



Tips for engaging in responsible tourism

Every action has an impact, which is why responsible tourism is so vital.

When you practice responsible tourism, you can help to support the environment, local economies, responsible accommodations and services, as well as contributing to lower pollution, social benefits, and getting the most out of your journey to the country.

Before your trip

- Get as much information as possible: find out whether your accommodations or tourism operator has a sustainability certification.
- Pack light: it's tempting to bring everything you think you might require, but remember to act wisely and consider your needs.
- Accommodation options: look for lodgings that have an environmental policy and support our culture and the community. The best evidence that accommodations follow a variety of sustainable practices is if it has a Certificate of Sustainable Tourism (CST) from the ICT and other standards or programs (Ecological Blue Flag, C-Neutral, Red Sofía, Code of Conduct, Social Tourism, E-Coins, 5MinuteBeach Foundation).
- Costa Rican businesses certified with a CST range from accommodations to car rental agencies, private transportation, tour operators, museums, spas, hot springs, protected areas, and even restaurants.
- Explore the transportation options: remember that traveling affects the environment. Whenever possible, try to minimize pollution by using public transportation, looking for mass transportation options or ones that are energy efficient (hybrid or electric vehicles), carpooling, and planning your travel around short trips that avoid peak hours.
- Did you know that your vehicle can get an eco-label?
- Offset the emissions generated on your flight using the FONAFIFO calculator at <https://www.fonafifo.go.cr/es/calculadora/> and help to support the Payment for Environmental Services (PSA) program.



While traveling

- Support the local economy: remember to eat local food, shop at local markets and attend festivals in the communities you visit; it's part of experiencing the culture. Supporting locally owned businesses, community tour operators and craftspeople means that you won't just have a unique experience, but also that you'll make a direct economic contribution to the community.
- Respect the local culture: learn about it, don't judge and share your own culture in a respectful manner. Always try to speak with locals before taking a photo and be careful at the cultural sites you visit, as they must be preserved.
- Before buying products, ask about where they come from. Avoid purchasing ones made from rare natural products and inform the local authorities about poaching and other illegal activities.
- Hire local accredited guides: enrich your experience by choosing local guides with certifications who know all about the destination. Ask for recommendations from tourism operators and hotels in the area.
- Walk carefully: these destinations are exceptional thanks to their natural and cultural splendor. Do your part to keep them this way by following the designated trails, respecting those who care for them and do not take archeological or biological objects from the sites.
- Support the fight against commercial sexual exploitation: if you see a suspicious situation or behavior, tell the hotel manager, local authorities, or call 911.
- Respect the country's biodiversity and keep your distance. Don't take photos with animals, don't feed them, and respect their habitat.
- If you go to the beach, take a few minutes to collect any trash and pieces of plastic you see in the sand and put them in recycling or waste bins.
- Respect the natural environment: refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle. Try to buy only what's necessary, avoiding the use of plastic and properly disposing of your waste.
- Reduce food waste: only purchase what you're going to need in order to avoid waste and reduce garbage; try to compost your organic waste as well.
- Minimize your consumption of water and energy: even if you're just visiting and you don't have to pay for electricity, try to optimize your use of resources.
- Reduce the consumption of products whose production causes large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, such as beef and milk products.
- Be mindful of your pets: pick up their droppings to avoid contaminating public spaces and be considerate of others visiting those sites.



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After your trip

- Leave the place better than you found it: it's part of regenerative tourism.
- Spread advice on responsible travel: as well as telling your family and friends about the incredible memories you created, you can also share recommendations with them so that they can have a positive impact on the world while enjoying an incredible trip.
- Keep exploring: travel is only the beginning of the learning journey. Once you return home, continue your exploration and get involved however you can with subjects or regions that draw your attention. Increase your knowledge as you learn about another fascinating place.
- Give something back. Traveling often opens your eyes and heart to something new.
- Calculate your trip's carbon footprint and offset your road and air travel here: <https://www.fonafifo.go.cr/es/calculadora/>. By doing so, you'll help to support Costa Rica's continued efforts to restore tropical forests and increase its forest cover.