

Subject: August Newsletter from Air Safe Hitches



August 2019

Newsletter

8/1/19

6 Less Visited Places In The U.S. That Will Blow Your Mind

When it comes to abundant spectacular nature, hospitable and kind people, outstanding service, diversity of cultures and foods, opportunities and possibilities, United States of America beats them all. If you think for a moment how vast this country is and how much beauty exists from one coast to another, you'll get completely blown away.

Even if you decide you want to stay in America for the rest of your life without crossing a border, we guarantee you will never get bored or question yourself what to see or do next. There are so many amazing places in the U.S. that will take your breath away.

Anything, absolutely anything what you may think of is possible to find here.. deserts and mountains, canyons and valleys, oceans and rivers, clean lakes and lush forests, amazing national parks full of falls and bears. On any budget, taste, and style one can find what his heart desires.

America has been our home for many years and left a trace in our hearts forever.

We love this country for its nature, variety, and accessibility, for developed infrastructure and sympathetic people. If we get a chance to go back for a visit, without a need to return to a cubicle lifestyle, then we would love to experience the vastness all over again.

We believe everyone should **visit the United States** at least once in his lifetime. However, to get a real feel of American natural beauty you guys need to hike up the mountains, swim the oceans, visit the countryside and go off the beaten path.

During eight years we have been extensively exploring different corners of the United States. We've lived in 5 states and visited 46. **So much wonder exists in the land of opportunities.**

From all our travels and explorations we would love to highlight special, but less visited places in the U.S. that you should visit. They will blow your mind for sure.

If you are a local, we hope these tips will help you rediscover your own country through a new prism. If you are a visitor, allow us to introduce you to greatness and splendor of these almost magical places.

During the time when we lived in America, we often rented cars from them even though we had our own. The deals were so good (like Chevrolet Sonic for three days in Los Angeles for \$30 or Ford Focus for five days in Denver for \$70) that we preferred to rent a car rather than put miles on our own vehicles on long distance trips.

1. Umpqua National Forest, South Oregon Oregon is famous for green clear lakes, rivers

and breathtaking waterfalls that form in them. But **Umpqua National Forest** in Southern Oregon probably has the biggest amount of peaceful ponds and thundering waters that you can visit.

The best part is how quiet and untouched they are. It seems that visitors to the state prefer going to nearby Crater Lake only, not delving into the forest and exploring its wonders. In some places, you may be the only visitor during the day.

Side note: the only downside of this area is the number of mosquitoes and ticks during the warmer months. If you think they bite you more than others (ugh, those creatures drive me bananas) then don't forget an **insect repellent** (this one, in particular, is really good against ticks and mosquitos, and used on clothes only.)

2. Lava Beds National Monument, California Visitors to California usually go to Pacific Coast Highway, Sequoia, Red Rocks, Yosemite, Death Valley and Joshua Tree national parks missing historically and geologically rich land in the North.

Lava Beds National Monument should be definitely added to your list of places to visit in California. Because of the volcanic eruptions in this area years and years ago a rugged landscape with diverse volcanic features was created. There are so many caves to venture in, campsites, and even battlefields to visit!

We can only imagine how excited kids will be to explore some of the caves. **Lava Beds National Monument** undoubtedly will amaze you with the surreal landscape!

Side note: The temperature in the caves stays low year round. Don't get deceived by the sun and heat on the surface. Take a hoodie or sweater to stay warm.

3. Rocky Mountains National Park, Colorado Alright, this park is not less visited or known among Americans. Quite on the contrary, they love it, know well and return again and again. But visitors from other countries often don't add it to the list of national parks to see. Usually, they head out to national parks in California, Montana, and Utah. Not many of them think this park is worth the visit.

Rocky Mountains National park is huge and has almost unearthly beauty. Spending a day or two there definitely won't be enough. Every season in this park is magical and will guarantee an array of colors.

Side note: If you plan on walking in the snow, don't forget proper shoes or **snow grips**.

4. Eastern Sierra Nevada in California As with Lava Beds National Monument, **Eastern Sierra Nevada** in California is less popular place in the U.S. that will blow your mind. Everyone praises Highway 1 along the coast, but not everyone directs enough attention towards highway 395.

This area has an incredibly high amount of lakes (you simply have to **visit Mammoth Lakes**), fairy-tale mountains, small cute towns, **amazing hot springs**, and even museums. A lot of movies representing Wild West of America were filmed here.

