

Travel company ends 'unethical' animal tours

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CREATIVE COMMONS
VIA STEVE DUNLEAVEY ON FLICKR.COM

One of the world's top travel companies is ending its tours to many of the planet's top animal attractions. STA Travel, which provides holidays, flights and accommodation for

2.5 million students a year, has decided it will no longer organize tours to places where animals are not free. This means it will not arrange elephant rides or trips to the Tiger Temple in Thailand, as well as tours to SeaWorld in Florida and California. The company said it would only go to places it knew were good to animals. Many STA customers complained about the tours to some places, so it started to review its animal tours. A company spokeswoman said: "We take this seriously and listen carefully to feedback from animal welfare experts."

SeaWorld was disappointed with STA's decision. It wanted STA to see the high standards of animal care at both SeaWorlds. It also said activities by animal rights groups may have made STA make this decision. A SeaWorld spokesperson said: "There is no higher priority for SeaWorld than the safety of our employees and guests and the welfare of our animals." STA said it would look at more places that have animals. It said: "We are very much at the beginning of this journey. It is really important we do it over time, understand what the issues are and work with organisations that really understand those issues." The animal rights group PETA says animals such as dolphins all suffer at theme parks.

Sources: *The Guardian* / *TravelWeekly.com* / *TTG Digital*

Writing

It is wrong to keep animals in theme parks. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

travel company / animals / attractions / tours / elephant rides / customers / experts / disappointed / high standards / decision / journey / animal rights / theme parks

True / False

- Three travel companies are ending tours to animal attractions. T / F
- STA Travel sells tours to around 2.5 million students a year. T / F
- STA will still organize tours to SeaWorld in the USA. T / F
- Customers complained about the tours to animal attractions. T / F
- SeaWorld totally understood and agreed with STA's decision. T / F
- SeaWorld said animal welfare is more important than staff welfare. T / F
- STA said it is just beginning of the process of making changes. T / F
- An animal rights said dolphins suffer at all theme parks. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. ending | a. choice |
| 2. top | b. specialists |
| 3. arrange | c. start |
| 4. review | d. leading |
| 5. experts | e. problems |
| 6. standards | f. organise |
| 7. decision | g. finishing |
| 8. welfare | h. levels |
| 9. beginning | i. reconsider |
| 10. issues | j. well-being |

Discussion – Student A

- Is it OK to keep animals at attractions even if standards are high?
- What more do you think STA could do?
- Is it unfair to keep animals as pets?
- What are the issues about animal rights?
- Do you think animals will still be in cages or parks in 50 years?
- What decisions would you make about animals in theme parks?
- How important is animal rights?
- What questions would you like to ask the SeaWorld boss?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. One of the world's | a. groups |
| 2. holidays, flights | b. are not free |
| 3. places where animals | c. of animal care |
| 4. places it knew | d. to feedback |
| 5. listen carefully | e. the issues are |
| 6. high standards | f. top travel companies |
| 7. animal rights | g. were good to animals |
| 8. higher | h. parks |
| 9. understand what | i. and accommodation |
| 10. theme | j. priority |

Discussion – Student B

- What kind of tours do you like going on?
- What do you think of the STA's decision?
- Do you think it's wrong that animals are kept in theme parks?
- Do you think dolphins like being kept at SeaWorld?
- What do you think of companies that operate elephant tours?
- What do you think people complained to the STA about?
- What do you think when you see animals in theme parks?
- Should we ban zoos and animal theme parks?

Spelling

- top animal snittacorta
- rzoaiagn (USA) / sgaiaonr (UK) tours
- it will not rningae elephant rides
- Many STA customers mdanplcieo
- viwree its animal tours
- animal welfare psexret
- disappointed with STA's ondcieis
- high naasddrts of animal care
- saciiitvte by animal rights groups
- no higher ytiripro
- the beginning of this oejrynu
- mteeh parks

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. f	4. i	5. b
6. h	7. a	8. j	9. c	10. e

Role Play

Role A – SeaWorld

You think Seaworld is the best attraction. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so interesting about their attractions. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the Louvre, Mount Everest or Disneyland.

Role B – The Louvre

You think the Louvre is the best attraction. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so interesting about their attractions. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Seaworld, Mount Everest or Disneyland.

Role C – Mount Everest

You think Mount Everest is the best attraction. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so interesting about their attractions. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the Louvre, Seaworld or Disneyland.

Role D – Disneyland

You think Disneyland is the best attraction. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that aren't so interesting about their attractions. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the Louvre, Mount Everest or Seaworld.

Speaking – Attractions

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| • SeaWorld | • Mt. Everest |
| • Disneyland | • Safari Park |
| • Pyramids | • Great Wall of China |
| • Louvre | • Taj Mahal |

Answers – True False

a F b T c F d T e F f F g T h T

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.