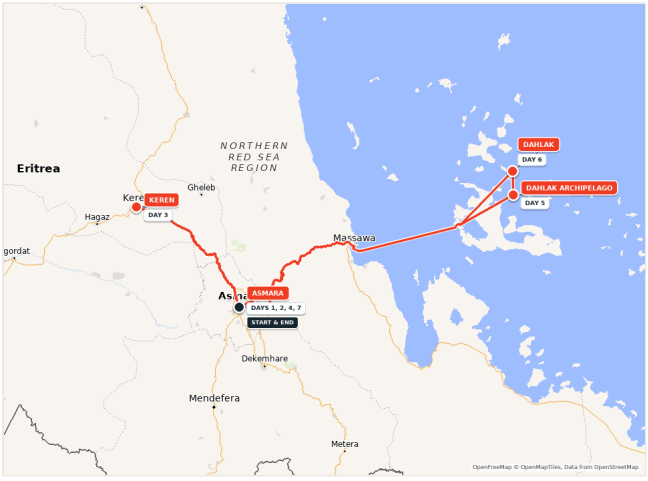
ENCOUNTERS TRAVEL

Your passport to adventure

Eritrea Encounters

COUNTRY(IES)	Eritrea
TOUR TYPE	Small Group
TRANSPORT	Local Minibuses or 4x4 vehicles, Dahlak Cruise
GROUP SIZE	Min: 2 | Max: 18
DURATION	7 days
STARTS	Asmara, Eritrea
ENDS	Asmara, Eritrea
MEALS	Breakfasts - 6, Lunches - 2, Dinners - 2

TOUR ROUTE MAP **7 Days**



ROUTE: **Asmara** (Start) → **Keren** → **Asmara** → **Dahlak Archipelago** → **Dahlak** → **Asmara** (End)

HIGHLIGHTS

Asmara, Keren Villages, Local Markets, Massawa, Dahlak Archipelago, Coral Reefs, Beach camping

Itinerary

DAY 1 — Arrive in Asmara, transfer to hotel. Afternoon guided sightseeing

Transfer from Asmara Airport to your hotel and spend some time at leisure before heading out to see the city's main sights. The introduction focuses on Asmara's architectural heritage and historic streets, giving you a closer look at the mix of modernist design, Italian influence and local culture that has shaped Eritrea's capital.

ACTIVITIES

- **Arrive at Asmara Airport**
  Arrive at Asmara Airport and meet your driver for the start of your Eritrean adventure. Clear formalities and prepare for your transfer into the capital.
- **Drive from Asmara Airport to Asmara City Hotel**
  Travel from Asmara Airport into the city and check in at your hotel. The short drive gives your first impressions of Eritrea's highland capital.

- **Free Time in Asmara**
  Take some time to rest after your flight or enjoy a short stroll near the hotel. You can start to notice Asmara's distinctive Italian-era architecture and relaxed pace.
- **Explore Asmara City Highlights**
  Join an afternoon guided tour of Asmara, a UNESCO-listed city noted for its modernist buildings and colonial heritage. Visit sites such as Santa Maria Cathedral, the Coptic Church Nda Mariam, Medeber market and the iconic Fiat Tagliero garage before returning to the hotel.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
Asmara hotel	None	Single Room Supplement (SSEREE), Extra night in Asmara - pre-tour

DAY 2 Optional Steam Locomotive. Head to Keren

Spend the opening part of the day at leisure in Asmara, then travel by road to Keren through Eritrea’s mountain country. Once you reach the town, the remainder of the time is also free, allowing you to relax or explore nearby areas at your own pace. The simple combination of leisure and overland travel provides an easy transition between the capital and Keren before the scheduled local sightseeing begins.

