

# GREEN TRAVEL BLOG ([HTTPS://GREEN-TRAVEL- BLOG.COM/](https://green-travel-blog.com/))

== green pearls® - unique places ==

1. December 2023

## OVERTOURISM: WHEN TOURISTS WANT TO GO WHERE ALL TOURISTS ARE



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*This is an update to our March 29, 2018 article on Overtourism*

When you are lying on the beach like sardines in a can or standing in a queue in front of the ice cream parlor for half an hour, when crowds are blocking the view of local sights, that is inconvenient and annoying, but not considered as something dangerous.

But: The infrastructures of popular cities are at their limits, as visitors crowd the streets, and the rents of residents increase immeasurably, because more and more housing space is used for holiday accommodations. Overtourism is a phenomenon that is certainly not relaxing. Just as these crowds of tourists strain your nerves, they strain the much-desired travel destinations, the nature as well as the people.

## TWO BILLION TOURISTS EXPECTED IN 2030

In 2017, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) released projections (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/12/640512-world-could-see-18-billion-tourists-2030-un-agency>), predicting 1.8 billion tourists worldwide in 2030, an unprecedented high. According to a press release (<https://www.fsitaliane.it/content/fsitaliane/en/media/press-releases/2023/7/24/fs-treni-turistici-italiani-is-established.html>), issued by the Italian National Railway Company (FS) in 2023, it is now even expected that there will be 2 billion tourists in 2030.

According to the UNWTO, the main challenges facing global tourism include:

- Pollution
- Waste
- Exploitation of labor
- Prostitution and child abuse
- Depletion of natural resources

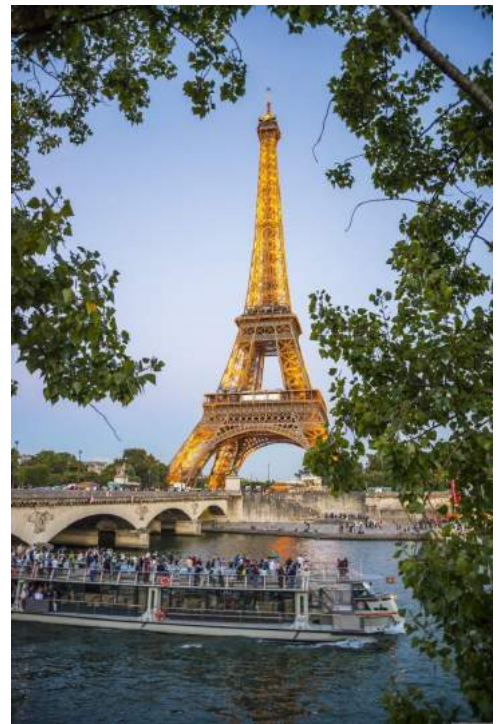


IMAGE: Pixabay

## TRAVEL MUST BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS IN TIMES OF OVERTOURISM

Although travel, like almost all human activities, has its downsides, it should not be forgotten that tourism also has positive effects.

“(Tourism) brings the world together in an incredibly powerful way: It makes the world smaller, more connected, more informed and therefore creates a more compassionate world” – *Taleb Rifai, former Secretary-General of UNWTO*

Rifai goes on to say it is up to the people themselves to ensure “that the effects of tourism are positive and contribute to sustainable development.

We at Green Pearls® have been actively campaigning for this since 2011.

## OVERTOURISM: A CHALLENGE FOR A WORLD HERITAGE SITE



Nowadays Machu Picchu is rarely as empty as in this picture © Inkaterra

Crowds of tourists also mean great amounts of waste. In 2016, the UNESCO considered including the Inka Mountain citadel Machu Picchu into the List of World Heritage in Danger. The reason: a waste management crisis. Around 2,000\* tourists daily leave vast quantities of waste at Machu Picchu and its transport posed a huge logistical problem. Due to a waste compacting machine at [Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel \(https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/inkaterra-machu-picchu-pueblo-hotel/\)](https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/inkaterra-machu-picchu-pueblo-hotel/) the crisis could finally be averted. The machine can process up to 14 tons of waste that is transported by train to recycling plants. For this initiative, [Inkaterra \(https://www.inkaterra.com/\)](https://www.inkaterra.com/) received the German travel award “Die Goldene Palme”.

