



Post-graduation travel can be fun, inexpensive

All over the country graduates are preparing for the future. They are applying for jobs, graduate schools, and generally beginning to look at life a little more seriously. For many however, the time is right to explore the world before becoming a settled part of it.

Often accompanying graduation is the annual rite of summer vacation.

Whether graduation has provided a nice gift of a financed vacation, or student-type budgets remain the main source of revenue, lengthy vacations are a definite option for nearly anyone, according to some local travel agents.

"We're seeing a lot of students going to Europe right now," said Betsy Ragland, consultant at the American Youth Hostels Travel Center. "But, this is also going to be a big year for people traveling closer to home because of the economy."

If financing is not a major

concern, there are several constructed tours to places such as Europe and Hawaii, said Alice Sabin, consultant for Ambassador Travel. "Some of these packages are geared toward younger people and are good for people who want to leave the United States," she said.

The constructed package typically is escorted, involves bus tours, and provides lodging for a couple of days in different cities.

For travelers on a tighter budget who still want to leave the country, the hostel system provides good accommodations, Ragland said.

"We see a lot of people who go for extended periods of time, often one or two months," she said. "Hostels accommodate that type of travel, requiring interaction by being set up similar to dormitories."

Many of the hostels in Europe are in historic buildings, castles and boats and are in

or near large cities.

"It's a great way to travel, meet other travelers, and find out about hot spots," Ragland said.

There are more than 5,300 hostels in 59 countries around the world and 220 in the United States.

With the intention of keeping expenses down, the average overnight stay in a hostel is \$7 to \$10. Many of the hostels also provide rooms for couples and don't have age limits, Ragland said.

In addition to hostels, the cost of a vacation in Europe can be kept at a minimum with Eurail passes, international student cards, and tour books.

The Eurail pass, which can be used throughout Europe (excluding Great Britain) has a price range of \$370 for 15 days to \$1,042 for three months. A youth hostel membership is \$25 and a student card is \$14.

After the initial costs, in-

cluding a plane ticket and passport, "people say about \$30 a day is a good amount to plan on spending, it all depends on what kind of traveling you do," Ragland said.

If Europe is either too expensive or simply does not pique any interest, traveling in the United States can be fun, cheap, and an easy option.

There are numerous hostels, clean camp sites, and inexpensive motels throughout the country. While there are many discount plane coupons, bus packages, and train discounts, a good way to see the country at an individually suited pace is by car.

One little-known auto travel option is the Driveaway System. The Driveaway System involves customers contracting with a Driveaway affiliate to have a car driven to a specified location. The affiliate then hires anyone who is interested to deliver the car.

"You can go from city to city and see the country,"

said Beverly McCall of Insured Driveaway System. "Over the years quite a few students have taken advantage of this but mainly foreigners use it as a way to see the United States — it's gotten around Europe by word of mouth."

The system is organized so that the first tank of gas is paid for and a \$200 deposit is put down for the car. The deposit is returned when the car is delivered.

"It's really the cheapest way to travel," McCall said. "It's easy to take bicycles, and unlike Greyhound or Amtrak, it's easy to get off the beaten track."

The driveaways are arranged fairly last minute so McCall recommends traveling with a fairly loose schedule and having a destination in mind.

—Brian Oxman

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