

# Students can save on travel options

BY ANNE HEITZ  
Staff Reporter

Spring break 1998 is fast approaching.

But for many students, it's approaching faster than the money to get there.

Whether students want to walk the streets of Chicago, soak in the sun of South Padre Island, Texas, or ski the slopes of Steamboat Springs, Colo., money may be the one luxury holding them back.

But, by finding the best and cheapest transportation, students may be better able to get to these destinations without spending their life savings.

Driving their own trusty vehicles may seem like a cheap travel choice.

But, if driving, students will pay between \$75 to \$200 on gas alone, depending on the car and the location.

Also, the car's value may decrease if they pack on up to 3,000 miles, depending on the number of miles traveled and the car's mileage before the trip.

Add the expenses of lodging, meals and entertainment for the week, and a long road trip may end up taking quite a chunk of money.

Students who still prefer to drive can consider renting a car or van.

Although many car rental companies require the renter to be at least 25 years old, a few rental locations in Lincoln rent cars to those 21 and older.

At Rent-Sum-Wheels in Lincoln, renting a Grand-Am, and driving to Chicago and back will cost about \$185. A van will cost up to \$350.

Renting a car to go skiing in Colorado will cost around \$250, and renting one to go to South Padre Island will cost between \$400 and \$450.

To rent a car at Enterprise, you must be traveling to one of the surrounding states. They have a running rate of about \$210 to rent a car and \$400 for a van.

Students who can't drive or who prefer another means of transportation should consider traveling by bus or by plane from Lincoln.

If purchased at least three days in advance, a round-trip Greyhound bus ticket to anywhere in the continental United States will cost \$98 this spring break. Tickets to Chicago or other nearby cities regularly cost less than \$98 and will be discounted by 25 percent.

If students prefer to travel by plane, Lincoln Travel offers round-trip airline tickets to Chicago for as little as \$81.

Tickets to Steamboat Springs cost about \$240, and tickets to the Harlingen, Texas, airport, which is the closest airport to South Padre Island, cost about \$350.

New Century Travel Agency offers airline tickets priced from \$196 to \$256 to reach Chicago or Colorado, but these tickets must be purchased 7 to 14 days in advance. These discount flights leave Lincoln on only certain days.

For students to get the best spring break travel packages, travel agents said, they should start saving money and planning now for next year's week of rest and relaxation. Many travel agencies said last week their 1998 spring break packages were booked.

Velma Lassen, manager of AAA Travel Agency, said the spring break season is a popular time of year for everyone to travel — not just students. This makes it difficult to find an airline ticket during spring break, she said.

"It's a very busy time right now. We are booked for many destinations and have been for quite some time," Lassen said.



SPRING BREAK REVELERS party on South Padre Island, Texas. Travel agents said the island has remained one of the hottest college spring break locations for decades. COURTESY PHOTO

# Vacationers head south for traditional hot spots

BY MIKE KLUCK  
Staff Reporter

The hot places for spring break travel this year are just that: hot.

Daytona Beach, Fla., and South Padre Island, Texas, still remain the two most popular destinations for university students.

But tropical destinations such as Cancun, Matzatlan and Jamaica are growing in popularity.

"Students are beginning to have a little more discretionary funds to go to some of these places," said Shasta Bunnell, a travel agent for Executive Travel, 1212 O St.

"Most of the students can get as good of a rate going into Cancun or Jamaica as they can into South Padre," she said.

Bunnell said prices for Jamaica or Cancun spring break trips range from \$500 to \$600 this year.

The package trips are designed

to keep students safe, she said.

"The company we use has a staff that helps students with sightseeing and problems," Bunnell said. But, she added, "If students are going out and looking for trouble, they are going to find it."

Craig Peters, a travel consultant for Via Van Bloom Tour & Travel, 2143 O St., said the allure of South Padre and Florida remains strong for most spring breakers.

"I think kids just want to get to sun," Peters said.

South Padre and Daytona Beach also remain popular because the two places continue to advertise for students' business, Peters said.

Peters said if students haven't bought their airline tickets to either South Padre Island or Daytona Beach, and they still want to spend spring break there, they should consider driving.

Remaining airline tickets are expensive, he said, and they cost

much more than the gasoline required to drive.

Both Peters and Bunnell said places like Pensacola, Fla., and Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla., are less popular because they cost too much for students, and it is difficult for students to book reservations at those destinations during spring break.

Both also said some students plan Las Vegas spring break trips, but they aren't as popular.

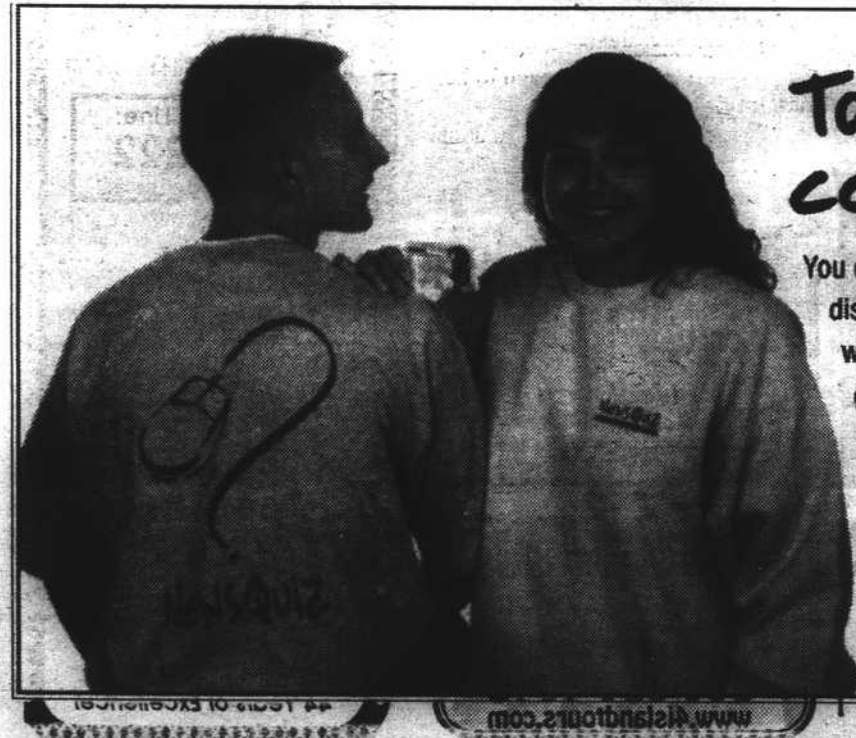
Students interested in Las Vegas are usually 25 years old or older, and not in the typical 18- to 21-year-old student crowd.

Both travel agents said they have booked ski packages for several students.

But the beaches still beat the slopes for most.

"We do have some interest in skiing packages at Winter Park," Peters said. "For the most part, students want to go where it's warm."

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