## NEW RULES FOR VISITING MACHU PICCHU IN 2024

\*While in 2018 there were still 2,000 tourists per day, now there are already 2,500 tourists per day. This means that the flow of tourists has increased by 25 percent in the last five years!

From 2024, visits to the ancient Inca city in Peru will be subject to [new rules \(https://www.incatrailmachu.com/en/travel-blog/machu-picchu-new-rules-2019\)](https://www.incatrailmachu.com/en/travel-blog/machu-picchu-new-rules-2019) to protect the World Heritage site. These include:

- Plastic ban
- Ban of alcohol
- No smoking

Machu Picchu can only be visited on a guided tour, to control the flow of tourists and compliance with the rules.



Try one of the eco-tours with specialized guides when staying at Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel © Inkaterra

## DO IT DIFFERENTLY – WITH AN INCREASED AWARENESS

Not leaving any waste behind would be even better. For example, using your own refillable bottle can help to reduce the vast amounts of PET bottles. In general, you should ask yourself on every trip: how does my behavior affect this place? And how can I make sure that the impact is not a negative one? A great way to counteract overtourism is discovering new places. For example, the Cloud Forest surrounding Machu Picchu is at least as spectacular as the mountain citadel itself, but certainly not as crowded. Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel offers guided tours, where you have the opportunity to enjoy the peace of this natural wonder and learn a lot about the flora and fauna of this area steeped in history and the sustainability projects by Inkaterra Asociación (ITA).

## TOURISM IN THAILAND – THE GOOD AND THE BAD

Thailand is one of the destinations that is still associated with images of beautiful nature overrun by tourists. For example, in our blog post [Sustainable Travel in Southeast Asia \(https://green-travel-blog.com/sustainable-travel-in-southeast-asia-green-travel-guide/\)](https://green-travel-blog.com/sustainable-travel-in-southeast-asia-green-travel-guide/), we described how overtourism has destroyed the coral on the Thai island of Ko Phi Phi Leh. The story began when the island was used as a location for the Hollywood film “The Beach,” starring Leonardo DiCaprio. After the movie was released in 2000, up to 5,000 visitors traveled to Maya Bay every day. In 2018, this mass influx was punished: 90 percent of the corals there were damaged. Subsequently, the bay was completely closed to visitors and only reopened in 2022 (after a four-year recovery period).

Our Green Pearls® partner [Zeavola \(https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/zeavola/\)](https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/zeavola/) is also located on the island of Ko Phi Phi Leh and is actively involved in the conservation and replanting of coral reefs. As a diver, you can even take an active part. And if you don’t already have a diving license, the resort offers certified PADI courses that not only give you a diving

license, but also teach you a lot about Thailand's underwater world.



## COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN THAILAND

Thailand (<https://www.greenpearls.com/de/destinationen/thailand-de/>) is one of the destinations that is still associated with images of beautiful nature overrun by tourists. However, numerous sustainable projects demonstrate that there is also another way of traveling. One of them is the village Tung Dap in Thailand. It has recently been recognized by Green Destinations as one of the top three in the “Best of Cities, Communities & Culture” category for its commitment to the protection of the local culture and tradition, the involvement of the local community into tourism and its efforts against exploitation, human rights violation and mass tourism.



Moken at work © Andaman Discoveries

## STOP OVERTOURISM: REAL-LIFE INSTEAD OF A SHOW FOR TOURISTS

Tung Dap is a rural homestay initiative, where visitors are welcomed into the village during the time of their stay, learn more about the country and its people, and get involved in the community's daily life. Examples of these unique local experiences are cultural activities that allow being close to nature like fishing and vegetable growing. The award-winning community-based tourism initiative [Andaman Discoveries](http://www.andamandiscoveries.com) (<http://www.andamandiscoveries.com>), organizes recommendable tours to Tung Dap. In our blog post [Green Vacation in Chiang Mai – live like the locals!](https://www.greenpearls.com/blog/green-vacation-chiang-mai-live-like-locals/) (<https://www.greenpearls.com/blog/green-vacation-chiang-mai-live-like-locals/>), you can read more about community-based tourism in Northern Thailand.



