



## Responsible Travel Policy

### Policy aims

Our photography courses and holidays are aimed at photography enthusiasts of all levels of ability and experience who love discovering new photographic opportunities and exploring new cultures in authentic settings, while being fully supported and guided throughout their journey by two professional UK photographers, fully familiar with the locations we travel to, and full-time local guides to support the group with culture, travel, language and every day needs.

Our ethos is to embrace and promote authentic and responsible travel practices that provide our customers with unique and memorable experiences immersing in authentic local customs and cultures, while implicitly and actively supporting local independent and family businesses and local economies, protecting and preserving the environment and raising social awareness through travel practices as well as photography imagery and projects.

### Economic responsibility

Being a small family business ourselves, living in a UK town renowned for its 'shop local' ethos and independent businesses, we are keen supporters of local, independent, family-run businesses, and we apply this ethos across our entire business, including and especially our photography tours. We choose accommodation that is either family-run or independent, we employ a local guide as well as a local driver and independent transportation, and always paying fair fees for the services we receive.

In the UK, we are supporters of local charities and we often run sales where a percentage of our proceeds go to local charities. In the past, we have successfully raised money for the local church, for the Poppy Appeal and the British Heart Foundation. We aim to work with different charities every year and give back to the community whenever and however we can.

Whenever we travel we purchase our gifts and souvenirs from family businesses, local markets as well as organised local charities promoting welfare of local residents and we never haggle! While doing so, we are very mindful not to inadvertently encourage child labour, as we believe all children should be in schools, not selling on the streets, as hard as the realities on the ground may be. We encourage our photography tour participants to adopt the same practices. This is embedded in our tour structure where we aim to stay and eat local, visit local markets and stay in family-run accommodation.



Studio and Gallery. 82 High Street, Whitstable. KENT. CT5 1AZ

Telephone: 07950 481728

[info@lightandimagination.com](mailto:info@lightandimagination.com)

[www.lightandimagination.com](http://www.lightandimagination.com)

Policy Date: 27/04/2017



### Environmental responsibility

In the UK, where we have a gallery, studio and training facility, we recycle as much as we can, including recycling our waste, reusing packaging for frames and supplies, making our own studio props wherever possible with purchases from local charities, donating to local charities anything that we may no longer require. We walk to work and cycle locally as much as we can, and take public transport whenever feasible instead of using our own car.

We offer a limited number of photography tours each year and we have a maximum group size of 10, thus keeping the environmental impact of international flights to a minimum. We don't include flights in our packages to allow participants all over the world to make the best and most cost and environmentally effective travel arrangements for themselves (e.g. combining with other trips planned in the same area).

Our China trip includes two locations that are both UNESCO-protected sites, one a national park and one a historic ancient town centre, both ticketed for access, and we include these fees in our tour price, thus contributing to their preservation and maintenance. As photographers of many genres including wildlife, we only work with what's presented to us and we highly discourage any intrusive interaction with animals to provoke a reaction, which we consider an unethical and unfair practice. We guide our students to adopt the same policy.

### Social responsibility

It is our ethos to only organise tours that actively promote local culture and seek authentic locations, often off-the-beaten track, and which benefit local communities inasmuch as possible. We have personally spent a lot of time in the locations that we are offering and are well aware of cultural and social norms or sensitivities, which we make our customers aware of as needed.

For every tour we run we employ a local guide, for the whole duration of the tour, to assist with any language, social and cultural information, as well as offer first-hand local knowledge and thus raising awareness of culture and customs. We actively encourage staying, eating and shopping local, and not using international chains, and we arrange all accommodation, travel and meals accordingly and directly at source inasmuch as possible, to maximise value for both our customers and local providers.

While encouraging our customers to be creative and always seek new points of view and ways of creating images, we actively discourage practicing photography that is too intrusive to either people, nature and wildlife, or which depicts social situations in a way that is derogative, insensitive or offensive.



Studio and Gallery. 82 High Street, Whitstable. KENT. CT5 1AZ

Telephone: 07950 481728

[info@lightandimagination.com](mailto:info@lightandimagination.com)

[www.lightandimagination.com](http://www.lightandimagination.com)

Policy Date: 27/04/2017