

Footprints

by Jessy James LaFleur / Berlin ITB - March 6th 2019
For TourCert

Take only memories, leave only footprints!

Like leaving footprints on a sandy beach, romantic surroundings, just you and me and our hands interlaced like jet streams of butterflies in the sky.

“Sigh” - the perfect Instagram-setting; green palm trees, coconuts and new horizons, the spitting image of a mounted catalogue-promise:

*Welcome to the perfect place on earth, not yet discovered:
One in a million, but not like a million others.*

Your dream destination;
a compensation for the long office hours, the long days without sunshine
with too many rain clouds.

Because you've paid for this! You've earned this!

You abstained from collecting the happiest memories throughout the entire year,
so when it comes to your one single month of freedom, you want the most glorious holidays.

You want that one special experience,
which can't be found on trip advisor and has never been mentioned on lonely planet.
You don't want to stay in boring hotel rooms, you prefer to rent AirBNBs or holiday flats.
Of course right in the center of every city, close to bars, nightlife and real people.
You want tourism, without being a tourist, you want the
Eiffel Tower, Great wall, London, Rome
Nepal, Tibet, Goa, Lisbon,
the Pyramids, Bali, the great Barrier Reef
...all to yourself and only to yourself

Because you've paid for this, you've earned this!

...for the one special experience, not much of course,
thank God for ryanair and easyjet.

City trips have never been easier:

Let's hop on board of a plane for the weekend, Baby!

Let's leave ecological footprints, which are not that ecological,
but hey, you've separated rubbish all year, so let's make an exception,
after all, it's your holiday.

Your dream destination!

That's what people want and that's what tour operators sell:

An impossible illusion, a fairy tale that turns into nightmares for residents and the environment.

So is this what we call globalisation or should we call it *"Ignorance on the highest possible level!"*

Take only memories, leave only footprints

And I'm sorry to say this, but touristic footprints are more like meteor strikes right through the middle of a million lives, destroying the only planet; Tourism - a catastrophe in disguise.

Take only memories, leave only footprints

2004, that's when KateUmwelt&Entwicklung and Tourism Watch decided that it was time for a change.

It was time to create better footprints, not on a sandy beach but in Stuttgart instead.

That's when CRS Tourism became the new lifeguard to save a part of this beautiful world from drowning and overcrowding.

From the “fox den” emerged Heinz Fuchs, a partner in crime, his vision:

Today Stuttgart and tomorrow the entire world!

Based in the south east of Germany, smart people started to believe in the change they could make.

This should be a wake-up call, they knew that things could be done in a different way.

We need new destinations, before dreams turn into irreversible consequences.

They knew that memories are made in the heart and by creating awareness, when people start seeing things from a different angle:

Not from the bottom line but from the bird's eye view.

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Do not wait to strike until the iron is hot, but make it hot by striking,

and while this climate in February is already hot enough,

Roland Streicher was burning with soulful motivation all year long.

2005 until 2008, ideas left Stuttgart to travel around Germany and Austria, slowly conquering the world,

and a tiny footprint left a big impression and more people started to join in.

This new destination was no longer about exploitation but about sustainability and sensitisation.

Congratulations on climbing the next big mountain:

It's 2009 by now and TourCert was officially founded.

We're still in Stuttgart, still recruiting new lifeguards, even though their names sound like villains from the new James Bond movie, coming soon to your chosen cinema:

Prof. Dr. Dagmar Lund-Durlacher

Dr. Christian Baumgartner

Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Strasdas

are not here to fight you, but to reach for the stars!

I know these guys sound incredibly epic

wait for *Günter Koschwitz* and *Angela Giraldo*, his better half and sidekick

One is missing though I'm afraid, but let's give him a few more minutes, because *Dr. Peter Zimmer* likes to be late.

It must have been fate, that all these people sat around the same idealistic bonfire, cooking up a storm to churn an entire economy ecologically in 2015.

And this tiny little *g* in *gGmbH* might look like a spelling failure, but it's more like a win over the growing capitalism, as it stands for non-profit, for charity and service to the public.

Service to the planet and with every little step you take, you can create the environment you would like to discover.

When you make a move in the right direction, others may follow.

Because every new piece of paper needs a compass and a fountain pen to turn into a map, and every travel squad needs guidance and a chief operator.

That one person that keeps the group together and always finds a way back to the base camp, someone like *Marco Giraldo*, someone who makes you trust in your own skills.

And if you book him today for your next getaway, he even comes with a human GPS, expert of all certified destinations, the perfect gear for any journey; *Martin Balas!*

But as we all know, the best trips never works out perfectly, there is no insurance, no guarantee. Catastrophes will happen and in this case, money was too tight too mention.

The financial plane nearly crashed on its way to new destinations,

but thankfully our lifeguards and their leader were saved by the federal ministry.

What an exceptional story, even followed by the Willy Scharnow price,
our lifeguards from Stuttgart were making history and luckily their footprints left not only memories
but marks on an entire industry.

The key word: *Certification!*

Let's show the world that we are making things differently.

Let's show the world that these collected souvenirs are actually milestones on a never ending
highway with high aims.

A roundtable where Human rights meet progression, moving from utopia to "Eco Trophea",
allowing evolution and restructure without destruction.

You have to take risks and allow the unexpected to happen,
this goes for life and every new dream destination:

Afrika, DomRep and Uganda, TourCert becomes Latina with all the fire inside its heart dancing
towards new awards, yes you are officially *outstanding* claims Study of Zenat.

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The best memories are made by using creativity and staying focused.

You may lose orientation sometimes, but your inner guide will never lose sight of your
vision

Welcome to the perfect place on earth, not yet discovered.

One in a million, but not like a million others:

Your belief! *A TourCertainty!*

You want that one special experience,

that can't be found on maps and has never been mentioned in guides before

You don't want to be rooted to the spot, you prefer to move more than ever before.

Of course with respect in the center of every city,

not supporting industries, but the real people.

You want lifetime experiences, without being ignorant

You want to make a change

Not only for yourself, but for the entire world!

"Travel for tomorrow!"

...and that's how tourism should always work.

Because you don't own this planet, you didn't earn this earth!

Take only memories, leave only footprints,

Building a family since 2004 and now we're hitting 2019

TourCert, you've come a long way, let's celebrate your success not only today,
but also in Summer on your next holiday.

Not on a sandy beach, in Lisbon or Prague

The next city trip goes to Stuttgart, the secret dream destination,

where the footprints once started...