

# SundayTravel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE JULY 31, 2016 | BOSTONGLOBE.COM/TRAVEL

FAMILY TRAVEL

## FUN? YOU BET. RELAXING? NOT EXACTLY

Packing a lot into  
baby's first vacation

BY JILL TERRERI RAMOS | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

I started making a list for the trip about a month in advance in the hope of avoiding a last-minute panic.

The vacation, in which my husband and I would drive two hours north to a lake house in New Hampshire to see his family and then head west to a resort in the Adirondacks for a few days with mine, would be similar to many I had taken before.

The wrinkle? The addition of a 15-pound baby.

Instead of engaging in my favorite pre-vacation ritual of plotting out which library branch held each title on the list of a half-dozen books I had curated throughout the year, I was calculating how many articles of clothing my 4-month-old daughter wears in a day.

No amount of self-awareness prevented me from turning into a cliché, the frazzled mom sweating every detail. But I had hopes that if this trip went smoothly, planning for future ad-

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Expert advice on  
how to lessen the stress

BY JACI CONRY | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

This summer, my husband and I took our 4-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son on a trip to the White Mountains. It wasn't a big excursion. It was a four-hour car ride each way and we spent three nights in a lovely hotel we've stayed at before. There were no major disasters on the trip and the whole "adventure" was relatively low-key. Even still it was stressful: I spent a couple days prior preparing for the trip, there were complaints on the car ride: endless "Are we there yet?" queries, and multiple stops because one of them "forgot" to pee at the last stop. During our stay, there were points when the kids fought over activities, occasional tears, and dirty looks from fellow restaurant patrons when our adorable children became too loud.

Back home, as I sorted through the detritus of our packed-full SUV, picked the endless Goldfish and pretzel crumbs out of the upholstery, and sorted through the mounds of dirty laundry, I was ex-

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JON CANNELL FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



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THE VIP LOUNGE | CHARLES DUTOIT

# For maestro, home is his favorite destination

With homes in Switzerland, Paris, Buenos Aires, Singapore, and Montreal, conductor Charles Dutoit is certainly well-traveled. One of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's most popular guest conductors since his debut with the orchestra in 1981, Dutoit will be back with the BSO, performing at Tanglewood with featured pianist Emanuel Ax, on Aug. 12. The 79-year-old maestro, who was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, is married to violinist Chantal Juillet, and has two children and four grandchildren, said he loves performing with the BSO. "Besides being a magnificent orchestra, I have known them since my student days at Tanglewood, and have always cherished this aspect of the relationship with them," he said. "In other words, a very affectionate one." Dutoit was recently named the 2016 Koussevitzky Artist, an honorary title given by the BSO in recognition of his commitment to the 2016 Tanglewood season and longtime contributions to the BSO and other orchestras around the world. We caught up with Dutoit, the artistic director and principal conductor of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, to talk about all things travel.



WINSLOW TOWNSON

**Favorite vacation spot?** Home, because I travel 320 days a year around the world. So I enjoy spending a few days at home whenever I can.

**Favorite food or drink while vacationing?** Everything related to Italian cuisine and its wine.

**Where would you like to travel to but haven't?** Tristan Da Cunha [a remote volcanic island in the South Atlantic Ocean]. I have traveled extensively in my life; in fact, I have visited 196 countries. But there are still a few spots difficult to access that I would like to see.

**One item you can't leave home without when traveling?** I always travel prepared, so as many travel guides as possible.

**Aisle or window?** Aisle, so I can get up without disturbing others.

**Favorite childhood travel memory?** When I was 13 years old, my first trip from Geneva to Paris on my own.

**Guilty pleasure when traveling?** Exploring as much of the unexplored as possible.

**Best travel tip?** To be open-minded and to avoid traveling with perceived ideas, [without] comparing these places with "home."

JULIET PENNINGTON

# Vacation stress can be reduced

► **EXPECTATIONS**  
Continued from Page M1

hausted. For a few moments I wondered: Had the trip been worth it? Thankfully, the thought was fleeting. The kids had a great time, and my husband and I enjoyed watching their delight — we plan to go back next year. But for the next several months, we're staying put.

