



Intrepid's top 12 responsible travel tips

1. Before leaving home learn as much as possible about the countries you are visiting - the religion and culture, the local rules and values.
2. Learn some language and don't be afraid to use it - simple pleasantries will help break the ice. Keep practising.
3. Learn what's appropriate behaviour and body language. Like the concept of "saving face" in Asia or giving the thumbs up in western or central Europe.
4. Support locally owned businesses, hotels, restaurants and other services. Eat local food and drink local brands and brews. Use public transport, hire a bike or walk where convenient - you'll meet local people and get to know the place.
5. Think first. It's best not to eat in restaurants, shop in stores or visit local shows, markets or zoos that promote cruelty or exploitation of endangered species.
6. Shop from traditional artisans and for locally made products, helping keep traditional crafts alive and favour local products over imported items. Bargain if that is a local practice, but bear in mind that a small amount to you could be extremely important to the seller.
7. Dress respectfully with an awareness of local standards. Dress modestly at religious sites and check what swim wear is suitable for pools and the beach.
8. Always ask first before photographing or videoing people. Send them back copies of photos to help make it a two-way exchange.
9. Be wary of giving gifts or money to beggars, children and people you have just met. Supporting the community through a local school, clinic or development project may be more constructive.
10. Leave only footprints... take care of the environment as you would your own home. Take out all you take in, to areas away from the cities. Use alternatives to plastic and say 'No' to plastic bags. For cigarette butts, an empty film container makes a perfect portable container.
11. After returning home think how you can support programs and organisations that are working to protect the welfare, culture and environment of where you've been lucky to visit.
12. Smile - The traveller who wishes to have a happy and successful trip should keep as calm, cheerful and friendly as humanly possible. And have fun!