ACTIVITIES

- **Free Time in Asmara**
  Take some time to rest after your flight or enjoy a short stroll near the hotel. You can start to notice Asmara's distinctive Italian-era architecture and relaxed pace.
- **Drive from Asmara to Keren**
  Drive from Asmara through the Eritrean highlands towards Keren, descending into a broad basin surrounded by granite hills. The journey reveals changing landscapes and rural life along the way.
- **Free Time in Keren**
  After arrival in Keren, settle into your hotel and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. You can take a gentle walk nearby or simply relax before the next day's explorations.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Keren hotel	Breakfast

DAY 3 Exploring the city of Keren

Begin in Keren with visits to the local markets, then continue to the Sanctuary of Mariam Dearit and the town’s war cemeteries. These stops provide contrasting views of daily commerce, religious tradition and the conflicts that have shaped the region. Once the visits are complete, drive back to Asmara, leaving Keren’s highland surroundings behind as you return to the capital.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Keren Markets**
  Explore Keren's bustling markets, moving through the covered food areas, tailor and silversmith streets and the women's market. The visit offers a vivid look at local trade and the multicultural life of this highland town.
- **Explore Sanctuary of Mariam Dearit**
  Visit the Sanctuary of Mariam Dearit, where a revered Black Madonna is set inside a baobab tree. This unique pilgrimage site draws both Christian and Muslim visitors and reflects Keren's strong spiritual traditions.
- **Explore Keren War Cemeteries**
  Pay your respects at the Italian, Askari and British war cemeteries around Keren. These sites commemorate soldiers who fought in the region and add a poignant historical layer to your visit.
- **Drive from Keren to Asmara**
  Return by road from Keren to Asmara through mountain scenery and rural settlements. Arriving back in the capital, you spend the night at your hotel.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Asmara hotel	Breakfast

DAY 4 To Massawa, cruise to the Dahlak Islands

Descend from Asmara’s cool highlands towards the Red Sea coast and arrive in Massawa, where Ottoman-era architecture reflects the city’s layered port history. Continue by boat into the Dahlak Islands, a remote archipelago of coral reefs and quiet shorelines. Spend the night on the islands and experience the striking change from Eritrea’s elevated inland capital to an isolated marine setting surrounded by open sea.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Asmara to Massawa**
  Descend from Asmara towards the Red Sea coast on a dramatic road that drops over 2,000 metres in altitude. The route brings you to the historic port city of Massawa, with its mix of Ottoman and Italian influences.
- **Cruise from Massawa to Dahlak Islands**
  Board a motorboat in Massawa and cruise into the Red Sea to reach the Dahlak Archipelago. The journey takes you across clear waters towards remote islands with pristine marine environments.
- **Visit Dahlak Islands and Coral Reefs**
  Begin exploring the Dahlak Islands, stopping at selected islets and coral reefs chosen by the captain. You can swim or snorkel in clear waters and enjoy the sense of isolation in this remote archipelago.
- **Stay Overnight at Dahlak Island Camp**
  Set up camp on one of the islands in simple igloo-style tents equipped with basic bedding and seating. Enjoy freshly prepared meals, a relaxed camp atmosphere and star-filled skies far from city lights.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Dahlak Island Camping	Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

DAY 5 Exploring the Dahlak Islands

Spend another relaxed day among the Dahlak Islands and enjoy the remote Red Sea setting at your own pace. Beaches, clear waters and coral reefs surround the archipelago, providing opportunities to appreciate the marine environment and its natural tranquillity. With free time available, you can enjoy the island surroundings without a fixed programme and experience a slower pace far from Eritrea’s mainland cities and busier coastal settlements.

ACTIVITIES

- **Visit Dahlak Islands and Coral Reefs**
  Begin exploring the Dahlak Islands, stopping at selected islets and coral reefs chosen by the captain. You can swim or snorkel in clear waters and enjoy the sense of isolation in this remote archipelago.
- **Free Time in Dahlak Islands**
  Relax on the beach or at camp between boat excursions and swims. This is a chance to slow down, enjoy the sea breeze and appreciate the quiet natural setting.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Dahlak Island camping	Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

DAY 6 Return to Asmara via Massawa

Travel by boat from the Dahlak Islands to Massawa before continuing overland to Asmara. The climb from the coast to the plateau brings a major change in elevation, temperature and scenery, with broad views appearing along the escarpment road. Once back in the capital, the remaining time is free, providing an easy return to the city after the marine and coastal landscapes of the Red Sea.

