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On the cover

Oscar and Sandra Canizares and their sons, David and Lucas, of Whiteland.

Photo by Mark Freeland

What to expect in travel for 2022

STORY BY FAMILY FEATURES

After a couple abnormal years, many families are eager and ready to travel together again, and there are indications some pandemic-influenced travel behaviors will persist in 2022.

For example, remote work and virtual school allowed families to travel and combine work and vacation time into "flexcation" getaways, a trend that will continue, according to the 2022 Vrbo Trend Report.

In addition to the 44% of families that said they're more likely to work remotely from a place that's not their home, extended stays are also on the rise. The vacation home site and app has seen a 68% increase in demand for 3-4-week stays over the past year.

Consider these 2022 trends spotted by the travel experts at Vrbo:

Up-and-coming destinations

Spots in Ohio, New York and Alaska saw double vacation rental demand over the past year. Within driving distance of major Midwest metros like Chicago, Indianapolis and Louisville, Cincinnati was the year's top emerging destination.

Other up-and-comers include Niagara Falls, a popular choice for those who wanted to experience life at the border. Yorktown, Virginia, the location of the last Revolutionary War battle, allows history buffs to witness a battle reenactment. Adventurous travelers trekked to Matanuska-Susitna, Alaska, to enjoy the wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve, breathtaking glaciers and surrounding mountains.

Chalet all day

You may have heard of Cabincore and Cottagecore, but chalets are a trending aesthetic that inspires family travel. Chalets saw a nearly 85% increase in demand year over year. Located on

lakefronts or nestled in the woods, these charming and idyllic properties are desirable lodging options for many families.

Kids call the shots

After being cooped up at home, it may be no surprise parents are letting their kids have a bigger say in vacation planning. Compared to pre-pandemic times, half of the families surveyed said they're more likely to let their kids decide where they vacation and 43% of parents are more likely to let their kids skip school for vacation.

Traveling with the pack

Many families adopted pandemic pets because they had more time at home to spend with their furry friends. Now more people are bringing Fido and Fluffy along on vacation; 68% of pet parents have traveled, plan to travel or would like to travel with their pets. What's more, there has been a 40% increase in demand year-over-year for pet-friendly vacation homes.

Early bird bookers

If 2021 was any indication, families will continue booking their vacations further in advance. Booking activity occurred an average of 2-3 months earlier than usual for several major travel seasons. Families booked summer travel in February, holiday trips in July and snowbirds got a head start on booking warm weather stays for 2022. In fact, 60% of survey respondents said they plan to book their vacations earlier than they did in pre-pandemic times with nearly half making plans 3-5 months in advance.

Find more ideas for planning your next vacation at Vrbo.com.

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Oscar and Sandra Canizares and their sons, David and Lucas, of Whiteland. The parents immigrated to the U.S. from Cuba to pursue careers in music.

Musically inclined couple embraces local opportunities

STORY BY GREG SEITER I PHOTOS BY MARK FREELAND

Oscar and Sandra Canizares wanted a better life for their family, and they believed they would never find what they were looking for in their native country of Cuba. So, despite living what many Cubans might consider a privileged lifestyle because they had a few "luxury" items, such as a car, the Canizares family took a leap of faith. In 2018, based primarily on music-related pursuits, they left friends, family and much of what they owned behind and came to the United States in search of freedom and opportunities they had never known.

"We were looking for ways to get out of Cuba and music provided that opportunity," Sandra said.

"We wanted to leave there for our kids."

Despite its visual appeal with more than 3,500 miles of coastline bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and the Caribbean to the south, Cuba, with its easily recognizable Spanish-colonial architecture, continues to maintain a socialist political system based on the "one state — one party" principle. That governmental style is what the Canizares family yearned to escape.

So, Oscar, Sandra, and their sons David and Lucas, who were 5 and 2 respectively at the time, moved to Bloomington, and Oscar began pursuit of a master's degree in Early Music Performance at Indiana University.

