Moments That Matter — How to Plan the Perfect Celebration Trip

Introduction

From anniversaries to landmark birthdays, from family reunions to retirements, celebration vacations are on the rise. And it’s no wonder. Milestones were made for celebrating and travel is one of the best ways to do that.

Last year has changed so much. But what hasn’t changed is how much we long to spend time with the people we care about. So why not make your first trip this year one spent exploring together with family and friends?

Meet up on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon to toast that birthday you didn’t really get to celebrate. Have a much-needed family reunion at The Ranch at Death Valley. Embark on a North American biking or walking tour with a small group of friends to celebrate your retirement. Indulge aboard a yacht-style Windstar cruise for your anniversary.

In the beginning stages of your planning? Maybe you feel overwhelmed thinking about where to hold your Celebration Trip, how to figure out your budget, and what’s right for you and your group. We’re here to help! Start at Chapter 1, and by the end of the book we’re confident you’ll be prepared to plan the best Celebration Trip ever.

Have some of the details figured out? Maybe you know when you want to go and what your budget is, but you’re trying to figure out where to go. Take a look at Chapter 1 to find your ideal trip style, and Chapter 5 to read more about Xanterra’s venues best suited for a Celebration Trip!

Contents

1. Celebration Trip Styles .......................... 2
2. Logistics ........................................ 7
   How long should a celebration trip be? ........ 7
   When should it be? ............................... 7
   Figuring out a budget: ......................... 7
3. Helpful Planning Tools .......................... 8
   Planning Checklist ............................. 9
   Before You Book ............................... 9
   After You Book ................................. 9
   Three to Six Months Before You Go ........... 9
   One Month Before You Go .................... 10
   Two Weeks Before You Go .................... 10
   One Week Before You Go ..................... 11
   Three Days Before You Go .................... 11
   One Day Before You Go ....................... 11
   Departure Day .................................11
4. Who Are You Traveling With? .................. 12
5. Eight Fun Destination Ideas ................. 14
   Death Valley ................................... 14
   Grand Canyon ................................. 14
   Tahiti ........................................... 15
   Arizona ......................................... 15
   Massachusetts ................................. 15
   Vermont ......................................... 15
   Savannah ....................................... 16
   Caribbean ....................................... 16
6. Choose the Xanterra Travel Collection for your Celebration Trip ....................... 17
7. Bonus: Fun Theme Ideas ......................... 23
1. Celebration Trip Styles

When planning a celebration trip, it’s important to consider the overall style of trip that is best suited for your occasion and group.

Pick the description that best describes you and/or your group, and you’ll have an idea for the best type of trip for your celebration in no time. We’ve suggested a few of our favorite Xanterra Travel Collection properties for each style of vacation. Be sure to read more about each destination in Chapter 5.

### FOOD AND WINE

If your idea of a great time has you whipping up a new recipe every week, hosting dinner parties for friends and family, or trying out the latest and greatest restaurant in town, you should plan a celebration trip focused on food and wine!

If you’re considering a food & drink celebration trip...

- Do any of your guests have special dietary needs or restrictions? That may influence our choices in restaurants and venues. Most places can accommodate special requests so be sure to communicate your needs to the chef and pay special attention to menu selections to ensure that all of your guests will enjoy each meal.
- If enjoying wine will be a focal point, are there any underage guests who will need to be excluded or will require childcare?
- Be sure to consider your budget as there are many ways to explore new foods and beverages, even on a tight budget.

**This type of trip is best suited for:** groups of adults of legal drinking age, couples’ getaways, honeymoons, retirement celebrations, milestone birthdays, family reunions.

**Xanterra venues for a Food & Wine trip:** Oasis at Death Valley, Holiday Vacations, VBT Bicycling and Walking Vacations, Country Walkers, Windstar Cruises.
Moments That Matter — How to Plan the Perfect Celebration Trip

Celebrating a retirement, graduation, honeymoon, or anniversary? You’ve likely been very busy and are in need of some R&R. If you’re craving some downtime, a chance to put your feet up, and time for some rest, you’ll likely enjoy a celebration trip focused on rest & relaxation!

If you're considering a rest & relaxation celebration trip...

- Are you imagining hours at a pool or a beach or on the deck of a yacht? Relaxing in a spa? Walking in gardens or on the golf course? Think about what relaxation means to you and your guests to narrow down your choices. It can also be less about place and more about service: no planning, no cooking, no shopping, no laundry means no rental home/apartment but instead a cruise, an inclusive-tour, or even a luxury resort.

- Are there activities, attractions, and/or excursions nearby for guests who may be looking for a bit of excitement amongst the R&R?

This type of trip is best suited for: groups of adults, couples’ getaways, honeymoons, retirement celebrations, a graduation vacation, girls’ weekends, milestone birthdays.

