

Summer Recreation Guide





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RV Trends for 2019

For many, summer beckons the call to the open road. And recreational vehicles are an excellent way to travel in comfort and style for those who don't truly wish to rough it.

RVs come in many shapes and styles, and each year brings new trends and innovations in the industry to meet customer expectations. The RV Family Travel Atlas identified four new trends for 2019

influencing the RV industry.

BACK TO BASICS

Bigger is not always necessarily better. Some find larger RVs and trailers intimidating to drive or tow and the upkeep can be expensive, not to mention the price of purchase. Like the tiny homes movement and the smaller camping trailers of decades past, RV makers are responding to travelers who desire something smaller and simpler, emphasizing quality over quantity. A range of new models are now coming onto the market that are under 30 feet long, but still offer many amenities of a larger RV.

TOWING COMMUNICATION

So you've decided on a new RV, but you'll need to tow it. According to RVFTA, figuring out the right kind of vehicle to haul your RV can be confusing and take much of the fun out of the experience. Thankfully, communication between truck manufacturers and RV makers have increased to make the hitch-tow capacity equation easier on buyers. In the meantime, RVFTA offers a helpful video on their website to assist at rvfta.com.

FOCUS ON QUALITY

Not all RVs are designed to

be driven. In fact, many find the same experience in a trailer-style RV at a cheaper price. But just because you don't have to drive the RV itself doesn't mean there aren't maintenance issues. Among these are the rigs themselves. In years past, RVFTA cites a flood of RVs aimed at budget-priced consumers but which also come with budget-priced craftsmanship. In essence, you get what you pay for — and a cheaper rig will likely mean more costs down the road. If you're in the market, make sure you invest in a quality rig. It may cost more up front, but you'll be thankful later on.

FIBERGLASS REVOLUTION

For years, the RV industry has been dominated by wood and tin models. Fiberglass always offered a budget alternative, but found only niche markets. That's changing. Upscale RV makers such as Airstream are marketing fiberglass trailers such as its Nest, which has been met with consumer praise. Because manufacturers are investing in a quality RV built from fiberglass, buyers have responded to a quality fiberglass RV that lands between the budget models and the higher-priced models made of traditional materials.

Thrills and Social Responsibility

For many families, summer means an almost obligatory trip to a theme park.

Disney World, of course, reigns atop the theme park world, but some opt for nearby destinations such as Sea World, Six Flags or Busch Gardens, which have several locations across the country.

One thing is certain: Visitors are seeking fantasy and thrills, and theme parks compete and work hard each year to introduce new rides, shows and attractions to keep crowds coming back. This year is no different. According an Entertainment Weekly website, theme parks are focusing on a mix of social responsibility, virtual reality and pop culture to draw fans and create lasting memories.

Reporting from the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Expo Orlando, the article identified several trends theme parks are investing in this season to heighten guest experiences while maintaining the thrill rides adrenaline-junkies expect. To that end, parks are focusing on delivering the kind of experi-



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ence visitors expect for the premium prices they pay. Guests expect that value and theme parks are responding.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Theme parks are not only wonderlands, but virtual cities in themselves where the

amount of single-use plastics such as straws and plastic bags create not only a trash problem but an environmental issue. In a nod to the environmentally conscious, many parks are reducing or eliminating single-use plastics. Parks with a strong environ-

mental focus, such as Sea World, Busch Gardens and zoos, seek to both eliminate these products and educate visitors about conservation and responsibility.

VIRTUAL REALITY

While virtual reality hasn't

clicked with the public at large, VR attractions are huge draws at theme parks with new experiences introduced each year. Technology has advanced and new VR attractions feature lightweight headsets and interactive situations that involve multiple players. It's feasible now that any entertainment venue or theater could offer such attractions, so look for to pop up soon in your neighborhood soon.

