



Plan Ahead for This Year's Holiday Vacation

Whether your family counts a holiday vacation among your treasured traditions or you're anticipating a holiday getaway for the first time, getting an early start on your planning can help ensure your trip is filled with good tidings and joy.

Know what you want to spend. If you're planning to open your wallet a little wider for this trip than you have in the past, you're not alone. A survey by American Express Travel found more than 60% of travelers are planning to spend more on trips in 2021 since they missed out on travel in 2020. Setting your budget now can help you make choices about things like accommodations and activities while giving you some extra time to save. Working off a budget from the start can also help you take advantage of book now, pay later options that may give you added savings or incentives.

Be conscious of high-demand destinations. Popular travel spots tend to fill up fast, so if you're considering visiting a high-demand location, be aware of how crowds might affect your plans for everything from wait times at attractions to rental cars and more. If travelling out of the country, make sure you check the requirements on Covid testing prior to travel. According to vacation rental company Vrbo, prime warm-weather destinations where families can spend the holidays together are already facing lower availability for homes, including Florida and Hawaii beaches. Similarly, Maui, Hawaii, has less

than 20% of homes available during Christmas week. Ski spots also see a large share of holiday travel, so be prepared if you're planning on a holiday hot spot.

Manage against the unexpected. Despite all the advantages of planning ahead, it's impossible to predict unknown variables like the weather when you make travel arrangements months ahead of time. Travel insurance can help protect the majority your investment if you have to cancel your trip. Some policies offer coverage for cancellation for any reason, so you'll want to research exactly what your policy allows, including weather and pandemic-related cancellations.

Book lodging early. With travel volume up and availability for accommodations already trending downward for the holiday season, consider making reservations sooner than later. Vacation homes have been quickly scooped up during every popular travel season this year, so it's no surprise families are planning ahead to ensure they have a great place to spend the holidays together.

Look into local events. In this pandemic age, many attractions and activities have new guidelines, including altered operating schedules, occupancy limits and reservation systems. Remember that preparation is key! Make sure to take all these measures into consideration as you are planning the perfect trip for the holidays!

- vrbo.com

News & Events

•October is Physical Therapy Month!

Join us in thanking all of our amazing physical therapists for their amazing work and dedication! THANK YOU!

•Autumn at the Arboretum

- September 18 - October 31
8525 Garland Road,
Dallas, TX, 75218

New this year is the location of the nationally acclaimed Pumpkin Village—behind the Jonsson Color Garden transformed into the theme Bugtopia. The signature display comes alive with larger-than-life insect topiaries, like the an 18-foot-long dragonfly, fascinatingly bugged-out 20-foot-tall pumpkin houses, and a maze for younger visitors. For more information visit: www.dallasarboretum.org/

•Pumpkin Patches in DFW and Austin

For a great list of pumpkin patches near you visit:

DFW

<https://familyguide.com/pumpkin-patches-dfw/>

Austin

<https://family.do512.com/pumpkinpatches>

•State Fair of Texas

September 24 - October 17, 2021
As a nonprofit organization, the Fair advocates for the community and is committed to preserving Fair Park – building on its legacy as a National Historic Landmark. For more information visit: <https://bigtex.com/about-us/>

Resources

• **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: www.vivaped.com/resources

For current events visit us on Facebook. www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds

• **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp



• **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at www.theparkerleeproject.org

• **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids
For more info visit: www.protecttxfragilekids.org

• **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory

• **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



Get Healthy with Giggles

Halloween During a Pandemic

Once again we are entering the fall and Halloween is just around the corner. One of the many things that have become like second nature for us is wearing face masks. This got me to thinking...why not create a costume look incorporating a coordinating mask? A little Google research and I was astonished at the many options of costume type masks. From Mickey Mouse to Pokémon, there are many options that can serve as a dual purpose, a costume accessory that can also protect the health of others.

Pfizer recently submitted trial data on vaccine use in children ages 5-11 as it prepares to make a formal submission seeking authorization to use the product in children. That submission could come before the end of the month.

This is exciting news for parents eager to get the protection of the vaccine for their children, but we are not yet in a place where children younger than 12 are able to be vaccinated.

In the meantime, protect those little ghosts and goblins with the tactics we are so familiar with, hygiene, and masks...maybe a scary one for fun! Happy Halloween!!!

- Kristine Dodge

Food for Thought



Chunky Halloween Candy Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 20 (.3 ounce) miniature bars fun-sized candy bars, chopped

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
- Mix butter, brown sugar, and white sugar together in a bowl until creamy. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until smooth.
- Combine flour and baking powder in a bowl. Mix gradually into the butter mixture. Beat in vanilla extract until mixed. Fold in candy a little at a time.
- Drop spoonfuls of dough 2 inches apart onto 2 baking sheets.
- Bake in the preheated oven until cookies are golden, about 10 minutes.

Enjoy!

www.allrecipes.com

Why didn't the skeleton go to prom?



He had no body to go with.



Just for Giggles!