Xanterra venues for a Rest & Relaxation trip: Holiday Vacations, Grand Canyon Railway, The Oasis at Death Valley, Windstar Cruises.
Love the great outdoors and seeing all of the natural beauty our world has to offer? If you’re a group of hikers, bikers, sailors, nature-lovers, or you just love to get your adrenaline pumping, you’re probably in need of an epic adventure!

If you’re considering an epic adventure celebration trip...

• Do any of your guests have mobility issues? If so, are there accessible activities and options for them?
• What’s the weather like at the time of year you’re considering for your epic adventure? Will you feel safe and comfortable?
• How challenging is the terrain? You need to make sure that all of your guests can handle the level of difficulty. For example, VBT Bicycling and Walking Vacations now offers E-bikes on most of their itineraries so people of all fitness levels can participate and join the fun.

This type of trip is best suited for: family reunions, honeymoons, couples’ getaways.

Xanterra venues for an Epic Adventure trip:
Country Walkers, Grand Canyon Railway, VBT Bicycling and Walking Vacations, Yellowstone National Park Lodges, Zion, Glacier, Mt. Rushmore, Rocky Mountain National Park, Oasis at Death Valley.
Do you feel most at home wandering a museum, an art gallery, or in the audience of an opera or a play? Maybe you love chatting with locals and trying the most authentic foods or securing a souvenir that can only be found in the place you’re visiting. If so, you should plan a celebration trip focused on cultural experiences!

If you’re considering a cultural celebration trip...

• How far in advance must you secure tickets to popular museums, exhibits, and performances? Some attractions (in Europe especially) sell out months in advance. Hint: Holiday Vacations, Windstar Cruises, VBT Bicycling and Walking Vacations, and Country Walkers include many of the most sought after attractions in your tour price!

• Is there a particular show, concert or exhibit that you want to see? If so, see if you can match up your calendar with that special activity.

This type of trip is best suited for: Retirement celebrations, couples’ getaways, honeymoons, family reunions, milestone birthdays.

Moments That Matter — How to Plan the Perfect Celebration Trip

Carefree. Spontaneous. Adventurous. There’s nothing like the feeling you get from a good old-fashioned American road trip. You can make as many or as few plans as you like. Pack a bag, your sense of curiosity, and maybe a map (remember those?) and hit the open road.

If you’re considering a road trip celebration trip...

- Know that you will be traveling through a diverse climate, much of which is remote desert. Have an emergency supply of water, food, and fuel at all times.
- Traveling with little ones? Know the local laws for car seats and safety when traveling with children.
- Bring an extra set of car keys. You could have a long wait for a locksmith.

This type of trip is best suited for: Couples’ getaways, honeymoons, family travel, milestone birthdays, girls and guys weekends.

Xanterra venues for trip: Grand Canyon, Oasis at Death Valley, Yellowstone National Park, Zion National Park.
2. Logistics

Planning a trip is lots of fun, but it’s important to not let the fun parts (picking a destination, choosing menus, selecting excursions) overshadow your consideration of logistics. Selecting the right dates, duration, and budget will determine exactly what you’re able to do for your trip and on your trip, so don’t miss this step!

HOW LONG SHOULD A CELEBRATION TRIP BE?

The larger the group, the shorter your vacation will probably be. Some of your guests may still be in school, or will have fewer vacation days than others. If you’re planning a family reunion or a large retirement or anniversary party, maybe consider holding a weekend (or long-weekend) celebration vacation to ensure that as many people as possible will be able to attend.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE?

If you’re traveling with school-aged guests, it makes most sense to schedule your celebration trip for summer or spring break holidays to avoid disruption and to make attendance feasible.

If you’re traveling in the summer, note that it is the busiest time for tourists. If you like smaller crowds and a slower pace, you may want to travel in fall or spring, or to a destination that’s less busy in the summer months.

If you’re visiting the Caribbean, you might wish to take hurricane season into consideration to avoid intense weather, especially if you would like to enjoy many outdoor excursions.

FIGURING OUT A BUDGET:

Ah, budgets. Not the most fun topic in the world, but certainly one of the most important. When planning your celebration trip, you want it to be as stress-free as possible, so you should figure out your budget early on in the planning process.

• Some questions to ask yourself:
  • Who is paying for this trip?
  • Will costs be split evenly between guests? (Read about the Splitwise app in the next chapter)
  • Are you able to treat your family and cover some or all of their costs?
  • Will you be putting any guests under stress by asking them to contribute to the cost of a trip that might be out of their price range?
  • What’s the maximum price you and/or your guest(s) can manage? A celebration vacation is an exciting expense. If guests will be covering their individual costs, consider giving plenty of notice to allow adequate time to save.
Moments That Matter — How to Plan the Perfect Celebration Trip

If you’re still concerned about the money factor and how much is reasonable to ask your guests to pay for a celebration, have no fear! Doodle, a popular polling tool (more about it in the next chapter) can be used to survey your guests to find out just how much they’re able to spend on the trip. It has a feature that allows for responses to be hidden from other guests, so this information can remain private.

