

One last thing...

“TOURISM CAN BRING PEACE”

Travel can unify the world—Louis D'Amore, founder of the International Institute for Peace through Tourism, has been saying it for more than 20 years. Now the first World Responsible Tourism Day makes the same point on November 14.

How can tourists bring world peace?

Louis D'Amore: “Fear of ‘the other’ leads to distrust, hatred and conflict. It is only through travel that we can come to know ‘the other’ and overcome the fear bred by isolation. Travel is the truest form of people-to-people diplomacy.”

Despite the huge increase in tourism, the world is still not a safe place.

“Political leaders have other priorities than humanity as a whole. While politicians bring us to conflicts, people all over the world want peace. My source of hope for the future is the current generation, ‘the first ‘global citizens,’ who travel with open minds and open hearts. When they become leaders, they will shape policies and decisions within a global context and a concern for the health of our planet and the well-being of all humanity.”

But tourists are notorious for destroying the environment and disrespecting the locals.

“Trends within the tourism industry paint a different picture. More travellers are wanting to ‘give back’ as volunteers helping to restore environments and preserve wildlife; visiting orphanages; building community centres and health clinics. The growth of ‘voluntourism’ and ‘philanthropic tourism’ are two of the major trends in the industry.”

How can we, on our next trip, help promote peace as tourists?

“Prepare for your trip by learning about the destination—its history, land, people, customs, cultures and traditions.

Respect these values and seek opportunities to closely interact with people of the host country. That will be a contribution to peace.”

—MARCO VISSCHER

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