Ko Phad (The Eighth Island) of Mu Ko Similan National Marine Park in Phang-Nga © Tourism Authority Thailand

## MASS TOURISM IN EUROPE – SIGHTS ON THE LIMIT THE WORLD'S MOST VISITED: THE EIFFEL TOWER

With approximately 7 million visitors per year, the Eiffel Tower in Paris is one of the most visited monuments in the world. That translates to about 20,000 visitors a day. Unfortunately, there are hardly any times when it is not crowded. So, if you really want to climb the Eiffel Tower, I recommend visiting at night – you will see Paris lighted up and be able to see that the city is star-shaped.

Fortunately, the city of Paris has already developed ambitious plans to become one of the greenest cities in Europe.

If you want to visit the metropolis, we recommend the small, sustainable Green Spirit hotels in the 7th arrondissement (not far from the Eiffel Tower). The [Hotel Le Pavillon](https://www.greenpearls.com/de/hotels/hotel-le-pavillon/) (<https://www.greenpearls.com/de/hotels/hotel-le-pavillon/>), the [Hotel Marlar](https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/hotel-malar/) (<https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/hotel-malar/>) and the [Hotel Amélie](https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/hotel-amelie/) (<https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/hotel-amelie/>), have all been created from old existing buildings and pay attention to organic and fair trade products as well as a healthy quality of air.

Read our blog post [Green Christmas in Paris](https://green-travel-blog.com/green-christmas-in-paris-2023-sustainable-ideas-tips-and-addresses/) (<https://green-travel-blog.com/green-christmas-in-paris-2023-sustainable-ideas-tips-and-addresses/>), for more ideas on sustainable travel in France's capital..

## JUST LIKE A FAIRY TALE, RIGHT?



Neuschwanstein in one of the most famous castles in the world.

Neuschwanstein Castle is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Germany. During the summer, the rooms that once belonged to only one person, King Ludwig II, are visited by over 6,000 people a day. It is up to you to decide whether you want to see the inside of the castle or whether a view from the outside will suffice (you can only see the whole building from a distance anyway).

Around the royal castles of Neuschwanstein and Hohenschwangau, you will also find wonderful opportunities for gentle tourism. Hotel **Das Rübzahl** (<https://www.greenpearls.com/hotels/hotel-ruebezahl/>) is now in its third generation of family ownership. It is committed to environmentally friendly transportation, green energy and waste avoidance. The hiking guide Basti explains the local flora and fauna to tourists and raises awareness for nature.

## AVOID OVERTOURISM – WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Take action on Instagram:** Some travel bloggers (e.g. from SoulTravel) have already criticized that posts like “why a trip to X will explode your Instagram feed” promote mass tourism. Such posts are only about the “shot” for more popularity and no longer about traveling itself. Instead, show Instagram something not everyone has seen. Without geotagging, of course! When consuming, you can also make sure to follow sustainable travel bloggers (<https://www.instagram.com/greenpearls/>) and influencers who advocate mindful travel.



- **Travel in the off-season:** Especially if you're not tied to school vacations, it's better to travel to popular destinations in the off-season. When it's less crowded, you'll have more time to enjoy yourself as well.
- **Travel longer:** Air travel produces a lot of CO2 and shouldn't be booked for a short trip. By staying longer, the destination can profit more from you as a tourist..
- **Choose lesser-known destinations**
- **Photograph respectfully and share your photos thoughtfully:** This means: refrain from using geo-tags and exact names of places. If you visit attractions or sights that are affected by mass tourism, point out the problems this causes in your description (keyword: Venice).
- **Engage with the culture of the country**
- **Visit/support local sustainable projects** (e.g., environmental protection, animal welfare, social issues)
- **Choose sustainable accommodations**

“The vision of travel we are committed to is one that benefits not only the traveler, but also the places we visit.” – *SoulTravel Travel Blogger*

## THE FUTURE OF TRAVELING

Above all, community-based tourism means that instead of a staged show for tourists, you experience authentic local everyday life. At the same time, community-based tourism provides a source of income for the locals, thus improving their quality of life. We think: This should be the future of travel.

Do you want to save the article to share it later with family and friends? Then use one of our pins or the button at the end of the article!



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