



Tips for thoughtful travellers



Responsible travel has always been at the heart of what we do at World Class Adventures. That's why we want to highlight some of the ways that you can make small decisions that have a big impact on your trip. From a community-run cooking class to an eco-hotel with zero-carbon footprint, we have a huge range of options to help you make a difference as you travel... and improve your experience at the same time.

Today we're featuring one of our trusted partners Audley travel, who've really got the message when it comes to travelling responsibly and sustainably. In January 2020, they were granted the Travelife Partner award - the leading international sustainability certification in the travel sector.



Audley's Travel for Good Fund

As travellers, we can help preserve and restore environments, protect wildlife and working animals, and support local communities in ways that positively transform the lives of people living in the destinations we visit. We know, from more than 25 years of experience, that when it's planned thoughtfully, travel can be a force for good. That's why we created the Travel for Good Fund. You can use it to donate to one of ten charities we've chosen to partner with from around the globe. Collectively, we can create a world of positive change.

Thoughtful trips that make a difference

Every Audley trip is hand-crafted just for you. However, we're always alive to the fact that we're part of a greater community, one that has the ability to inspire, to build bridges between cultures, and to promote a greater understanding of our planet and humanity's place on it. We believe in the compounded power of small, responsible decisions, which can add up to make a big difference.

Since the beginning, we've strived to work with local people and businesses in our destinations. Not only do we feel this gives you the best experience, but it also brings benefits to local communities. As a result, local people are motivated to preserve what attracts visitors, be it their culture, wildlife or environment. Conversely, we actively avoid 'tourist traps'.

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Seven compelling experiences that also give back to the local community

The pandemic made it clear just how important travel is for many destinations around the world — the guides, artisans, hoteliers, and wider communities in countries that usually thrive from visitors suffered as the world came to a halt.

That's why we've rounded up seven of our most compelling experiences that also benefit the people in the places you're visiting. From making a tagine with a women's co-operative to whale watching off Newfoundland, these are great ways to enjoy your next trip while knowing you're helping communities recover and flourish once again.

1. BAN PONG HUAI LAN, THAILAND

LOCAL LUNCH, WEAVING & A VISIT TO GRANDMOTHER SOM'S FARM



Nestled in the verdant rice fields outside Chiang Mai, Ban Pong Huai Lan is a small farming village selected by the late King Rama IX as part of the Royal Project Initiative. The goal was to help improve life for the people in the region and to provide education about sustainable farming techniques. A visit here gives you a chance to see authentic Thai village life up close.

The village itself is cupped by gentle hills and nestled amid fields that are lushly green during the monsoon. You'll be welcomed with a cup of fragrant herbal tea — probably citrusy lemongrass or spicy galangal — before heading to the local fish farm in the nearby Huai Lan Reservoir. There, you can admire the hills reflected in the still water and learn how the reservoir provides both farmed fish and irrigation for the local fields.

After a lunch created from ingredients grown locally, you'll also visit some of the village's weavers and, if you'd like, you can try your hand at creating a small object. From there, visit Grandmother Som, an elder of the village who's happy to discuss her farm's sustainable methods. Finally, end your visit with a dish of kanom khee maeo, a regional dessert made from rice flour and coconut.

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2. VENETO, ITALY

RISOTTO LUNCH ON A RICE FARM



The area outside of Verona gets less attention than regions like Tuscany, but don't let that dissuade you. A driving tour through the hilly, cypress-dotted countryside to visit local artisanal producers gives you a chance to glimpse rural life. You can also sample some of the exceptional produce the area is known for, including local wine, acacia or chestnut honey, and Grana Padano cheese.

The last stop is a local rice farm. Owner Gabriele is passionate about the history and heritage of rice farming. He's even won awards and accolades for his work to preserve the traditional farming methods of this region, which is known for its risotto. The visit includes a tour of the 16th-century rice mill and ends with a lunch featuring lusciously creamy risotto.

Gabriele also runs cooking classes for local school children — a venture that your visit supports. The classes have a two-fold purpose: they help foster the local culinary tradition and ensure that children graduate with the skills necessary to get a job.

3. LEMANAK LONGHOUSE, MALAYSIAN BORNEO

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN IBAN CULTURE



Deep in the heart of the Borneo jungle, the Iban people live much as they have for centuries, with a dozen families living together in a communal longhouse by the river. To immerse yourself in the Iban culture, we can arrange for you to spend the night with the community at the Lemanak Longhouse.

When you arrive, via a wooden canoe, you'll be greeted by the tribe and shown around the longhouse. In the evening, you'll join the community around the fire, when there's often dancing and singing — but

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this isn't a performance for visitors, it's a continuation of daily life here. There's the chance to sample homemade rice wine — go easy, it's strong stuff — and you'll spend the night as the families do, asleep on a mattress on the wooden-slat flooring.

In the morning, a tribe member will lead you on a walk through the forest to show you the medicinal plants and teach you the art of using blow darts. Before you leave, lunch is cooked on an open fire on the banks of the Lemanak River.

The visits here are strictly regulated, and your visit contributes to a community fund kept by the Iban people. The money can be borrowed by any family for pressing issues such as their children's education or emergency medical needs.