The tallest mountain Mount Whitney and the highest slopes of California are also located in this part of the state. In winter the only way to get to **Eastern Sierra** would be from the south due to the road closure from the West. In the summertime, you can visit from the Bay Area.

Come at any time during the year and explore this truly hidden gem.

5. Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota We bet North Dakota is probably one of the last a few states you plan to visit in America.

You are right, the state does not have a lot to offer. But we got blown away by the beauty of national park there when visited the state on our cross-country road trip from the West coast to the East.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park, which is on the western side of a state and not far from the border with Montana, is rich with wildlife, scenic drives, and stunning vista views. We spent there just a couple of hours in the evening, watching the sunset and observing the wildlife.

We haven't seen as many bison in our life as in this one park. They were resting in bushes,

crossing the road, refreshing in the river and walking wherever they wanted to.

We guarantee you will be surprised and amazed by the splendor of this park. Visit once and you'll want to come and revisit it again!

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Tips for Traveling with Pets In Your RV

Our dogs went on a two-month road trip with us in the pop-up camper last year, so we knew they didn't need any special attention with our new home. We have always moved apartments every couple years and they never get weird or worried. However, when we first moved in I tried to have some familiar scents for them, like their dog beds and Foxey has a few toys she loves. I am not sure if this actually does anything, but it seemed to help Foxey adjust nicely.

Luna doesn't care, she is happy to be wherever we are. Keeping your pets properly exercised really helps with your pets not behaving poorly, so we always try to keep our dogs tired.

Traveling with Pets: Cat Tips

Cats like hiding places. If you have cats you probably know this. We have at least three places that only the cats can get to. Nimbus, our oldest kitty, we were most worried about because he sometimes has a hard time adjusting to change. Our kitten we weren't worried about because he wouldn't know otherwise. So, we made sure to give Nimbus lots of one-on-one attention to help him adjust, he is such a lover. Also, he loves his hiding spots under the couch, a little shelf that is just for the kitties, and the bathroom where their food/litter is.

We originally had the litter box in the shower but that was a pain in the butt to move. To solve that, we closed off one of our shelves that had our charging station and put a cat door on the

other side so they could get to their litter and it has worked perfectly. Try to think about your cats when you shop for a camper, and get creative! Having the litter hidden is probably the best thing we have done so far.

Exercise

How do you make sure your pets get enough exercise? I am surprised we get this question so much. Maybe it's just us, but our dogs never got much exercise indoors even when we had a 1500 sq. ft. apartment! We didn't see how moving into an RV changed any of that. We usually take them out for walks or, especially while boondocking, we can just let them out the front door.

Training your dogs to listen to you is a must while on the road. Our 188 sq. ft. home on wheels is for snuggles and rest for the dogs so we try to wear them out in the morning so we can work the rest of the day, uninterrupted.

The cats on the other hand never really got much exercise to begin with, but we do find they love some one on one play time so we lock the dogs in the bedroom and we play with laser pointers or with string with them until they are over it! Which never takes long...

Keeping Pets Cool in Extreme Temperatures

For us, the beauty of living in the RV is that we can move when we want to and sometimes that decision is based on the weather (forever looking for that 75 degree place). That being said, we try to stay out of any extreme temperatures. We understand that isn't possible for everyone, so here is our advice for those who don't have that luxury.

Air conditioning!

But seriously, we were boondocking out in Joshua Tree this spring and temperatures were in the mid nineties but we didn't have any hookups so we were unable to use our air. We used spray bottles to keep the pets cool, made sure they had plenty of water, and occasionally rubbed ice cubes on them. We were pretty tight on our budget then so we didn't buy proper blinds and we still haven't bought Reflectix which is high on our list. Parking in the shade helps with the temperatures in your camper, also use your awning to block the sun from hitting your camper, and cook outside when you can!

Leaving Pets in your RV

We work and live out of our RV, so leaving it is only for recreation and grocery shopping. Luckily, our pets rarely get into anything they aren't supposed to, except our kitten loves to explore our cabinets and knows how to open our doors. That being said we still make sure everything is put away in its proper place before we leave. Having a small space makes you want to keep everything organized anyways.

We usually put the dogs in their kennel, but sometimes we leave them out. If it's a hot day we try to not leave, having air conditioning or not I always get stressed about leaving them on hot days. Remember people, there are so many resources for people to watch your animals if you have a long day planned. I feel so much better if my pets are at a doggie daycare so Kev and I can have a really amazing day worry free.

