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7 Ways to Save on a Labor Day Getaway

Liz Weiss

Labor Day marks our last chance to slip away for a relaxing end-of-summer retreat. And with the long weekend just around the corner, it seems our window to book a dreamy getaway at a bargain price is quickly closing. But this year, procrastinators are in luck. From secluded beach resorts to buzzing urban escapes, there are still plenty of affordable vacations to be had. You just need to know where to look.

With help from Clem Bason, president of the [Hotwire Group](#), and Mark Drusch, chief supplier relations officer of [CheapOair.com](#), *U.S. News Travel* has compiled a list of seven easy ways to save on Labor Day travel.



[See: [9 Affordable Labor Day Getaways](#)]

Tip 1: Delay Booking

It may seem counterintuitive, but Bason insists that the longer you wait, the better your chances of maximizing savings will be. Many hotels impose stay restrictions of up to three nights due to high travel demand during peak holidays, but when rooms remain empty days before much-anticipated holiday weekends, prices drop and stay requirements disappear. Waiting until the Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday before Labor Day could up your chances of nabbing a deal. "When you're a day away, that's when [Hotwire](#) is the best," explains Bason, adding that discounts can get up to 10 percent better by the day. "By waiting, you can really save," he says. The only caveat: "You run the risk of the hotel selling out."

Tip 2: Shift Your Departure Date

According to Bason, you'll snag a bargain "if you're willing to shift your trip a day forward or backward." Since travel demand is highest on weekends, taking off on Thursday or returning on Tuesday will yield a broader range of options." I guarantee you're going to see a big drop in [the average] rate," notes Bason. Drusch suggests another alternative: leaving on Sunday or staying until the Wednesday after Labor Day. Avoiding the holiday rush will increase your chances of nabbing better prices than if you planned to travel during peak travel days.

[See: [Best Fall Getaways](#)]

Tip 3: Vacation Elsewhere

It may sound cliché, but if you steer clear of popular getaway spots (like [Seattle](#) or [New York City](#)), you'll stumble upon some incredible destinations that cost half the price of typical trips. "Choose alternatives, but similar cities to popular destinations. For example, instead of visiting Seattle, go to [Portland, Oregon](#)," advises Drusch. You'll expose yourself to a new place, and save some dough in the process. Drusch suggests checking out [Phoenix](#) and [Albuquerque, N.M.](#), where the weather is warm and activities abound.



Tip 4: Rely on Trusted Travel Resources

[Hotwire.com](#)'s [Trip Watcher](#) and [Travelzoo](#)'s [Top 20 Travel & Entertainment](#) deals are useful resources for bargain hunters. And savvy iPhone users should also consider enlisting help from [CheapOair.com](#)'s App, which gives travelers the ability to filter their flight and hotel search by price, star rating, and user sentiment. Bason also recommends using [Expedia's ASAP](#) (A Sudden Amazing Price). "Every day they have a great deal on a highly rated hotel," says Bason. "It's fun [...] and you see a place you may not have thought of before."

[See: [8 Tricks to a Cheap European Vacation](#)]

Tip 5: Tweet Your Way to Competitive Savings

Airlines and hotels often use social media—like Facebook and Twitter—to advertise discounted rates. Drusch recommends that you “check out which [online travel agents] are utilizing their social media platforms and are showcasing their deals to consumers.” He also notes that travel agencies use social media to give away deals every day. To take full advantage, sign up for customized email alerts, so you can find out instantly when prices decrease for your desired destination.

Tip 6: Beat the City Rush

Although opting for one last beach break is a common Labor Day trend, Bason notes that this is your last chance for a weekend in the city before convention season starts. Big cities like [New York](#) and [San Francisco](#) are still pricey, but you can score unbeatable room rates in places like [Washington, D.C.](#), or [Chicago](#). Bason spotlights the Windy City as “by far the best value city destination. There are just far more hotels there than the city can support.” Plus, this time of year marks the onset of vibrant festivals and comfortable (cooler) temperatures.



Tip 7: Consider a package deal

Though it's a little late to take this approach for the upcoming long weekend, think about bundling your airfare, hotel, and car expenses for your next vacation. “If you're a planner, you'll want to use packages,” says Bason. When you book ahead of time, hotels, airlines, and car rental agencies are far more willing to provide you with discounts if you bundle products. “Sometimes hotels will discount so much that you can get your rental car for free,” explains Bason, highlighting [Expedia.com](#) as an excellent resource for building a vacation itinerary with free rentals. Bason recommends starting your research on package deals about a month before your intended departure date.

[See: [9 Affordable Labor Day Getaways](#)]