



Consumer Tips from Your Community Banker (March 2013)

Cabin-Fever Reliever: Vacation Planning

Living in Wisconsin means distinct seasons to enjoy and a great quality of life. This time of year, living in Wisconsin can also bring a weariness with snow shoveling and a case of the winter blahs. If you're a gardener, the lengthening days may spark you to plan new vegetable plots or start seedlings indoors. You may also be dreaming about a summer vacation.

Is this the year you finally take a long-planned trip to Alaska or Europe? Or, maybe your children are the right age for that car trip to Yellowstone or the Black Hills? If you have small children or prefer to break up your routine with more frequent trips closer to home, Wisconsin offers a wealth of reasonably priced possibilities. Wherever you decide to head, planning can result in a more relaxed trip, usually with fewer unexpected expenses.

If you've been dreaming about a trip for a few years, you probably have many of the details in mind. You want to visit the nation's capital in time to see the cherry blossoms or walk the streets of San Antonio before — or after — the heat of midsummer. You can see yourself trekking the Appalachian Trail or zooming along in a San Francisco cable car.

The more details you can envision in advance, the more satisfied you're likely to be with the trip itself. It may seem obvious, but consider:

- Why are you going? Do you want to see Wisconsin's art museums? Dive to shipwrecks in Lake Michigan? Hike the National Ice Age Trail?
- Are you traveling with friends or family (or pets) that have special needs or desires?
- When will you go? Do work assignments or children's schedules dictate a specific time or do you want to attend the Lumberjack World Championships in Hayward or other events?
- How will you get where you're going and how will you get around when you get there — will you fly, drive, hike, bike, or kayak?
- Where will you stay? There are often advantages (financial, convenience) to reserving rooms or campsites early; on the other hand, if you'll be in a locale with lots of options, you may want to choose spontaneously when you arrive.

Especially in Wisconsin, travel resources are endless and a sure cure for cabin fever. Here are a few of the best:

- Wisconsin's official tourism website, www.travelwisconsin.com, gets you dreaming with information on "green" travel options, accommodations from log cabins to luxury hotels, maps, guides you can order, and special offers.
- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/>, provides information on state parks, trails, and wildlife areas, including e-newsletters, volunteering in the parks, and how to reserve cabins and campsites.
- If you are planning a family reunion or other group tour, Circle Wisconsin, <http://www.circlewisconsin.com/>, offers regional and themed tours — for instance, Showtime Wisconsin Style, Where History and Nature Meet, and Gangster Getaway, to name a few.