



EARTHCHECK

Earth Check Silver Certification

The RIA has recently acquired EarthCheck Silver Certification. EarthCheck is a specialist organisation that assists businesses, communities and governments in their efforts to protect and enhance the environmental, economic and social sustainability of their tourism initiatives. EarthCheck Certified is by far the tourism industry's most scientifically rigorous benchmarking program and data is verified by independent third party auditors. Progress and performance is continually tracked and measured against personal targets, best practice region baseline and the performance of world-wide communities.

To achieve EarthCheck Silver Certification, the RIA is required to have a sustainable policy in place and be implementing an environmental action plan for proper monitoring and measurements on ten key performance areas: greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency/conservation, freshwater and stormwater resources, ecosystem conservation, social and cultural policies, land use planning and management, air quality and noise control, wastewater management, solid waste management and environmentally harmful substances.

To achieve Silver certification an Environmental Management System based on the International Standard ISO 14001 and Earthcheck standards has been implemented. The two standards combined have created the EarthCheck Sustainability Management System (SMS). The SMS achieves the management system cycle of 'Plan, Do, Check, Act', a process of continuous improvement, aimed at improving business and environmental performance. A key component of this involves the identification of environmental risks and impacts associated with all activities on Rottneest Island, and the development of an Environmental Action Plan to address these.

EarthCheck's three-tiered rating of Bronze, Silver and Gold status is premised on the belief that effective benchmarking over time puts rigor and transparency into business processes, benefitting all stakeholders in the long term. EarthCheck's benchmarking allows the RIA to measure ourselves against global industry standards.

For EarthCheck, you have to certify silver for 5 years in a row and then you get gold, five more years moves you to platinum. The RIA has benchmarked with EarthCheck every year since 2011 for Bronze. 2016 will be year two with Silver Certification, so we are aiming to achieve gold certification in 2020.

Early 2016, an article was published in the Financial Review 'Rottneest Island and nine other destinations where you can tread lightly in 2016' and saw Rottneest recognised as one of Australia's best managed eco-tourism environments, based on EarthCheck data.

<http://earthcheck.org/>



Ecotourism Australia ECO Certification

The ECO Certification program assures travellers that certified products are backed by a strong, well-managed commitment to sustainable practices and provides high quality nature-based tourism experiences. The ECO Certification Program is a world first and it has been developed to address the need to identify genuine nature and ecotourism operators. The RIA have attained Advanced Ecotourism level of certification, which means 75% of our tourism products have strong interpretation values, commitment to nature conservation and helping local communities.

<http://www.ecotourism.org.au/eco-experiences/green-travel-guide/rotnneest-island-authority>



Global Sustainable Tourism Council Accreditation

As the EcoTourism Australia Eco Certification program is using Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) recognised standards and is following processes and procedures that have been reviewed and approved by the GSTC, the RIA automatically qualifies to be able to use the GSTC Accredited logo (tick).

The GSTC are an independent body that establishes and manages global standards for sustainability in travel and tourism with the aim of increasing sustainable tourism knowledge and practices. To be able to use the tick, certification procedures must largely meet international standards for transparency, impartiality, and competence.

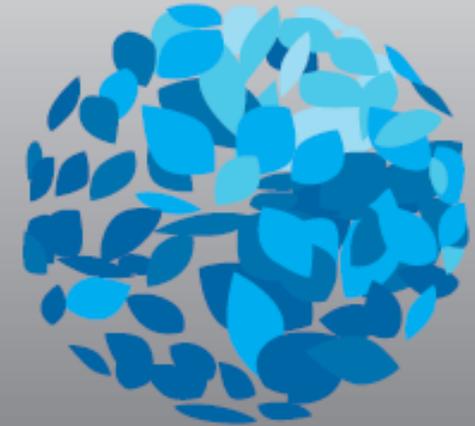
<https://www.gstcouncil.org/en/>

2015

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

ROTTNEST ISLAND

HAS BEEN ASSESSED AS MEETING SILVER CERTIFICATION (1 YEAR)
REQUIREMENTS OF THE EARTHCHECK COMPANY STANDARD
PRECINCT



EARTHCHECK
SILVER CERTIFIED


CHAIRMAN

ACHIEVEMENT DATE: 23 NOVEMBER 2015

www.earthcheck.org

the planet deserves more than half measures

Rottnest Island and nine other destinations where you can tread lightly in 2016



Rottnest Island, WA, is recognised as one of Australia's best-managed ecotourism environments.
by **Carla Adams**

"If the environmental footprint made by the world tourism industry was compared to the footprint of a country, tourism would be the fifth-biggest polluter worldwide," says Stewart Moore, chief executive of EarthCheck, an Australian-based organisation working with resorts and destinations, including Banyan Tree Lijiang in China, Western Australia's Rottnest Island and Iceland's Snæfellsnes Peninsula, to help them reduce their impact on the environment.

