

Summer Recreation

G U I D E



Motorcycles and ATVs

Cars and trucks are great for driving and working on, but nothing compares to hopping on a motorcycle or an all-terrain vehicle. They are the ultimate summer rides, infusing power, style and pure fun into any adventure.

Fast or slow, near or far, the open roads and fields are waiting for you to explore from the seat of your favorite ride.

MOTORCYCLES: FUN IN NUMBERS

One great thing about taking a motorcycle road trip is you can usually find company. Convoys of motorcycle enthusiasts are a common summer sight on our highways.

You could also opt for bringing only your significant other for a romantic ride, or even add on a sidecar for the kids to come along. No matter who you ride with, a motorcycle road trip offers the perfect opportunity to reconnect.

ATVs: GET MUDDY

ATVs can be enjoyed in all weather conditions, but they are an absolute blast in the mud. Wait for that big summer rain to come and then head out for some wet and wild fun.

But don't go too far – you'll want to be in a non-remote spot in case you get stuck and need someone to help pull you out.



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And don't worry about messing up your ride. Get it home, spray it off with a hose and head back out again!

STAY SAFE

Motorcycles and ATVs, though extremely fun and relatively inexpensive to enjoy,

require some precautions to make sure you stay safe.

You'll want to load up on the proper weather and safety gear to help you avoid danger on

your rides, and always remember to wear a helmet.

Driving a motorcycle requires a special license, so be sure to get legal before you hit the road.

RVs and Campers

Sometimes you just need to get away for a while. RVs and camper trailers provide the perfect way to head out on a classic American road trip.

But to enjoy the open road to the fullest, you need to know some ways to save money on your trek. Gas, food and parking costs can add up in a hurry. Here's how to reduce some of those expenses:

FREE PARKING

Many businesses offer free overnight RV parking while you're en route to your destination.

It's best to call ahead so you don't have to find out the hard way – a ticket or a locked boot – that RV parking is not allowed. Truck stops and retailers with large parking lots are usually your best bet, and can give you a free respite for the night.

BRING YOUR OWN FOOD

Spending a little time in a grocery store before you embark on your road trip or camping expedition can be time well spent.

Many of the camp stores and retailers associated with destination locations have higher prices because of demand. If you wait to buy all of your food and necessities there, you will end up cutting deeply into your vacation fund just to handle the basics. Think ahead and come prepared.



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COOK OVER A FIRE

Using your propane stove or grill in your RV is a nice

perk, but nothing beats cooking over an open flame. By gathering a little firewood and starting a fire, you have a built-in cooker for the perfect

hot dog, kebab or even casserole.

Grilling baskets and stands have turned the primitive into the convenient

and allow you to enjoy a little no-hassle cooking with a great wood-grilled taste.

Boats and Jet Skis

Water is the preferred choice of summer fun for millions of Americans every year as they head to their local spot to cool down and relax. Boats and personal watercraft such as jet skis provide an affordable way to enjoy the water and can be used relatively close to home.

Just head on down to your favorite local lake and spend the day speed-boating, fishing or zipping around on your jet ski.

BUY YOUR OWN?

Most water destinations offer boat and jet ski rentals, but buying a boat or personal watercraft can actually be affordable – if you find the right deal.

Local dealers offer specials and convenient financing packages that will make your dream of owning your own boat or jet ski a real possibility. But don't forget the accessories. You will have to load up on safety gear and necessary equipment, so be sure to budget appropriately.

RECONNECT WITH NATURE

If you've spent the day on the lake, you know: Water is a way of reconnecting with nature, the sun and those around you. There is nothing like enjoying the water from sun up until sun down with great company.

Maybe you prefer some alone time. Boating and jet-skiing are perfect for that too. Find your inner-self by spending some time enjoying the shimmering blue water, endless skies and vast surrounding forests.

SAFETY IS KEY

Certain dangers exist anytime you are relaxing on a wide open river, lake or ocean. Prevention, education and preparation are three of your greatest tools to avoiding potential risk.

- Take a boating safety course to hone your operating skills.
- Learn the boating laws and rules that apply to your area.
- Wear a life jacket in the case of an accident or overturned water vehicle.
- Learn how to swim – it may save your or another person's life in case of an emergency.



The Great Outdoors

Nothing says summer like spending some time in the great outdoors. Babbling brooks, rolling fields and cloudless skies. It is all right there for us to enjoy. And our options for doing so are endless.

Hunting, camping and fishing are just a few summertime activities that can help us get closer with Mother Nature. And they can all be relatively inexpensive to turn into a hobby.

All three come with some special circumstances and requirements – i.e. a special license for fishing and designated dates for legal hunting – so check in with your local or state agency for more information.

HUNTING

Hunting seasons vary throughout the country depending on what animal you are tracking, but the activity in general can be a serene, yet exciting one to take up.

A certain patience is required to hunt, one that will allow you plenty of time for peace and quiet. Even when you're hunting in pairs, the sport is usually a peaceful one enjoyed from a quiet tree stand or duck blind.

CAMPING

From basic to luxurious, camping can be enjoyed by people of all tastes and living preferences. No longer required to spend the night in a small, powerless tent, RVs and campers have taken camping to the next level.

With indoor kitchens, sprawling bedrooms and air-conditioning throughout, many options are available should you not prefer the simple, more primitive aspects of camping.

