any longer, we have a completely new situation that is resetting the world and all of us putting on the same line, and above all making us all equally vulnerable. Regardless in which way it is changing the world, the coronavirus arrived to Serbia too, shaking everyday life from the roots. 'Need of the man to return to the nature' and 'the nature fighting back' were some of the most common topics connected to the new pandemic. Restrictions of movements, social and physical distancing, and many other restrictions, are marking the new period of COVID-19 pandemic, which is still ongoing while we write this text.

It was a global question whether some systems would survive the pandemic. Like others, naturism was also heavily hit by different measures such as restrictions of travel and gatherings. However, the situation is slightly different now than at the very beginning of the pandemic. Naturism as a lifestyle is already aligned with nature considering its ability to revolt when we go too far. This was also a sign that naturism is part of us, unconditioned by the society, and depends on how much we are ready to fight for it. The main obstacle for naturism in Serbia this year was, and still is, limited ability to travel abroad, which helped us create a whole new dimension and discover new potentials unrecognised in the past.

Naturists in Serbia this summer had a chance to experience something that in the past they could only see in documentary movies and news reports from other countries, thinking that it was impossible to organise such events in this country. As we all agree that the word "impossible" lost its strength, we stood in front of many obstacles and tried to bring Serbian naturists back to the natural wonders that our own country offers - lakes, mountains, cities, and places for sports activities. We managed to realise our ideas, at least many of them, and reassure those who didn't believe in us.

At the very beginning of the summer, when the movement and travel restrictions were loosened for a brief period, we managed to organise sailing tour in Greece. With this exotic travel experience we opened the summer season, hoping that the pandemic will not complicate too much our plans for other tour and events that required traveling. Unfortunately, it did. However, that didn't turn out so bad after all.

We have to admit that sunbathing without clothes on Serbian beaches is not an issue. Even without specific organisation, one can find sandy or stone beaches and get nude. However, we wanted to go step further and we went to places and lakes which naturists didn't visit in the past, providing members of our organisation and other naturists an opportunity to enjoy sunbathing and swimming in new, previously undiscovered, locations. On the other hand, this way we wanted to promote naturism in locations where there are no local enthusiasts who dare try to do something like this. Of course, we also visited places and beaches where local groups and smaller organisations are trying to get their naturist spots under the sun, and we wholeheartedly supported their efforts.

Following the lyrics of a song that used to be popular in former Yugoslavia, which calls people to "go to the mountains because there is no winter there," Naturist Organisation of Serbia (NOS) headed to the mountains. Indeed, there was no winter in there! Naturist hiking, as well as swimming, is the ultimate way of unifying a man with nature. Two successful hiking events with several dozens of participants gave us wind on the back for new events and activities in the future.

By the end of the season, we are hoping to organise two more projects. While this text is being written, preparations are ongoing for the first naturist bicycle ride in Serbia and the first naturist boat ride on Danube River.

Besides all this, we haven't given up from organising regular weekly wellness events, enabling



Serbian naturists have their steady and comfortable oasis throughout the year, regardless of the season. Besides the fact that the number of visitors has slightly reduced recently, having in mind the hot weather outside as well as the COVID-19 scare, the owner of the wellness centre is strongly supporting our efforts and there were no changes in this project. We are also very proud to say that there were no COVID-19 cases among the NOS members and supporters, and that all of them are showing a very high level of responsibility to respect health prevention measures (keeping physical distance at events and wearing masks indoors when needed) as well as avoiding participation at events if they suspect any symptoms of infection.

Organisation of events and activities wasn't as perfect and easy as it may sound. We have to mention some problems and obstacles that we are still encountering. NOS membership count is not as high as we would like it to be, even though it is growing. Also, almost non-existent interest from mass media for naturist activities is sometimes being shaken by random positive articles, like for example this one <https://nova.rs/magazin/putovanja/gde-nudisti-letuju-u-srbiji-udoba-korone/>. (only in Serbian language)

Unfortunately, bureaucracy and wrong understanding of our ideas and goals, due to prejudice, are significantly slowing down our efforts to realise planned activities. This is especially related to the government institutions and public companies. While the private sector is more focussed on economic gain without questioning naturism as a lifestyle, the public sector is still reserved. NOS, as a member of International Naturist Federation (INF-FNI), is putting enormous efforts to find common ground for all issues and problems with the government institutions. We

are inviting the government and the public companies to try to overcome prejudice and step forward while taking the full responsibility. Next year in February, in Belgrade, NOS is going to be the host to numerous delegates from European naturist organisations during the EuNat event, and this way will show the openness of Serbia and Belgrade to new ideas. We are grateful to INF-FNI for trusting in us, and we hope that the government of our country will also recognise the importance of naturism and our capacities to make big and important events. After all, naturism, as part of overall tourism sector, could be very profitable.

