Making destinations better places for people to live in and for travelers to visit
“Carefully consider your every action. This is your holiday but it is their everyday lives.”

Responsible Tourism

I pledge to be a responsible tourist.

I take this pledge as a guest to your home, to preserve and protect your beautiful and unique Asia.

I vow to tread lightly, act kindly and explore mindfully.

I shall not take what is not given.

I shall not harm what does not harm me.

The only footprints I shall leave are those that will wash away.

Respect cultural differences
Learn how to say ‘hello’, ‘goodbye’ and ‘thank you’ in the local language. People highly appreciate it!

In Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar a respectful way of greeting another individual is to bow the head slightly with both hands pressed together at the chest, as if in prayer.

Avoid showing affection in public as it is considered quite offensive – sorry, no kissing!

Don’t point or gesture with your feet or put your feet up on furniture. Avoid touching someone on the head.

When using a toothpick, use one hand to cover your mouth.

Present money and gifts with both hands and accept them the same way.

Always let the oldest be served first and bend slightly in front of elders.

Don’t curl your fingers to beckon somebody over or point it at another person’s face. Asian people generally use a subtle downward waving motion to summon someone.

Don’t touch people of the opposite sex.

Asian societies remain fairly traditional and are attached to old customs.
Be sensitive to local cultures

Learn about culture and customs, the more you know about your destination the better you will appreciate and understand it.

When faced with strong cultural differences, the first thing to consider is whether you would act this way in your home country.

Try to understand their aspirations

We admire the rural beauty of traditional bamboo houses or the sight of a farmer harvesting his rice field. However, we tend to forget that these houses offer little comfort, are vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and that too much strenuous work reduces life expectancy.

Like most people, locals aspire to develop economically and have access to the same material possessions that we take for granted. You may provide a balanced view of development by expressing that modernity is best when enhancing traditional ways instead of denying it.

Each country has many different ethnic groups, each of which may have its very own etiquette and taboos. Always listen to the advice of your guide.

Cultural diversity and exoticism is what you came looking for so accept the differences and enjoy it! Do tell locals about your own culture, most are just as curious as you are to learn about other cultures.
Connect with people before taking pictures

Take some time to chat with the locals first. The photo will become a shared memory which you can send back to them.

Answer questions

Be prepared to answer, on numerous times, personal questions like: “Where are you from? Where are you going? Are you married? How old are you? etc…” Most people are simply trying to be friendly, to practice their English skills or start a conversation.

Do note that privacy has a very different meaning in Asia.

Locals will never criticise you, but will be embarrassed and politely keep their opinions to themselves.”
Many cultural sites, even those in ruins are sacred grounds. It is forbidden to walk or climb anywhere out of regular footpaths, to scrawl or scribble on monuments, and to collect stones or any parts of the monument or site.

Contact with monks
Show respect to monks, novices and nuns, don’t offer to shake hands, avoid stepping on a monk’s shadow.

Ladies, do not sit next to, or hand anything directly to Buddhist monks.

Show respect by not taking photos or disturbing monks during prayer times.

Don’t sit with your back or feet towards Buddha’s image.

Handle Buddha images or sacred objects with respect; avoid placing them in inappropriate places (on the floor for example).
In temples and religious sites both men & women should cover their shoulders and legs, and shoes and hats should be removed. It also applies when entering houses and some shops.

Be sensitive observe the way people around you dress (eg: they often swim in clothes) and adjust your behaviour and clothing according to where you are.

On the beach or at sea, nude sunbathing or swimming is not accepted.

In forests and jungles: long pants/skirts and sleeved shirts are strongly recommended to limit insect bites and sunburn.

In rural spots such as waterfalls and rivers avoid bikinis and swimming suits, keep your tee shirt on and may be a sarong as well to cover your legs.

In urban settings you may see women dressed in skimpy clothing; do not consider this to be the norm. Wearing mini-skirts, mini-shorts, going braless in tight clothing is often considered offensive, especially in rural areas. Men should avoid walking around bare-chested.
Ethical Travel

#TravelEnjoyRespect
Do not give gifts, money or sweets to children or buy anything from them – although you might think it helps. It only encourages them to stay on the streets where they have little hope of a better life and are vulnerable to all sorts of abuse. These children are often exploited by local mafias.

Our guides have been trained to react appropriately when confronted by such situations, should you witness a child being at risk, please tell your guide.

Children are not tourist attractions.

Visiting children centres, orphanages or schools is forbidden in western countries. Research has shown that short-term visits (including volunteer tourism) can be harmful to a child’s development and emotional balance.