4. CENOTE YOKDZONOT, MEXICO

RELAX AT A WATERY OASIS IN THE JUNGLE



Scattered throughout the dense green Yucatán, you'll find thousands of cenotes — otherworldly sinkholes filled with water. Lit by golden shafts of sunlight that pierce the jungle canopy, the water is filled with shifting shades of cerulean and turquoise — it's easy to see why the Maya believed them to be portals for speaking to the gods. Today, these remote, shady pools are popular destinations for locals and visitors who want to swim and relax — especially the ones close to Tulum, which can get busy.

As a quieter alternative, we suggest visiting Cenote Yokdzonot, a 20-minute drive from Chichén Itzá. The deep, cool-water pool is shaded by the dense jungle, with vines trailing down into the crystal-clear water. Developed as a sustainable eco-adventure destination, the cenote is a jungle oasis where you can ride a zipline, hike or cycle on the web of surrounding trails, or simply relax in a hammock. The restaurant serves a menu of traditional Yucatecan cuisine, prepared with local ingredients.

Overgrown and being reclaimed by the jungle, the cenote was cleared and is run by Zaaz Koolen Haá (Clear Water), a co-operative of local Maya women who were looking for alternatives to poorly paid agricultural work. Today, it's an important source of jobs and income for the Maya, and the co-op donates a portion of its profits to a fund that supports those who work in the fields.

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5. MARRAKESH, MOROCCO

LEARN TO MAKE TAGINE



Cooked in the signature conical vessel of the same name, a tagine is one of Morocco's signature dishes and you can find these spice-scented, slow-cooked stews wherever you go in the country. At the Amal Women's Training Centre and Restaurant in Marrakesh, the chefs will help you create a traditional tagine lunch, along with several side dishes.

In Morocco, cooking, and of course, eating, is a social occasion. As the meal cooks, you can sip mint tea — picked from the herb garden — with your instructors and sometimes with the association's director. As the tagine is slow-cooked over charcoal using traditional techniques, you'll have time to talk about life in Marrakesh and learn more about Amal's work.

The association was begun as a way to help single women — divorced mothers, widows, or orphans, who have had little or no formal education. The six-month training course teaches them to become chefs, as well as providing psychological support and therapy, to help restore their confidence and give them the skills they need to support themselves.

6. NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA

WHALE WATCHING, SNOWMOBILING & JAM MAKING AT FOGO ISLAND INN



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A small, windswept island off the coast of Newfoundland, Fogo boasts a desolate beauty at the easternmost tip of Canada. For hundreds of years, residents considered this one of the four corners of the world and eked out a living as fishermen in the rich, stormy waters.

Today, the island is largely untouched by modern development with the exception of Fogo Island Inn. Perched on stilts on the stony shore, it's a sleek, contemporary space with generous windows that flood the interior with the lucid, shimmering light of the sun reflected off the North Atlantic.

During your stay here, you can choose to enjoy a vast roster of activities that vary by season — islanders mark seven seasons instead of the mainland's four. You might go snowmobiling during pack-ice season, join jam making classes in berry season, take a whale-watching cruise in summer, or simply relax in the wood-fired sauna or rooftop hot tubs overlooking the ocean.

The hotel is a community asset, rather than a private one, and was built on sustainable principles, ecologically as well as financially. It was intended from the start to help sustain livelihoods for the residents of the island, so more than 65% of every dollar you spend — including all profit — stays within the community. Many of the experiences are led by islanders, who've also handmade much of the inn's furnishings — you can even buy their handiwork, including patchwork quilts.

7. MOREMI GAME RESERVE, BOTSWANA

TAKE A SAFARI AT CAMP MOREMI



Across all our safari destinations, we choose camps that are thoughtfully run, employ local staff, and have just a handful of rooms. It means you get a more personal experience where your surroundings are kept as wild and natural as possible, while not compromising on your comfort.

Botswana, with its focus on low-impact, high-quality safaris, has these camps in abundance. One that stands out is Camp Moremi, whose twelve thatched tents are scattered among trees within the wilderness of the Okavango Delta's Moremi Game Reserve.

Here, you can head out on twice-daily game drives (and, when water levels are right, boat safaris) led by experienced naturalists who'll notice even the subtlest hint of an animal's presence. As well as spotting headline animals like cheetah, leopard, lion, elephant, and buffalo, you'll begin to appreciate more understated species — rainbow-feathered bee-eaters flit between the reeds, hyena packs crunch down on skeletal prey, and elusive sitatunga antelope wade through the waterways.

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Moremi's Desert & Delta CARES philosophy embodies the holistic approach that we prefer. Together with sister camps across Botswana, they've created and support a variety of community initiatives that fund scholarships, mentor and train local woman and youths, and provide comprehensive health care.

For example, they work closely with Khumaga Primary school to offer career guidance, education assistance, day trips, and lectures for the children of the Khumaga Village. They also support the Tsidillo Stimulation Centre, a facility for children with mental, physical, and learning disabilities.

