

Tips For Road-Tripping On \$150 A Day

(NAPSA)—The road trip can be the quintessential summer family vacation. But does it make sense to go on a great family adventure in today's economy?

"Yes," says travel expert Amy Graff, who writes the blog *OnTheGoWithAmy.com*.

"The classic family road trip is back. With the average price of a gallon of gas less than it was last year, hitting the road is one of the cheapest options for a family vacation."

Last year, Graff and her family toured Route 66 on \$250 a day. This year, they're hitting the highway again, but on a tighter budget of \$150 a day.

Graff offers these tips for families looking to shave costs:

Book hotels that offer extra value. Don't just look at hotels with the lowest price. Consider all add-on fees before pulling out your credit card. Look for hotels that provide Internet, breakfast, parking and other amenities at no extra cost. Also, many hotel chains have special promotions to help you add a few days to your trip. For example, Best Western hotels will reward a free night to members of its loyalty program who book two separate stays at any of its 2,200 North American hotels between June 21 and August 16, 2009. (bestwestern.com)

Don't pay for entertainment. Hit up the library for Books on Tape®, DVDs and storybooks. Play I-Spy, 20 Questions or Name that



Amy Graff, who writes the blog "On the Go With Amy," plans to drive the length of the Mississippi River with her two kids and husband on a budget of \$150 a day. This includes gas, food, hotel, attractions and all the pie they can eat along the way.

Tune and download free printable car bingo and more games at familyfun.com. Forgo hefty admission fees and instead spread out a picnic blanket at parks, build sand castles at beaches and stretch your car-cramped legs on hiking trails. Also, plan your trip around free festivals, fairs and parades. (festivals.com)

Save on gas. Extra weight cuts fuel economy, so pack light. Carrying 100 pounds in the trunk reduces fuel efficiency by 1 to 2 percent. When hauling cargo, use the trunk instead of a roof rack, which decreases mileage by as much as 5 percent. Also, underinflated tires can decrease fuel economy by as much as 2 percent below the recommended level. Lastly, check with aaafuelgaugereport.com for the lowest gas prices.