

DESTINATIONS: DO NOT VISIT IN 2024



Fodor's, the travel guide publisher, has released its annual no-travel list for 2024. The list includes destinations that travelers should avoid next year due to the negative environmental impact of mass tourism. However, the purpose of the ranking is not to devalue these destinations but to encourage travelers to give them a break and help preserve them for future generations. The ranking focuses on three main issues that tourism brings: over-tourism, over-wasting, and poor water quality, which can have long-term impacts on the destinations.

Overtourism

Venice, Italy: Venice has implemented several measures to prevent mass tourism, such as prohibiting cruise ships and implementing a day tourist ticketing system. Despite these efforts, local residents remain worried about the future of the lagoon city and are demanding sustainable and long-term solutions to address the issue.

Athens, Greece: The Acropolis in Athens attracts around 17,000 visitors daily, making it the city's most popular tourist attraction. However, this high number of visitors poses a significant risk of damage to the Unesco World Heritage Site, and the loss of traditional ways of life in the surrounding districts.

Mount Fuji, Japan: In the current climbing season, 221,322 individuals have climbed the four hiking trails of Mount Fuji, as per the Ministry of Environment in Japan. Unfortunately, many are unaware of the potential risks of mountain climbing and pay only the voluntary fee of 1000 yen (about \$7), intended for safety and nature conservation purposes.

Overwasting

San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, USA: In 2014, Barack Obama declared the Monument's area a "National Monument." However, the natural oasis in Los Angeles County is facing various problems due to insufficient funding and visitors' lack of awareness. Consequently, tons of waste are being generated, and there are too few staff members to take care of the environment in an eco-friendly manner.

Halong Bay, Vietnam: A 2020 study found that Halong Bay receives 28,283 tons of plastic waste annually, with 34 tons of this total waste attributed to tourism. Sadly, only half of the original 234 coral reefs in the area survive today.

Atacama Desert, Chile: Chile promotes the Atacama Desert as a stunning natural treasure of the country. However, it has also become a dumping site for fast fashion from Asia, Europe and the USA. The waste has accumulated on a huge scale, making it visible even from space.

Poor water quality

Lake Superior, USA: Lake Superior, located near Michigan, contains ten percent of the world's total freshwater. Unfortunately, tourism has led to pollution, negatively impacting water quality and the environment. This pollution has caused the water to warm up and has contributed to the formation of algal blooms, straining the lake's natural balance.

Ganges, India: The Ganges, India's most crucial river, receives nearly 800 million liters of wastewater daily, as per a report by the World Bank Group in 2015. This poses a significant risk, as the river is a drinking water source for the towns and villages along its banks.

Koh Samui, Thailand: In July, 140,000 tourists visited the Thai island, exacerbating the water shortage. Tourism consumes almost 70% of the limited water resources, which poses a long-term threat to the groundwater supply.

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