

Subject:

August 2023 Newsletter from Air Safe Hitches

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Go RVing in any Budget

How to Set Up A Travel Trailer at the Campground

Before buying an RV, people want to know just how much their RV vacations will cost. Well, one of the best things about RV travel is that there are options for every single budget. You are in control of so many price points including the type of camper you purchase, how far you travel, and where you stay.

When we bought our first RV, we were teachers with lots of time to travel, but a pretty tight household budget. RV Industry Association estimates that RV vacations cost up to 59% less than other types of vacations. We have found that statistics go hand in hand with our personal experience. Sure, we love to splurge on RV resorts, special activities, and dinners out when we travel. But if we need to stretch our pennies, RVing lets us control the budget in so many ways.

So, whether you are about to take the trip of a lifetime or you want to plan the most affordable vacation ever, here are five ways you can manage the budget when planning your RV travel.

- **The Cost of the RV**

With new RVs costing anywhere from \$6,000 to \$300,000, this is the most important place to manage your costs. If you are financing, divide your total yearly payment by

how many nights you plan on traveling. In our opinion, this number should be far lower than what we would personally spend on a hotel room or vacation home. However, some people are willing to spend more because of all the benefits of having a home on wheels.

- **The Cost of Maintenance**

There are definitely annual maintenance costs for your RV, and it is important to be comfortable with them before you commit to a purchase. Price out winterizing and de-winterizing, along with basic service prices at your RV dealership.

Remember that the cost of maintaining a motorized unit versus a towable will vary greatly so do your research! You'll also want to price out storage if you can't keep your RV in your sticks and bricks driveway. That cost will vary greatly depending on where you live.

- **The Cost of a Campground**

This is another amazing way that you get to control your budget for RV travel. National and State Park campgrounds start at around \$20 for no hookups. The best resort campgrounds might charge as much as \$90 for waterfront, full-hook up sites. The average private campground with basic amenities will cost you around \$50. How much do you want to spend? You can find a place to fit that price point. We personally do a combination of public and private campgrounds to control our costs. On average, over the course of a decade, we spend about \$55 per camping night. Your numbers might look very different if you choose to only camp in state parks or only stay in resorts.

- **The Cost of Driving**

Your gas bill will definitely be higher if you are towing a travel trailer or driving a motorhome. If gas prices are a significant concern for you, pay close attention to the weight of the rig you are purchasing. Also consider distance in your vacation planning. Staying close to home will significantly reduce this cost. The more you drive, the more you'll spend, so this is a very easy cost to control when planning your RV trips.

- **The Cost of Food**

This is our absolute favorite way to save money while traveling in an RV. It is so easy to stick to your normal grocery budget, which means you are not spending a dime more on food than you would at home. However, we also like to experience local food culture, so we usually eat out for lunch and dinner at each vacation stop. Meal plan ahead of time, pick a few special splurges, and you can easily track your spending on food.

You have infinitely more control over how much you spend when traveling by RV than with any other form of travel. Once you figure out a budget for each of the above categories, you can move on to the fun part...taking those trips. If you ask us, an RV vacation is worth every single penny we spend. Every time.

RV industry steers through post-pandemic US slump

Timothy Aeppel

Updated Sun, July 30, 2023 at 9:00 AM EDT

July 25 (Reuters) - The U.S. economy may ultimately skirt a recession, but it's felt like one for months at Jon Ferrando's 103 RV dealerships.

Retail sales of recreational vehicles are on track to be the lowest since 2015, said Ferrando, CEO and president of Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based Blue Compass RV, which operates in 33 U.S. states. There's "definitely a recession in RVs," he said.

Blame the coronavirus pandemic. Few industries better illustrate the wild shift in U.S. spending habits that occurred during the health crisis.

In a matter of months, consumers stuck at home cut spending on services, as restaurants shuttered and airports turned into ghost towns, and began splurging on goods, especially items like RVs, bicycles, and swimming pools. Anything that made quarantine conditions more tolerable saw a massive surge in demand.

