

Vacation or Staycation?

By Jennifer Schenberg

How many of us still plan vacations during scheduled school breaks? Interestingly, over the past few years, it's felt like a slow evolution away from traditional advanced booking during holidays and Spring/Winter breaks to more off-peak times, price-based planning for taking the family on vacation.

Many of my friends take family vacations in the beginning of December or throughout January to avoid the crowds. Are they unconventional by opting not to book during a scheduled school break? With the escalating cost of travel sometimes being vacation-prohibitive, I can't blame anyone for making the most out of the time we have with our little ones, however and whenever possible. Disclaimer: Our circle of family friends have children in primary and elementary school for the most part, and not yet tasked by the demands of middle school and high school.

All that said, Spring Break is fast approaching and it's late in the game. With no set plans and a few days off from work, what do you do?

Consider hosting a Staycation. It's no sunny Turks & Caicos extravaganza, but it is a cost-effective alternative that will surely keep the kiddos engaged with friends and family while making some memories. Here are some local NYC Springtime ideas:

- See the city like a local, visit DUMBO, hang out in Prospect Park and grab a hot dog at Coney Island
- Finally visit the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building or the Top of the Rock
- Get discount same-day theater tickets at TKTS in Times Square, South Street Seaport or Downtown Brooklyn
- Indulge your shop-a-holic instincts and hit up FAO Schwarz, American Girl, or the Disney store
- Visit Dylan's Candy Bar, M&M'S World, or Max Brenner's for chocolate madness
- Explore Strawberry Fields, Central Park's playgrounds and bring a football or soccer ball
- Check out MOMA, the Museum of Natural History or the Guggenheim
- Have Dim Sum in Chinatown
- Take the tram to Roosevelt Island and spend the day exploring
- Visit Staten Island, Governors Island, City Island and Ellis Island
- Take a double-decker tour bus around the city and Brooklyn
- Ride the Ferris wheel in Toys R Us in Times Square
- Go to the Central Park Zoo
- Walk over the Brooklyn Bridge
- Missing winter? Ice skate at the indoor rink at Chelsea Piers
- See the new blossoms at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens
- Head over to the Bronx Zoo and imitate the animals
- Get a cannoli in Little Italy

Happy Staycationing!



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