

5 Summer Vacations Your Tween Won't Hate

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What tween wants to go on a family vacation when she could stay home and text her pals? Not to mention, avoid the sheer humiliation of being seen with her parents in public.

But we asked travel experts to offer up trips that will guarantee even your hardest-to-please tween will crack a smile — or two. We've got five options to consider when planning your next adventure.

1. Pick a theme, any theme. Tweens like to feel as if they have control over their own destiny, and letting them choose a vacation itinerary that appeals to them makes everyone happier.

Jeff Siegel, author of "[RelationTrips](#)," the true story of his quest to see every Major League baseball field in the country, along with his son, tells ParentDish choosing a theme for your trip that interests both you and your child can not only reduce the number of complaints you hear, but also will bring you closer together during this dicey phase of their lives.

"Brainstorm about common interests shared by family members," Siegel advises. "This can take a few hours or a few weeks. Consider surfing the Web for ideas or placing a suggestion box in the kitchen. Then hold a meeting to choose the official theme."

2. Get on your bike. Biking is experiencing something of a Renaissance these days, and, thanks

to the Tour De France, your tween is certain to love the idea of a trip that not only taps into a popular sport but also allows for a lot of room to change your mind -- for which tweens are notorious.

"The days are designed for ease and flexibility, so each member of the family will enjoy the perfect amount of activity," Dede Sullivan of [DuVine Adventures](#), a company that arranges bike tours abroad, tells ParentDish.

3. Take them on the grand tour. Gone are the days when parents used to send their children on a grand tour of every country in Europe, but, with planning, you can still take your kids abroad for a week or two.

Tweens are the perfect age to deal with the air travel required to get to the Continent, and they are also ripe to get the most out of their exposure to other cultures.

"In our experience, kids ages 7 to 16 are ideal for traveling on family adventures (abroad) that include everything from hiking and biking to river rafting and sea kayaking," Edward Piegza, president and co-founder of [Classic Journeys](#), a tour company, tells ParentDish. "And right in the middle of that ideal age spread? The what-have-you-done-for-me-lately tweens."

Piegza says part of the equation for happy family travel is making sure the plan includes something for everyone -- even the grown-ups. After all, it's your vacation, too.

"As a parent, I personally can vouch for the joy of sharing hydrofoil rides and peering into a volcano alongside our tween sons on the Amalfi Coast," he tells ParentDish. "But that's not to say my wife and I don't welcome the chance to spend time with the other grown-ups on tour, whether it's lingering over a gourmet meal or wine tasting or taking long, leisurely walks that would only make the kids antsy."

4. Pitch a tent. There's just something special about sleeping under the stars. Going into the wild for family fun ensures that you *have* to unplug from all your phones and gadgets and actually talk to one another.

You don't have to limit your trip to a tent and a campfire, either. With a little research, you can plan a trip that includes plenty of outdoor adventures, from whitewater rafting to ziplines in the forest to rock climbing and hiking.

5. The last resort. When all else fails, even the grouchiest tween will have a hard time resisting the idea of an all-inclusive tropical resort. Pools, beaches and all the tropical mocktails you can drink make for a relaxing vacation for the whole family.

A resort vacation also lets tweens have plenty of alone time, without causing too much angst for their parents. Kids can wander the confines of the resort to their hearts' content without getting into trouble.

Some resorts, such as the [Montage Laguna Beach](#) in California, even offer structured fun for your tween -- sans parents. Activities including kayaking, snorkeling and extreme scavenger hunts make the days fly by -- and they let you relax poolside while someone else entertains your kid.