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Exploring Uncharted Territory: Your Family Vacation

By News Canada

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by: News Canada

(NC)—Picture it - your minivan is stopped at a rest area. Your partner sits at the wheel while you are buried under a mess of unfolded maps. You feel tense as you debate over directions while your jumpy kids in the back seat are spreading chocolate over each other. Aah, the joys of a family vacation.

Don't despair, not every trip has to be like that. By making plans in advance, you can help ease tensions on the trip and turn it into a family adventure filled with wonderful memories for everyone. Before getting started, consider these quick travel tips.

Where are we?

Try to map out your trip in advance or at least be prepared with a road atlas in the car. Michelin's 2003 North America Road Atlas is spiral bound and compact, which means it lies flat for easier navigating and folds over easily so it can be tucked away in the glove compartment. A great innovation is that maps are organized by geographic region, not by the alphabet ... according to the way you actually drive.

Are we there yet?

Let your children also have their own map so they can follow along with you. Use a road atlas to teach your children how to use maps and help them learn to answer that gnawing question, "Are we there yet?" Make a game out of it and try to see who can calculate the distance the fastest.

I have to go!

Plan exciting pit stops along the way to give everyone a chance to stretch their legs and use a restroom. Choose interesting locations and tourist attractions such as the world's largest coffee pot in Saskatchewan, magnetic hill in New Brunswick or a haunted lighthouse in Ontario. Make these stops

part of the fond memories of your family trip.

I'm bored!

Entertaining car-based activities for the kids will help make the journey more pleasant for everyone. There are a variety of great board games available in compact sizes, which use magnets to ensure pieces stay on the board. Other options include reading out loud, singing or listening to audio books. Consider the classic games of "I Spy", a scavenger hunt or even counting cows, horses and other unique items you identify.

I'm hungry!

To avoid grumbling stomachs keep some snacks handy such as fruit, granola bars or juice boxes to keep everyone satisfied while you search for the next rest stop.

Spending time together on a road trip is a great way to have quality time with your family. Don't let it ruin your trip. Instead make it part of the adventure and the wonderful memories. Not only will some advance planning make your trip a lot more pleasant, it may keep everyone talking to one another!

– News Canada

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Strengthening Familial Ties: Have An Annual Family Vacation

By Jeff Usher

Let's face it. One of our greatest fears as parents is the often expected possibility that our kids would forget about us once they embrace independence. They have to move out and establish their own lot

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in life, eventually. Will they keep in touch? Will they always remember? Will they carry in their hearts the enjoyable memories you once shared? The answer is as clear as the question, if we ponder on in it more deeply. The way they would remember is by giving them a lot of fun memories to nurture. And what better way to make this a reality than by having an annual family vacation as a tradition.

Most importantly, a family vacation would allow you to savor all these things together. That is what a family is all about, after all being together, sharing a bond that neither time nor tide would be able to erode.

And the fact that such a family vacation would be celebrated every year can most possibly define what your family is all about that is, a family which upholds tradition and puts a premium on the ties that bind.

Since you, your spouse and the kids, as well as members of the extended family on occasions, would have a family vacation to plan for each and every year, there will be a lot of opportunities to visit wonderful and unforgettable places. Not only will these experiences spice up your lives, but they would also foster the strengthening of the bond that each family member shares.

Most counselors, as a matter of fact, promote an annual family vacation to keep the said family together. Each member may have his or her own life to live. He or she may have his or her own obligations to fulfill. But for at least once a year, they would all come together to celebrate what a family really means mutual love and support.

Indeed, an annual family vacation can easily become a tradition that can be cherished by each and every member of the household. Who knows? Perhaps this tradition can even last forever, and there will come a time when you'd be enjoying a family vacation with your grandkids as well.

Now, isn't that an investment worth making?

Jeff Usher is a normal guy trying to make his way in the world. He writes articles on various topics that may be of interest to a wide audience. More vacation saving tips can be found here:–

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