NOS is always making sure to be transparent and to inform members, supporters and others of all activities by regularly updating the website <https://www.nos.org.rs> where they can read in more details about the past events and see announcements for upcoming activities.

The best stories from the abovementioned events organised this year would probably come from participants themselves, so in order to best describe the atmosphere during activities, in the rest of this article we are presenting feedback received from participants directly.

#### Sailing:

"A truly wonderful summer vacation spent with cheerful crew, sailing across Saronic Gulf in Greece!

Above all meeting wonderful people with whom we spent the unforgettable ten days, indigo blue sea, beautiful island towns, party in the bay of Dokos Island, waking up and jumping out of bed straight into the sea, freedom in every sense... It is hard to describe with words – one should

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experience this! Sailing gives you something you cannot possibly have on a conventional vacation.

Whoever heels on a merry sailboat once, does not think about the summer vacations on the mainland anymore.”

### **Hiking:**

“At the beginning, it all seemed so easy, as if it was just another easy walk in the nature. We walked downhill, and soon after we lost a sight of the trail and continued through valleys and mountain streams. At some point we arrived at a glade where our guide told us that we can take off our clothes. The feeling of liberation overtook us – alone and nude in nature, isolated from the rest of the world.

Then we walked through a dense forest, which was very steep and the path was slippery and sort of dangerous. I thought I may fall down the hill and end my naturist career. It seemed that it lasts an eternity. We used trees and other plants as support. We walked, and walked, without a foreseeable finish line. All sweaty I wished to stop, but there was a voice in my head saying ‘you have to continue!’ At the end of our path there was a river. The guide said we can either follow him through the river, or walk next to it. We all chose to walk through the river to cool down our warm feet. We walked upstream, with the river up to our knees, and at some points up to our waists. This was probably the most pleasant part of the hiking, because the day was hot and the water was cooling. After two hours of a really adventurist mountain hiking, we finally arrived at our final target – a big waterfall. Exhausted but also excited, we rushed to leave our bags and jump into the water. As I stood under the waterfall, the water washed away all the heat, sweat, exhaustion, worries, bad thoughts, big city noise. The sound of the water is a real music for soul, that nourishes and heals.

We enjoyed our time by the waterfall for about an hour, socializing with laughter and swimming.

At the end of the tour, we treated ourselves with a nice dinner in a local restaurant. After such a trip, we deserved a treat. It’s true that the hiking was very exhausting, but in order to discover the true wonders of untouched nature, one needs to walk that way. It was worth it.”

### **The Second Hiking:**

“Discovering eastern parts of Serbia is a special experience. It’s irresistible, mystical, magical. Mlava River canyon and Gornjak Monastery are

leaving a very strong first impression. I started this hiking adventure with a group of people, whom I saw for the first time in my life. Uncertain whether I would be able to step over the imagined line, which in this case was hiking towards one of the peaks of Homolje Mountains, on a hot day, with a backpack only and not a piece of clothing on my body. OK, only shoes, the kind that was only suitable for my feet that I hurt a day before. My wish to experience something new brought me in front of imagined red line. Everything, besides hiking itself, was so easy, without options of changing my mind. People, whom I see for the first time, I feel as very close, friendly, as a supportive group, healing... Exactly like that.

The only disappointment from moment to moment was myself – I thought I was more fit than I actually was. Halfway towards the top, I thought I should go back, so not to slow down the whole group. However, two wonderful guys from the group cheered me up not wanting to let me stay alone at the back of the line. We made breaks and followed my pace, making jokes along the way. After two hours of walking with frequent resting stops, we caught up with the group and arrived to our goal, a mountain peak Ježevac, 675 m above the sea, from where we could see almost half of Serbia. A truly divine feeling, unreal...

While walking up the mountain, you almost forget your naked body, but when we arrived to the top – it seemed so natural to experience nature like that, and give yourself to it.

