

8 THINGS TO ASK BEFORE BOOKING A SUSTAINABLE TRIP

Get a greener holiday with these key questions, says eco-expert **Amanda Hyde**

1 How easy is it to go flight-free with the kids?

A trip by air releases around two-and-a-half times the CO₂ per person as the same journey by train or full car. If you're travelling in the UK or on the Continent, the car also means more flexibility – and luggage allowance!

2 Can't I just offset my flight?

In short, no. Carbon stays in the air for hundreds of years, whether you offset it or not. Rather than a like-for-like solution, think of offsetting schemes that support eco-projects and sign up to one that offers full transparency, such as Mossy Earth. mossy.earth

3 What's my tour operator doing to help?

If you're booking through an operator, look out for independent accreditation. Those certified B Corp (including Intrepid, Sawday's and Pura Aventura) have been through a rigorous auditing process to prove their commitment to responsible travel. bcorporation.net

4 Where should I go?

The destructive impact of over-tourism in places such as Venice and the Balearics has made the news in the past few years, but in lesser-known destinations such as Romania's Carpathian Mountains (where wildlife tourism is helping regenerate forests and villages), visitors help rather than hinder the environment. travelcarpathia.com Other destinations with a focus on eco-tourism include Austria, Costa Rica and the Azores.

5 How do I find a truly green hotel?

Look beyond the green-washing: anyone can ban plastic straws or mini toiletry bottles. Ask hotels whether they use green energy and eco-cleaning products, serve locally-sourced food, harvest rain and grey water, offer easy recycling and landscape with their surroundings in mind (perhaps adding dry gardens or a natural swimming pool).

6 Will my stay benefit the local community?

International chain hotels, all-inclusive packages and imported souvenirs draw money away from local residents in your destination. Make a difference by staying in independently-owned properties that train and employ local people nearby and use food that's grown and sold nearby, as well as opting for activities run by local firms. elsewhere.io

7 How will we get around?

Try a destination with plenty of active travel options – from beachside cycle lanes to cliffside walking trails – as well as good public transport. Look out for free bikes and electric car transfers in-resort too.

8 What changes can we make while we're there?

If the water's safe, drink it rather than buying plastic bottled water. Switch off the air con – and the lights when they're not needed. Opt into schemes that change towels and sheets less frequently. And pack reef-safe sunscreen so you don't hurt the marine life. ↗

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