



Why & How Tips For Touring Camps This Summer: “Kick The Tires” Before You Invest

June 26, 2014 (Portland, ME) – Camp is just starting, but this time of year is also the traditional kick-off to plan for next summer. Parents only have seven short weeks this season to preview camps firsthand for their kids for next summer. Just as parents would visit colleges, visiting camps is important because camp is a very significant financial, emotional, and life shaping investment. NOW is the time to book visits. Here are top summer camp tour tips from [Maine Camp Experience](http://www.mainecampexperience.com), the community of 30+ premier sleepaway camps and comprehensive camp planning resource.

1. **Book and Tour Early:** Booking early allows families to choose the tour date and time that works best for them, helps secure a spot in a popular age group or session, leaves them time to see additional camps if needed, and gives families peace of mind they chose the right camp. Some camps offer early enrollment incentives. In a new special offer, Maine Camp Experience is partnering with JetBlue TrueBlue to reward families with travel points for enrolling or referring others to enroll at any of 33 member camps in Maine by September 1. www.mainecampexperience.com/jetblue
2. **Decide Which Camps to Tour (Aim for 2-4):** Good initial research makes narrowing down camp tour choices easier. Families should base decisions on criteria such as: session length (1-8 weeks); gender (coed, all boys or all girls, brother/sister); type of programming and activities; location; desired rusticity; and cost. Families should consider using resources such as: the [Maine Camp Guide](#) who provides personal assistance and recommendations, [Select-A-Camp](#), and [self-posted testimonials](#) from experienced camp families.
3. **Maximize The Tour:** Parents and kids will see important facilities, where campers live, waterfront, arts, land sports, activities they enjoy, and hear about favorite camp traditions. Kids gain comfort and familiarity for the following summer. Tips to keep in mind:
 - a. Limit the number of tours per day (1-2 is ideal); include downtime between tours to process each camp visit, regroup and prepare for the next
 - b. Consider the time of the day and your child’s energy level and attention
 - c. Dress comfortably and be sure your child (and siblings) are well-fed and hydrated
 - d. Prepare your questions ahead of time to ask your tour guide; and spend time with the camp director
 - e. Be sure to see areas of interest to you and your child
 - f. Observe and talk to campers – your child’s age and older (which is what your child will be in a few years); as well as staff

- g. Ideally try to take an individual family tour, which Maine camps provide. This lets you focus on your own thoughts, experiences and questions without being distracted
 - h. Consider test driving a camp via a rookie day/weekend this summer if the camp provides, after you tour a camp.
- 4. Consider The Summer Camp's Location:** A camp's location is more than just its address. For example, at camp in Maine parents and siblings, too, get to experience the natural beauty, culture, sights, and cuisine (i.e., Portland is a "foodie capital") during initial tours, and on Visiting Day weekends, and pre/post camp sessions. Families should ensure they'll enjoy returning each summer (e.g., Maine is "Vacationland").

Now's the time to book your child's summer 2014 tours and soon you, too, will be living #ten4two. Summers and Camp Belong in Maine ... And So Do You!SM

Each summer, 20,000 kids from across the US and around the world attend Maine camps for strong traditions and values, and top-notch instruction and activities. Maine Camp Experience is a community of 33 premier, traditional sleepaway summer camps in Maine dedicated to providing children with the highest quality summer camp experiences in the country for generations. The camps, for kids ages 7-17, offer a range of sessions (from 1-8 weeks) and are either all girls, all boys, coed or brother/sister. Mainecampexperience.com is the resource for selecting camp and planning visits to Maine.