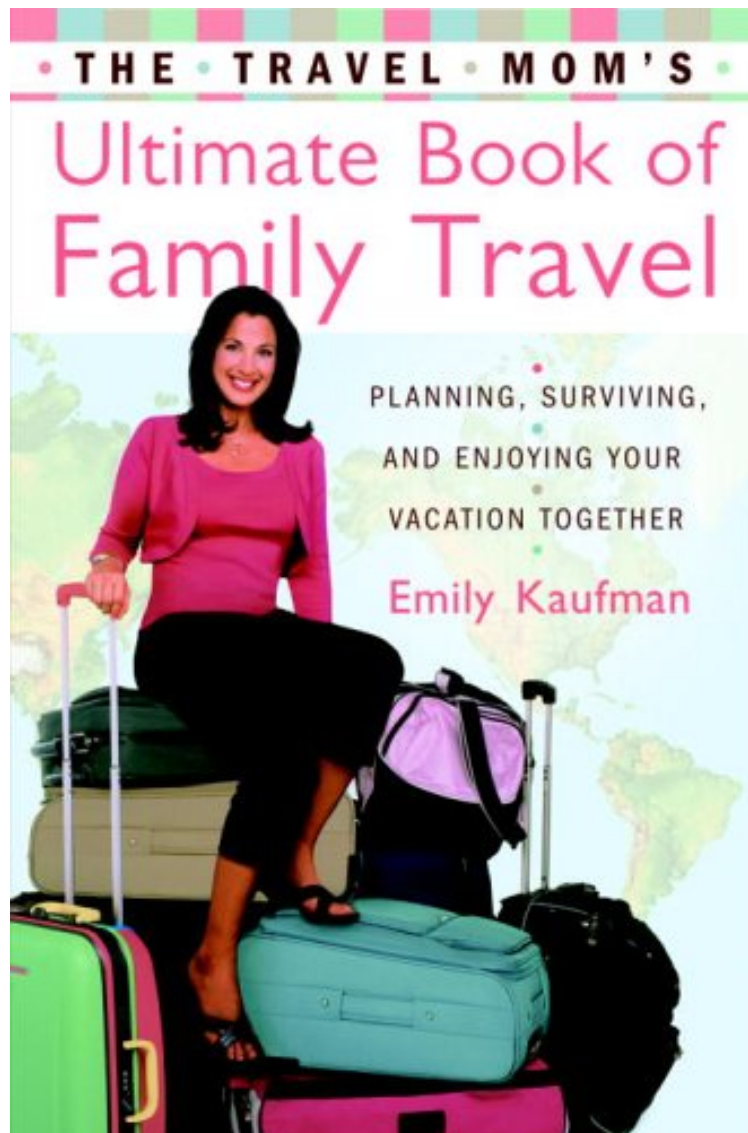


(Mobile ebook) The Travel Mom's Ultimate Book of Family Travel: Planning, Surviving, and Enjoying Your Vacation Together

The Travel Mom's Ultimate Book of Family Travel: Planning, Surviving, and Enjoying Your Vacation Together

Emily Kaufman

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Emily Kaufman : The Travel Mom's Ultimate Book of Family Travel: Planning, Surviving, and Enjoying Your Vacation Together before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Travel Mom's Ultimate Book of Family Travel: Planning, Surviving, and Enjoying Your Vacation Together:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ... mailed it to my daughter and she is very happy with the bookBy

Sally I mailed it to my daughter and she is very happy with the book. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. I am just glad that I didn't buy it... By Daniel Waterman I almost bought this book because I am interested in the topic. Fortunately, I checked the library and they happened to have a copy. Thank goodness for library cards! Honestly, is there anyone who has ever travelled with a kid who doesn't know to bring a "boredom bag" (a bag with crayons and puzzle books) for a long car trip? Want to know a great place to go with kids? Disney World. Who'd have thought? I am still looking for the recently published book that has some creative locations for family vacations. But unless you've been on the international space station since they invented the internet, this isn't it. 3 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Travel Just Became Fun Again! By KCP New York I always get excited about going on vacation...the fun, the adventure, the relaxation, the discovery of new and exotic destinations...sadly, those feelings last about 20 minutes and then it all sinks in. The stress, the anxiety, the planning, the organizing, the scheduling...we've all been there. I've even found myself saying, "Am I just better off staying home?" Worry no more. Finally, along comes a travel resource that let's you relish in the excitement and forget about the stress. Kaufman's writing is fun and easy-to-follow..with well-organized chapters and well-researched ideas, tips, and travel suggestions. Obviously, this is a woman who has logged her fair share of frequent flier miles and seen the best and the worst that is out there...from hotels to highways. Setting herself apart from just the average travel guide writer, Kaufman goes beyond the not-to-miss highlights of Walt Disney World and the must-have-meals in New York and successfully tackles what's important to her audience....how to relax, enjoy yourself...and most importantly create memories with your friends and family. Kaufman is always a leader in family travel...from her website ([...]) to her TV appearances, and now this publication. This is a valuable resource for moms, dads, and anyone leaving home with a rolling suitcase in tow.

