



# Responsible Travel Tips

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

## 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 and ResponsibleTravel.com's World Responsible Tourism Awards)
- Check if the companies have eco-certifications and eco-awards or labels
- Ask about environmental policies and practices of hotels & tour operators you are considering
- Ask if the tour operator or hotel supports any local conservation or community-development projects (see CREST's [www.travelersphilanthropy.org](http://www.travelersphilanthropy.org))
- If you're interested in 'voluntourism' carefully investigate the local projects (see CREST's [Dos and Don'ts of Travel Giving](#) & [Travelers' Philanthropy Handbook](#))

### 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, choose direct flights when possible, on larger planes and/or newer, more fuel efficient fleets
- "Offset" the carbon emissions from your flights to mitigate your carbon footprint
- Choose "green" airports, like Seattle-Tacoma International, Baltimore-Washington 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
- 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 the 5 Freedom, explained by [Born Free](#), and avoiding circumstances that endanger animal welfare

## When You Return:

### Help Perpetuate Responsible Travel

- Share with others your experiences and promote responsible companies, destinations, and practices (blogging, social media, etc.)
- 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)
- Rainforest Alliance –Green Your Travel: [www.rainforest-alliance.org/green-living/travel](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/green-living/travel)
- Rainforest Alliance –Verification: [www.rainforest-alliance.org/tourism/verification](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/tourism/verification)
- Ecoclub.com: [www.ecoclub.com](http://www.ecoclub.com)
- EcoTour Directory: [www.ecotourdirectory.org](http://www.ecotourdirectory.org)
- European Network for Sustainable Tourism Development (ECOTRANS): [www.destinet.eu](http://www.destinet.eu)
- “Green” Hotels Association: [www.greenhotels.com](http://www.greenhotels.com)
- Mesoamerican Ecotourism Alliance: [www.travelwithmea.org](http://www.travelwithmea.org)
- Planeta.com: [www.planeta.com](http://www.planeta.com)
- ResponsibleTravel.com: [www.responsibletravel.com](http://www.responsibletravel.com)
- Adventure.Travel: <http://www.adventure.travel/>
- 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:

- The Ocean Foundation: [www.oceanfdn.org/calculator](http://www.oceanfdn.org/calculator)
- Sustainable Travel International: [www.sustainabletravel.org/our-work/carbon-offset-portfolio/](http://www.sustainabletravel.org/our-work/carbon-offset-portfolio/)
- 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)
- Carbon Fund: [www.carbonfund.org](http://www.carbonfund.org)
- The Nature Conservancy: [www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/](http://www.nature.org/greenliving/carboncalculator/)
- Carbon Neutral: [www.carbonneutral.com](http://www.carbonneutral.com)
- Climate+Care: [www.climatecare.org](http://www.climatecare.org)
- TerraPass: [www.terrapass.com](http://www.terrapass.com)
- Carbon Footprint: [www.carbonfootprint.com](http://www.carbonfootprint.com)

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)), EcoTour ([www.ecotourdirectory.com](http://www.ecotourdirectory.com)), and Expedia ([www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com)).

