THE IMPORTANCE OF SELLING SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

THE AGENT’S GUIDE TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Dear TRAVEL AGENTS

Trafalgar, along with the rest of The Travel Corporation (TTC) Family of Brands, shares the belief that travel is an incredible gift. It has the ability to open our eyes to the unique cultures and spellbinding beauty of the natural world. But with this gift comes a responsibility: to protect and preserve our precious and fragile world.

For this reason, we are driven by a clear philosophy to have a positive impact on the people and communities we visit, to protect places wildlife and to care for the planet we call home. And this philosophy is in our DNA; we live it and breathe it every day.

As part of the travel community, we recognize our responsibility to do what we can to make travel a force for good. However, we cannot do this on our own. We need your support. That is why we have created this guide to give you the tools you need to join us on our journey to make a difference. We’ve outlined in 5 simple sections the challenges our world and our industry are facing and how you can help ensure a sustainable future for the communities your clients visit and the planet we share. Together, we can work towards a sustainable future.

Gavin Tollman
Trafalgar CEO
WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?

Sustainable tourism is defined by the U.N. World Tourism Organization as “Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”.

WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT?

We aren’t trying to single-handedly save the world. But, we recognize that as part of the travel community, it is our responsibility to make sure that our trips have a positive impact on the destinations we visit.
So future generations can enjoy the privilege of travel
Exploring this diverse and unique planet is truly a gift.

It’s what consumers want
According to a report by Booking.com, 87% of global travellers state they want to travel sustainably.

It feels good to do good
Being part of the solution adds meaning to what you do.

It’s simply the right thing to do
It all comes down to this. Our livelihoods depend on the beauty and diversity of this planet, it’s our responsibility to protect it.

FACTS

Three different factors that inspire sustainable travel.

60% were inspired by natural sights

54% were inspired by the visible impact of tourism on a destination

47% were inspired by the positive impact of tourism on local people and communities

According to Booking.com survey
It’s no secret that sustainability is one of the hot trends right now, with evermore conscious customers basing purchasing decisions around companies with a sustainable footprint. 87%* of travellers polled said they want to travel responsibly, so the opportunity to boost your sales is there for the taking. Nevertheless, only a fraction of agents feel sustainable options are important niche markets worth focusing on.

According to the World Tourism Organization UNWTO, cumulative international tourism arrivals hit 1.4 billion in 2018, two years ahead of its previous forecast. While increased numbers spell good news for industry profits, the tourism boom also poses a threat to the longevity of our destinations and the sustainability of our planet.

*According to Booking.com survey

FACT

60 Million

US travelers are choosing travel companies based on their sustainability practices.

According to a study by Sustainable Travel International
At Trafalgar, we are doing our part wherever we can to help drive the movement towards a more sustainable future by tackling the issues closest to us. With this in mind, back in 2008, our parent company TTC created the forward-thinking TreadRight Foundation to safeguard our natural and cultural legacies by protecting the people, wildlife and planet for future generations.

And powered by TreadRight’s philosophy and expertise, a year later, we created JoinTrafalgar with the mission to make a positive impact on the destinations we visit with each trip we take.
JOIN TRAFALGAR

We know we can’t do it all, so we’ve focused our efforts around three main pillars, guided by TreadRight’s clear vision:

Helping PEOPLE
We help support artisans, farmers, families & invest in micro enterprises.

Preserving PLACES & WILDLIFE
We help protect & maintain the diversity of wildlife, cultures and traditions.

Caring for the PLANET
We help reduce our footprint & protect the environment.
These are just a few of the challenges we are facing today:

1. **Overtourism**
   Overtourism is a word we cannot escape: headlines, industry conference agendas, political manifestos. Venice is sinking under the weight of 30 million visitors a year, and locals worldwide are being forced out of long-time homes by rising rental prices and property values.

2. **Climate Change**
   The planet is suffering as each year brings more frequent intense natural disasters, warmer summers and colder winters.

3. **Pollution and Environmental Destruction**
   Every hour, 800 football pitches worth of forest disappear around the world. And by 2050, it is estimated that plastic in the ocean will outweigh the fish in the sea.

4. **Mistreatment of animals**
   From lion walks to elephant rides, animals are being mistreated and abused around the world to provide entertainment for an ever-increasing number of tourists.

5. **Locals not benefitting from tourism revenue**
   The popularity of cruise ships and all-inclusive international hotel chains means that too few tourism dollars remain in-destination to benefit the local communities.
We're helping combat overtourism using the 3Ds to preserve the places we visit and help the people who call them home.

**Dissemination**

Adopting a ‘365’ approach: To ensure the longevity of local businesses, it is important to drive tourism activity beyond the peak season and promote year-round travel. There is magic in destinations in all seasons, and Trafalgar’s Autumn, Winter and Spring Europe trips are a kaleidoscope of colours, sights, and smells that offer your clients a unique experience while easing the pressures of overtourism.

**Dispersal**

Encouraging discovery beyond the usual tourism centres: At Trafalgar, we take pride in encouraging our guests to discover the iconic as well as get below the surface by exploring villages and connecting with communities. Our trips not only provide your clients with an authentic travel experience, we reduce traffic to overcrowded tourism centres and ensure that local communities benefit from year-round visitors.

**Direct Action**

Taking actions to make direct impact: Through TreadRight, we provide valuable financial support to help the maintenance and preservation of international landmarks that suffer due to increased tourism numbers.

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**FACTS**

79% of Americans, according to Forbes, would consider an oversea trip during the winter. 53% of them would not be seeking a change in weather.

