A Guide to Being an Ethical Traveler

**Clothing**
- **DO** research in advance about the clothing expected in the local culture, such as covered knees, shoulders, or head.
- **DON’T** wear clothing that is ripped, stained, or dirty.
- **DON’T** wear clothing that indicates you are a medical professional if you are not one.

**Kids**
- **DO** practice language skills with kids and answer questions they may have about you.
- **DON’T** visit or volunteer at orphanages; this encourages the exploitation and trafficking of children.
- **DON’T** pick up a child without permission from their guardian.
- **DON’T** interrupt a classroom during their school day.

**Animals**
- **DO** visit animal sanctuaries where animals are free to roam in their enclosures and cannot be touched by tourists.
- **DON’T** buy souvenirs made from exotic animals.
- **DON’T** ride elephants or swim with dolphins; these activities harm the animals and their species.
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**Environment**
- **DO** offset your carbon footprint and pack light.
- **DON’T** litter or create graffiti.
- **DON’T** take items from the environment such as stones or plants.

**Volunteering**
- **DO** pitch in with low-skill, low-sensitivity projects such as beach clean ups.
- **DO** work with local volunteer leaders on a community-led initiative.
- **DO** thoroughly research the organization or placement company.
- **DON’T** participate in medical volunteering unless you are an accredited professional who is invited by the community.
- **DON’T** do anything you wouldn’t be allowed to do in the US.
- **DON’T** perform a task if you don’t possess the skills.

**Photos**
- **DO** take photos that portray people fairly and with dignity.
- **DON’T** take photos in places where privacy needs to be respected such as a hospital or during a church service.
- **DON’T** take or post photos that stereotype or misrepresent a people.

**Respect**
- **DO** be humble!
- **DO** research ahead of time to learn the history, politics, religions, and cultural values of the area.
- **DO** be respectful of the history or religious significance of a site.
- **DO** be willing to step outside your comfort zone to try something new.
- **DO** engage with residents to ask respectful questions.
- **DON’T** mock people or their customs.
- **DON’T** make selfies or goofy photos in sacred places.
- **DON’T** speak too loudly or draw a lot of attention.
- **DON’T** insist on doing things the way that you are used to doing them.

**Economy**
- **DO** get off the beaten tourist path.
- **DON’T** buy mass market plastic souvenirs.
- **DON’T** stick to the touristy stores and restaurants.
- **DO** eat local foods.
- **DON’T** just stay on the grounds of a resort or on a cruise ship; get out to explore and support the local economy.

**Donations**
- **DO** research to find a reputable organization and make a monetary donation.
- **DO** make donations online when possible rather than with cash to discourage theft.
- **DON’T** bring items to donate from the US unless the item is hard to find in that country and was specifically requested.