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Steer Clear of These Top 5 Holiday Road Trip Mistakes

Rand McNally's new winter atlas features travel trips, road trip ideas, and more

SKOKIE, Ill., Nov. 18, 2015 – Road trips to visit family and friends are as much a part of the holiday season as trimming the turkey and decking the halls. With Thanksgiving kicking off the holiday travel season next week, Rand McNally's editors have pulled together five major travel mistakes with tips on how to avoid them so you and yours enjoy a safe and joyous holiday road trip.

These tips and more are included in Rand McNally's winter edition of its *Best of the Road® U.S. Travel Planner & Atlas*, which includes a 2016 Midsize EasyFinder® U.S. Road Atlas and content to help plan the perfect winter escape.

1. Putting Safety Last (Minute)

Always put safety first. Schedule a tune-up to give the car a thorough check, and get an oil change, tire replacement, or rotation if needed. Make sure the lights and windshield-wiper blades are working properly. Also, be sure the spare tire, jack, and jumper cables are in the trunk for emergencies. Other must-haves for the car include a first-aid kit, shovel, broom, scraper, deicer, bag of kitty litter or sand, blankets, and flashlights.

2. Not Delegating

Preparing for a road trip should be a team effort. Couples can split up duties. For example, one person could handle the holiday tasks, and the other could make sure the car is ready to go. Families can assign older kids and teens to wrap gifts, and help younger siblings pack and load the car.

3. Chaotic Packing

Time is so short around the holidays that it's tempting to wait until the last minute to scramble and pack your bags. Create a list of all the items you need to pack. It's always smart to include separates you can mix and match. When packing the car, take care to separate items you'll need on the road from what you'll need only after you arrive, and load the car first with the least essential items.

4. Being Overly Whimsical (or Worried) about the Weather

Planning is all about balance. Before and during the trip, check the weather for any sign of treacherous weather. Adjust your plans as needed.

5. Making Haste

Hit the road as far ahead of the holiday and return as late after it as possible. This will not only prevent traveling in heavy traffic, but it will also allow more flexibility in case the weather turns bad. Getting an early jump means you can take your time, and perhaps take in small town charms along the way.

The winter atlas is available now at store.randmcnally.com, as well as at bookstores and other online and storefront retailers.

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