My intuition is telling me that I am yet to move my borders in that direction.”

### **Lake trip:**

“With a professional and constructive organisation, we arrived at the lake with our own car, respecting all health prevention measures.

There was a very beautiful and clean beach, well taken care of in line with recommendations. Throughout the day, all event participants were safe thanks to the kind organisers who gave the best efforts to make sure everything is OK.

In the evening hours, we gathered at the Debeljača Lakes, in a restaurant, to summarise our impressions, full of good energy, and also to plan our next gathering. I met wonderful people, ready to help, in good mood and open for socialising. That is really the biggest benefit from this outing.”



### Another lake trip:

“As wise people say, we should not be afraid to experience new things. Lead by this idea, I applied to join a day trip event organised by NOS, not knowing anyone in that organisation, nor anyone who was planning to join the trip. Simply, the event details available at the NOS website were attractive enough. After a short telephone conversation with one of the organisers, it was clear to me that this is a serious group and there should be no reasons to worry for going alone. That’s how my first experience with NOS started, filled with positive impressions.

After a short car ride with the two members of the organisation (and I hope two new friends) we arrived at the untouched nature of eastern Serbia, or at least it seemed untouched at the first look. The nature was stunning, the lake peaceful and clean, a few ducks swimming at the lake were just adding to the beauty of this scenery. However, the part of the lake where we were supposed to put our towels and spend the day, was visibly visited by other way before us. Lots of trash left behind by reckless visitors for months was a sign that this spot was an actually popular place, I suppose among the local population.

Organisers were prepared and they even announced that at the very beginning of our day, once we arrive at the lake, we should clean up the trash. This activity was the most attractive actually. I’ve been a naturist whole of my life, and I was happy to meet other people with

whom I shared some interests and above all feelings towards nature – nature that gives us many wonderful things and to which we should return with gratitude.

This part of the outing, when a few of us in one hour collected about 12 big bags of garbage and cleaned this part of the beach, was my favourite – my first naturist eco activity! Who would make a better company for eco activities but naturists (in the root of the word ‘naturism’ there is return to the nature) ?

The rest of the day we spent on a clean side by the lake, swimming in clean and warm water, and above all in great company, talking, playing football and with mutual respect. The weather was also on our side. With a few passing clouds, it was sunny enough but not too hot. Simply, perfect weather for a beautiful summer day.”

These were testimonies by some of over 90 participants who decided to spend this summer with Naturist Organisation of Serbia. We hope we fulfilled their expectations and we are looking forward to new adventures.

Public Information Office,  
Naturist Organisation of Serbia





# Terra Nua Naturist Camping

FKK Camping und Caravan im Herzen von Alentejo in Portugal.

“Terra Nua” is the newest naturist /nudist camping and caravanning site in the heart of the Alentejo in Portugal.

With camping spaces for tents, caravans/motor-homes and outdoors leisure activities, in direct contact with nature, it seeks to meet the needs to „relax“ and diversion of the road, away from the routine of everyday life.

A space of gathering for the Portuguese and foreign naturists that visit Portugal, enticed by the excellent climate and quality of service. A space of leisure in nature, always in a family environment.

We are Jorge Coelho and Helder Rodrigues. We’re both naturists since our youth. We had both the same dream: to create a small naturist space in the countryside, where we could be closer to nature and all it has to offer us and be able to share this space of ours with others & and also make it a way of life.

Together we decided to give life to this common dream - to build a Naturist/nudist camping/caravanning site in the countryside. It is intended to be a space where all naturists/nudists can spend a few days in total relaxation, without clothes, in communion with nature and far from all the fuss and bustle of everyday life.

Professionally, Jorge is linked to tourism/ hospitality since 1987, having passed through various areas such as reception, reservations, commercial department, revenue management and electronic commerce.



Helder was connected to the banking sector for 25 years, although his academic background is cultural heritage and art history. Over the years he has developed skills in massage, physiotherapy and as a cook.

We started to develop this project a few years ago. It was intended to be done in the Algarve region right in the south of Portugal.

We started to look for a piece of land all over the Algarve, but soon found out that land prices were prohibitive for our pockets.

After a long search also in the Alentejo province and also after driving many kilometres, we found the spot we were looking for.

To get to where we are now, we had a hard and rocky road to travel. We have faced lots of setbacks, had to change the initial designed Project several times in order to fulfil all the official requirements.





