

Ecotourism: See the World While Saving It Imagine vacationing in a place of stunning, natural beauty."Getting there took four hours by bus along an unpaved road. But it was so beautiful that it was worth it. We hiked the trails and took a tour through the rain forest canopy. Our guide showed us how to poke a stick into a termite nest to get a snack (They have a nutty flavor!), and how to use live leaf-cutter ants to create stitches for a cut. It was quite an amazing experience!"Picture yourself relaxing on a pristine beach in Belize, exploring the desert on a camel in Dubai, or following lions and zebras in Kenya.As visitors explore an area, they also learn about it. o It provides an economic incentive to preserve the environment and raises money to help protect it. o It creates financial opportunities and jobs for the local population.She stayed in locally-owned, environmentally-friendly hotels that grow their own fruits and vegetables, and use renewable sources of energy such as wind and solar power."We wanted to explore a country that was largely unspoiled by development. And, boy, did we get what we were looking for. We saw beautiful beaches, lush rain forest, and exotic wildlife."Undoubtedly, ecotourism plays a critical role in preserving the land in Costa Rica as well as in other ecotourism destinations around the globe.o Ecotourism destinations focus on recycling, water conservation, and using renewable energy sources.Stacy Davison is one of the million-plus tourists who chose to visit Costa Rica this year.Stacy is especially enthusiastic about a wildlife refuge she and her husband visited during their trip.Now imagine that while enjoying these experiences, you are also helping to preserve the environment, protect wildlife, and support local communities.At one time, Costa Rica had the highest rate of deforestation in all of Latin America.Costa Rica is now the world's top ecotourism destination.At the same time, ecotourism provides visitors with a unique, unforgettable, and educational vacation.Such vacations are part of the fastest growing trend in the travel industry.While ecotourism was almost unheard of before the 1990s, it has quickly become a multi-billion dollar industry.These are some of its characteristics: o It involves travel to natural, often remote, destinations.o It builds environmental awareness.Costa Rica was one of the first ecotourism success stories.However, since ecotourism, there has been a dramatic reduction in deforestation.Basically, ecotourism is a win-win situation for both the tourists and the countries they visit.The trend is called ecotourism.These are often protected areas where development is limited.Now, more than a quarter of Costa Rica's land is protected from development.Stacy also enjoyed knowing that the money she was spending on her vacation was being used in environmentally responsible ways.Sound too good to be true?It isn't!But what exactly is ?ecotourism