ACTIVITIES

- **Cruise from Dahlak Islands to Massawa**
  Leave the Dahlak Islands by boat and cruise back across the Red Sea to Massawa. As the port city comes into view, you say farewell to the archipelago's remote landscapes.
- **Drive from Massawa to Asmara**
  Drive from Massawa back up the winding mountain road to Asmara, gaining altitude and cooler air. On arrival you check in for your final night in the capital.
- **Free Time in Asmara**
  Take some time to rest after your flight or enjoy a short stroll near the hotel. You can start to notice Asmara's distinctive Italian-era architecture and relaxed pace.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Asmara hotel	Breakfast

DAY 7 — Free time in Asmara. Transfer to the airport for departure (extensions available)

Transfer from your Asmara city hotel to the airport and prepare for departure. The journey across the capital provides your final opportunity to see the city’s surroundings before the supported services finish at the terminal. No formal activities are included during this period, allowing the day to remain focused on getting to Asmara Airport and continuing with your onward travel plans.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Asmara City Hotel to Asmara Airport**
  Transfer from your hotel back to Asmara Airport for your departing flight. The drive marks the end of your time in Eritrea's capital.
- **Depart from Asmara Airport**
  Check in for your onward or return flight from Asmara Airport. Your Eritrea Encounters Tour concludes here unless you have arranged post-tour extensions.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
N/A	Breakfast	2 Night Extension (Kohaito and Adi Quala), Extra night in Asmara - post-tour

INCLUDED

- 3 nights in Asmara, 1 night in Keren hotels
- 2 nights camping on the Dahlak Islands including equipment
- Dahlak Island cruise including all meals and 4 drinks per day
- All transport and transfers
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service (on tour days)
- Services of a local tour leader throughout (English & Italian speaking)
- All sightseeing tours as per itinerary
- Entrance fees for visits included in the itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Visa invitation letter for most nationalities

EXCLUDED

- International flights (available on request)
- Eritrea visa fees (an invitation letter will be provided)
- Optional journey on restored colonial train
- Additional paperwork for Visa on Arrival service (for countries with no Eritrean Consulate)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for tour leader & driver
- Any other items not mentioned above

Tour Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements , full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

2 Night Extension (Kohaito and Adi Quala)

Min numbers: 1

This 2 night extension includes 2 additional nights in Asmara, with excursions included to visit Dekemhare, the Sycamore Valley, ancient pre-Axumite ruins, Kohaito, Mareb Valley and Adi Quala.

Day 7 - We'll firstly head to Dekemhare, where we'll take a short walk to familiarise ourselves with the centre of town. We'll see early 20th century Italian style houses and the local market. From Dekemhare we'll take the road towards Nefasit, which was built by the Italians in just 7 months. We'll continue on to Segheneyti, where you will observe the majestic sycamore trees, the largest in the country, some as much as 300 years old, in what is called the Valley of the Sycamores. We'll later arrive in Adi Keyh and Kohaito, where the ruins of the ancient axumite cities of Metara and Coloe can be found. Based on the different names in the area that are related to the elephants, Kohaito is believed to have been at the centre of the ivory trade. At the beginning there were only 46 sites identified, but now the number has risen to 900. Particularly interesting is the dam called Safira in Kohaito, 2500 years old, whose construction is attributed to the 6th century BC. The style and solidity of the dam shows how the population possessed an advanced knowledge of construction. According to legend, the Queen of Sheba herself, is said to have visited the Dam. Although detailed scientific research has yet to be completed, the Kohaito civilization is thought to have lasted about 1000 years and is antecedent to the Axumite civilization. We'll return to Asmara late in the afternoon where we'll spend the night.

Day 8 - After breakfast, we'll board 4x4 off-road vehicles to travel along the road which continues all the way to Axum in Ethiopia. After arriving in the Mareb Valley, we'll visit the Church of Santa Rita in Adi Quala. We'll also visit one of the most beautiful Coptic Churches in Eritrea, dedicated to Mariam Tzion, one of few Coptic Churches that were constructed during colonial times. Overnight in Asmara.

Day 9 - Free time in Asmara until you are transferred to the airport for departure.

Note - Pricing is based on 2 passengers sharing a twin/double room. Single supplements apply. A minimum of 2 passengers is required for this optional extension to operate.

