

Chatter Box #30 – Vacation

Transcript

Maura: Hello everybody! This is Maura.

Ricardo: And this is Ricardo.

Maura: Yeah, he's back.

Ricardo: I'm back.

Maura: And this is your Chatter Box podcast with Culips. And what's the website, Ricardo?

Ricardo: That's Culips, C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Maura: That's it. So, this is our Chatter Box episode, where we talk and chat about different topics of interest, stuff that's going on in North America. And if you want more information about this episode or any of episodes you can go to our website and if you want to see the transcripts or learn more about some of the vocabulary in this episode, you can become a member and get access to all that. So this episode, this Chatter Box episode, is about...

Ricardo: Vacations.

Maura: Yeah, vacations. What a good topic! Who doesn't like to talk about vacations?

Ricardo: Exactly, I love vacations.

Maura: Yeah, who doesn't? They're so good. So, today we're going to talk about, first of all, different kinds of vacations that people take.

Ricardo: OK.

Maura: And then we're going to talk about **dream vacations**.

Ricardo: **Dream vacations**. I have a **dream vacation**.

Maura: Yeah, we'll talk about our **dream vacations** and then just generally **dream vacations** that a lot of people have. And the last thing we're going to talk about is our own vacation memories from our past experiences.

Ricardo: OK. Did you take a lot of vacations when you were younger?

Maura: Yeah, every summer, at least, we went away somewhere, I think.

Ricardo: Really?

Maura: Yeah, yeah. But you'll have to wait; I'll talk about it later.

Ricardo: OK.

Maura: All right. So, the first thing we're going to talk about is different types of vacations.

Ricardo: Different types of vacations.

Maura: Yeah, so the first kind of vacation—and this is a really new term—is called a **staycation**.

Ricardo: A **staycation**. I've never heard of that before. What is that... a **staycation**?

Maura: Yeah. Well, it's a vacation where the people stay at home. So they take time off from work, so they take vacation from work, but they don't travel anywhere, they just stay at home and relax and take care of things.

Ricardo: That could be fun, and it's also a good way to save money too.

Maura: Yes, it's a very good way to save money. Right, so **staycation** is a new word, like I was saying, made up of the word *stay*, to stay at home, and vacation. So we put them together and we have a new word.

Ricardo: **Staycation**.

Maura: Yeah, I doubt this word is even in the dictionary.

Ricardo: Yeah, I doubt it too. But have you ever taken a **staycation**, Maura?

Maura: Um... I don't think I have. I like to go away too much.

Ricardo: I think I have.

Maura: Yeah?

Ricardo: But **not by choice**.

Maura: Because you didn't have the money to go away?

Ricardo: I didn't have the money to go away on vacation.

Maura: But did you have a good time on your **staycation**?

Ricardo: Yeah, I did. I stayed home, I relaxed, I watched TV, played video games, talked to my friends.

Maura: Yeah, it's really **stress free**.

Ricardo: Exactly.

Maura: So, a lot of people take their vacation times in the summer; that's probably the most popular time to take vacations.

Ricardo: Yeah, that's true.

Maura: Yeah, so we just finished **the high season**, and by **the high season** we mean the time when a lot of people are travelling, and it gets kind of expensive to travel during that period because it's really popular.

Ricardo: I guess that's why they call it **the high season**?

Maura: Yeah. And at the end of July, there is also an extra busy time around Canada, and this is the time when all of the construction workers, and often some factory workers, take their vacations.

Ricardo: So it's like a **construction vacation**.

Maura: Yeah, so the construction stops and all of the workers go on vacation at the same time. So, some times beaches and vacation destinations are busier, because so many people are on vacation at the same time.

Ricardo: But that's also really good, because then that means that you don't hear a lot of noise in the city that you might be hearing every day on your way to school or on your way to work. Everybody's on vacation, including the construction workers.

Maura: Yeah, and if you are working during the last two weeks of July, during the **construction vacation**, then maybe there's less traffic on your way to work. So there are some positive points too. So what are **some common things that people do on their vacations in the summertime in Canada**?

Ricardo: I think a lot of people want to go to the beach.

Maura: I know that I do.

Ricardo: Yeah, me too. I love the beach. But another place people go is their cottage.