Working with an event planner local to your destination can be an extremely helpful way to minimize stress during the planning phase all the way through to the end of your trip, especially if you’re planning on hosting parties or events to mark the celebration.

**Not sure how to find an event planner? Here are some tips:**

- Check with the concierge of the hotel at which you plan to stay. They may have an on-site event planner, or a local planner who they’d highly recommend.
- Check local review sites like Yelp.com to read reviews of event planning companies in cities that may be unfamiliar to you.
- Don’t forget about social media! Take a look on Instagram or Facebook and search for event planners in the city you’ll be visiting. If your initial search doesn’t yield many results, try using hashtags like #WyomingEvents or #VermontEventPlanner. Social media can act as a digital portfolio for event planners, so you’ll get to see if their style fits yours in no time.

If you don’t need an event planner or it’s out of budget, consider tapping in to local and (often) free resources to find out more about the destination, to receive recommendations and insider tips, and to ask questions. Some helpful resources include:

- A trusted travel agent
- A friend who has visited the destination
- The local Convention and Visitor’s Bureau
- The local tourism agency
- The visitor’s center at a National Park
- A blogger local to the destination city
3. Helpful Planning Tools

Maybe you’re a natural event planner: your attention to detail is second to none, and you love to make sure everyone has a great time. Great! To make your planning process extra smooth, think about using some of our favorite tools:

- **Pinterest** - Pinterest is a popular online visual search engine that works like a virtual bulletin board and is one of the best tools to use to find inspiration online! Frequently used for wedding planning, its offerings and capabilities don’t stop there. Search for ideas relating to any type of event and we guarantee you’ll find countless exciting ideas and tips to make the most of your special trip. Once you find theme, an itinerary, or a menu idea that’s perfect for your trip, you can “pin” it to the board you’ve created for planning purposes. As you continue to pin, your board will grow and eventually you’ll have a visual representation of your ideal trip in one convenient place. **BONUS:** you can add collaborators to your board! If you’re working with a friend or family member to plan your special trip, you can give them access and they can contribute to the inspiration process. Be sure to install the Pinterest plug-in on your web browser! This will allow you to “pin” ideas that you’ve found elsewhere on the internet.

- **Google Drive** - Like Pinterest, documents housed in Google Drive can be shared with others and can be updated in real time. Are you spreadsheet-minded? Plan your budget in Google Sheets. Trying to keep track of invoices, hotel confirmations, itineraries, and more? Upload them to Google Drive and you’ll have access to everything wherever you have an internet or data connection. Keeping everything accessible in Google Drive means you won’t have to worry about losing anything or forgetting to keep a hard copy of important documents on you at all times. It also allows you to give your guests access to the information they might need quickly and easily.

- **Doodle** - Doodle is a simple, user-friendly, online tool that easily helps you to poll many people at once. You can suggest things like dates and times for an event and invited participants can select their availability and give feedback. As participants make their selections, Doodle collects the responses and visually shows you, the organizer, which option works best for the group. You can use Doodle in the early stages of your planning to decide on a number of important event elements, including dates, trip durations, preferred locations, budget ranges and more. It will help you to ensure that your choices are best suited to the preferences and availability of your invited guests.

- **Trello** - Trello is a tool that allows you to organize your projects into boards. Trello tracks your progress on a project (by making use of convenient checklists), easily tells you who’s working on what, and how far along your progress is. It’s a great tool to keep track of progress whether you’re working on planning your trip alone, or with the help of family and friends.

- **Splitwise** - Splitwise is an app for splitting expenses with your friends and family. It lets you and your friends add various bills and keep track of who owes who, and then it helps you to settle up with each other. Gone are the days of keeping track on scrap paper and feeling awkward when you need to ask to be reimbursed. Splitwise takes care of it all for you.
Not a natural-born planner? Not to worry. Many of Xanterra's properties and travel operators offer all-inclusive vacations or getaways with many inclusions, meaning that almost every element of your vacation is taken care of for you!

**Xanterra properties that offer an inclusive option:**

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<tr>
<th>HOLIDAY VACATIONS</th>
<th>COUNTRY WALKERS</th>
<th>VBT</th>
<th>WINDSTAR CRUISES</th>
<th>GRAND CANYON RAILWAY &amp; HOTEL</th>
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**Planning Checklist**

A celebration trip is supposed to be about kicking back, relaxing, and making unforgettable memories with friends and family, but getting ready to take a trip can be a stressful experience. Between packing, purchasing last-minute travel items, and figuring out who’s going to pick up your mail and feed your pets while you’re away, the lead-up to vacation can be enough to make you rethink your travel plans. Don’t sweat the details — with our helpful Celebration Trip Checklist, you can relax to the fullest knowing everything has been taken care of! Here’s everything you need to pick up, schedule, and pack to enjoy a fantastic celebration getaway.