Winnebago Industries CEO and President Michael Happe has called it the "COVID retail frenzy" when speaking to investors.

But trouble emerged soon after pandemic restrictions were eased and U.S. interest rates began to rise. The Federal Reserve has hiked borrowing costs 10 times since last March as part of an aggressive campaign to tame high inflation. The U.S. central bank's benchmark overnight interest rate has climbed by 5 percentage points to the 5.00%-5.25% range, the highest level in about a decade-and-a-half.

The interest rate consumers pay on loans is well above even that, and RV loans recently have averaged around 10% versus 7% or so before the Fed's monetary tightening kicked into high gear, Ferrando said. With 80% of his company's customers financing their purchases, it was natural that rapid rate hikes would curb buyers' appetites.

'SCREAMING RECESSION'

As demand evaporated, manufacturers hit the brakes. North American shipments of new motorhomes and trailers, almost all of which are produced in the United States, are expected to plummet to 300,000 this year, about half the number shipped in 2021, according to the RV Industry Association. The only other time shipments have fallen so sharply was during the 2007-2009 financial crisis and recession.

Winnebago and Thor Industries, the largest U.S. RV manufacturer, declined to discuss how they are adjusting to the slump, but investors seem to think the worst is over. Shares of Elkhart, Indiana-based Thor and Eden Prairie, Minnesota-based Winnebago are up about 46.5% and 29%, respectively, on a year-to-date basis.

"Our industry has always been a little challenged on forecasting around demand," said Jason Lippert, CEO of LCI Industries, a large supplier of parts to the RV industry that is also based in Elkhart.

That shortcoming was magnified during the pandemic, he said. "During COVID, dealers would take whatever they could get - as long as it was an RV."

Downturns in this business have long been considered a dependable recession gauge, but that may not apply this time.

"If I was just looking at RV data, I would be screaming recession," said Michael Hicks, an economics professor at Ball State University in Indiana who tracks the industry, adding that pullbacks in RV shipments have signaled every U.S. recession since 1981. But the glut created by a rare event like the pandemic may have skewed the normal picture, he said.

RVIA spokesperson Monika Geraci said the industry faces a dual challenge: inflation has led to higher sticker prices and higher interest rates have made it costlier to finance hulking purchases like RVs.

"We expect in the second half of this year shipments (of RVs) will start to increase again," Geraci said. The RVIA projects that shipments in North America will rebound to about 350,000 units next year "as consumers get more comfortable with the leveling off of inflation and the level of interest rates," she said.

OLD AND OVERPRICED

The problem for many dealers is the unsold RVs on their lots. Gregg Fore, an RV industry consultant who previously ran an RV parts supplier, said half the new inventory at some dealers he works with are 2022 models. That figure would normally be about 20% to 25%, he said.

Dealers now face the prospect of bringing onto their lots the newest 2024 models which cost less than these aging models. "How do you sell a '22 that's more expensive than a '24?" Fore asked.

Meanwhile, other sectors that saw pandemic-related booms have also fallen to earth - though in many cases not as hard as RVs.

Tyler Hermon, vice president of sales and marketing at Pools of Fun, a large in-ground pool builder in Indiana, said his backlog of orders for new pools is down to about three months - compared to the year-long waits that customers saw at the height of the pandemic.

"I would say we're still, volume-wise and revenue-wise, ahead of where we were pre-COVID - so we haven't fallen completely back," he said.

Back at Blue Compass, there is also optimism. The company moved quickly to sell off the glut of older RVs on its lots, Ferrando said, and its service business has stayed strong as existing customers continue to need repairs and upgrades.

"There's still interest in RVing," he said, "but customers are just more cautious right now."

(Reporting by Timothy Aeppel; Editing by Dan Burns and Paul Simao)

20 RV Tips And Tricks Every Camper Should Know

These are hacks that every camper should know, regardless of their experience level.

