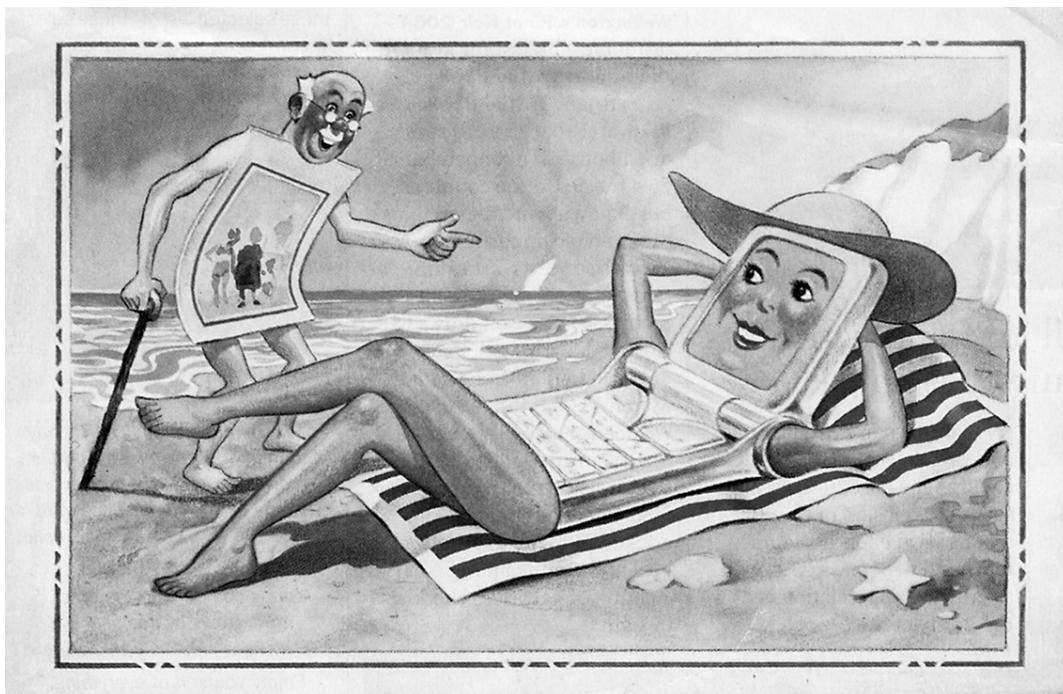


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## Tekst 10

# Postcards on the Edge

The digital age spells the end of a venerable vacation tradition. But are e-cards and text messages really better?



By LIAM FITZPATRICK

IT'S AMUSING THAT SO MANY MAGAZINE travel columns are entitled "Postcard from..." Because unless we're talking about e-cards, people just aren't sending them like they used to. Not in an age of e-mail, text messaging and mobile phones equipped with cameras. Other than the prepaid advertising cards put out by direct-mailing houses, chances are that the only postcards you receive these days are from elderly relatives.

A recent poll conducted by British tour operator Thomson Holidays found that of 1,000 customers surveyed, 50% intended to send fewer postcards in the

future. Tourists visiting the U.K. seem to be of a similar mind: Royal Mail statistics show the number of postcards mailed in Britain is falling by about 1 million each year – at a current 25 million, down from 30 million five years ago. The downward trend can be seen elsewhere. The Finland Post Corp. blames text messaging for the decline in the volume of postcards sent, while in Japan there are plans to axe 80% of the country's postcard-vending machines. At this rate, postcards seem destined to go the way of the telex.

The time it takes to deliver a postcard is out of sync with the way we holiday now. In the Thomson poll, 25% of respondents said postcards took too long

to arrive. That may not have been true 20 years ago, when people went on trips of lavish duration – a three-week meander through Europe, say, or a monthlong U.S. tour. But in these days of city breaks and three-night packages, you usually get home before your postcards do.

As holiday rituals go, it's commonly supposed that there's nothing nicer than sitting in a Florentine café or Beijing teahouse, with postcards fanned in front of you to craft elegant missives to loved ones. But the attractions of sending your wish-you-were-heres digitally are harder to resist. Techno-hipsters post their itineraries on a Friendster bulletin board, a great way to keep peers informed and gather travel tips. Why queue in a dingy post office when you can just use your phone to take a picture of the Acropolis or the Kremlin and fire it off to anyone you like? If you don't have a phone with a built-in camera, you can use your laptop: the Web is filled with e-card sites that allow you to click on images of well-

known attractions and send them with your message to multiple recipients. You'll find e-cards of everything from Vancouver's Stanley Park (*canadianculture.com*) to Australia's Great Ocean Road (*southwestvictoria.com*).

There is one major downside of the postcard's passing, however: it is frequently being replaced by the lengthy travel diary that your vacationing friends feel compelled to send from every Internet café they visit. Technology has suddenly made it all too easy to dispatch gushing, gee-whiz accounts of trips to the Pompidou or dives off the Great Barrier Reef, not to mention tediously unedited recollections of meals eaten on Brazilian Beaches or at Bangkok Street stalls. When several paragraphs about transport hassles and mundane hotel mix-ups are tacked on, you start to realize that whatever the postcard's failings, it at least had the merit of brevity.

*TIME*

*Lees bij de volgende opgave eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.*

## Tekst 10 Postcards on the Edge

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1p 43 “The digital age spells the end of a venerable vacation tradition.” (inleiding)  
Wordt er behalve technologie nog een reden in de tekst genoemd die de afgenomen populariteit van het versturen van ansichtkaarten verklaart? Zo nee, antwoord “Nee”. Zo ja, noteer de eerste twee woorden van de alinea waarin deze reden staat.

1p 44 “But are e-cards and text messages really better?” (inleiding)  
Wordt er in de tekst een voordeel genoemd van het versturen van ansichtkaarten? Zo nee, antwoord “Nee”. Zo ja, noteer de eerste twee woorden van de alinea waarin dit voordeel staat.