

Vacation on a Budget

You can have a prime vacation on a shoestring budget. With a little creative planning, you will be able to come up with some fun and memorable vacations that will give you the R&R you need without raising your stress level or a huge credit card bill.

Here are a few ideas that might get your vacation started.

-  Visit relatives or friends you don't see often.
-  Camping is an inexpensive way to experience the great outdoors. You don't need a lot of equipment; most of the items such as blankets, pots and pans you have at home. Tents may be rented or borrowed. For camping reservations or information, check out www.campnetamerica.com or www.gocampingamerica.com.
-  Hit the beach. Try a little beach bowling. Use disposable cups and fill them with wet sand as if you were going to make a sandcastle but put them in a triangle like bowling pins. Bring a ball to roll down the beach to hit the sand pins. The kids and adults will have fun bowling and setting the sand pins back up. Don't forget to take some quiet time to take a stroll along the water.
-  Stay at home and make each day a new theme. (Monday-pretend to take a trip to Mexico. Plan a meal, make a craft or play a game. Tuesday-pretend you're pirates and go on a treasure hunt. The possibilities are endless and everyone will have fun using their imaginations).
-  Explore your childhood past times or hobbies. Ride bikes, hike, go fishing or play a game of baseball.
-  Go to a park and have an old fashioned picnic. Take along a blanket and a basket of homemade food. Play some good ol' games like the three-legged race, water-balloon toss, flag football, or Frisbee.
-  Send your kids to a relative or camp and enjoy time with your partner.
-  Pamper yourself to a one-day maid service while you go explore the local sights.
-  Try a water park or theme park. (Sometimes you can find coupons or a hotel/theme park discount.)
-  Take your own food and drinks on your vacation. If staying in a hotel, find one that has a refrigerator and microwave. For large groups rent a condo, you'll more than make up what you pay for lodging if you cook your own meals.
-  Pack the essentials to prevent paying high prices at a resort area. Include snacks and drinks, medical kit, extra film, batteries, videos and games.
-  Attend a local theater of arts. You would be surprised how much talent is in your area.
-  Expand your cultural knowledge by visiting a museum or arts festival.