

How travellers can make a difference

The travel industry has boomed since the dawn of flight in the 20th century, enabling travellers to explore and discover destinations across the globe. While this level of accessibility to travel allows us to widen our horizons, it also threatens the welfare of global environment, cultures and heritage.



Meeting artisans in Rajasthan, India (Image Supplied)

With more and more people travelling internationally every year, it's vital for us to travel responsibly, ensuring a sustainable tourism industry that will allow future generations to experience the wonders of travel too. Insight Vacations shares five ways that travellers can make a difference.

Support local artisans

One of the best ways to have a better understanding of a destination is to meet and mingle with the locals. Opt to dine and shop at locally-owned establishments that are run by local families and artisans. By doing this, you'll be benefiting the welfare of the community, contributing to job creation and promoting local economic growth.

Be environmentally conscious

With soaring numbers of tourists passing through destinations, it has become imperative to leave as small a trace as possible. The good news is that there are many ways in which you can make a difference by simply learning a few easy habits. When staying at a hotel, take your own toiletries along and avoid the pre-packaged ones provided, switch off your lights and air-conditioning when you're not in the room, unplug electronic devices when not in use and save water by only having your towels washed every third or fourth day. Continue to recycle paper and plastics as you would have done at home, take along a reusable water bottle and stick to designated trails when you're out hiking.

Consider your mode of transport

The impact on climate change differs significantly from one mode of travel to another. Besides walking or cycling, coach travel is your best bet when choosing a responsible mode of transport, as it causes less pollution per passenger kilometre than any other form of motorised transport. In fact, travelling by coach creates 85% less carbon dioxide per passenger kilometre than car and air travel and nearly 40% less than rail.

Be respectful

Travelling is one of the best ways to form lasting relationships with people from across the world. It can, however, have the opposite effect, especially when local customs and traditions aren't respected. Learn a few basic phrases in the local language and use them in everyday encounters, respect local dress codes and learn about your chosen destination's customs and culture. Even the smallest gesture can go a long way in forging meaningful relationships across borders.

Offer lasting support

Be a true global citizen by recognising and offering ongoing support to organisations that work to protect the welfare, cultures, and environments of the destinations you visit. Whether it's through financial contributions, partnerships or simply spreading the word, your support can have a lasting impact on making the world a better place.

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