**BEFORE YOU BOOK**

- Choose a celebration date. Remember that if you’re inviting other friends and family (especially if lengthy travel is required), check in with VIP guests to make sure the timing you’re proposing works for them. Research event destinations that will work for your group. Be sure and ask for any group rates/discounts if your group size is large enough to qualify.

**AFTER YOU BOOK**

- Start building your itinerary. Research your destination and make notes about restaurants you’d like to try and local attractions you want to visit. Remember not to overbook yourself—build in lots of downtime and time with family and friends!

- Put together a draft day-by-day schedule. Consider everyone in your group and make sure there are choices to match everyone’s abilities and budgets.

- If you’re flying to your destination, confirm ground transportation from the airport to your hotel. Some Xanterra resorts offer shuttle services and the tour and cruise companies offer transfers.

**THREE TO SIX MONTHS BEFORE YOU GO**

- Make reservations. Book your hotels and restaurants and activities. Start planning menus now to ensure you’ll have the best meal within your budget. Similarly, you’ll want to book your group now if you’d like to participate in an organized activity or tour. For popular destinations or destinations at peak times, start your bookings sooner than later. It may seem like your trip is still a long way off, but you’ll be grateful to have your ‘must-dos’ secured early on.
Moments That Matter — How to Plan the Perfect Celebration Trip

- If you have an event planner, rely on him/her to help you finalize arrangements.

- Are you planning on giving any gifts? A welcome bag? This is the time to think about your budget and what, if any, gifts you will want to commemorate the occasion.

- Send a note to your guests giving them a rough idea of what to expect on the trip. Where they will be staying, the overall itinerary, what clothes/gear they will need, who else is confirmed on the trip, etc.

**ONE MONTH BEFORE YOU GO:**

- Will you be giving a toast or saying a few words about the guest of honor at some point during your travels? Start making notes about your speech now. Talk to close family and friends who know the guest(s) of honor well to collect funny stories, anecdotes, or special memories to include in your remarks.

- Shop for items you’ll need for your trip. Think about your destination and when you’ll be visiting. Will you need to pick up warm-weather clothing or cold-weather gear? Sunscreen, sunglasses, and hats might be required. If you’re planning an active getaway, think about special gear or clothing you’ll need to explore in comfort.

- If you’re planning to have someone care for your pets, collect your mail, water plants, or otherwise look after your house while you’re away, make arrangements now.

- Send an update to your guests with any new plans or finalized arrangements. Ask them to share their cell phone numbers and travel arrangements with you so you can create a contact list of all guests.

**TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOU GO**

- If you have any prescriptions that need refilling, make sure that you have enough for your time away.

- Make copies of all your travel documents. Share them (along with a detailed itinerary) with an emergency contact and store images on your phone so you’ll have access to them even without an Internet connection.

- Pay any bills that will be due when you’re away.

**ONE WEEK BEFORE YOU GO**

- Start setting aside items that you’d like to pack.

- Research helpful apps that will come in handy while you’re traveling.
Moments That Matter — How to Plan the Perfect Celebration Trip

THREE DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

☐ Arrange for transportation to the airport for your departure, if you’re flying.

☐ Coordinate a meeting point and time for your group if you have friends or family traveling from different locations.

☐ Do one last check-in with your celebration coordinator if you have one so you’ll feel confident our special event will be a success.

☐ Do your table seatings and place cards if you’re having a sit-down dinner.

☐ If you’re hiring a band or DJ, be sure to provide them with a playlist of your favorite songs and style of preferred music.

☐ If you’re giving a speech, make sure it’s finished and start practicing!

ONE DAY BEFORE YOU GO

☐ If you have time, change your sheets! It might seem like an odd thing to do, but trust us — when you return home after a trip, there’s nothing better than a good night’s sleep in a comfy fresh bed. While you’re at it, empty your garbage cans and eat or get rid of perishable food items.

☐ Pack last-minute items. Don’t forget extra snacks in your carry-on!

☐ If you have an early departure time, set an extra alarm. Plug in your devices so they’re fully charged and ready to go while you’re at the airport and in transit.

☐ Confirm our transportation to the airport, making sure to give yourself lots of time to get there, especially during peak traffic periods.

☐ Touch base with your pet-sitters and/or house-sitters to make sure they have access to everything they need – keys, passcodes, pet food and supplies, or your mailbox.

