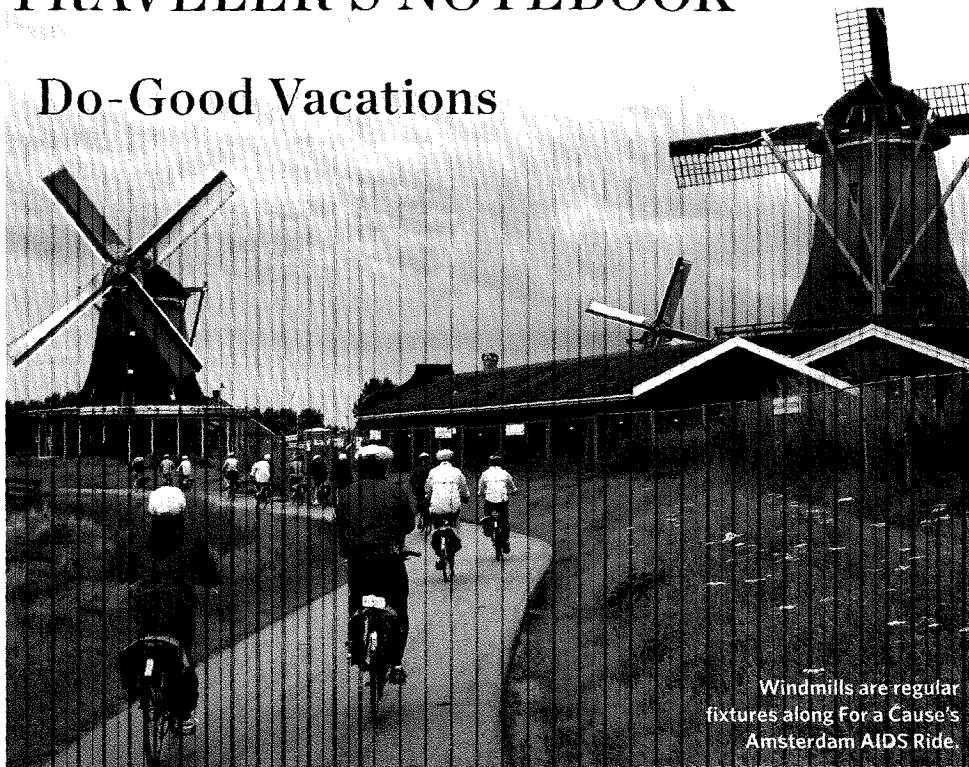


TRAVELER'S NOTEBOOK

Do-Good Vacations



Windmills are regular fixtures along For a Cause's Amsterdam AIDS Ride.

ITALY During forty-five-year-old Eileen Badder's group trip to the Marche region of Italy, she walked from village to village over hills dotted with vineyards, sunflower fields and fig trees. She slept in family-owned pensiones and feasted on traditional meals like tagliatelle with grilled rabbit. But her five-day, fifty-mile walk provided a bonus beyond exercise and culture: this journey was arranged by **For a Cause**, a nonprofit outfitter that helped Badder raise \$2,300 in pledges for the breast-cancer organization Y-Me. For a Cause was founded in 2006 by Robert Webber, who had participated in fifteen charity biking events before starting his own cycling and, later, walking fundraising tours. "I'd lost many friends to AIDS and wanted to do something more," says Webber. The money-raising adventures are combined with European vacations to Italy, Spain, Scotland, Ireland and the Netherlands and include nights in historic castles and visits to lesser-known areas. Seven-day journeys start at \$1,200, and the company asks participants to raise a minimum of \$1,000. Badder, a New York assistant vice president at a global brokerage firm, is now addicted to the concept. "It's a great way to take a vacation *and* make a difference," she says. 773-960-4365; rfac.org. **NINA KRIEGER**

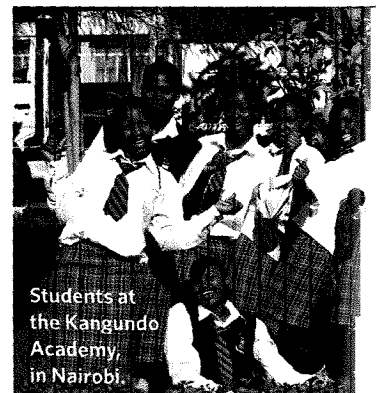


A CONSCIENTIOUS CARRYALL

Bag designer SKN is making shopping a little more eco-friendly with its reusable organic-cotton tote (\$34.95). The bags are produced entirely in the U.S. and can hold up to forty pounds. Plus, through SKN's partnership with American Forests, the oldest American nonprofit conservation group, one tree will be planted for each order. getskn.com. **GILLIAN HEARST SIMONDS**

BEYOND SAFARI

KENYA Given the current political climate, visiting Kenya merely to spot the Big Five from your open-air Jeep or quaff sundowners from your luxury tent seem slightly self-indulgent. That's why luxury tour operator Micato Safaris offers its clients a chance to give back by participating in its partnership with AmericaShare, a nonprofit foundation Micato Safaris established twenty years ago that supplies education, food, clothing and shelter to thousands of children living in the Mukuru slum, in Nairobi. Guests who arrive or depart from Nairobi can add a day on either end of their trip with Micato Safaris' Lend a Helping Hand on Safari program. During these one-day philanthropic excursions to the Mukuru slum, travelers visit the community, plant trees and donate much-needed supplies. More often than not, the inspiration to urge to help out doesn't end that day. Many Micato Safaris veterans have become involved in AmericaShare's School Sponsorship program, which enables needy children to attend boarding schools in Nairobi. One recent visitor even helped fund the Harambee House and Women's Centre, a community center and boys' dormitory run in part by women with HIV. *Harambee* is a Swahili word that in English means "all pull together," which is exactly what locals and AmericaShare participants do. Twelve-day safaris including Lend a Helping Hand extension, \$8,000 per person, double occupancy. micato.com. **CAROLINE**



Students at the Kangundo Academy, in Nairobi.