"Leaving everything — my grandparents and the church my grandfather had been pastor of — was very difficult," Sandra said. "But I wanted my kids to have everything I never had."

Oscar was exposed to music early in his life, specifically through school, where he often sang.

"The economic situation in Cuba was very bad and music was seen as a way to be able to tour and have a lucrative career," he said. "So, when I was 10, some people came to my school to audition kids for brass instruments — the trumpet and the trombone."

Oscar's musical abilities, specifically with the trombone, were quickly recognized.

"In Cuba, arts are handled like vocational school in the U.S. You go to a special school to be trained and that becomes your career path," he said. "If at some point you then decide not to pursue that path or you fail a test along the way, you're done. Then, you don't know what to do because that's what you've been trained for."

Oscar earned a bachelor's degree in modern trombone in 2005, focusing specifically on the sackbut, a type of trombone commonly used during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. He also earned a master's degree while still living in Cuba and began his music career there.

"I toured Europe and fell in love with what I was doing. It was a beautiful time of my life," he said.

But after 10 years in the field, Oscar knew he wanted to enhance his education, pursue other dreams, and ultimately relocate his family.

While growing up, Sandra frequently sang and played piano at the church her grandfather pastored. In fact, at the age of 15, she assumed the role of unofficial, volunteer music director there. Understandably, over time, music became an important part of her life. So as an adult, Sandra chose to continue sharing music with others by giving voice and piano lessons from her home.

She continued to do so even as she and Oscar considered their options for leaving Cuba.

"In my field of music, the best schools are in Europe and they're much cheaper than in the U.S.," he said. "But in Germany, for example, you may have to wait 10 years for residency and 15 years for citizenship, so the U.S. quickly became a



Oscar Canizares plays one of this trombones. This one is a reproduction of a 100-year old instrument valued for its mellow tones.

priority for us."

Oscar initially applied to a school in Massachusetts.

"It was very expensive. The cost of living alone would have been impossible for us," he said.

Eventually, he learned a two-year program in the field of study he desired was available at IU, so Oscar and Sandra set their sights on Bloomington.

"It (IU) was almost \$30,000 less than

what I would have paid in Massachusetts," he added.

However, despite being excited about their future in America, Sandra believed personal sacrifices would also have to be made.

"I accepted the fact that I may not be able to sing or play piano again," she said. "I wasn't really sure what to expect but I wanted us to be able to have and enjoy basic things that we hadn't had in Cuba."

Oscar felt the same way.

"Americans really don't understand immigrant goals," he added. "We come from a life where we didn't have many things Americans take for granted."

Once settled in their new home and when she was legally able to do so after meeting green card requirements, Sandra took on an administrative role at the church her family was attending in Bloomington, First Presbyterian Church.

But as Oscar attended classes at IU, curiosity got the best of Sandra and she learned, through research, that many churches were in need of a music director; a position she felt very qualified for.

Today, while continuing to work for Bloomington's First Presbyterian Church, Sandra also serves as music director



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Emotional safe spaces help children express feelings

STORY BY FAMILY FEATURES

Many internet memes have been made about toddlers and their temper tantrums. While the outpouring of oversized emotions can be amusing when viewed from afar, most parents and caregivers simply want to know what they can do to help children express their feelings in less dramatic ways.

According to child development experts, one of the keys to helping children learn to regulate their emotions is to develop emotional literacy: the ability to identify feelings. This can help children learn to recognize those feelings and apply coping strategies to (hopefully) calm down before their feelings overwhelm them. One way to help children work on their emotional literacy is to talk about emotions other people feel.

"Sometimes it's difficult to process our own emotions because that puts you in a vulnerable position," said Taunya Banta from KinderCare's Inclusion Services team. "When we're able to find some detachment from the immediate emotion, like talking about characters in a story: 'How do you think they feel?' or 'Why do you think they feel that way?' It opens an opportunity for kids to safely process their own emotions because they're not in the spotlight."

