

Remember the old song you sang as Dad drove his '49 Chevvy "over the hills and through the woods to grandmother's house we go"? Maybe it's worth driving instead of flying to your holiday destination this year. No long lines waiting to be frisked by airport security. No sitting in crowded terminals for hours because of delayed flights. No parking or taxi fees. No lugging luggage all over the airport and paying extra if it is overweight.



Gasoline prices are 70% lower than they were last summer when the big oil barons and their little gas station pals were robbing you blind at more than \$4 a gallon. Consider driving to grandma's this year, or if you're the grandma or grandpa, hitting the road to see the kids and grandkids. For instance, how much it would cost to fly from Los Angeles to Las Vegas vs driving there?

A typical flight is \$150 each way. That's \$600 base price for four adults round trip. Of course, there are all kinds of taxes and add-ons, so that cost could actually be \$800. Then there's parking and few other expenses. Each trip by air includes driving from home to the airport at least an hour early, security, dragging and checking luggage and wrapped holiday presents, waiting in the airport, boarding and one hour in the air.

Then, on arrival, dragging luggage and paying from the airport to your destination by cab or van. If you're lucky, and there are no long delays in the airport or on the runway, total time from your house to destination is about four hours each way.

To drive between the two cities is 275 miles each way, about four hours from your house to granny's house. Cost for two gas fill-ups at today's prices would be about \$110 for a non-gas-guzzling family car, maybe \$150 for an SUV. Therefore, if grandmother lived in Las Vegas, a family of four in a car full of luggage and holiday presents could save at as much as \$650 by driving over the hills and through the desert to her house.