



Sustainable Guiding and Tour Leadership Policy

Purpose

As a responsible and sustainable tour operator, ACME Voyages ensures that all tour leaders, guides, and representatives deliver accurate, respectful, and sustainability-oriented information to travelers.

This policy outlines the responsibilities and ethical standards that must be followed before, during, and after each tour.

It aims to minimize environmental and cultural impact, protect local communities and biodiversity, and enhance travelers' understanding of responsible tourism.

1. Before the Tour

Our guides and tour leaders are required to:

- **Promote eco-friendly transportation:**
Encourage travelers to use sustainable means of transport (walking, cycling, shared transport, or public transit) whenever possible within cities. Provide clear directions to meeting points to avoid unnecessary transfers or fuel usage.
- **Encourage reduction of single-use plastics:**
Inform travelers about the potable water situation in India and recommend the use of reusable water bottles, refill stations, or portable filters. When bottled water is unavoidable, ensure that bottles are collected and recycled.
- **Advise on dress code and cultural sensitivity:**
Provide guidance on appropriate clothing when visiting religious or traditional sites (e.g., temples, mosques, gurdwaras, and rural villages). This helps travelers show respect for local customs.
- **Inform about photography rules and privacy:**
Communicate the company's photography policy—travellers must always ask

for permission before photographing local people, especially in villages, markets, and cultural or religious ceremonies. Highlight restricted areas where photography is prohibited (e.g., inside temples, museums, or military zones).

2. During the Tour

Guides and tour leaders must actively help travelers engage responsibly and respectfully in the destinations they visit.

They will:

- **Encourage responsible behavior:**
Remind guests of local regulations such as smoking restrictions, noise control, and proper waste disposal. Explain simple ways to minimize their environmental footprint (e.g., walking on designated paths, conserving water and energy).
- **Support cultural exchange and learning:**
Introduce basic local language phrases (e.g., greetings in Hindi or regional dialects) to enhance guest interaction with locals.
- **Promote community support:**
Recommend local businesses, cooperatives, or artisans for dining, shopping, or craft purchases. Encourage visits to social enterprises, vocational restaurants, and women's self-help groups to ensure tourism benefits the local economy.
- **Raise awareness on health and safety:**
Inform guests about local health conditions, water safety, common scams, and areas where extra caution is needed.
- **Discourage illegal or unethical practices:**
Firmly prohibit guide or guest participation in commercial sexual activities, illegal drug use, or wildlife trafficking.
Educate guests about avoiding the purchase of products made from endangered flora or fauna, ivory, coral, or animal skins.
- **Promote waste management and recycling:**
Share information about local recycling rules and where guests can refill

water bottles or properly dispose of waste.

Remind travelers to leave natural areas as they found them—no littering, no picking plants, and no feeding wildlife.

- **Provide interpretation and education:**

Offer insightful explanations about natural, cultural, and historical sites, emphasizing their significance and the importance of protecting them.

Example sites include:

- **Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri, and Red Fort (Agra)** - cultural sensitivity and photography rules.
- **Ranthambore National Park** - wildlife viewing ethics, maintaining safe distance, no littering or loud noise.
- **Udaipur and Jaipur heritage sites** - guidance on respectful interaction with locals and artisans.
- **Rishikesh and Varanasi ghats** - respect for religious rituals, dress code, and no photography during prayers.

3. After the Tour

At the end of each trip, guides are required to:

- **Collect responsible travel feedback:**

Ask travelers for feedback specifically on the sustainability aspects of the tour — what they learned, how responsible practices were implemented, and any improvements they suggest.

- **Fulfill all commitments made during the tour:**

Ensure that any promised photos, contact information, or recommendations are shared promptly after the trip.

- **Communicate transparency in impact:**

When applicable, explain how a portion of their payment supports community projects, environmental initiatives, or carbon offset programs promoted by ACME Voyages.

- **Maintain post-trip engagement:**
Provide travelers with suggestions for continued responsible action, such as donating to verified local NGOs, supporting fair-trade cooperatives online, or sharing responsible travel tips with others.

4. Training and Accountability

- All guides and tour leaders contracted by ACME Voyages undergo periodic sustainability and ethical tourism training.
- Compliance with this policy is mandatory, and adherence is verified through guide performance evaluations, traveler feedback, and internal audits.
- Any breach of ethical or sustainability standards may result in disciplinary action or termination of contract.

Conclusion

Through this policy, ACME Voyages ensures that every tour is conducted in a manner that is environmentally responsible, culturally respectful, and socially beneficial.

Our guides and tour leaders serve not only as travel facilitators but as ambassadors of sustainable and responsible tourism in India.