Another way to help children work through their emotions before becoming overwhelmed is doing what many early childhood teachers do and create a space filled with things that allow children to find emotional release in a safe way. If space allows, Banta recommends creating both a quiet area and an active area.

Quiet areas allow children to work through their emotions using fine motor or listening skills. Items in this space could include blankets or pillows to cuddle up in or headphones to listen to relaxing music or audiobooks. Some children may find comfort in expressing their feelings through art, so consider including some drawing materials or a journal. For young children, a set of pictures or cards showing faces expressing different emotions can help them as they learn to identify their own feelings.

Active areas provide children opportunities to use their gross motor skills to work through emotions. If outdoor space is easily accessible, encourage your children to go outside and jump, stomp or run when they start to feel the urge to "let it all out."

An indoor active space could include pillows to scream into or hit and plastic bottles or bubble wrap to stomp on or squeeze. The action and noise can help get out the desire to hit or punch. Watch how your children show their emotions and give them safe alternatives. For example, if they tend to yell and hit when they're upset, give them pillows to scream into or hit. You can also help them designate a box or a specific spot on the wall or floor that they can throw beanbags, wadded up socks or any soft object at.

Acknowledge the emotions your children are experiencing and reassure them that while it's fine to feel that way, it's just as important they find a safe outlet for their emotions.



for First Baptist Church of Greenwood and because of that newfound opportunity, the Canizares family relocated to Whiteland almost one year ago.

Oscar earned his master's degree from IU in the summer of 2020 and currently serves as an instructional assistant at Pleasant Crossing Elementary School where David and Lucas attend.

"I'm not doing anything with my degree yet, but I would like to perform and maybe even create my own ensemble," he said. "I think I would really enjoy teaching, but I know doing that at the college level is very difficult. I guess that's a big picture thing. First, I need to get my teaching license so I can start teaching at the elementary level."

While embracing her role at First Baptist Church of Greenwood, Sandra has also launched her own home-based business offering piano and singing lessons in both English or Spanish. She actively promotes her company, S&C, through Facebook and Instagram (@musicandvoicelessons for both).

Her ultimate dream is to

eventually open an all-arts academy that has what she describes as "a Latin touch."

"It will serve as a cultural center for music, dance, cooking and art and will include teachers for different instruments and all those things. And of course, there will be some Latin American influence," Sandra said with a laugh.

"Music is amazing and a very important part of my life. It can transport you to places and even to people," she said. "Music is also my special connection with God. I'm always listening to it. Everything is better with music."

Oscar agrees.

"I see music like a language; a sort of code that allows me to decodify moments and things in life in a different way. It is definitely a blessing to have been born with the gift of having natural aptitude to study and comprehend it.

"I met my wife doing music. I traveled around the world and met incredible people doing music. And music was the way God chose to bring us here and change our lives. You just couldn't understand my life without music."



Left: Sandra Canizares plays piano. She recently started a business to offer bilingual voice and piano lessons. Above: Oscar Canizares plays the trombone.

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'The Big Mouse' presents sweet and maddening challenge

Dropping into the mist halfway between sleep and waking, I was jarred awake by the sound of scuttling and then the scraping of a chair being dragged across hardwood flooring — followed by dead, suspicious silence.

You probably know the dread that accompanies unearthing evidence of actual mice: a pile of corn kernels and polyester fluff in a quiet location (plastic bin of spare kids' shoes) or their other forms of evidence. Like the real live mice that escape our wily barn cats, my 3 year old also lives here: Cozy. Well-fed. Cute. Nocturnal and destructive.

I must have been delusional that day, when on a whim, I let child No. 6 nap in her big brother's bed. Mothers everywhere, hear me now: run the SWOT analysis on your one-time trial to "the next developmental thing," because it rarely ever results in ANYTHING GOOD. A wiser mother would have kept her in the friendly safety-standard-compliant child container for another day, or another month, or another three years.

