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Fun for all

Across the US, 10 trips adults and children can equally enjoy

BY NECÉE REGIS | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

With spring in the air and summer looming, it's time to start planning a family vacation. When I was a child this meant squeezing into a car with my mom, aunts, uncles, and cousins, and driving half a day to a sandy cottage on Cape Cod, which is still a good option. For more far-flung adventures, following are 10 destinations that include driving through a redwood tree, watching a gunfight in the wild west, riding a 75-mile-per-hour roller coaster, and fly-fishing near a wilderness campsite. Accommodation estimates are based on prices for the same weekend in mid-June, with two adults and two children under age 12 sharing one room.

Ferndale, Calif.
Leisurely old-time fun can be found in the Victorian hamlet of Historic Ferndale (population 1,390), listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Ornate buildings from the 1880s line Main Street, where you can spend an afternoon browsing antiques stores, art galleries, homemade candy shops, and watch candle-makers, blacksmiths, and a small repertory theater. A family room at the Redwood Suites, with full kitchen and a dining area, is a wallet-friendly place to stay while touring the area. Located along the northern California coastline,

Ferndale is close to Humboldt Redwoods State Park (707-946-2263, humboldtredwoods.org), a 53,000-acre reserve of majestic ancient redwood groves with hiking and biking trails. "Drive-through" a redwood tree at the nearby Shrine Drive-Thru Tree in Myers Flat. Other options for low-key fun include strolling along the nearby coastline, a nature hike in Russ Park (a 110-acre forest bird sanctuary), and a boat tour of the Eel River Delta. *The Redwood Suites, 888-589-1863, redwoodsuites.com, family suites from \$135 per night*

Duck Key, Fla.
Talk about kid-friendly, Hawks Cay Resort is a 60-acre tropical island getaway that is designed to be all about fun. Located midway down the Florida Keys overlooking the emerald green Atlantic, it's no surprise the main activities for kids and adults involve water: fishing, snorkeling, kayaking, kiteboarding, or simply taking a dip in one of five pools or a saltwater lagoon. Supervised activities for younger children include a pirate ship pool (with water canons, rope ladders, and slides), dockside fish feeding, scavenger hunts, and arts

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(Clockwise from top left)

Hershey, Pa.
Hersheypark has 11 roller coasters, including the Great Bear.

Sebago Lake, Maine
Fishing is just one of the many activities for all ages at Migis Lodge.

Ferndale, Calif.
Vintage autos fit right in on Main Street of this hamlet near redwood groves.

Bonita Springs, Fla.
Rock-climbing is among the adventures at Hyatt Regency Coconut Point.

Williamsburg, Va.
Visitors learn about the 1700s at Colonial Williamsburg.

Duck Key, Fla.
Hawks Cay Resort is a 60-acre tropical island getaway.

Tucson, Ariz.
Kids can become junior rangers at Saguaro National Park.

SAN DIEGO

Sun, sand, and surf suit teenagers in tow

By Diane Bair and Pamela Wright

GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS

SAN DIEGO — "That's so raunchy!" Olivia Bolen said to a very tanned teenage boy standing next to her on La Jolla Shores.

"Moopin!" the boy replied, as he tucked the longboard under his arm and ran into the surf.

Translation: awesome, very cool; things were good.

Sadie Wright-Ward, wading knee-high in the water, rolled her eyes and laughed. "Surf's up, hodad!"

We were on a family trip to San Diego, which included Pam's stereotypically unenthusiastic 15-year-old niece, Olivia, and Sadie, her college-age daughter. Last time we were in town, we took the kids to the San Diego Zoo, visited SeaWorld, and built sand castles on the beach. This time around, traveling with a tougher, older crowd, we had to ramp up the adventure meter. So far, after two days of surfing, shopping, biking, power boating, and cruising the beaches, things were "epic." That's good.

