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## **Studies Find More People Taking Summer Vacations in 2011** *Family Vacations, Group Getaways are on the Rise*

Washington, DC – May 23 2011 – As families across America celebrate the opening of summer with the long Memorial Day holiday weekend, many utilize the time to begin their summer travel plans. The American Resort Development Association (ARDA) points to recent surveys as indicators of a busy summer for the travel industry: more people are planning to travel this year than the previous year, vacationing with family members is a top priority and group getaways are on the rise.

TripAdvisor®, the world's largest travel site, conducted a recent [survey](#) which showed 83 percent of respondents are planning at least one family vacation this year, a four percent increase from 2010. While 59 percent of Americans are planning a trip this summer, up from 51 percent in 2010, according to an [American Express Company Survey](#). That same survey also found vacationing consumers plan to take an average of two week-long vacations, spending an average of \$1,200 a person, and three weekend-getaways, spending \$300. Nearly 70 percent of those planning to travel said they'll go with their immediate families, and girlfriend getaways and "man-cations" are growing in popularity.

While travel plans are on the rise, most travelers are still budget conscience and make travel decisions based on cost-savings factors. With hotel stays costing five to ten percent more this year than last year ([AAA/HIS Global Insight 2011 Memorial Day Holiday Travel Forecast](#)), ARDA believes this is an opportunity to reach travelers unfamiliar with timeshare.

"Vacationing with timeshare provides the luxury of resort travel but with the comforts of home," said Howard Nusbaum, CEO and president of ARDA. "There is certainly a monetary value to a traditional timeshare vacation because it affords your family the flexibility to eat meals together

in your kitchen rather than splitting a pizza on a hotel bed. But it's the sentimental value of spending relaxed, quality time with your family or friends in a spacious setting that allows everyone the space to truly rejuvenate that timeshare owners love most about the products."

While the travel industry has seen declining numbers since 2009 financial difficulties affected most travel budgets, timeshare owners have continued to travel due to the prepaid nature of the product. Timeshares enjoy an 80 percent occupancy rate, according to an ARDA International Foundation 2010 State of the Vacation Ownership Industry report.

"Travelers may not be able to pick their families, but they can certainly choose whether or not to plan trips with them – and Americans intend to do so in their droves this year," said Karen Drake, senior director of communications from TripAdvisor. "Family vacations are no longer the preserve of young kids and their parents, but a time for relations of all ages to come together for quality time."

Today, there are more than 5,000 timeshare resorts in 100 countries and many resorts offer rental programs or packages which offer a great opportunity to experience a timeshare vacation.

"Building memories is what is important about vacations," continued Nusbaum. "Timeshare is the perfect way for the entire family to reconnect with family members and rejuvenate away from the daily stresses of life."

Visit [www.VacationBetter.org](http://www.VacationBetter.org) for more information.

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The American Resort Development Association (ARDA) is the Washington D.C.-based professional association representing the vacation ownership and resort development industries. Established in 1969, ARDA today has over 1,000 members ranging from privately held firms to publicly traded companies and international corporations with expertise in shared ownership interests in leisure real estate. The membership also includes timeshare owner associations (HOAs), resort management companies, and owners through the ARDA Resort Owners Coalition (ARDA-ROC). For more information, visit [www.arda.org](http://www.arda.org) or ARDA's consumer website at [www.VacationBetter.org](http://www.VacationBetter.org).