1. Use an RV departure checklist

There is nothing like getting on the road and finding out that you forgot to unplug your shore power cord. There are a lot of things to remember before you pull out.

A visual checklist, either printed or on your smartphone, will help to ensure you don't forget anything. Print out this free RV Departure Checklist and keep it somewhere easy to access.

2. Know the height of your rig

Find out how high your rig is. Write the height on a label or piece of masking tape, and put it on your dashboard. Watch for low-hanging branches and take note of the height of overpasses before you proceed. Use an RV-safe GPS to make sure you have a safe route.

3. Level your RV before filling your freshwater tank

Leveling your RV before filling your tank will ensure that you are really getting a full tank.

4. Mount towel bars (and other things) on your walls with exterior grade Gorilla mounting tape

Exterior grade Gorilla mounting tape adheres to RV walls much better than Command strips or anything else we've found.

5. Use Command broom holders to hold flashlights or wrenches

3M Command broom holders are great for keeping flashlights and wrenches handy in your basement storage areas or inside the RV.

6. Replace your RV showerhead

This trick will help to conserve water, while still having decent water pressure. The Oxygenics showerhead makes it possible to enjoy longer, better showers in the RV. Read more about replacing your RV showerhead from Do It Yourself RV.

7. Use an Instant Pot Pressure Cooker

The Instant Pot pressure cooker will allow you to make almost effortless, delicious meals in a lot less time than traditional cooking methods.

You simply put the ingredients in, set it, and the Instant Pot takes it from there. Bonus: You can vent the Instant Pot outdoors, so cooking won't add to the humidity levels in your RV.

8. Bring a basic tool kit

Be prepared to make minor repairs if you need to by having a basic tool kit with just the essentials. This includes a screwdriver or cordless drill, a few different bits, some screws, an electrical tester, and wrenches like a torque wrench.

9. Pack a hairdryer

A hairdryer can be used for more than just giving you good hair. You can use a hairdryer to thaw frozen pipes or to blow warm air onto cold kindling when lighting a campfire.

10. Pack some pine cones

What? Pine cones?

Yes! Pine cones aren't just for Christmas decor. Pine cones are also nature's perfect firestarter and readily burst into enough flames to start kindling when you put a flame to them.

11. Plan an RV-safe route

Use the RV LIFE App and RV LIFE Trip Wizard to plan your route and find amazing camping spots that are perfect for your camping style. Get RV-friendly directions, read reviews, and find important campground information, all in one convenient tool.

12. Turn the propane valve off before you travel

Traveling with your RV's propane valve open is crazy. Our rolling rigs are subjected to shaking equivalent to an earthquake as we travel. This shaking causes many things to loosen or even come apart, and propane connections and lines can come apart as we travel. This definitely presents a fire hazard in your RV.

13. Pack a first aid kit

Be prepared for emergencies (including the four-legged family members) by packing a first aid kit for both humans and pets.

14. Bring a collapsable storage tote or two

Collapsible storage totes can be used to tote campfire supplies like s'mores ingredients, napkins, glasses, and beverages, and make decent impromptu tables to put campfire essentials on.

15. Bring board games and other activities for family fun

Board games will help your family enjoy time indoors if the weather gets too ugly to play outside. Here are a few great board and card games that you can easily play in the RV.

16. Pack a pizza stone

A pizza stone will help to even out the heat in your RV's propane oven so you can bake amazing meals. And of course, you can always use it to make pizza! Pizza stones do break, so be sure to protect them by wrapping them for travel.

17. Repurpose your dishwasher

When you are boondocking, your time off-grid and unhooked will be much better if you don't run out of water. Washing and rinsing dishes uses more water than anything besides your RV toilet, so it makes sense to repurpose your dishwasher. Use a basin to wash your dishes, and then use gray water to flush your toilet.

18. Make sure your campfire is really out before leaving it

Abandoned campfires are one of the leading causes of forest fires. Not all of these fires were intentionally left smoldering.

