

How To Break Broke

Rob Carigan, a junior at Pennsylvania State U., believes he can become a spring break legend on a \$5 budget.

Here's his plan: Grab a sleeping bag, a Walkman, Doritos and Ramen noodles. Hide in the university library for a week.

Impossible? Don't be so sure. "You can get seven Ramen noodles for a dollar," Carigan notes.

But what if you want to escape books? Maybe you're looking for a more traditional spring break, meaning you pile into your car with 10 of your friends, drive 'till you see a large mass of water and proceed to spew chunks all over those friends for the rest of the week.

All this can be yours for a low, low price by following the advice of some frugal spring breakers:

QUESTION #1: How can you be sure you're getting the best deals?

Investigate spring break packages. (NEWSFLASH: You should have started doing this in December.) Then, assemble a group comparable to the attendance at an Ohio State U. football game. The more people you have, the more bargaining power you have.

Finally, when you arrive at your destination, scrounge for anything that might save money, such as spring break guides, coupon books, newspaper ads or "financially secure, Christian families seeking to adopt."



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By Rob Kaiser, *The Breeze*, James Madison U.

QUESTION #2: When are the best deals at the clubs and bars?

"Sunday and Monday the red carpet rolls out," says Brad Nelson, owner of Inter-Campus Programs (which sells spring break packages) in West Chicago. Businesses try to attract students at the beginning of the week hoping they'll keep coming back.

Paige Deaton, a senior at Appalachian State U. who celebrated her 21st birthday on her week-long vacation to Key West, Fla., has another suggestion: Say you're celebrating your birthday wherever you go. Deaton, whose birthday was legitimate, says people bought her drinks at bars all over town and she spent only \$60 for the whole week. The drawback: You can't visit the same bar twice.

QUESTION #3: Where is the cheapest place to stay without getting adopted?

Find a homeless shelter. During a typical spring break week, Friends of the Homeless, a nonprofit organization in Daytona Beach, Fla., sees about 20 spring breakers pass through their doors. However, "most of them are not willing to work" and make a beeline for the phone to call mom for money, according to employee Ray Donnelly.

If the shelters won't take you, find a structure with at least three walls and a blinking neon sign with the letters M-O-T-I-L. "We stuffed six people into a four-person room," says Chris Howard, a senior at James Madison U. who went to Mardi Gras in New Orleans two years ago. "The most expensive part of our trip was cab fare to and from Bourbon Street."

QUESTION #4: What can you eat?

Seek out fast food joints.

In New Orleans, Howard and his friends ate the \$1.99 meal deal at Rally's twice a day, every day. "I will never eat Rally's again," Howard says.

Gwenael Denorme, a Miami U. of Ohio sophomore, hit Pizza Hut during her Myrtle Beach, S.C., spring break trip. "One of my friends [pretended] that there was hair in her food," Denorme says, adding that they all got free meals.

But if for some reason your morals accompany you on break, remember the old standby — seven Ramen noodles for a dollar.

SPRING BREAK '94



Giving Others a Break

When spring break is over, a lot of students return to campus with bragging material: a new tattoo, the perfect tan or tales of "eating the worm."

Last year, Kim O'Brien came back with something a little different to brag about. A senior at the U. of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, O'Brien spent her week in Washington, D.C., living in the basement of a church and teaching poor minority and disabled junior high school students.

"The kids were really receptive," she says. "I think they were used to older teachers who stressed discipline more than education. One girl still writes to me."

Although last year O'Brien participated in the program to meet a requirement for her education degree, she plans to return this year as a volunteer. And the trend toward similar "alternative breaks" has continued

to grow. Nearly half of the students in a national survey told U. they would consider spending their vacation doing service work, and universities are responding.

At the U. of Southern California, students can participate in three local programs and one on a Navajo Nation Reservation in Utah. Groups of 12 to 40 students can work on environmental issues, homeless relief, tutoring or construction.

"It gives you a great appreciation for what you have," says Jerry Houser, director of the Career Development Center, who has participated in alternative breaks for the past three years. "You visit people who are on the edge of survival. They live in houses with no running water, no electricity. We saw this kind of thing not just on the Indian reservation, but also in the city."

About 90 students at the U. of Wisconsin work at six volunteer sites, helping the homeless, migrant farm workers, Native Americans or poverty-stricken residents of the Appalachian mountains. While the projects are hands-on, organizers emphasize educating student volunteers about different lifestyles.

For those who want to volunteer, at least two organizations are accessible nationwide:

- Habitat for Humanity International, (912) 924-6935. This ecumenical Christian ministry recruits volunteers to build homes in areas of poverty or disaster. Already there are 285 campus chapters.

- We are giving [the homeless] a leg up and a second chance that no one ever gave them," says student recruiter Carrie Toepper, a 1993 graduate of Ball State U. "We're empowering them."

- Break Away: The Alternative Break Connection, (615) 343-0385.

Break Away serves as a clearinghouse for volunteer break programs.

Data bases allow the organization to match groups with suitable projects. They also have a newsletter, and offer training and consulting services.

"For people our age, it just clicks immediately why students would want to get involved," says Laura Mann, co-director of Break Away. "I think a lot of it is people feeling like we've been left a mess and we have to clean it up."

U. Spring Break Survey

Where We're Going: Canada, with 9 percent of the vote, is the most popular destination, followed by Daytona Beach, New Orleans and South Padre Island. Fifty percent of readers polled, however, plan to travel to less traditional destinations.

Why We're Going There: In choosing a destination, students say their decision is based on cost (68 percent), friends, the weather and activities/sports.

What We're Spending: Readers say they spent an average of \$365 last year,

while this year they expect to spend \$413.

What We're Doing: Favorite spring break activities include: meeting people (55 percent), drinking, exploring/sightseeing, sleeping and eating.

What We're Bringing: After money and credit cards, students say it's important to bring the following: camera (70 percent), sunglasses, T-shirts and a car. Condoms seem to be an afterthought, with only 28 percent deeming them important.

Results are based on a survey of 464 students at 25 campuses. This is a non-scientific poll.

By Angie Hatton, *The Eastern Progress*, Eastern Kentucky U.