

# FAMILY TRAVEL

## Great Family Vacations: Just Add Water

(NAPSA)—The best family vacations, many say, blend value, ease and just enough adventure to keep boredom at bay.

Traditional trips such as camping and theme parks may not appeal to every family. And three restaurant meals a day can take a big bite out of any vacation budget. RVs are an affordable alternative, and their equally convenient counterpart—houseboating—is likewise enjoying a new wave of popularity.

According to one of America's largest houseboat vacation companies, navigating a houseboat is even easier than driving your minivan around town. There could be several reasons:

- No experience or special licenses are necessary.
- No traffic gridlock. Houseboats are simple to operate and first-time renters are brought up to speed with the thorough orientation given upon arrival at the dock. Think of a houseboat as a really big RV but with instant access to refreshing waterways.
- Houseboaters never have to stress about reserving a room or waiting in line at a ticket booth or fast-food counter. Picture this: You're aboard your houseboat, heading into your own cove, wilderness before you, blue sky above and smooth afternoon water aft. You glide right up to the sand, tie up, turn off the engine and ask your "crew" what they want to do now. Fish. Swim. Nap. Water-ski. Play ball. Fire up the grill. Picnic on the shore. Take photos. Relax



with a good book or daydream.

- Planning a houseboat vacation is fun and easy. First, pick a place—do you want to fly or drive to your destination? Is water-skiing a priority, fishing or being able to explore interesting inlets and hike through a woody wilderness? Seven Crown destinations include California's Lake Shasta and the California Delta, Arizona's Lake Mohave and Nevada's Lake Mead, where these activities are just some of those possible on a houseboat vacation.

Pick a houseboat model—the Seven Crown fleet includes models that sleep from six to 13 (all with full kitchen) with amenities such as penthouse sleeping areas, spiral staircases, wet bars, sun-decks and barbecues in a variety of configurations.

- Large houseboat companies run full-service marinas; they rent

ski, patio and fishing boats and personal watercraft, sell supplies and fuel and offer lodging, restaurants, RV parks, moorage and more.

- Packing is easy. Into the suitcase go swimsuits and shorts, flip-flops, T-shirts, sun hat, maybe a deck of cards or board games and toiletries. You can even bring a water-worthy dog along. Most houseboat operators are pet friendly; Seven Crown doesn't even charge extra.

How long can you get away? The most popular houseboat vacations run three to seven days and most houseboaters return from their voyage wondering where the time went.

- First-time houseboaters can find many helpful tips on the Web at [www.sevencrown.com/tips](http://www.sevencrown.com/tips).

For more guidance, information or reservations, call Seven Crown Resorts toll-free at (800) 752-9669.