

Green Travel Tips

by Maria Gant

With summer approaching at a blazing rate, many people are making plans to travel. Here are some things to consider to make your vacation a little greener. Remember, every little bit helps!

If you are going to travel by car, consider taking your bikes along so you can use them at your destination. If you were planning to travel in your own car, and it is large and/or not very fuel efficient, consider renting a model that gets better mileage. If you are going to rent a car:

- Choose the smallest size vehicle necessary. It will use less fuel, and may even save you money.
- Consider renting a hybrid car.

At your hotel:

- Take quick showers, and don't leave the water running while you brush your teeth.
- Turn off the air conditioning, heat, television, lights and any other electric devices when leaving your room.
- Reuse your sheets and towels instead of having them changed every day.
- Bring your own toiletries and drinking cup (or reusable bottle), rather than using the prepackaged ones.

Pack light! It saves energy and airline fees when your bag weighs less, and it helps save the environment by using less fuel to transport your luggage.

- Pack clothes that mix and match to create several outfits with just a few pieces.
- Save make-up and skincare samples to take when you travel; or, buy small reusable containers and fill them at home so you take only as much as you need for your trip.
- Leave your hair dryer at home if the hotel provides one.

At your destination:

- Walk, rather than drive.
- Consider renting a bike to get around.
- Use public transportation when available, or the hotel shuttle van.

Green travel also means supporting the local economy. Buy local foods, take tours offered by local operators, and patronize local businesses. You will support the local way of life and reduce your environmental impact.