Staying with Pets in RV Parks

We haven't had any issues with the amount of animals (4) we have at any RV parks or campgrounds. The only thing we have been working on is trying to get our dogs to bark less. Luna has the loudest bark in perhaps the world, so we have been actively trying to train her she doesn't feel like she needs to bark. Our instinct at first was to yell at her or give her negative feedback, but we learned from the dog whisperer that doesn't help, if anything that just makes them want to do it more. Because people come around and they see you upset so they think when people come around it is a bad thing. We always have treats around, if we notice someone is going to walk past our camper or Luna might see them we try to give her treats before she gets the chance to bark. It isn't always easy to get to her first, but it has helped her a lot.

Tips for RVing With Your Dog

"Everyone who has ever lost a pet while traveling thought, "it will never happen to me."

By Tonya Blackwell

One of the facts of life inherent in RVing is the need for climate control in the vehicle, and when accompanied by pets, it is imperative that cooling systems, especially, not fail when the vehicle is parked. Even the best maintained systems can hiccup; generators can lay down, and that can be fatal for a pet left in the camper while the rest of the family is away.

You can safeguard your traveling companion with an alarm system designed to send a call to a designated cell phone number if the electricity goes out or the temperature rises above or falls below a margin you set as your safe climate zone for your pets. Most will continue to alert you at intervals of two or three minutes until the temperature is stabilized within acceptable levels once again. An additional measure is to place an emergency rescue sign in a prominent window of your RV, letting anyone assisting in an emergency know there are pets that may be in need of rescue as well as what kind they are.

While you should never, ever leave your dog unattended at a campsite, there are times when you'd like to be able to let the dog out without being tethered to you or a stake out. You can't, in most places, leave your dog off leash, so it can be a problem. Or you can invest in a portable exercise pen.

They are typically sold in panels that hook together and fold flat to accommodate the storage limitations of an RV. You can get them in varying heights and different numbers of panels, and add panels to create a larger space so your dog can have his own little backyard home away from home and you can man the grill without four footed assistance.

One of the most important safety devices for your traveling pet requires planning ahead. Losing a pet while away from home is tragic; often a dog or cat who would ordinarily find their way back home becomes disoriented because "home" is a moving target. Before you make the first reservation, seriously consider having your pet microchipped or tattooed and be sure to file the papers with the proper registry. Also, invest in a tag or plate for their collar with your name and a number where you or a responsible person can be reached. It's fairly safe to speculate that everyone who has ever lost a pet while traveling thought, "it will never happen to me."

While on the road, it's best if your pet is contained. A sudden stop can turn a pet into a living projectile, injuring you and injuring -- or killing your pet. After all, you wouldn't dream of letting a child bounce around a moving vehicle! There are a variety of ways to restrain your pet in comfort and safety, depending on the size of your pet and your preference.

The most common is, naturally, the crate. If you're using a crate, settle it in a secure space in the RV and make certain it won't slide around or end up hurtling through the vehicle in case of a sudden stop or impact. Strapping it in place is definitely a good idea. Another possibility for small dogs is a dog car seat. These belt into a seat similarly to a child's car seat. The dog is then harnessed into the seat -- usually a padded box like set-up. One of the nice features of most of these car seats is they allow a small dog to sit up high enough to see out of the windows and catch the breeze.

Larger dogs have the option of harnesses that belt directly into the existing seat belts (pictured Above). They allow the dog to sit up and look out of the window and flaunt their gypsy existence to less fortunate canines.

As more and more people travel with their pets, new products to make the trip more enjoyable and safer are bound to hit the market, and who knows, you might just come up with the next great pet travel product while you're sitting around the fire at the campsite one evening. You just never know what the next gotta-have-it pet product will be. After all, who ever thought Doggles would be such a hot item?

How to Downsize and Simplify for Full-time RV Life

During the process of transitioning to full-time RV life, one of the very first things you'll need to do is downsize and simplify. After all, an RV might feel huge as you're driving it down the road, but when it comes to living in one, even the biggest RVs with the most slides can feel teeny tiny.

Unfortunately, many people find the idea of downsizing daunting. They take one look at all the stuff they've acquired through the years and feel completely overwhelmed as they wonder what they should keep, what they should get rid of, and where to store things they can't keep in the RV.

