



## 5 TIPS FOR GREAT FAMILY VACATIONS

While most of us look forward to family vacations as a time to get away from the stresses of the everyday world, sometimes those vacations generate their own stress. Following a few simple guidelines, though, can help to keep you calm. Following are some things to keep in mind.

**Plan together.** Don't plan everything and simply spring it on the rest of the family. Your fellow travelers will be more likely to enjoy a trip they have a voice in planning.

**Be democratic (to a point).** Everyone should get to choose one or two aspects of the trip, and voting on options can be a reasonable way to resolve differences. Still, the parent has the deciding vote, especially if budget, safety or other factors dictate the best choice.

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**Splurge, but don't overdo it.** Sure, a vacation is a great time to splurge on activities, dinners and accommodations, but don't go overboard. Stretching budgets creates stress that can kill a vacation vibe.

**Make an itinerary.** Don't plan every minute, but do have a general plan for each day of the trip. That can help reduce disagreements and set clear expectations – and still allow for some spontaneity.

**Keep it low-key.** Save the high-risk adventure activities for a time when you're travelling without the kids. For this trip, keep it low-key and focus on fun with them.

## Smart Facts

85%

of American parents plan to travel with their families in the U.S. in the next year.

43%

of parents expect to stay in a hotel in the next six months.

68%

of parents say they get more excited about traveling when they include their kids in planning.



## TRAVEL IS BACK! TOP VACATION TRENDS FOR THIS YEAR

After a couple of years of limiting our vacations to modest, close-to-home affairs – or not traveling at all – Americans are poised to hit the beaches, theme parks, campgrounds and more this year. And the vacation industry expects those travelers to want to make up for lost time.

In fact, Expedia has pronounced 2022 to be the year of the “G.O.A.T.,” or “Greatest of All Trips,” and one travel expert says this fits well with the general attitude people have when they venture out. “Travelers tend to be curious, open-minded, adventurous, and optimistic souls, or they would stay home,” adds Melissa Biggs Bradley, founder and CEO of Indagare, a New York travel-planning company.

Following are some of the trends that travel-industry professionals say will define the coming summer.

**Catching up with family and friends.** Expect to see lots of multigenerational groups traveling together, families using vacations as reunions and collections of people taking “friendcations” to make up for the time they haven’t been able to be together over the last two years. In fact, one study showed a 26% increase in bookings of five or more guests compared to the last pre-pandemic travel year.

**Going solo.** On the other hand, experts say there has been an increase in people traveling solo. But that doesn’t mean these travelers want to be left alone: Many of them are joining organized trips that cater to individual travelers, often because they like to be around like-minded people.

**Breaking the budget.** Having denied themselves for so long, travelers are expected to spend more this year, treating themselves to pricier locales, accommodations, meals, activities and more. A recent global study discovered that 70% of leisure travelers in major countries plan to spend more on travel this year than in the past five years.

**Going downtown.** Urban travel is making a comeback, with people planning trips to big cities to enjoy amenities and activities that we all avoided during the pandemic. U.S. travel agencies report that New York is one of the hottest destinations this year, and many global travelers are heading travel to big cities like Paris and London.

**Getting professional help.** Because they want bigger trips that require more logistical planning and because pandemic restrictions and effects still linger, travelers are more likely to ask travel agents to help them make their plans, navigate around COVID-19 requirements and impacts and provide support in the case of a problem.



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## TRAVELING WITH BENEFITS

When planning trips and vacations, health coverage is one of those things we seldom consider but probably should. After all, accidents and illness can occur while you're traveling, and if they do, you'll want to know that you or your family member will be taken care of. But how can you be sure? Following are some things to keep in mind.

**Pack your card.** This might seem like a no-brainer, but be sure your health coverage card is in your wallet before you go.

**In case of emergency.** The good news is that all health plans are required to cover you at in-network rates for emergencies, no matter where you are. The trick? Understanding what your benefits provider considers an emergency.

