

# 10 Places to See Before They Disappear



The environmentalists have been warning us for years. Only recently though people started to listen carefully. Several natural as well as cultural and architectural treasures might disappear unless we start taking proper care of the environs that surround us. Now Frommers, a professional travel portal, made a collection of destinations you should see rather quickly before they vanish. These ten sites, presented to you by Tourism-review.com, make up a carefully chosen list of destinations for eco-conscious travelers to enjoy. That verb "enjoy" is crucial for in the process of cherishing these natural and cultural wonders we renew our commitment to preserving them.

## 1. Babylon, Iraq

There is not much left of the once gorgeous city of Babylon – barely a mound of broken mud-brick buildings and debris in the fertile Mesopotamian plain in Iraq. One of the biblical cities of great religious importance for the Christian part of the world has been damaged by war on one hand and rush economical and architectural development on the other. Do not hesitate and visit it quickly, there may not be much to see in a few decades.

## 2. Fenway Park, USA

Fenway Park, a name almost entirely unknown in Europe, is the home stadium of the Boston Red Sox baseball team. It has served as such since its opening in 1912 and is thus the oldest stadium in the Major League Baseball. The club officials have one or two times thought about moving the club to a more modern ballpark, yet the fans have always put an end to these thoughts by expressing their disapproval. Yet a stadium with wooden seats and hand-operated score board will probably not last long and massive reconstructions are foreseen. Better visit it before it will turn into yet another boring modern stadium.

## 3. Gu Gong (The Forbidden City), China

This vast complex located in the middle of Beijing is more than half a millennium old. More than seven million visitors long to see the architectural gem every year, most of them the Chinese in search for their history and identity. The government, who likes their nation to care for their past, cannot afford to close the whole area for the much needed reconstruction. Section by section gets closed so that at least the necessary problems can be fixed.

## 4. Kootenai River, USA

Kootenai River is a tributary to Columbia River, flowing from British Columbia to Montana and Idaho. A number of dams built on the river has severely damaged the wetlands in Idaho, an important stop for many vagrant birds like e.g. geese. Except for the construction of dams, also agriculture has left deep scars in the local nature. Recently, things have been getting a little bit better though – the Nature Conservancy in cooperation with local companies as well as volunteers have started a hopefully successful restoration of the wetlands.

## **5. Little Green Street, UK**

"Little" is the most significant part of this London street's name - there are only eight 18th century houses on one side of it and two on the other. The street that has survived both world wars unchanged is now endangered by the unwise decision of the local authority. As in many other cities, also in London the developers are trying to fill every free square centimeter of space by a block of flats, a parking lot or a shopping mall. Here, the construction would not endanger the houses itself, but rather the 2,5 meter wide street as a whole - all the hard machinery would have to drive through here to get to the parking lot-to-be.

## **6. Lord Howe Island, Australia**

Lord Howe Island is a small island in the Pacific Ocean 600 kilometers east from Australia. It is a distinct terrestrial eco-region, known as the Lord Howe Island subtropical forests, where many endemic species of animals, especially birds, used to live. Since the humans arrived to the island in 1788, more than half of the originally recorded bird species and subspecies are extinct. Either due to reckless hunting or due to illnesses and predators brought to the island by the first "colonists". Nowadays, the island's 350 residents are trying to keep it as clean as possible, the worst threats being oil and chemical sea and air pollution.

## **7. Michoacan Monarch Biosphere Reserve, Mexico**

Monarch butterflies are extremely sensitive to air pollution, cold and wet conditions. That is why they need a stable stopover on their long migration from cold winters in Canada to warm Mexican weather. Michoacan is one of their most favorite places to rest on their way, yet it is being destroyed slowly - mainly by poor Mexicans who burn down the local forests and denude the countryside to get more soil to earn their living from.

## **8. Taj Mahal, India**

Taj Mahal is one of India's most popular tourist attractions. It welcomes from 2 to 4 million visitors annually, more than 200,000 of them from overseas. All air polluting vehicles are nowadays strictly prohibited from the area and tourists can either walk to the monument or use an electric bus. Yet the huge amounts of people breathing, sweating and touching things they are not supposed to touch have left the building damaged and the limitations of their number seems to be the only way for the palace to be able to recover.

## **9. The Galapagos Islands, Ecuador**

Galapagos is an archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, near the equator. It was here that Charles Darwin made major progress in his theory of evolution. Discovering this tropical paradise may have been good for the mankind, yet considerably worse for the local fauna and flora, that suffered serious damages by crowds of inconsiderate tourist. Due to growing population of the islands and many evasive species brought by them from overseas, the local wildlife is in constant danger.

## **10. The Pyramids of Giza**

The pyramids of Giza are probably the best-known monuments worldwide. Many people have visited them and almost everyone has at least heard of them. Popularity has its pros as well as its cons though. Too many tourists, the unstoppable, confused and constant growth of the nearby Cairo have

brought air pollution, tons of garbage and armies of the poor trying to steal a piece of the monuments and sell it later. All these contribute to the slow and unnoticed breakdown of the pyramids – better go there soon, but responsibly!

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