Maura: Yeah.

Ricardo: Yeah, basically.

Maura: Yeah, so a cottage is a rustic kind of house, where you go in a natural area, usually near water or a lake and you just relax.

Ricardo: Exactly, there's no TV or there might be, I'm not sure. But people go to the lake, they swim, or they fish. It's kind of like camping.

Maura: Yup. A lot people go camping too. I love camping. Do you?

Ricardo: Mmm,,, not so much, no.

Maura: Yeah, it can be a lot of work, and when it rains it's not quite as fun, but it's always an adventure.

Ricardo: Yeah, but that's definitely not my kind of **dream vacation**.

Maura: You're more of the luxurious type.

Ricardo: No, more of the beach type, but I'll tell you later.

Maura: OK. One more kind of vacation is the **road trip**.

Ricardo: **Road trips!** I love **road trips**.

Maura: Yeah?

Ricardo: Definitely, yes.

Maura: Where have you been on **road trips**?

Ricardo: Hmm... Not too far, maybe to Toronto, for example, with friends. That's the best part about a **road trip**: is driving with your friends.

Maura: Yup, for sure. It's who you go with. So, a **road trip** is just a trip or vacation you

take that includes a lot of driving.

Ricardo: That's right. But while you're driving, you can have some fun. You can listen to music or play games in the car, sing songs...

Maura: Yeah, there's definitely a lot of chatting going on when you're on a **road trip**.

Ricardo: Exactly. And then you might stop along the way and have lunch somewhere.

Maura: Yeah. And sometimes **road trips** aren't even about the destination, it's the trip itself. It's being in the car and stopping along the way, visiting different places.

Ricardo: That's right.

Maura: OK. Now let's talk about **dream vacations**.

Ricardo: **Dream vacations**. I couldn't wait to get to this part.

Maura: So why don't you tell us what your **dream vacation** is, or one of them?

Ricardo: One of them. Well, I love hot weather and I also love the beach, so my **dream vacation** would be to go somewhere hot, like an island somewhere like Tahiti or Fiji, where I can sit on the beach all day or swim in the water all day.

Maura: Yeah, that sounds pretty good. Definitely a good vacation would involve relaxing, **taking it easy**...

Ricardo: But you know Maura, a lot of people have different ideas for **dream vacations**.

Maura: Yes, some people actually don't like to go to the beach and relax all day, because they like activities and they want to do something that's more exciting.

Ricardo: Also, some people don't like warm weather. I have a friend who hates hot weather. Do you know what his **dream vacation** is?

Maura: No.

Ricardo: His **dream vacation** is going to Iceland.

Maura: Oh, really?

Ricardo: Yes, definitely.

Maura: Yeah, but he's probably pretty rare. Most people enjoy, at least, warm weather, if not hot weather.

Ricardo: That's true.

Maura: Yeah, I think that a lot of people would have a similar **dream vacation** to yours: going somewhere on the beach, relaxing. And that's actually what a lot of Canadians do in the winter. In the winter, a lot of Canadians want to leave the cold Canadian winter and go to a warm country in **the south**, like Mexico or in the Caribbean.

Ricardo: That's true...Cuba, Dominican Republic... And when they go on vacation, sometimes they do something called an **all-inclusive vacation**, or they take an **all-inclusive vacation**.

Maura: Right, so they pay one fee and it includes their flight, and their hotel, and all of the food.

Ricardo: Sounds nice

Maura: Yeah, yeah, definitely. So that's a popular thing that Canadians do in the winter to escape the cold. They go to another country, a warm place. I think a lot of people also have a **dream vacation** of a **cruise**.

Ricardo: A **cruise**, yeah, I didn't think of that.

Maura: Yeah, a lot of people would love to go on a **cruise**, which is to stay on a **cruise** boat and travel around to many different exotic locations. But it's also more popular for older people.

Ricardo: Sometimes families probably go too. So Maura, what's your **dream vacation**?

Maura: Hmm... I find that a hard question to answer, because I'm interested in so many different places. But probably my **dream vacation** would be similar to yours, because for a vacation it's really good to relax and not be stressed, and I also like to be warm and on the beach.

Ricardo: OK, I see. So you can, like, maybe **kick back** or **take it easy** on the beach.

