

Get Away with the Essential Pleasures

Create lists, allow one bag per family member and stick to the essentials. Once you've unpacked, declutter, lighten up, add a dash of colour and enjoy the finer things in life.

BY KARA KURYLLOWICZ

Listening to the wind in the trees while sipping a fine wine. Leaping off the dock with shrieks of joy. Snacking on luscious local berries and fruits. Devoting an entire evening to watching the moon rise.

As your summer getaway beckons, focus on the seasonal experiences that matter most by packing only the truly essential and extraordinarily pleasurable.

You can hire professional organizers and interior designers, the ultimate affordable luxury, or you can borrow their tried-and-true strategies for an easy, enjoyable first foray to the getaway.

"Your getaway should be a simpler version of your primary residence," says Kristie Demkie, owner, Organomics Professional Organizing, Edmonton. "Take what you need for comfortable, convenient daily living, but don't try to duplicate your everyday life."

To guarantee a great weekend, set specific expectations around work versus playtime. "Realistically, certain chores are unavoidable, but if everyone knows that completing assigned tasks pays off with guilt-free fun, you'll get family buy-in," says Lorraine Mitchell, owner, Clutter Denied Professional Organizing, Winnipeg.

GETTING THERE

Put It In Writing

Whether paper- or computer-based, lists can be lifesavers. To create the *can't-live-without-it* list, write down everything you need to get through a routine 24-hour period. This should save you last-minute trips to town for your favourite dark chocolate, or heaven forbid, your toothbrush. Post a *shopping* list and pen in a sensible spot with subcategories such as staples, cleaning supplies, food. The *grocery* list is a no-brainer when you create your *meal* plan first. Family members should build their own *three-day* and *seven-day* checklists that make it hard to forget medication, the extra bikini or sailing gloves. Laminate the lists you're sure to reuse.

Get Packing

Covered plastic bins keep the creatures out and neatly store everything from sports gear to board games. Oversize cloth bags are affordable, durable, reusable and save space, says Karri McDonald, president, Creative Interiors & Artistic Organization, ⇨



The view from the dock on the bay is the quintessential summer pleasure.

Once you're happily unpacked and ensconced in your home away from it all, take a little time to freshen up for the glorious season ahead.

Vancouver. Consider duplicating items, such as bathing suits or certain sports equipment, rather than lug it all back and forth each weekend. Designate one weekend bag per family member. No exceptions!

Once you're happily unpacked and ensconced in your home away from it all, take a little time to freshen up for the glorious season ahead.

WE'RE HERE!

Declutter Your Space

Decluttering opens up the space and leads your eye to the spectacular view or favourite painting, says Carrie Lightfoot, principal designer, Carrie L Designs, Calgary. Store everything used only in the cooler months, then get rid of whatever you haven't used in several seasons. Decluttering applies to everything from furniture that serves no purpose to knickknacks and old magazines.



The rich hues and sweet scent of bright red raspberries on pristine white tease the senses.

Design Tips

Repositioning furniture to take advantage of an ocean breeze or a mountain view is as practical as it can be attractive. Lighten up by replacing winter-weight drapes with light, airy sheers that move with the breeze or changing the richly-hued, cozy bed linens to something more summery.

Colour Your Summer

Experiment with creative colour to refresh, reenergize and change the getaway vibe. Revel in vibrant jewel tones or relax with delicate pastels, focusing on colour choices that distinguish your summer space from your primary residence. Add colour through paint as well as towels (bath, beach, kitchen), dinnerware and glassware, accent cushions, throws and accessories for a luscious look.

The Good Stuff

Take it up a notch, whether it's with an exquisite champagne flute that makes your favourite bubbly taste that much better or a bundle of random wildflowers piled into an elegant vase.

Summer – strategic planning, a little bit of effort and a dash of design sense will help you make the most of it. **UL**



Bare feet are essential to seasonal leisure.



Time to get outside and down to the water for a quick dip once you've unpacked, decluttered and freshened up.