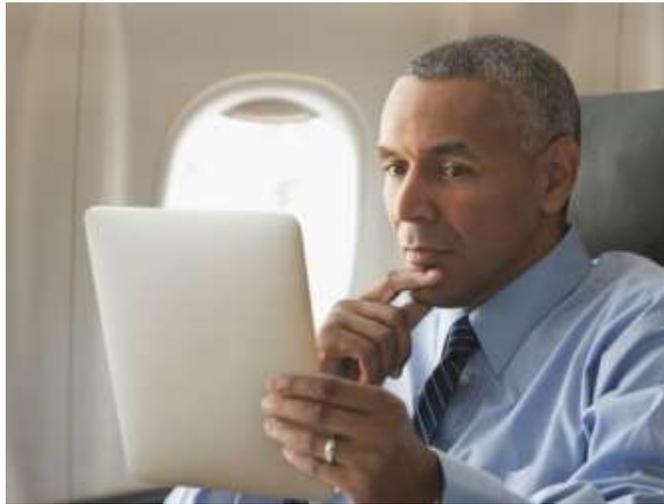


# 7 ways to turn a travel commitment or obligation into a vacation

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***Here are 7 ways to turn your obligatory vacation into a real vacation.***



(Photo: Getty Images)

Vacation. Just hearing the word puts a spring in your step. Goodbye, office. Hello, sunshine! On vacation, the world is your oyster. Infinite possibility is just around the corner!

Except when it isn't.

Let's be honest. How many of us have to take vacation days that don't feel very vacation-y? A family reunion, a distant cousin's daughter's son's graduation or a coworker's out of state wedding. In other words, how many times are our vacation destinations out of our hands?

Our schedules can be so full of these "obligations" and business trips that the fantasy of lounging carefree on a far-off beach often remains just that: a fantasy. Drinks with umbrellas occupy our daydreams while we spend our actual days off sipping endless cups of coffee, knee-deep in spreadsheets for work.

Is all hope for a real vacation lost? Not at all! A [Hampton by Hilton Twitter poll](#) reveals that even obligations can be fun, if you take steps to make the most of them. Here are some suggestions for having a vacation on your obligation!

### **1. There's no place like...hotel**

Want to know the best part about those obligations that happen to be in the middle of nowhere? You're *in the middle of nowhere*. There are no travel checklists, no tourist sites to cram in and no waking up early to beat the crowds.

That also means that there's no guilt about sleeping in, watching the news in your pajamas, taking the time for a leisurely breakfast and finally getting around to reading that book that's been sitting on your shelf forever. You don't need to be in an exotic destination to squeeze in a little rest and relaxation.

### **2. Try the local cuisine**

Nothing says vacation like someone else doing the cooking!

No matter where your travels take you, go where the locals go. Try Cajun cooking, a Philly cheesesteak or some real Southern BBQ — whatever the regional specialty is where you're staying. Argue with your family about how the Chicago deep dish compares to the classic New York pizza slice. See if you can find a cheap but delicious food truck. Whatever you do, though, just don't forget to leave room for grandma's famous cookies.

### **3. Extend your trip**

Are you a road warrior, traveling all the time but feeling like you never really get to see more than the inside of your hotel room? First of all, make sure it's a nice hotel room!

Second, consider extending your trip by a day or two. It'll turn that obligation into a vacation (like our pro traveler in the video above). You've already made the trip to a new city. Why not add in a bit of leisure time and feel like you're having a true getaway? If you're traveling for business and your employer allows, consider taking a friend or spouse.

### **4. Make your own fun**

Bring a deck of cards and have a tournament with your family. Put your feet up and have a movie marathon. Walk around the block. Rock out to your favorite music with your nephew and claim the title of the Cool Aunt or Uncle. Have a waffle-eating contest at breakfast time!

The point is, you can create your own fun no matter where you are. Keep an open mind and don't be afraid to get creative!

### **5. Scout out the local watering hole**

Speaking of spoiling yourself, have a cup of something. Or two. When you have time to spare (or time to sneak away rather), spend it on a java jolt or a sip of the local spirits. Every town has their special brew — whether caffeinated, supercharged or related to the grape. And sitting at a local cafe or sports bar is perfect for people watching or watching your favorite team — without any objections from family members rooting for the other team!

### **6. Shop 'til you drop**

Or at least until you buy souvenirs for everyone on your lists — including yourself! Retail therapy can be even more rewarding in a new city with new stores and uncommon items that you can only get in Obligation, USA. If your suitcase is fuller when you leave than when you came, you're winning at obligation-ing.

### **7. Do something you wouldn't do at home!**

One way to bring excitement and flair into an obligation is to do something you can't always or wouldn't do at home. Whether it's exploring the great outdoors, enjoying live music or just taking a much-deserved cat nap on a hammock — make your obligation your oyster (and eat some oysters while you're at it). Being somewhere different can give you the freedom to do things your everyday self doesn't have time to do.

Whatever the reason behind your visit, a comfortable, reliable hotel can make all the difference between an unforgettable stay and a stay that you'd rather forget. From free Wi-Fi to hot breakfast every day, Hampton by Hilton's small personal touches adds up to a big difference in quality. [Turn an average weekend into a mini-vacation](#) with extra time for yourself. Don't have reservations about your next obligation, make a reservation at [Hampton by Hilton](#) instead — for wherever or whenever you travel!

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