Maura: Exactly. I really like no stress and sometimes if you're travelling around and sightseeing and visiting places, it can be a little bit stressful.

Ricardo: Yeah that's a good point.

Maura: Let's move on to our third segment, which is our vacation memories.

Ricardo: Vacation memories.

Maura: Yeah, it makes you smile doesn't it?

Ricardo: Yeah, it does.

Maura: So, when you were a kid, when you were a child, do you have any memories of going anywhere with your family?

Ricardo: Yes I do. I think my favourite memory about vacations was a vacation I took with my family when I was 13 years old, or maybe 12 years old. We went to Barbados.

Maura: Oh yeah?

Ricardo: Yes. It was the first time I was going to Barbados. Both of my parents are from Barbados, so I was really excited to see where my mother and my father came from.

Maura: Nice. How long did you go there for?

Ricardo: We were there for two weeks.

Maura: OK. And when did you go? I hope you went during the winter.

Ricardo: No, we went in the summer. We went in July.

Maura: So was it extra hot there?

Ricardo: Yes, but it's hot there all year round.

Maura: Right, right, so did you spend a lot of time on the beach or were you busy visiting family?

Ricardo: A little of both. We went to the beach every day. Every morning at 6am! But we also visited family. I met cousins, and aunts, and uncles. It was a lot of fun.

Maura: Yeah, that sounds like a really nice vacation.

Ricardo: Definitely. It was.

Maura: Do you have any other memories of a more recent vacation?

Ricardo: Yes. I took a vacation and I went to Hanoi.

Maura: OK.

Ricardo: In Vietnam.

Maura: Oh, wow! How long were you there?

Ricardo: I was there for about two weeks.

Maura: OK. And again, did you **take it easy** and relax on the beach?

Ricardo: Yeah, I did. Definitely I did that, and I also went on a boat and I saw Ha Long Bay. It was beautiful.

Maura: Nice. I'm sure it was pretty amazing.

Ricardo: It was amazing. I think if you have the chance to go, you definitely should.

Maura: Tropical beaches, it's something that we don't have in Canada!

Ricardo: No, we only have lakes.

Maura: Yeah. We have beaches, but they're not tropical.

Ricardo: Yeah, that's true. Do you have any best vacation memories from when you were younger?

Maura: Well, when I was younger, we did the typical Canadian thing, which is going to a cottage for a week, near a beach, and just relaxing with our families. So I have lots of different memories of doing that. But I remember one year, when I was really young, I was walking down the path towards the beach, from our cottage. And I wasn't supposed to be going there alone, so I was going very slowly, and a deer ran by me!

Ricardo: A deer?

Maura: Yeah.

Ricardo: Were you scared?

Maura: I don't think I was scared. I was surprised, and the deer was probably more scared than I was. But, no one believed me that I actually saw a deer. But I did! Do you believe me?

Ricardo: Hmm... Yeah, I believe you.

Maura: OK, thanks. But, yeah, so I have lots of good memories from going up to a cottage around one of the **Great Lakes** that we have in Ontario. Vacations are always good, I think. Even if it rains, it's still a vacation. It's still somewhere different, it's a good change. OK. Well, now that we've talked so much about vacations, I think we should both go on one. Right now.

Ricardo: That's a good idea, but where?

Maura: Well, the beach.

Ricardo: The beach. All right, let's go. I want to go to Tahiti!

Maura: All right, we'll go to Tahiti. Let's just **get outta here!** OK, so this has been Maura

Ricardo: And Ricardo.

Maura: Talking about vacations. And remember, if you want any more information about this episode, go to our website, become a member, and have access to our Lipservice. So thanks again Ricardo for talking about vacations with me.

Ricardo: No problem, any time Maura.

Maura: OK, let's go to Tahiti. Bye!

Ricardo: Bye!

Detailed Explanation

Staycation

As Ricardo and Maura say in this episode, the word **staycation** is very new. It is probably not in most dictionaries, especially if the dictionaries are from a few years ago. The online dictionaries we checked did have it, though!

A **staycation** is a vacation where the person stays at home. While the person is on vacation at home, they might take care of things around the house, like cleaning or renovations. A person taking a **staycation** might also do leisurely activities close to home. Ricardo says that he played video games and spent time with friends on his **staycation**.

