

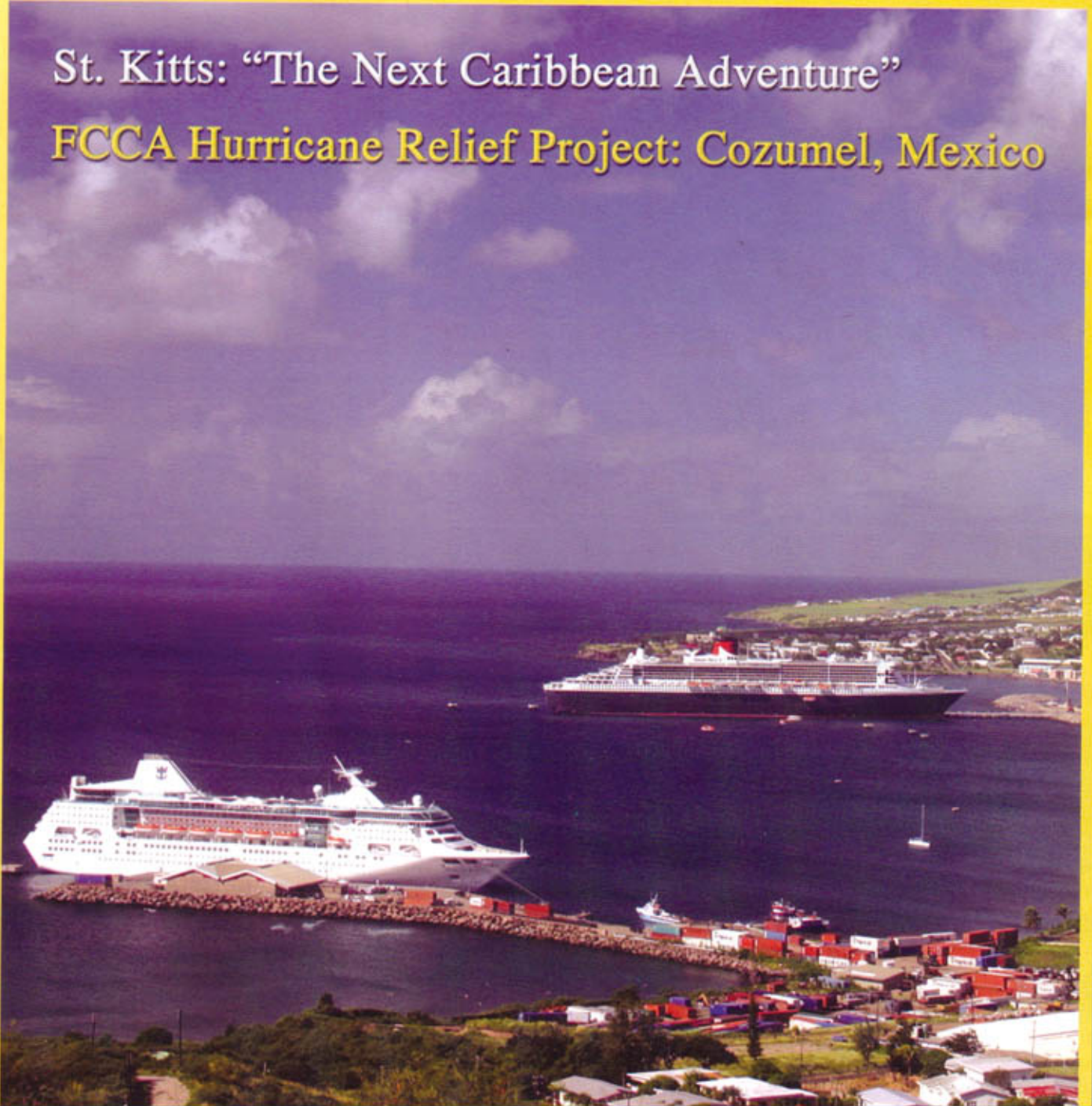


# Caribbean Cruising

THE FLORIDA-CARIBBEAN CRUISE ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE  
Third Quarter 2005

St. Kitts: "The Next Caribbean Adventure"

FCCA Hurricane Relief Project: Cozumel, Mexico





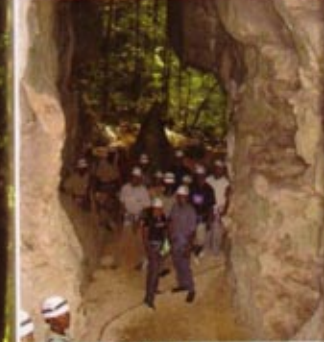
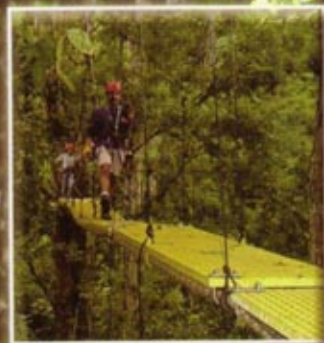
# THE Original **CANOPY TOUR®**

**Let Us Take You To New Heights!**

**A safe, fun adventure for all ages**

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Featured on:







# Original Canopy Tour

## Safety first, high-flying fun second.

Whether high in the branches of the rainforest canopy or over the expanses of valley traverses, in the middle of the ruins of pre-Colombian civilizations or passing through the cool darkness of caves—yes, caves!—there are plenty of breath-taking views and mouth-dropping motion on any one of the **Original Canopy Tour** locations now available to cruise ship passengers throughout the Caribbean and Central America.

