

Essential Guide: Eco Friendly Holidays

How to be more eco conscious without compromising on your well deserved R&R

9



Stress-free eco-friendly travel

Planet-friendly ways to enjoy the world

Many of us spend all year dreaming of our next holiday destination.

Whether it's skiing in the snow or sunbathing on the beach, it's a chance to unwind and explore a new corner of the world.

Although it's a chance to escape our daily lives, it doesn't mean that we should neglect our responsibility to the planet. Eco-friendly travel doesn't have to be stressful.

With some pre-planning and a suitcase packed with sustainable essentials, you'll have everything you need to travel responsibly.

Is it better for my carbon footprint to stay in the UK?

Less travel is certainly better for the planet, as evident by the effects of the pandemic.

As a consequence of global

lockdowns, countries noted improved air quality, less wildlife poaching and clearer waterways.

Last year, many people turned to staycations instead of travelling abroad: Google searches for staycations increased by 85% between June 2020 and July 2021.

There is no straightforward answer to this question! If you were to travel by plane, a staycation in the UK is likely better for your carbon footprint.

However, if you were to travel by bus, train or ferry to your destination, there are a lot more factors to consider.

Aviation is the mode of transport that releases the most emissions but you should also consider the impact of your accommodation, energy and water use, food waste and your experiences at your destination.



“If you travel by motor home or camper van, reducing the weight could drastically reduce your carbon footprint.”





“ By leaving the Do Not Disturb sign on your hotel door, you’ll save over 6,000 gallons of water.”

What type of holiday has the lowest environmental impact?

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the accommodation sector accounts for one-fifth of tourism emissions.

Heating, air conditioning, pools, restaurants and bars all contribute to high emissions.

There are certain things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint when choosing accommodation!

Hotels

Staying in hotels can be luxurious so it’s natural to want to make the most of it - hot showers, miniature toiletries, fresh sheets and perfectly controlled temperature at the touch of a button.

But it comes at a price.

A hotel room can emit up to 15 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year (more than 5x the average UK

household).

This is mainly contributed by the energy and water consumption from daily laundry service air-con, fridges, TVs and food.

The World Wildlife Fund discovered that 2 weeks in a Caribbean five-star all-inclusive hotel can produce 205kg of food-related emissions per person - the equivalent of driving for 10 hours.

Just picture the huge buffets laid out for breakfast every morning, much of which goes uneaten.

When looking for a hotel, search

for places that practice sustainable tourism such as renewable energy, local produce, recycling systems, support the local community and offer rewards for public transport and eco-friendly travel.

Small-scale resorts tend to have a smaller environmental impact.

Additionally, limit the energy you use while staying there.

A great tip to travel by is ‘act as you would at home’ - turn the lights off when you leave, don’t have long showers and use the air-con sparingly.



Motor homes/camper vans

In comparison to flights, motor homes are a more sustainable accommodation option.

According to the Vehicle Certification Agency, on average, driving from London to Cornwall and back in a Caravelle (174PS 2.5 litre diesel) will emit 224kg of carbon dioxide.

In comparison, a short-haul return flight from London to Marseille will produce 300kg of carbon dioxide per person.

Don't forget that many people travel far further than France so the emissions would be much higher.

Additionally, the average lifespan of a car is around 8 years while a motorhome will last 20 years or more.

It's not just the travelling either, building cars and motorhomes also

releases harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

When a vehicle is scrapped, production starts all over again.

However, motor homes and camper vans will last up to three times longer than cars, reducing the overall carbon impact.

Better yet, sustainable campervans and motorhomes exist! Cambee, for example, are VW camper van conversions with sustainability in mind.

They're built with durable materials such as timber and metal rather than plastic while interiors are made from hard-wearing birch ply, a light material that also saves space - great for fuel-efficiency.

They also source their materials locally to reduce the miles your camper does before you're behind the wheel.

