



Tips for the perfect summer camping trip

(BPT) - Summer is officially here.

After spending the past few months cooped up, the urge to get out and explore the great outdoors - safely - is stronger than ever. But, the pandemic has left many wary of travel by air, rail, bus and other means of mass transportation. Instead, travelers are packing up their families and taking to the road.

According to AAA, car trips will account for 97% of the favored mode of transportation this summer.

For those needing a vacation that is relaxing, rejuvenating and, most of all, reachable on four wheels, a summer camping trip just might be the best option. Follow these tips to get the most out of your camping trip.

Selecting your campsite

From roughing it in the backwoods to glamping in a fully-furnished yurt, there are many campsite options to choose from when planning. First, you'll want to decide what type of experience you are hoping to enjoy.

Are you pulling a camper trailer or a tent?

Do you want to drive up, stake out your tent and be relaxing next to the campfire within an hour?

Do you want to grab your pack and hike out to the backcountry where there are no maintained roads or trails?

Once you've decided, do your research to find the campsite that meets your needs by visiting websites for campgrounds nearby or your state's Department of Natural Resources.

Prepping your vehicle

Before you hit the road, you'll want to take care of some basic vehicle maintenance to help avoid running into issues during your trip.

One thing many of us tend to overlook before a trip are tires. It's important to take the time to inspect your tires to ensure you and your passengers are riding down the road safely. This starts with checking the air pressure to ensure each tire is at the factory recommended inflation. Then it's on to the tire tread. You can use the penny test to make sure you have a safe amount of tread remaining. Anything below 2/32 of an inch is considered worn and should be replaced.

If you're planning to take more camping trips this summer, you'll want to consider upgrading your vehicle with proper tires that will perform on any terrain like the BFGoodrich All-Terrain T/A KO2. The KO2 offers aggressive all-terrain traction to confidently get you where you want to go whether you're driving on dry or wet pavement, snow, mud or rocks. The KO2 is perfect for year-round use in any weather condition. In fact, it is Three Peak Mountain Snowflake Rated, which means it exceeds the Rubber Manufacturer Association Severe Snow Traction requirements.

Next, pop the hood and check your oil. Is your car or truck due for an oil change? Will your road trip to the campground put you over the recommended miles between oil changes? If you answered yes to either of these questions, be sure to get your oil changed prior to your vacation.

While you're at it, you should also check your air filter and battery. Make sure both are clean, free of dirt and operating as intended. If not, these items should be cleaned or replaced.

Packing your gear

Now that you know where you're going and how you're going to get there, it's time to pack your gear for the perfect outdoor getaway. A few essential items you'll need, in addition to your preferred shelter, are cooking utensils, footwear, insect repellent and a first aid kit.

Just because you're camping doesn't mean you won't eat well. With the proper meal prep and kitchen tools, you will be enjoying your favorite camp meals in the great outdoors. A must-have at any camp is a cast iron pan for cooking everything from eggs and bacon to steak and potatoes. You'll also want to invest in quality reusable eating utensils - fork, knife, spoon, cup - to ensure you can enjoy the fruits of your cooking labor while reducing waste.

If you plan to take a leisurely or demanding hike, you'll want to make sure you have adequate footwear that provides the comfort and support you need to traverse rugged terrain. You'll be spending a lot of time on your feet, so it's important to invest in quality shoes or you'll be stuck at the campsite nursing blisters and unnecessary aches and pains.

A little fresh air and vitamin D may be just what the doctor ordered for those needing a reprieve from the stress of the past few months. And, following these simple tips will put you on the path toward the perfect summer camping trip.