If all of that sounds familiar, this is the article for you. Here we will discuss the ins and outs of simplifying your life for RV living, so you can feel the sweet freedom of leaving the stuff behind for a life of adventure.

The Purging Process

Let's begin by discussing purging. This is probably the most stressful part of downsizing as it means getting rid of the things you've likely held onto for years. What we've found is that it's best to take this process one step at a time, breaking it down into little pieces rather than looking at it as a whole.

Start in one room, open one drawer or cabinet, and sort through the stuff there. As you come across each item, ask yourself if it is truly useful to you in your day-to-day life. If it is, put it into a "keep pile". If the answer is "no" and if the item is not an important paper or sentimental piece, it should go immediately into a "donate", "sell", or trash pile depending on what it is. Important papers and photos should go into a pile of their own, as should sentimental items.

Some items may strike you as being potentially useful "down the line." In these cases, you'll almost always want to get rid of the thing in question. Anything that isn't used on a weekly basis probably doesn't deserve your valuable storage space. Besides, most things can be replaced pretty easily if you do find you need said item in the future.

Once that first drawer or cabinet is finished, move onto another and do the same thing. Repeat this process until you've gone through every drawer and cabinet in a room, making six piles:

1. Keep
2. Donate
3. Sell
4. Trash
5. Important papers/photos
6. Sentimental

With every storage space in the first room cleaned out, take a look around that room and sort through any stray items that may be on the countertops or floor. Wrap up that room by tossing the trash pile and donating anything in your "donate" pile, then move onto the next room, using the exact same process to clean through each and every item.

Paring Down the Rest Once your entire house has been sorted through, you should be left with items to keep, items to sell, a stack of important papers, and a collection of sentimental items.

Selling the Excess Getting rid of the "sell" pile is easy enough to do and can make you some extra cash, giving reluctant sellers some motivation.

Whittling Down the Sentimental Stuff As far as sentimental items go, start sifting through the collection again. Consider how you would feel about parting with each item. Would a photo or scanned copy of the thing suffice? If not, could you put it in storage and part with it temporarily? Do you have a loved one who might keep and care for the item for you?

As you ask yourself these things, make smaller piles by sorting the sentimental items according to what you will do with them, then hand off things you won't be keeping as soon as possible in order to keep it quick and painless.

Sorting the "Keep" Pile At this point, your "keep" pile should be fairly small. Go through this pile again and be brutally honest with yourself, asking yourself if you truly need to have each item. Make sure to get rid of doubles of things such as cooking utensils and hairbrushes, cut back on things such as craft supplies, and remember that if things are lost or broken, they can always be replaced.

Dealing with Papers and Photos As you go through things you will probably come across an enormous number of important documents, as well as hard copies of photos. Many of these documents and all of the photos can be scanned and stored digitally using a scanner such as

this. This will save a ton of space and cut down on the weight of your rig.

When storing documents digitally, be sure to save them in multiple places.

Some documents which you'll want to keep hard copies of include the titles to any vehicles or other property you own, your passports, social security cards, birth certificates, other forms of ID, and insurance verification. If you don't know how to get the social security, here's how to get a new social security card on application filing service that is quick and painless. That said, it doesn't hurt to have digital copies of these items as well. These should all be stored in a fireproof container in a cabinet in the RV.

If you prefer to keep hard copies of some photos, consider purchasing some boxes such as these to keep them safe during your travels.

How to Store Things As mentioned before, you do have the option of leaving some stuff in storage. This is a great option for those who are hesitant to get rid of certain items. That said, unless you have a family member who is willing to offer you storage space, you will want to consider the cost of keeping a storage unit before making this decision.

If you do decide to put some stuff in storage, be sure to store things in such a way that they will not be destroyed in your absence:

- The boxes mentioned above are perfect for keeping photos safe in a storage unit.
- Meanwhile, a bigger fireproof safe can be used to leave some important documents behind if you wish.
- Vacuum bags are awesome for saving as much space as possible when putting things into boxes to store, and they also help keep pests at bay while helping to keep moisture off of fabrics.
- That said, you will want to add some mothballs to each box to ensure the bugs and rodents leave your stuff alone.
- Additionally, including something that will help prevent mold and mildew from cropping up while you're away.
- Furniture bags are great for protecting big pieces.
- All smaller items should be sorted well and kept in tight-sealing boxes.
- All boxes should be labeled to make finding things easy when you return.

