

## Consumers Put Peddle to the Metal for Summer Vacations

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Holiday Resales, a member of the Seattle-based Holiday Group of companies, reports an unprecedented demand for drive-to destinations for mini-vacations close to home.

'We're hearing it from our customers, and we're seeing it in the web analytics tracking the click-through path of our visitors to our gallery of timeshares,' says David Skinner, President and CEO of Holiday Resales.

Since 1992, over 20,000 customers have purchased 'used timeshares' from Holiday. 'As opposed to our earlier years in the business, the trend today is 'vacation local'' says Skinner. 'People want a hassle-free vacation experience. And airports are anything but hassle-free.'

Skinner reasons this is due to the following: heightened security measures, keeping lines long; money-saving cut-backs from airlines, reducing staff and service levels; crowded planes, flying at passenger capacity to increase revenue. And now, rising airfares--just in time for summer vacations.

'Sure, gas is going up too,' Skinner acknowledges. 'But, taking your car with you alleviates another line to wait in as well as the expense of paying at the rental car agency desk.'

But money and aggravation aside, there is another reason for the increase in demand for drive-to destinations: Americans are time-starved.

'The people who can most afford a vacation are those who can least afford the time to take a full week off from work,' states Skinner. Their solution is to take several long weekends every quarter: tacking a Monday/Friday onto a weekend for a quick getaway. And who wants to spend their precious time in an airport?

'Even a regional airline that flies you point-to-point in less than two hours becomes a 5 hour commitment each way, by the time you calculate delays for checking in, security screening, waiting for luggage and renting a car,' explains Skinner. 'Not to mention the hassle factor. With a drive-to destination, the vacation begins as soon as you leave the drivewaythe cooler is between the seats, your favorite CDs are playing, and the kids are watching a movie on the pop-down TV or a laptop.'

Does this trend signal a rebirth of the road trip? 'Well, yes and no,' says Wendy Knudson, a Vacation Concierge for Holiday Timeshare Resales, one of the Holiday Group companies. 'The traditional road trip in the 60's involved days of driving spread out over a week or more. Today, my customers are looking for a shorter road trip-both in driving time and length of stay. They want to get to the resort within 3 hours of leaving home, and stay no more than four nights.'

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