

TOP 5 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MISCONCEPTIONS



At a time when the environment, sustainable development, green energies, flexitarianism and zero waste are at the heart of many concerns, tourism is not exempt from this awareness. Indeed, we are witnessing a real desire on the part of travelers, but also tourism professionals, to "travel differently". A multitude of new ways to travel are emerging, including sustainable tourism.

However, there are a lot of misconceptions about the sustainable tourism, here are top five brought to you by Tourism Review.

Sustainable Tourism Is Ecotourism

Ecotourism is not sustainable tourism, but it is part of it. It can even be said that it is a sub-category of sustainable tourism.

Indeed, ecotourism has for the first principle the sensitization to nature and its resources, their discovery and their protection. Nature and the environment are thus at the very heart of the trip. For example, the selection of activities, or even accommodation, will be based on environmental criteria with a principle of eco-responsibility and preservation of biodiversity. It is simply a tourism centered on the environment.

Sustainable tourism also integrates this environmental facet, but not only. It is completed by social and economic notions linked to this sector. We can therefore say that ecotourism is a branch of sustainable tourism, illustrating the environmental pillar of the principle.

Sustainable Tourism Is in the Countryside

Some say that sustainable tourism rhymes with rural tourism... Wrong!

The environmental aspect of sustainable tourism often leads travelers to favor activities in the middle of nature, the discovery of fauna and flora, the reconnection with nature... So, of course, it will be much easier to find "happiness" in the countryside. But it is more a personal choice than a reality.

Many cities are making great efforts to re-naturalize their downtown areas and reduce their ecological impact, by offering green transportation, eco-friendly housing, or eco-responsible restaurants... The real local life, culture, and traditions can be as strong in some areas of a capital city as in a totally unknown and remote part of the country visited...

Quite often, sustainable tourism takes us to remote places, far from the city, especially because we personally seek to be lost in the middle of nature. But a sustainable city break is quite possible!

Sustainable Tourism Is Uncomfortable

Sustainable tourism does not necessarily imply no comfort. Just because you choose to sleep in an eco-responsible place doesn't mean that you will have to go to the bathroom outside and fight with

the local insects that might tickle you in the middle of the night. Moreover, the efforts made by some eco-responsible accommodations (solar panels, waste management, water management, the origin of bedding, breakfasts...) can sometimes be totally invisible to the client if it is not clearly stated in the communication! In fact, it may not change anything for you, while the environmental impact will be huge.

Obviously, some may prefer a minimalist experience with moderate comfort by choosing to go camping in the wilderness for example... But again, it's a matter of choice only!

Sustainable Tourism Is Solidarity Tourism

The social and economic aspects of sustainable tourism can be represented by solidarity tourism. So here, just as for ecotourism, we are on some facets only of sustainable tourism. To summarize, solidarity tourism is a form of sustainable tourism, but sustainable tourism is not solidarity tourism.

To remain in the comparison with ecotourism, in which the environment is at the heart of the trip, in solidarity tourism, it is the human being who is at the center, with an economic dimension. Here, the goal is to share the financial benefits of a trip equitably among all the local actors who participate in the "implementation" of this trip. There is a real notion of equality within each stakeholder of the trip.

Solidarity tourism means sleeping or eating in a hostel or a family restaurant, shopping at the local producer's, buying souvenirs at the local craftsman's... In short, it means giving a living to the very population of the place you have chosen to visit.

Sustainable Tourism Is Expensive

Another common misconception about sustainable tourism is that it is expensive... This is absolutely false!

Indeed, it will depend mostly on you, your needs or your desires. For example, during your sustainable trip, if you decide to stay in eco-friendly accommodation, it can very well be a small friendly campsite, as well as a big palace. As a result, the budget will vary considerably!

Another example: you decide during your trip to eat only local products and dishes from short circuits. You should know that some starred gastronomic restaurants only work with local products. But the little kiosk on the corner will also serve dishes exclusively made from products grown by its owner... However, the bill will not be the same! Discovering the city by bike, or discovering the city by an electric car with a driver will not have the same cost... In short, sustainable tourism is not more expensive or less expensive, it adapts to all budgets and desires!

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