



[Group Trip Advisor](#) - A Blog Devoted to Group Travel

[Planning Guides](#)

Group travelers have unique needs, depending on the trip purpose. Bachelor party planners debate over which type of alcohol to consume and whether or not a stripper is appropriate. Family reunion organizers decide how big of a reunion to have and where to have it. Brides and grooms deliberate on pros and cons of a destination wedding or a home-grown wedding.

Peruse these planning guides to find tips, advice, and new approaches to planning anything from a road trip, to family vacations, to ski trips, to weddings, to girls getaways, and more.

[Family Reunion Planning Guide](#): Gathering the generations together takes time and patience, but is worth the lasting memories.

[Group Getaways with Friends](#): Travel with college friends, poker pals, other couples, golf buddies, or just the girls.

[Wedding Planning Guide](#): Whether the ceremony is a quick Vegas-themed affair, in a dreamy destination, or where you live and work, the devil is in the details. Here are tips to simplify the wedding planning process.

[Ski Guide for Groups](#): Snowboarders and skiers alike can use this essential planning tool of ski resorts, checklists, and après ski activities before hitting the slopes.

[Group Reservation Guide](#): Tips for negotiating group hotel rates, group flight reservations, and more.

[Clubs, Teams, Organizations Guide](#): Become a group trip planning expert with tips about group reservations, how to organize a trip with ease, and other helpful advice.

September 30, 2008 in [Family Travel](#), [Friends Groups](#), [Group Travel Tips](#), [Planning Guides](#), [Weddings](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

[Top Family Resorts: Travel + Leisure Style](#)

Readers of *Travel + Leisure* have cast their votes for the [50 best resorts for families](#) in top vacation hotspot categories such as the U.S. + Canada, Mexico + Caribbean, Hawaii and Florida. The 2007 results are in and at the top of the Mexico + Caribbean and Hawaii categories are two Four Seasons resorts. Read on for more details of where your kids can be entertained while you're being pampered.

October 02, 2007 in [Family Travel](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

Safe Cars for Family Road Trips

Summer is settling in nicely and autumn leaf-peeping season is just around the corner. It's the right time to think of safe family vehicles not only for toting the kids to school, but also for those classic road trip vacations.

MSN posted an article on [Consumer Reports' top ten vehicles for family road trips](#). Fear not, hip parents! There are more than just family wagons and minivans. The list includes the likes of Lexus, Audi and Cadillac cars. These autos are state-of-the-art with curtain airbags, stability control, not to mention a slew of reliability testing, leg room for long trips and other features Consumer Reports deems ideal for comfort and safety while driving.

So hit the road for a weekend escape, ski vacation or family reunion. Don't forget the snacks for the kiddos!

August 14, 2007 in [Family Travel](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

Planning a Reunion is No Picnic, Spread the Work

That reunion you're planning, or thinking of planning, is coming up more quickly than you might think. Studies show that while most reunions take place in summer, reunion planning goes on year-round. In a recent [article](#) for *Leisure Group Travel*, Edith Wagner of *Reunions Magazine* writes that accommodations for summer reunions are typically locked in by March so that members can plan ahead. She adds that planning and activities are becoming more organized as well, with programs often including golf tournaments or city tours in addition to the classic group picnic.

Because planning a reunion can be a daunting undertaking, Wagner urges planners to [delegate](#) and use all the help they can get. Getting others involved in planning generates "ownership" in the event's success and spreads around the gratification, as well as the workload. Of course, [TripHub](#) is a great way to invite others to participate and keep everyone informed throughout the process. See our [Family Reunion Guide](#) for more tips and suggestions on planning your reunion. Have fun!

February 13, 2007 in [Family Travel](#), [Reunions](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

Kid-friendly Golf Resorts: Ten ways to know one when you see one

By guest blogger Suzanne Rowan Kelleher

Love family vacations? Love golf? Bringing the two together has never been easier, as more hotels and resorts are wooing parents with excellent golf schools and family-minded packages. But how will you

know if a resort's family golf program is really as kid-friendly as promised?

You can tell a lot simply by reading the property's brochure or web site, says Jerramy Hainline, director of instruction at the [Hilton Golf Academy](#), whose three resorts welcome over 350 kids each year. Compare how the resort describes its junior golf instruction with how it portrays its adult offerings. "If there's very little difference in how the classes are described, it's more than likely that the resort hasn't tailored anything for kids," says Hainline. "If a resort or school truly wants kids there, it will have made accommodations to offer junior golfers a quality experience."