EarthCheck (earthcheck.org) was established in 1987 and operates the non-profit EarthCheck Research Institute, which reports on climate change and the sustainability of the global tourism industry; it also has a certification program that measures and manages the environmental footprint of hotels and destinations in more than 70 countries. Make 2016 the year you resolve to touch the earth lightly – starting with these 10 inspiring suggestions.

1. Eco-island in WA

[Rottnest Island's](#) abundant protected flora, marine life and wildlife include the protected and very cute quokka – a small nocturnal macropod. At sea, humpback and southern right whales linger and bottlenose dolphins nose around Salmon Bay. By contrast, inland salt lakes on the Wadjemup Walk Trail are remarkable ecosystems to explore.

Green cred: Recognised as one of Australia's best-managed ecotourism environments, Rottnest Island introduced Western Australia's first public place recycling program. Recently, a desalination plant has reduced the annual drain on the Wadjemup Aquifer by 75 per cent; a glass crusher on the island processes bottles into sand for building pathways and a new reusable coffee cup initiative rewards visitors for avoiding "throwaways". The island's golf course will soon switch to 100 per cent recycled water irrigation. rotnnestisland.com

2. Chilled out in Chile

[EcoCamp Patagonia](#) is famous with the younger, more responsible travelling crowd: those likely to start the day with yoga and end it with a blog post (through which they are often funding a life of continuous travel!). Situated in the midst of Chile's majestic Torres del Paine National Park, the futuristic-looking eco-domes mimic portable dwellings built by the region's 15th century Kaweskar tribe, although animal skin and branch construction has been updated with modern insulating fabrics which capture passive heat and light.

Green cred: State-of-the-art composting toilets and modern, low emission wood stoves create warm, comfortable living and communal spaces. Solar panels and a micro-hydro turbine take care of the modest energy and heat required to keep guests content. Chilean cuisine and wine takes care of the rest, [ecocamp.travel](#)

3. Chinese poetry

In a location as poetic in reality as it is on paper, [Banyan Tree Lijiang](#) sits at the foot of the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in western China's Yunnan province. Paying architectural homage to the region's ethnic Naxi Kingdom style, villas with mountain and lake views are linked by waterways and cobblestone paths (all leading to the resort's den of pleasure, its Eastern-inspired day spa). Local artisan wares in nearby Shuhe and Baishan old towns, trail tours, bike rides and visits to indigenous tribes living by Lashi Lake offer unforgettable cultural experiences.

Green cred: Banyan Tree Lijiang limits resource use, including waste production. Rainwater collection, eco-friendly bathroom facilities and maintenance save three Olympic swimming pools of water annually. Eco-lighting and temperature control save energy, while recycled linen bags are used for sorting and recycling (plastic bags are banned). The Banyan Tree Foundation mentors young people, supports environmental research, educates guests and minimises environmental impact. [banyantree.com/en](#)

4. In Iceland, it's pronounced cool

Mastering the correct pronunciation of Öraefajökull glacier, Seyðisfjörður creative hub, or Eyjafjarðarsveit valley is just one of the many joys of visiting this remote and [pristine country](#), where nature is on permanent hyper-display. Iceland's best eco-experiences are of the outdoors, adventurous type; the midsummer midnight sun allows for more bike riding, mountain running, horse riding and whale watching than you'd cram into 24 hours anywhere else. In winter, northern lights, surreal-looking glaciers, natural geothermal hot water beaches (volcanically heated) and idyllic highlands beckon. [Ion Luxury Adventure Hotel](#) has been sustainably transformed from abandoned inn to indulgent base from which to explore the volcanic wonder-landscape of Mount Hengill, or the self-assured sophistication of Reykjavik, less than an hour away.

Green cred: Iceland's commitment to sustainable tourism development is across the tiny nation with a population just shy of 330 000. Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson recently inaugurated the world's first [carbon-free whale-watching tour](#), North Sailing Husavik, aboard a fleet of restored oak sailing vessels. On Snæfellsnes Peninsula, one of EarthCheck's leading destinations of the world, 95 per cent of businesses have signed a no plastic bag pledge, geothermal water is used for heating and the entire community is engaged in sustainability education and action. Offset your Icelandic holiday-generated carbon emissions using the [Iceland Carbon Fund Kolviður](#) website. For more, see: [kolvidur.is](#); [visiticeland.com](#); [ionicealand.com](#); [northsailing.is](#)

5. Sweet silenzio in Italy

At 1500 metres above sea level, via the Monte San Vigilio cable car in the northernmost province of northern Italy, lies a place of natural mineral springs, clear alpine air and perfect silence. The pristine and peaceful beauty of [Vigilius Mountain Resort](#) in South Tyrol, an autonomous region where Italy and Austria collide, grew out of a considered approach to sustainable tourism. Architect Matteo Thun's vision of a giant tree lying on its side has been realised in wood and triple-glazed glass, with internal clay and stone walls conducting and storing heat to regulate the inside temperature. Outside, an enchanting mountain forest is perfect for walks in summer and skiing in winter.