How to travel more sustainably: a practical guide

Reducing plastic and carbon offsetting flights are just two ways to travel more sustainably, but what else can we do? There's plenty you can do on your trip to travel the right way, from recycling to being aware of cultural sensitivities, as well as acting as our 'eyes and ears' for the great, and not so great:

Interacting with local communities

- **Respecting the culture:** we find that observing local cultural sensitivities not only helps to avoid accidentally causing offence, but also opens more opportunities for you to engage with local people. Your specialist will help guide you on the cultures and traditions in the destination you're visiting.
- **Learning the language:** learning a few words in the local language is usually greatly appreciated and can often lead to a more authentic experience.
- **Interacting with children:** we advise against visiting schools or orphanages when children are present. If you have a particular interest in visiting a school, only do so when classes aren't in session.
- **Photography:** always ask permission to take a person's photograph — this can also be a good opportunity to interact with people you wouldn't otherwise cross paths with. Don't take photographs of children without consent from their parent or guardian. Also be aware that flash photography can be damaging to artwork.
- **Choose local businesses:** to help create local jobs, we recommend eating and shopping as locally as possible during your travels, choosing community-run and locally owned businesses. Your specialist can let you know of any community initiatives you could support in the areas you visit, such as women's co-operatives that produce handmade crafts you can buy as souvenirs.
- **Bartering:** different cultures have varied attitudes to tipping and bartering — your specialist can provide you with country-specific details, or you can ask your local guide for advice. Take a light-hearted approach when bargaining and remember that small amounts can often mean a lot to the vendor.
- **Giving back:** if you'd like to donate to the country you've visited, you can do so through our Audley Travel for Good Fund, which supports a variety of social and environmental charities around the world.

Protecting the environment

- **Preserving nature:** when visiting national parks and nature reserves, stick to set paths (unless instructed otherwise by your guide) and keep noise to a minimum to avoid disturbing wildlife. Your specialist will share destination-specific recommendations like rinsing your hiking boots to avoid the transfer of invasive species, leaving all plants and creatures as you found them in the wild, or taking care not to stomp on centuries-old moss.
- **Souvenirs to avoid:** to ensure you're not purchasing products made from endangered animals and plants, you can find a list of examples of banned souvenirs in the CITES treaty and the IUCN 'Red List'.
- **Carbon reduction:** one of the most effective ways to reduce your carbon footprint is choosing to get around by train instead of an internal flight or opting for a walking or cycling tour rather than exploring by vehicle. We also encourage you to carbon offset your flights, which your specialist can arrange. Our partner, ClimateCare, invests in initiatives that not only lower carbon emissions, but also help improve lives.
- **Animal encounters:** we use local guides who adhere to strict animal welfare guidelines. When on your own, keep a respectful distance from any wildlife you encounter and don't feed any wild

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animals as this can alter their natural feeding habits. We recommend avoiding petting zoos, animals in confinement (unless for conservation and rehabilitation reasons), or animals that perform tricks. Should you encounter any examples of poor animal welfare on any experiences we offer during your trip, please let us know and we'll investigate.

- Supporting wildlife: there may be wildlife sanctuaries and conservation projects you can support in the destination you're visiting. Either speak directly to your guide or hotel workers while you're there or follow up when you arrive home — our specialists may be able to assist.
- Use reef-friendly sunscreen: some sunscreen can be damaging to coral reefs and marine ecosystems. We recommend doing some research before purchasing your sunscreen or looking for products with the Protect Land + Sea Certification.

Sustainable travel

- Selecting your stays: we hand-pick places to stay that not only follow standard sustainable practices but excel in their efforts to give back to the environment and the local community. For example, they might have policies in place to protect and regenerate the land and native species, employ people from the surrounding area, or designate a portion of their proceeds toward supporting the local community, environment, and/or wildlife.
- Keep your waste to a minimum: recycle what you can, and sensibly dispose of any extra packaging you may have before you travel. Bring items such as batteries home with you if they can't be recycled locally.
- Reduce your plastic:
 - Bring a reusable water bottle to refill throughout your trip.
 - When ordering a drink, ask for it without the straw.
 - Try using travel soap and shampoo bars to help reduce your plastic waste.
- Reduce your resource use:
 - Reuse your sheets and towels as much as possible, remember to turn off lights and electrical equipment in your room if you're not using them, and turn off air-conditioning units when they're not needed.
 - You should also be mindful of what you eat — buffets are very common in certain regions of the world, but can result in a lot of food waste, so make sure to only take as much as you're likely to eat.
 - Where possible, choose dishes made from locally sourced ingredients. These often tend to be local delicacies, which could also enrich your cultural understanding and sense of place. Choosing a plant-based meal can also help reduce your carbon footprint.
- Avoid peak-season travel:
 - many destinations see a massive spike in visitors during certain months, for example when the weather is warmer and drier or when there's a specific seasonal reason for visiting, putting a strain on resources.
 - By visiting at alternative times of year, you'll experience fewer crowds and shorter waiting times, as well as having a wider choice of places to stay.
 - It also helps to provide jobs for local people year-round rather than them having to rely on making enough money in a few months to last for the rest of the year.

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