Campfires heat the ground underneath them hot enough to reignite anything combustible in your firepit hours later. No one wants to be "that guy/girl" so use lots of water or dirt to thoroughly smother your campfire when you are done with it.

As a rule of thumb, you should be able to put your hand comfortably on the ground in your fireplace before you leave.

19. Make a headlamp into a lantern

Strap a headlamp (light side in) to a 1-gallon jug of water to make a lantern that lights up your campsite. Opaque, white jugs work best for this camping hack.

20. Wash your clothes as you travel

This camping trick from *Travels With Charley: In Search of America* by John Steinbeck is so simple and effortless we'll be using it all the time.

Put dirty clothes, water, and laundry soap into a five-gallon bucket with a tight lid. Make sure the lid is on snug because if it isn't it makes a huge mess. Find a place in your rig where you can make sure the bucket will stay firmly in place. If you have a place to secure it, even better.

Every bump you hit and turn you take will agitate the clothes in the bucket as you drive, just like a washing machine does. After an hour or two of driving, your clothes will be perfectly clean, ready to be rinsed and hung to dry in the fresh air.

How Safe Is an RV Road Trip?

RVs can be a better way to see the country (and avoid airport chaos), but they can pose some safety concerns.

By Sally French

With air travel so chaotic, delay-ridden and expensive — and hotels zapping amenities like free breakfast and housekeeping — an RV road trip might be a fresh way to travel — without many of those issues. But RVs can pose challenges of their own. And for people who have never driven a moving, tiny home before, safety might post among the biggest challenge of them all.

But with so many novice RV renters comes a lot of new realizations. A spokesperson for Cruise America told us that, between 2019 and 2020, they saw a 30%-40% year-over-year increase in time spent on the phone with customers to answer questions, adding that some customers are uncertain about how to drive their vehicles and how to use campgrounds.

While RVs don't have to be scary, there are some RV safety concerns you should be aware of before booking your first RV rental.

RV safety considerations

1. Uncertain weather and natural disaster could complicate your travels

Between lightning strikes causing the biggest fires in recorded California history to the U.S. witnessing a record number of landfalls for any hurricane season, it's been a wild year for weather. Some experts expect that things could still get worse.

Research led by Stanford environmental scientist Michael Goss suggests that autumn coincides with extreme fire danger, exacerbated by increases in temperature and decreases in precipitation over the past four decades. Meanwhile, hurricane season extends from summer into fall, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Aside from dangers of driving in the midst of a natural disaster, severe weather might mean some campgrounds are temporarily closed, as was the case at Yosemite National Park during the 2020 California wildfires.

2. Driving comes with accident risks

In the five-year span from 2014 through 2018, U.S. air carriers experienced one fatality, according to Bureau of Transportation Statistics data. For 2018 alone, that's a fatality rate of 0.012 fatalities per 100 million miles traveled.

Meanwhile, 36,560 deaths occurred in 2018 alone due to motor vehicle crashes — a fatality rate of 1.13 deaths per 100 million miles, more than 93 times the airline fatalities in the same year.

RVs come with their own challenges that traditional cars typically don't have, including risk of accident from overloaded or unevenly loaded RVs, increased rollover risk due to a higher center of gravity and larger blindspots.

To reduce your risk, use basic common sense while driving an RV:

- **Travel during daylight hours.** According to 2016 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data, 68% more fatal accidents occurred between the hours of 3 p.m. and midnight versus between 3 a.m. and noon.
- **Don't make hasty driving decisions.** If you realize that the exit is approaching but you're still in the far lane, don't try to quickly change lanes; just wait for the next exit and backtrack. You might end up five minutes behind schedule, but the whole point of a road trip vacation is to slow down and relax anyway.
- **Take wider corners.** Your overswing (the distance that your vehicle swings out when making a sharp turn) is likely much greater in an RV than the car or truck you are used to driving. Pay attention to your overswing and take wider corners while driving to avoid hitting curbs or fire hydrants.
- **Drive slower than you usually would and keep wider distances between cars.** RVs brake slower than most cars, so watch for brake lights in front of you, prepare to stop well in advance and take it slow to begin with.