Bureaucracy in Portugal is also something that requires among other things lots of patience to overcome.

Just a small example, we have submitted a request to check whether we would have the town halls approval to build the campsite in the land we had found and before we buy it, and we have waited a whole year to get an answer from them.

The campsite is located in the countryside and the nearest village (Messejana) is to be found at 3km. Everything was done from scratch and with lots of costs associated. Contract an enterprise to make a subterranean hole for water supply. Arrange with the Portuguese electricity supplier, so that the electricity was brought into our land, etc., all that before the builders could start their work, not only the things we can see above the ground, but also all that is underground (electricity and water supplies, sewers...)

Another big setback was COVID19. So far 2020 has been a very odd and hard year worldwide. COVID19 changed all our lives completely.

Of course it also affected our Project, with the confinement we all had to go through, with the borders closed, the material suppliers not being able to deliver materials in due time, etc.

Along the way we have decided to divide the project into two phases. Phase one is ready with all the compulsory services fully working.

On phase 2, three more buildings will be constructed, including the amplification of the bar/reception areas.

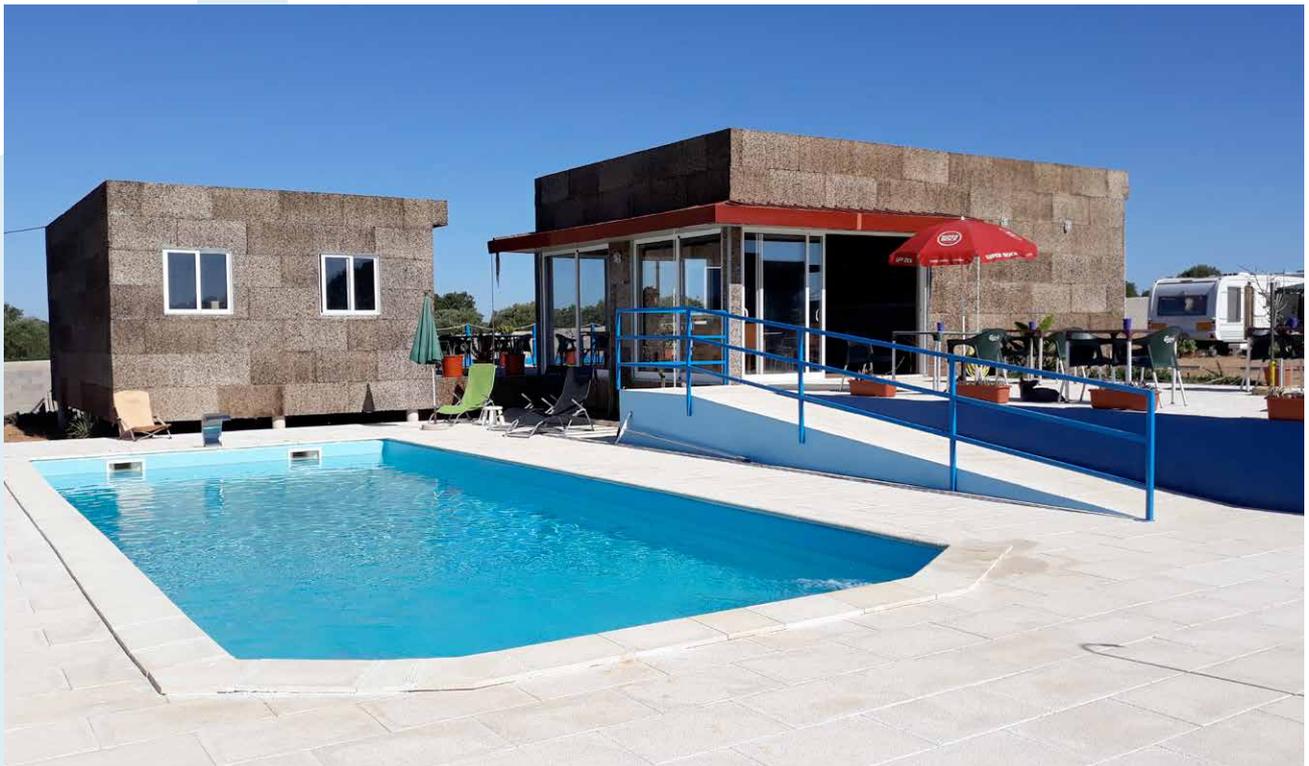
All the above being said, the most important thing now is that against all odds, we have finally managed to “open our doors”. It has been a really enriching experience and the feedback we are receiving from those who already gave us the privilege of being our guests, has been great, which ensures us that we are moving in the right direction.

