

Why Should The Kids Have All The Fun This Summer?

By Meredyth Censullo



Splashing in a watering hole. Horse-back riding. Arts-and-crafts. Ghost stories. Freedom from Mom and Dad!

If you're like a lot of adults, you have fond memories of a sleep-away camp you attended as a kid. Or, if you missed out on the summer-camp experience in your youth, perhaps you'd like a childhood do-over.

There's good news! Summer camps aren't just for kids anymore. According to the Boca Raton-based online camp clearinghouse GrownUpCamps.com, there are thousands of summer programs that target the over-18 set. Ranging from inexpensive to pricy, these 'camps' offer grown-ups an opportunity to indulge in favorite pastimes or discover new interests.

"Baby boomers, and even younger adults, are so busy these days juggling careers and families that they don't have the downtime adults used to have," said GrownUpCamps.com Founder and President, Nancy LaPook Diamond.

"For many adults, camp vacations offer personal growth and enrichment," said Diamond, a seasoned 'camper.' "Many campers want to return home stronger and smarter, with new skills. Others are looking to sharpen old skills, or gain new ones."

According to the Travel Industry Association, about 30.2

Skip Barber Racing School Operates out of two base locations in Florida in the fall, winter and spring — Sebring International Raceway and Daytona International Speedway. In addition to the Skip Barber Racing School and the all-new Skip Barber MX-5 Cup Racing School, the company also runs the Skip Barber Driving School and the High Performance Driving School. More information is available by calling 800.221.1131, and at www.skipbarber.com.

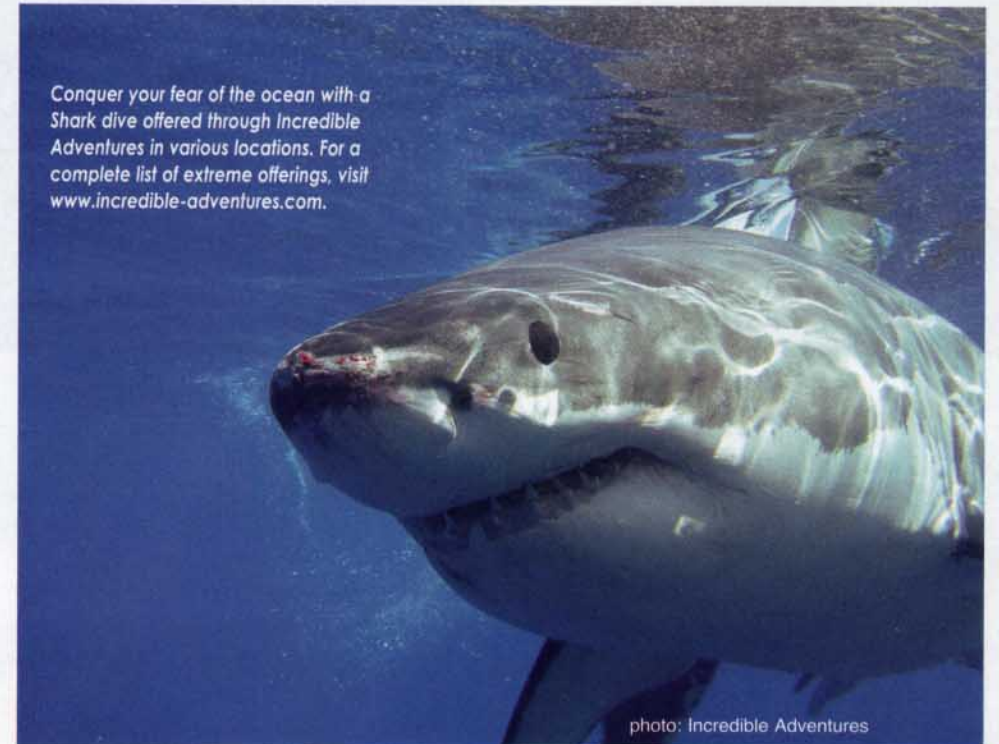
million U.S. adults have taken an educational trip to learn or improve a skill, sport or hobby in the past three years. And just about every past-time has a camp. A search of GrownUpCamps.com turns up summer programs for photography, sewing, whale-watching, dance, vegetarian cooking, weight-loss and more.

For example, Paradise Golf Academy, with locations in Ft. Myers and Orlando, offers weekend, three- and five-day getaways that provide campers with access

Pricing for the golf getaways, which includes free time to hit the links, ranges from \$700 per person for a two-day weekend camp, to \$1,700 for the premier five-day school, not including lodging.

While rejuvenation and recreation are popular adult-camp destinations, adventure camps offer the most unique experiences. According to Adventure Travel Report, 98 million U.S. adults have taken an adventure trip in the past five years.

