

Mom's Moment: Vacay Essentials

Written by Nadine Bubeck



It's the time I anxiously await every. single. year. When July hits, my posse and I hit the road: just me, the husband and our two toddler boys. Some think we're crazy having trained our kids to road trip at an early age- each around a few months old- but to me, it's a good kind of crazy. I love that my boys love exploring, vacationing, and hotel hopping. Priceless memories.

But the days leading up to our beach escapades kind of suck for me. I make a million lists ensuring I don't forget pull ups, nighttime diapers, undies, blankeys, cups, pouches, phone chargers, warm clothes, cool clothes, an array of shoes, ...and the list goes on. This, in addition to packing for myself (if there's any room left in the car).

However, thanks to some handy, helpful vacay essentials, our trips have gotten a lot more convenient.

First, never thought I would surrender to the beach wagon, but I have...and for good reason. We only schlep a million and one things to the sand, exhausted by the time we settle down from carrying so much beach crap. Enter the [Beachcomber All-Terrain Wagon](#) from Bed Bath & Beyond. Sure, you can use this wagon anywhere, but it's ideal for the sand. Made of a rugged steel frame with a durable polyester tub and oversized molded wheels, the wagon opens and folds compactly quickly and easily. It even fits a cooler. No more breaking your back en route to the beach.

Next, our family (and sometimes extended family) tends to pack into small rentals. Consider us budget-friendly, but we simply won't splurge on a multi-room villa. Instead, our family piles into beds and pull-out couches. But this year, we needed some extra sleeping space, so we turned to Lightspeed Outdoors®, a San Diego based company, specializing in items that make being outside easy. From picnics to camping, fishing to beach days, they offer gear that combines style and utility. My pick: the [2-Person PVC-Free Air Bed](#). This oversized air mattress exceeds the competition, being more stable and durable than the alternative. Why? Because it uses high-quality TPU (thermoplastic polyurethane) and features a patented stabilizer system that allows the bed to be adjusted from soft to firm, depending on your sleep preference. The entire bed packs up smaller and significantly lighter than others on the market and it includes a storage bag.

I've also upgraded from using old sheets to a real, grown-up beach blanket, and it makes a big difference when it comes to comfort and convenience. The [Lulyboo Easy Roll Up Blanket](#) is 5X5 feet, giving your fam plenty of room to relax. It's machine washable, waterproof and travel ready, folding nicely into a purse size carry bag. Each corner features an innovative snap helping keep sand from covering the blanket. Plus, it's available in cool, contemporary designs.

Also from Lulyboo, if you have a little one, check out the [Litty-Bitty Changing Kit](#). Trust me, it's more than a changing pad- it's a waterproof changing kit with large storage pockets, a unique pocket pillow & zipper pouch. The compact folding design and handle makes it easy for carrying, in addition to top inner flap that holds 3 diapers & doubles as a pillow. There's also another big pocket for wipes and cream.

Since I'm constantly lugging around juice cups, water cups and chilled food, I'm all about a good cooler. I recently came across [SoYoung](#), a company that sells raw linen cooler bags. The best part: they're machine washable and dishwasher safe, and can easily fit snacks and a few drinks. Plus, the bags can be worn in as a messenger or backpack, and comes with a leak-proof insulated insert for easy cleaning. Plenty of fun designs to choose from.

For beach attire, I'm all about [Cabana Life](#). The luxury leader in sun-safe clothing offers chic apparel that blocks up to 98% of UV rays. Items such as tunics, rash guards, bathing suits and dresses available. Plus, in addition to gifting yourself new gear, buy some stuff for the kiddos. Cabana Life has adorable suits, trunks, hoodies, hats and onesies- all showcasing sun protective material.

Sick of buying disposable one-time usage water diapers? Keep your baby trendy while they tread the water with [Bambino Mio](#)'s award-winning reusable swim briefs. The drawstring waistband means it's easy to put on, comfortable and secure. Made from a soft, lightweight fabric that doesn't weigh your baby down in the pool like disposables. Can easily be worn under trunks or suits. Adorable and practical.

I'm all about safety, so I thought to include [eClip](#), an innovative new must-have that assures you'll never "forget" your kids in the backseat. It attaches inside the car and alerts parents via cell phone if you accidentally leave a young child in the car. This one-of-a-kind gadget also monitors the temperature in the back of the car, making sure the child doesn't overheat while driving.

And finally, there's such a back and forth with sunscreen, so I've forced myself to finally settle on the spray that makes me feel most comfortable- [Babyganics](#). I've been using Babyganics baby-safe products since my first born- house cleaner, wipes, shampoo, and more. Now, I've turned to their mineral based SPF 50, a tear free option for skin protection. I also like their purse-size hand sanitizer, as I'm a germaphobe.

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