

Spring Break

Sun-seekers flock to Florida, Bahamas



Though it may not be sunny enough to be lying by the pool in Chapel Hill come March 3, many students are finding ways to enjoy the first touches of Spring. According to local travel agencies, the Bahamas and Florida seem to be the favorite spots.

Only 14 days to go.

Students count the hours 'til spring break like they're waiting for Christmas. And no wonder. The break has advantages the winter respite doesn't include — you're not expected to go home for the holidays, so you can take off with fellow classmates for one last week of partying and sunning before the studying and summer-job-hunting begins. The only concern is getting away. And for most students, getting away means Fort Lauderdale, Daytona, the Bahamas or Jamaica.

The March 3-10 holiday is such a lucrative time for Florida businesses that by now, nearly all hotels in the favorite resort areas are booked up. A Small World travel agent, Ellen Holcomb, says the only accommodations left in Daytona are those without toll-free phone numbers and those not listed in the hotel directory available at travel agencies.

"I must have called 500 places in Daytona for this one girl," Ellen Holcomb says. "Everything was full."

Another alternative for those who can't get hotel reservations, she says, is to camp. Some campgrounds — at Key West, for example — operate on a first-come, first-served basis, and do not accept reservations.

If you are lucky enough to get a room in Fort Lauderdale or Daytona, count on spending anywhere from \$15-\$60 a night. "I'd rather camp than stay at the real low-priced places," Holcomb says, but a double room at the Holiday Inn averages \$20-\$35 a night.

Most students prefer to drive to the resort areas. A round trip excursion rate plane ticket is \$141 to Miami, and a round trip Amtrak pass is around \$90.

For those who didn't make the month-in-advance plans for spring break vacations, there are alternatives. Small World and Circle Tours are offering tour packages to Nassau and Jamaica.

The Circle Tours Jamaica trip includes a flight March 6 to Montego Bay, five nights at the Montego Bay Club in condominium-style rooms and a return flight to Raleigh-Durham airport on March 11. The cost ranges from \$299 to \$329, depending on the kind of room requested. Of the 100 passengers on the tour, most are students, a Circle Tours spokesperson says. The deadline for reservations is Sunday.

The Small World tour to Nassau costs \$264 and includes a 4-day cruise on the *Leonardo da Vinci*, leaving Fort Lauderdale March 6. The agency also offers a \$90 round trip rail pass to Fort Lauderdale. There is space for about 25 more passengers on the cruise, a spokesperson says, and the deadline for reservations is Friday, Feb. 24.

Spring break traditionally sends students south. But for those who have not yet had enough of this record-breaking cold winter, there are ski tours to Aspen, Vail, Taos and Winter Park available in connection with Piedmont Airlines.

Tours offered by Delta Airlines include a two-day weekend with tennis instruction at Hilton Head Island for \$135-\$150, a four-day golf and tennis vacation on Kiawah Island for \$92-\$125 and various New Orleans tours ranging from \$53 to \$185.

However few and far between they may be, here are a few suggestions for the student for whom cost is no object:

- Instead of staying in a hotel when you visit the islands, you can rent a Jamaican Villa near the beach for only \$740 a week.
- In place of the ordinary cruise ship, why not spend a few extra bucks and rent the *S.S. France* for a mere \$90,000 daily.
- If you'd rather let the fun come to you, the Clyde Beatty Circus out of Florida can be booked for \$15,000 a day.

Well, so much for suggestions.

Only 14 days to go...

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