

## Vacation Spending and Souvenirs

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“See-it-like-it-buy-it” spending is often what happens when we’re shopping in a place we may never visit again. How many of us have had difficulty balancing the desire to comparison shop with the reality of once-in-a-lifetime opportunities while on vacation? Will that local souvenir be on sale in the shop down the road? Is it really one of a kind?

Vacations, as it turns out, can provide many opportunities to teach your kids about a different kind of spending. The type of spending where you just don’t know if you will ever see this item again, let alone understand what it might really be worth.

### When To Try

While on vacation

### What To Do

#### Before You Go:

- To give your kids some “see-it-like-it-buy-it” spending practice, consider giving them a small vacation budget, which they can use for buying things while on the trip.
  - The heads-up gives them a chance to plan and prepare for the added responsibilities. (Within your rules, of course.)
- Spend time researching the kinds of activities and items that might be found locally in your vacation spot. Involve the kids too!
  - Local tourist-bureau and travel-guide websites can offer a glimpse of things to do and places to see while you are on your trip.
  - See if you can identify local specialties.
  - Take out books history books from the library to read and the research the unique things found in that region.

#### While on the trip:

- Help your kids when they are trying to make a purchase decision. Sometimes just asking questions will help them sort out all the parts to the “see-it-like-it-buy-it” phenomena:
  - Is this something you really, really want?
  - Have we seen it anywhere else?
  - Will we be in this store again later in the vacation?
- It is okay to give your kids the go ahead to make a “see-it-like-it-buy-it” spending decision. Some kids will need a bit of prodding, others will not.
  - Try hard not to bring your biases into their decision. Even if you would not purchase the item, as long as they have the money, and the item fits within your rules, let them go! This is how they will learn best.
- Encourage your kids to be creative in their spending decisions.
  - Sometimes a special ride, tour, or unique experience can be more meaningful than a trinket.
  - Maybe a taste of regional food, such hush puppies in the South or clam chowder and saltwater taffy in New England, is the fastest route to a memorable vacation.
- And don’t forget to share what you are thinking when you are making your own “See-it-like-it-buy-it” vacation spending decisions!



### Talk About It

After one of your kids has made a purchase, consider asking them to reflect on the decision. Was it hard to decide to buy? If a “no” decision was made, was that hard? Why? Why not?