



You suddenly find you'll be getting a week off, and you want to find a place to relax. You don't have much time for plans, because you don't want to waste any of those days. You need to find last-minute travel pronto.

To choose the best locations for last-minute vacation travel, there are many variables. If you're willing to pay for the convenience, vacations to favorite cities, including Las Vegas, New York, Los Angeles, London, Paris, Rome and others can offer anything you need for a fulfilling, if very expensive, vacation experience. Therefore, if you don't want to go through the hassle of making hurry-up air and hotel reservations, vacations at locations within short driving distances from home may be the most convenient choice.

Another factor is that it's often considerably more expensive to make last-minute bookings for air travel and hotel reservations in popular cities and resorts. For instance, on round-trip flights from New York to London, a schedule booked at least two weeks in advance may be as inexpensive on some airlines as \$600. For last-minute tickets, the price could be double or more, especially if you plan to travel over a holiday period.

The first location to consider for last-minute vacation travel is your own back yard. Maybe not literally the yard in back of your house, but vacation facilities within a one-hour drive of your house. Choose a beachfront or mountain resort within that convenient distance. Consider checking into a hotel in the area with a golf course, good restaurants, spa, pool, tennis courts or other recreation facilities that appeal to you.

This stay-local plan could perfectly fit your last-minute vacation plans, and eliminate the need to rush and shell out money to make hurry-up flight and hotel reservations. It could have some added benefits. In these tough times, you could help bring some much-needed income to your local travel and hotel economy.

One type of vacation can actually cost less if reservations are made at the last minute. Cruise lines have a dilemma most other travel businesses don't have to face, and savvy vacationers can take advantage of it. When a major cruise ship sails, to meet expenses and make a profit, it needs to have a full complement of passengers aboard.

However, even when enough reservations fail to come in, the sailing schedule must be kept, no matter how many empty cabins there may be aboard. Therefore, when departure time approaches and there's less than a full passenger list, cruise lines send out urgent ads offering substantial last-minute price deals.

If you're suddenly faced with making last-minute vacation destinations, consider facilities within a short drive of your house. For those and any other destination you may choose, go to internet travel resources or get in touch with your hometown travel agency. You'll find many listings for very attractive last-minute cruises, hotel packages and other similar bargain vacation offers.