☐ Check in online for your flight(s). Confirm flight times and any travel advisories that could impact your departure.

DEPARTURE DAY

☐ RELAX! You’ve done all the prep, your suitcase is perfectly packed, and you’re 100% ready for a worry-free celebration trip. Have fun making memories with your favorite people!
4. Who Are You Traveling With?

No matter if you’re traveling with young children, teens, extended family, or your significant other, the trip planning process can be overwhelming. We’ve compiled our favorite tips to help you spend less time worrying about the details, and more time enjoying the company.

Traveling with Young Children

Travel can be a life-changing experience for children of all ages: new foods, memorable experiences and amazing sights. But it can also be an overwhelming—all the extra planning, making sure you pack everything you need, and possible tantrums are just a few of the challenges you might encounter along the way.

We’re here to help—click through for our favorite tips for traveling with children, and start planning for a stress-free vacation.

Traveling with Teens

Naturally curious, traveling with your teenager can be an incredible bonding experience, especially when they’re involved in the decision-making process. But you may need some help getting started.

Click here for some ideas on putting together a vacation that everyone in the family will love.
Traveling with Extended Family

Sharing a private train car enroute to the Grand Canyon with your cousins. Getting the whole family together for a week at a luxury resort in the middle of the desert. Embarking on a self-guided walking tour with the grandparents.

If you’re planning a multigenerational vacation, click here for some helpful travel tips when vacationing with extended family.

Traveling as a Couple

From the first romantic National Park getaway, to a Caribbean cruise adventure for two, or an indulgent stay at a desert oasis, the highs and lows of traveling as a couple can deepen the bond you share with your other half.

If you’re planning a romantic vacation, click through for some helpful travel tips and stress-free planning.
5. Eight Fun Destination Ideas

You’ve figured out your trip style, you feel prepared to tackle the logistics, you have an idea about the Xanterra venue that might be a good fit (and don’t worry, there’s more information about each provider in the next chapter!), now where do you want to go? We know that sometimes that much choice can be overwhelming, so we’re here to offer up some fun destination suggestions for your Celebration Trip. You’ll be ready to pack your bags by the end of this chapter!

1. DEATH VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

The largest national park outside Alaska, Death Valley National Park in California spreads over 5,000 square miles of desert and mountains. It’s a landscape of striking contrasts, where snow lingers on peaks during winter, the occasional downpour brings forth a sea of wildflowers, and the dark sky offers stargazers a glittering treasure trove. Craft a perfect stay, filled with history and adventure, as you play golf below sea level or explore salt flats, ancient geological formations, chiseled canyons and the lowest point in the Western Hemisphere, Badwater Basin.

2. THE GRAND CANYON

Grand Canyon National Park is a place of remarkable beauty, peace, and scenic grandeur. The park encompasses 277 miles of the Colorado River and adjacent uplands in northern Arizona. Its lush forest of Pinyon and Ponderosa Pine and Utah Juniper interspersed with shrubby cliff rose, blackbrush, and sagebrush provides the botanical backdrop for squirrels, mule deer and the silver-gray coyote, known as the Song Dog of the West. Hawks, California condors, and eagles soar majestically above the rim, though ravens are the most common bird observed.
3. TAHITI

Located in the Pacific Ocean, The Islands of Tahiti are a mythical destination. You may be envisioning an idyllic island paradise and, once you visit, you'll discover that your imagination isn't too off the mark. The sand massages your feet, warm water welcomes you like an old friend, and ambition falls away as you watch the sun etch palm fronds on the beach. This is a place that is easy to love, difficult to leave. Experience Bora Bora, Moorea, Fakarava, and other exotic Tahiti destinations you only dream about.

At the renowned Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, explore hundreds of animal and plant species, or trek through Saguaro National Park, named for its distinctive native cacti found nowhere else on earth.

5. MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts is framed by coastal forests, breathtaking seashores, rolling farm fields, and colorful cliffs. Take in scenic lighthouses, gingerbread cottages, artists' colonies, and tranquil beaches. Along the way, serene marshes, sweeping dunes, lush lagoons, and breathtaking shores greet you at every turn. And from the brilliantly colored Aquinnah Cliffs, revel in the panoramic view of the sea stretched out before you.

6. VERMONT

Vermont’s radiant fall scenery—a blazing patchwork of sugar maples sweeping the countryside awaits. There’s nothing quite like Vermont during autumn’s explosion of red, orange, and gold.

4. ARIZONA

Soak in the sprawling desert landscapes that span across vast, versatile ranges. Visit the prolific "winery row," where you can enjoy a picnic and educational tasting at a family-owned winery. Experience artists’ colonies to see the work of local masters. Journey to idyllic Patagonia, a quirky town encapsulated by picturesque mountains.
Strolling through picture-postcard villages and rambling high ridgelines on the Long Trail are reason enough to visit. But discovering the region through locals’ eyes, meeting friendly bovines, sampling exquisite craft beers, and traversing undiscovered trails from Quechee Gorge to Lake Champlain brings you a step closer to the heart of the Green Mountain State.

