



GREEN UP »

Your holiday

Travel often gets a bad rap in the world of green, but there are many easy ways to make your next holiday planet positive

words SUE WHITE photography BIG STOCK PHOTO

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SLEEP AND PLAY GREEN

The phrase "green hotel" no longer means a solar-powered shack in the bush. Eco operators are springing up all over. In hotels, www.greenhotels.com



can guide you to (mainly North American) accommodation providers working on their green credentials. At home, Ecotourism Australia promotes members that wave the eco flag (www.ecotourism.org.au).

Remember, when speaking green, size matters — so go for small, not supersized. Coral Princess Cruises is one local example. Its 50-person ships are bite-sized compared with many, allowing them to visit locations such as the Great Barrier Reef, the Kimberley and the Top End with a lower footprint than most.

THINK LOCAL

With more than 5 million visitors travelling to our shores annually, the world is green with envy about some of the holiday options available right here in Australia. With deserts, reefs and some of the world's best beaches on our doorstep, we're undeniably spoiled for choice.

Whether holidaying locally or overseas, a good rule of thumb is to visit fewer places for more time. This saves on transport emissions chewed up moving between locations and allows you time to enjoy greener activities. Quiet strolls down country lanes and haggling at the local farmers' market are much more feasible if you're not rushing to tick off your next destination, takeaway meal in hand.



TIP 4 GREEN GOURMETS

There's no need for your taste buds to suffer on a green holiday; far from it. Green food is local, which can often mean



Pack your picnic set, then perch yourself in a local park.



tantalisingly fresh. Sample as much local produce as possible and support meals with low food miles attached. Pack your picnic set, head to the best local deli and then perch yourself in a local park, on a pier, or on a hillside. A guaranteed holiday highlight!



TIP 5 GO CAR FREE

Do you really need a car on standby during your next holiday? If you can do it in California, you can do it anywhere. Just a stone's throw from Los Angeles, beachside Santa Barbara for years has been encouraging visitors to go car-free. The city boasts an electric shuttle, Segway tours and hybrid taxis and encourages exploration via our greenest travel option: feet. Car-free visitors arriving by train or booking into a participating hotel are rewarded with discounts, maps of how to get around sans car and fuzzy feelings that warm your heart, not the planet.

www.santabarbaracarfree.org

TIP 2 OFFSET ANY FLIGHTS

Buying carbon offsets to neutralise the emissions created from your air travel is becoming standard practice for green travellers. Many airlines, including Qantas, Virgin and Jetstar, allow passengers to offset their flights — for an extra fee — and many independent providers will do this for you, too.

While offsetting is a positive if you must travel, Josh Meadows from the Australian Conservation Foundation advises travellers to first consider whether they really need to fly at all. If so, "Have a look for reputable offset providers and see what they are actually doing: are they investing in renewable energy

or planting trees?"

Deciding is easier with ACF's Consumers' Guide to Going Carbon Neutral. Download at www.acfonline.org.au/carbonneutral.

