

How to Save Money When Planning your Next Family Vacation

- 1) **Be Flexible With Travel Dates** – A minor tweak in your travel plans can save a bundle, especially if you're buying tickets for a whole family. Flying during the week instead of on the weekend can save you money. Also, flying with connections instead of direct or non-stop may help to lower the cost of your airfare. Small changes can save you hundreds of dollars.
- 2) **Travel off-season** – Many families feel they need to travel during the Summer months when children are out of school. Try to travel in the shoulder seasons early Fall or late Spring, just before or after peak season. Prices are low, the weather is nice. Shoulder seasons might not always be the warmest or sunniest, but the prices are far better.
- 3) **Choose Hotels or Resorts that offer free breakfast** - It's no secret that eating your way through vacation can be costly. When booking your hotel stay, look for the hotels that offer "children stay free" under a certain age. Many places today will offer a full cook to order breakfast or a continental breakfast complimentary with your stay.
- 4) **Save BIG on luggage fees - Airlines** are not shy when it comes to charging for your luggage. When shopping for airfare, make sure to figure in the cost of your bags per person. Double up when packing and make the most use of your carry on. Also, make sure to look for airline suppliers that offer to fly your bags for free. It can make a huge difference in the long run!
- 5) **Vacation where the dollar is still strong.** These include family-friendly places such as Mexico, many parts of the Caribbean, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, and Ecuador. In the Caribbean, islands such as Aruba, Barbados, Bonaire, Curacao, Antigua, Barbuda, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Dominica and Grenada all have currencies that are tied or pegged to the U.S. dollar. The dollar also goes a long way in Mexico and in many Central American countries. If your family enjoys nature, adventure and exploration, consider visiting such spots as Panama or Mexico.