Thus began the serious talks, loving reprimand, trial night lights, punishment and idle threats. All with zero effectiveness against toddler FOMO.

Did I mention that she is incredibly cute?

Early on, she would wait until mommy and daddy were in the shower. Once the sound of running water (through THREE DOORS)



Marcie Morrison is a mother of six, engineer and entrepreneur. She likes reading, the arts and making things, including sense of the world. She and her husband's business and homeschool are based out of Franklin, and she blogs at marciemorrison.com. Send comments to me@marciemorrison.com.

hit her big, mousy ears, she would leave her nest and head directly for provisions. Her wake of destruction has been truly impressive: teenage backpacks pillaged for Tootsie Rolls; entire tins of mints, breached; empty Tic Tac containers tossed like shotgun shells.

Once, on a date night after the Big Mouse had been put to bed, she snuck out past the big kids, using her freshest mind map to make a beeline for the adults-only cookie jar under our bed. After she was found, the biggest kid said, "We didn't even know about those cookies!"

You have heard of the tricks of real mice who eat the bait and run or gnaw their own legs off to escape a glue trap. As a dual engineer couple, we have dreamed about devices and apps to aid our plight. This was before she went through a phase of diving back into bed and acting

asleep. No joke, tonight she locked the door and turned the lights on, forcing us to break in and enter. Now she can escape silently, making her middle-of-night presence even more disconcerting. The Big Mouse may have a bright future as a field agent.

I soothe myself against her independence and wit by dreaming about her expert care of us when we are old and decrepit.

So as a last resort, we are trying bribery. If you can stay in your bed for three nights in a row, we can go to the book store and get a fresh book! Score! For three nights, the master strategist stayed in her bed without a peep, earning a trip to Wild Geese Bookstore and fooling us all.

And then in a sudden (but not entirely unexpected) turn, it all vanished like a vapor. "YOU'RE NOT EVEN TRYYYYYYYING!" I shouted. Apparently the allure of the trampoline park is outweighed by her urge to stand in the hallway, peering around the corner at adults paying bills and writing columns for local magazines on their laptops at the kitchen table.

As the melatonin kicks in, I'll put the screen down in favor of knitting or reading as I munch on the under-bed stash, reflecting on my own mouse-like tendencies. Both sweet and maddening, it's likely that later tonight, I'll take her by the pudgy little hand and lead her back to bed.

fun, fresh sneaker trends



New shoes can be a great way to update a wardrobe while staying motivated to remain on track with a wellness goal. From platform sneakers to slip-on styles with clean, classic graphics, a range of fresh footwear trends are all the rage. To stay ontrend, try these three tips and style ideas on for size.

1. Slide on slip-on styles: According to Alyson Stanley, buyer for national retailer Rack Room Shoes, fashion is a form of expression, and right now, comfort and convenience are doing all the talking. The latest slip-on shoes require no lacing up or adjusting Velcro straps, making getting dressed easy and fun for even the youngest family

Shoes to try: Vans' retro styles come in various vibrant colors and patterns, with sizes for school-aged girls and boys, and parents, too. Additionally, the Nike Flex Runner Slip-On Sneaker is available in fun color combinations and offers plenty of support for children to run, jump and play.

2. Reach new heights with chunky soles: When it comes to platform sneakers, there's no need for subtlety. Bigger is better. Top brands embrace this elevated shoe design in both hightop and low-top versions.

Shoes to try: This season, Converse offers platform styles that kick it up a notch in a plethora of colors, including white-on-white, pastel shades, animal prints and classic patterns.

3. Color block: Athletic shoes adorned with pops of bright colors, such as coral, teal, bubblegum pink and neon green, are a fresh choice to stay motivated to maintain fitness goals all year - and an ideal way to add a unique look to an outfit.

Shoes to try: Nike's Air Max Excee sneaker offers a variety of vibrant options for men, women and children.

"With a few simple updates, embracing this year's shoe trends can be simple, easy and fun for the whole family," says Stanley.

