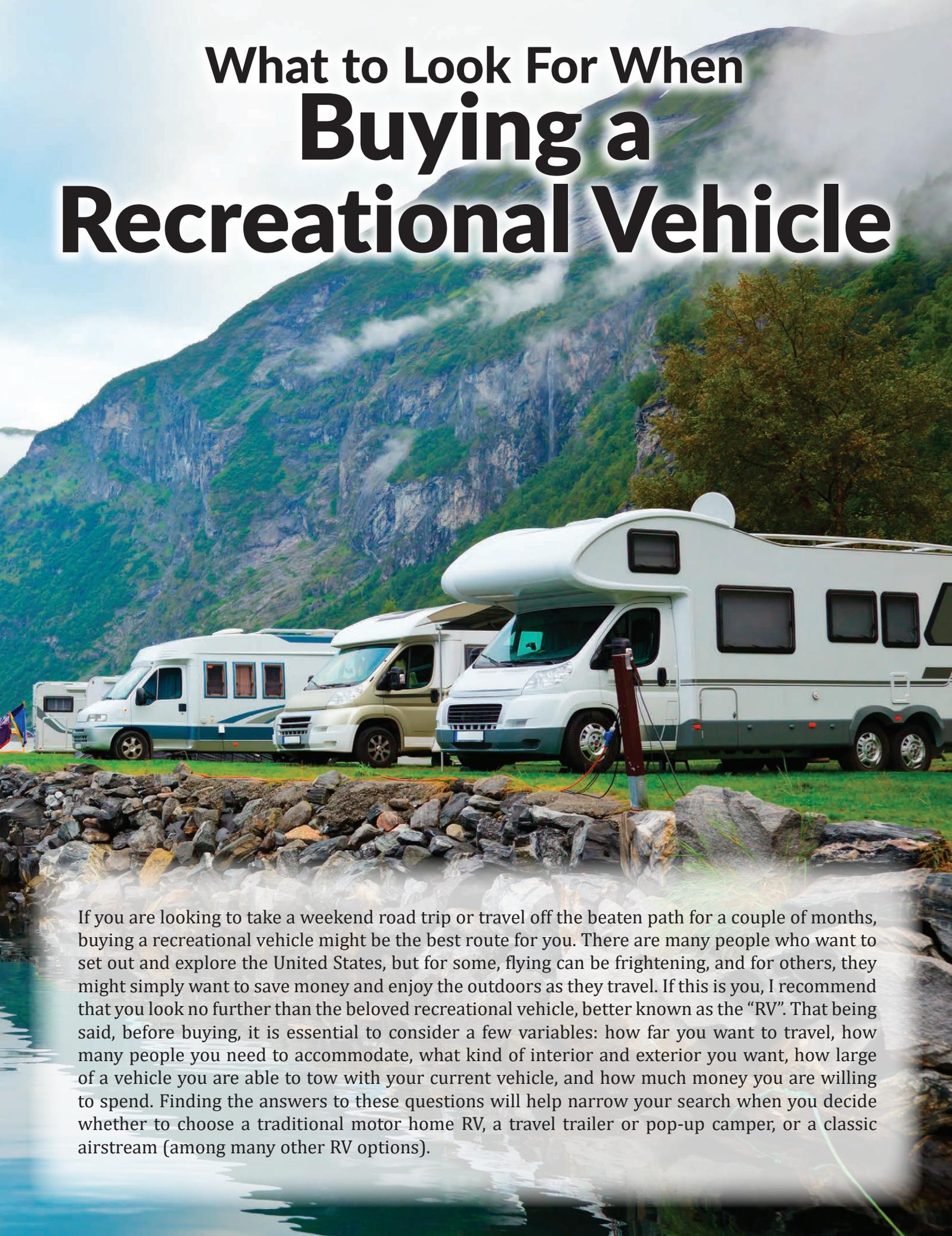


What to Look For When Buying a Recreational Vehicle



If you are looking to take a weekend road trip or travel off the beaten path for a couple of months, buying a recreational vehicle might be the best route for you. There are many people who want to set out and explore the United States, but for some, flying can be frightening, and for others, they might simply want to save money and enjoy the outdoors as they travel. If this is you, I recommend that you look no further than the beloved recreational vehicle, better known as the “RV”. That being said, before buying, it is essential to consider a few variables: how far you want to travel, how many people you need to accommodate, what kind of interior and exterior you want, how large of a vehicle you are able to tow with your current vehicle, and how much money you are willing to spend. Finding the answers to these questions will help narrow your search when you decide whether to choose a traditional motor home RV, a travel trailer or pop-up camper, or a classic airstream (among many other RV options).

