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Fun for all

Across the US, 10 trips adults and children can equally enjoy

BY NECÉE REGIS | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

With spring in the air and summer looming, it's time to start planning a family vacation. When I was a child this meant squeezing into a car with my mom, aunts, uncles, and cousins, and driving half a day to a sandy cottage on Cape Cod, which is still a good option. For more far-flung adventures, following are 10 destinations that include driving through a redwood tree, watching a gunfight in the wild west, riding a 75-mile-per-hour roller coaster, and fly-fishing near a wilderness campsite. Accommodation estimates are based on prices for the same weekend in mid-June, with two adults and two children under age 12 sharing one room.

Ferndale, Calif.

Leisurely old-time fun can be found in the Victorian hamlet of Historic Ferndale (population 1,390), listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Ornate buildings from the 1880s line Main Street, where you can spend an afternoon browsing antiques stores, art galleries, homemade candy shops, and watch candle-makers, blacksmiths, and a small repertory theater. A family room at the Redwood Suites, with full kitchen and a dining area, is a wallet-friendly place to stay while touring the area. Located along the northern California coastline,

Ferndale is close to Humboldt Redwoods State Park (707-946-2263, humboldtredwoods.org), a 53,000-acre reserve of majestic ancient redwood groves with hiking and biking trails. "Drive-through" a redwood tree at the nearby Shrine Drive-Thru Tree in Myers Flat. Other options for low-key fun include strolling along the nearby coastline, a nature hike in Russ Park (a 110-acre forest bird sanctuary), and a boat tour of the Eel River Delta. *The Redwood Suites, 888-589-1863, redwoodsuites.com, family suites from \$135 per night*

Duck Key, Fla.

Talk about kid-friendly, Hawks Cay Resort is a 60-acre tropical island getaway that is designed to be all about fun. Located midway down the Florida Keys overlooking the emerald green Atlantic, it's no surprise the main activities for kids and adults involve water: fishing, snorkeling, kayaking, kiteboarding, or simply taking a dip in one of five pools or a saltwater lagoon. Supervised activities for younger children include a pirate ship pool (with water canons, rope ladders, and slides), dockside fish feeding, scavenger hunts, and arts

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(Clockwise from top left)

Hershey, Pa.

Hersheypark has 11 roller coasters, including the Great Bear.

Seabago Lake, Maine

Fishing is just one of the many activities for all ages at Migis Lodge.

Ferndale, Calif.

Vintage autos fit right in on Main Street of this hamlet near redwood groves.

Bonita Springs, Fla.

Rock-climbing is among the adventures at Hyatt Regency Coconut Point.

Williamsburg, Va.

Visitors learn about the 1700s at Colonial Williamsburg.

Duck Key, Fla.

Hawks Cay Resort is a 60-acre tropical island getaway.

Tucson, Ariz.

Kids can become junior rangers at Saguaro National Park.

SAN DIEGO

Sun, sand, and surf suit teenagers in tow

By Diane Bair and Pamela Wright

GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS

SAN DIEGO — "That's so raunchy!" Olivia Bolen said to a very tanned teenage boy standing next to her on La Jolla Shores.

"Moopin!" the boy replied, as he tucked the longboard under his arm and ran into the surf.

Translation: awesome, very cool; things were good.

Sadie Wright-Ward, wading knee-high in the water, rolled her eyes and laughed. "Surf's up, hodad!"

We were on a family trip to San Diego, which included Pam's stereotypically unenthusiastic 15-year-old niece, Olivia, and Sadie, her college-age daughter. Last time we were in town, we took the kids to the San Diego Zoo, visited SeaWorld, and built sand castles on the beach. This time around, traveling with a tougher, older crowd, we had to ramp up the adventure meter. So far, after two days of surfing, shopping, biking, power boating, and cruising the beaches, things were "epic." That's good.

We based ourselves in lively Mission Beach, a colorful neighborhood just south of downtown, with a surfer-dude vibe. The narrow peninsula, bordered by Mission Bay on one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other, is lined with side-by-side, pastel-painted cottages, surf and bike shops, restaurants, bars, taco stands,



PAMELA WRIGHT FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

TEENS, Page M4 Sadie Wright-Ward learning to surf.

