

Top 10: Ways to Infuse Vacation into Everyday Life



Anyone else feeling the lingering cold Winter days? That stretch between New Years and Memorial Day holidays is a long one. It's easy to dream of vacations past and future and summer days somewhere up ahead. Why do we yearn for that magical, three-syllable word so much? Whether to break away from routine, or feel, taste, touch, smell, hear things out of the ordinary, just the sound of the word "vacation" makes us feel all the good feels.



But, why dream when we can infuse vacation into every day life to escape for just a bit, rejuvenate and transform ourselves to a place of warm, happy feelings without buying a plane ticket? Here are my Top 10 ways to infuse vacation into everyday life:

Find a spot that reminds you of your favorite vacation spot. Whether a bright, beach-y restaurant (like [Mahalo](#) in Chicago where I snapped the photo below), rum bar (like [Sparrow](#) in Chicago), a vibrant Mexican restaurant, or even a contemporary art museum, find your happy place in close proximity.



Here's my recent [Instagram](#) story on a recent visit to Hawaiian inspired restaurant, Mahalo - pretty much sums up my current sentiments about yearning for vacation.

I've even been known to sneak in a new restaurant for tea and breakfast before a work meeting when in a new city, or check out a local lunch spot like my stop shown below at [Blue Plate Taco](#) in Santa Monica on my way to the airport from a business trip to add a little taste of vacation to a professional visit.



2. Get cooking with tropical flavors in your kitchen. Turns out, I'm not the only one reaching for vacation vibes and if Deb from Smitten Kitchen says so, then I know it to be true. Her recent [Key Lime Pie recipe](#) screams sunshine, so find your favorite vacation-y recipe and bring it life at home. Here's a recent picture of the The Works Greek Salad we whipped up for islandy flavors. Recipe coming soon.



3. Be Present. Take a look around to appreciate the sunrise or sunset, the snow falling, or the cloud formations. The sunset below was taken in Nelson, New Zealand and was the longest sunset I can remember witnessing - maybe due to the wide open sky without anything obstructing the view of the sun as it disappeared along the horizon. Make eye contact with a friend, colleague, spouse, or family member when having a conversation and notice their reactions and ideas. Chew slowly, and pay attention to tastes and flavors, or the beat in your favorite song.



4. **Smile.** Find something that makes you smile or laugh - a funny video, a flashback memory from when you were younger, a joke, or a picture from a happy time. Send the memory to a friend to make them smile too - you'll feel instantly more connected and happy.

5. **Hydrate and Sleep.** On vacations, we tend to be more rested and we may be more connected to nature, water, and take the time to nourish our bodies. Turn the screen off or put it away and go to sleep early one night to give your body that rested vacation feel. According to [Berkeley's Greater Good Magazine](#) and Alex Soojung-Kim Pang in his book, *Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less*, "When we treat rest as work's equal partner, recognize it as a playground for the creative mind and a springboard for new ideas, and learn ways to take rest more effectively, we elevate it into something valuable that can help calm our days, organize our lives, give us more time, and help us achieve more while working less."

6. **Create a memory.** While this photo may not seem significant on first glance, it represents creating a memory and a snapshot (okay, with a black-and-white photo filter) of a time when we found the first and very much needed gas station after miles of windy rural road driving in New Zealand. While the station was rudimentary at best, I snapped a photo of my husband that I could see us looking back on as we age. It looks old fashioned in a very modern time. Just having fun with this photo created a fond memory of a moment in time on our life journey.

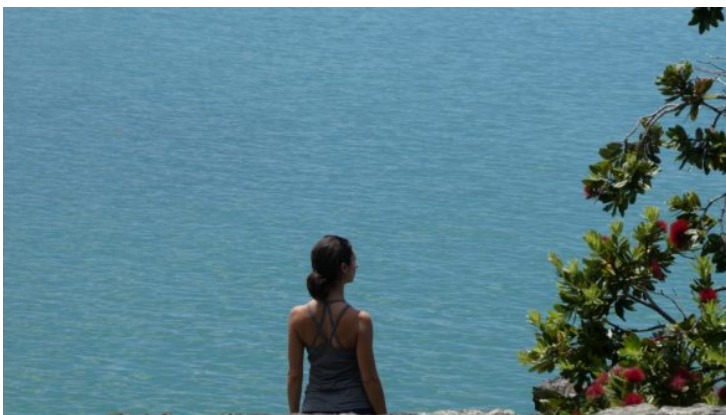


7. **Move.** Stretch, exercise, dance, move your body. On vacations, we tend to walk, explore, move through airports and newly discovered towns. Our bodies are constantly moving - get that circulation flowing for quick rejuvenation.

8. **Try Something New.** While renting a mountain bike and unexpectedly ending up on a treacherous and heavily inclined forest path (below) isn't always in the cards during winter, there's an exhilaration and excitement that comes with trying something new. Make a new recipe, try a new hobby, take a class like those taught by experts offered on [MasterClass](#), or even walk into a building you've walked by a million times but always wanted to stop into.



9. **Disconnect with electronics, connect with nature.** While turquoise open ocean is tough to come by, especially when you live in the Midwest, find a spa with a hot tub, take a bath at home, check out an indoor nature conservatory (breath of fresh oxygen? Yes, please!), buy a plant to have some living greenery or flowers at home, or light a candle.



10. **Break the rules (within reason).** So, maybe I wouldn't recommend having Affogato (melted vanilla ice cream with espresso and whiskey) once a week for 3 weeks (oh, yes I did - the photo below was #2 on our trip) unless you're hiking or exercising as much as we did in New Zealand. But, go ahead - eat dessert first, treat yourself (shopping, a massage, an extra glass of wine) and do

something that feels a little wrong but makes you happy!



How do you infuse vacation into everyday life? Ready, set, now put away that screen! P.S. If you want to take a real vacation, check out my [Top 10 Things to Do in Auckland!](#) (Take me back!)