POP CULTURE

The theme park experience would be incomplete without characters from pop culture that fans want to see. From Disney World's iconic cartoon characters to superheroes and movie tie-ins such as "Harry Potter," fans crave a live experience in these fantastical worlds and theme parks have responded.

If you're looking for something new beyond Disney or Universal offerings, LEGOLAND Florida is introducing LEGO Movie World, featuring "Masters of Flight." This flying theater should appeal to all ages, as guests take a seat on Emmet's couch for a thrilling LEGO adventure.

Other new experiences include a Pittsburgh Steelers-themed roller coaster at Kennywood and a Sesame Street-themed attraction at SeaWorld Orlando. The expo highlighted other anticipated experiences such as Disney's Galaxy's Edge and a new Harry Potter ride at Universal Orlando, among others.

Happy Campers Grow in Numbers

Camping is a great American pastime and summer is the season that beckons more campers than at any other time of the year. It's easy to understand: Under sunny skies, forests, trails and lakes beam, inviting nature-lovers and inspiring the outdoorsman in all of us. And those numbers are growing.

According to its annual report on camping, Kampgrounds of America revealed that more than 6 million new North American households have adopted the camping lifestyle since 2014. The most avid group — those who camp three or more times each year — has increased a whopping 64 percent, an indicator that camping is growing quickly with no indication of slowing.

Here's some key points from the KOA report:

Increases in new campers: In the U.S. there was an increase of 2.6 million new camper households in 2017. Further, representation among all ethnicities is beginning to appear more like the overall population.

Accessible technology: Increases in camping — both in reach and frequency — can be tied to increased accessibility due to the removal of previously held beliefs and barriers. Which is to say, access to Wi-Fi has greatly diminished those barriers, allowing campers to easily connect, an impact that increases their ability



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to take longer trip.

Accessible, but unplugged: Nearly all campers (97 percent) state that they bring some type of technology with them while camping. About a third of all campers say they have a smartphone with them, but they don't turn it on (used for safety only). Millennial families are more likely to stay online, sharing their experience on various social media platforms.

Less stress, more relaxation: The annual report continues to show that campers view camping as a time to relax, escape stress and clear their minds, spending more time with family and friends and increased recognition that camping contributes to emotional and physical health.

Teens engaging: Teen campers con-

tinue to be highly engaged in camping and demonstrate a great deal of enthusiasm toward camping and the outdoors. Teen campers express higher levels of enthusiasm toward camping than what adults predict; 94 percent of teens state they are enthusiastic about camping, compared to 77 percent of adults who say that teens are enthusiastic.

Diversity in camping: New campers are more diverse than the overall population with a nearly even split between white and non-white campers.

Millennial campers: Six out of every 10 millennial households tried some type of camping or lodging in 2017, but the experimenting is being driven by Hispanics (71 percent) and African

Americans (78 percent) trying out new ways of camping. Nearly all millennials (93 percent) and Gen Xers (93 percent) would like to try some type of new camping. Millennials are the most likely to want to experience backcountry camping and/or glamping, while Gen Xers seek unique accommodations.

RVs, tents or cabins: Most campers continue to identify tents as their primary way of camping. Tents are relatively inexpensive, easy to transport and can be set up almost anywhere. But RVs vie for the lead — although many either rent or borrow and RV for an excursion. A fourth of campers settled for cabins, accounting for a large influx of non-white campers who express a preference for the comfort of cabins.

Find Luxury in the Great Outdoors

If your idea of “roughing it” means the cheap room at the Four Seasons, you’re in good company — and glamping, or glamorous camping, might be the cure for getting in touch with nature without sacrificing comfort.

The term glamping hasn’t been around all that long, but the concept is not new. Lavish accommodations in far-flung locations have been around for centuries.

Today, glamping pairs upscale amenities and technology with exotic vistas for a range of prices at yurts, tents, caravans, trailers and treehouses, among other campsites. So if you want experience the great outdoors without sleeping on the great outdoors, glamping might be your best option.