Not by choice

Ricardo says that he took a staycation, but **not by choice**. When someone does something **not by choice**, it means that they did not choose to do it. There is a reason that they must do something. In Ricardo's case, the reason he didn't go away anywhere was because he didn't have enough money to travel. So he didn't necessarily want to take a staycation, but he had no choice.

Here are a couple more examples with **not by choice**:

Steve: What are you doing today?

Dominic: I'm cleaning my house, **not by choice**.

Steve: Oh, your mom is making you help?

Dominic: Exactly.

Christian: Are you coming to my party?

Felix: Nope, I'm staying home. But **not by choice**. I've been really sick for the past few days

Stress free

It seems that there's a lot of stress in the world these days! Many people like to go on **stress-free** vacations. A staycation is often **stress free** because there's not much planning to do and not much money to spend.

Vacation packages that people can buy are often advertised as **stress free**. A vacation that is advertised as **stress free** often has activities already planned out for you, so all you have to do is get to the vacation destination.

High season

The high season is the time of year when it's most popular to take a vacation. In Canada, **the high season** for vacations is in the summer, when a lot of Canadians travel around Canada or travel to other places that have nice weather in the summer, like Europe.

The winter in Canada is also a **high season** for some tourist destinations and activities. At ski resorts, the winter is **the high season**, because that's when they're busiest. The wintertime is also when it's the **high season** for travelling to tropical places. Many Canadians want to take a break from the winter, so they travel to destinations that are hot and sunny.

During **high seasons**, it's more expensive to travel and often more difficult to find a place to stay. That's why many people prefer to travel in the off-season or low season. The off-season or low season is when the same destinations are less busy and less expensive.

The construction vacation/holiday

The **construction vacation**, or the **construction holiday**, is the time in the summer when construction workers take their summer holidays. In Quebec it's always the last two weeks of July. Many other people choose to take their vacations during this time also, which means that vacation destinations around the province are really busy! This also means that there's a lot of traffic at the beginning of this holiday time, when everyone leaves the cities, and again at the end when everyone returns.

There are also similar times when construction workers take their holidays in other parts of Canada.

Common vacations in Canada – rustic vacations and luxurious vacation

In the summer, many people like to go to a more natural area, with trees and forests, and spend time near a lake. They often rent cottages (or they own one) or camp or stay in a trailer. Other people might visit a city that they have never been to. Because of the nice weather, the summer is a nice time to walk around a city and see the sights. These are **the most common kind of vacations around Canada**.

In this episode, we talk about **rustic** vacations and **luxurious** vacations. A **rustic** vacation is a simple vacation in a natural setting, where you might get dirty. A **rustic** vacation would be camping or staying in a cottage. A more **luxurious** vacation would be staying in a nice hotel with many modern comforts. Ricardo admits that he prefers more **luxurious** vacations.

Road trips

A **road trip** is any trip or vacation that involves a lot of driving. Some people do **road trips** right across our country, which takes days. Other people do shorter **road trips**. There is no standard length of time for a **road trip**, but they usually last longer than 3 hours. For some trips, it's not about the destination, but about the trip itself. Sometimes there's more time spent in the car than at your destination. **Road trips** are common because it's the cheapest way to get to a far-away place in North America.

Road trips are so popular that there have been many movies made around this theme. In the year 2000, there was a movie released called ***Road Trip*** about some friends who take a **road trip**, and all the crazy things that happen to them along the way. There is also a new movie coming out this fall in North America called *Due Date*, which is also about a **road trip**.

Dream vacations

Some lucky people are able to take their **dream vacations** and other people can only dream! A **dream vacation** is your personal idea of the best vacation ever. A lot of people's **dream vacations** are very expensive, because it's a dream!

You can actually put the word **dream** in front of many different nouns to talk about your ideal anything! People might talk about their **dream** girl or **dream** man. They might also talk about their **dream** jobs, the ideal job.

The south

For us in the Northern Hemisphere, the south is warmer. We often refer generally to **the south**, and we are usually talking about warm countries in the Caribbean. Sometimes when we say **the south** we're talking about Florida or California in the U.S.A.

Here's an example of someone talking about **the south**:

Joan: What are you going to do this Christmas?