7. SAVANNAH

Enjoy a charming Southern escape where art, architecture, shopping, and ghost stories are set under a veil of Spanish moss. Savannah is a place where cuisine comes straight from the coast and cocktails are served at every meal. Explore the old Historic District filled with restored buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries. Walk along picturesque waterfronts, once the location of cotton warehouses and now hotels, restaurants, and shops.

8. CARIBBEAN

Candy-colored cocktails sipped in seaside watering holes. Carefree days followed by calypso-flavored nights. These are the siren songs that lure anyone with a yearning to escape to the incomparable Caribbean Islands. Whether you’re cruising through turquoise waters or lazing on powdery white beaches, the glamorous harbors and unknown coves of this area remain a hidden treasure.
6. Choose the Xanterra Travel Collection for your Celebration Trip

You’ve selected your preferred trip style, you’ve thought about the logistics, you have a few destinations in mind, and you’ve started seeking out inspiration - now what? It’s time to select your preferred Xanterra venue and/or travel provider! We’ve noted which trip style each property is best suited for and a bit about what you can expect when you book a trip. Read on to find out more about each Xanterra venue and you’ll be well on your way to the best celebration trip ever!

**Holiday Vacations**

Take the stress out of planning your get-together. From flights and hotels to transportation and attractions, Holiday Vacations handles every detail for you. Choose from tours in the southern, eastern, and mid-west USA. Whether you want to have your celebration vacation near or far, Holiday Vacations is sure to have an option for you. The beauty of a tour is they have already done all the research and found the highlights of each destination and taken care of every detail to ensure you are truly on vacation with your friends and family. Your guide makes sure that all of you have a worry-free vacation and the price is all-inclusive. Tour options include indulging in delicious regional cuisine at fantastic local restaurants and seeing the best sites, staying in beautiful hotels and learning from expert guides. Holiday Vacations is the perfect choice for couples and solo travelers alike who want to get away and enjoy the best sightseeing and culture the world has to offer.

*For group inquiries, please call 800-826-2266.*

Food & Drink • Culture • Rest & Relaxation

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**Country Walkers**

For over 40 years, Country Walkers has provided active, experiential, and stunning travel experiences on five continents and in more than 20 countries. Their unique adventures and insider access bring a destination to life with well-crafted itineraries for Guided Walking and Self-Guided Walking. Country Walkers has designed each of their itineraries with on-site research and insider perspective in mind. They guarantee an active adventure that immerses you in the culture, history, natural experiences, and superb cuisine of a destination. They take care of everything—from finding the best walks in a region...
to gratuities at dinner—so you can simply enjoy the experience. Each day, you’ll relish a morning walk with your group, a convivial, included lunch along the trail, and further explorations in the afternoon. Then, you’ll be returned to your accommodations in time to relax before an exceptional meal at a local restaurant. They even include beer and wine with dinner!

Country Walkers is a great choice for groups and solo travelers alike. They know how fun it is to travel with a group of friends, which is why they offer the Travel Together program. When you bring a group of six or more along on a Guided Walking Adventure, you’ll all receive a 5% savings. In addition, you’re entitled to referral credits for any new guests who join you. Travel Together Program guests also receive a gift for everyone in the travel party—this year it’s a Patagonia backpack!

Solo travelers will be happy to know that they are just as much of a priority as group travelers, so if your Celebration Trip will be a solo endeavor, Country Walkers is a great choice for you. Their walks are designed to be at sociable pace meaning you will meet new friends along the way! They also offer many ways to save (always tricky when you’re not sharing costs with someone else!) by offering an optional room-share program and the lowest single-supplement rates in the industry, among many other incentives!

For group travel call 888-480-3428.

Epic Adventure • Food & Wine • Culture

Grand Canyon Railway & Hotel

The Grand Canyon Railway makes it easy to plan your next special occasion or group adventure to the Grand Canyon. Start the adventure aboard the iconic historic train along a century-old rail line. With five classes of restored passenger service, your group will journey back in time through pine forests and wide-open prairies as musicians play the tunes of the west on this uniquely historic Grand Canyon expedition. Combine the train ride with a variety of packages that include meals, activities and accommodations near the canyon. You can even charter your own private train and let our helpful and entertaining staff make the journey one you will reflect on with joy for years to come.

For larger groups, please call 800-843-8723.

Epic Adventure • Culture • Rest & Relaxation

The Oasis at Death Valley

Just two hours from Las Vegas and four hours from LA, the Oasis at Death Valley is the only place where you can stroll among lush greenery and swim in a spring-fed pool in the middle of the largest national park in the continental USA.