There is no way around it: Traveling with children, especially young ones, is stressful. Before you depart on a family trip, have realistic expectations. It's crucial that parents keep in mind that they aren't going on a "vacation," says Linda Whitehead, senior adviser for education and development at Bright Horizons, a Boston-based provider of early education, pre-schools, and child care. "Parents need to realize that they are going to be 'on.' The trip isn't going to really be a break for them," says Whitehead. "Parents need to go into the trip thinking that it will go more smoothly the more engaged

they are with their children."

Keep in mind that the power struggles you have as a family at home don't stay behind when you depart on the trip, says Dr. Steven Schlozman, a staff child and adolescent psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital and associate director of the MGH Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds. "And the struggles could be a little worse because you're in such close quarters."

Be aware that the children in your family may want to do different things. "Kids may be different developmentally or temperamentally," says Schlozman. "If one wants to go hiking and the other wants to do the water park, trade one activity for another and make these kind of deals ahead of time so kids don't feel like things are being sprung on them."

Consider a family meeting every morning of the trip to discuss the day's plans and engage and involve the kids in the planning process. "That way, they'll be more likely to enjoy the ac-

tivities," says Christopher Willard, author of "Growing up Mindful: Essential Practices to Help Children, Teens, and Families Find Balance, Calm, and Resilience." "Make it fun by mapping out walking routes with the kids from hotel to museum to restaurant and back. Take photos throughout the day, and look back on them at the end of the day to talk about some of their favorite moments."

Struggles aside, traveling is an integral part of family life that can present wonderful opportunities for bonding. "We work awfully hard these days. Leaving the rigid schedules behind to concentrate on togetherness is important," says Schlozman, who recommends taking your time on road trips. With younger children in particular, it's about the journey, not the destination.

"You'll see cool things on the way; don't be in such a rush you can't pull over and check out a farm stand or see some animals grazing. It's worth stopping; it's



COLLIN QUINN LOMAX/SHUTTERSTOCK

a chance to make some great memories." Plan to pull over at a rest stop where kids can get out and burn off some energy by running around, tossing a Frisbee, or blowing bubbles, adds Whitehead.

Family trips are a time to relax on rules a little bit, says Schlozman, who allows his daughters to have more screen time during vacations. Sometimes, popping in a DVD or giving your child an iPad is the only way to make a long car ride or flight endurable. But balancing screen time with ways to connect with your child is key too. "In the car, there's an opportunity to play observation games, I Spy, word games, or family singing," says Willard. Or download a family-centric podcast, like Stories Podcast (storiespodcast.com), written and created by Haverhill's Dan Hinds. A father of a 6-year-old daughter, Hinds realized there was a need for a podcast designed for kids two years ago. "We offer a mix of original stories and adaptations of classic stories read storybook style with voices for characters and songs," says Hinds. The podcast is a top "family" pick on iTunes. "When you're traveling with young kids, there's only so many times you can listen to the 'Frozen' soundtrack," says

Hinds. "You can give kids an electronic device, but then they are in their world and you're in your world. When you tune into the same podcast, you can be entertained in the same way. You can talk about what you're listening to, the kids can ask you questions."

**'The trip isn't going to really be a break for [parents].'**

LINDA WHITEHEAD, *senior adviser for education and development at Bright Horizons*

Of course, preparation is key. No matter if you're flying or on a road trip, you'll want to bring an abundance of snacks along with a few toys and blankets or stuffed animals that are special to the kids. And don't forget first-aid essentials, just in case. It's also helpful to pack a few surprises for kids, says Whitehead. "New coloring books, stickers, or movies can go a long way to keeping kids entertained, and consider bringing toys like Legos, stamps, or Play-Doh."

Accept that things won't al-

ways go as planned. There's a high likelihood that an 18-month-old will melt down at some point on an airplane, says Whitehead. "We have all been in situations where our child is crying and everyone is looking. But try not to be self-conscious. Most people are kind and will have empathy, some will offer to help. Keep in mind that it won't last forever, your child will get through it, you'll get through it."

Anticipate that there might be flight delays, disappointing accommodations, and bad restaurant fare. "Kids are amazing mirrors. They will notice if you are massively disappointed in a hotel room or service," says Schlozman. "The more upset you get, the scarier it is for kids. They will take on your bad mood, and it's surprising how quickly a mood will go south. But the opposite is true, too. As a parent you can keep the mood buoyant."

Yet we're all human and part of the normal travel experience is frustration at some point, adds Schlozman. "If you lose your temper over a line, later acknowledge it to your kids and assure them everything will be fine."

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