

Family Travel Series

# WINTER ROAD TRIPS

All of the Fun,  
None of the Whining



By Tamela Rich

# Three Tips for Planning a Great Family Vacation

Planning a family vacation the right way will make it more fun for everyone.

## Don't over plan

You'll have a better vacation if you don't plan more than 50% of each day.

This leaves plenty of time for the little moments that can never be anticipated (sometimes delightful and sometimes not).

Leave room for magic in each day. Kids are over-scheduled in everyday life; vacations should be different.



Check out Tamela's  
Pinterest Boards for  
Family Vacation Tips and  
Destinations






## Give everyone some of what they want

When you understand that Mom loves to read every display at an interpretive center while Sis likes to take animal pictures and Bro is a rock hound you can plan accordingly, knowing that everyone's needs are being met. Your turn is coming.

## Wild Card

A Wild Card is where someone can ask to change the planned itinerary. Consider one wild card per person per week.

## Destination Apps

		Android	IOS
	NatGeo National Parks		<a href="#">Available</a>
	Roadside America App		<a href="#">Available</a>
	Roadside America Presidents		<a href="#">Available</a>
	Oh, Ranger! Park Finder	<a href="#">Available</a>	<a href="#">Available</a>
	TripAdvisor Offline City Guides	<a href="#">Available</a>	<a href="#">Available</a>

For more vacation tips, downloads and more visit [TamelaRich.com](http://TamelaRich.com)

# Maximize Your Road Trip Vacation Budget



A road trip is the perfect way to have a unique experience on a budget. With some creativity you'll save money on food and entertainment.

## Save Money on Healthy Food

Eating in restaurants, amusement parks, and junk food from gas stations is expensive and derails healthy eating habits. Here's a better system:

- ✿ Pack a small cooler with healthy snacks, utensils, and condiments
- ✿ Shop at farmers markets and grocery stores
- ✿ Picnic while on the move and eat in your lodgings once you're settled
- ✿ Pack a refillable water bottle for each person instead of reaching for sodas and juices
- ✿ If you ONLY pack healthy snacks that's exactly what you'll eat

## Pull over!

You don't have to spend a fortune on venue tickets and other entertainment. Have a blast staging family snapshots with roadside attractions and monuments. Dress them in your scarves and hats like this one (right) for even more fun.


When you get home, make a collage for the refrigerator or use a service like [Shutterfly](#) or [Apple's iPhoto](#) to make a beautiful printed book of your escapades.



# Make Room for Fun

Cramped cars make for cranky kids.