What else should you look for? Here are 10 more clues that a resort will deliver a golf vacation that's truly a family affair:

- **On-course instruction.** A no-brainer, right? Far from it. You'd be surprised at how often a kids' golf "program" turns out to be a 90-minute etiquette lesson in a windowless conference room or an hour on a driving range plus a soda break. It's critical that a program teaches kids how to play the game, not just how to drive a ball or putt. "Kids need to experience being on the course to bring it all together," stresses Hainline. So if a resort's junior program doesn't feature any on-course time, it's a deal breaker.
- **Reduced green fees.** Discounts for junior golfers or deals where "kids play free" with a paying adult demonstrate that a resort is serious about encouraging kids to play.
- **Low student-instructor ratio.** Class size for kids ages 6 to 17 should never exceed six kids per instructor, says Hainline. "And for 4- to 5-year-olds, the ratio should be closer to 2 to 1."
- **Inclusive instruction.** Even preschoolers can learn the fundamentals of golf, including the basic rules of etiquette—whose turn it is to putt, where to stand, and that old bugaboo, when to be quiet. A family-friendly resort will have come up with ways for kids as young as 5 or 6 to participate in the game.
- **Child-savvy pros.** "You want instructors who have experience with the programs and a history of working with junior golfers," says Eric Alpenfels, director of instruction at the Golf Academy at [Pinehurst Resort](#) in North Carolina. "I think five years of experience is a good start. Junior-golf certification programs vary from facility to facility." If you can't find this information on the resort's web site, call and ask.
- **Family-friendly tees.** Most youngsters don't have the skill and strength required to play a long course. To get kids in the game, many resorts now offer forward tees set at shorter distances. Having a variety of tees allows the family to play together, with Mom and Dad playing the long course and kids hitting from the forward tees. Some resorts even have special scorecards with more realistic pars for kids.

- **Kid-size clubs.** "Cut-offs" are adult clubs that have simply been shortened, resulting in a heavy head relative to shaft length. They're better than nothing, says Hainline. But it's preferable that a resort provide kids with junior clubs, which are scaled down appropriately from top to bottom.
- **Big balls, little balls.** Young kids are still working on eye-hand coordination. At the Hilton Golf Academy, junior golfers start off hitting beach balls. Once they've mastered those, it's on to rubber balls, then tennis balls, and finally golf balls.
- **Designated family time.** Many resorts now offer special tee times reserved just for families. Pinehurst's "Family Fairways" program goes one better, giving parents and their kids one course all to themselves for several hours each afternoon. "Family Fairways takes the intimidation factor out of play," says Alpenfels. "You don't need to worry about who's behind you, or hitting in the middle of the fairway, or going straight to the putting green."
- **Non-golf kids' activities.** If family members have varying levels of skill and interest, it's simply unrealistic to expect your whole clan to golf 24/7. Look for a swimming pool and other recreational activities to keep everyone happy. An on-site kids' camp or babysitting service will add flexibility to your schedule.

Bio: Suzanne Rowan Kelleher is the Editor-in-Chief of [WeJustGotBack.com](http://www.WeJustGotBack.com), a family travel website with resort and hotel reviews, how-to articles, readers' tips and recommendations, and planning advice for kid-friendly vacations.

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February 08, 2007 in [Family Travel](#), [Golf Travel](#), [Guest Bloggers](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

Top 10 Thanksgiving Dinner Topics

Turkey day is almost here. Families will gather across America to feast on meat, stuffing, mashed carbs, cranberries, and some form of green veggie dish. Aside from the obvious Congressional overturn, dinner table conversations will inevitably turn toward personal life, especially since relatives and/or close friends are gathered in one place.

Use the Thanksgiving holiday as an opportunity to start planning family reunions or trips with friends. At minimum, share upcoming travel plans. You just might discover useful tips on what to do/see in an area or thoughtful advice on how to solve a trip planning issue from your wise resources at the table. Ten table topics:

1. **Family reunion plans:** Start the discussions among your immediate family and any relatives at the table on ideas for the next reunion.
2. **Brainstorm ideas** for reunion locations, (someone's house? a destination that everyone can travel to?) themes, (someone's

birthday? an important anniversary?) and timing. These are three critical early planning steps for reunions. Why not discuss while you pass dishes during Thanksgiving, or are all on a walk the day after Thanksgiving, or gathered around the fireplace visiting?

