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Great Destinations for Grownups

Avoid the college crowds and book a rejuvenating, budget-friendly getaway.

Your vacation is finally here! Chances are, you want to be as far away from partying college kids as possible—fortunately, we've brought in three travel experts to help you get the most out of your break this year (and save money in the process!).

Set Travel Goals

"The first step is to decide what sort of vacation you want," says Hope S. Philbrick, founder and editor-in-chief of [GetawaysforGrownups.com](#), an online magazine for adults seeking travel options sans children. Choices can be anything from urban or rural to beach or mountain, near or far, luxurious or frugal!



"Teachers looking for a more relaxing getaway should head to the beach, while those who want to be more active should plan a trip to the mountains, and cities offer more in terms of culture, attractions and shopping areas," contends HomeAway senior vice president Jon Gray. For seaside destination ideas, read "[Pick Your Perfect Summer Getaway from These 8 Unique Beaches](#)."

Once you determine the overall setting, it's time choose a specific destination. "College students are far more likely to congregate at a beachside strip mall than a national or state park, at a resort pool than an art museum, at an amusement park than a historic site," explains Philbrick. "Families will flock to Disney World, the Wisconsin Dells, etc., so choose accordingly."

The good news: There's no shortage of destinations offering a respite from the partying stereotypes often associated with this travel season, says Jeanenne Tornatore, senior editor at Orbitz.com. To wit, a few of our experts' favorite locales:

- **Sedona, AZ.** "If you're looking for warm weather, pool, spas, golf, hiking, biking and even catching some MLB baseball games on the cheap,

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Sedona will meet your expectations," says Tornatore. "This area is known for its beautiful natural surroundings, plethora of outdoor activities and great full-service resorts."

- **"The Caribbean and Mexico** boast several adults-only resorts, including Iberostar Grand Hotel Bavaro in Punta Cana Dominican Republic and Sandals Barbados, which are great if you're the sort of traveler who prefers to stay in one place and get away from it all in a beautiful setting," recommends Philbrick. Look to Riviera Maya to avoid the Cancun chaos.
- If peace and quiet is your ultimate goal, consider renting a cabin at a national or state park. Philbrick recommends **Burnham Cottage** at General Coffee State Park in Nicholls, Georgia—it's a three-bedroom house you can have all to yourself while surrounded by over 1,500 acres—while Gray suggests **Steamboat Springs**. "It's a popular destination for outdoor lovers and is [just] five miles away from Routt National Forest and Fish Creek Falls, which boasts a 283-foot-tall waterfall."
- You can't go wrong with a ski vacation, and resorts out West are devoid of that crazy party atmosphere, says Tornatore, who favors **Beaver Creek**. "It's a bit more off-the-beaten-path than some of it's neighboring resort towns and offers so many different lodging options, yet still maintains an upscale atmosphere."
- If you're really trying to get an adults-only experience, Philbrick suggests scheduling plenty of **21-and-over** activities into your itinerary, like **comedy clubs, casinos and spas**. Every city has something; for example, in Atlanta, there's an adults-only bowling alley (The Painted Pin), restaurant (Viande Rouge) and events (Georgia Craft Beer Festival). "Options like these can provide an adult escape even close to home," explains Philbrick who also recommends exploring towns like **Napa Valley**. "[Since] wineries, distilleries and breweries are also adult-focused, have a great time exploring Napa, drive the Kentucky Bourbon Trail or ride the Colorado Brewery Bus."

Do Your Research

If you're unsure about the vibe in a destination, hop online and read customer reviews—"they've stayed at the properties and offer unbiased, firsthand accounts of what to expect," says Gray. You can also just call the resort and ask them what the atmosphere is like during your vacation dates," adds Tornatore, noting that most will be upfront with you.

Ways to Save Money

Traveling during peak seasons can be costly, but there are some clever ways to save.

- **Book early.** This is one of the busiest travel seasons of the year—it's not a time to wait for last minute deals, says Tornatore. Booking early will also give you more options to choose from, adds Gray.
- **Rent a house or condo with a group.** "Vacation rentals are an ideal option for groups and families, as they offer twice the space at half the cost of a hotel room, and come with other budget-friendly amenities such as kitchens to prepare your own meals, washers and dryers to avoid pricey bag checking fees [and privacy]," says Gray.

- **Stay off the beaten path.** Look for lodging that's not located near popular attractions, such as the waterfront or theme parks, says Gray. "The farther you are from tourist areas, the better the deal." Likewise, properties in lesser-known destinations cost less because demand isn't as high.
- **Look for value-adds.** "[Many resorts offer] things like free breakfast, free wi-fi, and resort credits that are basically free cash to use towards on-property amenities like golf and spa services," says Tornatore. All-inclusives can be another great option.
- **Travel on the off-peak days.** "Fridays and Saturdays are typically the most popular days for travelers to head out, so if you can wait until Sunday or Monday to depart, you'll often find better seat options and lower fares for flights," says Tornatore.
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