

Mom's Moment: The Obligatory Travel Post

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I love to travel. There is nothing more precious than quality time exploring and enjoying being away. And vacation memories are more sacred than anything monetary. If I can gift my sons anything, it would be the freedom to see and do whatever their heart desires.

But newsflash- traveling comes at a cost. Especially when you're a family of four. Things are downright expensive.

I know every blogger is sharing their "travel tips for summer," so yes, I feel the need to as well. Here are some ideas you might not think of- trust me, I've learned from experience. I am also including summer vacay essentials that are totally cool and budget friendly.

Research accommodations and amenities

Hotels can be cramped. Squeezing into one room doesn't always constitute as a vacation. That's why I suggest looking into resorts that offer a non-cliché suite; apartment style living with a family room, kitchen and washer and dryer. Places like the [Four Seasons Aviara](#) in Carlsbad, California offers residential options that are far more affordable than your typical VRBO.

Tip: You don't need to bring a thing. These types of properties take care of everything- crib, high chair, etc. However, if you want a portable napper, I highly recommend getting a [Docketot](#), a multi functional baby lounging, playing, chilling, resting and snuggling station for newborns and babies.

Look for on-site advantages

Sometimes the best vacations are those where you don't have to leave the property. Places like the Four Seasons Aviara caters to families- offering a playroom stocked with toys, a baby pool (and adult pool) and plenty of fabulous on-site dining options the whole family will love. Plus, many high-end properties help arrange babysitting and can also accommodate in-room spa services you can enjoy while your babies nap!

Tip: If you do choose to leave the property, stay somewhere convenient to attractions. (Local tourism boards are a great resource for discovering area attractions; check out [Visit Carlsbad](#).) For a SoCal vacation, the Four Seasons Aviara is super close to LegoLand...and the beach. Bed Bath & Beyond sells an awesome [pop-up shade](#) for beachgoers. It's under \$50 and lays flat in an included carrying case. Literally pops up in seconds.

Don't assume luxurious properties are out of your budget

Yes, you'll have to pay, but... Big properties are often less expensive and definitely more accommodating than a VRBO. They also offer deals and discounts, especially during the week versus weekends. You'll be presented with options you never knew you wanted. The Four Season Aviara offers private surf lessons, golf cart service around the property and cooking classes.

Tip: Regardless of where you'll be this summer, chances are, you'll be spending time outside. There's been tons of hype over good versus bad skin protectants, so I've done some due diligence...the answer: [California Baby](#). Keep the whole family protected from harmful rays with the brand's specially formulated, Summer Blend Broad Spectrum SPF 30+ Sunscreen, chemical-free Natural Bug Repellent and lather in the Aloe & Arnica Soothing Spray after a sun-filled day.

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