

Eco-friendly adventures that belong on your travel bucket list

Sustainable tourism is crucial in the protection of the environment and travellers are more aware of this than ever before – by only taking photos and leaving nothing but footprints.

So, we've rounded up three destinations that are leading the way with ecotourism initiatives, starting with the Land of Fire and Ice.

ICELAND

Gushing geysers and geothermal lagoons rest on backdrops of soaring fjords in Iceland. As the home of Europe's second-largest glacier Vatnajokull, it's little wonder that Iceland is a favourite for holidaymakers and adventurers alike. With protected national parks and environmentally friendly infrastructure, Iceland's ecotourism credentials are as top-notch as nature's paintbrush.

Ecotourism credentials

Reykjavik, Iceland's capital, is classified as one of the greenest cities with the most green space per resident in a country that sources almost all energy from renewable sources. Sustainable farming and fishing join electric whale watching boats and heart pumping, eco-friendly activities within a range of responsible tourism initiatives.

On a G Adventures Explore Iceland tour, discover how power is sourced from the earth at geothermally heated farms and see the world's third-largest geothermal power plant.

Must-sees and dos

Spot seals lazing on ice caps at the spectacular Jokulsarlon Glacier Lagoon. Hike the trails of Skaftafell National Park, a preservation area within the Vatnajokull National Park that's framed by glacier-carved landscapes. No trip to Iceland is complete without a visit to the wonders of the Golden Circle, the home of Gullfoss Waterfall and Geysir hot springs.

With so much exploring to do, you'll work up an appetite for meals of fresher-than-fresh local produce. Think Icelandic lobster pizza.



TOP TIP

Research recommendations and book excursions before you go, often you get better value doing so and avoid any disappointment.

Natalie Turner,
Your Co-op member



Bookable with Co-op Holidays.



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SWITZERLAND

Thanks to the country's fantastic public transport system that's largely powered by clean hydroelectric sources, Switzerland continuously has a high ranking on the global Environmental Performance Index, along with the Swisustainable certification for tourism-related service providers.

You're guaranteed plenty of space in nature to breathe in clean, fresh air, with laws that ensure forests make up a large portion of the land. Sightseeing is just as sustainable in the cities. Take a solar and electric-powered boat ride along Lake Geneva or an e-scooter tour of Zurich.

To blend Switzerland with an eco-friendly European trip, G Adventures uses rail travel for transportation. Such eco-friendly adventures are designed to protect the planet while ensuring you have an unforgettable experience.

COSTA RICA

This land of adventure is a world leader in ecotourism that helps preserve epic landscapes and wildlife. With Sustainable Tourism Certification, operators are assessed and awarded for accomplishments in environmental, social and economic initiatives.

A pioneer of community tourism, G Adventures offers a thrilling Natural Highlights of Costa Rica tour. Learn about conservation and wildlife efforts from an expert at the Monteverde Institute, supported by National Geographic. As part of the G Adventures for Good project, you'll also enjoy a coffee at the Mi Cafecito coffee cooperative after delving into the drying and roasting process.

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Co-op Holidays is working with Ecologi, a B-Corp Certified social enterprise offering a subscription service to support verified climate solution projects.

Ecologi recommends taking small steps that make a huge difference.

1. Try a flight-free holiday

Flying less helps to reduce emissions and you'll be amazed at how far you can get on the ground!

2. Pack better beach reading

For your next trip, read *On Fire: The (Burning) Case for a Green New Deal* by Naomi Klein, *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need* by Bill Gates.

3. Embrace plant-based food

Reducing meat and dairy in your diet is a great way to lower your carbon footprint. Why not see what delicious veggie dishes your destination offers?

4. Adopt a 'reduce first' mindset

Firstly, minimise the negative impact of travelling while giving back to the destinations you visit. Choose sustainable tour operators, then offset the unavoidable remaining emissions.

5. Re-wear your holiday outfits

Ditch the seasonal cycles and invest in clothing you intend to wear time and time again to reduce your footprint.

Ecologi plant trees on your behalf when you travel with Co-op Holidays, helping you offset your carbon emissions.

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