

Trips Of A Lifetime



Stay Close And Keep Up With Reunions

(NAPSA)—Because families connect us to our history, our culture and our community, family reunions are more popular than ever, according to a recent survey sponsored by the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) and Vacation.com. Many families separated by miles and mountains find they can reinforce their connections by gathering in one place. Family reunions can also let more distant relatives keep up with family events.

Here are some tips to help make your family reunion a success:

- Start early. A large reunion can be complicated, especially if this is not a regular event. Experts recommend starting to plan as far as two years in advance.

- Give guests advance notice. If people have to travel long distances, or if you're planning a "destination reunion" such as a cruise or an overseas trip, many family members may need time to make arrangements to take time off work.

- Be prepared for guests with special needs. Allow time to plan to accommodate health problems and other issues that you know will come up.

- Consult your travel agent. A travel agent can suggest dates, destinations and activities that are likely to work for your family. An agent can also help you manage things like hotel accommodations, itineraries, car rentals, restaurant reservations and emergency travel arrangements—and



If you don't see your relatives day-to-day, you can get a lot out of seeing them once a year.

family contention, by being a neutral party.

- Choose a date that will work for as many people as possible. Avoid obvious busy times of the year such as major holidays or prom and graduation season, and also watch out for not so obvious ones—a family of tax accountants probably shouldn't schedule an event for March or early April.

- Don't change the date in mid-stream. People may plan other activities—and time off—around the scheduled date immediately. Changing it may create conflicts or make it impossible for some people to attend.

- Have one person coordinate RSVPs and contact information. This minimizes the potential for miscommunication.

ASTA has tips on planning family reunions or any other trips you might want to make. To learn more, go to www.astanet.com/travel.