We do look forward to have the pleasure of welcoming you all in a nearest future at Terra Nua!“.

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# Neomatriarchy or superiority of the woman?

Is there a neomatriarchy? Or does woman predominate in many sectors because she is superior to man? To answer the question, a brief analysis is necessary, given that the issue is much debated in the media today and therefore very topical.

As is known in the social structure of matriarchy, women are in a dominant position with respect to men. It is believed that this family institution has established itself in the past among the people dedicated to agriculture, while patriarchy predominated among those dedicated to pastoralism.

Sociology says that matriarchy, with its peculiar characteristics of power management by women, is an institution hypothesized by evolutionists of the nineteenth century which, however, has had no response in ethnographic and historical reality, apart from few exceptions.

It was the evolutionist anthropologists of the nineteenth century (in particular the historian Johann Jakob Bachofen) to assume that in the initial stage of development of societies, in which there was a high rate of promiscuity, only the motherhood of the individual was certain. The uncertainty of being able to confidently attribute paternity would have placed the man in a subordinate position with respect to the woman, who would have played both the role of mother and head of the community.

An example of matriarchal society is the mythical Amazon and that of the divine figure of the Great Mother, examples which have exercised great interest in scholars of the neo-evolutionary school.

As to the Amazons, today it has been discovered from archaeological finds, that this people, dominated by women, is to be placed in today's Romania. This would also confirm their participation, in line with the Homeric tale, in the Trojan War.

However, as regards the divine figure of the Great Mother, much debunked the belief today that this deity is part of myths and legends.

The finds in South America and Europe of stone statuettes depicting the Great Mother demon-

strate the historical existence of this cult. In Italy there is a region that has revealed traces of the cult of the Mother Goddess, "Sardinia", where the Nuragic civilization has revealed how deeply rooted this cult was in the Neolithic period. And the Neolithic, in fact, is the period in which the cults of the „Mother Goddesses“ were practiced all over the world.

Consequently, if a matriarchy existed, is there now a neo-matriarchy?

What I can say, and I speak personally, is that it cannot be denied that the presence of women in all the structures and ganglia of Western societies is massive.

Given the role of the mother, who affects 90% of the education of the child, you can see that since kindergarten the female presence is almost absolute, and then continues in elementary school with 80% of teachers, in middle school with 70% and in high school with 60%. We need to go to university to find a balance on the presence of male teachers in relation to female teachers. This is not to say that our society is matriarchal (which, among other things, if it were, it would be a good thing), I only take note of a present situation.

There is a small nation in Europe, born after the dissolution of the USSR, which is called the „republic of women“. This country is Latvia: until 2015 its president was a woman, she has female ministers (and even in Italy they are now different), newspaper editors, bank managers, important state and private companies, etc. In short, the nickname „republic of women“ is not only relevant but also extremely applicable because it photographs and summarizes in a clear concept for anyone, namely what is the degree of penetration of women in Latvian society.

Africa also has its „black Latvia“.

Some time ago „Il Corriere della Sera“ published an article on Rwanda, that is of the country where there are countless women at the top of the state, the judiciary, law enforcement agencies and large public and private companies.

The world of entertainment, to take another example, is the most evident expression of female penetration at all levels: a host of models, show

girls, presenters, dancers, singers, journalists, etc. work on television, who ended up with making male presence a minority. And this is not a negative, but a positive fact.

And if we then go into the world of work, regardless of the school mentioned above, we discover a predominance of women over men in terms of clerical duties. In post offices, banks and insurance companies, a majority of female presence cannot be missed. And not only that: today women also do works once only meant for men: today women fly planes, tugs, icebreakers, drive buses, drive trains, maneuver excavators, are radar controllers, are scientists, etc.

Obviously, with these examples I do not want to say that all this is a sort of neomatriarchy, since I know very well that this is a discourse relating to equality with man, a discourse of equal job opportunities, equal dignity, etc., I mean that man today feels the breath on his neck of a global liberation of woman, a process which, according to sociologists and sexologists, would be the cause of today's crisis of male identity.

