

Make Love, Save Turtles



Many tourists visit Florida each year with Mickey Mouse and Shamu on their minds. The Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort and Spa and the Harbor Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Resort and Spa are giving some Florida tourists another animal to consider: sea turtles. These tourists, however, are in the mood for something a bit more risqué than Disney's Magic Kingdom or Sea World.

During sea turtle nesting season, these two resorts market to couples looking for romantic getaways with puckish promotions such as their "Fertile Turtle" and "Nocturnal Nesting" promotions. Playing on sea turtles' age-old reputation for fertility and virility (after all, it is rumored that turtles can copulate for as long as two weeks), these promotional packages include fertility-enhancing teas, couples massages with pregnancy-promoting aromatherapy, aphrodisiac-infused cocktails, and romantic moonlight beach walks for couples hoping to fertilize eggs of their own.

The night walks, guided by park rangers, offer guests the opportunity to witness sea turtles nesting. Meanwhile, the resorts take precautions to protect the turtles and their nesting habitats with turtle-friendly black exterior light bulbs and blackout drapes in guest rooms. At the Harbor Beach property, agents from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency survey the beach each morning to ensure that nests laid overnight are taped off. A portion of the proceeds from the Marco Island property's "Fertile Turtle" package goes to the



At the Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort and Spa, the "Fertile Turtle" package includes a couples massage with chasteberry aromatherapy. Chasteberry is an herb that purportedly increases fertility by stimulating the pituitary gland, which regulates the body's production of estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. © MARCO ISLAND MARRIOTT BEACH RESORT

National Save the Sea Turtle Foundation, which educates children about sea turtle conservation.

Both the "Fertile Turtle" and the "Nocturnal Nesting" packages have been well received, with numerous guests inquiring about each package. The hotels that have been successful in fostering loggerhead turtle conservation will offer these packages again in the summers ahead.