What to Replace Some items are very useful in day-to-day life but are too bulky to be practical for RV living. In many cases, these bulky items can be replaced with smaller versions of the same thing. You might also consider replacing single-use kitchen items with gadgets that have multiple functions.

For instance:

- A bulky traditional blender can be replaced with a smaller Magic Bullet blender.
- A waffle maker can be replaced with a multi-functional Griddle.
- A slow cooker can be replaced with a 7-in-1 Instant Pot.

These smaller multi-use items will allow you to get the exact same things accomplished without using so much of your cabinet and counter space.

Helpful RV Storage Tips and Products

The final step is moving everything into the RV. However, before physically moving anything, make a note of what you need to store in the RV, along with the cabinets and drawers you have at your disposal.

Sit down and figure out where each and every item will live, ensuring there is a place for everything before you ever lift a finger. Doing this will help reduce stress during moving day, as you will be able to put things away immediately and won't be left with a pile of stuff on your tiny living room floor.

Planning ahead is also helpful because it will give you a chance to figure out what kinds of storage and organization products you need to buy. Here are some of our favorite storage products.

- Over-the-door storage pockets for storing small items such as toiletries.
- Wall-mounted storage boxes for toys, shoes, books, and tools.
- Plastic drawers for making tall cabinets more useful.
- Well-sealed tubs for keeping in storage bays.
- Dish stacking shelves for keeping dishes tidy. Can also be used for organizing craft items, among other things.
- Command Hooks and Command Strips for hanging photos, pot holders, water bottles, mugs, bags, jackets, and more.
- Hanging fruit basket for produce storage.
- Hanging hammocks for stuffed animals. Also good for bedding storage during the day.
- Non-slip cabinet liner to keep things in place.
- Magnetic spice rack and magnetic knife rack.
- Wall storage for books and toys.
- Canned goods organizer.
- Lazy Susan for deep cabinets.
- Hanging wall file and/or bulletin board for important papers.

Of course, not all of these items are useful to all people or in all rigs. Carefully consider what you really need before making a purchase in order to avoid wasting time and money.

More Quick Tips

Toys When paring down toys, give kids a box or some other container they are allowed to fill. Let them know that they may only keep what fits in that box, meaning you will likely need to implement a “one thing in, one thing out” policy.

Clothes A capsule wardrobe (or something like it) is ideal for tiny living. This involves choosing a single base color—such as black, brown, or navy—and owning a few key items in that color. All other items must mix and match with these key items, meaning you can keep just a few things but have plenty of different outfit options.

Books and Movies Keeping books and movie in digital form can save a ton of space. Another great option is to use your library card to borrow books and sometimes even movies from the Overdrive app.

Simplifying for Full-Time RV Life

Hopefully, this article helps you feel more confident as you dive into the simple yet rich world of RV living. Taking those first steps may feel overwhelming, but once you do it you’ll never look back!

Why Are RV Park Rates So High?

by Nancy Ferri | Feb 25, 2019

If you’ve camped with any regularity, you understand one of the top costs of RVing, aside from fuel, are campsites. We notice prices have gone up on just about everything over the years. But RV parks are pricier and require lots of planning and reservations in advance to ensure you can actually camp when and where you want to. Those living life on the fly often find themselves out on their luck if they attempt to camp without a reservation.

So, why are RV Park Rates So High? It’s because of the number of RVers. More people than ever are purchasing RVs or renting them through companies like RVshare or Outdoorsy. The increase in the number of RVers has also increased campground costs such as employees, maintenance, security, water, sewer, electricity, and trash removal.

So read on to learn why RV Park rates are so high and what you can do to lower your cost of RV Campsites.

What is the Average RV Rate for Private Campgrounds?

Of course, average is a notable word whenever trying to budget or plan ahead. Prices, taxes, and amenities vary from state to state. Private campgrounds generally include full hookups

(electric, water, and sewer). They will range between \$30-\$60 per night dependent upon location and amenities such as a pool, WiFi, cable, mini-golf or a water view. A luxury RV resort, such as Disney's Ft. Wilderness will find you paying from \$70-\$100/night. Families traveling with children often look for amenities, including entertainment.

