



**BEAUTY AND THE BEASTS**  
THE MODEL IN PARC NATIONAL DES VOLCANS IN MUSANZE, RWANDA.

## ANOUCK LEPÈRE'S CAUSE: PLANNING WAYS TO IMPROVE A COMMUNITY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS IN RWANDA.

**E**arlier this year, I went on two trips to Banda Village, Rwanda, with Kageno, a charity that works to create sustainable development in impoverished African communities. Banda is located in the middle of a rainforest full of the most colorful birds and butterflies and beautiful natural springs. While there, I stayed in a house made of mud bricks, waking up to birdsong and going to bed when the sun went down.

I had been searching for a new challenge in my life beyond modeling, which led me to volunteer with the organization. My focus for the first trip was helping the local engineer and agriculture specialist supervise landscaping efforts surrounding the village's nursery school. When some of the children saw me sketching plans, they wanted to draw, too. At another school I visited, I ended up teaching English for an hour. There was a question-and-answer

session about what everyone did in a day. I tried to explain modeling by acting out how I posed for pictures and showed the clothes. The class couldn't stop laughing—they thought it was a very funny job. On this trip, we talked about the plans for a small athletic field, playground, and garden that needed to include medicinal plants like chili pepper and milk thistle. I also organized a cooking contest to help educate everyone about different types of foods and create some fun around preparing local vegetarian ingredients (meat is hard to come by here). Someone thought the no-meat rule excluded fish and slipped one from the lake into his dish. We were all surprised when we tasted that entry!

During my second trip, I helped paint the walls of the school and continued meeting with the carpenters to plan the playground. I look forward to returning to the village, perhaps to help with the planned ecolodge, which will provide jobs and support for the community. □

## Overheard

- Former Casa Tua chef **Sergio Sigala** has left his old kitchen to helm Cecconi's, opening this month in Miami's new Soho Beach House on Collins Avenue.
- For those in search of the perfect period Halloween costume (1920s beaded flapper dress or vampire-worthy 1990s Margiela?), try Southpaw, the appointment-only vintage resource in midtown Manhattan, a longtime favorite of models like **Lily Donaldson** and **Daria Werbowy**.
- Spend a day checking out some of New York's noteworthy sources for artists' publications, like Chelsea's Printed Matter or the **Rafael de Cárdenas**—designed OHWOW Book Club on Waverly Place. You just might run into **Lily Aldridge** or **Kathy Grayson** browsing beside you.
- Tea Tours at Gracie Mansion—official residence of the mayor of New York since 1942—are fit for royalty but open to the public. Guests can delve into the newly restored eighteenth-century landmark's rich history and even richer cakes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The special house tea: a blend with a twist of mandarin and safflower. □



**FEDERAL RESERVE**  
GRACIE MANSION.

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