Some of those campers went



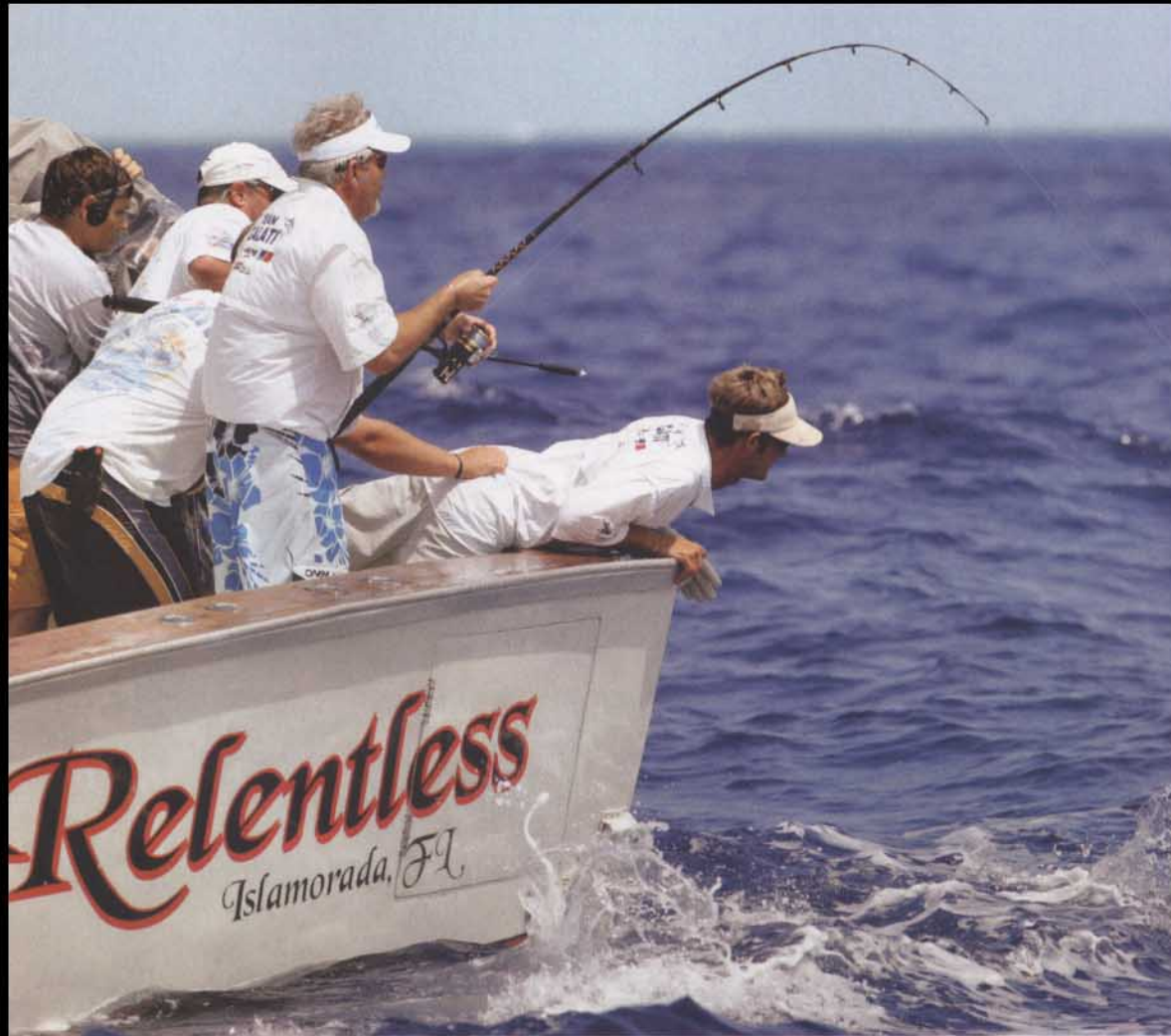
Conquer your fear of the ocean with a Shark dive offered through Incredible Adventures in various locations. For a complete list of extreme offerings, visit www.incredible-adventures.com.

photo: Incredible Adventures

to state-of-the-art digital video analysis, swing enhancing drills, and rounds of golf with PGA professionals.

"Our instructors take the golf lessons out on the course, and provide students with immediate feedback," said Ray Thorp, Paradise Golf Academy's owner. "If a student's shot goes haywire, we give them the tools to know why it happened, and how to correct the problem."

to Space Camp, at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Ala., which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The Space Academy® for Adults puts people ages 19-99 to the test in out-of-this-world astronaut-training activities and simulated space-shuttle missions. A ride in the SpaceShot™ gives campers the experience of four Gs of force, the 1/6th Gravity Trainer simulates walking on the moon, and the Multi-Axis Trainer simulates




a tumble through space. The Space Academy is available in three-, six- and eight-day packages, with prices starting at \$399. And for parents that would feel guilty about experiencing Space Camp without the kids, there are parent-child camps, too.

For those with a tad more money to spend, there are the extreme camp experiences offered through Incredible-Adventures.com, such as the Key West Shark Weekend. It's three days spent aboard the Research Vessel Tiburon, within the Tortugas Ecological Reserve and Marine Sanctuary, in different diving encounters with a variety of sharks and loggerhead turtles. The fee for the undersea adventure camp starts at \$2,600 per person. (Private charters start at \$25,000.)

If your preference is to leave

Florida - and the country for that matter - IncredibleAdventures.com offers "MiGs Over Moscow." Campers spend five days in Moscow, and have the opportunity to pilot - with the help of a professional - a jet fighter, including the MiG-29 or MiG-31 Foxhound. Security clearance and a pre-flight medical are required. Prices range from \$15,000 for a single flight to \$87,000 for the "Top Secret Double Agent Flight program." And while the flight on a MiG is covered in the camp's fee, the flights to and from Russia aren't.

Summer camps for big kids exist in every possible niche. So, if you're getting a little jealous planning your kids' summer, consider getting away yourself. Chances are, you won't have to worry about getting homesick. 



Top Left: The fish tales will become bigger after a 3 or 5-day camp at the Professional Fishing Academy at IMG Academies. Join Capt. Blair Wiggins, the star of Fox Sports Addictive Fishing for a big sea adventure. To book, call 941-739-7476.

Top Right: It's all about fun and adventure as Incredible Adventures offers extreme adventure camps including flying a MiG over Russia or Zero Gravity camps.

Lower Right: If space has always been a dream, become an astronaut for a week at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.



photo: Max Deréla

photo: Andreo Forster