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Getting there is half the fun when planning transportation

By HEIDI WHITE
Staff Reporter

When planning a trip for spring break, students may spend most of their time thinking about where they want to go, but also how they're going to get there.

Angie Kettler, a customer service representative for Budget Rent-A-Car, said although many students rent cars for their spring break trips, there are some restrictions to consider.

Budget Rent-A-Car requires renters to be at least 21 years old and have a major credit card. For those under 25, there is an extra \$12 charge. Renters under 25 cannot let anyone else drive the car, she said.

Another limitation is that no rental cars can pass the border to Mexico, but they could probably go to Canada, Kettler said.

At Rent-Sum-Wheels, some of the same restrictions apply.

Branch manager Ron Martin said Rent-Sum-Wheels also does not rent to drivers under 21, but carries no extra charges for those under 25. Cars rented must stay within the continental United States.

Rose Sheridan said Avis Car Rental's policies are more strict than other local agencies.

The rental sales agent said Avis will only rent to students under 25 who work for the university and rent under their group plan.

At most agencies, insurance coverage is

strongly recommended when renting a car.

Kettler advises renters to call their own insurance agents ahead of time to see if their policies cover them while driving rentals.

If renters aren't covered already, Kettler said paying for the agency's own insurance would be a good idea. At Budget Rent-A-Car, \$15 a day would relieve the renter of any responsibility for the car, she said.

"Weird stuff can happen. One lady even drove a Neon into the Rio Grande River," Kettler said.

Students planning transportation for spring break should think about the time it takes to reach their destinations along with rental restrictions, Channele Flepicka, office manager at Adventure Travel said.

Flepicka said a lot of students aren't renting cars because they are under 25, and they only stay at their destination for average of three or four nights. This makes flying a better option, she said.

Train transportation is also not as popular as it used to be because of the time factor, Flepicka said.

Riggert, a leisure travel associate for Omni Travel Inc., said a lot of students take charter flights to destinations that are big spring break sites.

Most of these flights leave out of Kansas City, Mo., or Omaha, she said, and head toward places like Cancun, Daytona Beach, Fla. and South Padre Island, Texas.

Classic spring-break destinations should be crowded again in '97

By MIKE KLUCK
Senior Reporter

It's back to the basics, as well as the beach, for many spring breakers this season.

Despite the effort — or sometimes, lack of effort — of other spring-break vacation spots, the old favorites of South Padre Island, Texas; Daytona Beach, Fla.; Cancun; and Jamaica remain popular with many college students looking for fun in the sun.

"We haven't had anybody asking for anything new," said Kristen Naber, Travel and Transport Leisure Travel consultant. "It's the same old places."

Naber said places such as South Padre Island and Daytona Beach remain popular spring-break destinations because they actively pursue the college market.

The popularity of those places has attracted more and more students from around the country.

"Those places really cater to the spring-break crowd," said Terri Johnson, manager of Lincoln Travel. "Each year it's kind of the same because college kids want to run into other college kids. A lot of times, spring breakers want to be around a lot of people, especially ones who are partying and having fun."

"Those crowds have also attracted other business. MTV likes to come there and do shows where there are a lot of people."

Caribbean comeback

Loreen McCardle, sales manager of Sun Splash Tours, said Jamaica and Cancun have become popular among spring breakers within the last five years because of the low cost.

But they have also put a lot of effort into inviting the spring break crowd.

Naber said her company offers charters to Cancun, which can range anywhere from \$450 to \$700.

McCardle said Sun Splash Tours offer different packages, which cover everything including air fare, hotel, meals and gratuities. Those packages are popular with college students because everything is paid for before they leave.

"With those type of trips, the students can

operate on a set budget and not go beyond what they want to spend," McCardle said. "A base rate for Jamaica starts at \$399. But there are also plans which include the admission for parties and events while there."

Despite the low costs to Cancun and Jamaica, Johnson said many places in the 48 contiguous states still remain popular because they are drivable.

Scoping the slopes ... and more

Johnson and Naber both said they haven't received any requests on information for spring-break skiing packages. Usually, spring breakers from Nebraska who want to go skiing drive to the ski area and pick up discounts when they arrive.

Even with the mainstay popularity of Daytona Beach and South Padre Island, some new places are being requested by spring breakers, Johnson and Naber said.

Naber said she has received spring-break information for New Orleans, while Johnson has given out a lot of information on trips to Orlando, Fla.

She said people who travel to Orlando can accomplish both the enjoyment of going to the beach as well as seeing the theme parks.

"It kind of depends on where you stay at," Johnson said. "There are budget properties everywhere down there. You can do the Disney thing or get outside of town and go more to the beaches and do the Daytona thing."

Another popular destination with the older spring-break crowd is Las Vegas, Naber and Johnson said.

Last year, air fare for a three- to four-day cruise was about as cheap as going skiing. But this season the cruise industry is avoiding the spring-break crowd like a hurricane.

"The cruise industry has raised the age limit so you have to have a least one person 25 years old in the cabin," Naber said. "Many times all passengers, except for families with their children, and honeymooners, need to be over 25."

Although spring break is less than two months away, Johnson said there are still some popular and good packages available.

"But I would suggest you get started pretty quickly booking your trip," Johnson said.

Padre Island is noted for its lobsters.



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