Plus, they offset their carbon emissions and get all of their electricity from a green energy company.

“Most places in Europe can be reached by train. Not only will this reduce your carbon footprint, but it's also a chance to soak up the beautiful scenery.”

Camping

While you would expect camping in nature to be sustainable in itself, that's not quite the case.

There are things to consider when camping to reduce your impact on the environment.

Rather than choosing a wildflower meadow or vegetation, opt for a durable surface such as sand or flat compact soil.

Don't choose a patch of grass that looks recently used by campers, find a new spot to give that space a chance to recover.

If you've never been camping or don't go very often, you probably don't need to purchase all of your own gear.

Instead, consider renting gear or borrowing it from a friend.

Not only is less consumption better for the environment, but it will also save you money.

As for your packing, we have eco-friendly essentials such as bamboo cutlery and natural firelighters to help you leave no trace.

Static caravan

Static caravans are a great way to staycation and they're situated all across the UK, many of which are probably on your doorstep. A holiday doesn't have to mean travelling far, there is bound to be an area near you that is waiting to be discovered.

The most eco-friendly choice is to opt for caravans that have double glazing and solar panels.

Plus while you're there, avoid single-use plastic, recycle your waste and cycle rather than drive to explore the local area.

Airbnb

In comparison to staying in hotels, Airbnb uses 63-78% less energy.

As they're individual homes and rooms, you don't have to worry about the likes of elevators, hallway lights and food buffets.

Plus, Airbnb uses up to 48% less water. It has recently launched an educational hub for hosts to learn how to reduce their carbon footprint and practice sustainable hosting.

Airbnb has a huge host of accommodations that allow guests to immerse themselves in nature and local communities.

It's not just accommodation,

Airbnb also lists experiences in your chosen location, helping you opt for eco-friendly tourism while you're there.

How much do flights really add to my carbon footprint?

In 2019, worldwide flights produced 915 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Aviation is responsible for roughly 5% of global warming. This may not seem like a huge percentage until you consider that more than 80% of the global population have never flown.

According to The Guardian, a return long-haul flight produces more carbon emissions than the average person in more than 50 countries will account for in an entire year.

Short-haul flights have the worst environmental impact because a large proportion of energy is used for take-off.

Travelling by bus, train or car is better for your carbon footprint.

For example, let's consider the carbon emissions for a family of four, from London to Paris using three different modes of transport:



A return flight from London to Paris in economy class:

— **440kg** of carbon dioxide for the entire family.



Driving from London to Paris via a ferry from Dover to Calais:

— **173k** of carbon dioxide per car.



Travelling on the Eurostar from London to Paris:

— **10.6k** of carbon dioxide per passenger.

1

Sustainable travel doesn't stop when you get off the plane or once you've arrived.

2

It also involves being conscious at your destination and minimising your carbon footprint.

3

There are some simple things you can do to leave less of a footprint, whilst keeping your holiday feeling like a holiday...

1. **Choose** soap and shampoo bars rather than plastic bottles.
2. **Take your** safety razor, rather than a disposable plastic option.
3. **Take your** Kind Bag.



“Most of what you pack is never worn. Plan what you are going to wear beforehand so you know that everything you bring will have a use.”

Many people choose to fly because it appears less time-consuming.

But when you consider getting to the airport in advance and waiting for your flight, plus the journey into the centre on arrival, travelling by car, train or bus doesn't take much longer.

In fact 80% of flights to Europe could take less than a day to get to by train.

Slow travel is a concept that has been popularised in recent years.

It involves taking fewer mini-breaks throughout the year and instead, taking fewer but longer holidays.

You take your time travelling to your destination by boat, train or bus and once there, create a deeper connection with your surroundings.

The idea is simple - contribute more to the local economy, reduce your carbon footprint by travelling more sustainably and slowing down for your wellbeing.

Of course, sometimes there is no option but to fly.