Green cred: Proudly "eco-aggressive", Vigilius Mountain Resort is part of Design Hotels group. Sustainable measures include a waterfall-powered hydro-plant supplying endless green energy. Guests barely notice the impact of efficient use of water, paper and electricity, but they do spot the delicious results of local ingredients and regional flavours in the multi-award-winning Restaurant 1500, [vigilius.it/en](#)

6. Sustainable African safari

Travel sustainably through parts of Zambia, Namibia and Botswana on the Great African River Safari by [Natural Habitat Adventures](#) with a private naturalist guide. Roam from Victoria Falls along the Chobe by luxury riverboat, stay in small luxury camps within private game reserves on the banks of the Zambezi River, and venture onto exclusive Hunda Island, where the 130,000-hectare Selinda Reserve is home to herds of protected big game including lion, elephant and buffalo.

Green cred: [Natural Habitat Adventures](#) is the official international travel partner of World Wildlife Fund. Committed to conservation, it helps local communities recognise and access the long-term value of protecting their natural resources and wildlife – a refreshing alternative to mass tourism for discerning travellers. [nathab.com](#)

7. Viva verde in Brazil

The [Green Passport program](#) will encourage the 400,000-plus tourists expected to hit Rio de Janeiro for the [Olympics and Paralympics in August](#) to become green tourists. As they make their way on a green route through the city using a smartphone app, they can identify "preserved nature", "traditional culture", "local cuisine" and "authentic experiences". Further afield, in the Amazon region, eco-lodges and green hotels flourish, including [Ariau Amazon Towers Hotel](#), [Barranco Alto Eco-Lodge](#) and [Kiaroa Eco-Luxury Resort](#).

Green cred: The Rio 2016 Green Passport campaign is a partnership that includes the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), and the Brazilian Ministries of Environment and Tourism. It takes up from where the 2014 World Cup passport left off. [rio2016.com/en](#); [passaporteverde.org.br/en](#);

8. Daintree simplicity

Queensland's [Daintree Wilderness Lodge](#) continues to attract earth-conscious travellers from around the globe. Elegant, simple cabins are isolated and Wi-Fi-free, creating tranquil environments from which to contemplate the magic of the world's oldest rainforest. Don't forget to leave your chemical-laden grooming products at home: the water waste system relies on bacteria to break down disposal from showers, toilets and sinks. Just enjoy the supplied Appelles environmentally-friendly toiletries.

Green cred: Natural timber cabins built above the ground help preserve the life cycle of the rainforest floor and its inhabitants. You'll leave with a renewed commitment to sustainable practices in everyday life, [daintreewildernesslodge.com.au](#)

9. Queensland by foot

A green escape west of the Gold Coast and less than two hours' drive south-west from Brisbane, the [Scenic Rim Trail by Spicers Retreats](#) is no bush bash. This four-day hike of natural discovery and relaxed luxury offers an expertly guided tour of the Scenic Rim region, and traverses both a 2000 hectare private nature refuge and the World Heritage-listed Main Range National Park. You can peer down into Fassifern Valley and ascend the peak of Mount Mitchell, an extinct volcano.

Green cred: Carbon-neutral [Canopy Eco Lodge](#) is self-sufficient: solar-powered, rainwater-fed and built with minimum interruption to the flora and fauna of the area. The stunning eco-tents feature pristine bed linen, cosy mohair blankets and, yes, hot water showers. Sleep easy after dining on a locally sourced organic meal, [spicersretreats.com/spicers-canopy](#)

10. Green New Zealand

[Kaikoura](#), a small town midway between Christchurch and Picton on New Zealand's South Island, has a big claim to fame. Its 4000-strong community is New Zealand's only and the southern hemisphere's first to attain EarthCheck Platinum Certification. Maintaining a policy of "zero waste to landfill" since 1998, the town's civic and commercial leaders co-operate to protect its marine ecosystem, tourism attractions and liveability.

Green cred: Solar street lights, promotion of walking and cycling, and ongoing energy efficiency initiatives are complemented by a Trees for Travellers project, which allows tourists to contribute to the green status of the town. Stay at the sustainably built and run [Hapuku Lodge and Treehouses](#), where a tree is planted for every guest night, [kaikoura.co.nz](#); [hapukulodge.com](#)

Read more: <http://www.afr.com/brand/sophisticated-traveller/tread-lightly-when-you-travel-in-2016-20151119-ql35s3#ixzz3z5EepSSU>