



Overtourism: The Impact of Too Many Tourists

Introduction

Discuss as a class or in pairs/groups of three. If working in pairs, ask for some students to report back.

1. Have you ever visited a place that was overcrowded with tourists? How did it affect your experience?
2. In your opinion, how does overtourism affect local communities and the environment?
3. Do you think it is possible to enjoy a popular tourist destination while also protecting the local environment and culture?

Vocabulary

Match the words from the text with their definitions.

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|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Overcrowded | B. The number of visitors to a place exceeds its capacity, creating discomfort |
| 2. Environmental impact | A. Harmful effects on nature and ecosystems due to human activity |
| 3. Cultural heritage | G. The history, traditions, and cultural assets of a place |
| 4. Sustainable tourism | F. The act of visiting natural areas with an emphasis on conservation |
| 5. Overconsumption | D. Using resources in a way that leads to damage or depletion |
| 6. Local economy | E. The income and employment that comes from businesses in a local area |
| 7. Pollution | J. The release of harmful substances into the air, water, or land |
| 8. Ecotourism | C. Traveling in a way that protects the environment and supports local communities |
| 9. Destination | I. A place where people go for travel or leisure |
| 10. Regulations | H. Rules or laws that control or manage activities, especially tourism |

1B - 2A - 3G - 4F - 5D - 6E - 7J - 8C - 9I - 10H



Speaking

Look at the photos, what can you tell about them? Use the vocabulary from the previous exercise - the photos are located in a separate file, remember to download!

Reading

Complete the text with the words below.

issue influx decade limiting heritage travelling consequences
reliant reduces littering increased balance

Overtourism is an increasingly serious (1) issue in many of the world's most popular travel destinations. Cities such as Barcelona, Venice, and Kyoto have seen a rapid increase in the number of tourists over the past (2) decade. While tourism can bring significant economic benefits—such as job creation, local revenue, and increased business activity—it also has several negative effects on both local communities and the environment.

One of the major (3) consequences of overtourism is overcrowding. Popular destinations often experience so many visitors that local streets, public transportation, and tourist attractions become overcrowded and uncomfortable for both tourists and residents. This not only (4) reduces the enjoyment of the visit but also causes stress on the local population. The (5) influx of tourists can lead to longer waiting times, higher prices for goods and services, and a general decrease in the quality of life for locals.

Additionally, the environmental impact of overtourism cannot be ignored. The rise in visitor numbers often results in (6) increased pollution, particularly plastic waste, left behind by tourists. In natural areas, such as national parks or beaches, pollution and human activities like (7) littering and overuse of resources can damage ecosystems and wildlife habitats. Many locations are not equipped to handle the waste and increased demand for water, electricity, and food, which puts additional strain on the environment.



Reading

Cultural (8) heritage is also threatened by overtourism. As tourism becomes a dominant industry, there is a risk that traditional cultures and practices may be altered or lost in an effort to cater to the expectations of foreign visitors. Local customs may be commercialized, and historic sites can be damaged by large numbers of visitors who may not respect the preservation efforts. In some places, the local economy becomes so (9) reliant on tourism that if visitor numbers decrease or the industry faces a crisis (such as an economic downturn or global pandemic), the entire area can suffer.

To mitigate the negative impacts of overtourism, many cities and rural areas are embracing sustainable tourism practices. These practices aim to (10) balance the benefits of tourism with the need to protect the environment and respect local communities. Some destinations are focusing on promoting less-visited areas, encouraging off-peak travel, and offering incentives to tourists who visit during quieter times. In some cases, cities are (11) limiting the number of tourists who can visit specific sites at any given time. Ecotourism, which focuses on nature conservation and supporting local communities, is also gaining traction as a more responsible way of (12) travelling.

In conclusion, while tourism brings many advantages, overtourism can have far-reaching negative effects on both the places people visit and the people who live there. By supporting sustainable tourism and making responsible choices, tourists can enjoy travel while helping to protect the environment and preserve cultural heritage.



Comprehension

True or False? Read the statements and decide if they are true or false.

1. Overtourism only happens in major tourist cities. - FALSE
2. Overcrowding can create a negative experience for both tourists and locals. - TRUE
3. Pollution from tourism only affects the ocean, not the land.- FALSE
4. Overtourism can have a positive impact on local culture. - FALSE
5. Cities affected by overtourism often have stronger local economies. - FALSE
6. Ecotourism focuses on supporting traditional tourism practices. - FALSE
7. Sustainable tourism involves reducing the number of visitors to a destination. - TRUE
8. Overtourism does not affect the natural environment in rural areas. - FALSE
9. The tourism industry's dependence on mass visitors can lead to economic problems.- TRUE
10. Ecotourism encourages respect for local cultures and nature conservation.- TRUE

Speaking

Discuss in pairs, groups of three or as a whole class.

1. Overtourism is damaging our cities and the environment.
2. The local economy can become too dependent on tourism, which is dangerous.
3. Tourists should only visit popular destinations if they are willing to follow strict rules to protect the area.
4. Ecotourism is the future of travel.
5. It is unfair for tourists to expect to find traditional cultures unchanged when they visit a destination.
6. Responsible tourism means avoiding crowded areas and supporting less-visited locations.
7. Governments should set strict limits on the number of tourists allowed in certain cities.
8. Tourism helps to preserve local traditions and cultural heritage.
9. Sustainable tourism means visiting places without harming the environment or local communities.
10. Tourists should be educated about the impact of their travel on the planet.