I can’t wait to leave school. I can’t wait to travel to amazing places. I want to climb to the top of the Eiffel tower and look over Paris. I want to climb to the top of Mount Olympus. I want to travel all through the world and see everything there is to see. But I’m telling you right now, when I visit Uluru I won’t be climbing it. And, if any of you are lucky enough to get to the red centre of Australia, neither should you.

Just last year, the Uluru-Kata National Park Board decided to ban tourists from climbing Uluru, starting in 2019. And it’s about time, I say. For years the Anagu people - the people indigenous to the area - have been politely asking tourists not to climb this rock. And for years tourists have been ignoring this polite request.

There is a sign at Uluru National Park that reads, “The climb is not prohibited, but we prefer that, as a guest on Anagu land, you will choose to respect our law and culture by not climbing it.” That seems pretty clear to me. When I visit one of my best friend’s home, her mother asks us to remove our shoes when we come in the front door. Even though I come from a house where we always wear shoes inside, I respect the wishes of my friend’s mum. After all, it’s her house. So it’s her rules. Last year, I was lucky enough to go to India and visit a Sikh Gurdwara, or temple. When I went in, I covered my hair with a headscarf, even though it was super hot and I wanted to wear less clothes, not more. I was in the sacred space of the Sikh community. I was a visitor. I wanted to be respectful, so I followed their rules. When I go to Uluru, I’m going to follow the rules of the community that live there, just like I would whenever I visit anywhere else.

I’ve spoken to lots of other Australians about my travel plans. Many of them have asked me about whether or not I’ll climb Uluru when I go, because I’m planning on visiting before the climbing ban takes place. When I tell them that I won’t be climbing, some people say I should. They say that because I’m not indigenous, I don’t have to have the same beliefs as the Anangu people. And they’re right. I don’t share the same belief in Dreamtime legend. I don’t have the exact same connection with this landmark that the indigenous people have. I don’t even really understand the beliefs the Anangu people have. But this is what I tell people who say it’s okay to climb Uluru: I don’t have to share the beliefs of other people to respect them. I don’t have to understand why it’s disrespectful. I’m a visitor to their lands. And when I visit, I do it respectfully.

The Indigenous people of Australia have had their culture disrespected ever since white settlers arrived here. For some reason, people seem to think that their culture is not as important as the other cultures they visit. It’s about time that we gave the Indigenous people of Australia the same respect, and the same rights, that we give to other cultures that we see.

Did you know that at the top of Uluru there are no toilets? Many people who climb this national treasure seem to have no idea, and, when they get to the top of the rock, some people wee or even poo on top of Uluru, leaving their mess behind for Park Rangers to clear up. How disgusting is that? Not only is it super-gross, this waste material gets into water holes and pollutes them.

It seems pretty clear to me that there are really good reasons we shouldn’t climb Uluru - it’s disrespectful to another culture, people who climb it are destroying a natural wonder and, most importantly, when you visit someone else’s land, you should respect their rules.

When I travel, I’m going to have heaps of amazing experiences. But I’m never going to climb Uluru. And you shouldn’t either.