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Step into Spring



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Creative Tips for Taking a Staycation

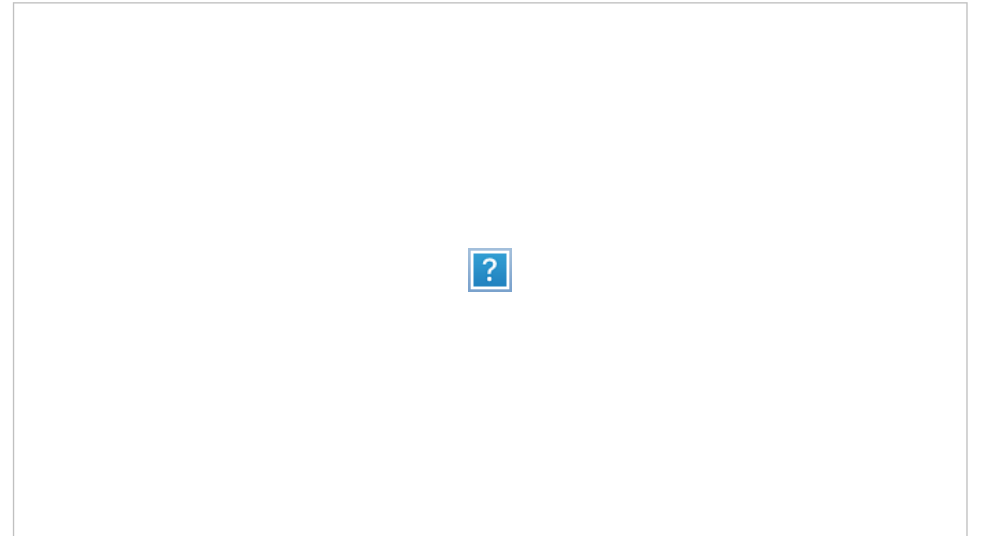
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Staycations – those money-saving vacations you take while staying in your very own home – are one of the most effective ways you can choose to reduce your travel energy consumption and shrink carbon footprint. With rising energy prices and the less than luxurious nature of air travel these days, staying at home may be just as relaxing than heading off to **exotic points unknown**. Find out how much your energy consumption is impacted by conventional travel. Then take a look at Hearts' list of creative ideas for making your cheap staycation one of the best holidays ever.

Quick Guide: Travel Energy and Vacation Emissions

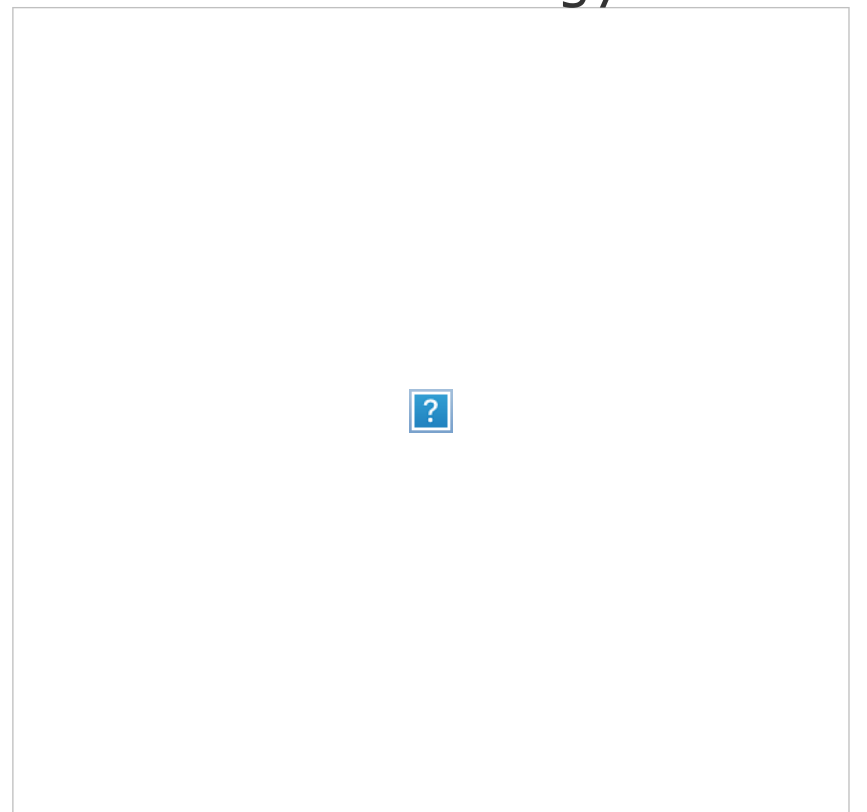
- **Air travel carbon emissions:** Two-thirds of global air travel is related to tourism, contributing 7% of all greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. In fact, airline emissions from Americans travel adds 10% to our transportation-related carbon emissions.^[i] High-altitude emissions from planes are much more damaging than that emitted close to the ground. That's because when emissions like nitrogen oxide and water vapor combine at 30,000 feet, they result in up to twice the global warming impact of the carbon dioxide emissions from the same plane.^[ii]