"It should never be a case of 'go big or go home,'" says Geneva Long, CEO of luxury travel trailer-maker Bowlus Road Chief. "Anything over 26 feet or 4,500 pounds will severely restrict your ability to drive, park, enjoy national parks or camp. You don't want to hate the experience, and it's almost a guarantee you otherwise will once you add in high winds, poor driving conditions, heavy traffic and limited camping locations due to your oversize."

If you do get into a rental car accident — whether it's a small sedan or huge motorhome — make sure you contact the RV rental company. Just as you would with any car accident, make sure you take photos and exchange contact information with other involved parties. And of course, before you rent, make sure you have the right accident insurance (some credit cards might actually cover the cost for you).

3. Shared bathrooms and showers could facilitate the spread of germs

If your RV doesn't have its own shower or bathroom, you might find yourself resorting to shared facilities at a campground, which might not always be as clean as you'd like.

The alternative: Bring your own portable toilet and shower. Depending on where you're camping, you might be able to go in the woods (skip this option if you're in a campground near other people or near a body of water). Otherwise, consider your own travel toilet and camping shower.

4. Maintenance issues become your responsibility

Sure, it's annoying when you're sitting on the tarmac and your flight won't take off because a door won't close. But aside from a potential delay, you don't have to worry about a thing besides when the snacks will finally arrive.

With an RV, you're on the hook for any and all maintenance issues.

"Always check tire pressures and be aware of gas mileage before you set out, so you are not stuck somewhere in 107-degree heat," Long says.

And maintenance isn't just limited to how the vehicle operates while driving; it encompasses living spaces too. If a hotel has a power outage, the front desk can probably help you deal with it. If your RV has a power outage, hopefully you're familiar with the RV's electrical lines. Before taking off on an RV road trip, familiarize yourself with the RV's sewer lines and control panel — and read the user manual.

A better option for an RV vacation with minimal risk: RV delivery

Given concerns around driving it and dealing with hookups, tire pressure and other common maintenance challenges, here's a potentially-better solution: RV delivery.

RV delivery is a growing trend in the camping world where — instead of exchanging your car for an RV at a rental facility — you drive your own car to the campground, where an RV is already set up and waiting for you. RVshare, which is one of the biggest RV delivery operators and operates like Airbnb for RVs, said that almost 40% of its RV rentals were delivered so far in 2022, up from 27% in 2021 and 16% in 2020.

Another safety bonus of RV delivery: insurance coverage is often cheaper. While rental company Outdoorsy requires that all renters have an insurance package that covers liability and damage insurance is usually cheaper for stationary deliveries because you're not paying to cover the rig on the road. In fact, it's sometimes less than a quarter of the cost of Outdoorsy's comprehensive coverage to insure an RV that you'll drive.

Plus, someone else deals with making sure you've hooked it up to the fresh water, sewer and electricity lines correctly. They might end up even dumping the sewage for you upon departure.

RV vacations: are they worth the risk?

Traveling in an RV has plenty of benefits. You might find your RV road trip turns out to be cheaper than your usual vacation. Head somewhere like a national park and you'll

likely end up spending more time outdoors, which the CDC says improves overall health and wellness thanks to increased opportunities for physical activity, along with promoting mental health and stress reduction.

But all travel comes with some level of risk, and RVs aren't necessarily exempt.

The Danger Of An Un-Level Trailer

Why should a trailer be level? For a horse trailer to avoid overloading one of the four tires or possibly breaking one of the axles, it must be level when hitched to a tow vehicle. What we mean by "being level" is that the weight of the trailer should be sitting evenly on both axles and all four tires. Since each tire and axle is rated to sustain up to a specific maximum weight, any weight over that specific weight will overload the tire and result in a blow-out or a broken axle. With most horse trailers today being equipped with rubber torsion axles, weight shifts from one axle to another rather quickly when raising or lowering the nose, making it even more critical to insure that the trailer is level.

