

Tips On Trips

Think Outside The Fifties On Your Next Road Trip

(NAPSA)—Wind in hair, radio blasting and the wide, open road—the 1950s automobile obsession inspired Americans to get out and “hit the highway” in their new wheels. Ever since, seeking out fun and famous roadside landmarks, everything from quirky diners on Route 66 to larger-than-life monuments, has been an all-American tradition.

More than half a century later, road trips are as popular as ever. In fact, nine out of 10 summer trips are taken in personal vehicles today, according to a recent National Household Travel Survey. But with people so frequently taking driving vacations, travelers may feel a need to modernize their road trip to avoid the “been there, done that” syndrome. The classic road trip can get a dashboard-to-taillights makeover.

You can rev up your next road trip with these 21st century tips:

Celebrate Good Tunes, Come On: Nothing gets everyone in the vacation spirit quite like listening to much-loved tunes. Before your trip, create a road trip CD full of fresh, upbeat songs or load your iPod with sounds inspired from the sand or pool with Reggae, Hawaiian or Calypso melodies.

It's the journey, not the destination: Trying to drive too far in one day can rob you of an enriching experience. Each year people already spend more time in their cars commuting to work (approximately 100 hours) than they do on vacation (approx-



Strike a pose! Towering roadside landmarks, such as Hobo Joe in Buckeye, Arizona, abound out on the open road and offer superb photo opportunities.

mately 80 hours), according to the U.S. Census Bureau. So break for breaks. Get out of the car, stretch your legs, take in some fresh air and truly experience your trip rather than watch it pass you by in the rearview mirror.

Bye, bye, paper guides: Directionally challenged? Toss those bulky, foldout paper maps and use modern-day tools such as www.hamptonlandmarks.com to

discover the exact locations of unique destination ideas. This Web site unveils fun road-trip ideas, called “DriveAbouts,” with themes including “Diamonds in the Dust,” (all things baseball with stops at famous fields such as those featured in the “Field of Dreams” and “A League of Their Own” flicks); “The Weird and the Wonderful” (think Bigfoot sightings and lavender fields); and “Star Sightings” (everything from the Happy Days house to numerous locales Marilyn Monroe once called home.) The site electronically maps the routes so you can toss those clumsy fold-up maps and guidebooks.

One, two, three, Cheese! Great photo opportunities are plentiful across the U.S., so if you haven't yet posed next to the towering Hobo Joe in Buckeye, Ariz. or the original American Bandstand in Philadelphia, Penn., you've got some exploring to do. Capture your precious moments on a digital camera and then download photos on a travel blog so friends and family back home can live vicariously through you.

Make a note in your PDA to revolutionize your next weekend getaway and help the great American road trip continue its time-honored legacy into the future. So hop in the car, roll down the windows, turn up the volume and get ready to make vacation memories to last into the next decades.

For more information on Drive-Abouts or Hampton Hotels, visit www.hamptonlandmarks.com.