FLORIDA

Pregnant at Disney and still loving it

By Kari Bodnarchuk

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — The first time I visited Walt Disney World, I had braces, feathered hair, and "jelly" shoes. I ate hot dogs and cotton candy until my belly ached, and I rode every roller coaster and waterslide until I had lost my voice from screaming. The experience was a childhood highlight.

Fast forward a couple of decades to my next visit: I had a 2-year-old in tow, a 7-month-pregnant belly, and a long list of foods that expectant moms should not eat, from hot dogs to soft-serve ice cream. My tired, aching feet needed the support of practical shoes, and I had to skip all the high-adrenaline rides that had made my first visit. Even the waterslides and wave pools were out.

Quite simply: Could I still have fun? And how could I make the trip go as smoothly as possible?

Out of more than 150 attractions at Disney's six parks, only 16 have warnings for pregnant visitors. That means you won't spend your entire trip sitting on benches people-watching while your friends and family



KARI BODNARCHUK FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

DISNEY, Page M4 Winnie, Piglet, and Carolyn D'Amico.

EXPLORE NEW ENGLAND

Sheepshearing festivals are a rite of spring. M7

The budgies draw crowds at Franklin Park Zoo. M7

Pregnant visitors can still enjoy a trip to Disney World

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have all the fun.

Disney has plenty of mellow rides suitable for expectant moms, plus dazzling shows and performances from the Broadway-style Festival of the Lion King to the nightly fireworks display and Main Street Electrical Parade. You will also find plenty of unofficial activities to do at your own pace: Check out the elaborate topiaries, in which bushes and flowers are used to create Disney characters and other fanciful designs, wander through Epcot's World Showcase pavilions where you can "visit" 11 countries, or search for Mickey images hidden in the parks' rides and landscape.

If you are traveling with young children, chances are that whatever attractions appeal to them will be your speed, too. My 2-year-old daughter and I rode Dumbo The Flying Elephant, "it's a small world," Peter Pan's Flight, and Buzz Lightyear's Space Ranger Spin, and they offered the perfect mix of easy motion, visual stimulation, and colorful creativity to suit us both just fine.

"You just plan a different kind of trip," says Allison Larys of Elgin, Ill., who visited Disney with her 4-, 6-, and 8-year-old boys when she was eight weeks pregnant. "You go to see The Hall of Presidents or the houses on Main Street, or you plan a sit-down dinner rather than doing something on the go."

Obviously, moms-to-be should avoid all roller coasters like Space Mountain and Splash Mountain, rides like The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror during which you plunge 13 stories down an elevator shaft, and Test Track, when you "drive" a vehicle along a track at speeds up to 65 miles per hour and bank 50-degree turns.

"It's not a dangerous ride because of the turns or high speeds," one of the cast members, as Disney employees are called, said of Test Track, "but if something happened, the emergency stop is very jolting."

Also steer clear of all water-



Segway Personal Transporters can spare pregnant visitors some walking at Epcot. In addition to going on many Disney rides, pregnant women can enjoy more sedate activities, such as wandering among elaborate topiaries of Disney characters at Epcot.



PHOTOS BY KARI BODNARCHUK FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

slides, wave pools (out-of-control swimmers can be just as dangerous as the 6-foot waves), and any rides that will dip, drop, swoop, spin, jostle, or rock you too much. That said, several expectant moms who had been to Disney many times before disregarded the pregnancy warning for Animal Kingdom's Kilimanjaro Safaris, during which passengers ride in a long jeep-like safari vehicle that bounces and rattles along a chewed-up, dirt track.

I opted to go on the ride after talking to a cast member, and had no problems. On rough stretches, I hovered a few inches above my seat and absorbed the bumps with my knees. Sit closer to the front of the vehicle where it is less bumpy, or ask for the wheelchair-accessible vehicle.

Rides may affect you differently depending on your stage of pregnancy. One of my all-time favorites, for instance, was Epcot's Soarin', during which you buckle into a row of seats that rises 40 feet over the theater floor. As you watch a 5-minute video on a giant IMAX screen, you get a real sense of what it is like to hang-glide over a stunning California landscape. You even feel a breeze in your face and catch the scent of pine trees as you swoop and

soar over a beautiful wilderness.

