

10 Tips for Eco-friendly Holiday

Eco-friendly vacations are a perfect time to unwind and explore new destinations keeping in mind the need to care for the environment. Here are some travel tips which will not only help you save money, but also protect the ecosystem while traveling.

1) Pre-trip arrangements: Before leaving for a trip, make sure you have switched off all your lights and unplugged all electronic appliances. You can keep one light switched on with a timer so that it seems like you are in the house, thereby saving electricity and also preventing burglary attempts. Switch off the air conditioner, and if it is very cold, adjust your thermostat to 60 degrees F. Don't forget to cancel any newspaper subscriptions so that you don't waste paper.

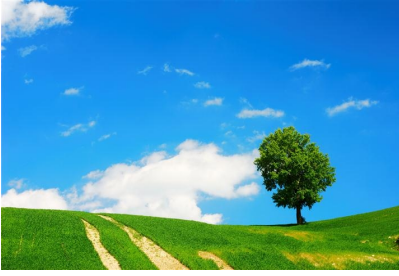


2) Light luggage: The heavier the luggage, the more fuel is required to operate vehicles. By packing light, you are contributing towards the environment as less fuel will be used, and it also makes things more convenient and less stressful.

3) Accommodation: If you are staying at a camp site, make sure you follow the 'Leave No Trace Behind' rule. Always throw trash in proper trash cans. Use bio-degradable soap and put out all campfires before you leave the spot. If you are staying in a motel, do not leave the lights, air conditioner or TV on unnecessarily and use only the necessary amount of water.

4) Transportation: Whenever possible use a train instead of an airplane and a local tourist bus or car pool for long distances. Explore your nearby surroundings on a bike or just by walking. This will not only keep you fit but also reduce your carbon footprint.

5) Eco-friendly activities: Hiking, trekking, and signing up for eco-tours are an interesting way to know more about a place. There are many local travel agencies that offer eco-tours, where they will educate you about the local flora and fauna. While hiking or kayaking, immerse yourself in nature without disturbing the ecosystem.



6) Go local: A traveler always brings money to the local economy by spending on various products and services offered by the place. Visit local stores, eat at charming mom-and-pop restaurants that get their produce from local farmers, and buy souvenirs which are not made in other states or countries. In this way, you are helping to lessen the quantities of waste and gas emissions which take place in the course of shipping.

7) Recycle: You should recycle whenever possible, even when you are on vacation. Look for bins which specifically ask you to put in trash that can be recycled. They are usually placed at important tourist spots, eco-friendly hotels or campgrounds. You can also pack recyclable items in your bag and dispose them properly once you are home. Always remember to reuse your water bottles and lessen the use of plastic.

8) Laundry: Carry a small trash bag for any dirty clothes and don't wash each and every clothing unless absolutely necessary. You can wear a pair of jeans more than once, and avoid using laundry services of your hotel to save water, electricity and also your money. You can hand wash smaller articles of clothing and reuse hotel towels and sheets.



9) Sustainable gear: There are many companies which sell gear, especially backpacking gear, that is environmentally-friendly or is made from recyclable items. Many stores also have a used products sale, where you can get a very good deal. Do some research over the internet to find a wide range of gadgets that are solar-powered or buy rechargeable batteries and reusable containers. Shop from companies which support eco-conservation because you know that the money you are spending will be donated for a good cause.

10) One destination: Although it may seem like a fun idea to see many places in one trip, you are losing out on many fascinating details that can only be experienced when you focus on a few places and take your time in exploring them at your own pace. By focusing on one or two places, you not only help reduce fuel emissions but also let yourself really relax.

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