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**Wisconsin Dells Is A Fun Family Vacation Destination**

**By Dorrie Ruplinger**

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin is a fun destination for a family vacation, and with a little research and advance planning the trip doesn't have to make your wallet cry out in pain.

Wisconsin Dells (and the area is really two towns: Wisconsin Dells and Lake Delton) has been a popular summer vacation destination for people who live in the Midwest since the late 1800's. In recent years, several indoor water parks have been built making Wisconsin Dells a popular year around vacation destination, not only for people who live in the Midwest but for people from around the world.

What first drew tourists to the Wisconsin Dells area? It was the scenery. The Wisconsin River meanders through the Wisconsin Dells area and has beautiful sandstone rock formations. A trip to Wisconsin Dells wouldn't be complete without a boat tour of those rock formations.

There are two basic choices of tours; either boat tour or a "duck" tour which also includes some sightseeing on the land. If you have small children, they'll enjoy the "duck" tour the most.

If you take a boat tour, you'll have a couple of options. You'll be able to take an "upper Dells" tour, a "lower Dells" tour, or both. The upper Dells boat tour lasts about 2 hours and the lower Dells boat tour lasts about 1 hour. The upper Dells tour includes a few shore stops to look at some outstanding landmarks (

<http://www.wisconsinellstoday.com/dells/wisconsinellstoattours>

).

The "duck" tour is a combination land and water tour. It's a really fun way to see some of the beautiful scenery on the land and water. And the tour is a big hit with kids of all ages! My family takes a trip to Wisconsin Dells nearly every year and we go on the Duck tour almost every trip because we find it so much fun. The "duck" vehicles used for the tours are amphibious vehicles used in WWII that have been revamped. The tour starts out on dry land. During the tour you'll be taken down streets of Wisconsin Dells; through lovely wooded areas where wildlife is often seen (we usually see white-tail deer) and

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then it's on to the really fun part of the trip.

The duck driver drives into the water with a big splash - well; usually with a big splash. The driver will ask the customers if they want to go into the water slow or fast because fast gets some of the people wet. On every tour I've been on the fast trip into the water has won the vote and it is fun! After the twists and turns of the wooded trails (some of them steep and narrow, but always safe) the water part of the trip is a nice change of pace. After being in the water for a while and seeing some of the breathtaking sandstone rock formations, your driver takes you back onto dry land and your fun tour is complete. During the entire tour your driver entertains you with a funny and informative narrative.

Even though our family loves going on the Duck tour when we go to Wisconsin Dells, if they have a choice of only one activity to do, going to a water park wins hands down. There are over 20 water parks in Wisconsin Dells. There are outdoor water parks; indoor water parks; and combination indoor/outdoor water parks. So no matter what time of the year you want to splash in the water and have fun you can do it in Wisconsin Dells.

Our family usually takes a summer trip to Wisconsin Dells. And with mid-summer temperatures in the

90's, and even occasionally in the 100's, splashing in the water is very refreshing. Our family's favorite outdoor water park is Noah's Ark. It's currently the largest outdoor water park in Wisconsin Dells. You can easily spend an entire day there and not get bored. I have a few tips for you though if you do go to Noah's Ark (or any of the water parks in Wisconsin Dells) to help keep your costs down and to make the trip as enjoyable as possible.

1) If at all possible, don't buy your admission tickets at the front gate the day you want to go to the park. You'll pay full price and there are lots of ways to find discounted tickets. If you live in the Midwest check with your local Parks and Recreation Department to see if they have discounted tickets available. Also check with your place of employment to see if they offer discounted tickets. An Internet search may also give you sources for discounted tickets. Another option is to go into downtown Wisconsin Dells or Lake Delton before you go to Noah's Ark and stop at one of the ticket booths there. You can almost always purchase discounted tickets there, especially if you are planning to do more than one activity while you are in Wisconsin Dells. For example if you are planning to go to a water park, take a duck tour, go to a water show, and go to one of the amusement parks to ride on the roller coasters and go-karts you can get some pretty good discounts by buying all your tickets at the same time.

2) Take waterproof sunscreen. You're going to be in and out of the water all day so make sure you have waterproof sunscreen in order to avoid having to constantly reapply your sunscreen throughout the day.

3) Take towels. It may seem like a silly item to list but it's surprising how many people forget to take a towel. You can purchase beach towels inside the water parks but they are expensive.

3) Consider renting a locker in the park. There are locker rentals available in the park for a nominal fee. I always rent a locker and put dry clothes for my family in the locker along with the things I don't want

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to carry around all day, such as my sunscreen. At the end of the day we retrieve those dry clothes and change into

- 4) Take plastic bags for your wet swimsuits and towels.
- 5) Take a small waterproof container for extra money. Get one that attaches to your wrist or hangs around your neck. If you don't have one or don't know where to buy one, you can purchase one inexpensively at one of the stores inside the water park.
- 6) Bring your own lunch. There are several covered picnic areas inside the water park available free of charge for your use although it's likely some of them will be unavailable on any given day because they will be reserved for groups who are at the park. Even if you don't want to pack a cooler at home, bring along the empty cooler and pick up your lunch items from a store the day before. Although there is good food available inside the water park, it is expensive and will quickly put a big dent in your pocketbook.
- 7) Bring water shoes. Sandals are okay too but you want ones that are water friendly which typically means flip-flops and those can easily fall off your feet when you're on some of the rides. I don't advise going barefoot. The park is paved and if it's a sunny day the pavement gets very hot.
- 8) Go on rides early in the day and late in the day. That's when the lines are the shortest. The lines are really long in the middle of the day. Have your picnic lunch at that time, do a little browsing in the water

park stores, and take a short rest before heading back on the rides.

