



Don't Pack the Stress: 9 Tips for Saving Money on a Summer Vacation

Nonprofit credit counseling agency helps families curb expenses during the high-cost travel season

PHOENIX – (May 17, 2016) – It's that time of year when Americans pack their bags, beckoned by the beach, the mountains or a visit with loved ones. And while summer is the most popular time to travel, relatively few people abide by a budget and proactively seek out money-saving options.

"Summer is the time to relax and have fun, but it's hard to enjoy yourself when money concerns are nagging you," said Mike Sullivan, spokesperson for Take Charge America, a [national nonprofit credit counseling and debt management agency](#). "Fortunately, there are countless ways to save money and still have the time of your life."

Sullivan offers consumers nine tips for vacationing on a budget:

1. **Establish a vacation fund:** Don't rob your emergency savings for a trip. You'll regret it when the unexpected occurs, and potentially fall further into debt. Do consider setting up a separate savings account just for vacations if you have the budget to accommodate it.
2. **Sell your stuff:** If you've been meaning to sell that barely used treadmill or guitar, now's the time. Earmark that cash for your vacation fund.
3. **Pack two in one:** If you're unsure where you want to go, consider starting your vacation in a jump-off city with access to two destinations. For example, travel to San Francisco and take a day trip to wine country.
4. **Scour group deal sites:** Once you've selected your destination, sign up for Groupon, Living Social and other deal sites within that geography to save on meals and activities.
5. **Be flexible:** Most people travel on Fridays and Saturdays, but you can snag cheaper flights and hotel rates on weekdays.
6. **Fly cheap:** You can also save money by choosing a regional airport. It may require extra time to drive to your final destination, but it could save significant dollars.
7. **Be smart with room and board:** By-owner rentals and sites like Airbnb may offer cheaper rates than hotels. Moreover, renting a home gives you access to a kitchen where you can cook your meals and save money on dining. If you must stay in a hotel, pick one that offers complimentary breakfast or includes a kitchenette for preparing meals.
8. **Skip the car rental:** Unless you really need a car, use Uber or an hourly rental service to get around – especially if you're staying in a hotel with a daily parking fee or are traveling to a city with a good mass transit system.
9. **Dine out for lunch:** Even the most frugal vacationers like to eat out every once in a while. Dine out for lunch instead of dinner to save money. You're also less likely to splurge on expensive cocktails and wine.

For more financial tips, visit [Take Charge America](#).

About Take Charge America, Inc.

Founded in 1987, Take Charge America, Inc. is a nonprofit agency offering financial education and counseling services including credit counseling, debt management, student loan counseling, housing counseling and bankruptcy counseling. It has helped more than 1.6 million consumers nationwide manage their personal finances and debts. To learn more, visit www.takechargeamerica.org or call (888) 822-9193.

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