Through TreadRight and JoinTrafalgar, we have been able to have a lasting positive impact on the destinations we visit, and here are just a few of the ways we’re tackling the issues challenging the sustainability of our world and of our industry:
In 2018, we launched our paperless travel documents programme. When you make a booking with e-documents, we plant a tree in your guest’s name. And through our partnership with One Tree Planted, we have planted 150 acres of trees in Northern California and Tanzania. That’s around 2400 tennis courts worth of trees – doing our bit to reforest the planet, one tree at a time.

In 2018, as part of the TTC family of brands, we led the industry by becoming the first global travel operator to commit to the elimination of all unnecessary single-use plastics (SUP) – removing 60 different types of plastic. We are plastic-free in our offices around the globe, and we’re setting our sights to being SUP-free on-trip and across our whole supply chain by 2022.

In 2019, we are eliminating plastic water bottles from being sold on our coaches in Europe and North America. We estimate this will eliminate about 5 tons of plastic waste in the next five years. And in destinations where tap water is safe to drink, we encourage our guests to bring or buy their own reusable water bottles.

At Trafalgar, 95% of our coach fleet operates at or above EU emission standards.

When your clients choose to travel by coach, they are choosing a greener way to travel. Think of coach travel like a giant carpool, eliminating taxis, rental cars and other individual vehicles from the road. In addition, fuel-efficient coaches produce:

85% less CO₂ per passenger kilometre than car and air travel.

40% less CO₂ per passenger kilometre than rail travel.

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To help the people and communities in our destinations across all seven continents, we take our guests off the beaten path to discover the rich cultural heritage of the people that make each destination so special. Through our Be My Guest experiences, we bring guests into the homes and small businesses of the local people to learn about their cultural heritage while sharing a delicious home-cooked meal. These encounters provide valuable income and allow our hosts to preserve their traditions and cultural legacy.

We take guests to craft markets and artisan shops, so they can purchase souvenirs directly from the artists who make them to ensure the money ends up in the right hands.

As one brand, we know we can’t change the world. But we can do what we can to make the world a better place through travel.

41% of travellers would go out of the way to find a local restaurant that uses only local ingredients.

According to Booking.com survey
You, as agents, are in the privileged position as advisors of travel to help customers make the right choices. You have the power to change the way people travel and the power to change the world. You can open the door for clients who want to do something positive with their travels but aren’t quite sure how.
Knowledge is power. Your clients are entrusting their holiday planning to you and your industry knowledge. That means you have the power to ask your clients the right questions and deliver the trip of their dreams while ensuring their travels make a difference to our planet and the communities they visit.

We encourage you to ask your clients to travel responsibly.

Checklist for AGENTS

- Qualify clients by asking about sustainability.
- Share travel trends by questioning seasonality.
- Offer off-the-beaten path options.
- Tell clients how their travel can give back to communities.
- Know your wholesalers and what they stand for.
- Make your go-to sustainability options list.

32% of travellers say they lack the information needed to make their travel more sustainable. According to Booking.com survey.
The challenges facing our industry are real, the threats to our planet are real, the steps we can take to make a difference are simple. However, despite client support, we still see some stakeholders refusing to pull their weight in lifting the burden of the negative impacts of travel to make room for a future where travel is a force for good. Often, it’s because they don’t realize how impactful even small changes can be.
That said, there are many companies working hard to make a meaningful change towards normalizing sustainable practices across the travel industry. And, we encourage them through partnerships and financial support.

**ME to WE**

A branch of the WE Charity, ME to WE is a social enterprise that empowers people to change the world through their everyday consumer choices. They offer volunteer and cultural immersion trips to let guests give back, hands on. We offer ME to WE volunteer trip extensions on several of our trips since 2014.

**ONE TREE PLANTED**

One Tree Planted is a non-profit organisation that works in partnership with Trafalgar to reforest areas of tree loss in Tanzania and Northern California. For every guest that books using e-documentation, we plant a tree in their honour.

**JOIN TRAFALGAR**

With 80 itineraries featuring JoinTrafalgar experiences, we support locals across 72 countries and help keep traditions alive for future generations.

**TREADRIGHT FOUNDATION**

To date, TreadRight supports 50 sustainable travel projects across all seven continents.
The Good
Companies taking active steps, no matter how small, to incorporate sustainability into their business model.

The Bad
Companies shirking their responsibility or “Green-washing” their brand with empty promises.

Make sure to choose brands that walk the talk when it comes to sustainability. Ask them to provide concrete examples of actions they are taking to work towards a more sustainable future.

The Good and Bad to keep an eye out for when choosing a travel brand:

When deciding which BRANDS to work with

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Helping PEOPLE
- 3200 people enjoy clean water from wells we built with partner ME to WE.
- 150 women in Jordan can now provide for their families and preserve their traditions.
- 100+ livelihoods protected through our Be My Guest Experiences.
- 24k volunteer hours a year by Trafalgar Team to help care for our planet.

Preserving PLACES & WILDLIFE
- 7 km of Giant’s Causeway in Northern Ireland now accessible to disabled visitors and families.
- Zero elephants ridden on our tours; zero animals harmed in the name of entertainment.
- Dozens of endangered species protected through our support of various wildlife conservation initiatives.

Caring for the PLANET
- 150 acres and counting reforested thanks to your support of our e-documentation program.
- Zero single-use plastic bottles on our American and European coaches.

When you work with Trafalgar, you join a team that cares and connects to make a difference individually, locally and globally. We don’t just talk about it, we live it, it’s in our DNA.

To date, TreadRight has supported over 50 sustainability projects worldwide, and JoinTrafalgar has more than 80 experiences across all seven continents which help make a difference. These are just a few examples of what we have achieved so far. To learn more about ways your support of Trafalgar is making travel matter, visit the Join Trafalgar and TreadRight websites.

So get connected with
JOINTRAFTALGAR
READY TO JOIN THE EVOLUTION?

START YOUR JOURNEY TO MAKE TRAVEL MATTER TODAY.