

# ***Day 1: Your Travel Itinerary***

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You stand to the side, out of the way, fading slowly into a lull, when the tug of your 4 year old welcomingly reminds you that you are really there. You're in no hurry though, as you stand in your own bubble of emotions that with one small jolt from the 7 year old, you know you'll burst...with relief, that you all arrived alive and well to talk about it; with exhilaration at the thought of something new and different and with the overwhelming sense of anticipation that comes with ... the family vacation!

Whether you anticipate some time away to finally allow the uncontrollable giggle of your children to remind you that laughter is still the best medicine. Or your greatest desire at this point is that for one week, your name is not associated with an email, a meeting or a deadline. You've finally taken the time to go away with your family and enjoy a part of the country you've never seen. Yet there's the downer.

There's always a downer – the good and the bad, the bitter with the sweet – always. But knowing this somehow makes it easier to cope. For this...a vacation in 2009...well, if you're like anybody who still has home access to the Internet and still has a job, a vacation is way at the end of the to-do list, if it made it there at all.

What's a family of four or even a single person to do when faced with the highest level of stress that the current generation has ever experienced and thinking that the possibility of a vacation to relieve it is as far away as Oz? At the very least, and with much hope, this column will be a mental get-away, as it will introduce to some and remind others, of destinations of luxury, renewal and just plain fun. It will also be here to provide you with ideas, travel tips, maybe some laughs and even some money saving ways to enjoy yourself, your family and the world. You have to start somewhere, so why not start with "Day 1 of Your Travel Itinerary"!