

Lubbock or Leave It? Getting out of Town Without Breaking the Bank.

by Annie Margarita Yang



In 2014, Movoto ranked Lubbock as the absolute most boring city in America. Although Lubbock is a small city, it doesn't have the hustle and bustle energy. There's not much to do besides eating, drinking, and going to church. Everything closes at 9:00 p.m. and during the summer and winter when college students are away, it's a ghost town.

Things are getting better. Last month, an ice skating rink opened. Later this year, Adventure Park and Lubbock Aquarium are opening. But what is there to do right now? Locals say there's a lot to do in Lubbock and then proceed to tell me about the Palo Duro Canyon that's two hours away. When it's that far, it's not even Lubbock anymore.

I've lived here for 8 months and decided to explore surrounding areas in Texas and New Mexico. Working 7 days a week caused me to lose my creativity, inspiration, and connection to God. I needed stimulation.

The problem was Handrio and I are saving \$3,000.00 to move to Boston. The last time we went on a road trip to Dallas, we got over excited, overspent and got an overdraft. A fun trip turned out anxiety provoking since we couldn't afford it. I felt scared that would happen again.

It didn't happen this time though because I planned every possible expense. The destination was White Sands National Monument and Roswell, NM. I budgeted for 3 people at \$95.00 per person and I was off by only a few cents. How did we do it?

Limit The Number of Days

Get out of town for 2 days—3 days max. The longer you leave, the more money you spend. Two days is enough to rejuvenate your body, mind, and soul without missing a day of work.

Go When Demand Is Low

The largest expense for road trips is lodging. Hotels in Roswell cost over \$100.00/night on Christmas week, but on New Years Day, they were \$60.00. On New Years Day, most people are back home experiencing a holiday hangover.

Invite Your Friends

If you can get four people, that's fantastic. It cuts down on hotel and gas costs per person. To divide all expenses evenly, in the beginning, ask everyone to put the same amount of cash into a joint envelope and use that. Remaining cash gets split evenly. For the digital savvy, charge all joint expenses onto one card. Keep receipts and pay the cardholder your share at the end.

Calculate the Gas Money

<http://GasBuddy.com> is accurate. Find out the round-trip cost for gas. Then add \$20.00 for gas to explore the destination itself.

Stay At A Hotel With Complimentary Breakfast

That's one less meal you have to worry about. Lunch/dinner is around \$12.00 per person per meal for small towns. Make it \$16.00 for big cities.

Plan Your Attractions

Attractions are your biggest budget buster. You have to get this right!

1. Go to TripAdvisor and see the "Top Things to Do" at your destination.
2. On an Excel sheet, make a list of 10 possible attractions.
3. Next to each one, write the total price for the number of people going.
4. Now, write the addresses. This makes your trip more energy efficient. Visit attractions in the same zip code before driving across town.

If you are a spontaneous traveler who hates plans, don't worry. You won't end up going to every attraction; 10 are too many. Think of this list as options, not a set itinerary. The point is to make a budget.

Wishing You A Great Getaway

Take a look at the spreadsheet I made for our White Sands and Roswell, NM road trip. It should inspire you to create your own.

Is there a destination you have in mind already? Leave a comment and we could start planning together.

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