UNICEF, Friends’ International and an increasing number of children organisations are now campaigning to stop what has become an exploitative practice that turns children and disadvantaged communities into tourist commodities.

Ask yourself: would you allow complete strangers to approach your children, take pictures of them, or give them candies?

If you wish to learn more, please visit: www.thinkchildsafe.org
If you wish to alleviate poverty and provide better life opportunities for children and their families, we recommend you to do it through registered organisations.

Of course, it’s not easy to assess the reliability of an organisation in a foreign country. In response to traveller’s requests, EXO Foundation offers a list of carefully selected projects you can trust www.exofoundation.org

When you give through EXO Foundation, we guarantee that 100% of your donation accrues to the project of your choice, as we cover all overhead costs.
Consumer behaviour

TRAVEL can be used as a FORCE for GOOD
Support the local economy

Local transport
The diversity of local modes of transport adds to the charm of travel. You might be annoyed sometimes by endless calls to use tuk tuks or cyclos but be patient. A polite ‘no, thank you.’ will suffice.

Be sure to always agree on the price before taking any form of local transport.

For the best sightseeing experience, walk, cycle, take a cyclo or a rickshaw.

“Buy locally made food & handicrafts directly from local craftsman and markets.
At the end of the booklet you’ll find a list of shops supporting community projects that help to directly improve the livelihoods of the most disadvantaged people.”
Whatever the situation, try to stay calm, firm and courteous and speak without raising your voice.

Becoming angry is considered a major weakness and local people will be embarrassed for you.

‘Saving face’ is a subtle but important aspect of personal dignity and smiling often can help to open cultural doors.

Criticism is not as easily accepted as it is in western countries and should only be made when also giving praise.

Keep calm, be patient

With patience and a broad smile you will not only get a better price but also enjoy the art of negotiation – that is very much part of markets in Asia. Whatever you buy, be mindful that it is part of their livelihood.
Do not buy any wild animals either dead or alive.

For example, sometimes local people will try to sell you caged birds to be set free that helps to bring good luck. However, by paying for it you only encourage them to capture more.

Do not purchase historical artefacts, souvenirs made of shells, corals, precious wood or any endangered species.

Trading of elephants, tigers, primates, marine animals alive or dead and animal parts such as meat, ivory, bones, shells is illegal.

Other wild animal parts such as turtle, pangolin, monkey, red tuna, seahorses, shells, coral and more should not be purchased.

Do not buy any furniture made of timber or other natural materials taken from the forest and the natural ecosystem.
Do not support the sex industry

You risk putting money into the hands of the mafia and catching diseases. What you may see as a glitzy entertainment has a gloomy backstage. Most men and women involved are part of a larger network of human traffickers.

Pedophilia is strictly forbidden. Violators will be pursued and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, even after they return to their home countries.

““This includes the various shows in hostess bars, street prostitution etc...”"
Respect the environment

“Leave only your footprint”

Asia’s tremendous economic growth has taken place at the expense of its environment and precious biodiversity. Let’s do our best to help keep our planet healthy & beautiful.
Anti-plastic attitude

Plastic disposal is a major problem in Asia.

When ordering a drink, ask your guide to help you order without a plastic straw. If a glass is not clean using a straw does not make it any safer.

Avoid wrapping your luggage in kilometres of plastic wrap; protect them with locks and carry precious items with you.

Take your own bags with you when shopping – Say no to any kind of plastic or styrofoam food boxes.
Bottled water is easy to find, but unfortunately recycling facilities are not.

Use a refillable bottle or simply refill a plastic one.

You’ll find water fountains in many places through the Refill My Bottle mobile application.
Organic waste such as food scraps should not be scattered or buried in National Parks and any natural areas. This may introduce non-endemic seeds into the local ecosystem. Carry back all your waste with you.

Bring back used batteries to your home country, there is no reliable recycling processing here.

Avoid leaving any rubbish behind, especially when trekking or visiting rural villages. Ideally pick up any rubbish you see littering the forest, the sea or beach, protect Mother Nature.

Smokers, please keep your cigarette butts with you until you find the next dustbin.

Toilet facilities
Please always use the toilet facilities provided. If there are none, go at least 50 metres away from water sources and people’s homes.

Cover everything and carry any sanitary napkins or baby diapers back with you in a bag for appropriate disposal later.

Avoid throwing waste on a fire as it might offend the local community – many locals consider fire to be sacred.
Save energy and water

In your room, use air-conditioning sensibly. Turn it down when you leave your room or even at night when a fan is sufficient.

