

Travel Tips: / Tips to Help You Vacation Without the Financial Stress

< *By Gordon Newton* >

There's nothing quite like a vacation. It's a time to take a break from reality and explore another world.

Even though many people travel to alleviate stress, planning and organizing a vacation can actually cause stress.

The most common type of "travel stress" is financial. Seventy four percent of people say they've gone into debt to pay for a vacation, to the tune of \$1,108 on average, according to the 2017 [LearnVest Money Habits and Confessions](#) survey.

and preparation, you can manage the financial stress caused from vacation.

Give Yourself a Reasonable Budget

Developing a budget and sticking to it is one of the best ways to manage financial stress. Spend time researching lodging, dining, transportation, and entertainment costs in the area and build from there. The biggest mistake when developing a travel budget is not allotting for unexpected costs.

A strong budget will allow you to enjoy your vacation without worry about money. And returning from vacation knowing you stuck to your budget will be a relief.

Start Saving and Planning in Advance

If you're planning to travel throughout the year, open an additional savings account and put money into it each week, or keep a spare change jar in your home or office.

Planning in advance is key. Bearing the brunt of expensive plane tickets weeks or months in advance will give your bank account time to recover before spending again. Keep an eye out for deals in the weeks leading up to the vacation for activities you'd like to do. Capitalize on

\$5 off admission to a museum or park. Little savings add up on your budget's bottom line.

Incorporate Low-Cost or Free Activities

Sightseeing is of the cheapest vacation activities.

Consider planning a self-guided tour of an historical neighborhood or finding a scenic trail to hike. Plan a day at the beach or enjoy some time using the amenities provided in the place you're staying, such as the pool or hot tub.

Look for All-Inclusive or Alternative Lodging

Though five-star hotels are appealing, check if alternative lodging options are available.

Options can range from staying with a family friend, which is great if you're traveling solo, or renting a vacation home, which is great if you're traveling with a group or staying for a long period of time. Rentals can be much more affordable than hotels, especially if you split the cost with a group.

all-inclusive resorts. These resorts help you save money on extra fees for things like drinks and meals, along with other daily expenses.

Why Timeshares Might Not Be Right for You

Though many believe that a timeshare is a pathway to easy and cost-efficient vacations, these purchases tend to create more financial stress. Most prospective timeshare owners aren't aware of the additional fees that increase each year and the multitude of challenges faced when trying to rid yourself of ownership.

Another downside of many timeshares is you may have to vacation in the spot each year unless you choose to pay more money to trade your timeshare for another location. Not only does this limit your travels, you will also have to be flexible in your scheduling as multiple people can share ownership.

The best way to avoid timeshare ownership is to avoid the pitch. Timeshare salespeople are trained to be persistent and not take "no" for an answer. Instead of attending a timeshare meeting, explore the new city!

Take the money you'd be putting into

owning a timeshare and use it to save up for a vacation you can take at any place of your choosing instead.

Exit Your Timeshare

There's nothing more frustrating than paying for something you don't use or can no longer use. Countless timeshare owners report not having used their timeshare for years, commonly due to failing health or the inability to book a trip. But they're still stuck paying the ever-rising maintenance fees. This is the opposite of what timeshare ownership was intended to be, in that this causes stress as opposed to the joy of vacationing.

Sadly, it's not easy to get rid of a timeshare on your own because they do not hold value and because the resale market is flooded. Few timeshare owners factor in the cost of getting rid of their timeshares. But those who successfully get out of their contracts using a trusted exit company say it's money well spent and it gives them control over vacation spending again.

When seeking out a timeshare exit company, search for one with a solid reputation because there are many scammers out there seeking to prey on desperate timeshare owners. Look for a minimum five-year track record of success,

and research the company's credentials through resources such as the Better Business Bureau or the state's attorney general. And download a free copy of the Consumer's Guide to Timeshare Exit, which is a great resource to help you navigate through this process.

Remind Yourself That Vacation Is Possible Because of Your Hard Work

We work hard for our money, and we should be able to see the benefits of it. When you notice negative thoughts creeping into your mind surrounding your vacation time, remind yourself of this: It's okay to spend the money that you worked hard to earn—you deserve time to relax!

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