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Don't forget the environment just because you are on holiday!

Many of us take great care to recycle, reduce waste, use our cars less, donate to charity, buy fair-trade etc in our everyday lives but turn into “monsters of consumption and waste” when we're on holiday.

So here are some top tips to ensure that your holiday is good for you and good for the place you visit:

- 1) Spend your money in the local community. Staying in the resort and spending in the large hotel chains does little to help local people.
- 2) Eat local food – you'll get a better feel for the place you are visiting and you'll experience their culture through their food, plus you'll reduce your food miles. Also try the local beers rather than the imported ones, you know what they are like already, so how about trying something new?
- 3) Try to reduce the amount of waste you produce, in particular plastic waste. Many countries outside Europe do not have facilities for recycling and are still putting their waste in landfill. In many cases these landfill sites are unsafe and cause toxic leachate to enter the water table. So, as much as possible, try to reduce your packaging and waste while on holiday.
- 4) Don't drop litter. Dropping litter ruins the countryside for everyone and can kill wildlife.
- 5) Don't pick plants to take with you. By stealing plants, even if they are wild, you damage the local ecosystem. Leave everything as you see it – if you really like the look of something, take a photograph!
- 6) Take a shower, not a bath. Many hotter countries have water shortages and yet, to keep the tourists happy, they divert local water to the hotels. This means that the native population goes without. So reduce what you use so that everyone gets their fair share.

- 7) If you are staying near the sea check out if there is green slime along the rocks – this is an indication of nitrate rich water and may mean that the hotel is pumping their sewage into the sea. Nitrate rich water can kill marine life and damage coral reefs. Ask the hotel if they use a tertiary sewage treatment system and if they don't tell them that as an eco-conscious tourist you'd like them to consider changing to this in the future. The more people that ask, the more likely they are to change. Your voice counts!

- 8) If you go whale or dolphin watching, check the eco-credentials of the boat company. Many tourist boats try to get too close and scare the wildlife forcing them to move to new habitats and disrupting their breeding. Don't support companies that are exploiting the wildlife.

- 9) If you are bringing home souvenirs avoid ones made from animal skin or bones. Some are illegal and cannot be brought into the UK. Also do you really want a bit of dead camel or crocodile in your luggage?

- 10) Take lots of photos! This is one of the best ways to bring back a taste of your holiday. They don't damage the environment, they are light to carry, no people or animals are exploited and you'll have them for a lifetime.

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Editors Notes:

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