

General Information about Spiral Island



Spiral Island is the name given to two world famous floating [artificial islands](#) built by British expatriate and eco-pioneer Richart "Rishi" Sowa.

Sowa, a musician, artist, and carpenter started constructing the original Spiral Island in 1998 in the Maya Riveria of Mexico. The first Spiral island was located in a [lagoon](#) near [Puerto Aventuras](#), on the [Caribbean](#) coast of [Mexico](#) south of [Cancún](#). Rishi began filling [nets](#) with empty discarded plastic bottles to support a structure of [plywood](#) and [bamboo](#), on which he poured sand and planted numerous plants, including [mangroves](#).

The floating bottle island sported a two-story palapa structure, a solar oven, a self-composting toilet, and three beaches. Some 250,000 bottles were used to construct the 66 feet (20 m) by 54 feet (16 m) floating island structure. Rishi planted mangroves to help keep the island cool, and some of the mangroves rose up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high.



SPIRAL ISLAND I - IN CANAL AT PUERTO AVENTURAS 1998 to 2005

Sowa used sand to construct the first island, and it was taken from the end of the beach near Puerto Aventuras, where it came up against the man-made rock pier on the edge of the canal system where the Island was tied. Due to the prevailing winds, beach-sand was constantly being piled up near the rock pier because of the constant motion of the waves and wind. The authorities dredged out the beach sand using large machinery so that boats could continue to come through the canal. Since Sowa gathered 8 to 10 large buckets per week, the builders of Puerto Aventuras Canal did not need to dredge it again to remove the build up of sand, as he was doing it for them.

The first Spiral island was destroyed by [Hurricane Emily](#) in 2005. The floating island was thrown up onto the beach in one piece, and a small proportion of the bags of bottles washed up on the beach away from where it landed. The roots of the 7-year old, 7 metres (23 ft)-tall mangroves were intertwined through the island's base and the strong net that was wrapped totally under the whole island helped to keep it together.

SPIRAL ISLAND II - JOYSXEE - STARTED 2007 to PRESENT

In late 2007 and 2008, Sowa started building a new Spiral Island in the waters of [Isla Mujeres](#), the "Island of Women", just off the coast of Cancun. The new floating man made island opened for tours in August, 2008 and has grown in size.

The new island, delightfully named 'JOYSXEE' by Rishi Sowa is about 20 metres (66 ft) in diameter, and plants and mangroves are found growing on it. The new island contains over 150,000 plastic bottles. The new island has white sand beaches, a palapa house, two ponds, a solar-powered waterfall and river, wind breaks and solar panels. Numerous volunteers from all

over the world helped with the construction of the new island project. Sowa will continue to make improvements to the Island, so it will always be a work of art in progress.

<http://spiralislanders.info/about.html>