Extra night in Asmara - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Extra night in Asmara - post-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Important Notes

1 Accommodation

We use good quality hotels rated at the Eritrean 3 to 4 star level in Asmara as well as a comfortable 3-star hotel whilst in Keren.

Our accommodation on the Dahlak Islands will be Igloo style tents (2.1 x 1.2 meters), which are equipped with 5cm mattresses, pillows, sheets, chairs and table. As fresh water is very scarce on the Dahlak Islands, daily showers are not always available and toilets will be 'bush style'. A cook will accommpany us to prepare meals for the group and these will feature fresh fish, traditional Danakil break, fruit, tea, coffee, pasta rice and traditional foul. 4 drinks per person per day are included in the cost of this excursion which include (water, soft drinks and beer).

Hotel accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will stay in a private double room.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

2 Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you’re really experiencing the country you’re travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. Our routes in Eritrea, available public transport options and the distances involved mean that we use private vehicles such as minivans throughout this tour. The section exploring the Dahlak Islands will use a motorboat.

3 Airport Transfers

This tour includes an airport meet and greet and transfer service on the first day of the tour. Our rep. will be holding an Encounters Travel signboard or have your name displayed for easy identification. If you can't find our representative, our emergency contact numbers will be provided on your tour confirmation voucher.

A departure transfer to the airport is also included at the end of the tour.

No refund is available on missed transfers or portions of your trip owing to incorrect flight details being provided or delayed flight arrival. Any additional cost incurred in order to meet up with your group is at your own expense.

If your flights arrive/depart before/after the tour starts/ends then we will be very happy to arrange additional accommodation and airport transfers for you. We will aim to book these in the same hotel as the main tour, though this will be subject to availability. If you do not book your additional accommodation through us, then our arrival/departure service is not included and you will need to make your own airport transfer arrangements.

4 International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don’t include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we’ll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Our Eritrea tours start and finish at Asmara airport (ASM).

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

5 Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There’s no point in us providing great guides if you’ve got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won’t ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our Eritrea group departures to have a minimum of 2 and maximum of 12 travellers.

At Encounters Travel we aim to only use local guides and reps wherever possible. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

6 Entrance fees & permits

The price of this tour includes the cost of entrance fees to visits included in the tour itinerary. Should you wish to visit any monument that is not included in the standard tour itinerary, the entry ticket for this is not included.

7 Tipping

Tips are commonplace and customary in Eritrea. Wages for service staff in Eritrea are very low and tips are a necessary supplement to meagre incomes.

Having said that, tipping is always optional, and the amounts paid should reflect the service level provided, and your personal budget. We are often asked for advice on common amounts, and for assistance with tipping. Some suggested guidelines are given below.

Restaurants and taxis: Local markets and basic restaurants - leave the loose change. More up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill.

Local guides: Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your tour guide. We suggest USD 2 per person per day for local guides.

Drivers: You may have a range of private drivers on your trip. Some may be with you for a short journey while others may be with you for several days. We would suggest a higher tip for those more involved with the group however USD 2 per person per day is generally appropriate.

Tour Guides: To answer your next question. . . as a guideline we suggest for your tour guide between USD 25-40 per person for the entire tour, but ultimately, its up to your satisfaction with their service and your budget. You should not feel pressured to tip any particular amount.

8 Language and Customs

Eritrea is a multilingual country and the nation has no official language since the Constitution establishes equality for all Eritrean languages, however the most spoken languages in Eritrea are Tigringya, Arabic and English. English is often used as an educational language, therefore many members of the younger generation can speak English (many of the older generation can still speak Italian owing to the colonial past).

One of the most recognised customs in Eritrea is the Coffee Ceremony. Coffee is almost always offered to visiting guests or during festivities. If a cup of coffee is politely declined, then be sure you'll be offered tea instead.

Whilst eating traditional foods, you'll often see Eritreans eating by hand, though generally only the right hand as the left is considered impure.

9 Visa Requirements

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country and have at least 2 clear consecutive pages. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

Obtaining Eritrean visas is not always straightforward. There are two options:

- **Obtain your visa in advance**

  For citizens of countries which have an Eritrean Embassy/Consulate, then your first point of call should be to apply for a visa from them. After making a booking with us, we will provide you with a free Letter of Invitation (LOI) which you will need to support your visa application. At the time of publication, the fee for British Passport holders is £50 and for US Passport holders $55. Should you reside in a country which has no embassy, please see option 2 below.

