Responsible travel maximizes the benefits of tourism while minimizing tourism’s negative consequences!

Responsible Travel Tips

Before You Leave:

Do Your Research
- Consult guidebooks and online resources about your destination’s environmental, social and political issues.
- Look for websites specializing in responsible/sustainable travel options.
- Check if the companies you are considering have achieved recognition in leading responsible travel competitions (such as World Travel & Tourism Council's Tourism for Tomorrow Awards).
- Check if the companies have eco-certifications and eco-awards or labels.
- Ask about environmental policies and practices of hotels and tour operators you are considering.
- If using Airbnb or another home sharing site, check to see if home sharing is legal and what the regulations are in that particular destination.
- Ask if the tour operator or hotel supports any local conservation or community-development projects.
- If you’re interested in “voluntourism,” carefully investigate the local projects (see CREST’s Dos and Don’ts of Travel Giving).

Make Your Transportation Count!
- Explore eco-friendly transportation – Are low-carbon or public transportation options available, such as trains or buses?
- When traveling short distances, try not to fly. When flying, book in economy class and choose direct flights on newer, more fuel-efficient fleets when possible.
- Offset the carbon emissions from your flights to mitigate your carbon footprint.
- Choose “green” airports, like Seattle-Tacoma International, Boston Logan International, Denver International, and San Francisco International, which are taking steps to be more sustainable.

While You’re There:

Be Responsible with Giving and Buying
- Eat in locally owned restaurants, and stay in locally-owned lodges, hotels, and B&B’s.
- Buy locally made handicrafts and products.
- Never buy crafts or products made from protected or endangered animals.
- Hire local guides – make sure they are licensed and live locally.
- Pay the fair price – don’t engage in overly aggressive bargaining.
- Think twice about giving money to children – this can perpetuate a cycle where children are sent to beg rather than school.

Be Culturally Sensitive
- Ask for permission before entering sacred places, homes, and private land.
- Always ask for permission before taking photos of individuals.
- Dress appropriately for local customs.
- Learn some words and phrases in the local language.

Be Environmentally Conscious
- Refrain from taking seashells, coral or other natural objects.
- Always carry your trash away from natural sites to dispose of properly.
- Recycle and compost waste when possible.
- Bring your own reusable water bottles, bags, straws, utensils, and takeaway containers.
- Use limited resources wisely, such as water, fuel, and electricity.
- Stay on designated trails and observe set distances from wildlife – never provoke, touch, or otherwise engage animals.
- Be an animal-friendly traveler; we suggest at minimum following Born Free’s Compassionate Travel guidelines, and avoiding circumstances that endanger animal welfare.
When You Return:
Help Perpetuate Responsible Travel
- Share your experiences with others and promote responsible practices to your networks on social media. Your friends, family, and co-workers will benefit from learning about your travel choices.
- Consider making a donation to programs that give back and benefit the local community you visited.
- Integrate further responsible travel suggestions into future trips.

Helpful Resources for Responsible Travel Trip Planning:
- Center for Responsible Travel (CREST): [www.responsibletravel.org](http://www.responsibletravel.org)
- Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC): [www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)
- Travel Care Code: [www.travelcarecode.org](http://www.travelcarecode.org)
- Rainforest Alliance – Green Your Travel: [www.raINFOrest-alliance.org/green-living/travel](http://www.raINFOrest-alliance.org/green-living/travel)
- Ecocube: [www.ecocube.com](http://www.ecocube.com)
- Green Hotels Association: [www.greenhotels.com](http://www.greenhotels.com)
- Mesoamerican Ecotourism Alliance: [www.exploremesoamerica.org](http://www.exploremesoamerica.org)
- Planeta.com: [www.planeta.com](http://www.planeta.com)
- ResponsibleTravel.com: [www.responsibletravel.com](http://www.responsibletravel.com)
- Book Different: [www.bookdifferent.com](http://www.bookdifferent.com)
- Kind Traveler: [www.kindtraveler.com](http://www.kindtraveler.com)
- Lokal Travel: [www.lokaltravel.com](http://www.lokaltravel.com)
- Visit.org: [www.visit.org](http://www.visit.org)
- Urban Adventures: [www.urbanadventures.com](http://www.urbanadventures.com)
- With Locals: [www.withlocals.com](http://www.withlocals.com)
- I Like Local: [www.i-likelocal.com](http://www.i-likelocal.com)

Carbon Offsets Projects and Carbon Footprint Calculators:
- Atmosfair: [www.atmosfair.de/en/home](http://www.atmosfair.de/en/home)
- NativeEnergy: [www.nativenergy.com](http://www.nativenergy.com)
- My Climate: [www.myclimate.org](http://www.myclimate.org)
- Carbonfund.org: [www.carbonfund.org](http://www.carbonfund.org)
- Cool Effect: [www.cooleffect.org](http://www.cooleffect.org)
- The Nature Conservancy: [www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/](http://www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/)
- Carbon Neutral: [www.carbonneutral.com](http://www.carbonneutral.com)
- ClimateCare: [www.climatecare.org](http://www.climatecare.org)

Responsible travel tips drawn from the following resources: Center for Responsible Travel ([www.responsibletravel.org](http://www.responsibletravel.org)), Global Sustainable Tourism Council ([www.gstcouncil.org](http://www.gstcouncil.org)), Intrepid Travel ([www.intrepidtravel.com](http://www.intrepidtravel.com)), and Expedia ([www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com)).