When you pack light and pack right, you'll have more space for fun

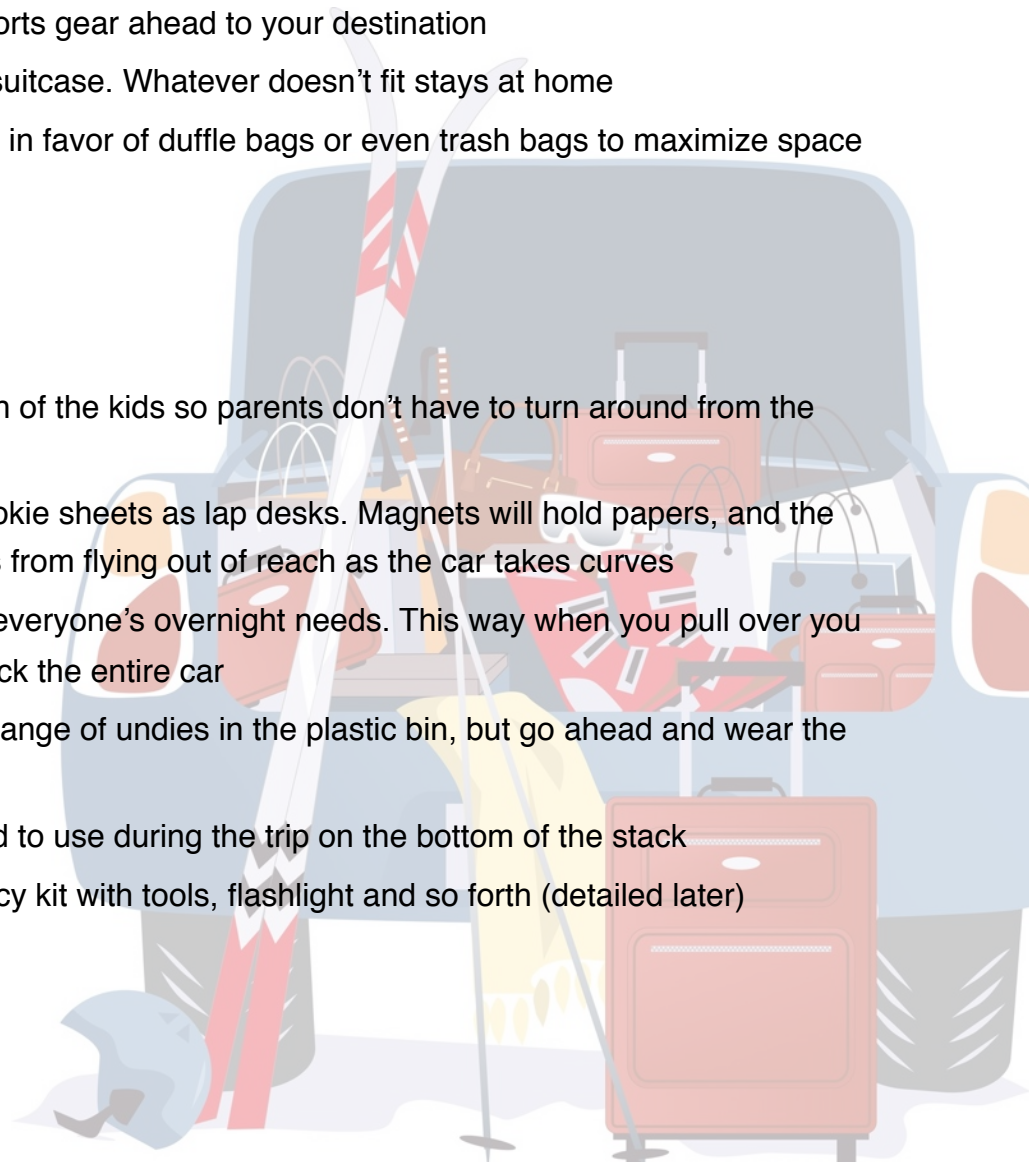


YOU DON'T NEED  
as much  
as you usually pack

## Give yourself leg room

- \* Choose a wardrobe that only requires one pair of shoes
- \* If you must bring boots, wear them as you travel instead of packing them in the suitcase; you'll have more room in the suitcase
- \* Leave the hair dryer and other appliances at home
- \* Pack interchangeable wardrobe pieces: every top should match every bottom
- \* Don't travel with more diapers than you'll use on the trip. Ship ahead or buy when you arrive
- \* Ship bulky items like winter sports gear ahead to your destination
- \* Give everyone the same size suitcase. Whatever doesn't fit stays at home
- \* Ditch the hard-shelled luggage in favor of duffle bags or even trash bags to maximize space

## Packing the car

- 
- \* Place snacks within easy reach of the kids so parents don't have to turn around from the front seat to help
  - \* Use toaster oven pans and cookie sheets as lap desks. Magnets will hold papers, and the lip of the pan will keep crayons from flying out of reach as the car takes curves
  - \* Pack a plastic bin that carries everyone's overnight needs. This way when you pull over you don't have to unpack and repack the entire car
  - \* Include toiletries, PJs and a change of undies in the plastic bin, but go ahead and wear the same clothes another day.
  - \* Put the things you will not need to use during the trip on the bottom of the stack
  - \* Be sure you have an emergency kit with tools, flashlight and so forth (detailed later)





# Car Safety Tips

Parents taking the family to a holiday destination have a lot to juggle and consider, so car maintenance may not be top of mind.

A quick inspection might help you arrive safely. These tips come courtesy AAA of the Carolinas.

## Tires

- Check tire pressure for all tires AND the spare when they are cold
- Make sure their pressure levels match those found in either the owner's manual or on the driver's door jamb
- Note that pressure levels may be different for front and rear tires
- To inspect tire tread, place a quarter upside down in the tread grooves on several spots of the tire. If the top of Washington's head is exposed at any point, it's time to replace that

## Battery

- A fully-charged battery in good condition is required to start an engine in cold weather
- Ensure the battery cable connections are tight and the terminals are free from corrosion



## Wiper blades and fluid

- Wiper blades should completely clear the glass with each swipe. Replace them if they leave streaks or miss spots
- Be sure the windshield washer reservoir is filled with a cleaning solution that contains anti-freeze for cold weather use
- Carry an extra supply of washer fluid in your

TIP: Check all your lights (high beams, turn signals and brakes) before you leave.

Safety first!

## Heating

- Check radiator hoses for leaks, bulges and cracks
- Make sure your vehicle's antifreeze reservoir is at the full mark
- Have your engine's coolant checked by a technician to ensure low temperature protection. The last thing in you need is a frozen engine block
- Check your heater before hitting the road. Does it work?

## Emergency road kit

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Flares
- Jumper cables
- Basic repair tools
- Water and imperishable food
- The kit can be compiled at home or purchased at any AAA branch office

## Emergency planning

- Buy a roadside service plan like AAA. Program their contact number into your mobile phone
- Download the [AAA Roadside app on iTunes](#) or the [Android market](#). Help can be summoned right from the app
- Leave your travel itinerary and route with someone at home or your destination

## Oil

- Check levels and change at the interval recommended in your owner's manual
- Stick with the vehicle manufacturer's recommended viscosity
- Be aware that your vehicle may require different oil for cold weather operation

## Professional inspection

- Get a safety inspection from a trusted professional. Some things, like battery charge, require special diagnostic tools
- Visit a [AAA car care center near you](#) to have your vehicle inspected by a trained technician. FREE!



## Tamela Rich

American Road Trip Expert Tamela Rich is an award-winning author, storyteller and adventurer. She inspires people to live their best lives through her books, speeches and website. Tamela's motto is to "Pack Light. Travel Slow. Connect Deep." [TamelaRich.com](http://TamelaRich.com)