Sam Eittreim, who has visited Disney about 30 times, knew she had to avoid Soarin' last month when she was 11 weeks pregnant.

"I was so nauseous," said Eittreim, 30, of central New Jersey. "But I wasn't expecting to have the problems I did on other rides. The first thing I did was Ellen's Energy Adventure," a 45-minute attraction at Epcot's Universe of Energy starring comedian Ellen DeGeneres. "There were lots of nausea triggers, like things flying through the air. I closed my eyes for 65 percent of the ride. That happened again with Captain EO, a 3-D movie in the Imagination pavilion. The whole theater moves a little bit so when something moves you shake, and when an elephant sneezes, you get wet. I couldn't handle it. I had a lollipop in my mouth and my eyes shut and I was trying to think about other things."

Definitely ask a cast member before you go onto any ride or in any theater, recommends Eittreim, to find out if it should be avoided if you feel nauseated.

Two rides that possibly should have warnings: The Maelstrom in Epcot's Norway Pavilion, since you get jolted around and experi-

ence a sudden 12-foot drop part-way through the 5-minute boat ride, and Pirates of the Caribbean in Magic Kingdom, which has a 14-foot drop at the beginning.

One of my favorite places to hang out, besides my hotel's enormous outdoor pool, was at Typhoon Lagoon, where I could float on an inner tube on refreshing Castaway Creek, a small river that whisks visitors through rain forests and caves on a 30-minute loop around the water park.

A key to staying comfortable during the trip was staying cool, and also well fed. For those with food cravings or aversions, Epcot has the greatest variety of dishes and food available, with about 40 places to eat.

"I was starving and basically ate my way through Disney, it was great," says Sam Eittreim's sister-in-law, Holly, who visited Disney when she was just eight weeks pregnant. "Things were open really early and there were so many different types of food. I would have breakfast and then go into the park and get a hamburger and fries around 10 a.m., and then we would go to lunch."

Bring plenty of snacks in case you need a quick fix. Also bring a refillable water bottle, since you can get water at fountains

throughout the parks.

"There are plenty of places to sit, but I remember the lack of shade, especially in Magic Kingdom," said Carolyn D'Amico, 37, who was six months pregnant during a trip to Disney last May. "I saw a lot of people with umbrellas, which I always think is kind of silly. But with the sun beaming on you, it gets very, very hot, so an umbrella is actually a great idea."

I discovered Magic Kingdom's Baby Care Center on a 92-degree day when I needed a respite from the sun. These centers, found at each of the parks, cater to families and also welcome pregnant moms. Sit in a rocking chair in air-conditioned comfort, kick up your feet, and relax. Each one also has a diaper-changing room, nursing rooms, and a small "store" with diapers, snacks, baby bottles, and other parenting supplies that you might need.

Save your feet at Epcot by touring the park on a Segway Personal Transporter, a two-wheeled machine that you turn and propel by shifting your weight slightly in different directions. On the two-hour Around the World at Epcot tour, which takes place before the park opens to the public, you go through a

If you go . . .

Moms Panel

disneyworldforum.disney.go.com

Around the World at Epcot

407-939-8687

Rate: \$99 per person, ages 16 and up. Must wear closed-toe shoes.

Baby Care Centers

Located next to the Crystal Palace in Magic Kingdom, inside Future World's Odyssey Center in Epcot, next to Guest Relations at Disney's Hollywood Studios, behind Discovery Island's Creature Comforts store in Disney's Animal Kingdom.

short safety and training session, then zip around the pavilions.

I also saved time on my feet by taking advantage of the Fastpass reservation system, a free service for all. Use your entry ticket to check in at a popular ride and you will get assigned a window of time when you can return and walk to the front of the line.

Cut walking time by staying at a hotel on the monorail route, including Disney's Polynesian Resort and Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa. Monorail trains link these hotels with Magic Kingdom and Epcot in minutes. Free buses and shuttles also go to the parks and downtown.

One of the most invaluable resources I discovered is Disney's Moms Panel, an online resource where you can get answers to questions and tips.

I can't wait to take both my children back to Disney. I might also plan a kids-free afternoon so I can ride Space Mountain and the Tower of Terror until I can't scream anymore, eat soft-serve ice cream until my belly starts to ache, and body-surf the giant wave pool until I look like a wrinkled manatee.

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