15 Couples Vacay Ideas That Are Good for Your Relationship

Life’s too short not to get away once in a while!

By Nikki Roberti Miller - February 26, 2014

Pop quiz: When was the last time you and your partner took a vacation together? Not a visit to the in-law's house or tagging along on a work trip. We mean a real vacation.

Getting away isn’t just a luxury, it’s a bonafide way to rekindle and recharge your romance—a must if you’re normally consumed with work or kids (or both). We rounded up some great just-for-two trips and asked the experts to weigh in on how they can benefit your relationship. Read on and get inspired!

The 'Let's Forget We're Adults' Trip

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Great time to take it: Either you don’t have kids yet or some gracious soul has agreed to babysit them.

Where to go: Do the full-on theme park adventure without kids slowing you down. Hit up your local Six Flags, or if you can afford it, hop a flight to Disney or Universal Studios (both often have excellent packages for two).

Why it’s great for your relationship: Take this time to have some carefree fun! “Creating happy memories together goes a long way in establishing a couple’s sense of shared meaning,” says Hilary Phillips, a licensed counselor and founder of We Want More. “These events become part of the story of us, unique from any other relationship we have.”

Things to do: It’s a toss-up between holding on for dear life on a lightning-fast rollercoaster or donning some mouse ears and snapping a cheesy selfie with your sweetheart.

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The ‘We’re Tight on Cash’ Trip

Great time to take it: When you can’t wait a second longer for a vacation but don’t have the funds— and can get free babysitting (hi, Grandma!).

Where to go: No money? No problem! Discover a local hidden gem, try house swapping for a weekend, book a last-minute cruise, or pitch a tent and go camping.

Why it’s great for your relationship: Staying within your budget means not fretting over every little bill while you’re away and avoiding a spending hangover when the trip is done. Instead, you can focus on being alone, which is especially important if you have a family. “Our kids used to whine about us leaving to travel, but they know that it’s vital to our relationship,” said Traci Bild, founder of the Get Your Girl Back movement. “We have told them -- since they could understand -- that our annual trip ensures that their parents stay together. Kids need to see this in their parents’ relationship so they can model it in their own.”

Things to do: Go on a picnic with a homemade lunch you packed yourselves, and include a few surprise goodies you both love.
Our First Trip as a Family (yes, you’re bringing the baby!)

Great time to take it: When you just need to getaway and you realize, you may never actually truly be “ready.”

Where to go: Family-friendly resorts, hotels and campgrounds, which are equipped to handle the little ones. Translation: You won’t get dirty looks if your kid has a temper tantrum in the lobby, plus there will be changing tables in all the bathrooms.

Why it’s great for your relationship: A family that plays together stays together. “Unlike possessions, memories grow more valuable over time and bond you to the people who share them,” said Betsy Talbot, founder of Married With Luggage. “You’ll never forget the rainy night you all huddled under a tree while camping or the look on your mom’s face when she finally visited the country where her parents were born.”

Things to do: Let each family member pick something they want to do. It could as simple as going on a particular ride at a park or eating a special treat at a favorite restaurant. Giving everyone a say in the itinerary makes them feel a part of the decision-making and -- bonus -- teaches the kids the importance of doing something nice for others.

The Empty Nest Trip
Great time to take it: When your kids are officially gone, but before you get stuck in a rut.

Where to go: Why not make a vacation out of dropping your kid off at school? Just be sure to book a room far enough away from campus so you don't risk any run-ins.

Why it's great for your relationship: When your life has been all about the kids for so long, it can be scary to go back to just the two of you. But this is an excellent opportunity to focus on each other in a way you couldn't before. "When you think you know everything about your long-term spouse or lover, go somewhere new together and try a brand-new sport, hobby or simply a local food. You'll give yourselves the opportunity to learn things about each other that you thought you knew, and didn't," said author and relationship expert April Masini of Ask April.

Things to do: Use this time to enjoy a well-deserved vacation and talk about your new life together. Think about things you've been dying to do but haven't had the time for, and ask your partner to do the same. See if there are any shared interests and make a plan to try them out together.