- Wekiva Falls near Orlando, FL – \$50-\$60/night
- Hadley's Point Campground, Bar Harbor, ME – \$46-\$50/night
- Giant Redwoods RV, Meyers Flat, CA – \$45-\$55/night
- Loons Point RV, Cedarville, MI – \$32-\$41/night
- Hillbilly Creekside Campground, Maggie Valley, NC – \$30-\$36/night
- Sun Rocks RV Park, Prineville, OR – \$28-\$33/night

Usually renting by the week or month allows you a discounted rate. Taking everything into account, with the numerous private campgrounds throughout the United States, an average rate most likely is \$35-\$45/night, before taxes.

What is the Average RV Rate for Public Campgrounds?

Public campgrounds, as a rule, are traditionally less expensive than those privately owned. Naturally, a municipality running a campground must set aside funds to do so. Public campgrounds commonly offer more private, buffered sites, as well as, natural scenery to that area and the opportunity to view its natural wildlife inhabitants. However, public campground usually have fewer amenities or none at all. Some public campgrounds offer full hookups, while others only have electric and water (with a dump station on site) or dry camping only.

- Morefield Campground, Mesa Verde National Park, CO – \$45/night (full hookups)
- North Rim Grand Canyon National Park, AZ – \$18/night (dry camping)
- Nolin Lake State Park, Mammoth Cave, KY – \$29/night (electric & water)
- Tomoka State Park, Ormond Beach, FL – \$28/night (electric & water)
- California State Parks – \$35/night / National Parks in California – \$35/night (amenities vary)
- Lake Park County Campground, Lewisville, TX – \$17/night (electric & water)

Be it federal lands, national, state, or county parks, there are a multitude to choose from throughout the United States. Restrictions on when you are allowed to make a reservation will also apply. For instance, national parks and federal lands generally allow you to reserve 6 months in advance of your arrival date. State parks and county parks can range from one year to three months in advance simply depending on the policy of the particular municipality. When making reservations at public campgrounds, it's best to plan ahead. Depending on location and time of year, they can book up quickly.

What Factors Determine RV Park Fees?

Popular areas of the country receive thousands of visitors per year. Park and campground financial needs grow by leaps and bounds due to increased costs of ongoing maintenance and or the occasional natural disaster. And all of this equates to money.

There are items that the average visitor may not take into account when they make an off-hand remark to a ranger asking why the park should charge an entry fee—after all, we pay taxes, right? For any park, be it a public municipality, federal or private, there is a mountain of items for which time and money must be allocated. Perhaps you are aware of what goes into keeping a park running safe and sound, but just in case, we've listed a few below.

- Campground stores
- Emergency preparedness
- General maintenance to campsites and buildings in the park
- Hiking trails, bike paths, canoe rentals, and related maintenance
- Landscaping, downed trees, prescribed burns
- Liability insurance
- Motor vehicles and other equipment used by park employees
- Park roads and campground improvements
- Parking lots
- Playgrounds
- Picnic areas
- Repair and maintenance of historical buildings or monuments

- Restrooms and bathhouses
- Sewage and water treatment facilities
- Security
- Signage
- Special programs provided throughout the year
- Swimming pools
- Taxes
- Trash and recycle collection
- Water and electric within the park or possibly solar panels
- And most important, paid employees and rangers

Public campgrounds must have an annual budget and the funds to maintain their campgrounds and parks safely and securely for all visitors. Private campgrounds also adhere to many of the same regulations as public campgrounds, while ensuring they make a profit to possibly also pay a mortgage they hold on their land or equipment. Of course, private campgrounds are not subsidized with federal, state or county dollars.

Visitor rates are not merely an average of those that visit a park occasionally but those that use the campground, amenities of the park, rent a kayak or visit for special events. Dependent upon a park's location, it must budget and plan knowing when it will be at full capacity during the year.

Are Discounts Available at RV Campgrounds?

Yes! If there's an upside to campsite prices, it's the numerous clubs, volunteer opportunities, military or senior discounts that abound.

It's simple to check with state parks by phone or stopping in along your route. Some parks only provide a discount if seniors reside in the state, while others allow all seniors a discount or a chance to purchase a pass which allows a discount for a year. Your age will vary from state to state as to what is considered a "senior." If your plans are to stay within a state for any length of time or travel there often, it could be worth your while to purchase the pass.

Active military and veterans' discounts differ from state to state. The majority of state parks offer anywhere from 10% to 25% off campsites. Several states waive the day use fee.

