

Take a “Staycation”

Going out of town on vacation is a great way to relax and de-stress. However, if finances are tight and you can't afford to leave town, try a "staycation" instead, visiting local attractions, taking day trips to nearby destinations and going home to sleep in your own bed at night.

A staycation can give you a break that costs less and is free from the stress of long drives, packing and unpacking, airport delays and other long-distance travel hassles. And it gives you the opportunity to learn more about local attractions and entertainment options.

A vacation should be a change from the usual routine. Try some of these destinations and activities to leave you and your family feeling refreshed and satisfied without spending a lot of money.

Get Going

- > Go to museums, zoos, festivals, art fairs and concerts in your neighborhood and nearby areas. Look for free community programs and check local libraries and newspapers for coupons. Ask about reduced admission prices for residents.
- > Take advantage of community swimming pools and recreation centers.
- > Try a new restaurant, bowling alley or movie.
- > Local colleges, continuing education centers and historical societies offer interesting activities.
- > Attend a local theater or musical performance; the experience is not only inexpensive, but also supports the artistic pursuits of the community.
- > Find state parks, camping sites and nature preserves in your area or in locations within easy driving distance. Informative tours, walks and hikes are often available for little or no cost and can be planned with little notice. Check your state or regional tourism bureau's website for information.
- > Pack a picnic lunch. Everybody has a few favorite picnic foods and most supermarket delis provide an array of prepared foods that are perfect for picnics. These items are still cheaper and healthier than fast-food restaurants.
- > Bike or hike. Most cities have recreation areas with designated paths that are smooth, safe and free from motorized traffic. If you do not have a bicycle of your own, investigate bicycle rentals in your area. Exercise is a great way to feel healthy, relieve stress and explore your surroundings.
- > Volunteer at a local soup kitchen, shelter or senior center. Gaining insight about others can help you gain a new perspective on daily life and stresses.

Stay In

Few activities reduce stress more than no activity at all. Keep nagging concerns about productivity at bay and schedule time for nothing to make sure you really do relax. Take a hot bath, pamper yourself or treat your spouse to an invigorating massage. Relax and watch movies, play games, share stories or complete a fun craft or cooking project. Just make sure to set aside household chores and “to-do” lists so you can fully enjoy your staycation.

Additional Information

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