

SHOULD I GO THERE?

Travel writer Carlos Gomm is thinking of taking a holiday in Antarctica. But should he go there?

I don't like holidays with hotels, beaches and swimming pools, and I'm not interested in sightseeing in old cities. So for my next holiday, I plan to do something exciting outdoors. There are many tour companies on the internet offering that type of holiday. One company takes backpacking trips over the Andes of South America. Another company has animal safaris in Africa. And you can even go swimming with dolphins with a tour group in Australia.

The problem for me is that when I choose a holiday, I don't want to go somewhere and see lots of other tourists. I want to be the only person there, which is difficult these days. Is there anywhere in the world without other people? What about Antarctica?

safari (n) /sə'faɪri/ a type of holiday in Africa to look at animals
environmental organization (n) /ɪn,vaɪrən'mentl ,ɔ:ɡənai'zeɪʃn/
 a group of people who want to help the natural world

Antarctica should be perfect for me. It's huge, it's quiet and it's thousands of kilometres away from other countries. It doesn't have a government and there are no cities, so there's no pollution or noisy traffic. It has lots of wildlife.

However, like many places in the world, Antarctica is changing. Fifty years ago nobody lived here, but now between 1,000 and 5,000 scientists live and work there all year, and over 50,000 tourists visit every year. The main way for tourists to visit the continent is by ship. There are no hotels, so cruise holidays are very popular. You can leave the ship during the day and there are guided tours of areas with wildlife. As a result of so many tourists, some people think the numbers of wild animals and birds are decreasing.

On the other hand, there is some positive news. Many cruise companies teach their passengers about the wildlife in Antarctica and give money to environmental organizations in the region. These organizations want to help the nature and wildlife of Antarctica so it doesn't change in the future. So what should I do? Should I go to Antarctica, go somewhere else or stay at home?

Reading

- 1** Look at the photo of tourists on a ship in Antarctica. Why do you think tourists go there? What do you think they can see?
- 2** Read the article. Match the paragraphs (1–5) with the topics (a–e).
 - a why Antarctica is a good holiday destination
 - b the writer's problem
 - c negative changes in Antarctica
 - d which holidays the writer likes and doesn't like
 - e the positive work of tourism in Antarctica
- 3** Work in pairs. Read paragraphs 1 and 2 again. Answer the questions.
 - 1 What does the writer want to do on his next holiday?
 - 2 What types of holiday does he write about?
 - 3 What is his problem? Why?
- 4** Do you like the same types of holiday as the writer? Do you agree with him about holidays and other tourists? Why? / Why not?

Critical thinking reasons for and against

- 5** Work in pairs. Read paragraphs 3 and 4 again. What reasons does the writer give:
 - 1 for a holiday in Antarctica?
 - 2 against a holiday in Antarctica?
- 6** Work with another pair and compare your lists from Exercise 5. Then read the last line of the article and discuss these questions.
 - 1 Does the writer have a conclusion? Give reasons for your answer.
 - 2 What do you think he should do? Why?