

Not just for the traditional holiday season, but how about leaving the parents at home and doing some exciting winter travel with your grandkids? You know you spoil those kids, so wouldn't it be fun to be with them exclusively when no parents are around to tell you you're spoiling them? And don't forget to make a video or photo record of all the memorable events you've planned. Here are just a few ideas.



1. Take them to a mountain ski area for a weekend in the snow. Teach them the basics of skiing, starting with snowboards for the littlest ones and progressing as far as they can handle on beginners' ski slopes. Enjoy warm evenings together by the hotel fire, and let them stay up as late as they want.
2. On the other hand ... free them for a week from parents and winter snow in their hometown, and venture to a sunny tropical beach where winter temperatures go up to the 70s and beyond. Wade and splash with them in the ocean, and maybe they can share some of your own hang ten skills you still have from when you were a world-class surfer. Watch the sun go down over the ocean horizon while you toast hot dogs and marshmallows at your campfire on the beach.
3. Take them to the big city for a weekend of Broadway-quality stage shows. For instance, now most popular in New York, off-Broadway and in many other cities are kid-friendly "Beauty and the Beast", "The Color Purple", "Jersey Boys", "The Lion King", "Tarzan", "Wicked" and others. Eat in upscale restaurants and don't tell the kids' parents how much money they cost.
4. OK, those evil adult children of yours won't allow you to take your grandkids away from home, even for a weekend. Pick a snowy day to visit them and relive your own youth when you thought snow was the most wonderful gift from heaven a kid could enjoy. Of course, you need to make the very best snowman in the neighborhood. Get creative with hat, scarf, brooms and veggies to give your snowman real style. Build up snow blocks or use some big cartons to construct two snow forts. Then choose up sides and have a snowball fight. And if you arrive just when the snow has freshly fallen, make snow angels with your littlest family angels.

5. Of course, the greatest gift you can give yourselves and your grandkids is a trip to a Disney park. In the 1970s and 1980s, when our kids were growing up, our family went on winter vacations to Walt Disney World at least a dozen times. Nothing is more enjoyable for parents ... and grandparents ... than to see how kids fall totally under the spell of the Disney wonders.

OK, now turn off that boring TV set and drag your butt out of that comfy couch. Start planning to enjoy some memorable adventures of a lifetime with those youngest members of your family. Do it now, because they'll soon be too old to travel with their grandparents, and you ain't gettin' any younger either.