

distractions

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Oh, to be any place but Eugene now that spring is (almost) here

Spring vacation is just around the corner, and it's time to start thinking about where you're going to spend it. The Bahamas? England? Valley River Center?

There are thousands of choices regarding the place, the transportation, and the financial drain necessary. To get you in the mood to start thinking about it, join **distractions** on a trip to vacationland.



Getting there (affordably) is half the fun

When it comes to traveling during the spring break, there are a few transportation options you should consider. The mode of transportation you use depends on how much time you've got, how far in advance you can make re-

servations and how large the numbers are in your savings account.

If you're heading down to the Bay Area, and you've got access to a car, then by all means use it. San Francisco is only about 550 miles down I-5, or 10

hours of nonstop driving — compared to some lecture classes, little challenge of alertness for most students.

But if you'd rather leave the driving to someone else, and you've got a few extra dollars, then Greyhound will be pleased to let you purchase a round-trip ticket for about \$130. If you enjoy riding the rails, Amtrak can take you to and from the Bay Area for about \$120, as long as you buy the ticket a week or so in advance.

For about \$30 more than the cost of a bus ticket you can fly the distance comfortably on United Airlines, which most travel agencies agree is the cheapest airline from Eugene. The catch here is that you make reservations as far in advance as possible. If you don't, chances of you getting a space on one of their planes is pretty slim.

The Grey Rabbit Ride Center offers a nice alternative to the usual means of transportation to San Francisco. For less than \$70 — almost half the cost of Greyhound — you can stretch out on a comfortable cot and snooze your way to Fisherman's Wharf and back. Of course, Grey Rabbit doesn't run as often as Greyhound, and you have to make reservations in advance, but you're almost guaranteed to have a more interesting trip.

San Diego is about 1,000 miles away, or 19 hours of straight driving — a task that you may not find so pleasant. Your best bet may be the \$270 round-trip ticket on United, if you can afford it.

But if you'd rather save money and you don't mind long rides, Greyhound

will bus you round-trip for about \$185. Amtrak can get you there and back for about \$10 less.

If you're thinking about staying in the Northwest, Seattle is a leisurely seven hours away. Greyhound's price for a two-way ticket is \$60, and Amtrak's costs \$49.

If you'd rather visit the East Coast, you can take in Manhattan and Staten Island, too — via United Airlines — for about \$400. The travel agencies say you could probably make it to the Big Apple for \$50 less through a different airline in Portland, because the airlines are more competitive there.

If your budget is really tight, there's a carpool board in the EMU to match drivers and riders for destinations all over the country. And if that fails, many college students have made long trips cheaply by thumb.

Should you decide to stick with commercial transportation, the thing to remember, especially on the airlines and Amtrak, is to make your reservations well in advance. The sooner you reserve your space, the more money you'll save and the fewer hassles you'll have.

by chris courtner



SPECIAL TRAVEL ISSUE