Glamping is much more than an upscale tent. “Glamping is the ultimate realization of ‘disconnect to reconnect,’” said George Morgan-Grenville, the founder and chief executive of Red Savannah, a high-end travel company in overview of glamping in *The New York Times* last summer. And that doesn’t always mean out in the wild.

In New York, Collective Retreats launched a seasonal camp in New York Harbor featuring 37 tents, its own restaurant, massages, furnished porches and wood-frame beds with high linen counts, according to the article. Luxury hotels are also getting in on glamping, offering private terrace retreats in Chicago, Beverly Hills and Denver.

Those experiences come with



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top-dollar price tags, of course. But many glamping outposts in the wild offer luxury-style accommodations in the mountains, at the beach and around the country and world for reasonable prices.

Under Canvas and Collective Retreats are two of the largest glamping outfitters, operating seasonal “resorts” in such places as Mount

Rushmore in South Dakota, the Great Smoky Mountains in Tennessee and at ranches in Texas. The companies also host outposts in the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. The locales and options are almost endless.

How to get started? Begin online. There are literally dozens of reputable newspapers, magazines and travel sites featuring a variety of glamping

experiences. In addition, sites such as glamping.com and worldofglamping.com offer overviews and links to locations and the companies that service them. The two previously mentioned glamping outfitters, Under Canvas and Collective Retreats, are among the largest companies involved in booking these trendy, exotic but luxurious retreat vacation options.

Slide, Ski, Splash and Boat

Whether it's swimming, skiing or boating, summer to many literally means diving in or taking to America's great waterways. Here's what's happening this summer with all these activities.

WATER PARKS

No matter where you live or your summer vacation destination, water parks are always within reach. Many towns and cities feature water parks, as do all the major amusement parks dotted across the nation. For sure-fire family fun that will especially please the kids, water parks offer all sorts of exciting thrills, from flume rides and slides to sliding bodysurfing mats, pools and more.

RENTAL ACTIVITIES

For the adventurous, there are many exciting, affordable activities available for rent. Among these are water mats, water skiing, jet skis, parasailing, paddle boarding and surfing. Some of these activities require at least some pre-instruction in order to ensure safety. But each is a fun way for people of all ages to spend time on a lake or at the beach.

BOATING

Boating enthusiasts can't wait for summer to pull up anchor and head out on the lake or seas for fun times on the water. If you're new to boating or looking to buy as summer approaches, here's some trends to be aware of that will enhance your experience.

New boat models this year are more



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hi-tech and advanced than ever before. Boat.com outlined the following features sure to make your boating experience more enjoyable and secure:

Connectivity: Look for improved Wi-Fi streaming that goes above and beyond normal Bluetooth connectivity.

Security: More boat manufacturers are offering remote monitoring systems with smartphone apps that let you keep tabs on your boat's location at all times.

Stabilization: Advanced stabilizers that keep boats going smooth in rocky waters were once just available in larg-

er craft. But now even smaller boats feature gyro systems that counter the sea's unpredictable chops.

Pontoons: Ever-popular, these versatile craft are easy to clean and feature more innovative features and furnishings.

Power: 200hp outboard motors were once the top standard, but no more. That horsepower has doubled, sometimes tripled in newer boats featuring motors from Mercury, Yamaha and Seven Marine. And you can always add multiple motors for supercharged performance.

Consoles: New boats don't forget the

captain! Updated models now feature bigger multi-function consoles and docking cameras.

Sun protection: Out on the water for hours? The sun can become blistering. Which is why new boats are now designed with coverage, even in smaller craft. Larger rigs can feature retractable awnings for shade.

OTHER WATER JOYS

There are numerous, inexpensive ways to enjoy the water this summer. From the simple joys of a rope swing by a lake to rafting, canoeing or tubing on the country's numerous rivers.

The Right Grill for the Job

Summer beckons cooks to transfer their indoor skills to patios, decks, parks and campsites. Wherever you plan to cook or host a party, there are myriad options in grills and barbecues. Good Housekeeping has some basic tips on how to choose between the various models.

