



*Don't  
forget  
the  
toilet  
roll!*

“Don't forget to take the toilet roll” – these words echo in my mind after having lived and worked on a campsite in south west France. As a young school leaver, working overseas for a camping specialist, sounded quite enticing. The reality of living under canvas for six months and traipsing to the wash block to visit the toilet got rather tedious, I have to admit.

Nevertheless, a week or two in the great outdoors, connecting with nature is wonderful therapy and good for the soul. It is the perfect solution for a family holiday. Children are completely oblivious if the bed is too hard or

lumpy, the crockery too basic or that there is not enough space to swing a cat and if the children are happy – it is easier to be more relaxed. Are you with me on this one?

You have to remember the camping experience is all about the environs. Do plenty of research before you commit to the campsite you are to stay on. There are campsites with fantastic pools, great restaurants, and handy shops on site with plenty of activities on offer from windsurfing, tennis and waterslides. If you do not want the full monty, you should consider smaller sites which are often quieter offering real rest and relaxation.

Camping has come along way since those carefree days I spent unattached and without children in my twenties. For those of you who have never tried sleeping under canvas with the family before, I can thoroughly recommend using a tour operator which has the tents already erected before you arrive. The tents are very well equipped with electricity and full fridge freezers, they have full cooker hobs with grills and all your beds are set up already. Pillows and blankets also there, so you don't have to pack your entire house in the boot of the car – just bed linen and towels. Keycamp holidays ([www.keycamp.co.uk](http://www.keycamp.co.uk)) offer various types of accommodation on campsites throughout Europe from super tents, mobile homes and chalets.

Would you consider sleeping in a tree house? New for 2009, the tree houses



can accommodate up to six people. Very cleverly constructed around the trunk of the tree, the tree house is about 4 to 5 metres off of the ground. If you decide to sleep on terra firma there is a tent also with the kitchen equipment included. This kind of nocturnal experience is not for young children especially under 2 years. I think the big kids in the families (dads I mean) would probably be quite excited about this type of camping for a night or so tagged on to the start or end of the holiday or for the full duration – takes all sorts!

If you choose to brave the UK weather this summer, there are some wonderful campsites which have award winning reputations. Look out for the symbols graded by Visit Britain, Visit Wales or Scottish Tourist Boards.

If you want the camping experience but do not want all the organisation that goes with it, there is a company which offers the tents already erected and wait for it, the company will shop, cook and wash up for you too! They offer plenty of activities depending on their resort – from white water rafting

to climbing and abseiling. Their Bank Holiday weekends in the Breacon Beacons are £199 per adult and £159 per child and include heaps of activities as well as the accommodation and food included. See [www.acornfamilyholidays.co.uk](http://www.acornfamilyholidays.co.uk)

Wherever you end up this summer, remember to have some tolerance for the little creepy crawlies. Camping is about getting closer to nature and not being frightened of it!

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