



# The big debate

## Are extra tourist fees a good idea?

Too many visitors can cause big problems, especially in small communities.

### What you need to know

- About 1.52 billion people traveled internationally in 2025, and many tourist hot spots are facing the challenges of “overtourism.”
- In 2025, more than 10 million people lined up to see the Trevi Fountain in Rome, Italy, causing overcrowding, damage, excess trash, and crime.
- Officials in Rome instituted a fee of just over \$2 for each person who wants to see the fountain during the day. They estimate it will bring in \$7.7 million to \$23 million per year.



**ADDED COSTS**

In Bhutan, every visitor over age 12 has to pay a fee of \$100 per night, in addition to regular travel costs.

Officials estimate that last year, as many as 70,000 people visited the Trevi Fountain each day. But the fountain stands in a small plaza in the middle of a bustling city, and the crowds clog up nearby streets—and frustrate many local residents. Mount Fuji, in Japan, used to be crammed with thousands of hikers who littered and damaged the beautiful natural landscape. In 2024, Japan instituted a \$13 fee for tourists and capped the number of people at 4,000 per day. Other popular spots around the world are facing the same problem, but some people say charging visitors more isn't the solution. What do you think? Are extra tourist fees a good idea?

### Yes—share the responsibility

Visiting a special location or landmark is an amazing experience for tourists, but it's not without a burdensome cost to local communities that maintain sites, keep people safe, collect trash, and clean up streets and beaches. More work means higher expenses, which should be shared. Tourists don't mind paying more either. Studies show that 71% of travelers want to help and 80% are happy to pay to protect special places. And the money can do so much good. For example, Hawaii raised hotel fees by a small amount, which could bring in \$100 million a year. The funds will help the state handle the harmful effects of climate change.

### No—trips are expensive enough

Tourists already have to pay for travel, housing, and meals. Adding on extra fees will discourage them from visiting and force them to choose a different, cheaper destination. That's bad news for local restaurants, hotels, and shops that earn a huge chunk of their income from visitors. And not everyone supports charging tourists more. In Denmark, Scotland, and other popular places, communities have rejected extra fees because they don't want local businesses to suffer. Many people also worry that any money raised from fees might not be used to maintain tourist attractions. Officials could very well spend it on other things instead.

### YES Three reasons extra tourist fees are a good idea

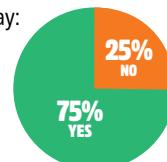
- 1 It's very expensive to maintain famous landmarks, and many local governments struggle to afford it.
- 2 It's only fair to share the costs with the people who visit the sites and cause the problems associated with overtourism.
- 3 Tourists want to help protect the places they visit and will spend the extra money.

### NO Three reasons extra tourist fees are not a good idea

- 1 People paying big bucks to take a trip will travel to a cheaper place, causing local businesses to lose out.
- 2 Communities who are most affected by overtourism often vote against extra fees.
- 3 Local residents can't be sure officials are spending the extra money from tourist fees where they say they will.

### LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if it's ever OK to quit an activity. A majority of you approve of walking away: 75% of you said yes, while 25% said no.



### What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit [kids.theweekjunior.com/polls](https://kids.theweekjunior.com/polls) so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think extra tourist fees are a good idea or **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.