A house with trees in the background

Description automatically generated

**TA**

**Star**

lake

days

If you’re looking for relaxation and family fun at the lake, considering these factors as you plan will help you find the best deals and the right lake for your family.

*Where* to go

**FOCUS ON THE OFF-SEASON**

Knowing a bit about who vacations in a particular area at what time of year helps you get off-season pricing. For example, eastern and southern Florida are popular in winter, which means summer travelers will find deals. But that’s not true for the Panhandle, where summer brings higher prices. To cast the widest net for destination ideas, go to state and regional tourism websites.

**WIDEN YOUR SEARCH**

If you travel a short distance from a popular designation, you can often find lower rates at a lesser-known lake.

*When* to go

**CHECK THE SCHOOL CALENDAR**

When classes are out, rates rise (especially on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day). When classes are in, rates are lower. In much of the South and Midwest, school lets out in May and goes back into session by mid-August. In the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states, school doesn’t end until mid-June and starts after Labor Day, so timing is critical if you are headed in that direction.

*Where* to stay

**WEIGH PRICE VS. AMENITIES**

One big difference between a hotel/resort and a lake house is the service. If you don’t think you’ll make good use of comforts like a poolside cabana or on-site activities, renting a condo or house might be a better deal. Consider price, amenities, and service when making a decision on a destination.

Don’t rely on star ratings. Read lots of reviews to match up the factors important to you with info from reviewers. Remember that older comments (even from a year ago) may not reflect current conditions so call the property to verify details.