

Many of us look forward to our summer holidays all year. We can't wait to get away from our everyday lives to visit new place try new things, or just to relax and lie in the sun. But how many of us think about the effect our holidays have on the places we visit?

Although tourism has many benefits, such as bringing extra money into the local economy, there are also negative effects. Tourism can do all sorts of damage to the environment, the culture and the people of a country. especially in places which aren't prepared for large numbers of holidaymakers. In recent years there has been a large increase in the number of independent travellers who want to get off the beaten track, and this has meant that many remote destinations are having to adjust to new visitors

It certainly isn't all bad news though. The last few years have also seen a huge increase in **'eco-tourism'**. This is 17 tourism where holidaymakers try to have a positive effect on the people and places that they visit. If you are really committed to this idea, then you can spend your holidays helping out on an organic farm in Britain, or taking part in conservation projects in Africa or the Amazon rainforest. Don't worry, though, if this doesn't sound like your idea of a holiday. Wherever you go and whatever you want to do, there are still ways to make sure that you have the best possible impact on your holiday destination.

If you are heading off to a place for the first time, it is an excellent idea to find out as much about it as you can. A guidebook is a great place to start. As well as learning about the local places of interest, you can read about the way you will be expected to behave and dress. This can save you from making embarrassing mistakes and means that you are less likely to upset or offend your hosts. Don't stop at the guidebook, though. If you can, listen to some music or read some literature from your chosen destination Knowing a little about the place that you are visiting before you leave can make your holiday more enjoyable when you arrive.

It is also important to think about how you spend your money when you are on holiday. Whenever you can, try to put into the local people's hands. You can do this by eating and drinking local products rather than imported brands, staying in locally owned accommodation and using local guides. In some parts of the world, you might be relatively well off compared to the local population. Even in places where you are expected to haggle or bargain, you should always pay a fair price for things. Remember that what might be a very small amount of money to you, **can make a big difference to some people.**

Another important thing for the co-tourist is to have as little effect on the local environment as possible. This is easy to do if you follow some common-sense advice. Don't leave litter lying around and use biodegradable product whenever possible. If resources like water or fuel are in short supply, then use as little of these as you can, and of course you should never buy products made from rare plants or endangered animals. If you are lucky enough to visit a truly exotic destination such as a coral reef mountain or desert region, or a rainforest then you should try to leave it exactly as you found it, so that future visitors can enjoy it just as you did.

Eco-tourism organizations say that respecting the culture and environment of the places that you visit will lead to much more rewarding and enjoyable holidays. If we try to encourage the local economy, leave the environment undamaged and are aware of the different laws and attitudes in the places we visit, then all of us can enjoy our "eco-holidays much better now and in the future. With more and more of us planning holidays in new

locations every year, we should all do our bit to make sure that we are always welcome wherever we go.

1 Tourism does the most damage in countries

- A where there has been an increase in eco – tourism.
- B which aren't ready for a lot of tourists.
- C where there are a lot of people travelling on their own.
- D which have a strong focal economy.

2 What is meant by 'eco-tourism'?

- A Helping out on organic farms.
- B Helping to conserve the rainforests.
- C Having a positive effect on the environment.
- D Helping places to get used to new visitors.

3 What should you do before you take your eco - holidays?

- A Buy a guidebook.
- B Learn how to dress.
- C Find out about the local attractions
- D Learn about your destination.

4 How can a tourist help the economy of a country?

- A Bargain for everything they buy
- B Buy the goods and services provided by the local people.
- C Pay a fair price for everything.
- D Buy expensive imported brands

5 What is meant by 'can make a big difference to some people' ?

- A You can change their lives.
- B You can help to preserve their local environment.
- C You can help them to have a better life.
- D You can be fair.