We based ourselves in lively Mission Beach, a colorful neighborhood just south of downtown, with a surfer-dude vibe. The narrow peninsula, bordered by Mission Bay on one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other, is lined with side-by-side, pastel-painted cottages, surf and bike shops, restaurants, bars, taco stands,



PAMELA WRIGHT FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Sadie Wright-Ward learning to surf.

FLORIDA

Pregnant at Disney and still loving it

By Kari Bodnarchuk

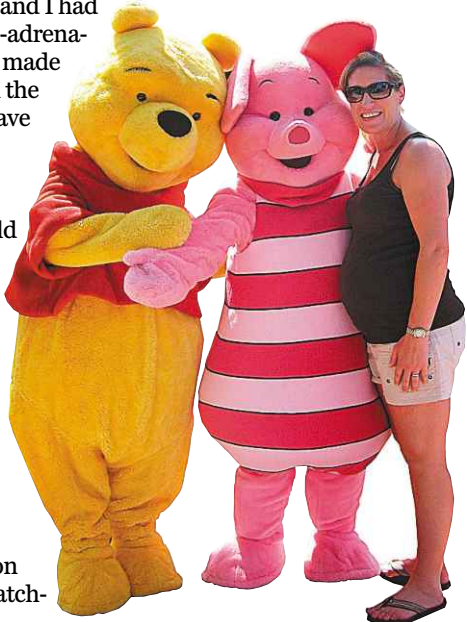
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — The first time I visited Walt Disney World, I had braces, feathered hair, and "jelly" shoes. I ate hot dogs and cotton candy until my belly ached, and I rode every roller coaster and waterslide until I had lost my voice from screaming. The experience was a childhood highlight.

Fast forward a couple of decades to my next visit: I had a 2-year-old in tow, a 7-month-pregnant belly, and a long list of foods that expectant moms should not eat, from hot dogs to soft-serve ice cream. My tired, aching feet needed the support of practical shoes, and I had to skip all the high-adrenaline rides that had made my first visit. Even the waterslides and wave pools were out.

Quite simply: Could I still have fun? And how could I make the trip go as smoothly as possible?

Out of more than 150 attractions at Disney's six parks, only 16 have warnings for pregnant visitors. That means you won't spend your entire trip sitting on benches people-watching while your friends and family



KARI BODNARCHUK FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

DISNEY, Page M4 Winnie, Piglet, and Carolyn D'Amico.

EXPLORE NEW ENGLAND

Sheepshearing festivals are a rite of spring. M7

The budgies draw crowds at Franklin Park Zoo. M7

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Across the US, 10 destinations for family fun

► **10 TRIPS**
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and crafts projects such as painting coconut shells and tie-dying T-shirts. In addition to water sports, programs for teens include basketball, volleyball, kickball, and a game room with X-Box, Wii, PlayStation, and computers with safeguarded Internet access. The weekend “Kids Night Out” party offers pizza, movies, video, board games, and a chance for parents to go for Caribbean-influenced cocktails and cuisine at three restaurants. *Hawks Cay Resort, 888-395-5539, www.hawkscay.com, from \$229 per night*

Williamsburg, Va.

Combine fun with learning in Colonial Williamsburg (800-HISTORY, www.history.org), part of the Historic Triangle in Virginia that also includes Jamestown and Yorktown. Virginia's largest tourist attraction lets families experience life in the 18th century. The 301-acre reconstructed historic area features 35 exhibition sites, and more than 100 gardens and museums. Watch skilled blacksmiths, shoemakers, printers, gunsmiths, a wigmaker, and more use period tools in 16 trade shops scattered throughout the town. Start your day by checking in at the visitors center to learn about special programs and tours. A stay at one of the six “official” hotels (ranging from the luxury Williamsburg Inn to value-priced Governor's Inn) will reap special rates on general admission passes and exclusive benefits. When you're ready for some 21st-century fun, check out the thrill rides at nearby Busch Gardens, the bizarre offerings at the Ripley's Believe It Or Not! Museum, or head to Water Country USA for flumes, geysers, rafts, and other water-themed adventures. *Governor's Inn, 757-229-1000, www.colonialwilliamsburg.com, from \$70 per night*

