



Global Sustainable Tourism Council

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#GSTC2026

# Slow Travel

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[gstc.org](http://gstc.org)

# What Slow Travel Means...

- Travelers stay longer and move at a slower pace to avoid rushing through destinations
- They often choose walking, cycling, and other lower impact ways to explore
- The experience places greater emphasis on local culture, food, and community connection

**Longer Stays Promote Sustainable Tourism**



# Impact of Slow Travel: Key Environmental and Economic Benefits



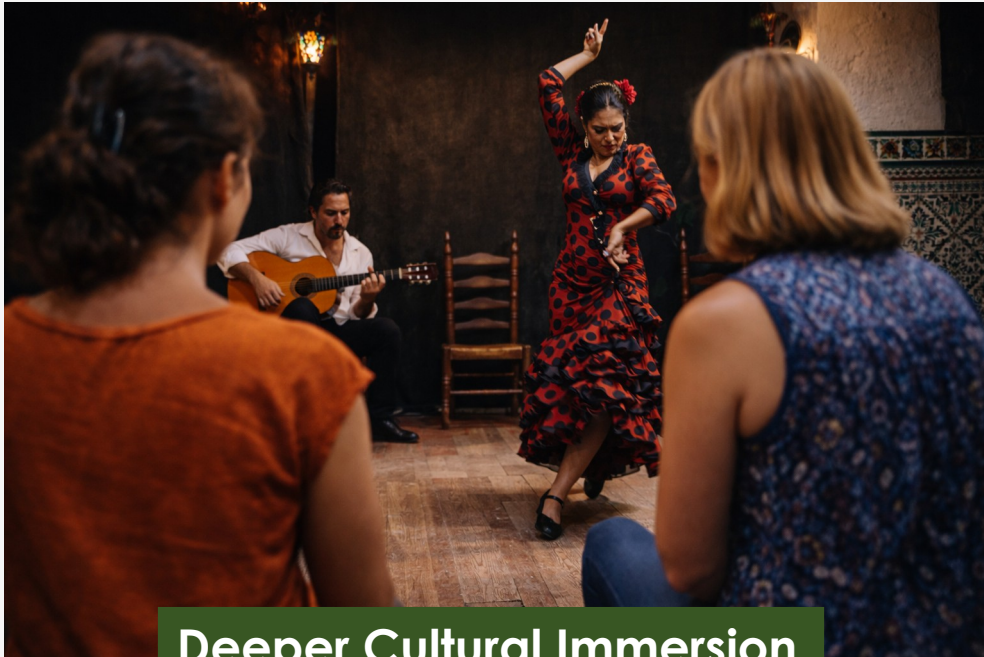
[Image: Portofino, Italy by Elijah Cobb, Pexels]

**Reduced Carbon Footprint:** Fewer, longer trips reduce air miles, which constitute a significant portion of a trip's total carbon emissions.

**Better Resource Management:** Longer stays, especially off-season, ease pressure on resources like water and energy, reducing waste and supporting stable, year-round employment.

**Local Economic Support:** Visitors stay longer and spend more on local experiences, food, and transport, rather than just large corporate attractions, fostering better economic distribution.

# Impact of Slow Travel: Cultural and Personal Benefits



**Deeper Cultural Immersion**

Slow travel allows you to immerse yourself more fully in authentic local cultures and understand a different way of living, it enables you to build relationships, understand the customs, and connect with the community on a deeper level.



**Reduced Over-tourism**

Longer, well-distributed stays reduce the intensity of overcrowding in major hotspots, reducing strain on local infrastructure and improving the experience for both residents and visitors.

# Drivers Behind the Shift



**Work-from-Anywhere**



**Authentic experiences**



**Enhanced well-being**



# How Hotels and Tourism Businesses Respond?

- **Offering slow travel packages**
- **Long-term stay facilities**
- **Highlight local culture and cuisine**
- **Facilitate meaningful experiences**
- **Provide information and resources**
- **Transportation options**
- **Support sustainability initiatives**



# How to Promote Secondary Destinations?

- **Use digital storytelling and influencers** to showcase authentic, visually engaging experiences.
- **Define clear USPs** such as 'hidden gems', fewer crowds, lower costs, eco-tourism, or immersive local culture.
- **Encourage user-generated content (UGC)** to build trust and amplify authentic visitor perspectives.
- **Create strategic partnerships** with local businesses, artists, and transport providers to develop attractive packages and itineraries.
- **Promote “second city” advantages** by positioning destinations as more local, accessible, and less crowded alternatives.
- **Invest in infrastructure and product diversification** to support year-round tourism and reduce seasonality.
- **Use geo-targeted ads and event marketing** to redirect visitors and attract niche audiences.
- **Develop strong visual assets and virtual experiences** through high-quality imagery, video, and interactive websites.
- **Engage local communities** so residents become authentic ambassadors of the destination.