LEVELING A HORSE TRAILER.

Preparation: Check each tire's pressure to ensure that they are all the same. This is important to achieve a correct level. I suggest filling them to the maximum pounds per square inch (psi) – they will flex less, ride cooler, and less apt to blow. You can locate the psi of the tires on the side wall.

Bumper Pull Trailers: To correctly set the level of your bumper pull trailer, park the trailer and tow vehicle on a flat surface. If the trailer is blatantly un-level when hooked to the tow vehicle, unhitch the trailer and raise or lower it so that the trailer is level. Since fenders, running boards, and other flat spots on the trailer may not be straight, using a level on one of these areas may not give you accurate information.

The best way to determine the trailer's levelness is to first, stand a distance from the trailer and observe by sight if it looks as if it is sitting level. Then look at the tires to determine if they are equally flat rather than one tire being rounded. The rounded tire means there is little or no weight on it. The next step is to determine how to achieve the correct trailer height when the trailer is hitched to the tow vehicle. This can be achieved in two ways. EquiSpirit has an adjustable coupler on all its bumper pulls so with a wrench, you can adjust the trailer coupler up or down to the height of the ball mount on the tow vehicle. Most other bumper pull trailers do not have this feature, so you will need to choose a ball mount with the right height to keep the trailer level when hitched up. Ball mounts will have what is called "drops" (0", 2", 4" 6") so depending on the height of your tow vehicle, you will need acquire the proper ball mount. You may not get the level exact, but close is okay as long as there is flatness on both tires. If the level is slightly off, have the nose a bit up rather than a bit down – it will track better.

Gooseneck Trailers: The gooseneck trailer should be unhitched from the tow vehicle and parked on a flat, level surface. Observe the trailer to see if it looks level and to

determine that the tires (tires need to have the correct psi) are equally flat on the bottom rather than one being more rounded and the other more flat.

Once you determine that the trailer is level, measure from the ground to the lowest part of the gooseneck. Then measure from the ground to the top of the tailgate or side of the bed of your truck. Subtract that distance from the distance from the ground to the top of the gooseneck. The amount will be the clearance you will have from the top of the tail gate to the bottom of the gooseneck with the trailer sitting level. It should be at least six inches – preferably seven or eight so that the trailer does not hit the tail gate or sides of the truck when going over uneven terrain. If you prefer not to pre measure, with the trailer sitting level, drive your truck under the gooseneck (make sure your tailgate is down). If the clearance from the bottom of the gooseneck to the top of the tailgate and sides of the truck is under six inches, there will not be enough clearance to safely pull the trailer. The gooseneck will most likely hit the tailgate or the sides of the truck bed, especially on uneven terrain. If your tow vehicle adequately clears the truck bed while the trailer is sitting level, you can adjust the coupler up or down to meet the ball while the trailer remains level.

Note: Most all gooseneck couplers are adjustable by loosening or removing a couple bolts and sliding the coupler up or down. It's important to note that the adjustable coupler does not raise the whole trailer up and down, just the nose. So if the clearance from the top your tailgate (and sides of your bed) to the bottom of the gooseneck is less than 6" while the trailer is sitting level, raising the coupler will only raise the nose of the trailer, shifting weight onto the rear axles and tires. The adjustable coupler's purpose is to adjust for different height truck beds such as a four wheel drive as opposed to two. If your trailer does not have the proper clearance over the truck bed, your options are limited. You can purchase a trailer that will fit your current truck, purchase a truck that has a lower truck bed (two wheel drive as opposed to four), or you can have the axles blocked up 4" by your local service center.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF SUMMER RV TRAVEL IN 7 EASY STEPS

by Jessi Joachim

Summer is in full swing! It's time to hit the road and get your adventure on. Beautiful weather, shining days and amazing road conditions are just a few reasons to look forward to Summer RV travel. But have you prepared for all of the more challenging aspects of summer RV travels?

