



## Sponsor Profile

**Your name:** Edward Paine

**Organisation:** Last Frontiers

**Position:** Managing Director

### **Organisation Profile:**

Last Frontiers specialises in tailor-made travel to Latin America, carefully planning each holiday with the utmost attention to detail, whether it be a cruise to the Galapagos, a family outing, honeymoon or adventurous escape. As a small, friendly and enthusiastic team, we regularly travel all around Latin America to broaden our knowledge of the areas we already cover, as well as heading off the beaten track to explore new exciting locations and properties for our clients.

### **Can you summarise your commitment to responsible tourism?**

Last Frontiers has been concerned, since our inception 20 years ago, to work with lodges, hotels and service providers who understand the importance of sustainable and responsible tourism. We believe that the issue is core to economic viability and growth, not a side issue within tourism that can be referred to (or ignored) at will. We use local guides throughout and prefer to use locally-owned (and run) accommodation wherever possible, preferring small hotels to large. We point out to our clients where particularly fragile environments or endangered cultures exist and advise them on how to minimise the impact their presence or actions may have. We give guidance and encourage our clients to arrange local tours when they are at the destination. We also suggest local restaurants and menu specialities to reduce importation of international foods. We encourage communication between our clients and local people, by informing them of local customs and providing some useful phrases in the native language. We also encourage responsible tipping, and try to make sure that tips are distributed in a fair manner. In general, we are fortunate that Last Frontiers' clients are already very aware of the need to travel responsibly, and we welcome suggestions for improvements to our own practices. We provide all clients with a suggested Code of Ethics to supplement advice on specific destinations.

### **Examples of recent actions?**

As a company, we were involved in the founding of the LATA Foundation; two members of staff are Trustees and several have sat on sub-committees. This allows us to support directly many worthwhile projects throughout Latin America. We also make our clients aware of this work in our 'Welcome home' questionnaire, in case they might be interested to make a donation themselves after their trip. We have supported the Galapagos Conservation Trust (GCT) for many years and sign up each passenger who travels to the Galapagos through Last Frontiers as a member of GCT for a year on a complimentary basis. We feel this helps promote and support the good work they do.

### **What about your carbon footprint?**

To maintain our high level of knowledge we have to fly to Latin America to keep up to date on each area; it would be impossible to provide our level of service and expertise without this. However, we try to maximise our time there to see as much as possible during the trip.

Here in the UK, a number of our staff car-share to the office while others use public transport or cycle. We cut down on use of paper and printing wherever possible. We also recycle as much rubbish as we can. We recently moved office into a derelict 19th century corn mill and during conversion have rebuilt the property to extremely high specifications on energy saving and water conservation. Our insulation is beyond minimum government guidelines. We use rainwater harvesting for lavatory flushing, use environmentally friendly cleaning products,



have underfloor heating and energy-saving lighting. We were even commended in the local District Council's Design Awards for the sympathetic conversion of a redundant village landmark to a new business use. We also donate old books and unwanted gifts to charity shops and recycle old computers. Regarding our brochure, we only produce it every 5 years or so and when designing the next one, take into consideration materials used and available technologies (eg recyclable vs recycled paper).

**Are you involved with the Latin America Travel Association?**

I was chairman of LATA for over 10 years. The LF team are encouraged to attend all LATA events so that everyone is up to date on developments and important industry issues.

**Can you outline your firm's involvement with the LATA Foundation:**

I was a Trustee from the start and have also designed, built and developed the website as the Foundation has grown.

**How will you continue to support for the LATA Foundation in the future?**

Hopefully much as we have in the past!