



The Swing is to Spring . . .

Cherry blossom photo, courtesy Traverse City, Mich.,
Chamber of Commerce.

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Year-Around Vacations

The year-round vacation idea—a “natural” if there ever was one—has caught on more quickly than any ever offered the recreational travel trade and its tens of millions of cash customers. The swing not only is to spring, as Greyhound rightly clarions, but also to fall. And also, more people will be going south this summer, and north next winter, than ever before. Millions of new “paid vacationists,” the shortage of “in-season” facilities (no new construction during the war and very little since) plus excellent promotion by many regional groups and generous support from the press, have added up to a substantial extension of the regular seasons. Scores of resorts opened earlier, closed later, many changed over to year-round operation.

But the battle for “season-all” instead of seasonal vacations is far from won. The whole recreational travel industry, faced with rising costs and operating on a “fixed charge-no inventory” basis, recognizes that to break even or show a profit, it must have a longer season or higher average house count. Fortunately millions of vacationists have already seen the wisdom of taking an early or late vacation, or a winter and a summer holiday.

“Vacationists More and More Disdainful of Set Seasons” is the significant headline in the Cleveland Plain Dealer on Harry Smith’s keen analysis of this new vacation trend. “Plan for All-year-round Vacations Gains Favor in U.S.,” says a 7-column head in the Cincinnati Post, while the New York Herald-Tribune banner-headers “Vacation Time is When You Want It—and There’s No Need to be in a Crowd.” Modest Tennessee advertises “Early or Late—It’s a Beautiful State,” while Miami Beach says “Fun—Thrills—Luxury—Around the Calendar,” and Oregon’s invitation reads “Take a Tip from the Pelicans—See Oregon in the Spring.”

Yes, the vacationist is getting it from all sides these days. And millions of them would like to just pick up and go. But easier said than done for many. The ways and means must be there, too. Factory “close-downs” or “mass vacations” are a great hindrance. State and city governments and chambers of commerce, working with trade unions, must secure the cooperation of large

employers so that shut-downs will result in the least confusion and difficulty for employees, the least conflict with the shut-down dates of others, and the least overloading of local transportation and accessible resort facilities.

“The Swing is to Spring” is but one of many catchy headlines used by Greyhound Bus in its national campaigns the last few years to build off-season business. Its advertisements, “The Early Bird Gets the Best Vacation,” “We’re Glad We Waited ‘til Fall,” “Better Late than Ever,” not only brought them many passengers but created new business for hundreds of resorts. No other one transportation serves directly so large a percentage of our population, so Greyhound is ideally fitted for its farsighted pioneering role. The bus industry, incidentally, has generously supported the work of the committee on year-round vacations.

The Santa Fe Railway, too, deserves special mention for its well-rounded 1948 early fall campaign to start travel rolling southwestward weeks ahead of the usual time. The Santa Fe, as well as the Southern Pacific, the Union Pacific, and other western lines have, of course, cooperated for years with the general program of the All-Year Club of Southern California. But there had never been an intensified, organized drive until All-Year Club’s Don Thomas challenged: “Let’s Break Out of the Short-Season ‘Strait-Jacket!’”

The “strait-jacket” has now been ripped open—as current advertising reveals and every resort manager knows. But it will not be in tatters until National Association of Travel Officials’ have the wholehearted cooperation and support of all the great transportation interests in the fullest development of their slogan: “Vacation time—Anytime . . . Every Season Has a Reason.”

Leading figures in the field of recreational travel comprise the year-round vacation committee of NATO. The rail, air, bus, shipping, sight-seeing, and hotel associations are represented by top executives, and five typical regional organizations have members, with two from the press. It is the first time in the history of travel promotion that every element has sat around one table with a common goal. Anyone engaged in the sale, promotion, or conduct of recreational travel is welcome to join NATO, to share in and contribute to this worth-while objective.