“The **Original Canopy Tour** was designed as a one-day outing for port visitors seeking something a little more exciting than the standard fare and anyone, from 5 to 105, in reasonable health, can experience the tour,” says co-owner Rick Graham. “It requires no special skills, no extraordinary physical condition, no exceptional state of mind and, while risk is an inherent factor in all outdoor experiences, the margins of risk on our **Tours** are reduced to far less than virtually any other activity in its class.”

## What’s in a name?

While the ‘art’ of an **Original Canopy Tour** rests on its tasteful incorporation into unique and spectacular settings, the ‘science’ of its safety is the result of 12 years of meticulous research and design.

The name **Original Canopy Tour** is, in the literal sense of the word, no accident! It is a name that was deliberately chosen for branding purposes in order to distinguish the company from inexperienced, possibly illicit and demonstrably *unsafe* competition. The company is the oldest, most experienced, knowledgeable and impeccably scrupulous in the business today because, quite simply, the activity was invented

by **Tour** owner, Darren Hreniuk, who from the very beginning employed the first-principal concept of risk management into every aspect of the tour’s design and operation

“Safety is just good business,” says Hreniuk, “Safety has always been our number one priority and our record shows this.”

Hreniuk says he struck upon the idea to find a way to allow tourists to experience the rainforest canopy, what he calls one of the planet’s “final frontiers” in the late 1980’s. In search of a new direction for their lives, Hreniuk and his partner, Rick Graham, moved to Costa Rica from Canada.

Upon arrival in Costa Rica, Hreniuk began design drawings, making calculations and experimenting with prototypes in the humble surroundings near the Quaker-established, world famous Montverde Cloud Forest Reserve. After several years of experimentation with different designs, materials and operational techniques, Hreniuk struck upon a formula he felt was functional and safe.

Recognizing the potential profit value of what he had created but also equally concerned that design and operational safety be rigorously followed, Hreniuk applied for and received a patent for his invention in 1997. This patent, granted in Costa Rica, allowed the patent-holder 20 years of exclusive rights. Darren also received an International trademark from the US Patent and Trade Office in 1996. Unfortunately, due to political pressure and social factors in Costa Rica, the patent has been in dispute and usurped since it was granted.

## Expanding into the Caribbean and beyond

After a decade of extremely safe commercial experience, in





2003, the **Original Canopy Tour** began to explore the possibilities of franchise and partnership operations outside of Costa Rica. Interest has been high with tours already operating in four new locations in Mexico, Belize and Jamaica and negotiations are underway for several new locations. With such a vast array of untapped natural settings, the company is excited about the prospect of continuing to design high quality and unique tours throughout the Central America and the Caribbean basin. To assist in this growth, **OCT** became a platinum member of the FCCA.

"This is not an activity you can just decide to get into one day and profess to be an expert the next," says Hreniuk. "We liken ourselves, in a sense, to dive operations like PADI and NAUI, where years of experience and training ability are combined to allow you strap on fins and air tanks to go safely and confidently into completely new and different environments with minimal risk.

"We are confident that being a member of the FCCA, along with the cruise industries recognition of our achievement, will help in the growth of our activity and open the doorways to fresh, unique environments for our customers."

But despite this growth, the **Original Canopy Tour** is conscious of the need to constantly be checking and rechecking operational and design concepts. There is a patent-pending, currently in the National Phase covering a double line safety traverse developed as an added safety measure accepted as the industry standard.

Hreniuk devised a fail-safe mechanism that employs a self-equalizing second line. The design evenly distributes weight between independent lines, thereby reducing wear and, therefore, prolonging the life of the cables themselves. In the unlikely event of a failure anywhere on the system, the failsafe feature assures you arrive safely to your destination platform.

Due to the fact that this activity is a new creation it doesn't fit neatly into any category of activity for which regulations exist, the **Original Canopy Tour** maintains very strict safety policies, and system operators endure well over 100 hours of training, which is quite a lot when you consider an average college degree is only 128 credit hours.

## Giving back to the environment

Hreniuk's "Original" idea was to create something unique to help protect the world's rainforests by creating an awareness of the fragile ecosystem and channeling money back into reforestation, conservation and education, as well as socio-economic development of the rural areas surrounding the protected areas.

"The idea to protect the earth's natural resources was from the beginning a goal of this company," says Graham, who is also a biologist. "Darren has the ingenuity to give people a truly different way to experience the environment in each new project he builds and it is his intention to make each new location truly different – not just the same thing in each cruise port. People come away awed at what they have just done and tell everyone about their unique experience".

Darren adds, "I go to great lengths to make sure the environment is protected when I install a system. After all, it wouldn't be a good idea to harm the area we are touring. We want everyone to see the natural beauty – not add to the damage. We also require that each new partner contribute to the preservation of each new location."

Contact **The Original Canopy Tour**: (877) 351-4700 (Toll Free US & Canada). [www.canopytour.com](http://www.canopytour.com)

### OCT's Commitment

#### Safety First

- Over 10 years experience with no major accidents.
- Copyrighted Training Program, Operational System and Standards Manual with over 100 hours of mandatory training for each system operator
- Daily and weekly inspections of all equipment and tour elements
- Logs kept of equipment use and number of clients passed through each system
- We use only materials and equipment of the highest quality
- No insurance claims in over 10 years of operation in 5 countries.
- The Original Canopy Tour is the only one of its kind to be approved by the US Secret Service for the visit of President Jimmy Carter and 16 other members of his family in Costa Rica.

#### Eco-friendly Designs

- True sustainable tourism (Ecotourism)
- OCT's main directives include Conservation, Education and Reforestation
- No nails, screws or bolts used in trees
- All elements are suspended or attached in a manner that won't harm trees and can be adjusted for tree growth
- No trees are cut or limbed during the installation process allowing minimal impact on the natural surroundings