

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



Animals

DO visit animal sanctuaries where animals are free to roam in their enclosures and cannot be touched by tourists

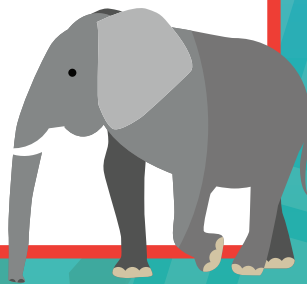
DO turn off geotagging on your camera when photographing wild animals wanted by poachers

DON'T buy souvenirs made from exotic animals

DON'T take photos with captive wild animals; it encourages people to capture them for money

DON'T bait wild animals or get too close to them

DON'T ride elephants or swim with dolphins; these activities harm the animals and their species



Photos



DO get permission before taking someone's photo or from a guardian if it is a child

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

Environment

DO carry a reusable water bottle and avoid single use plastics

DO offset your carbon footprint and pack light

DO visit natural areas to support their conservation



DO look for hotels and tour companies certified with an eco label

DON'T take items from the environment such as stones or plants

DON'T stray from marked trails

DON'T litter or create graffiti



Kids

DO practice language skills with kids and answer questions they may have about you

DO play games such as soccer with kids after getting permission from any adults present

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



DON'T give children presents including money, stickers, or candy; this encourages them to skip school to beg

Economy

DO get off the beaten tourist path

DO seek out local guides

DO buy handicrafts made in the area

DO stay in locally-owned accommodations

DO eat local foods

DON'T buy mass market plastic souvenirs

DON'T stick to the touristy stores and restaurants

DON'T just stay on the grounds of a resort or on a cruise ship; get out to explore and support the local economy



Respect

DO be humble!

DO research ahead of time to learn the history, politics, religions, and cultural values of the area

DO try out some words in the local language

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

DO reflect on your experiences to become more conscious of your own biases



DON'T mock people or their customs

DON'T take 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



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



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



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