3. **Upcoming weddings:** Gather ideas from decorations to music to locations if you're the bride or groom; and if you're going to attend a wedding soon, ask for ideas on wedding gifts.
4. **Spring break trips** for college students, teachers at the table, or parents who use that opportunity for a family vacation: Gather ideas, brag about trips already set, or ask to borrow items needed such as snorkel gear, binoculars, etc.
5. **Winter or ski travel plans** for the upcoming season: Thanksgiving is traditionally more than turkey, it's the start of ski season at slopes across the Northern Hemisphere. Plan a ski trip with family and/or friends. The deals are as fresh as the snow, but will be harder to get later in the season. After dinner, take a trip to the computer and research ski resorts and accommodations that fit people's budgets.
6. **Road trips:** The beauty of a road trip is the wandering nature of the journey. Because you can detour to so many tiny towns and off-the-beaten path areas, you may want to gather ideas from the brain power at the dinner table so you don't miss something.
7. **Any travel abroad** is usually planned several months to a year in advance, and sharing ideas or learnings from research about the area is great table conversation. You may even be surprised at who else around the table knows about a certain country. Some of the best conversations can be jump-started by someone saying they are traveling to a foreign country within the next year.
8. **Trips with friends:** Share upcoming plans for trips with friends (road trips, girls getaways, bachelor parties) and find out who might know about the destination and surrounding attractions. Use your family and friends as resources.
9. **Delegation:** with so many loved ones around during this holiday, this is a perfect time to delegate assignments for planning reunions or weddings to people who can help. Shuttling people to and from the airport, decorations, meals, activities, child care, rain plan alternatives, etc.
10. **Ask for planning tips** from family, relatives, and close friends at the table. Whatever upcoming vacation(s) you're planning, asking for help can yield sage advice. You might be surprised at what you learn.

[TripHub](#) is ideal for any group planning trips together with useful tools such as [trip home pages](#), [blog discussion areas](#), [event schedules](#), and ways to share itinerary information. Give it a try for your next group trip. See how TripHub works with a [tour](#) or via [FAQs](#).



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[How to Avoid Family Vacations from Hell](#)

I just discovered a site called [BabyCenter](#) with loads of good family and parenting articles. One of the best articles I've read in a long time about family travel is called [Family Vacation Disasters and How to Avoid Them](#). Classic.

Parents who are pregnant, who have infants, toddlers, or older kids will all gain some wisdom from this sage advice. There are numerous real stories from parents that teach good lessons. And anyone who travels with friends or family members who have kids, you'll also get a kick out of these stories. But overall, my favorite part was the [7 Ways to Avoid Vacation Hell](#). Here are my favorite excerpts:

1. **Call ahead:** *A sure sign the hotel is kid-friendly is if you inquire about how friendly they feel toward kids and they say, "We've got a camp run by an art teacher." Bad sign: "I think there might be some crayons around here."*
2. **Think outside of the box:** *Travelwise, faster or cheaper is not always better. Your whole life you've probably sought nonstop flights, but now it might actually be easier to get out and run around halfway through. Or you might want to invest in a seat for the baby, even though you don't have to. For a short trip, you might consider taking a train — so you can cuddle and nurse the baby — instead of driving.*
3. **Do your driving at night:** *Plan car trips after bedtime. The kids will sleep, there will be less traffic, and you may even get to have your first adult conversation in months! Also, you can snack uninterrupted on the good chocolates you've been hiding from the children.*
4. **Have a bathroom plan:** *If you're traveling by car, consider bringing a potty with you so your new toilet-trainer has a familiar place to sit. Bring emergency diapers on the plane. Plan plenty of bathroom stops for any trip longer than ten minutes.*
5. **Do less:** *It sounds simple, and it is. You'll have years of vacations with your kids: Do less now, and enjoy your time with them. It's the one week of the year when you don't need to rush everyone — so don't. One good rule of thumb: While you're planning your itinerary, plan for half of every day to be free, unscheduled time.*

Source: BabyCenter



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[Kids As Trip Leaders](#)



Ask any proud parent and they'll tell you their kid is their highest priority. That means when deciding where to go for vacation, toddlers and kiddies usually factor into the equation. Without having the finger dexterity to book tickets or cognitive development to plan itineraries or agendas, little munchkins across the world help set the pace and plan for family vacations or reunions with friends who have kids.

