



Yes: TripAdvisor Will No Longer Sell Tickets To Places That Hurt Animals



By [Christian Cotroneo](#)

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One of the world's biggest travel sites has announced it won't be letting customers book tickets to attractions involving captive animals or endangered species.

Some of the changes take effect immediately, while the company promises to revise its booking policy completely by 2017.



COURTNEY VAIL/WDC

TripAdvisor, along with its booking agency [Viator](#), is also launching an educational campaign, linking certain animal attractions on the site with expert information on animal welfare practices.

By early next year, any listing that involves an animal attraction will have a paw-shaped icon next to it. Clicking on that paw will open a portal with information on the attraction from groups like the [Association of Zoos & Aquariums](#), [World Animal Protection](#) and [PETA](#).



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The idea is to shut the door on tourism involving dubious animal attractions, while opening a window to how travelers can make the world a better place for animals.

"TripAdvisor's new booking policy and education effort is designed as a means to do our part in helping improve the health and safety standards of animals, especially in markets with limited regulatory protections," Stephen Kaufer, president and CEO of TripAdvisor said in a press release. "At the same time, we want to celebrate those destinations and attractions that are leaders in caring for animals and those in the tourism industry who help further the cause of animal welfare, conservation and the preservation of endangered species."



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There are a few exceptions to the new policy — notably involving domestic animals and aquariums. [Aquariums that let people touch animals](#) "for education purposes," for instance, will get a pass.

But elephant rides — an industry that sees the animals [chained and worked to the point of collapsing](#) — will no longer see tourist dollars through TripAdvisor.



ANANTARA GOLDEN TRIANGLE ELEPHANT CAMP & RESORT THAILAND

The same goes for cub petting, where people are invited to pet baby tigers or lions who are sold to [canned hunting facilities when they grow up](#).



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Swim-with-the-dolphin programs, another [brutally misguided tourist attraction](#), are also now squarely on the unbookable list.

"We commend TripAdvisor for taking steps to improve the standards for interactions with wild and captive species in tourism," Wes Sechrest, CEO of [Global Wildlife Conservation](#), said in a press release. "This will encourage people to visit destinations that promote the safe viewing of wildlife in the wild, such as national parks, as well as legitimate rescue centers and zoological facilities that support on-the-ground wildlife conservation efforts.

"We want people to connect with wildlife and feel inspired by wild places, and this will help provide a guide for how to do so without further endangering our planet's biodiversity."