The 'We Want to Get Out of a Sex Rut' Trip
Great time to take it: You can't remember when you last penciled in time for you-know-what, or you're tired of the same old routine in the bedroom.

Where to go: Somewhere exotic you both have never been before, or a vacation spot you went in the past where you (ahem) saw the bedroom more than the sights.

Why it's great for your relationship: "So often, couples I work with will say the only time they feel relaxed enough to enjoy sex is when they are away on vacation," Phillips says. "Getting out of our routine, away from kids and work, is the perfect time for a couple to renew their physical connection."

Things to do: Snuggle, cuddle, smooch. Repeat.

The Romantic Getaway
Great time to take it: After a year of dating and anytime after -- there never needs to be an excuse for romance.

Where to go: Pick a place you’ve never been before (like that quaint bed and breakfast you saw last summer) or stay local and do something sentimental, like booking a room at the hotel you stayed in on your wedding night.

Why it's great for your relationship: Sometimes it’s easy to take your significant other for granted or forget what you love most about them. Take a moment to rekindle the fire by doing something just for the two of you in a place that will set the mood just right. “Something about travel is sexy, fun and alluring,” said Bild. “Traveling as a couple, without friends, forces couples to really see each other, communicate and engage, which is almost impossible to do at home with the chaos of life.”

Things to do: The small details are what makes this trip so special. Think picking up a bottle of his favorite wine, arranging for strawberries and Champagne in bed or wearing that nightie that always drives him crazy.

The 'We Want to Get Fit' Trip
Great time to take it: When you have a weeklong babysitter lined up and haven’t been to the gym in months.

Where to go: Health-focused spas and resorts, like Miraval Resort in Tuscon, Ariz.; Red Mountain Resort and Spa in St. George, Utah; or Biggest Loser Resort in Malibu, Calif., Chicago, or Ivins, Utah.

Why it’s great for your relationship: Kids + a stressful schedule = no time for yourself. And when you’re not taking care of yourself, you’re not able to give your relationship the best it deserves. Put down the chicken nuggets and juice boxes and head for a vacation that will set you both back on a healthy track. “When we learn to communicate better about our health needs, we may find we can communicate better about other aspects of our lives,” said Thomas Bradbury and Benjamin Karney, authors of Love Me Slender. “Ultimately, this can lead to an even closer and healthier relationship as well as healthier bodies.”

Things to do: Hit up a farm-to-table restaurant and order veggie- and nutrient-rich dishes neither of you have tried before. Be sure to share each bite! Or, pick an adventurous activity, like biking the length of the coast or participating in a mud run together.

The ‘We’re Too Tired to Make Decisions’ Trip
Great time to take it: When you’re so brain dead that you start calling your son the dog’s name, or wake up in the middle of the night thinking you’re late for work.

Where to go: On a cruise or an all-inclusive resort.

Why it’s great for your relationship: Just because you’re too tired to make plans doesn’t mean you should forgo a vacation. In fact, taking a break, especially when you’re this tired, is just what the doctor ordered. “Traveling together as a couple can do wonders for emotional and physical intimacy,” Phillips says. “It provides unique opportunities to disconnect from everyday demands and focus on each other. Long plane or car rides provide a chance to connect and talk.”

Things to do: Catch up on sleep and enjoy being able to just talk to each other.

The Outdoorsy Trip
Great time to take it: When you’re starting to feel a little stir crazy indoors but don’t have much time to get away. Children optional.

Places to look into: Local campsites and national parks.

Why it’s great for your relationship: Nothing gets you out of your everyday routine like roughing it in the woods for a couple of days. And Phillips says this kind of break does wonders for any relationship at any stage. Not only will you reconnect with each other and Mother Nature, you’ll have plenty of opportunities to make new memories.

Things to do: Get up early one morning to catch the most beautiful sunset you’ve seen in years. Just make sure to research spots ahead of time -- nothing’s worse than hiking at 4:30 a.m. only to realize the sun rises in the opposite direction. At night, cuddle up with your honey for stargazing and counting shooting stars.

