



REDISCOVER FREEDOM IN AN RV

by Josephine Matyas

The beautiful Canadian wilderness is a draw for many, but snuggling into a sleeping bag in a tent is not everyone's vision of the ideal way to connect with nature. Many campers want to surround themselves with the outdoors, but also crave the creature comforts of home—a kitchen to cook meals, a bathroom for showers, and space to spread out. For families, a dry place to wait out a storm can be an on-the-road lifesaver. For seniors, it can be a simple matter of safety and comfort. This is what's behind the upsurge of interest in travelling by recreational vehicle. RV travel—including everything from the easy-to-pull travel trailers to bus-sized motorhomes—provides a flexibility that makes it simple to “pick up and go,” moving easily from one campground to the next, or embarking on a longer road trip.

According to GO RVing Canada, a non-profit association dedicated to promoting the RV lifestyle, 14 percent of Canadian households have tapped into the RV mode of experiencing the great Canadian outdoors—spanning the whole range from tent trailers and fifth wheels to recreational vehicles. RVing has always been a popular mode of camping for seniors, but in recent years there has been a definite shift that includes younger campers. These days, two-thirds of RVs are owned by people under the age of 55. Most are getting into the RV lifestyle with a small tent trailer or travel trailer—something they can easily manoeuvre and tow behind the family minivan. There's been an explosion in RV innovation and many units now include green technology—solar panels, water systems and

state-of-the-art drive technology.

The GO RVing Canada campaign, known as Wildhood, connects young families with RVing as a budget-friendly lifestyle as well as a comforting reminder to parents of the way things “used to be.” They can set aside the stresses of helicopter parenting—the feeling that they need to overschedule and constantly hover over their children—and just let kids be kids, exploring the simple pleasures like cooking s'mores over a campfire, counting the stars and launching into a lake on a rope swing. In campgrounds, children can engage in activities with an abandon to just get out and play again. It is a type of freedom that comes with camping and the RV lifestyle, with the benefit of creating family memories along the way.

An RV vacation—staying at campsites and cooking meals rather than eating in restaurants—can be much less expensive than the average vacation. With new, small RVs starting at \$6,000, there's a unit on the market for every lifestyle and every price point. It's an affordable way to travel, to camp, and even to set up a seasonal cottage-like stay.

The GO RVing Canada website is a one-stop resource about RVing, with information on buying and renting RVs, listings of RV dealers and RV parks and campgrounds across Canada, and about the RV lifestyle. Consumer tools include how-to videos, a trip planning guide, RV camping and buying courses, a vacation cost calculator, along with a choose-your-RV feature helping users decide what sort of RV and type of trip best fits their travel style (www.gorving.ca). 🍁