- **Obtain your visa in Asmara airport on arrival**

  This option is only available to those who reside in a country with no Eritrean Consulate or who can prove that they cannot obtain a visa in advance due to already travelling. In cases where it is not possible to arrange a visa in advance, we can arrange a visa on arrival. An additional cost applies to this option which should be paid locally. Please contact us to check this fee as it may differ according to nationality.

Please send us a scanned or photographed copy of the identity pages of your passport as soon as possible after you have booked so that we can obtain the necessary paperwork for you.

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10 Time

The time in Sudan is GMT plus 3 hours. Daylight saving adjustments are not applied.

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11 Voltage

Sockets accept two round pronged plugs (Type C / D) and the electicity supply is 230 volts. Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don’t have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already. If you have US appliances you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

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12 Money

The Eritrean Nakfa (ERN) has a fixed exchange rate of 15 to 1 USD. As the Nakfa cannot be obtained outside of Eritrea, we recommend exchanging money locally.

Please note that foreign credit cards and debit cards are NOT currently accepted in Eritrea, therefore you will need to bring your currency in cash, to exchange locally.

The best place to exchange money is at the airport, the rates are often much better than the rates at hotels. Currency should be exchanged only at official bureaux de change and banks, and receipts should be retained. There are severe penalties for changing money on the black market. Please note that only new US Dollar bills are accepted in Sudan - old or worn bills will not be accepted.

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13 What to take

Luggage: To facilitate easy transport of everyone luggage in the vehicles, we ask that you bring soft luggage with you, and not rigid suitcases. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in your accommodation during your sightseeing trips – you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

Luggage limits: Again to ensure space and comfort in the vehicles you will be travelling in, we request that you bring no more than 15kg of main luggage on this tour. For hand-luggage most airlines allow between 5kg and 10kg and we ask that you try to restrict yours to 5kg max.

Clothing: Eritrea's climate ranges from hot and dry along the eastern coast to cooler and wetter conditions in the western highlands. The low land regions which are located in between tend to be semi-arid. We avoid operating this tour during the summer months, when temperatures can reach 39c. Between the months of October and June, when we operate this tour, temperates generally fall between 25 and 32c and short spells of rain may be experienced.

Other items: Bedding (sleeping bag whilst camping, although bed sheets are provided) is provided in the Dahlak Islands but we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner for comfort all year round (even with the best efforts, sand can find its way pretty much everywhere). We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

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14 Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour starting on Saturdays between October and June. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 travellers. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and on a separate dates & prices sheet available on request.

Private and tailor-made tours are also available on any date; please contact us for details and prices.

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15 Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please contact us if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

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16 Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.
We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust

My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see our website or booking conditions for more information.

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17 Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.
The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

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18 Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

https://x.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

19 Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event).

Considering travel insurance for your trip? World Nomads Travel Insurance offers coverage for more than 150 adventure activities as well as emergency medical, lost luggage, trip cancellation and more.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable.

20 Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current official government travel advice for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's 'Travel Aware' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

travel aware
gov.uk/travelaware

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21 Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.
- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can’t fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon’s efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.

- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

Use Water-to-Go products and you'll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
- They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
- Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
- The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
- The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.

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22 Private & Tailor-made Tours

While our group departures offer a fantastic way to explore with like-minded travellers, we understand that some guests prefer a more exclusive experience. Most of our group tours can be booked on a private basis, allowing you to enjoy the same expert-led routes with your own dedicated party. The primary advantage of choosing a private arrangement is the flexibility it provides; we can easily customise the itinerary to include your preferred style of accommodation or adjust the pace to suit your needs. Private tours can be run on the same start days as our group tours, or on other dates. However, some activities within our trips are restricted to particular days of the week - we will advise you on anything like this that we need to work around. Pricing will be based on the number of travellers in your party, and any customisations you may like to make.

For those seeking something truly unique, our specialist sales team is available to collaborate with you on a completely tailor-made tour, designed from the ground up to match your specific interests, accommodation level and requirements.

To request a quotation for a private or tailor-made tour, please contact us.
