

FAMILY VACATION TIPS

While vacations are a great time to experience new things and bond as a family, they can also present a new variety of family challenges. Here are five tips to help you, and your family, cope:

1. **Start Early:** Begin the day's activities after a quick breakfast. Crowds will be light and your children's energy will go toward the activity, not battling crowds at a buffet restaurant.
2. **Schedule Light:** One or two shows, museum visits or special sites are probably all your children can handle in one day. More than that and you risk serious activity overload.
3. **Give Them Options:** Although children may not pick the most glamorous restaurant or the trendiest art gallery, letting them play a part in vacation planning increases attention spans and agreeability.
4. **Food is Important:** Planning ahead and packing favorite snacks is useful when your hungry child gets picky at the fancy French bistro where you decide to grab lunch. Food is essential for energy, and energy is a vital piece of successful family excursions.
5. **Stick to Routines:** This applies especially for younger travelers. Consistent meal times and nap times, combined with keeping up familiar habits, like reading a book before bed, keeps the stressors of unfamiliarity to a minimum.