Eddie: Our family is planning to take a vacation in **the south** somewhere. We've been saving for this for years!

All-inclusive vacations

All-inclusive vacations are vacation packages that include your flight, hotel, and all the food and drinks you want while you're away. The places where Canadians most often go for **all-inclusive vacations** are Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico. These **all-inclusive vacations** are usually spent on resorts.

Cruises

A **cruise** is a vacation spent on a **cruise** ship, visiting different ports in a variety of countries. **Cruise** ships are very large, white boats that have many things to do aboard. **Cruise** ships have many rooms for people to sleep in, many restaurants, shops, and other activities. Popular cruises for Canadians include trips around the Caribbean and trips to Alaska.

The verb **to cruise** means to go or to travel at a constant speed, and a **cruise** ship does this. You can **cruise** on your bike, or in your car, or in any moving vehicle. There are also variations on the meanings and slang usage of the word **cruise**.

To kick back/ to take it easy

When Maura and Ricardo talk about relaxing on the beach, they talk about **kicking back** and **taking it easy**. Both of these also mean to relax. **To take it easy** means to relax and not get stressed about anything. People often say this when they're saying goodbye to someone who they may not see again soon.

Here is an example of saying **take it easy** when someone is saying goodbye:

Karen: I have to get going now.

Nancy: Yeah, it was nice seeing you. **Take it easy**.

Karen: You too!

To kick back also means to relax, but it's not used when saying goodbye like **to take it easy** is. If you think about it, when you really relax, you lie down, **kick** up your feet, and put your head **back**!

Canadian beaches and the Great Lakes

Canada doesn't have any tropical beaches, but we do have many beaches on lakes. Across the country, there are many small lakes where Canadians like to go swimming when it's warm. On the West and East Coasts of Canada, people also go to beaches on the ocean.

In Ontario there are five lakes called the **Great Lakes**, which are so huge that you can't see to the other side. The **Great Lakes** are Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, Lake Huron, Lake Superior, and Lake Michigan. These lakes are also shared with the United States, as they run along the American-Canadian border.

To get outta here

Here's an example of two words that are often said so quickly by native speakers that they sound like one word. **Out of** very often sounds like **outta**. **Outta** is not a real word and shouldn't be used in written English, unless you're writing very casually, like in an email to a friend..

To get outta here means to leave. People can use it to talk about themselves, like in this episode: "Let's **get outta here**." A person can also tell another person to leave by saying, "**Get outta here!**"

Get outta here can also be used in another way that's quite different. It can be used to tell someone that you don't believe (or that you can hardly believe) what they've just said because it's really surprising.

Here are a couple of examples:

Gary: I just won tickets to see our favourite band! Front-row seats!

Sheila: **Get outta here!** Are you kidding me?

Gary: No! I'm serious!

Irene: I'm sorry, I can't go to the movies with you tonight because I have to work.

Kyle: **Get outta here**. Really?

Irene: Yes, unfortunately.

Quiz (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)

1. What is the slang term for a vacation when you stay at home?

- a) a vacancy
- b) a station
- c) a vacay
- d) a staycation

2. Why did Ricardo stay at home for his vacation?

- a) It was too cold.
- b) He didn't have money to go anywhere.
- c) He had to work.
- d) It was too hot.

3. What adjectives best describe any high season?

- a) cold and chilly
- b) cheap and crowded
- c) warm and sunny
- d) expensive and busy

4. What kinds of vacations are taken driving in cars?

- a) road vacations
- b) road trips
- c) street trips
- d) car vacations

5. What is Ricardo's dream vacation?

- a) to go to Iceland
- b) to go to a warm beach, like Tahiti
- c) to go to Vietnam
- d) to stay in Montreal

6. Frank: What are you going to do on your vacation?

Veronica: I'm not sure yet. I just know I want to _____ and relax.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) be stressed
- b) kick back
- c) take back
- d) be busy

7. What kind of animal did Maura see on her family vacation when she was young?

- a) a bear
- b) a deer
- c) a bird
- d) a lion

8. Which is an expression that means to leave?

- a. To get up here
- b. To get into it
- c. To get outta here
- d. To get on it

Answers: 1.d 2.b 3.d 4.b 5.b 6.b 7.b 8.c