A vacation has the special power to bring a family closer together breaking away from familiar routines, allowing time to enjoy each others company, and experiencing the world together. All it takes is the right mindset and some planning. The Travel Mom shows you how. In one invaluable guide, you'll get a host of ideas for some of the most popular options in family travel from cruises and all-inclusive resorts to RV camping and extended-family reunions. The Travel Mom also tackles the sticky realities of family vacations. In a warm, mom-to-mom tone, she gives you tricks and tips you'll appreciate from the first rainy day, missed flight, or scary look at the travel budget. Simple strategies like packing a customized boredom bag with snacks and games can save a long road trip. And her off-the-beaten-track and off-season suggestions are unbeatable to keep things interesting and affordable. A great resource for busy moms everywhere, The Travel Moms Ultimate Book of Family Travel will guarantee their family vacation is worth all the time, money, and emotion they put into it.

About the Author Emily Kaufman, aka The Travel Mom, is the travel contributor for ABC's Good Morning America. In addition to GMA, she has appeared on The View, Good Day Live, and CNN and is a regular contributor to Womens Day magazine. Emily spends most of her time traveling the world in search of terrific family vacations with her children, 13-year-old Gabby and 15-year-old Charlie, and her husband, Sid. She resides in Southern California, but basically lives on a plane. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. ONE Planning Makes Perfect We like to think that a good vacation is one that just happens, miraculously and serendipitously. We tend to imagine that planning might actually take away from the relaxing break from routine that vacation is supposed to represent. Nothing could be further from the truth. Take this travel story. Trudy, Paul, and their two kids, Phoebe and Eric, wanted to take a break for a long weekend from their hectic, demanding lives in a busy suburb outside Chicago. It was late November; the warm months of summer were all but a distant memory and the cold midwestern winter was hunkering down for a long stay. Paul came home one evening from work and announced to Trudy and the kids that he had just bought four tickets on a discount airline to Florida. Trudy said, "Where are we staying?" "I'm not sure yet," replied Paul. "We'll find something when we get there." The family of four packed lightly and jumped on a flight to Florida the next morning. They arrived in the Fort Lauderdale airport to discover it overflowing with people. Trudy looked at Paul and said, "It's not even spring break. What's going on?" They soon found out that there was an enormous convention taking place throughout the city. Not only were there no rental cars available, but there was barely a hotel room open. The dreamy long weekend of sun and fun that Paul had imagined had suddenly turned into a disaster. How did this particular travel story end? The family ended up staying at a not-so-nice airport hotel and relying on expensive taxi rides to take them to the beach, shopping areas, and other tourist attractions. Phoebe and Eric were soon cranky and bored, and no amount of cajoling helped to lift their spirits. By the time they returned home to Chicago, all they wanted to do was crawl into their comfortable beds. Vacations-turned-nightmares are absolutely avoidable if you follow one simple rule: Plan your vacation. Yes, it does take time and focus to plan a good vacation, but that effort always brings its rewards--and this is especially true when planning a vacation with your children. Gone are the days of packing a simple overnight bag with your partner and jumping on a plane out of town. With children in tow--whether those kids are toddlers or teenagers--it is absolutely essential that you take steps to plan your vacation in order to maximize your enjoyment and minimize your discomfort. Planning also ensures getting the most out of your travel dollar. What does planning encompass? Define Your Travel Experience Now it's time to get started. I suggest, at the risk

of sounding corny, sitting in a quiet place and trying to visualize how you want to feel on your vacation. What kind of a vacation experience are you looking for? This decision can feel overwhelming and confusing, even for the most well-traveled person or family. I have developed a short work sheet for helping you determine what kind of trip you want to take, where you want to take that trip, how much you want to or can spend on such a trip, and when you want to go. You may know the answers to most or all of these questions. Fine. Simply use the work sheet to assemble your information in a clear, concise way, which will help you begin to plan and organize.

How much mental stimulation do you want? Are you looking for sun or snowy cold? Do you want to be physically active or no? These are basic but important questions that will help you achieve your vacation dream and avoid having an experience that no one really planned on having--I call this the vacation regrets--which too often means that you end up returning home more exhausted than when you left and need a vacation to recover from your vacation. Yikes! I advise that you sit down with a clean sheet of paper or blank computer screen and read through and answer the questions below. As you do so, you will begin the selection process.

