

## CommonHealth Weekly Email

### Active Vacation Ideas

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Vacation season is just around the corner. For most of us, that means no work and no distractions—just lots of time to have fun without worrying about what's waiting for you back at the office. But taking the same old trip to the beach every summer gets kind of boring. Why not try something different this year and spend your vacation time getting active?

An active vacation is planned around physical activity—no lazing around on the beach for you! From walking tours across Europe to full-fledged adventure vacations, active vacations do your body good! If you'd like to try something different this year, here are some trips consider:

#### **Walk this way**

Walking tours are excellent ways to discover the most beautiful places in the world. While you're exercising at a comfortable pace, you can drink in the sights and sounds of your city of choice. Why not traipse around Tuscany and mingle with locals, or pause in Paris for a treat at a corner bistro? Besides visiting the shopping districts, your days could be filled with vineyard visits, cooking demonstrations and tours of historical monuments. Taking a walking tour gives you a glimpse of how it really feels to be a native. Besides burning hundreds of calories a day, you will immerse yourself in local culture and come home with memories (and photos) to last a lifetime.

#### **Climb Every Mountain**

If walking is not your speed, you could boost your adrenaline level by going mountain climbing! There are many companies that offer climbing education, so you can learn as you go. There's a climbing adventure for everyone, even if you're an absolute beginner. While you can stay within the United States and discover the beauty of our local mountain ranges, maybe you'd like to expand your horizons and visit the volcanoes of Mexico, which is the ideal place to start if you have never climbed before. Prior backpacking experience is recommended to ensure that you have the stamina needed to complete your climb.

#### **A River Runs Through It**

If you'd like to be close to the water without hitting the beach, then whitewater rafting across the rapids is sure to get your heart pumping. There are river expeditions on every major river across the country—all geared to different experience levels. Challenging the rapids is a unique way to combine beautiful scenery with breathtaking excitement. Most companies offer half-day trips, as well as full day and overnight trips for those looking for the most exhilaration possible. And don't forget about kayaking. One or two-person kayaks are available, so you can paddle on your own or share one with a friend.

#### **Cycling for Excitement**

Cycling is one of the fastest-growing pastimes in the United States and it's easy to see why—it's fun, fast, and furious! Taking part in a cycling tour is a challenging way to catch the sites while enjoying the company of the rest of your group. The possibilities are endless—from guided tours through the mountains of Colorado to a pub-to-pub trip across Ireland—cycling gets your heart rate up and lets you enjoy a region's beauty along the way.

#### **Take a Hike**

If you enjoy walking but want to try something more intense, hiking is the way to go. Why not take your time exploring our extensive national parks? Take a hike through Yosemite and embrace the giant Sequoias or scramble up Sentinel Dome for a breathtaking view of Yosemite Valley. Some of the most beautiful parts of the world are right here in your own backyard.

#### **A Whale of a Time**

Want to get up close and personal with a whale? You can, with a sea kayak adventure in Newfoundland, Canada. Paddle along with the whales and the icebergs off Cape Broyle and explore the Avalon archeological dig, one of the earliest European colonies in North America. This rugged adventure takes you to the easternmost point of North America, so become an explorer and soak up a little history while you exercise.

#### **Get Active with Social Activism**

While there are countless activities to fill your days during your vacation, some people prefer to spend their downtime helping others. Many charitable organizations need volunteers to build homes or dig wells in underdeveloped countries. Swinging a hammer or digging a ditch may not be your usual form of exercise, but the help you're providing will warm your heart as well as give it a good workout.

Of course, this list is just the start of what you can do on your active vacation. There's always surfing, skiing, snowboarding, sailing, snorkeling and more. Only the sky's the limit—especially if you decide to take the leap and go parachuting. What are you waiting for? Grab your gear and get going!

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