

Vacation MOM™

Family all-inclusive resorts

by *Donnita Bassinger*

Choosing the perfect location for your tropical family vacation just got easier. Parents want quality family-time but also a chance to enjoy a nice meal and some relaxation, kids love activities and meeting new friends, teens want water sports and a place to hang out. There are all-inclusive resorts that offer everything you want.

High quality all-inclusive resort features:

- » Accommodations
- » Unlimited meals and beverages from multiple restaurants and bars
- » Water sports and activities
- » Night time entertainment
- » Supervised children's programs with trained staff and security measures
- » One price covers almost everything (some even include room service and tipping!)
- » Secure environment—outside visitors are not allowed on the property
- » Some resorts offer Kids Stay Free promotions during the off-season

Here are a few of the top choices for families:

Club Med

Club Med has beach resorts around the world. Formerly known as a place for singles, many of their resorts have had makeovers and are now focused on families with an emphasis on sports and activities. They spare no expense to have the best equipment, facilities and instructors. Tennis, water skiing, sailing, volleyball, basketball, aerobics, archery, kayaking and more can be found at their resorts. A circus skills program features a flying trapeze for adults and kids. Mini-Club is for ages four to 10 years and Passworld is for ages 11 to 17. Some resorts have programs for ages four months to three years at an additional charge. The evening babysitting program

called Pajamas Club is from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. for \$20 per child. The Club Med locations in Ixtapa and Cancun, Mexico; Sandpiper Bay, Florida and Guadeloupe would be good choices for families. All Club Med resorts have an International feel with staff and guests from around the world.

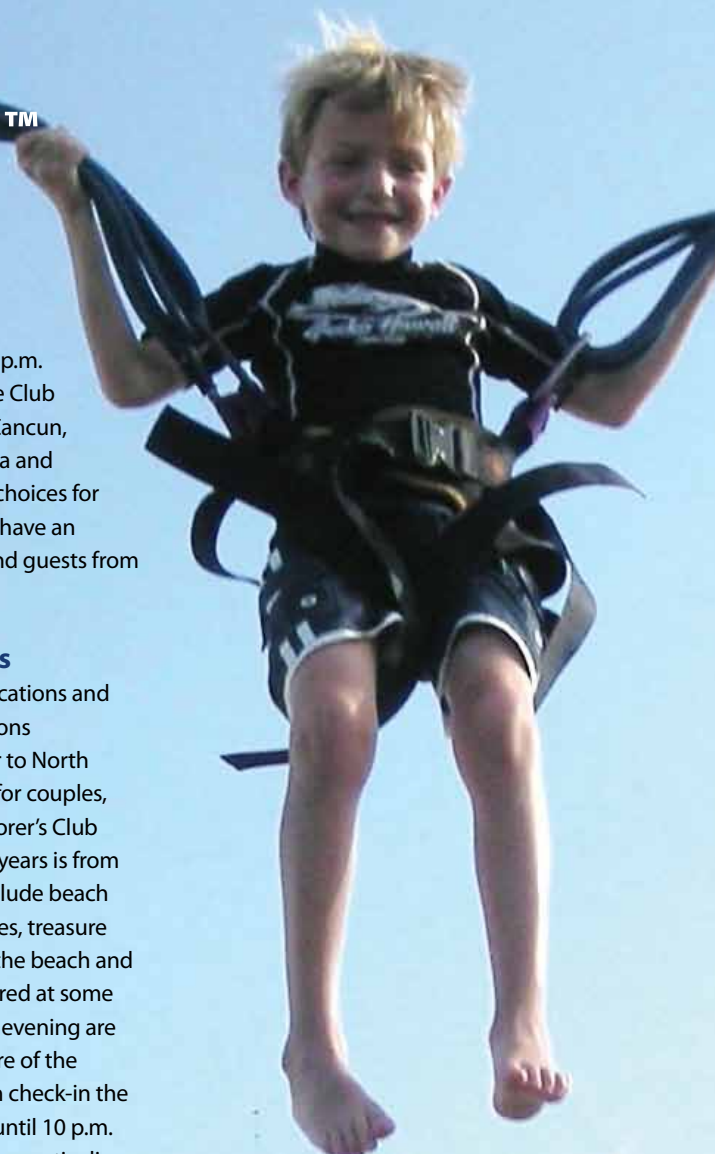
Dreams & NOW Resorts

Dreams Resorts have eight locations and NOW Resorts have two locations throughout Mexico that cater to North Americans. These resorts are for couples, singles and families. The Explorer's Club program for ages three to 12 years is from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Activities include beach soccer, Euro-bungee, campfires, treasure hunts, big-screen movies on the beach and more. Teen programs are offered at some resorts. Nanny services in the evening are \$15 per hour. A favorite feature of the Explorer's Club is that you can check-in the kids for dinner and activities until 10 p.m. while the grown-ups have a romantic dinner and drinks.

Beaches Resorts

Sandals couples-only resorts were pioneers in all-inclusive resorts and they expanded into family vacations with Beaches Resorts. Their Luxury vacation includes tipping, transfers, scuba diving, golf and more. Beaches has luxurious accommodations built for families. The Kids Camp program is for newborns through 12 years from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. They have an amazing Tweens and Teens program featuring a DJ Academy and teen-only nightclub. Nanny services at night are \$15 per hour for up to three children. The highlight for families is the on-site Pirates Island Waterpark. Beaches Resorts are located in Jamaica and Turks & Caicos.

The resorts listed above each offer a very different vacation experience. It is important to consult with a travel professional to find



the perfect fit for your family. Once you find the all-inclusive resort to fit your needs, you may never take a regular vacation again!

Donnita Bassinger lives in Eugene with her husband and three children. She is active in Cub Scouts, the school PTO and local charities. Donnita has been a travel agent for 27 years and is the owner of VIP Vacations, Inc. She and her family LOVE all-inclusive resorts and she would be happy to chat with you about travel at 541-688-7473. You can find more information on Facebook under "Vacation MOM".

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