Although it's not great for

your carbon footprint, there are some top tips to reduce your environmental impact when flying such as travelling light! Most of the clothes we take on holiday don't end up being worn.

By only packing what you need, you'll reduce the weight of the plane, and in turn, reduce fuel usage and carbon emissions.

Additionally, choose an economy ticket rather than business or first class because the more expensive seats take up more space and weight on the plane.

You should also consider the airline you will fly with.

The newest aircraft are typically more fuel-efficient and produce fewer emissions.

Choose airlines that are transparent and take steps to reduce their environmental impact by using eco-friendly materials, using sustainable fuel, offsetting their carbon emissions and investing in green initiatives.

Skyscanner is a great tool to use when searching for flights as

you'll see a 'greener choice' label, highlighting the flights that emit less carbon dioxide.

Skyscanner analyses the aircraft model, checking for fuel-efficient engines and sustainable modifications.

Then, it calculates emissions based on distance, capacity and cruise time.

Some airlines have the option to offset your carbon emissions directly. This is where people pay extra to invest in green schemes that make up for the emissions their flight produces. While it doesn't get rid of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, it tries to reduce it somewhere else instead.

EasyJet and British Airways are among some of the airlines that offer carbon offsetting schemes.

You simply pay a fee on top of the flight cost.

But we recommend researching into it beforehand to ensure you're investing in something truly sustainable and not subject to greenwashing.

How to pack sustainably

One way towards eco-friendly travel is to reconsider what you pack in your suitcase. We recommend making a checklist beforehand so that you only pack what you need.

1

Miniature toiletries are amongst the worst contributors of single-use plastic waste: it is estimated that roughly 100 million miniatures are purchased each year in the UK, creating 980 tonnes of plastic waste.

Instead, get some reusable containers and distil your large bottles of shampoo and shower gel for each holiday. You can keep reusing the smaller bottles each trip. Alternatively, soap bars perform in the exact same way except their packaging is far more eco-friendly.

2

Creating a 'zero-waste kit' is also handy. This involves all your reusable essentials that can be kept in your handbag or backpack for easy access. Typically, this would include the likes of a reusable water bottle, a reusable shopping bag, natural deodorant and reusable cutlery. Having all of the essentials on hand will reduce the need to buy single-use plastic on the go.

3

Buy reef-safe sunscreen. Some sunscreen contains harmful chemicals which can damage coral reefs and marine life. According to National Geographic, 14,000 tons of sunscreen and 82,000 chemicals from personal care products are thought to wash into the oceans each year. Instead, opt for mineral sunscreen and check the label to ensure it is free of oxybenzone and octinoxate.

4

If you're renting a cottage or camping, bring eco-friendly cleaning and kitchen products such as OceanSaver anti-bac spray, compostable bin liners and compostable cleaning cloths. The wonderful thing about these products is that you can take them home!

5

If you're an avid reader on holiday, it may be worth investing in a kindle to reduce the weight in your suitcase.

Our checklist of eco-friendly essentials

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| ● Soap bars or reusable toiletry containers | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Reusable makeup pads or biodegradable wipes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Reusable water bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Menstrual cup | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Reusable travel mug | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Reusable facemask | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Reusable cutlery set | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Reef-safe sunscreen | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Reusable straws | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Biodegradable plasters | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Reusable shopping bag | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Biodegradable or refillable anti-bac | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Reusable food containers | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Reusable razor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Zero-waste natural deodorant | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Kindle | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ● Zero-waste floss | <input type="checkbox"/> | ● Bamboo toothbrush | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Don't forget to switch off all of your appliances before travelling so they don't use up unnecessary energy. Switch them off at the wall because they still use electricity while they're plugged in!

Are there sustainable travel agents?

Yes, there are! Many people prefer to leave the stress to the professionals and now that there are sustainable travel agents, it makes eco-friendly choices even easier.