**Pre-trip check.** If you're going somewhere for more than a few days, it might be worth your time to check your benefits provider's website before you leave to identify in-network providers where you're going.

**In-network on the road.** Just like at home, if you need healthcare while you're on a trip, check your benefits provider's website to search for an in-network provider before visiting a health care provider.

**You might have to pay.** Regardless of what's covered, if you're in an area that your benefits provider typically doesn't serve, you might have to pay upfront and get reimbursed after the fact.

**Make the call.** Of course, the easiest way to get answers is to call the customer service number on your health benefits ID card. If that doesn't lead to answers, call your HR person, and they should be able to help.

**Going abroad?** If you're traveling out of the country, call your benefits provider to make sure you understand what is and isn't covered. For example, some plans will cover travel back to the U.S. for care if you need it; others won't. It would be good to know before you go what your plan covers.

**Consider travel medical insurance.** For a price, most insurers can sell you travel medical insurance that will address most of these issues and can be especially useful if you're traveling outside the U.S. The policy would be in force only while you are traveling, and they often are reasonably priced, especially when considering the value of peace of mind.



### *Cataracts Awareness Month*

Cataracts are the world's leading cause of blindness, but they also are highly treatable if caught early. Usually the result of changes related to aging – although sometimes genetically connected – cataracts result in cloudy vision in most people, but can become severe. [Prevent Blindness](#) has more information.

# HARVEST OF THE MONTH: CARROTS

While the carrot can seem like a run-of-the-mill root vegetable, it was considered a bit of a hero during World War II. When British food supplies hit all-time lows and rationing put severe limits on what families could get, the government promoted carrots as plentiful, versatile and easy-to-grow. Ad campaigns informed families how to cook carrots and pointed to the sharp eyesight of British pilots as evidence of the carrots' high levels of Vitamin A.

Meanwhile, carrots also played a role on the front lines: To inform French resistance fighters that the D-Day invasion was about to occur, on June 4, 1944, Radio London broadcast the message, "The carrots are cooked!" This echoed a popular French phrase meaning "No turning back."

These days, carrots aren't considered quite as heroic, but they are still recognized for their health benefits: They're packed with antioxidants, vitamins and more, and have been linked to improved eyesight as well as reduced cancer risk, weight loss, lower cholesterol and more. When shopping, be aware that, while orange carrots are most



common these days, the multi-colored varieties offer the same health benefits and can add visual interest to meals. Regardless of color, choose firm, smooth and well-formed carrots, and watch out for "sunburned" tops, and large green areas at the top. If you buy carrots with leaves attached, remove those and then place the carrots in a plastic bag before putting them in the refrigerator. They'll hold their best flavor for a couple of weeks but retain their nutritional value for even longer.



## Recipe: Simple Carrot Soup

### Ingredients (8 servings):

4 cups chopped carrots  
3 cups fat-free chicken broth  
½ onion, sliced  
Water to cover  
4 cloves garlic, smashed  
1 teaspoon dried thyme  
½ teaspoon dried tarragon  
2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream

### Directions:

Combine carrots, chicken broth and onion in a large pot and cover with water. Add garlic, thyme and tarragon. Bring the liquid to a boil and then reduce heat to medium-low. Cover pot and simmer until the carrots are very tender (40 to 50 minutes). Remove pot from heat and cool soup for 10 minutes, then puree soup with an immersion blender (or mash vegetables with a potato masher and whisk until soup is smooth). Return pot to medium heat and cook until reheated, about 5 minutes; stir cream into the soup.

### Nutrition Information:

CALORIES: 114; PROTEIN: 6.4G; CARBOHYDRATES: 16.4G; FAT: 3.1G; FIBER: 4.3G; SUGARS: 7.3G; SODIUM: 464MG; CHOLESTEROL 10.2MG

Sources: Accessed May 9, 2022

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