



Sustainable Tourism

And Why We Should Care About It
Cassandra Jimenez

What is sustainable tourism?

The concept of visiting a place as a tourist and trying to only make a positive impact on that location's environment, society and economy

What are the benefits?



1. Benefits the local community

- Offers employment to local residents but also through non-profits
- supporting locally owned and operated businesses your money goes directly back into the community.



2. It helps to conserve precious natural resources

- Earth's many unique ecosystems are made the way they are for specific reasons, and they are not renewable!
- You can take part in conservationist tourist activities by first avoiding support of any programs that hurt the land or animals; for instance, the majority of zoos and any landscaped parks or recreation areas that have torn down natural resources in order to find their space.
- There are tours and parks that enable the original land to be preserved and enjoyed, so you should look for those.



3. It gives tourists a more honest look into the local area

- By supporting locally-run tour guides and businesses, you learn the truth about their culture and environment
- You will get a first-hand glimpse into life as a local and learn to love the community for what it is.
- Some places to look for these types of tours and experiences include Visit.org, Grassroots Volunteering (volunteering) and Omprakash (volunteering)



4. Sustainable Tourism isn't just about creating better places to visit

- It's about creating better places to live!
- The tourism industry helps to maintain the natural land and culture of the area, while also employing and empowering locals who get to live in their community year-round without having to change it all for tourists.
- Hostels are often run by locals, and don't take up as much real estate as hotel chains do. AirBnB is definitely run by locals, and is often a way for individuals to supplement their income through the influx of tourists.



5. It can help avoid the displacement and resettlement of local communities

- An unfortunately often a consequence of tourism coming to a location previously untouched by major businesses.
- **Sustainable tourism** does, and advocates for finding the best combination of exciting and profitable tourism and the continued existence of indigenous communities.
- You can make efforts to be sustainable in this way by not supporting programs that exploit the local culture for entertainment or tourist photo ops.
- Do some research to discover if the program or workshop you're signing up for is being run by genuine residents or members of a certain culture or subculture, and not a larger outside corporation.



Supporting sustainable tourism is a responsible thing to do!

