

Travel tips for the digital family

Vacations were not something we took when I was growing up. Between our family's tight budget and my dad's work schedule, it was just too hard to get away. Now as a working mom, I am trying to do my best to take my boys on at least one trip each summer. Some years, we are only able

to do short weekend trips, but I am trying to organize bigger vacations as my boys get older. Regardless of the types of trips we take, I want to make them as affordable and stress-free as possible. Here are some apps I use and activities I plan to help make each trip a success.

MY TRAVEL APPS

- ▶ **TripAdvisor:** This is a well-known and commonly used app to get reviews on hotels, tourist attractions, restaurants and more. I use this very frequently when traveling.
- ▶ **Yelp:** If you need a great local restaurant, try looking at Yelp. There you can read reviews from customers and find the best places to eat.
- ▶ **GasBuddy:** Find the cheapest gas near your location.
- ▶ **Waze:** Get crowdsourced travel information and directions. Be one of the first to know of traffic jams, accidents, road conditions or road construction. You can contribute to and access real-time information.
- ▶ **iExit:** Find out if the next interstate exit has helpful resources such as a gas station, a campground, a restaurant or a hotel.

family while traveling. It allows you to treasure hunt in a fun, affordable way. Geocaching uses GPS to find little hidden treasures all across the country. Many of these treasures are nothing more than a little metal container (often half the size of a finger or smaller) containing a rolled-up piece of paper that you can sign and date to show you found the item. Sometimes there are little treasure boxes where you can remove an item and replace it with something else. Download a GPS app and get out and explore. You can learn more by going to www.geocaching.com.

- ▶ **Digital Scrapbooking:** Any time you travel, have your kids contribute to the memories by letting them use a camera or video recorder. Sometimes the pictures they take and the videos they make are some of your most treasured. Then, take those videos and pictures and make a digital scrapbook or video using websites or apps such as Shutterfly or Animoto.

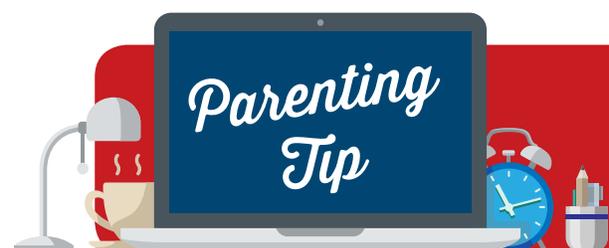
Whether you are planning a weekend camping trip or a two-week beach vacation, it helps to be prepared so everyone can have fun and enjoy the trip. Happy traveling! 📱



CARISSA SWENSON
IS A TRAINING AND EDUCATION CONSULTANT FOR CONSORTIA CONSULTING.

➤ **Also, don't forget to add to your vacation fun with activities or projects.**

- ▶ **Geocaching:** Geocaching is one of my favorite activities to do with my



A movie, audiobook or podcast can help time in the car pass quickly — for children or grown-ups. To save on mobile data, download these using your home Wi-Fi network before hitting the road.