

How can you make your holiday zero-waste?



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With sustainability the buzzword of the year and waste high on most people's list of 'must get rid of NOW' with so many of us 'Kondo-ing' our homes asking every inanimate object if it sparks joy. But going green, going zero waste? It's not simple.

And when it comes to travel, being green is even less so. Convenience, stress, packing restrictions and the inevitability of succumbing to airplane regulations mean you can't bring your at-home zero waste kit with you. Your low-impact comfort blanket is ripped off, so to speak.

You might be asking why going zero waste when you travel is even important. Well, while we know the impact our actions make at home, it varies from country to country. Sustainability Blogger and YouTuber Lottie explains that, "Many countries less sophisticated recycling infrastructures than we (Westerners) do. Often, these are the most vulnerable areas, that can't cope with the amount of plastic used and thrown away on a daily basis."

So attempting to leave only footprints when you travel is an endeavour worth pursuing. I've done it a few times now, with moderate success managing to stay pretty true to my zero waste values.

If you're keen to do the same, read on to discover the best tips to have a zero waste holiday.

Prepare: do your research ahead of schedule

Preparation is always key but never more so than if you have removed the variable of 'just in case' and that of buying anything you've potentially forgotten at the airport.

Think about where you're going first; if it's somewhere you can easily refill what you need you are luckier than most. If not, then what will the weather be like each day? What will you be doing; swimming, perhaps or bar-hopping? Think about the actual essentials you'll need each day and write a list.

Do your research ahead of schedule and find out about the best zero waste spots in your destination, you might be surprised to find a local bulk store or zero waste restaurant, for example. If not, things like food markets are always a great place to find waste free supplies. And you can utilise local Facebook groups or crowdsource on Twitter to help you find zero-waste hidden gems too.

Go paperless and invest in reusables

I like to travel carry-on only although that isn't always achievable. However there are some quick wins when it comes to travelling zero waste. Ensuring everything you take is digital as opposed to paper is a super easy zero-waste win and almost every airline has its own app to help you ditch paper when you travel. And many other forms of public transport accept e-tickets too, particularly in cities. So you can ditch the printed tickets for good. But don't forget your passport!

Make a zero waste kit

Make a zero waste kit with things like reusable napkins, straws, containers and cutlery to avoid any single-use plastic you'll undoubtedly encounter. Take a reusable water bottle and coffee cup so you can stay caffeinated AND hydrated while you travel. Luxury travel writer Jailan Yehia, who covers stylish travel on her blog [Savoir There](#) shares her best

tips to avoid excess waste when she travels. She says, “I do two things that are obvious, but help a lot: I carry a metal straw in my travel wallet as well as a totally *leakproof* travel mug. It’s extremely rare for me to have to buy plastic bottles on a journey now.”

Liquid or solid?

Don’t succumb to the miniature aisle of your local drug store where those super-cute miniature toiletries live. Instead, invest in some silicone tubes and tubs and decant your full-size beauty products into them. And ditch liquid where you can: I take solid soap, shampoo, conditioner, face wash, serum and deodorant with me, all bought from [Lush](#) and [Earth Conscious](#) but have found solid options on Amazon too.

Get the best gear

Zero waste subscription box [UNWRPD](#) make sustainability easy with their selection of plastic-free, eco products from bamboo cotton buds and reusable make-up pads to travel essentials like metal straws and soap pouches perfect for travelling. If you’re a budding travel photographer [Mobiles.co.uk](#) has created a series of templates for smartphone accessories, such as a tripod and charging cradle, which can be created entirely out of recycled cardboard. Best of all, you can recycle them when you’re finished!

Reducing your carbon impact

Ultimately, you are going on holiday to relax. If you’re flying you’ve added to your carbon footprint, so try to make every decision you make as conscious and sustainable as possible throughout your holiday.

And a note on reducing your carbon impact: [Blogger Sophie Davies](#) has a great tip to leave only footprints when you travel, “Purchasing carbon offsets will make your trip more eco-friendly. It won't undo the damage travel can cause but it does help to protect our planet.” You can do this through companies like [Terrapass](#) and some airlines are now starting to give you the option to do so when you book your flight.

But don’t forget you are allowed to slip up and make mistakes; in fact, it’s more likely you will create some waste than none at all so don’t stress! Prepare, pack like a pro and enjoy your vacation.

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