Turn off taps and switches when not in use. You can choose not to have your towels and bed linen changed daily, just follow the signs!

Wherever water is heated with cut timber, avoid hot showers it will invigorate your blood circulation.

Ask your driver to open windows to cool down with fresh air in rural areas.

“WATER IS PRECIOUS, HELP SAVE IT.”
“Look with your eyes, bring back memories, and leave things just as they are.”
When snorkeling, be aware that touching coral formations hinder their growth – and note that coral cuts are prone to infection. Do not collect nor buy any coral or shell.

We want to protect wildlife and promote conservation, we therefore recommend a sensitive approach to all animal attractions, such as elephant camps, primate centers, tiger zoos or marine wildlife attractions.

An easy rule of thumb for you: places where animals have to perform in an unnatural way, or are chased or lured are not recommended! Please do respect animal’s natural behavioral patterns.

Animals should always have access to food and water, and live free from pain, discomfort, fear or stress.

Never feed or touch wild animals on land or underwater.

Never stare or smile at primates.

If you visit an elephant camp and you see an elephant forbidden to eat grass, walking on concrete, under the sun, carrying over 150kgs, or performing unnatural activities such as painting, playing football etc... Refuse it!
Stay on beaten tracks

This is particularly important during the wet season, when it is all too easy to create new tracks in order to get a better footing. When this happens the trail soon becomes a series of footpaths that turn into erosion gullies.

Be aware that some tropical plants are stinging or poisonous, avoid touching what you don’t know.

In limestones caves, do not touch formations as natural body oils hinder their growth and discolour the limestone. These have taken thousands of years to shape into what you can see today!

Reduce deforestation by avoiding unnecessary use of scarce firewood such as limiting beach bonfires.

On nature treks, when you need to bathe in streams or lakes, limit soap usage and/or use organic soap and shampoo.

Detergent powder is even more harmful to the natural ecosystem, so avoid using it when possible.
List of fair trade & organic shops
CAMBODIA

Friends n’ Stuff
Phnom Penh
• 215, Street 13,
• Stall 434, Russian Market
Siem Reap
• Art Center Market Stall
2122E, (Wat Damnak Village)
• Marum restaurant (near Wat Polenka)
www.friends-international.org

Mekong Quilts
Home decor, bamboo furniture
• 49, Street 240, Phnom Penh
• 5 Sivutha Boulevard, Siem Reap
www.mekong-quilts.org

Daughters of Cambodia
Crafts, coffee shop & spa 65, Street 178, Phnom Penh
www.daughtersofcambodia.org

Association des Artisans du Cambodge
House 11B, Street 240, Phnom Penh
www.aac.org.kh

Les Artisans d’Angkor
• Chantiers-Ecoles
Stung Thmeuy Street, Siem Reap
• 12AE0, Street 1, Phnom Penh
• Airports
www.artisansdangkor.com

Saray
Water hyacinth handicrafts
Furniture, bags, carpets
www.osmostonlesap.net

Beau Fou boutique
520, Angkor Villa St, Siem Reap
www.theglobalchild.org

Epic Arts Cafe & shop
Near old market, Kampong Cham
www.epicarts.org.uk

Smateria Bags
Accessories from recycled materials
• 8E0, St 57, Boeung Keng Kang
• International Airport, Phnom Penh
www.smateria.com

Golden Silk
10 km from Banteay Srey, Prey Village Themey, Siem Reap
www.goldensilk.org

Senteurs d’Angkor
Spices, perfumes, body products
• 33BE0 Street 178, Phnom Penh
• Pi Thou St (Opposite Old Market), Siem Reap
• Airports
www.senteursdangkor.com

Mekong Blue
Silk products
Street 2, Sre Po Village, Stung Treng
www.mekongblue.com

Institute for Khmer Traditional Textiles
10a The-Lane, Siem Reap
www.iktt.esprit-libre.org

A.N.D
Street 240, Phnom Penh
www.artisandesigners.org

Dorsu Ethical Fashion
Old market, Kampot

YUNNAN, CHINA

Tang Dong Handicraft Development Center
Dugshou 18th, Chang Fang Road, Old Town, Shangri-la County
www.tibetcraft.com

Nixi Black Pottery Coffee
5, Cang Fang Street, Chang Shangri-la City Old Town
www.blackpotterycoffee.webs.com

Yunnan Mountain Handicraft Centre (YMHC)
1, Jinlong Jie, Shangri-la
www.ymhfshangrila.com
**INDONESIA**

