



LOOK SHARP + LIVE SMART

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THE LEADING MAN
HOLLYWOOD'S
BEEN WAITING FOR

CONFESSIONS
OF A DRONE
PILOT

THE GQ
GUIDE TO
BUSINESS
TRAVEL

>HOW TO PACK,
WHERE TO EAT,
WHAT TO WEAR
& HOW TO HAVE
FUN ON YOUR
BOSS'S DIME

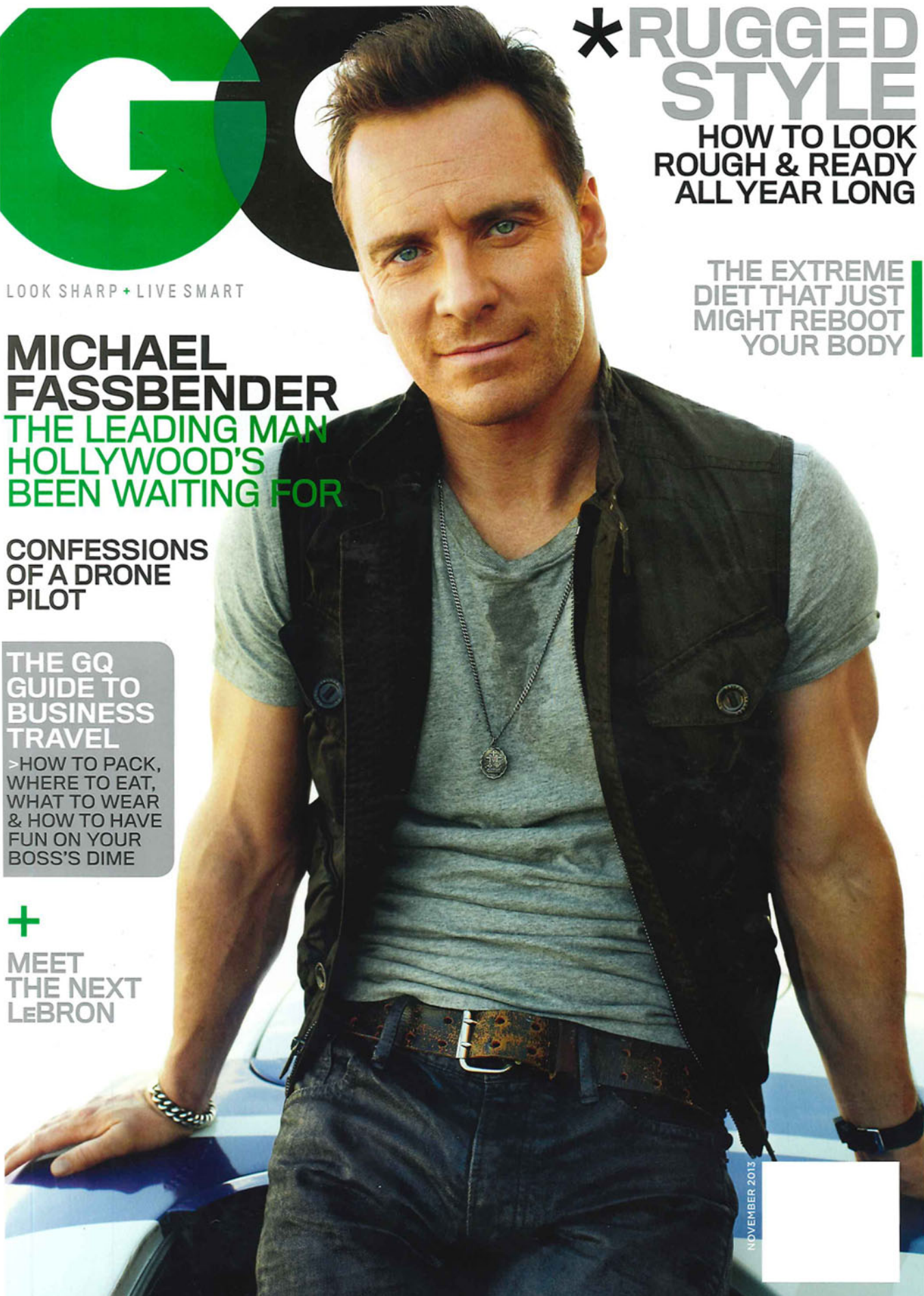


MEET
THE NEXT
LEBRON

*RUGGED STYLE

HOW TO LOOK
ROUGH & READY
ALL YEAR LONG

THE EXTREME
DIET THAT JUST
MIGHT REBOOT
YOUR BODY



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Destinations > Skip the Beach—Jump into the Volcano

Getting away from it all doesn't have to mean sitting on your ass. In the tropical wonderland of **Granada, Nicaragua**, you unwind by hiking volcanic craters and swimming in eighty-degree lakes



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- 1 You don't have a "room" at the hotel Jicaro. You have a private two-story casita.
- 2 Wish you were here? One of the islands that dot Lake Nicaragua.
- 3 In the distance looms Mombacho, the active volcano that created all those islands.



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at The Peace Project, a combo English school for local kids and scuba outfitter for tourists. For \$30, he took me diving at **Laguna de Apoyo**, a crystal-clear, bathwater-warm lake teeming with gold and violet cichlid fish, plus the odd crab.

From there I dried off and headed into Granada, a colonial town of 120,000 that feels like a third-world New Orleans: colorful homes, lively street scenes, a

proud local culture of good cheap food. At a dive called **Comidas Típicas y Más** on the nightlife drag La Calzada, I enjoyed a tamale washed down with *pinolillo* (the crazy national drink of toasted corn, cacao, and milk) for about eight bucks, including tax and tip. Granada makes it especially easy to work up an appetite when you choose, as the locals do, to get around by bicycle or on foot.

All this rigorous vacationing helped me downshift to full-on Chill Mode—hence Jicaro, where I read a novel in that hammock. Bird-watched. Tipped back a glass of aged Flor de Caña rum. Ate a dinner of baked guapote, a fish that'd been freshly caught in the lake.

I hit my king-size bed early, blissed out by the kind of dead-to-the-world slumber that happens when there's not only no street noise but also no streets. —NICK MARINO

4 The cathedral is among Granada's most prominent landmarks.

5 Part of the town's charm lies in those Crayola-box color schemes.

6 When the sun goes down, the locals come out.



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→ I knew going in that the hotel was on a private island, one of 365 scattered like dice in Lake Nicaragua. But I hadn't anticipated the drama of arriving via boat. As I sped across the water, to my right was a hulking volcano. Dead ahead, my accommodations: **Jicaro**, a luxury ecolodge with nine lakeside casitas, each fitting two guests. A world-class resort, capacity eighteen.

There were no other buildings on the island. No television sets. Not a single wall in the obsessively local restaurant. This was a place with the very Nicaraguan idea

to nudge me outside—even if just to swing in the hammock strung up on my front porch.

I appreciated the break, having just spent two frantic days sightseeing on the mainland. The hulking volcano? I hiked that shit. Known as **Mombacho**, it looms so large that it begged to be conquered. Not at all the rocky, Mars-like surface that springs to mind when you think "volcano," it turned out to be a mountaintop rain forest with panoramic vistas.

A half-hour drive away, back down at sea level, I met a red-bearded dude named Mark McKaye



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