I recognized this when my nephew was born this year (my first nephew ever!) and our whole extended family decided to gear Thanksgiving around where he (and his parents) live. We just may decide to adjust schedules around baby for Christmas as well. Why not? As the first grandchild in our family, we're all enamored and want to spend as much free time as possible before he's grown up and it's too late. OK. So it isn't that urgent. But you get the point.

And when kids are in school with more pronounced likes, dislikes, and interests, parents can consider what types of vacations to take the kids on: nature explorations, camping trips, road trips to the national parks, beach vacations at luxury hotels, sailing adventures, overseas travel, theme parks, etc.

When organizing that next group trip with the kids, consider how much is being determined by the kids themselves. Their influence is significant. Note: Subtle TripHub t-shirt placement in the photo helps drive this concept home.



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[Gift Vacations: A Luxury Travel Treat](#)

The New York Times ran a story on a new trend for millionaire

vacations: why travel alone when you can afford to [take your friends and family](#) and pay for them? Group travel doesn't discriminate against cash in pocket, banks, investments, etc. Everyone travels for the same reason when planning a group trip: to stay connected to close friends and family.

This new luxury travel trend - dubbed as a result of the rich in America getting richer and not being shy to foot the bill to spend quality time with people - presents interesting opportunities for group travel, along with dilemmas.

- **Opportunities:** Free time at no to little cost to enjoy a vacation, opportunity to see a new place or try out a new style of living potentially out of bounds otherwise, take the attitude of "carpe diem" and just go for it.
- **Dilemmas:** The guilt of feeling obligated to somehow return the enormous favor, the feelings of inequity among friends, not feeling "right" about accepting such a gift. And the giftor must decide who's in and who's not invited, which can get uncomfortable with those uninvited. Ugh.

On my boating trip this summer (split the costs evenly), one of our stops was Roche Harbor, San Juan Island. We happened to arrive during a mega yacht meet-up and our 33-foot wooden boat was dwarfed by many pristine, fiberglass ships. For the size of little quaint Roche Harbor (at least that's how I remember it from my childhood) it seemed ridiculous. But after reading this NYT article (which is intriguing, and a must read) now I wonder how many people on yachts were on gift vacations.

If you have the means to plan a luxury trip with friends and family (whether you gift it or not), you can use [TripHub](#) to coordinate and share trip details.



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Avoid Common Holiday Headaches

Holidays are just around the corner. Families and friends will gather to spend quality time reconnecting. While the holidays are some of the busiest travel times of the year, there are several prep steps to take to avoid the typical holiday stress.

Here's how to avoid common holiday stressors by planning ahead:

Long lines

Avoid long lines at airports by taking an extra day off of work (on less busy travel days), or traveling when flights are less likely to be full. Be flexible.

Travel expenses

Book early to save on flights and hotels. If you see a sale price for a package deal (hotel + airfare) or hotel, or flight, you should grab it as prices are only likely to increase as the date approaches. Also, consider airports nearby but not exactly where you wanted to go and consider renting a car, taking a train, or a puddle jumper plane to your destination. Sometimes, creative planning can get you there for cheaper. Shop around on discount sites or even use sky miles to help out.

Rides to and from airport

Nothing is worse than standing in the cold outside an airport hoping your ride shows up soon, at that terminal, at that airport, on that day. Coordinate early and use [TripHub's Event Schedule](#) to list rides available for people in your group. If Uncle Bob is planning on picking up Aunt Sue at 8:40 PM the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, note this on the Event Schedule of your trip home page so others can hitch a ride if convenient.

Where to stay

If gathering at a relative's house, discuss or share accommodation options together. [TripHub](#) has tools to do just that. 1) You can discuss accommodation options within the [Trip Blog](#) when you set up a trip home page with your group, or 2) discuss hotels using the custom feature built for making comments within a hotel search results page, or 3) if you have set plans or can open your house up for guests, share your accommodation information with other members of your group.

No peace and quiet

Want to ensure you have a little [solo time on your trip](#), so you aren't inundated with family 24/7? Here are a few tips for getting time to yourself through the joys of iPods, books, exercise, and dogs.

Missed opportunities

To plan ahead on attractions, shows, museums, theater events, golf tee times, and other activities that could be sold out, you can use [TripHub's Trip Blog](#) and/or [Event Schedule](#) to share ideas and information with people and avoid any confusion.

To plan your holiday group getaway, you can use [TripHub](#) to plan where to stay, how to get there, and what to do when you're together. It's an easy, free way to plan ahead and avoid the stress of the happy holiday season.



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