Sebago Lake, Maine

Share the wonders of nature without the hassle of camping at one of the 35 cottages at Migis Lodge. Northwest of Portland, this 125-acre property in a pine-scented forest stretches along the shore of Sebago Lake, Maine's deepest and second largest lake. There are activities-a-plenty for children and parents, including on-site hiking trails, fishing, canoeing, waterskiing, kayaking, sailing, pedal boats, golf, and tennis. A summer activity program, for ages 5 and over, features a changing schedule of games,

crafts, sports, picnics, swimming, field trips, storytelling, and treasure hunts. The rates at this all-inclusive resort include all meals, activities, and facilities except the use of motorboats and bar beverages. At night, parents can opt to dine alone while children enjoy a special menu in the Family Dining Room. *Migis Lodge, 207-655-4524, www.migis.com, seasonal rates range from adults \$170-\$395, children \$55-\$127 per night*

Tucson, Ariz.

What kid doesn't want to be an official National Park Junior Ranger? At Saguaro National Park (520-733-5158, www.nps.gov/sagu/index.htm), children age 5 and up can earn a badge and certificate in the Discovery Pack program. Composed of two districts (east and west) separated by the city of Tucson, the park offers more than 165 miles of hiking trails and other ranger-guided programs. In addition to cacti forests, the park is a haven for wildlife such as desert tortoise, javelinas, roadrunners, Vermillion Flycatchers, and Whiskered Screech Owls. Check out the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, a zoo (with mountain lions, prairie dogs, Gila monsters, and more), natural history museum, and botanical garden. Experience the old west at Old Tucson, a film location and western-themed park with stunt shows, gunfights, musical revues, and horseback rides, a carousel, and more. At the Pima Air & Space Museum, see more than 300 aircraft and spacecraft. Cool off in the 177-foot twisting water slide at the Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa. *The Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa, 800-937-8461, www.westinlapalomaresort.com, from \$139 per night*

Hershey, Pa.

Behind every great invention is a story, and in the 21st century the story often includes a theme park. Though Milton S. Hershey didn't invent milk chocolate, he did create his own recipe and is credited with mass-producing and marketing chocolate bars, and creating a town around his factory. That town is now home to Hersheypark (800-HERSHEY, www.hersheypark.com). In central Pennsylvania, 90 minutes from Philadelphia, it features rides galore including 11 thriller roller coasters, 20 rides for kids, entertainment, and a boardwalk with nine water attractions. Nearby, the 23-acre Hershey Gardens offers themed gardens and



GRAND TETON LODGE COMPANY AND FLAGG RANCH CO.

Colter Bay Village at Grand Teton National Park offers scenic cruises on Jackson Lake. Below, Nevada's Aston MonteLago Village Resort is on Lake Las Vegas.



JENNIFER NICHOLSON

a butterfly house. Or check out ZooAmerica, 11 acres with more than 200 animals. Other attractions include The Hershey Story, a museum that tells the history of Milton Hershey's life in chocolate (don't miss the Countries of Origin Chocolate Tasting, \$9.95), and Hershey Trolley Works, a ride through Chocolate Town, USA, with singing trolley conductors. Families with children 12 and under can enjoy Dutch Wonderland, with 30-plus kid-friendly rides, water play, and mini-golf. It's possible to stay in Hersheypark at a lodge, hotel, or campgrounds. Check for package deals that offer admission to select venues. *Hershey Lodge, 800-437-7439, www.hershey lodge.com, from \$309 per night*

