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From Aruba to the World, Bucuti & Tara Wins Silver ICRT Award for Regenerative Tourism

Nearly four decades of putting the wellbeing of its island home at the center of tourism earns the resort international recognition and makes Bucuti & Tara the only resort in the Caribbean honored with the award

EAGLE BEACH, Aruba – September 14, 2026 — [Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, Aruba](#) has been awarded **Silver in the 2026 ICRT Responsible Tourism Awards for Regenerative Tourism**, recognizing nearly four decades of work to strengthen the natural environment, local community, culture, and economy of its island home.

Bucuti & Tara is the only hotel in the Caribbean to receive an ICRT Responsible Tourism Award for Regenerative Tourism in 2026, marking a significant achievement for Aruba and highlighting the destination's potential to demonstrate how tourism can actively contribute to the long-term well-being of its people and place.

Since opening in 1987, Bucuti & Tara has built its approach around the belief that the success of a tourism business is inseparable from the well-being of the destination it depends upon. Under Founder and Owner **Ewald Biemans**, and now alongside his granddaughter, Managing Director **Crescenzia Biemans**, that philosophy has evolved into a broad model of tourism that goes beyond minimizing harm to actively contributing to Aruba's environmental, social, cultural and economic resilience.

The approach encompasses environmental restoration, local employment and suppliers, employee and family wellbeing, cultural connection, animal welfare, community investment, and guest participation.

The **ICRT Responsible Tourism Awards**, presented by the International Center for Responsible Tourism, recognize organizations demonstrating measurable impact, innovation, influence and practices that can inspire positive change across the tourism

industry. The Regenerative Tourism category recognizes approaches that seek to leave destinations stronger by creating positive environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes.

A Regenerative Model Rooted in Aruba

Bucuti & Tara's regenerative approach begins with the natural environment that supports Aruba's tourism economy.

The resort's **Bucuti Tara – GMC Nature Preserve** permanently protects 32 acres of scarce, undeveloped land in Noord from development. Motorized vehicles of any type are prohibited, helping preserve the area as a natural habitat and quiet refuge within an increasingly developed part of the island.

The preserve represents a typical Aruban ecosystem and provides habitat for native flora and fauna, including some of the many bird species that call Aruba home or use the island as a stopover during migration between hemispheres. Species such as the **Wara Wara, Shoco and Prikichi** can be found among Aruba's indigenous landscape.

More than 1,200 native trees have already been planted, with a long-term goal of approximately 15,000. As the restored ecosystem matures, it is projected to remove approximately 375 tCO₂e annually, increase biodiversity, and contribute to Aruba's climate resilience.

Over time, the protected area is intended to become a quiet natural space where residents and visitors can walk, jog or simply spend time among Aruba's indigenous trees, plant life and wildlife — creating an opportunity for the community to experience and appreciate the ecosystem being restored.

Along Eagle Beach, Bucuti & Tara's monthly beach cleanups have continued for 33 years, removing approximately 1,500 pounds of debris annually and helping protect nesting habitat for vulnerable leatherback sea turtles.

Through its partnership with **TurtugAruba**, guests can learn how to protect turtle nests and hatchlings and can request a responsible turtle wake-up call when hatchlings are expected to emerge.

The resort's commitment to Aruba also extends to animal welfare. In 2016, Bucuti & Tara founded **Stimami Sterilisami**, a nonprofit dedicated to improving animal welfare across the island. The organization has provided more than 50,000 spay and neuter procedures for Aruba's dogs and cats. Since August 2025, the program has fully funded procedures, removing cost as a barrier for island residents while pairing direct action with education.

Regeneration Includes People

For Bucuti & Tara, a destination cannot thrive without the people and culture that give it its identity.

Approximately **70% of the resort's workforce is Aruban**, and Bucuti & Tara prioritizes local suppliers, farmers, fishermen, artisans, musicians, and entrepreneurs. Its weekly local market, Artist-in-Residence program, and newly introduced wellness market create opportunities for guests to connect directly with Aruban makers and creativity.

The resort also invests in the long-term well-being of its employees and their families through programs that include financial coaching and savings plans, preferential green loans, childcare and elderly-care subsidies, pensions, language and educational development, affordable housing, fitness memberships and preventative healthcare.

These initiatives are designed to support financial security, family wellbeing and career development, recognizing that a regenerative tourism model must consider the people who make the tourism experience possible.

Guests are also invited to participate in the relationship between tourism and place. Through Bucuti & Tara's voluntourism program, travelers can join beach cleanups and tree planting, contribute through **Pack for a Purpose**, and participate in mangrove restoration, coral reef rehabilitation and animal welfare initiatives.

The resort also makes deliberate choices about the experiences it promotes. Through its **"What We Are Not"** commitments, Bucuti & Tara declines to promote or book activities known to negatively impact Aruba's flora, fauna or ecosystems, including ATV and UTV excursions and certain motorized watersports. Instead, guests are directed toward responsible nature-based and cultural experiences.

"Aruba is our home, and the success of tourism should also mean a better future for our island and its people," said Crescenzia Biemans, Managing Director of Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort. "We are grateful for this recognition of work that means so much to our team and community partners. For us, its value is in what it makes possible: nature protected, animals cared for and a healthier island for those who come after us."

Sharing What Aruba Has Taught Us

Bucuti & Tara's regenerative approach is supported by a sustainability program encompassing more than 400 initiatives and internationally recognized third-party certifications, including CarbonNeutral®, LEED Gold, Green Globe Platinum and Travelife Gold.

The resort's sustainability program has also been recognized by the United Nations as **"highly replicable and scalable"** for hotels worldwide.

Bucuti & Tara has shared its experience beyond Aruba through presentations and participation in international tourism and sustainability forums, including United Nations climate conferences COP26 and COP28, WTTC Global Summits, and gatherings of the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association and Caribbean Tourism Organization. Government officials, international delegations, researchers, students and hospitality professionals have also visited the resort to learn from its approach.

The model has developed alongside strong hospitality performance. Bucuti & Tara maintains approximately **97% year-round occupancy and a 63% repeat guest rate**, while Tripadvisor ranks the resort No. 8 Hotel in the World and No. 1 Hotel in the Caribbean.

Together, these figures illustrate a model in which environmental and community responsibility is integrated into the guest experience rather than treated as separate from it.

A Caribbean First for Regenerative Tourism Recognition

The 2026 ICRT Responsible Tourism Award places Bucuti & Tara among tourism organizations demonstrating that regeneration can move beyond an aspiration and become part of everyday hospitality.

For Aruba, the recognition represents an opportunity to showcase the island not only as a world-class tourism destination, but also as a place where businesses, residents and visitors can work together to protect and strengthen the resources that make the destination special.

For Bucuti & Tara, being the **only hotel in the Caribbean to receive an ICRT Responsible Tourism Award for Regenerative Tourism in 2026** is a milestone in a journey that began nearly four decades ago.

The resort's guiding philosophy — **"we are in the nature industry, not the tourism industry"** — continues to shape its decisions today.

The Silver ICRT Award recognizes that enduring approach: one rooted in the belief that tourism can do more than reduce its impact. It can help restore ecosystems, strengthen communities, celebrate culture and contribute to a destination's long-term resilience.

For Bucuti & Tara, the award is recognition of the work, not the reason for it.

The purpose remains the same: **put Aruba first, and help ensure the island thrives for generations to come.**

To learn more, visit **Bucuti.com**.

IMAGES & VIDEOS

Resort images and video are available in the [private media gallery](#).