Death Valley offers one of the world’s most dramatic desert landscapes—a place of shifting sand dunes, multi-hued rock formations, and hidden canyons—you’ll wake before dawn to watch the rugged mountains turn pink with the sunrise. Then, come nightfall, you’ll marvel at star-filled skies as the desert wind rustles the palms. Explore ghost towns, be awed by the native wildlife, tee up for a game of golf, and enjoy the other-worldly landscape all around you by partaking in exciting hikes. Death Valley National Park has no shortage of things to do, and the Oasis at Death Valley is the
perfect home base to take it all in.

First, The Inn at Death Valley - a stunning, recently fully refurbished, Four-Diamond hideaway, it’s been the perfect place to relax and watch a glorious sunset in the national park since 1927.

For a more family-friendly choice, make yourself at home at The Ranch! Casual accommodations are complemented by another spring-fed swimming pool, tennis courts, a playground, an 18-hole golf course, and more.

The Inn’s new two-room Casitas are a luxurious choice for unparalleled privacy and relaxation. Wherever you choose to rest your head, the Oasis at Death Valley is a stunning and unique choice for your west coast honeymoon, anniversary getaway, family reunion, or retirement kick off for groups of all sizes. It is truly in the middle of nowhere you’d rather be.

**For larger group events, please call 760-786-3354.**

Rest & Relaxation • Epic Adventure

**VBT Bicycling Vacations**

When you travel with VBT, you’ll discover that cycling or walking in the great outdoors is only part of your vacation. They design their trips to exhilarate you, not to wear you out, and they tailor each of their tours to engage all the senses. VBT introduces you to local people, teaches you a bit of the language, provides historical background, and helps you truly experience regional life and culture. VBT offers the most affordable, comprehensive trips of their class. And now they offer E-Bikes for those guests who want a little help on the steeper terrain.

With a VBT vacation you can expect unique, authentic cultural activities, round-trip international airfare (when you book with the Air Package), all accommodations and transfers, most meals, and free use of a customized VBT bicycle and helmet or VBT walking poles. Pair all of that with two local, expert VBT Trip Leaders, an on-tour support vehicle and transportation between sites and you’ve got the makings of an easy, affordable, and exciting walking or bicycling adventure!

VBT also offers bike and boat vacations, which are the perfect choice for medium to larger sized groups: you can book the whole vessel with a group of 24! With nearly everything taken care of for you, a trip with VBT means you can enjoy a milestone birthday, an anniversary, or a retirement with ease in dozens of locations around the globe!

VBT makes it easy to organize a group trip - they offer many fantastic incentives like frequent traveler credits and the ability to earn a free trip for yourself (and even a guest!) depending on the size of your group. They’ll also send you all of the materials you need to help get your guests excited about your upcoming adventure and if your group is departing from the same city, they’ll do their best to ensure that you’ll all be on the same flight.

**For group travel please call 800-245-3868 extension 3307.**

Epic Adventure • Culture
**Windstar Cruises**

Windstar’s small yachts and personalized approach bring you closer to each destination and every port, so you can see the world from new perspectives, enjoy your celebrations away from the crowds, and immerse yourself in local cultures. Choosing a Windstar Cruise means you’ll be able to focus on the celebration rather than planning the logistics as there’s no need to look for special venues or worry about things like catering. Windstar’s award-winning crew will take care of everyone’s needs and their vacation planners can help with all of the travel arrangements. With their dedicated group tour coordinator on staff to help plan your group vacation, they can help create a truly memorable vacation for your next celebration.

Experienced in weddings and vow renewals, Windstar Cruises will make your celebration trip memorable and unlike anything you and your guests have enjoyed before with a ceremony performed by the captain. Also a fantastic choice for birthdays, honeymoons, and any celebration for couples all the way up to groups of 50+, a Windstar Cruise is a top choice for a relaxing celebration trip almost anywhere in the world.

Gourmands will be excited to know that Windstar Cruises and the James Beard Foundation are partnered to bring you culinary experiences unlike any other. Through this program, Windstar now offers James Beard chef selections on every menu, every ship. In addition, Windstar works with James Beard to bring together some of the most talented chefs and sommeliers on themed cruises and in their dining program. Imagine dining on dishes created by not just one celebrity chef, but a list of all-stars with the likes of Maxime Bilet (The Cooking Lab), Evan Hanzoor (Egg), and Jose Mendin (Pubbelly Noodle Bar, Habitat, Baja Bao). Their themed cruises featuring James Beard Foundation chefs and beverage experts are a foodie’s dream, with chef demos, special beverage pairings, and market tours.