FISHING

Once you find your favorite fishing spot, it's hard to beat. What's better than spending a few hours trying to lure the big one as the birds, frogs and bugs keep you company?

Fishing offers a calming respite from everyday life and requires little equipment to fully enjoy it. Just pick up a pole and some bait, and you've got your afternoon made.

Of course, you can spend massive amounts of money on special rods, tournament entry fees and boats, so it all depends on how serious you plan on making your new hobby.



Barbecues and Entertaining



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Just because it's the summertime, it doesn't mean you have to leave your home to have fun. You can throw a cookout, summer party or wiffle ball game on nearly any night – from the comfort of your own backyard.

Wait until the sun goes down or have an afternoon get-together. Go small or go big. Call over the neighbors or keep it family focused. You are in control of your own party and can decide when it happens and who is invited.

COOKOUT

Become the backyard hero by throwing a few rib-eyes on the grill and calling over your closest friends. The summertime barbecue is a staple of Americana and can be enjoyed on a deck, an apartment rooftop or at a popular festival. The point is, it doesn't matter where you

light up your grill – summer fun will surely follow.

TAILGATE

Some of the best entertaining can come smack dab in the middle of a hot, crowded parking lot. Doesn't sound like fun? Add a grill, some games and a few of your favorite drinks. Now add the excitement of your beloved sports team hitting the field in a couple of hours and you should be more than excited to be there.

Tailgating can be enjoyed outside of professional and college stadiums for nearly any sport. It is a great way to get pumped up for the big game in

the company of your best friends and closest family members.

HARVEST PARTIES

Themed harvest parties are becoming all the rage for gardening enthusiasts. They are the perfect way to show off bountiful plants, vegetables and flowers, while also allowing friends and family the opportunity to enjoy some time together.

If you're hosting the party, make sure to mow your yard and have your garden looking its best. Have finger-foods and drinks ready to serve your guests, and let the good times bloom throughout your garden party.

Grab Your Bike

Looking for a fun summer workout with little negative impact on your body? Grab your bike. It's an increasingly popular way to stay in shape and have fun at the same time.

Cycling requires a helmet and a great bike. End of story.

Well, there are definitely bells and whistles you can add to enhance your biking experience, but at its core, cycling is a relatively simple sport to enjoy. And it is in activity that has literally taken people around the world.

You may even be living in a cycling hotspot without even knowing it. Check in with your local biking groups and clubs to see where they spend most of their time. Then hit the road, trail or street for some summer adventure.

GREAT CARDIO

Cycling is a great form of cardio in that it works on your endurance while bolstering your cardiovascular health. It allows you to add resistance to your workout by climbing hills or traveling over challenging terrain. This, in turn, leads to your muscles working harder, making them leaner and more toned.

BEAUTIFUL WORKOUT

From the vast mountains of Colorado to the city streets of Chicago, cycling can be enjoyed anywhere, anytime. As long as there are safe routes to enjoy, experiencing them on a bike can actually help open your eyes to the true scenery around you. The sun, fresh air and beautiful views are just a few of the reasons you should be biking this summer.

RIDE SAFELY

If you are hitting the roads this summer, be safe. The National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration says cycling accidents are on the rise. This can be due to improper lane usage, not wearing reflective gear at nighttime or simple driver negligence.

No matter the reason for uptick, it is paramount that you make safety your top priority. Try to find designated cycling spots within your community and always travel in groups. There is safety in numbers, and more people usually means more protection from accidents.



Get Competitive

Summer is a leisurely time for many people, as they hit the beach or relax at the pool. But what about the adrenaline-junkies who can't get enough action, even when the weather heats up?

There are many options for the competitive among us, and the summertime provides the perfect forum.

Without the snow or cold restricting event planning, many organizations put together fun contests such as 5Ks or volleyball matches. Reach out to your local tourism organization or more information on what's coming up in your neck of the woods.

RUN A 5K

The 5K has exploded in popularity in recent years. The 3.1-mile trek can be enjoyed in woods, city streets or along beach-sides and is often created as a fundraiser to support local charities. The distance is a challenging one for new runners, but a great overall workout even if you choose to walk it.

RUN A HALF-MARATHON

Half-marathons are the "big boy" version of the 5K that running enthusiasts try to graduate to during their trainings.

Coming in at 13.1 miles, the half-marathon is a test of endurance and usually set up as a true competition compared to a fun, charity event.

If you can comfortably run seven to eight miles, you may not be far off from being able to complete a half-marathon. Know your limits and start small with the 13.1 miles as a goal in your head.

SOFTBALL LEAGUES

Many churches and athletic organizations put together popular softball leagues for the summer.

Maybe you are a former high school or college baseball or softball star. Maybe you just like running around the bases and picking dandelions.

No matter what your athletic skill set, joining a softball league can give you a weekly hobby filled with good competition, great friends and action-packed fun.



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SAND VOLLEYBALL LEAGUES

Likewise, sand volleyball leagues are popping up across the nation – even if there is no beach in site.

Many local parks in beach-less areas have added sand pits for volleyball enthusiasts, and many

even coordinate a weekly summer league. Of course, if you live near the ocean, you probably see beach volleyball being played on a regular basis.

Check in with your local league to find out cost and time requirements for joining.