



Real Family Chol Hamoed Trips

Goldie Grossbaum

“WHERE ARE WE GOING TODAY?”

“When are we leaving?”

“Are we going somewhere today?”

“We have to go somewhere today!”

Yes, you guessed it – it’s day #3 of The Chol Hamoed Trip Extravaganza – when you have a whole week to plan trip and after trip and spend quality family time together.

Except the degree of quality can fluctuate.

“Let’s go to Virtual Reality!”

“No, Laser Tag!”

“That’s boring, could we do an Escape Room again?”

“Could we go to the zoo?”

“Not the zoo again!”

“Wacky Tacky!” chimes in my two-year-old, referring to yesterday’s trip for the younger division.

“No way!” comes the chorus.

So it’s official; we have eight different opinions.

“Daaa da!” shouts the baby.

Make that nine.

And we still haven’t made it through breakfast, with the regular chorus of “there’s nothing to eat” and “could I have chocolate?”

“The decision is already made, there’s no need to discuss it,” announces my husband.

The heated conversation continues anyway.

Oh, it sure feels like Chol Hamoed!

Now that our family has grown to an official younger division and older division and outgrown our Sienna, these trips are not so easy to plan.

But today was going to be a trip for everyone, using both vehicles.

We didn't even get a family picture because we are too busy just being a family.

No, I don't dare think we'd make everyone happy! The age range is 10 months to 14 years. Not even possible.

Sometimes that's just not the goal. As long as everyone is happy for some of the time and we are all spending time together, it's good enough.

By the time breakfast finishes, the baby is napping, and by the time the baby wakes up, we have to eat lunch first.

So at 2 pm sharp, the best and most common time of day to start Chol Hamoed trips, we set out. I ignore the constant stream of pictures on WhatsApp of everybody's Perfect Chol Hamoed Trips coming in all morning.

Lunch is done and it's time to hit the road.

Divide and conquer.

My husband deals with the seat assignments and arguments, I assemble the snacks.

I join for the tail end of "he got the window yesterday" and we are on our way.

We chose a gold mine tour and exploration as our "whole family" trip, for both older and younger divisions.

The little kids are scared in the dark mine and want to leave. The big kids are fascinated and want to stay.

The little kids love running up and down the flights of stone steps.

The big kids are fascinated by the machines that grind the stones to powder.

The little kids are scared of the noise and play with the rocks.

The four-year-old is starving and doesn't want the snacks I packed.

The six-year-old needs the bathroom.

The 12-year-old has a headache.

The baby wants to get out of the stroller but there is no place to put him down.

We chat and stroll and hike and watch and sweat.

I freak out every time anyone goes too close to the little stream.

When we get to the gem panning station it is 3:55 pm and it is closed already—even though closing time is supposed to be at 4:00.

Everything is exactly as it is supposed to be, because that's what family trips are all about.

It's not about everyone always being happy, having fun or looking perfect.

It's about quality time together in all shapes and forms.

We didn't even get a family picture because we are too busy just being a family.

And everyone agreed it was a great day, well, except for one. Because in real families, there's always one who insists they're starving and there's nothing to eat. 🍴



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