Vacation Planning Work Sheet

1. What is your travel mood: energetic, quiet, or a mix of the two?
2. Do you want to visit a warm or cold climate, or does it matter?
3. Do you and your family enjoy doing a lot of activities, such as sightseeing or touring? Or do you want to spend time primarily resting?
4. Do you and your family enjoy the outdoors, or do you prefer full amenities?
5. Do you already know your dates of travel? With school schedules, many families know well in advance when they are taking vacation. If you know your dates, you have valuable information for determining the costs, availability, and other details about your trip. If you have more flexibility around when you can travel, seasons often help determine the type of trip. If it's February and the days are cold and short, you might be in the mood for a warm hiatus down south. If it's summertime, you may feel more up for an adventure. Then again, if it's winter and you and your family enjoy winter sports, you may want to consider a destination that provides such activities. (You will find specific destination suggestions in Part 2.)
6. How old are your kids, and do their ages preclude some trips? For example, if your kids are under five, then you probably do not want to plan a soft adventure in the outdoors. But if your kids are teenagers, they may want the thrill of a backroads experience. As you peruse the destinations in Part 2, keep in mind how your entire family can enjoy a particular trip.
7. Do you want to stay in a hotel, small inn, or bed-and-breakfast, or do you want to rent a condo or house? Your choice of accommodations in part depends on the ages of your children. If they are very young, then you may be more comfortable in a condo or house. Then again, you may want the services and amenities of a hotel or inn. (See more recommendations for choosing accommodations on page 19.)
8. What is your budget? It's important to decide beforehand exactly how much money you want to spend on your vacation. Determining this figure will help you narrow your field of options--regardless of how much or little you want to spend. Remember, no matter your budget, there is a perfect vacation for you. As you will see in Part 2, by choosing an all-inclusive resort or a cruise vacation, you can predetermine to the penny what you will spend, before you even leave your house!
9. Are you flexible enough to consider off-peak travel? All resorts, hotels, and packagers offer specials during off-peak times. Off-peak can mean midweek or off-season. So if you have flexibility with your vacation dates, then it is very well worth your while to find out rates during these off-peak times. You can receive a significant discount--and enjoy your vacation with a lot fewer crowds. This is true whether you're going north to snowboard or south to sunbathe or to a city to be a culture vulture for a week. But don't worry, if you have to travel during peak times (during holidays and summer vacation), there are plenty of ways to maximize your travel dollar and find added value. Keep reading!

After assembling all your information, you may still not know exactly where you want to go, but you are probably a lot closer to knowing how much you can spend, when you are traveling, and what type of vacation you want. Keep this information at hand as you continue the planning process. Sometimes narrowing your choices is hard because you want to do everything during one seven- or ten-day period. Try to remember that you can and will take many vacations in your lifetime, and that the one you are planning for now should fit your family now. If your family includes babies and toddlers, for example, it may be too soon to visit Disney World, and you might have a more relaxing and enjoyable time at an all-inclusive resort or on a cruise that provides babysitting and organized activities for toddlers. If your kids are no longer toddlers but are under twelve, then certain soft adventures may be too strenuous for them but perfect for when they turn fourteen. As you peruse the vacations described in Part 2, consider the ages and makeup of your family and let these factors help pare down your choices.

Choosing Your Destination

Perhaps your heart is set on taking your kids for a first-time trip to New York City. Or your family is gearing up for its first big trip to Disney World. Perhaps you and your family have decided to go as far away as Hawaii! In the chapters ahead, you will be able to gather more and more information about types of vacations--beach vacations, winter sport trips, cruises, extended visits to an all-inclusive resort or city, outdoor adventure trips, and meandering trips that include stops at some of America's hidden treasures. The more variety you see, the more likely you will be able to narrow your choices and come up with the perfect vacation plan for your family's next trip. It's also helpful in selecting a destination to ask your friends, extended family members, and coworkers where they have traveled and which places they have enjoyed as families. Word of mouth is always a great source of travel information.

To decide on your destination, use the selections described in Part 2 to begin your research. Here is a quick overview of the types of vacations described and their general locations:

- * Beach vacations in and around New England, the mid-Atlantic states, the southern coast, the Gulf shore, the Great Lakes,

California, and Hawaii* Winter vacations in California, Colorado, Wyoming, Vermont, and Canada* All-inclusive resorts in the Caribbean, Mexico, Colorado, Florida, and Bali* Cruises through the islands of the Caribbean and Bahamas, and to Alaska* Soft adventures such as white-water rafting, dude ranches, Outward Bound experiences, and BackRoad adventures* Composites across the U.S., including national parks* Cities including New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Memphis, Chicago, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Seattle, and London, England* Hidde...From AudioFileParents can definitely get a lot out of Emily Kaufman's chatty advice for family travel. GOOD MORNING AMERICA's "Travel Mom" has many tips for planning vacations, from initial conversations about destinations to notes on actual family-friendly resorts. She moves through her sensible, and often invaluable, ideas at a rapid rate, and the warmth in her voice overcomes a strident timbre. Because of the awkwardness of trying to make actual notes from a spoken program, listeners will want to seek out the print edition. The bonus gem in this audiobook is a lively, insightful conversation about audiobooks between Kaufman and author Judy Blume. Blume's engaging manner will resonate with parents, and Kaufman's points about the family time generated by audiobook listening are worth it all. R.F.W. AudioFile 2006, Portland, Maine-- Copyright AudioFile, Portland, Maine