

Better Homes and Gardens Survey Reveals Americans Plan Fewer Vacations, More Time in Backyard

"Staycations" New Summer Trend

DES MOINES, IA (May 20, 2008)— According to a new survey, staycations are a new trend this summer. The **Better Homes and Gardens Summertime Study** finds that more than half of respondents (52%) are going to be spending more of their vacation time at home than in previous summers. When specifically asked about taking a staycation, 80% (or 8 out of 10) said they like the concept of spending more of their vacation time in their homes and local area this summer.

Almost half of survey respondents (49%) will be spending less on travel and vacations; 28% will be spending about the same; and only 23% (or 1 in 4) will be spending more on vacations compared to previous years.

What's driving this staycation trend? According to the survey the top factors for not vacationing as much include the high price of gas (99%), rising cost of food and lodging (96%) and consumers' other spending priorities, such as home repairs or household bills (94%).

"*Better Home and Gardens* reaches more than 39 million Americans each month and through our regular conversations with consumers, we see a clear trend in Americans spending more time at home this summer," said Gayle Butler, editor in chief, *Better Homes and Gardens*. "Families are feeling the pinch at the gas pumps and the grocery stores and are reshaping their summer plans accordingly."

Instead of vacationing, the survey found that people will be spending time:

- Relaxing/spending more time at home (85%)
- Gardening (64%)
- Exploring events and attractions in local area (62%)
- Home improvement projects (50%)

Outdoor activities are a key part of summer plans with 62% of respondents expecting to spend more time this summer relaxing in their yard, patio or porch than in previous summers. Also, 58% of people will have more BBQs and get-togethers with family and friends this year. The majority of people (63%) will be in their yard at least once a day this summer compared to 7% of people who plan to be in their yard a few times a month or less.

"Instead of traveling, Americans are clearly focusing on how they can create an entertainment destination for family and friends in their home and outdoor space," said Butler.

For most people, the field of their dreams doesn't include a baseball diamond, but rather if money weren't an object respondents said they would like a backyard with a custom-designed natural stone patio (58%); state-of-the-art grill (54%); hardwood deck (49%); outdoor fireplace (47%); designer outdoor furniture (44%); and fully-equipped outdoor kitchen (40%).

Among the top additions people desire most in their yards this summer include adding water fountains or ponds, gazebos, fire pits, shade canopies and vertical gardens or trellises. The survey also found that most people are most looking to update their current patio furniture, grill, outdoor lighting and container gardens. (Images available upon request.)

The *Better Homes and Gardens* Summertime Study was conducted on the *Better Homes and Gardens* Reader Panel from May 2-9, 2008. The maximum margin of error for the total sample of 837 is plus or minus 3.4 percentage points.

About *Better Homes and Gardens*

Better Homes and Gardens is America's largest enthusiast magazine, fueling and satisfying readers' desire for improving their home and their lives. With a circulation of 7.6 million and a readership of more than 39 million, *Better Homes and Gardens* is a vibrant down-to-earth guide for the woman who is passionate about her home and garden and all they encompass.

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