

These Travel Charities Are The Perfect Holiday Gift

Excerpted from an article by Eric Rosen



AmericaShare supports education efforts for children in Kenya.

Tourism-based philanthropies can ensure that places you love will continue to thrive until you're able to visit them.

During 2020, with its COVID-19-prompted [lockdowns](#), continuing border [closures](#), and other pandemic-related restrictions, even the most [avid travelers](#) have had their wings clipped. Due to current case surges, both [in the United States](#) and abroad, many folks have had to [cancel holiday trips](#), or at least put them on hold.

While on the road reporting for [Conscious Traveler](#), a podcast that explores the world through stories of community, conservation, and culture, I've come across myriad hotels and hospitality brands that support philanthropic foundations. Their work ranges from wildlife conservation and environmental restoration to providing schooling, medical care, and clean drinking water to local communities. Unfortunately, with fewer travelers physically on-hand to donate time or money to them, support of these organizations has become more urgent during the pandemic.

If you or your favorite road warriors aren't leaving home over the holidays this year, contributing to one of these commendable causes might just be the best way of putting your [travel dollars to good use](#). You can continue supporting a place that you or your loved ones already know and cherish or connect with new destinations you hope to visit once you get back [out in the world again](#). Here are several to consider this holiday season.

AmericaShare, East Africa

[Micato Safaris](#) custom creates itineraries that take travelers to see some of Africa's most spectacular wildlife in Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana, and beyond, plus opulent offerings in India. What might be more impressive, however, is that for every safari booked, [Micato sends a child to school](#)—specifically children from the Nairobi slum of Mukuru. The organization also sponsors children from Mukuru to attend private boarding schools around Nairobi, and its Shining Star Fund provides individual



scholarships to send academically gifted students to high school (hopefully on their way to university). That's in addition to running the Harambee Community Centre in Mukuru, with a nursery school, two libraries, and two computer labs, plus drinking water distribution points throughout the area. During the COVID crisis, [AmericaShare](#) has innovated in several ways—for instance, providing smartphones to hundreds of children so they can continue to attend virtual classes. As you might imagine, fewer people booked safaris this year, but the inhabitants of Mukuru have not left their problems behind. So even if you're not going on a game drive anytime soon, you might want to make a [donation](#) to this laudable cause.”