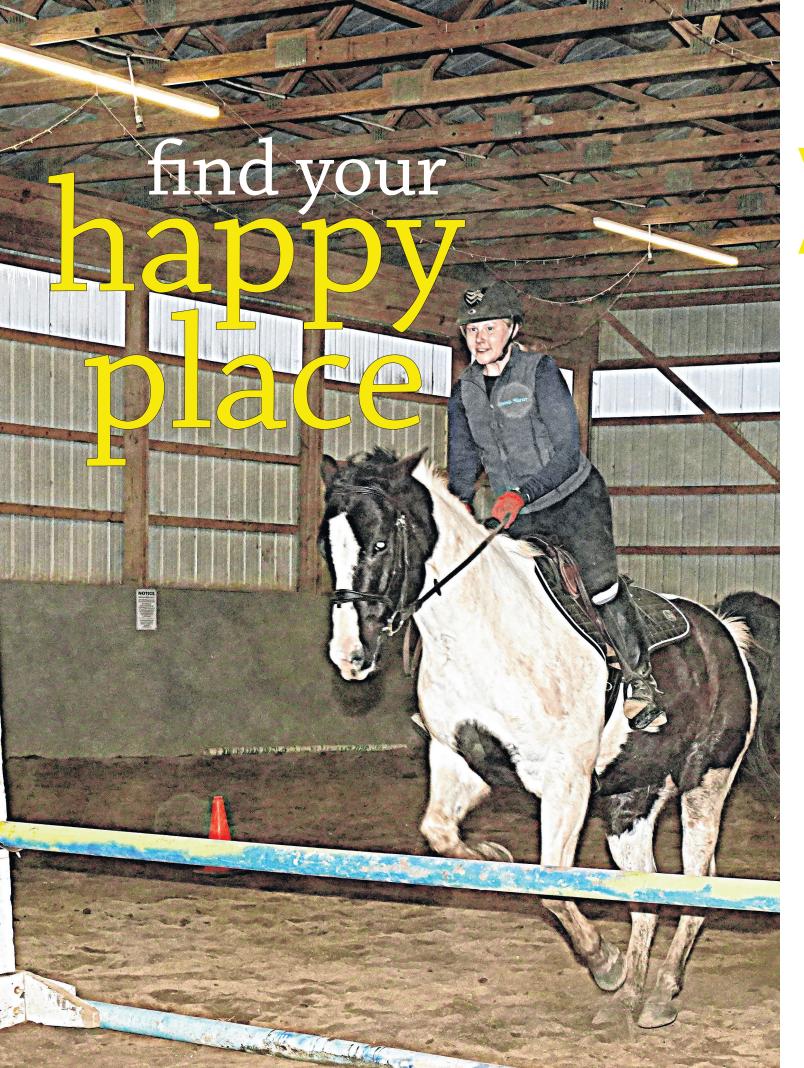




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Horseback riding a great way to get outside, exercise and find balance

STORY BY JENN WILLHITE I PHOTOS BY MARK FREELAND

As more families seek outdoor activities to do together, many are discovering the numerous benefits of horseback riding. Even city dwellers can climb up on a horse.

Diane Harter, owner of Havens Hope Ranch and Stables in Greenwood, says horse therapy, as it is sometimes called, is a great activity for anyone of any age and especially for families.

"Anyone who comes here, we are equal opportunity," Harter says. "We do all kinds of stuff and they will learn from the ground up."

Bonding with a horse is one of the most satisfying things a person can ever do, Harter says.

"If you have never been on a horse, you have never truly found a happy place," she says. "It is truly the most amazing feeling. Even if you don't get on, if you are around them it is the best feeling of peace in the world."

Horses each have their own distinct personalities and are very sensitive to the energy humans give off, Harter explains, so if you are feeling skittish, the horse will, too. If you are having a bad day, that horse will pick up on it and may likely

"We have some Arabians who are higher strung, so you really have to be careful about your emotions," Harter says. "That goes into the therapy side if that horse feels you angry, it is going to ruffle it, at least with more sensitive horses, like Arabians."