When it comes to national parks, BLM lands and national forests, seniors and active military are nicely rewarded with discounted camping and entrance fees. At age 62, the Lifetime Senior Access Pass can be purchased for \$80. This pass gives you free entrance to the national parks and half-priced campsite fees.

Please note, you may still be charged an extra fee for the use of electricity and water or a registration fee. However, the price of the actual campsite is shown at half-price. This campsite pricing varies depending on location, type of federal land and amenities offered. Federal sites may only offer dry camping; others will offer electric/water and some even full hookups.

Active military may obtain an America The Beautiful Pass absolutely free! This pass is not available to military veterans. However, veterans may qualify for the Senior Access Pass at age 62. Disabled veterans qualify for a free Access Pass.

Becoming a camp host can provide you a free campsite. Jobs vary from place to place as well as your time at a particular location.

There is a host of RV clubs available to take the bite out of your nightly rate while staying at private campgrounds. These are renewed annually, giving you the opportunity to discover which ones work best for you. In addition to the discounts listed below check out our article called The 5 Best RV Campground Memberships where we discuss the 5 Best memberships, and a couple of runners up, in great detail.

Good Sam RV Club offers a 10% discount at over 2,400 campgrounds throughout the U.S. Membership costs is \$27/year. Good Sam also provides a 5 cents/gallon on gasoline and 8 cents/gallon on diesel discount when gassing up at any Pilot Flying J location. Pilot Flying J also will refill your propane tank at a 5 cents/gallon discount.

As a club member, enjoy a 10% discount on purchases at any Camping World and several outdoor retailers. Other discounts apply on dining, travel, and shopping.

Passport America at \$44/year is a wise decision for those who want good use of campground discounts. Their directory includes approximately 1800 campgrounds across the U.S. and Canada and offers 50% off campsites. Before joining, you can download the directory which outlines policies, such as the number of nights the discount is applicable.

Harvest Hosts is a unique RV club. It's a network of wineries, breweries, and farms that invite RVers to stay one night free per visit at over 700 locations. At \$79/year, the membership pays for itself after a couple of nights. The site, however, does not allow access to its locations before signing up.

Participating locales provide no RV hookups or services such as showers and bathrooms. You must call ahead to reserve. For those who don't mind boondocking for an evening, this sounds like a fun, adventurous way to throw in a night or two off the beaten track as you travel to a new destination.

Escapees RV Club has various discounts that apply to their network of campgrounds. Some may be 50% off while others will give a 15% discount. Restrictions may apply as to how many nights you will receive the discount. Their website is extensive and has a lot to offer at \$39.95/year.

KOA Value Kard Rewards is specific to KOA campgrounds throughout North America. For a \$30/year membership, you'll receive 10% off daily rates year-round at 500 KOA campgrounds. KOA also provides a phone app making it easy for online reservations. Reward points are accumulated with each booking to be used for cash off on future KOA stays.

Is There A Shortage of RV Campgrounds?

What kind of crazy question is this, you ask? I somehow got hooked in with 3 different camping groups on Facebook and getting reservations seems to be a complaint voiced by many.

With that said, there are over 15,000 campgrounds throughout the United States. But, why do we hear that RVers are unable to get reservations? Naturally, some folks have the planning gene, while others, not so much. The idea of taking off for the wild blue yonder definitely has its appeal, however, in the real world, some sort of plan generally has to come into play.

Perhaps friends were unable to camp at the Grand Canyon National Park Campground, had to find another campground an hour or so away, which then turned the normally happy campers into unhappy campers. When you are dead set on camping on any public lands, planning ahead for your date of arrival and departure is usually the best option. Check ahead to inquire how far out you can book a reservation, and be prepared the day of to do so. Private campgrounds, such as KOAs, are generally able to accommodate RVers.

I agree though, when you have your heart set on a particular campground, it can feel like the shortage is real. You know the saying, "location, location, location." To help keep you in the green with a campsite, be sure to check ahead for your next stopping point then google campgrounds in that area. If you need to make a reservation last minute, call ahead to ask about accommodations. If you must call two or three campgrounds, so be it. Most RVers I know have always located a site, whether it be their second or third choice.

Conclusion

RVing provides newfound freedom and escape from everyday stresses of life. More people than ever have learned that RVing really can be an economical form of travel and one that keeps the family staying together and playing together. Whether you enjoy primitive camping or need the amenities provided by an RV resort, you'll find your way in searching for the campsites that best fit your needs and those of your family. Keep livin' the dream.

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