Going on the ducks or a boat tour and going to a water park aren't the only activities to do in the Wisconsin Dells area. You could stay busy for weeks (if your pocketbook could handle it) doing all the activities available to you. You could go horseback riding; go-carting; riding on roller coasters; shopping; take in the Tommy Bartlett water show; play miniature golf; play regular golf on one of the golf courses; rent a boat and go fishing (you'll need to purchase a Wisconsin fishing license); rent a canoe and go canoeing; enjoy a movie at the drive-in movie theater; rent a jet-ski; visit the railway museum; visit the history center; play paintball; or do any of the dozens of other available activities. You could even take a short drive to Baraboo and watch the Al Ringling circus. There are literally hundreds of things to do in the Wisconsin Dells area.

I have one more thing to keep in mind as you are planning your trip to Wisconsin Dells. August is the busiest month in Wisconsin Dells. How busy? Consider this: Lake Delton and Wisconsin Dells have a combined year-round population of around 5,000 people. During the weekends in August, the population in the Lake Delton/Wisconsin Dells area can swell to more than 200,000 people. Lines at the attractions will be the longest in August and the hotels will be booked solid (I don't mean to scare you though. Our family usually goes in August even though we know it's going to be busy and we have a great time). Book your hotel early or consider going there at another time during the summer. June isn't as busy but the weather may not be as warm either which means it could be a little chilly if you're going to be visiting one of the outdoor water parks.

Dorrie Ruplinger is a featured writer for

<http://www.wisconsinhellstoday.com>

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Wisconsin Dells including recommendations on things to do and see, visit

<http://www.wisconsinhellstoday.com>

## **The Perfect Beach Vacation For You**

**By Jolana Klobouk**

What makes the perfect beach vacation? The most important thing in having the perfect beach vacation is to choose the right destination. Couples don't want to end up with screaming kids by the pool and families don't want to end up at a romantic resort designed for couples with no activities to keep the kids amused.

There are hundreds of places that you can select for your perfect beach holiday. You can choose from beaches in the United States, the Caribbean, or decide to go overseas to find additional tropical climates and idyllic beaches.

If you are searching to get away with a spouse or significant other for a romantic beach vacation, Maui may be one of the perfect beach locations. One of the many areas in Hawaii, Maui is one of the top romantic beaches in the world. Maui is also well known for honeymoons, and offers an abundance of incredible beaches with plenty of other things to do as well.

Another well-known destination for a romantic beach vacation is the Virgin Islands. The Virgin Islands is the perfect destination to get away from it all and just spend time together to get to know each other all over again in paradise. Couples have been choosing these islands for many years for getaways and romantic vacations and honeymoons.

For a family beach vacation, there are lots of places that you and the kids will love. One of the favourite spots in the USA is California, as there are many additional things to interest the kids as well. There are over 1,000 miles of California beaches along the California coast and approximately 118 beach cities. In addition, there are oodles of attractions, including Sea World, Disneyland and the San Diego Zoo.

For the perfect beach vacation, select a location that will have activities that you and your traveling companions will enjoy. If you love surfing, pick a location with waves. Families with small children will prefer calmer waters. If you love going out at night, or collecting seashells or just doing nothing – there is a beach destination to accommodate you.

Once you have narrowed it down to a few perfect locations, look at the costs involved and pick one that

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fits into your budget. You will not enjoy yourself knowing you broke the bank but at the same time, pick a few things to splurge on to reward yourself and enjoy it.

No matter where you decide to go on your beach vacation, pick the spot that is best suited to who is going, what type of activities you enjoy and one that fits into your budget. A beach vacation can be a perfect vacation because whether you are traveling with that special someone, your family or friends, it will help you unwind, relax and have some fun. We can all use more of that!

Jolana Klobouk is a former travel agent who loves to travel and write about her experiences. She is currently the editor of

<http://www.best-family-beach-vacations.com>

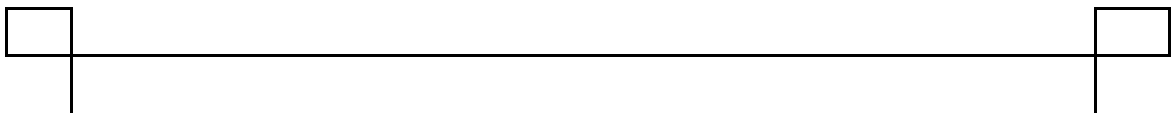
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