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Crush lounge at Atlantis Resorts, Bahamas

teens *rule* on these vacations

BY ANDREA GUTHMANN

PLANNING YOUR FAMILY'S SPRING BREAK? Got teens? As any parent knows, an unhappy teen can be the difference between an epic adventure and an epic fail. Thankfully, hotels, resorts and cruise lines are amping up the fun factor providing teen-specific options, from lounges and spa treatments to outdoor adventures.

Here are some vacations where teens rule:

Caribbean Beat

All-inclusive resorts in the Caribbean are some of your best bets when trying to please a too-cool teen. Just ask **Cindy Richards**, former travel editor of **Chicago Parent** and editor of the family travel-planning website, *travelingmom.com*. Her top pick? "Crush, the teen lounge at Atlantis Resorts in Paradise

Island, Bahamas, is Shangri-La for just about any teenager," says Richards. "A floor-to-ceiling video gaming tree, social media computer terminals—and best of all—no parents or younger siblings allowed after 8:30!"

Crush also has a mocktail bar and uber-hip dance floor with pulsating lights. Knowing teens often talk tech better than face to face, an iPad is set up by the DJ booth for song requests.

Another Caribbean hit with teens is Beaches resorts in Negril, Jamaica, and the islands of Turks and Caicos. After water-skiing, windsurfing or scuba diving, teens can chill at the game room or mix and mingle while making their own CDs. The reggae party continues at Club Liquid, a staff supervised alcohol-free nightclub just for teens and tweens.

Cruising Together

"Teens can wreak havoc aboard ships, pushing elevator buttons and bothering other passengers," says **Carolyn Spencer Brown**, editor of *cruise critic.com*. "That's why the cruise industry long ago started paying attention to teen customers. They know if teens are happy, typically everyone else is happy." Spencer Brown's top pick? "Hands down, Royal Caribbean is the best for teens. Between zip-lining, ice skating, teen lounges and Broadway shows, there's no time to get bored. It's also smooth sailing with teens aboard Princess Cruise Lines, and if there are younger siblings, Disney Cruises are a great choice, as they have something for everyone."

Mega ships aren't your only teen-friendly option. "There are ships perfect for teens that have nothing to do

with teen clubs,” says Spencer Brown. “Offbeat experiences aboard expedition boats can make for a great family vacation where you really get to learn about a place. Lindblad Expeditions and InnerSea Discoveries do a great job with these vacations.”

Surf's Up

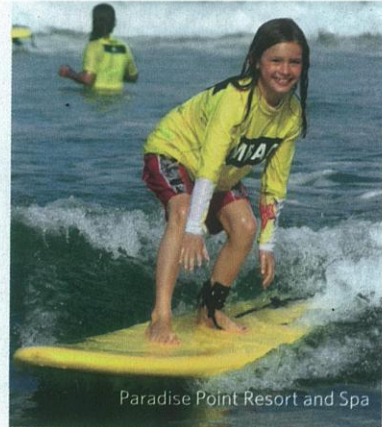
Cruises and the Caribbean are exciting, but you don't need a passport to plan a beach vacation your teen will warm up to—a new wave of U.S. beach resorts is reaching out to teens.

It's “no parents allowed” at Ritz Carlton Palm Beach's Coast teen lounge. It features a gaming area, production studio, DJ booth and young staff that serve as unofficial teen concierges with information on where to go, what to see and what to do. Surfboard rentals and lessons, as well as


boogie board rentals, make going to the beach an adventure.

A heavenly vacation will be had by all at Paradise Point Resort, San Diego's island resort. It sits on a 44-acre island in Mission Bay, across the street from SeaWorld. A water taxi shuttles you to the back entrance of the amusement park, and if you buy your tickets at the resort, you get to skip any long lines. They can also make waves at the resort's new surfing school. End your day in paradise with a beach bonfire—the hotel offers s'mores kits and plenty of fire pits.

Another Southern California favorite, Loews Coronado Bay, has partnered with Pottery Barn to design a PBTeen lounge and even a PBTeen spa room. What better way to relax after a typical California day spent biking, surfing or jet skiing?



Paradise Point Resort and Spa

Next time you're planning a vacation, consider combining family bonding time with boredom-busters that include active adventure and a chance for your teen to meet up with other kids their age. Give your teenager the freedom to choose their own fun and you'll end up with a family vacation where everyone wins. 

For great cold weather destinations for and with teens, download our iPad version or visit makeitbetter.net/family.