**Threads of life**  
Jalan Kajeng 24 Ubud, Bali  
www.threadssofarife.com

**Yin Jewelry**  
Jalan Dewi Sita, Ubud Gianyar, Bali  
www.yinjewelryforsoul.com

**UTAMA Spice shop**  
- Monkey Forest Road (130 Meters north of Monkey Forest), Ubud, Bali  
- Gopa Town Center, Jalan Danau Poso no. 57, Sanur, Bali  
www.utamaspicebali.com

**LAOS**

**Organic market**  
That Luang Esplanade, Vientiane  
www.laosorganic.com

**Carol Cassidy’s**  
Textiles and weaving shop  
108, Nokokoumanne Ban Mixay, Chanthabouly district, Vientiane  
www.laotextiles.com

**Ock Pop Tok**  
Weaving & textiles Ban Saylom, Luang Prabang  
www.ockpoptok.com

**T’Shop Lai Gallery**  
Crafts and body products Vat Inpeng Street, Vientiane  
www.artisanslao.com

**Friend’s shop & restaurants**  
100 Sisavang Vatana Road, Ban Wat Nong, Luang Prabang  
www.friends-international.org

**CAMACrafts**  
Ban Phonton, Luang Prabang  
www.camacrafts.com

**Ma Té Sai**  
Hilltribes’ crafts  
2/58, Sisangvone Road, ban Xieng Mouane, Luang Prabang  
www.matesai.com

**Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre**  
Ban Khamyong, Luang Prabang  
www.taeclaos.org

**MALAYSIA**

**Batik Boutique,**  
Handmade local batik products.  
3, Jalan 26/70a, Desa Sri Hartamas, 50480, Kuala Lumpur  
www.thebatikboutique.com

**RazKashmir Crafts,**  
Authentic, local, handmade products. No.12, Jalan Tukang Emas, Melaka 75200, Nude The Zero Waste store  
11A, Jalan 19/29, Seksyen 19 Petaling Jaya 46300  
www.nudezerowaste.com

**Bliss Zero Waste Store**  
55, Jalan Sultan, City Centre, 50000 Kuala Lumpur  
www.facebook.com/BlissZW/

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**50 TIPS**
### Myanmar / Burma

**French Association Xavier Bagnoud, AFXB**  
Textile, metal and wood handicrafts, and candles  
Shwe Goner Daing Street, Yangon

**Pomelo**  
Decoration, jewelery  
89 2nd floor, Thein Phyu Road, Botataung Township, Yangon  
www.pomelomyanmar.org

**MBoutik – SEDN**  
Handicraft  
U Paing (560), Thiriripyisayar, Toechae n°4 Ward, Nyaung OO, Mandalay Region  
www.sedn-mboutik.com

**Hla Day**  
Handicraft  
1st Floor, 81 Pansodan Street, Lower Middle Block, Yangon  
www.hladaymyanmar.org

**ChuChu**  
Handicraft, recycling product  
Dala Township, on the southern bank of the Yangon River, Yangon

### Thailand

**ThaiCraft Fair Trade**  
35 Bamrungrat Rd., Chiang Mai  
www.tcrfaith.co.th

**Hilltribe Museum and Education Centre**  
3rd Floor, PDA Building, 620/25 Thanalai Rd., Chiang Rai  
www.pdacr.org

### Vietnam

**Mekong Quilts and Mekong Creations**  
Textiles, accessories, home decor  
- 58 Hang Trong, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi  
- 13 Hang Bac, Hoan Kiem, Hanoi  
- 1st Floor 68 Le Loi, D1, Ho Chi Minh  
www.mekong-quilts.org  
www.mekong-creations.org

**Craft Link**  
Wide range of crafts 43-51, Van Mieu, Hanoi  
www.craftlink.com.vn

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**TIPS**
List of organic & training restaurants

CAMBODIA

Friends The restaurant
215 Street 13, Phnom Penh

Eleven One Kitchen
St. 334, Phnom Penh

Lotus Blanc Restaurant
Main Entrance of PSE, Pour un Sourire d’Enfant, 38, Phnom Penh

Bloom Café
St. 222, Phnom Penh

Marum
8A, B Phum Slorkram (between Wat Polanka and Catholic Church), Siem Reap

Spoons
0142, Group 5, Pave Road, Bamboo Street Wat Damnak Village Salakomreuk Commune, Siem Reap

Sala Bai Restaurant
Wat Savy, Tonne Sap Road, Siem Reap

Haven
Chocolate Rd, Siem Reap

Bayon Pastry School
Coffee shop Taphil Village, Siem Reap

Le Jardin des Délices
National Route 6 (Airport Road), Siem Reap

Don Bosco Hotel School Restaurant
Street Ou-Pram, Sangkat 4, Sihanoukvile

INDONESIA

Zula Vegetarian Paradise
Jalan Dhyana Pura No.5, Seminyak, Kuta, Seminyak, Kuta, Kabupaten Badung, Bali