BEING PREPARED FOR SUMMER RV TRAVELS

Depending on where you're headed, extreme heat, thunderstorms and crowds can all change plans for summer RV travels in an instant. It's important to make sure you're ready for anything that gets thrown your way. Ensure your trip is everything you ever imagined it could be and more with these seven easy steps to make the most of RV travel during summer!

ENSURE ALL HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING AND APPLIANCES ARE WORKING

You can't embark on your summer RV travels without proper heating and air conditioning solutions. Make sure your RV's systems are running full steam ahead by testing them out a week or two before the big trip.

Appliances are another luxury you can't afford to miss out on. Whether it's just a weekend trip or an extended vacation, having plenty of useful, portable appliances will make your life a whole lot easier. Consider slow cookers, dehumidifiers, washing machines or air compressors to combat all of the unfavorable features of RV life.

PREP YOUR MATTRESS FOR RESTFUL ZZZ'S

Getting a good night's sleep is vital to RV travel. Being rested and alert is essential for safe driving, so make sure your RV bedroom setup is at its best. Choose a mattress in the perfect size for your RV's bed frame that will support through the night.

Accessorize your sleeping set up with comfortable sheets, blankets and pillows. If you tend to overheat, open the windows to your RV and let the cool, overnight breeze flow into the space. Fans help airflow, and moisture wicking sheets can help you control humid air. Gel pillows are also a great way to stay cool. Utilize what you can to make the most of your travel time without feeling exhausted.

DON'T FORGET THE BUG SPRAY

No one likes itchy bug bites and ceaseless scratching. Make sure your RV is bug-free by purchasing an ample amount of bug spray or by using easy DIY remedies to all of your pest problems.

Blocking pesky bugs from entering your living space is not only for your own peace of mind, but it's also crucial in preventing harmful insect borne illnesses like Lyme disease or influenza. Keep your health at the forefront to remain in tip-top shape and enjoy your trip to the fullest.

PACK LIGHT

When it comes to personal items like clothes, shoes or vanity products, keep things to a minimum. Make as much room as possible for necessities that will aid in your adventure, such as camping equipment or entertainment gear.

While it's great to stick to what you're good at, step outside your comfort zone and take a trip on the wild side. RV travel is the perfect time to try new outdoor activities like kayaking, fishing or even spending the night exposed to the elements. If you've been dying to try something new, bringing it on the road with you is your best bet to get it done. In the end, you'll be glad that you did!

USE THE OUTDOORS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Space can be an issue with RVs when traveling long distances. Stretch those legs and get some fresh air by utilizing outdoor space as much as possible. From hammocks, to

picnic tables, or even camping tents, the options are endless. Try cooking a meal over an open fire or relaxing under a built-in canopy. Find a remote area for some incredible stargazing or head to a national forest and experience nature as it was meant to be.

STOW AN EMERGENCY KIT

You never know what will happen when on a trip. Stay ahead of any potential disasters by packing an emergency kit full of helpful goods. You can buy pre-made first aid kits stocked with all of the most important health cures like bandages, gauze and disinfectant.

Include other valuable wares that you may not think about at first. Flashlights, water filters and even tarps can be useful in dangerous predicaments. Being over prepared is never a bad thing especially when something could be used in unusual circumstances.

DON'T FORGET THE GPS

Getting lost is not ideal. Be sure your GPS is functioning properly. If you're confident in your survival skills, try going old school with a compass and a couple of maps of the area you are traveling.

Many phones still include compass apps in case of emergency and you can always fire up the GPS when needed. Going back to basics could tap into your adventurous side and make you open to trying more rustic escapades.

ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR YOUR SUMMER RV TRAVELS

No matter where you decide to roam this summer, you can feel prepared with these 7 summer RV travel tips. Now, go out there and have a grand summer adventure!

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