

Travel Light

Five Tips for a More Eco-Friendly Trip

When asked for advice about how to avoid creating emissions that contribute to global warming and be a cool traveler, travel experts at eco-tour outfitter Natural Habitat Adventures, in Boulder, Colorado (nathab.com), offered these five simple ways to avoid making our next vacation a guilt trip.

STAY NEUTRAL. Going the group tour route? Check for green credentials. Increasingly, travel outfitters are bolstering an ongoing commitment to sustainable travel by becoming carbon neutral. Programs may include recycling and renewable energy use, and then buying offsets to make up the difference, to guarantee carbon neutral trips for guests. Even some major online travel companies offer travelers offset options when they make reservations.

CHART A GREEN COURSE. New eco-maps chart the natural and cultural environments to suggest low-impact activities and resources wherever we travel. Green Map System provides “green” maps of some 302 spots around the globe ([Green Map.org](http://GreenMap.org)).

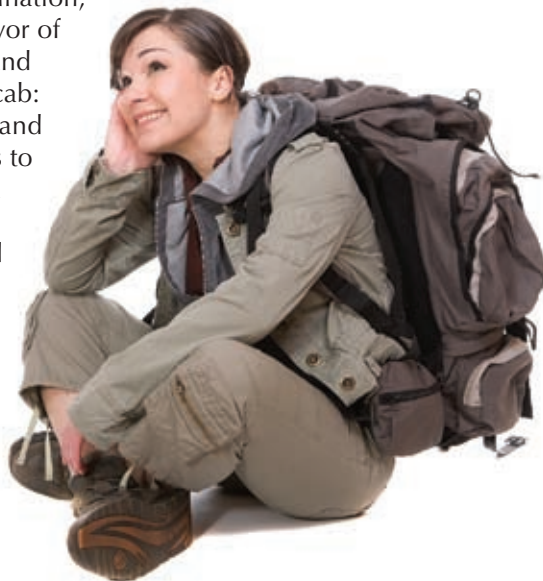
TAKE A TRAIN. Europe isn’t the only place worth traveling by train. Check into train or bus options in other countries, as well. In the United States, railroad shuttles up and down the Eastern Seaboard are particularly quick and convenient.

FUEL FOR THOUGHT. Committed to a road trip? Keep the car well-tuned and tires properly inflated to pollute less—and cut gas costs up to 15 percent. Try to buy gas from a more environmentally responsible oil company: The Sierra Club recently updated its *Pick Your Poison* guide to gasoline, and Sunoco continues to receive its “top of the barrel” rating.

Better yet, rent a hybrid or biofuel green car from a mainstream rental company. Or, consider a local hybrid car-sharing service. Also consider joining an Earth-friendly auto club such as Better World Club, which offers discounts on hybrid cars and eco-travel—and even roadside assistance for bicycles.

IN TRANSIT. When flying to a destination, eschew using individual cabs in favor of public transit or a hotel shuttle to and from the airport. Or, hail a hybrid cab: Chicago, New York, San Francisco and London all have added hybrid taxis to their fleets, and Planet Tran offers a hybrid taxi reservation service in several major cities on the east and west coasts. When visiting a city, remember to plan the day around walking destinations and local public transit options.

Source: Adapted from Life.Gaiam.com.



Locavore Update

How to Measure a Food's Eco-Friendliness

Sales of locally grown foods are expected to reach \$7 billion this year, up from \$4 billion in 2002, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. One driver is the well-publicized average 1,500 miles it took for 28 fruits and vegetables to reach the Upper Midwest by truck in a 2001-2003 study by Iowa State University's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

"The average distance we calculated was often cited incorrectly as the average distance food traveled in the United States," explains Rich Pirog, who led the research. "Local food really isn't about mileage or distance. It's about the relationships that are built in the food chain. It's about farmers and local communities getting a higher percentage of the food dollar."

Local food sourcing builds community, poses a smaller risk for food-borne contaminants and tastes better, especially when it's organic. It doesn't require the refrigeration needed for long-distance hauling and often comes without wasteful packaging.

A Carnegie Mellon University study further calculated that transportation now accounts for 11 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with fruits and vegetables and only 1 percent for red meat, while how the food is produced contributes 83 percent; so it's good to be familiar with local providers. The researchers also reported that switching from red meat and dairy products to chicken, fish, eggs or a vegetable-based diet one day a week yields at least the equivalent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of buying all locally sourced food.

Primary source: emagazine.com



Über Men

Study Shows Gap Between Green Thinking and Doing

Researchers have invested much time trying to figure out why many people don't follow through on their green aspirations. Now, a new study has found a surprising culprit. According to a study conducted by OgilvyEarth, Americans overwhelmingly view going green as a "feminine" act, and some men are actually avoiding eco-friendly activities for fear that they'll come across as more feminine.

The study ranked the population on a spectrum that ranged from Green Rejectors to Super Greens, with most men turning up as the former and most women as the latter. What's worse, some men said they wouldn't carry reusable shopping bags or drive a hybrid car, because they were worried such activities would seem "girly," or make them self-conscious.

Luckily, many über-green guys aren't going with the trend. Many embrace a desire to do their best to preserve our planet for future generations—to ensure that their children will have nature to enjoy like they did as boys. Many do traditionally manly things like farming, setting up programmable thermostats and driving a high-mileage vehicle, activities they learned from their fathers, who were, in turn, taught by their fathers. There's nothing wrong with a guy going green. Carry a reusable shopping bag proudly and be part of the solution.



Source: *Greenzer.com*



Eco-Update

Food service giant Sodexo is now rolling out Meatless Mondays to 3,000 corporate cafeterias and hospitals across America. "We make it attractive, compelling and much easier than anything else to eat vegetarian," says Arlin Wasserman, the company's vice president for sustainability.