

Why going camping could be the answer to your lockdown holiday woes

July 8 2020, by Carol Southall



Credit: Pexels

For many of us, the forced confinement of lockdown has reiterated the importance of being out and about in nature—along with the benefits it can bring.

So as the UK begins to reopen, it's likely that many people will be craving space away from crowds and busy, built-up areas. And given that, [one in eight](#) British households has no garden, there is likely to be a

surge in people heading off to enjoy the great outdoors and British countryside.

Indeed, outdoor areas and activities—think gardens, [national parks](#) and coastal areas—are likely to be busier than usual. Predominantly [indoor activities](#) and venues, meanwhile—such as restaurants, museums and galleries—are likely to face lengthier periods of subdued demand.

As a result, the tourism industry is anticipating a surge in people taking active outdoor breaks close to home. In the US for example, a national marketing campaign from the [National Park Foundation](#) will promote lesser-known parks as destinations. While [Airbnb's recent Go Near initiative](#) aims to support the "growing desire for domestic travel".

In the UK, VisitBritain's weekly UK COVID-19 [Consumer Tracker Report](#) shows that 20% of adults in the UK plan to take a short break or holiday within the UK by September. Coastal areas (both urban and rural) are emerging as top destinations.

Heading outdoors

[Spending time outdoors](#), [can improve your](#) blood pressure and digestion and boost the immune system. Spending [time](#) in green space, near trees, also means that we take in more oxygen, which in turn leads to release of the feelgood hormone serotonin.

[Many families](#) incorporate outdoor activity in [green space](#) into their holiday plans as a way of improving wellbeing and mental health. Active pursuits in the outdoors can also bring families together to enjoy themselves.

Camping, more than most forms of holiday, involves [family](#) members doing more together and encourages a more active, back-to-nature

lifestyle. And, according to [research](#) from the University of Plymouth, children who go camping do better at school and are healthier and happier. So it's a win-win.

The children who took part in the research were asked what they love about camping and the most common themes were making and meeting new friends, having fun, playing outside and learning various camping skills. Children also recognised camping's value for [problem solving](#) and working together—out in the fresh air, away from the TV and computers.

Quality family time

The make-up of family units has changed massively over the past two decades. And many families now [live spread out](#) – no longer in one place, town or city. So for many families, holidays offer the offer the chance to spend time and reconnect with different generations of their family—along with quality time together that is [so fundamental to family life](#).

For families with busy lives, where parents are often working long hours, the chance to be together on [holiday](#) can feel key to the survival of the family unit. And many working parents—mums in particular—have found that the struggle to balance work and childcare has been exacerbated during lockdown.

But of course, families struggling to spend time together is not a new phenomenon. In 2011 a [Thomson Holiday report](#) found that, more than one-quarter of working parents spent less than an hour a day with their children. This is despite wanting more time together.

Time for a break

[The benefits of family holidays](#) are numerous. They can give all members of the family time to regain balance, reconnect and restore equilibrium. Holidays are also often an opportunity for people to try new skills, sports or activities—which can help to [boost confidence and self-esteem](#).

So don't despair if you're no longer heading abroad this summer. Instead, head for the great outdoors and enjoy some quality family time—away from the house and daily lockdown routine.

This will not only give you a chance to relax and unwind in a new environment but will also encourage children and other [family members](#) to try something new—whether it's toasting marshmallows and singing campfire songs, swimming in rivers, stargazing—or simply just being close to nature.

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