The Pampered Trip
Great time to take it: A babymoon or right after you both finish a big project at work.

Where to go: Luxe locales, like the Spa Resort Casino in Palm Springs, Calif.; Hot Springs Resort and Spa in Hot Springs, N.C.; or a two-day cruise to ‘nowhere.’

Why it’s great for your relationship: A spa day or ultra-relaxing weekend getaway will help you both decompress and refocus on what matters -- each other.

Things to do: Couples-only activities, like massages or private yoga lessons, are a must. Enjoy being side by side as the stress of everyday life melts away.

The ‘We’re in a Rough Spot’ Trip
Great time to take it: When you can't even agree to disagree.

Where to go: Marriage Quest retreat in Vermont; Marriage Boot Camp in Plano, Texas; Sedona Soul Adventures in Sedona, Ariz.

Why it's great for your relationship: “Being out of your normal routine allows you to see problems in a whole new light, which means you'll also see different opportunities to solve those problems,” Talbot said. “Trying new things together adds excitement to a relationship and promotes the feeling of being part of a team.”

Things to do: Exciting or brand-new activities where you need to work together, like whizzing down a zipline or taking a salsa dancing class.

The Foodie Adventure Trip
Great time to take it: Anytime you're both free, but leave the kids at home.

Where to go: Scott's Pizza Tours in New York City; a culinary cruise with Linblad Expedition; or Foxglove Farm in Salt Spring Island, British Columbia.

Why it’s great for your relationship: There’s nothing like a plate of something yummy to get you both in the mood. Feed each other, laugh over weird-sounding dishes, and don’t forget to share.

Things to do: Don't just take pictures of your dinner -- snap some of you and your honey eating the food.

The 'We Just Had a Baby and Need a Break' Trip
Great time to take it: When your kid has just reached the age where you’re comfortable leaving him or her for a couple of days.

Where to go: For your own peace of mind, stay close -- a local bed and breakfast will work best.

Why it's great for your relationship: Having a baby is stressful, but don't let your pint-sized cutie drive a mega wedge in your marriage. Devoting some time for just the two of you is a great way to make sure your bond is still super strong.

Things to do: Let's be honest, sleep. Catch a full eight-hours, order room service for breakfast, then cuddle under the sheets with your lover.

The 'We Only Have a Weekend' Trip
Great time to take it: When you’re short on time.

Where to go: Look for Groupons and Living Social deals for local hotels within three hours from your home. By cutting down on travel time, you’ll maximize what you can do over the weekend. Make a list of local landmarks and sights, and try to see as many as you can. Or, check out a package deal at a nearby hotel, so you can enjoy a couple of days of unlimited TV, pool and gym time.

Why it’s great for your relationship: A quickie trip can have a huge impact on your relationship. “Couples who have been together a long time can lose sight of who the other person is right now, in their relationship, at the present time,” said Bild. “With kids, work, sports, and more, the vacation allows time for one another to unwind, relax, laugh, and remember what it’s like to be young, free, and spontaneous again.”

Something to do: Come up with a list of things you want to see and choose your favorites ahead of time. That way, you can maximize your time away and bypass any disagreements.

The Adventure Trip
Great time to take it: When you feel stuck in a rut and need some excitement. It’s also great for your last hurrah before trying to start a family.

Places to look into: Hot air ballooning in Sedona, Ariz.; zip lining in Costa Rica; spelunking at the Great Blue Hole in Belize; dog sledding in Alaska; going on safari in South Africa; and bungee jumping or sky diving.

Why it’s great for your relationship: “Sharing an adventure, such as visiting a foreign country for the first time, can help to reinforce a couple’s bond,” Phillips says. “When we experience something new and problem solve with another person, a unique connection is formed.”

Things to do: This is your chance to dare your partner to be courageous and exciting. Don’t forget to take lots of pictures with each other for the family album -- you can impress your kids with them in the years to come.

Nikki Roberti Miller is a writer and editor who pens the blog Mrs. Healthy Ever After about married-life and health-tips. Follow her on Twitter and Pinterest.

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