Earth cafe and market
Jl. Kayu Aya No.99, Seminyak, Kuta Utara, Kabupaten Badung, Bali

Moks Plant-based
Restaurant & Permaculture Garden Puskesmas Ubud II, Gg. Damai, Sayan, Ubud, Kabupaten Gianyar, Bali

The Fair warung Bale
Taman Kaja, Jl. Sri Wedari No.6, Ubud (bold), Kabupaten Gianyar, Bali

Hospitality foundation & restaurant
Jl Mananga Aba, Karuni, Loura, Kabupaten Sumba Barat Daya, Nusa Tenggara Tim

LAOS

Let’s Eat
Phai Nam street, Vientiane

Lanith Café
Khounboulom road, Bat Watchanh, Vientiane

Khaiphaen
100 Sisavang Vatana, Ban Wat nong, Luang Prabang

Saffron Cafe
Khem Khong Road, Ban Wat Nong, Luang Prabang

MASALAYSIA

EcoGreen Organic,
127, Jalan Aminuddin Baki, Taman Tun Dr Ismail, 60000, Kuala Lumpur

Organic Lifestyle,
66, Lorong Maaron, 59000, Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur

Ashley’s By Living Food
11, Ground Floor, Jalan Telawi 3, Bangsar (Near Bangsar Village), Kuala Lumpur

Green House Vegetarian Restaurant
4, Jalan Kota Laksamana 1/1, Taman Kota Laksamana, 75200 Melaka

Selvam, Indian banana leaf
3, Jalan Temenggong, Bandar Hilir, 75100 Melaka
MYANMAR

Linkage restaurant and Art Gallery
141, 1st floor, Seikkantha Street Between Mahabandoola and MM MM, Merchant Rd, Yangon

Shwe Sa Bwe
20 Malikha Street Township, Yangon

Sanon
Pyu Saw Hti Street next to Nyaung U Thante Hotel Nyaung-U, Old Bagan

Inle Heritage Restaurant
Inle Heritage, Innpawkhon Village, Inle Lake, Shan State

Yangon Bakehouse
Pearl Condo, Block C, Ground Floor, Kab Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon

THAILAND

Cabbages & condoms
• 10 Sukhumvit 12 Alley, Khwaeng Khlong Toei, Khet Khlong Toei, Bangkok
• 302/3-4 Ratchadapisek Road, Samsen Nok, Hoi Kwang, Bangkok
• Chiang Rai 620/1 Thanalai Road, Wiang, Muang, Chiang Rai

Bo Lan
24 Sukhumvit 53 Alley, Khwaeng Khlong Tan Nuea, Khet Watthana, Bangkok

The passport
507 Moo 10, Maepa, Mae sot

Krua Chuan Chom,
• 33/3 In front of Khlong Prem Prison, Ngam Wong Wan Road, Lat Yao Subdistrict, Chatuchak District, Bangkok
• Corrections Center for Women, Rajatvithee Road, Chiang Mai

VIETNAM

Koto
• 19 Nguyen Dinh Chieu, D.1, Ho Chi Minh City
• 59 Van Mieu, Dong Da, Hanoi

Bloom
• 3/5 Hoang Sa, D.1, Ho Chi Minh City
• 14 Nguyen Cong Tru, Hue

MaiSen Bistro
56 Nguyen Van Lac, W. 19, Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City

Noir
180D Hai Ba Trung, Da Kao Ward, D. 1, Ho Chi Minh City

Blanc
178/180D Hai Ba Trung, Da Kao Ward, D. 1, Ho Chi Minh City

Organik House
7F Nguyen Thi Minh Khai, Ben Nghe, D. 1, Ho Chi Minh City

The Royal Saigon
201 Bui Vien, Pham Ngu Lao Ward, D. 1, Ho Chi Minh City

La Boulangerie Francaise
46 Nguyen Tri Phuong Street, Hue

Streets International
17 Le Loi, Minh An Ward, Hoi An

Reaching Out Tea House
131 Tran Phu, Minh An Ward, Hoi An

White Lotus
11 Phan Boi Chau, Cam Chau, Hoi An

Karma Waters
• 213 Nguyen Duy Hieu, Cam Chau, Hoi An
• 110 Tran Huy Lieu, Khue Trung, Cam Le, Danang
Find nearby RefillStations using our map