Snake River, Idaho

Nature Retreats USA offers

rustic elegance in the wilderness along eastern Idaho's Snake River in scenic Swan Valley. The south fork of this river, less than 100 feet from the lodge, is known by many as one of the US's best tailwater and dry fly fisheries. Beginner? No problem. Kids and families can learn to fly-fish along a trout-filled pond. Non-anglers can go horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, white-water rafting, golfing, and even shopping in nearby Jackson Hole. The Heise Hot Springs offers muscle-reviving pools, a 350-foot waterslide, and a nine-hole golf course. For true wilderness, sign up for Overnight Camp, a retreat nestled in cottonwoods and aspens of the South Fork of the Snake River Canyon. *South Fork Lodge, 877-805-7794, www.natureretreats.com/south-fork-lodge/vacation-rentals.php, from*

\$960 for a two-night minimum stay (includes breakfast, gratuities, and taxes)

Bonita Springs, Fla.

Bonita Springs is known for many things: pristine beaches, great fishing and boating, golf, and abundant wildlife. All these and more can be enjoyed at the family-friendly Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa, located on the southwest coast of Florida between Fort Myers and Naples. Kids especially love the 140-foot corkscrew slide found in the Adventure Pool, one of multiple pools ranging from 2,700 to 5,000 square feet. Adult-supervised activities at Camp Coconut (ages 3-12) include pool games, arts and crafts, and wildlife excursions to learn about local flora and fauna, and the native Calusa Indians. Teens can enjoy tennis, biking, climbing walls, and kayaking. Take a family outing to Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary (239-348-9151, hfl.audubon.org/corkscrew-swamp-sanctuary) where a 2-plus-mile boardwalk meanders through open prairies and a bald cypress forest that is home to 200 kinds of birds, including ibis, heron, limpkin, and anhinga, plus alligators, otters, Florida black bears, white-tailed deer, and red-bellied turtles. *Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa, 239-444-1234, www.hyattcoconutpoint.com, from \$189 per night plus \$20 a day resort fee*

Henderson, Nev.

Twenty miles from the glitz and glamour of the Las Vegas

strip, you will find fresh desert air and tons of things for kids to do in the stunning Nevada landscape. A stay at the Aston MonteLago Village Resort, located on Lake Las Vegas, gives you easy access to water activities with kayaks, pedal boats, canoes, electric boats, jet skis, and stand-up paddle boarding. Like to fish? Lake Las Vegas and nearby Lake Mead are stocked with large mouth bass, rainbow trout, and catfish. Hotel guests are provided with free transportation to the strip, where kid-friendly activities include the Fountains of Bellagio, Volcano at Mirage, Sirens at Treasure Island, Lion Habitat at MGM Grand, Shark Reef at Mandalay Bay, Siegfried & Roy's Secret Garden and Dolphin Habitat, and the Adventuredome theme park at Circus Circus. Get out in nature and hike among the red sandstone rocks at the Valley of Fire (775-684-2770, parks.nv.gov/parks/valley-of-fire-state-park), Nevada's oldest and largest state park, or take a 20-minute drive to stand in awe of the Hoover Dam. *Aston MonteLago Village Resort, 877-997-6667, www.montelagovillage.com, from \$152 per night plus \$20 a night resort fee*

Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming

Towering granite peaks, clear alpine lakes, wildflower-filled meadows, and sagebrush-scented valleys are all part of the nearly 310,000 acres of wilderness in Grand Teton National Park. (307-739-3300, www.nps.gov/grte/index.htm). Located in northwestern Wyoming just south of Yellowstone National Park and just north of the town of Jackson, the park attracts families who enjoy hiking, boating, kayaking, fishing, and other outdoor activities. It is possible to stay within the park at campsites, cabins, and full-service resort hotels. The historic cabins at Colter Bay Village offer a family summer-camp experience with nearby access to hiking trails, horseback riding, scenic lake cruises, guided fishing trips, and nightly ranger talks. Additional amenities within the village include two restaurants, grocery store, marina with boat rentals, a general store, and visitors center. *Colter Bay Village, 800-628-9988, www.gtlc.com, private 2-room cabin \$189-\$229 per night, four-person occupancy, \$10 for each additional person*

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Preparation can help children cope with airport security

By Paul Abercrombie
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Airport security can try the patience of even the most stoic adults. But for children — especially the youngest — it can be downright scary.

