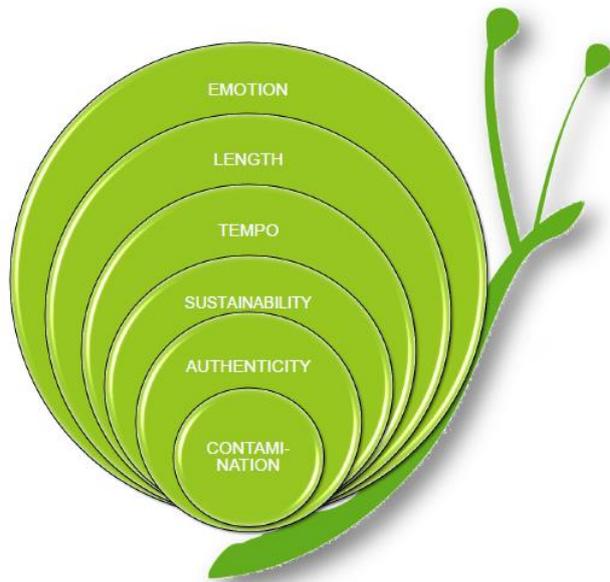


What is slow tourism?



At the very basics, slow tourism is the connection between **sustainability** and **tourism**. It's about taking time to get to places and taking the time to explore those places.

The Italian Association of Slow Tourism puts it like this:

“Slow tourism invites travellers to tourism at a reduced pace; one that is sustainable and responsible, and to discover new destinations while respecting them. It invites tourists to get to know places, to live and “taste” them while at the same time promoting their protection as patrimonies of inestimable worth, as a richness to be safeguarded for our common wellbeing.”

Slow tourism stems from the **slow food** movement which also originated in Italy.

Slow food is all about local food and traditional cooking. It's the antidote to fast food. It's about taking time to cook and eat. Slow food focusses on sustainable food sources and local businesses and is, therefore, the opposite to uniform global agriculture.

Slow tourism comes hand in hand with other **slow movements** such as Slow Cities, Slow Money, Slow Education, Slow Schools, Slow Books, Slow Living.

The idea which underlies all of these movements is to **slow down** and **reduce the speed of modern life and consumption**. It's about **making a connection**. Slow tourism doesn't ask you to visit as many places as possible in a short time span but do the opposite and take your time to explore a place, get to know the locals, and eat local food.



Why should you care?

'Normal' tourism plays an important role in many economies around the globe. The problem is, however, that all too often are locals and their environment negatively impacted by crowds of tourists visiting their homes.

Just take **Venice** and **Barcelona** which have both declared to reduce their number of visitors per year.

Slow tourism, however, is not about Instagram-worthy pictures in the major tourist posts but about the local beauty to be found when you look **closely**. It's about **experiencing the place you are visiting** and choosing **slow forms of transport** and **eating local foods**.

The journey itself becomes the goal of a trip and not the destination.

The advantage of slow tourism is that it offers the perspective of a local rather than that of a tourist. And it's about being responsible as a traveller.

Slow tourism offers the possibility to use a variety of forms of transport, from **horse carts** to **houseboats**. The idea is to **reduce carbon emissions** through slow forms of transport. **Tourism itself has a high carbon footprint**, so slow tourism urges everyone to reduce their prints as much as possible.



How to go about it?

The most important part of slow tourism is to **take your time**. Stay in one place for **at least one week**. Travel as local as possible, so no cars or planes and **only local buses**.

Try to avoid large hotels and rather book in at a small Bed and Breakfast, houses, cottages, apartments. Sometimes you can find small family-run holiday accommodations which are perfect to connect with locals.

During your holiday you should try to cook for yourself at least a couple of times and with that explore the local food culture at a market. Eating out should be limited to small places. Ask for recommendations of your hosts.

And finally, embrace the unexpected. Become an explorer and be open to **new adventures**. Stay safe and live like a local for the time you are on holiday.

a) *Answer the following questions.*

- 1) Why is time a key concept for a slow tourism approach?
- 2) How can tourism be 'slow'?
- 3) Making a connection with local communities is another essential aspect. Explain why.
- 4) Explain how slow tourism reduces the impact on the environment.
- 5) What type of accommodation is generally offered by slow tourism operators?

b) *Think of a slogan to promote a slow tourism package.*

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c) *Draw a mind map to describe slow tourism.*



d) *Introduce slow tourism to the rest of the class.*