- **Energy for car travel:** If you take road trips instead of flying, you're still having an impact on climate change. Since 20 pounds of CO2 are emitted for every gallon of gas burned, a 4,000-mile drive that gets 20 miles per gallon will generate 4,700 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions and consume more than 14 barrels of oil.^[iii] ^[iv]



Take Action! Creative Staycation Ideas and Low-Energy At-Home Holidays

1. **Make a plan ahead of time:** Don't wait until the last minute to plan out your staycation. With a plan, you will ensure your staycation doesn't just turn into a purposeless, uninteresting period of time.
2. **Forget about chores:** Turn off the alarm, put your PDA in the drawer, and tune out! Definitely make your time at home relaxing by ignoring your regular list of to-dos. Forget about fix-it jobs, cleaning tasks, and errands, and just escape into the bliss of relaxation instead.
3. **Inform coworkers, family and friends:** Make it clear to the people in your life that though you're still at home, that doesn't mean you're available for day-to-day tasks, phone calls, and other mundane things. If they want to relax with you, great! Otherwise they should let you enjoy your vacation in peace.
4. **Choose on interesting local attraction daily:** The key is to choose activities you wouldn't normally do during the course of the year. Whether you visit the local museum, have a picnic in a historic park, cycle to the nearest national forest, watch the air show, visit a new restaurant, swim at the community pool, or attend a fun event at the neighborhood science center, there are likely plenty of interesting attractions right outside your door. Pick one for each day to make your staycation interesting the entire time.
5. **Take a class:** Is there a cooking class you've been dying to take? A pottery seminar you want to partake in? A gardening or building how-to event you'd like to attend? Likely your community is bursting with fun and enjoyable educational getaways that will give you diversion with brain benefits. Check local community message boards and announcements to see what's available!
6. **Choose a geographic theme:** Make your staycation feel as though it's more exotic by choosing a geographic or ethnic theme. Then cook traditional meals, watch documentaries about the region, explore their crafting ideas at home, and read cultural novels or biographies of the area's heroes. You could even host a cultural party and invite all of your friends to attend in costume!
7. **Volunteer for your favorite charity:** Many nonprofits run special work events during the summer, such as park or beach clean-ups, building projects, and the like. If you're the active type, why not look around to see how you can help to transform your staycation into a voluntourism staycation.
8. **Pamper yourself:** Whether your idea of the ideal day is a day at the ballgame or a day at the spa, choose activities that will speak to your soul and decrease the insanity of your life.
9. **Take pictures:** Whatever you do, don't forget to document your staycation with some great photographs. Not only will this be inspiration to ensure your at-home-vacation is a blast, it will help you keep a record of all the interesting things you experienced and learned.



Dig Deeper: Holiday Energy Saving Tips and Resources

- Check out voluntourism opportunities here at home via [The International Ecotourism Society](#), [VolunTourism.org](#), or even Travelocity's [Travel for Good](#) site.
- Calculate your carbon footprint size with and without taking an airline vacation with Nature Conservancy's [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#).
- Find out more about how much your travel adds to our American climate emissions problem via the [Transportation's Role in Reducing US Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#) report.

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