



Forgot To Plan Your Vacation? You're Not Up A Creek

(NAPSA)—Whatever your dream vacation may be, there is ample time to make those dreams a reality. With a bit of clever maneuvering, you can still make that warm-weather escape in style.

Use the following tips from Rich Beattie, an editor at outdoor recreation and adventure travel Web site GORP.com, and stake your claim to the adventure of a lifetime, even at the last minute.

1. **Don't Panic:** Take a deep breath. There are still airline tickets and campgrounds available for summer. Just stay calm and do some research into the going rates. The more prices you check out, the easier it will be to recognize a great deal when it comes around.

2. **Stay Loose and Be Flexible:** Had your heart set on hiking through the Austrian Alps, but the flights to Innsbruck are sold out? No problem. This doesn't mean you need to change your plans dramatically. Try flying into Munich or Zurich and hop on a train. It's all part of the adventure. If flights to Alaska are sold out, explore another arctic environment like Greenland, or try camping in a national forest instead of a booked-up national park.

3. **Check for Cancellations:** If someone else gets called home on business, a spot for you opens up. It does happen, and more often than you might think. If you dream of staying at a Yellowstone lodge, for example, keep calling back for possible openings. Already on the road? Lots of campgrounds have some first-come, first-served sites that go quickly. Do your homework beforehand and find out where they are and then show up early.

4. **Green Means Go:** Close your eyes. Where do you see yourself? Kayaking off the coast of Maine? Taking that hiking trip through



Try something different. This year make your family vacation an adventure.

the Pyrenees? Okay, now open your eyes—and your wallet. If that train trip through Switzerland is too expensive, consider a Rocky Mountain hike to enjoy comparable scenery.

5. **Go SOMEwhere.** If the ideal trip seems like it just isn't going to happen, there are other options. The most affordable places are those that people don't go to during the summer. Think Caribbean—summer tradewinds and crystal-clear waters make the heat bearable, and discounted rates at luxurious hotels, some up to 50 percent off, make a trip even more appealing.

Not finding the solution right away? Do some research into your options. Search through GORP.com (www.gorp.com) to explore potential areas and activities or to book an adventure travel trip.

For research into camping options, check out www.KOA.com. The site can take reservations online and sell you a park pass or other camping resources.

And if you are planning a visit to one of our country's national parks or recreation areas, be sure to check out the official Web site, www.nps.gov, for its Morning Report filed daily with news, warnings, and events in the national park system.