You can trust that you’re in excellent hands when you sail with Windstar Cruises, but don’t just take our word for it: have a look at the dozens of awards that Windstar Cruises are honored to have received in recent years, with accolades from Conde Nast Traveler, Travel & Leisure, USA Today, Travel Channel, and many more.

For groups 20 or larger, please call 880-628-3354.

Rest & Relaxation • Food & Wine • Culture

**Yellowstone National Park Lodges**

At Yellowstone National Park Lodges, you’re invited to discover or rediscover the magic of the world’s first national park, Yellowstone. There’s an incredible variety of guided sightseeing tours and adventures to be had in Yellowstone National Park.
From full-day touring motor coach excursions to shorter morning photographic safaris, scenic boat tours and a full array of winter experiences, there’s a way for everyone in your group to enjoy the natural beauty all around you. Choose from many options for lodging found inside the park, including hotels, lodges, cabins, campgrounds and an RV facility. With on-site restaurants and conference rooms to accommodate groups of up to 150, Yellowstone is the perfect backdrop for a celebration trip of any kind. If you’re planning for a large group or you want a bit of a slower pace, you might choose to hold your celebration trip in the late fall, winter, or spring when the park is less crowded. You can also choose to go with a tour operator like VBT, Country Walkers or Holiday Vacations where all the planning and logistics are already taken care of.

For larger groups, please call 307-344-5437.

Epic Adventure • Rest & Relaxation

Zion National Park Lodges

Zion National Park is a sanctuary with over 146,000 acres of cliffs, canyons, diverse plant and animal life, and uninterrupted beauty. Its massive sandstone walls, some as high as 3,800 feet, offer an opportunity for serenity and reflection for all who visit—and Zion Lodge offers the only in-park lodging inside this hiker’s paradise. With the lodge open year-round and offering special winter rates and packages, guests can easily experience Zion National Park. Zion Lodge makes it easy to travel with a group, too, by offering incentives to save with every 15 rooms booked!

For larger groups, please call 425-772-7752.

Epic Adventure • Rest & Relaxation
Cedar Creek Lodge at Glacier National Park

Known for its seemingly endless acres of rugged and breathtaking landscapes, Glacier National Park was established in 1910 and stands today as a monument to wild natural places. In 1932 Glacier National Park was designated as part of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. Today, it remains a symbol of shared stewardship and a testament to the important and deep-rooted relationship between Canada and the U.S. Just as the landscape and wildlife are part of the heritage of Glacier National Park, so are the historic lodges and classic Red Buses and their drivers known as “jammers.” With abundant lodging, including the Cedar Creek Lodge, Glacier National Park stands ready to welcome the park’s visitors and help create memorable and meaningful experiences to last a lifetime.

Celebrating your milestone moment at Cedar Creek Lodge ensures that your gathering is set apart by captivating surroundings. Begin the festivities by greeting your guests with an al fresco cocktail reception at sunset. For ceremonies and receptions large and small, their ballroom-style function room provides a grand setting with its elegant chandeliers, custom wainscoting and views of the mountains in Glacier National Park.

For larger groups, please call 406-897-8351.

Epic Adventure • Rest & Relaxation
7. Bonus: Fun Theme Ideas

A trip style, discussed in-depth earlier, informs the pace of your trip and the type of trip provider you may wish to choose. If you want to go the extra mile, though, and make things a bit unique and different for your guests, you might wish to make your celebration trip themed! A theme can last the entire duration of the trip or it might just be for one night to drum up some excitement and fun. Here are some fun theme ideas that you might wish to incorporate into your celebration trip!

The Wild West

Pack your best cowboy boots and get ready to enjoy a taste of the old West at a once-in-a-lifetime family reunion. Best suited for a trip on the Grand Canyon Railway or to Yellowstone National Park Lodges, a Wild West theme will get everyone into the cowboy spirit. Plan a cookout, schedule a horseback ride, and get ready for a trip back through time!
Trace Your Heritage

Best suited for a family vacation or a reunion, choose a destination for your celebration based on your family’s heritage. While you’re in your ancestral homeland, make a point of seeking out family records, visiting fabled and historic landmarks, and get a taste of where your family comes from. This type of theme will ensure a fun, meaningful, and educational trip for all!

Your Favorite Story

Do you and your loved ones have a favorite special book or movie? Make that memorable story your theme! Star Wars fans should visit Death Valley where many of the scenes were filmed. Best for a family vacation or a unique honeymoon, literary and movie buffs will have a grand time walking the footsteps of their favorite characters.

Are you excited yet? When it comes time to start planning and booking your celebration trip, know that the Xanterra Travel Collection is the best choice for all of your milestone moments and celebration trip needs. We’d be thrilled to help you mark your special occasion with a trip guaranteed to make memories that last a lifetime.

Ready to start planning?

xanterra.com/celebrate