Hearing a friend's horror story of how a recent family trip nearly did not happen because his child had a tantrum over surrendering a beloved blankie to the maw of an X-ray machine, I was reminded of a similar trauma in our family.

It was a handful of years ago when my now-9-year-old son, wife, and I were on our way to visit family in Los Angeles. My wife breezed through the walk-through X-ray. But when the same machine beeped as my son toddled through, a Transportation Security Administration agent asked for a do-over. Beep went the machine again. The same uniformed woman asked us to step aside for a pat-down inside a little glass-walled cage.

“The nice lady just needs to check our clothes to make sure we didn't forget anything,” I explained to my son.

A minute turned to several. By now my son had spotted his mom, who had cleared security and was cheerfully waving to us.

“Mommy,” my son called, waving back. A glance at his face told me he was nowhere near as happy as his mom.

About that pat-down, I reminded the TSA agent. She said she was waiting for a male colleague, apparently because as a female she could not frisk us. No persuading her otherwise. I began to feel as if we were unfairly stuck in time-out.

A gruff male counterpart arrived 15 minutes later, and the pat-down turned into a wrestling match. My son, tearful and terri-



DAVID MCNEW/GETTY IMAGES/FILE

For children who are new to air travel, going through airport security can be an intimidating experience.

fied, and I, by then closer to getting Tasered than I would like to admit, were finally reunited with a freaked-out mom.

I do not bring up this unpleasantness to criticize the TSA (there is plenty of that daily on the Internet). Rather, we and many parents we have commiserated with wish we had done more to prepare our youngsters for dealing with security.

The TSA posts tips for traveling with children on its website, though most tell what can and cannot be worn or carried through security (including such gems as “Passengers should NEVER leave babies in an infant carrier while it goes through the X-ray machine”).

And while TSA spokesman Greg Soule told me “[the TSA] recommends parents talk with their children before the security checkpoint to explain the process,” the hows and whys were unclear.

For that I turned to Tampa child psychologist Stacey

Scheckner. Among her tips for preparing young children for the weirdness of airport security:

■ If it is the child's first time in a plane, tell them how airplanes and airports work.

■ Explain that, just like mommy and daddy, sometimes people in airports are grumpy. Some of these grumpy people can be policemen.

■ Even if policemen are grumpy, we need to listen to what they say and do what they tell us to do because they want to make sure everyone gets on the plane. If they are not nice, we need to put ourselves in a happy bubble where we stay happy.

■ Sometimes mommy and daddy do not know why the police do things but we know that they are doing their jobs to keep us safe.

■ If children have their own backpacks and/or favorite stuffed animals or blankets, parents need to hold these before going on through security. You do not want these to be taken away from

children. This can be especially traumatic.

■ If your child is an anxious type, make sure stuffed animals “go night-night” safely in a parent's bag before you get to security — preferably before you leave for the airport.

■ Parents, stay calm. If you get frustrated, your children will pick up on it and feed off that anxiety.

■ You probably know your child's triggers for getting upset. Do not try to shush them because they will know you are anxious

and fearful.

■ Do not say please, please, please calm down or threaten punishment. Have a treat ready or, better yet, a distraction (a new, cheap toy, for example).

■ Role-play with children. Several days or even weeks before your trip, take turns pretending you are the police or a TSA official. Use real bags, blankets, etc. Play grumpy and happy versions of TSA officials.

■ Make sure children get a good night's sleep before the trip.

■ Pack as many snacks as pos-

sible. Cram in as many snacks as possible before you go through security. Make sure treats are not liquid — no yogurt, juice, etc. Of course, with rules changing almost daily, you will need to check with the airline as late as the day before you fly.

■ If your child happens to bring up topics like planes blowing up, guns, or bombs, change the subject. Don't tell them they cannot talk about such subjects.

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