Yes, perhaps it is not the advent of a new type of matriarchy, but the affirmation of a superiority of women that has been highlighted by the widespread diffusion of education at all levels, from which women have benefited and from which for centuries and centuries have been excluded.

Naturism also contributed, in its small way, to this process of liberating women.

For example, entering into the relationship between the sexes, naturism, due to the essential connotation of the nudity that characterizes

it, makes the woman free from the fear of male aggression, which is naturally attenuated. This process of rebalancing the relationships between the sexes adds a new freedom to women to the freedoms already conquered.

As a result, the male also becomes free with the freedom of the woman. In naturism, woman-sex becomes woman-person again, and this is because in the naturist community man recognizes woman's role and dignity, giving a new dimension to the man-woman relationship. Naturism is the only idea to have theorized and put into practice in their communities the relocation of women to society.

This is achieved with the continuous vision of one's own nakedness, that of others and, above all, that of the woman.

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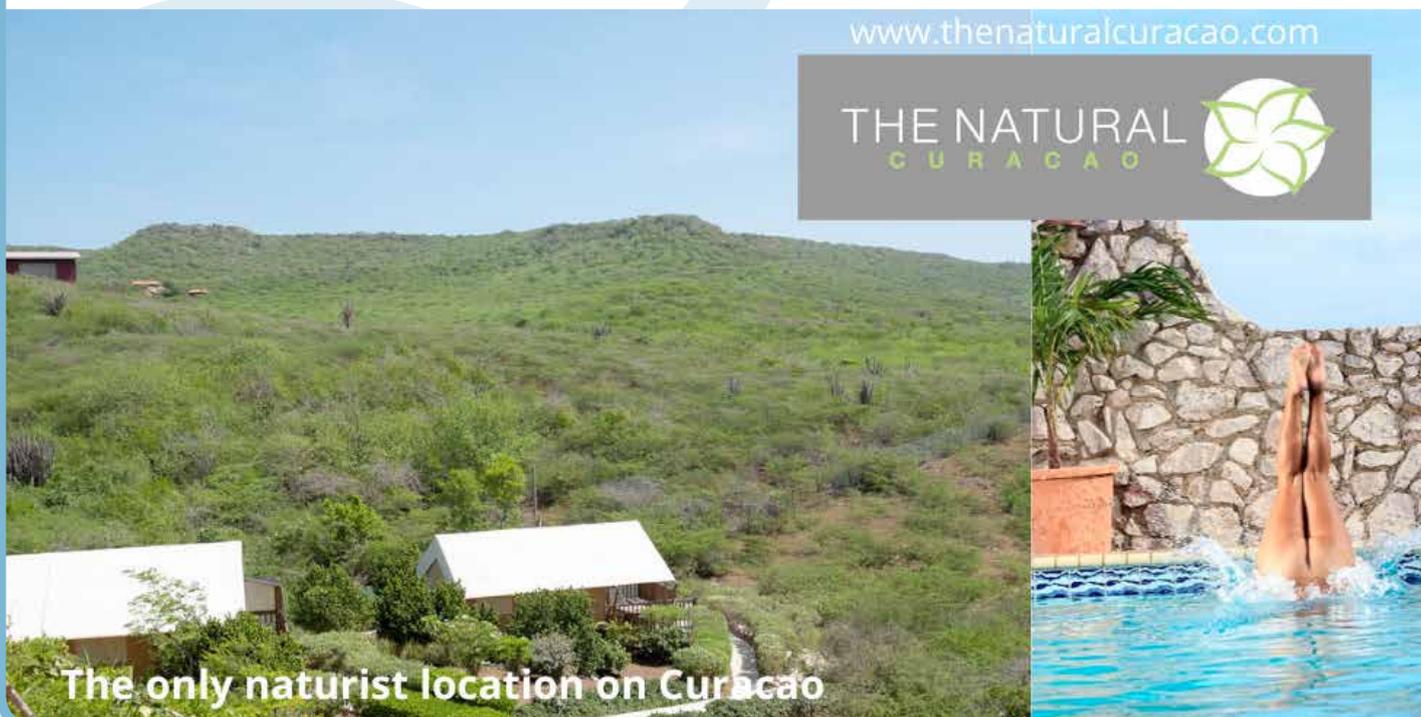
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