Green Destinations

Based in the Netherlands, this is a non-profit organisation for sustainable destination development and recognition. It has certified more than 200 destinations in 60 countries to help deliver responsible tourism based upon the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Essentially, it works with tourism businesses and media partners, helping green destinations to become more visible in the marketplace. This makes it easy for you to choose eco-friendly destinations.



Intrepid

It's a Certified B Corporation and the world's largest purpose-led adventure travel brand, with responsible travel at its core. It actively works with local communities to support the development of new experiences in destinations that otherwise wouldn't see the benefits of tourism. It also invests in human rights initiatives and wildlife conservation projects. Its tailor-made plans enable you to explore authentic local culture in a sustainable, experience-rich way.



Byway

Also a Certified B Corporation, it creates travel and accommodation packages away from traditional tourist routes, favouring trains, bikes, buses and ferries instead. It coordinates the whole journey for you based on top itineraries in the UK and Europe, including bag storage, luggage transfer and handpicking and booking your accommodation. You'll also receive personalised support from the team via WhatsApp before and during your holiday, recommending hidden gems and local treasures.



Green Pearls

It's the leading source for green hotels around the world. The hotels chosen are based on their sustainable initiatives and green projects. Browse by hotel types or destinations to find your ideal holiday with peace of mind that you're choosing a sustainable place to stay.



Book Different

Choosing sustainable accommodation is easy - it provides you with eco-certified hotels, responsible destinations, plastic-free travel options and responsible transportation methods. Browse the eco-certified hotels and check out the stay green check score based on four pillars of sustainability: management, fair and local, cultural friendly and nature and environment.



Lokal

Catering to the conscious traveller, the money you spend with Lokal goes back into local communities and conservation. It gives you tailor-made off the beaten path adventures crafted by local experts, unique local stays that benefit the local community and experiences that immerse yourself in the local area. It sources locally-owned accommodation, guides and transport to directly benefit the communities you visit. When that isn't 100% possible, it works with 3rd party sustainability accreditation standards.

How to be more sustainable when you get to your destination?

- Make the most of public transport. Getting the train or bus is a great way to view the local scenery and there's no need to worry about parking.
- Better yet, cycle and walk more. This method of transport emits zero carbon emissions whilst improving your health and wellbeing. It's a fun activity for the whole family.
- In some countries, tap water isn't drinkable so try to avoid buying plastic bottled water. If that isn't possible, buy the biggest water bottle and distil it into smaller reusable bottles.
- Say no to plastic on your travels. This is where a zero-waste kit is essential because you'll always be prepared.
- Opt for an electric car if you need to hire a car.
- Eat like a local. The fewer miles your dinner travels, the lower its carbon footprint so choose local produce and restaurants. It's a chance to try authentic food that you wouldn't usually so make the most of it.
- Opt for digital tickets and paperwork rather than printing and storing multiple pieces of paper on your travels. No need to worry about important documents getting lost and you can save paper in the process.
- Bringing back gifts for loved ones can be fun but make sure you choose them carefully. Don't bring back anything from nature such as shells. Also, don't choose something that will likely be tossed in the bin soon afterwards. If it is plastic, ensure it is recyclable. Gifts that are made by local craftsmen is more authentic, heartfelt and will benefit the community.
- Leave the 'do not disturb' sign on your hotel door to cut down on energy and water consumption.
- Holiday by the 'leave no trace' motto to ensure you leave nature exactly as you found it.

Holidays are wonderful for exploring new cultures, de-stressing and soaking up new experiences.

However, with so much beauty in the world, there is also a responsibility in its safekeeping. Eco-friendly travel doesn't have to be a hassle and you don't have to give up your favourite experiences. Eco-friendly travel is simply about slowing down and making decisions that benefit the local community and the wider environment.

Use our top tips and extensive range of eco-friendly products to ensure you leave no trace while travelling the world.

Still have questions before you travel?

WhatsApp your Carbon Mentor who can help you with pretty much anything... apart from packing, they can't help you with that

