

# Responsible Travel Etiquette Creates Positive Impacts in Local Communities

Travel is about discovering new places and meeting new people. It is important to create awareness about the huge impact a traveler can have on a destination. Yes, it is important that the travel industry do its part implementing responsible travel principles, but it is also important to create knowledge among the travelers how to be a good tourist. Travel Etiquette and good behavior can reach long way. Following are some travel advices any traveler should be given before leaving their home countries.



**Before leaving home** any traveler should read as much as possible about the country they are going to visit. Encourage the travelers to ask questions, search the internet and visit bookshops. It is useful to learn a few words of the local language and their customs when greeting and meeting new people.

**When travelers meet the local people** they should be reminded that a traveler is a guest in others peoples home. A traveler should be open-minded and respect the local way of living. Learn and experience. Be extra careful when visiting holy places like churches, temples or sacred grounds.

Travelers need to be aware of how they dress according to local customs. Always show respect for elderly people regardless status and work. It is also important to show respect for beggars and think twice before giving anything to children. When travelers give to children this encourage them to continue begging. Travelers should also be careful regarding smoking and drinking alcohol. Some places smoking and alcohol is not yet common, other areas they have strict rules about smoking and

drinking while in some communities alcohol is major social problem.

**Responsible photographing** includes asking before taking pictures of people and do not interrupt if the situation does not allow. Some places may charge a small fee for taking photos. The traveler should be asked to act polite, not provoke, and also remember that in some places it is not allowed to take pictures of holy places.



**It is important to be careful with water and energy usage** as shortages are common in many places. Simple advices like not let the tap water run while brushing teeth, shower instead of filling the bathtub and not to use more towels than necessary will help saving water. Turn off lamps and other electrical equipment when they are not in use.

**A part of travelling is experiencing new food.** Every traveler should be encouraged to try local dishes in the restaurants. Try not to eat all the meals in one place - but spread the spending money and at the same time increase the experience by trying different restaurants.

**Promote local excursions that contribute in the community.** Choose environmentally friendly excursions even if it costs a bit more money. Use local transportation and guides when possible and again ask questions.

**Shopping is one way of contributing** to local economic growth. Travelers need to be conscious about what they are buying and not buy products made of endangered species or plants. Cultural heritage is not a souvenir therefore do not purchase such items or take "trophies" from local places. Bargaining is culture in many places, but it is important not to let it become a sport! Pay a fair price that both parties are happy about. Buy locally produced goods and services and take an interest in where the items are being produced.

**When travelers are outdoors** they need to be careful in the natural surroundings. Leave wildflowers and plants alone and enjoy them in their natural environment. Respect wild animals and keep distance for their own safety and to not disturb them. Don't feed wild animals or cause unnecessary noise. Do not litter outdoors or in the street. If there is no bin - take the trash back home.



Ethical Travel Portal urges our travelers to be responsible tourists when they travel by giving them advice and information about the destination they are going to. When visiting a destination, a traveler should be advised about the protection and preservation of places, cultures, environments and local communities. Every visit should be of mutual benefit for host and guest.

Photos: Ethical Travel Portal

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