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MIAMI: Guy Harvey unveils future resort plans

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Marine artist and conservationist Guy Harvey opened one of his Outpost eco-lodges on Isabella Bay in the Galapagos Islands and plans to develop a second Outpost on San Cristobal island, about 100 miles west of Isabella.

Speaking Thursday at the Miami International Boat Show, Harvey said the Outposts will offer diving, fishing, hiking, surfing and photography, as well as opportunities for scientific research into striped marlin, shark and reef fish.

"I've been there six times over the past 12 years diving and fishing," Harvey said. "The best fishing show I ever did was on marlin in the Galapagos. We hooked 300 striped marlin in four days. It has some of the best fishing in the Americas."

Harvey said he has aligned himself with Iguana Crossing, a luxury hotel that opened two years ago on Isabella Bay, and has designated it an "expedition outpost." He also will be developing a second "signature outpost" from scratch in the highlands of San Cristobal, 1,500 feet above sea level near a volcano park in the center of the island. Harvey said Isabella already is a popular destination for cruising sailors, who stop there before continuing west across the Pacific.

The government of Ecuador and Galapagos officials have thrown their support behind the outposts to entice cruise ship passengers off the boat to stay landside and spend more money in the islands.

"They're looking at this as a way to attract sustainable tourism" said Mark Ellert, president of Guy Harvey Outpost Resorts. "They want to migrate their tourism from water-based to land-based."

The signature lodge will have a Guy Harvey theater, a research institute, an entertainment center and probably 30 villas and "dorm-like" facilities for visiting students, he said. The San Cristobal Outpost likely will take two years to build.

Harvey is partnering with Ecuadorean hoteliers and developers in the Galapagos.

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