The most common choices in outdoor grills are gas and charcoal. But other options include electric and pellet-fueled grills. Depending on what you're cooking, the various types of grills offer pros and cons.

Gas: For no-fuss, no-muss outdoor cooking, gas grills come close to an indoor gas stove. Fueled by propane tanks or a natural gas line and firing up at the push of a button, gas grills offer uniform cooking temperatures and are easy to clean. It's a great choice for those who cook outdoors frequently.

Charcoal: Perhaps no grill is more ubiquitous than the standard charcoal grill. They come in many sizes and varieties at every price point, piling on more frills as the cost increases. Charcoal grills use



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briquettes or lump charcoal, or even wood to heat food. There's more time and less control involved, but there's no question these grills offer more smoky, barbecue flavor.

Electric: Ahead of gas grills, electric grills offer even more ease, convenience and control. Unfortunately, the lack of flames fails to impart true barbecue flavor on meats and

other foods cooked on the grill — plus, they're more expensive.

Pellets: The least well-known of the grill family, these grills use hardwood pellets formed from wood scraps to heat food. For grilling purists, pellet-fueled grills offer authentic flavor but are more expensive than their charcoal cousins and may be harder to

find.

Whatever type of grill you choose, Good Housekeeping recommends that you consider a variety of factors to ensure a successful, tasty experience:

Consider how often you'll be cooking outdoors. If you cook outside frequently, invest in a quality grill with multiple burners and options.

Factor in space. Larger outdoor units take up space and require cover from inclement weather. Determine the kind of flavor you seek. Using the tips above will help you arrive at the proper grill.

Time. If you don't want to spend the entire time outdoors tending a grill, consider options that require less attention.

Trends and Styles in Swimwear

Whether you're headed for the pool, the lake or the beach, summer allows you to peel off the layers of winter and don the outdoor fashions of the season — namely swimwear. Men's summer fashion trends remain relatively consistent (trunks and shorts in various styles and patterns), but women's swimwear is a category on its own.

While you've been working out to get in shape for the summer and revealing swimwear, designers have been working to provide options at all price points in a variety of styles. Travel and Leisure magazine highlighted the top trends in swimwear for 2019.

High-Cut bottoms: It's back to the future for this revealing, leg-lengthening style. T+L predicts these bold, flattering bottoms will be ubiquitous this season — even in one-piece suits.

Knots and ties: Another style revival, knots and ties return this season — from bows, strap-wraps and waist ties — to offer a flattering choice for almost any body type.

Colors: While bright, bold colors seem to always be in fashion, this year subtle skin tones are arriving in swimwear to accent a minimalist, modern trend.

Patterns: Animal prints never truly went out of style, but T+L sees leopard- and cheetah-spotted swimwear everywhere this season — along with a new look: snakeskin prints.

Hardware: What could be more



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trendy or practical than jewelry matched with swimwear? These suits are as convenient as they are chic, according to T+L.

Strapless tops: Want to eliminate as many tan lines as possible while wearing a flattering silhouette? Strapless necklines are making a big comeback this year.

Of course, styles and colors are unlimited and most women find a flattering style, color or print and tend to

stick with it. But Glamour magazine identified these color, style and print trends you're likely to see popping up this season.

Sporty color-blocking: Color-blocking uses dual shades — waist up and waist down — and employs straps or a reversible weave to blend the two.

Washed-out minimalism: The magazine sees more brands embracing minimalist, simple colors in a variety of silhouettes and simple prints from

black-and-white to ribbed textures.

Sweet and sexy: For the more romantic, Glamour style-watchers see shades of pink, red and purple with feminine details such as bows, ruffles and keyhole cutouts.

Tropical flavor: Palm prints are perennial favorites, but the magazine identified next-level trends in super-bright colors and off-the-shoulder silhouettes mixed with ruching and ruffles.