Harter adds it is very rare to get a dangerous horse as danger comes from a place of fear. Horses are not instinctively mean, she says, horses who demonstrate behavioral issues have been treated in such a way as to make them react - it isn't their nature to have a bad attitude.

Horses truly just want your love and look to you for guidance, Harter explains, you can't take your frustrations out on a horse because they don't understand.

Relating to a horse is a matter of empathy, Harter adds.

"It really teaches people to calm down, control their emotions," Harter says. "And don't get physical with the horse





Above: Instructors at Havens Hope, from left, Kayla Taylor, Sarah Kenderline, Taylor Reiff and Rachel Tyson, with owner Diane Harter on far right and Sammie Harter on

Left: Lucy Blair, 5, and Trent Godfrey, 7, groom a horse.

Opposite page: Sammie Harter jumps a horse in the indoor arena at Havens Hope Ranch & Stables

because, you know what? Some will get physical right back."

Much of the time, people are simply looking for a way to de-stress and get away from the chaos of the day-to-day, Harter says. Horses are a tremendous way to battle stress and mental and physical fatigue, too.

Visitors to the ranch learn just about everything there is to know about caring for and riding horses. Beginning with the first meal of hay or grain in the morning to grooming and health checks, aspiring horse enthusiasts get an up-close, handson experience, Harter says.

"You don't just come in and get on a horse," Harter cautions. "You have to be able to handle the horse and people don't think about that."

The one-hour horseback riding lessons at the ranch are broken into two parts: the first half hour is spent learning practical care of the animal and the second part is riding, Harter explains.

Additional tools taught during the hands-on care portion include how to do a visual inspection of the horse to check for injury, assess its gait and overall appearance, how to choose the right saddle and bit, as well as how to sit correctly









Top: Students and instructors line up at Havens Hope Ranch & Stables.

Middle: Carolyn Dawn rides in the indoor arena. Instructor Taylor Reiff with riders Grace Blake and Rachel Tyson.

Bottom: Owners, from left, Brent and Diane Harter and their daughter, Sammie Harter.

atop the horse and offer verbal and body cues to the animal.

Typically, groups at Haven's Hope are kept small with one instructor for every four riders. And for those who say horseback riding isn't technically a sport, well, Harter begs to differ.

"It is just as important as playing football or doing gymnastics," Harter says.
"I've heard people say horseback riding isn't a sport, come out here and get on this 1,200 pound animal and tell me it isn't a sport."

It is nearly impossible to work with a horse and not get attached, Harter stresses. However, it is equally important to be exposed to a variety of horses and their personalities.

With time, individuals learn how to read the horse and interpret how it communicates. For instance, if a horse is kicking the side of the stall, it may be expressing impatience, Harter says.

Physical benefits of learning to ride include a building of one's core strength when learning how to sit on the horse, coordination, balance and how to constantly adjust to the movements of the horse in order to guide it correctly.

The benefits don't stop with the physical alone.

Engaging with horses requires a certain kind of temperament, mental focus and openness. It also teaches one balance, Harter says.

"You have to be willing to work as a team, so someone who isn't a good team player, this probably isn't the activity for them," Harter says. "It's a living, breathing being. It isn't for everyone. You have to be able to trust and let go."

Harter's 20-year-old daughter, Sammie, is known around the ranch as a genuine horse whisperer. Having been around and caring for horses for the majority of her life, Sammie says she understands first-hand the benefits of building a relationship with the animal.

"It is very therapeutic, I have a lot of anxiety and the horses really, really help with that a lot," she says. "I can definitely see the kids who come out who have anxiety and are shy don't stay shy for long. They definitely get out of their shell."

"It is a really good family bonding activity," Harter adds. "You have to learn from the ground up. It is the most satisfying thing you will ever do – to bond with a horse."







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