IF YOU CHOOSE TO GO WITH THE TRADITIONAL, LARGER MOTOR HOME RV, YOU SHOULD BE READY FOR:

- Many amenities at your fingertips, including a kitchen with custom finishes, a bathroom, a bedroom, a dining area, storage area, and usually a place you are able to do laundry.
- Plenty of room to travel with the entire family, since large, stand-alone RVs can comfortably fit around 6-8 people.
- A higher price tag on things such as cost of the vehicle – ranging from \$75,000 to custom-built beauties that can cost hundreds of thousands or even in the millions of dollars – as well as the insurance on the rig, the gas to fill it up, and even the fees to park it.
- The joy – or hassle, whichever way you look at it – of driving around an RV of such magnitude, as opposed to hauling a secondary unit behind an SUV.
- Slide-outs which maximize space, along with a “basement” below the cabin, providing ample storage space for those extra long trips.
- More maintenance as a whole, because the larger the vehicle, the more likely it is to have things go wrong or break.



IF YOU CHOOSE TO GO WITH AN OUTDOORSY TRAVEL TRAILER OR POP-UP CAMPER, YOU CAN EXPECT:

- Lightweight but powerful construction, allowing it to be towed behind almost any SUV or pickup truck.
- A lower and much more affordable price tag than that of a motor home. For travel trailers, they range in price from around \$12,000 to \$70,000; for pop-up campers, they range in price from around \$4,000 to \$20,000.
- A much smaller space to live and sleep in – hello bunk bed style sleeping – but still capable of sleeping around 2-6 people for both travel trailers and pop-up campers.
- Fewer amenities than a motor home, but still enough to be comfortable.
- The majority of your trailer or pop-up camper’s travel time will be during weekend trips, since they simply do not possess the space or amenities for month-long trips.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO GO CLASSIC WITH AN AIRSTREAM TRAVEL TRAILER, YOU CAN COUNT ON:

- A shiny, vintage exterior with a stylish flair on the interior. This factor alone is why many RV buyers choose airstreams,

because their old-school feel is hard to pass up. With an airstream, you are going to own a piece of history!

- A reliable RV that is balanced, lightweight and stable due to its aluminum frame and solid steel chassis. Not to mention, it is easy to tow and minimal on gas due to its aerodynamic shape.
- A surprising amount of storage space. The length you choose – 14 to 31 feet – will depend on the amount of space you have to work with, but regardless, airstreams are very efficient at maximizing storage.
- Renovations ranging from minor to major fixes. Unless you are ready to pay a pretty penny for a fully refurbished airstream trailer, you are going to have to put in the time and money to restore it to its previous luster.
- The cost being dependent on the aforementioned. If you want a fixer-upper, you are looking at a few thousand dollars plus the cost of renovations. If you want a fully loaded and ready-to-go airstream travel trailer, then the price can range anywhere from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for the largest size.

Given these points, you should have a well-rounded understanding of what to expect with some of the most popular choices of recreational vehicles before you depart on your next weekend or cross-country road trip. Pro tip: if you haven’t ever ridden in or owned an RV, I would suggest renting one before you take the plunge. Fortunately, there are many RV retailers out there that will let you rent one for the weekend to test it out. Also, it is important to do your research beforehand and inspect an RV you are considering to buy thoroughly before you throw down any money. If the RVs listed above aren’t necessarily your speed, you can also look into fifth wheel RV trailers, truck campers, and sport utility RVs (also known as Toy Haulers), just to name a few. The great thing about this method of traveling is that there are so many models out there to choose from, so while one type of RV isn’t going to fit the needs of every person, there really is something out there for everyone. Happy traveling! 🌲

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