

# There Is a New Trend In Tourism Industry - Geotourism



Geotourism is similar to ecotourism which focuses on avoiding harm to wilderness areas and wildlife wherever possible; it is simply an environmentally friendly way of traveling. Geotourism goes even further, it is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of the place being visited, including its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents. A geotourist longs for destinations with unique culture and history and wants them to stay unique rather than turn into a typical tourist trap. "People do tend to like things that they're not going to experience somewhere else. They're looking for things that are not homogenized," said David DePetrillo, Rhode Island's tourism director. "People are seeking a more experiential vacation." National Geographic Society's Jonathan B. Tourtellot, who has coined the term geotourism, says: "The enemy of geotourism is sameness... There's a great deal of creeping sameness in the world." The tourism industry often changes certain exotic destinations. An example is, according to Jonathan B. Tourtellot, Spain's Costa del Sol, sometimes called the "Costa del Concrete" for its overdeveloped coastline. Jonathan B. Tourtellot describes Costa del Sol as an example of a place where tourism has taken a big toll. "It's not necessarily that a big hotel on a beach is a bad thing," Tourtellot said. "It's how the hotel is designed. It's where the hotel is located. What's a bad thing is nothing but ugly, look-alike hotels going on for mile after mile." Lelei Lelaulu, the president and the chief executive of Counterpart International, a Washington-based non-profit international development agency gives an example of a geotourism destination. It is in Guatemala, where small coffee growers show their farms to the tourists in a geotourism initiative. "People can go and visit these small farms and get to taste the coffee ... look at the farm and incredibly interesting machinery, but also learn about the local Maya culture as well," Lelaulu said.

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