

## 6a Staycations

### Speaking

- 1 Work in pairs. How well do you know your own capital city and its attractions? Ask each other these questions to find out.
  - 1 Can you name five important tourist attractions in your capital city?
  - 2 How many of these have you visited?
  - 3 Have you ever been on a bus tour or walking tour of the city?
  - 4 Have you ever been to a famous street market in the city?
  - 5 How often do you visit the city's main museums or galleries?
  - 6 Do you know the name of a good, reasonably-priced hotel in the city?
- 2 Are there parts of your local area that you haven't ever visited or feel that you don't know? Would you consider taking a holiday there? Why? / Why not?

### Reading

- 3 Read the blog. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?
  - 1 Staycationers always sleep at home.
  - 2 Staycationers go out and do different activities during their staycation.
  - 3 Staycations have all the stresses of normal travel.
  - 4 Staycations simulate traditional holidays.
- 4 Now use the information in the blog to complete the statements.
  - 1 People first started having staycations because of ...
  - 2 Staycations are good for the local economy because ...
  - 3 Some people think that visiting local attractions isn't as exciting as ...
  - 4 Without leaving New York, Karen Ash was able to have a ...

## STAYCATIONS

You probably don't like the term 'staycation'. Me neither. But you mustn't be put off. As a concept, it is quite attractive. Perhaps you've already had one, but weren't aware that's what it was called. Staycations don't just mean staying in doing things around the house or just relaxing at home. They involve getting out more by taking day trips from your home to see local sights. If you don't want to stay at home, you can holiday locally – for example, camping at a local campsite.

Staycations originally became popular after the financial crisis of 2008, when people were looking for ways to cut back on their spending. Apart from the savings, let's not ignore the other benefits: you don't have any of the problems associated with travel, such as packing, long drives, delays at airports and so on; and you bring money to the local economy, by eating out, for example. The only people who hope this kind of holiday won't catch on are the holiday companies themselves.

Some staycationers who base themselves at home like to follow a set of rules, such as setting a start and end date, planning their activities ahead of time and avoiding routine. You don't have to do these things, but it helps to create the feel of a traditional vacation. Others, aware that an extra barbecue and a visit to the local zoo may not match the thrill of foreign travel, take it a step further. A recent example was Karen Ash, whose story appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*.

A resident of New York, Karen Ash decided not to go to Japan, as she had originally planned, but instead took a weeklong Japanese vacation in her own city. This included buying postcards and souvenirs at a Japanese market, admiring bonsai plants, eating ramen (and even speaking Japanese when ordering), all without leaving New York. Her itinerary also involved joining in at a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, attending a taiko drumming concert and watching Japanese soap operas on DVD. I don't think many people would want to take this much trouble to create their staycation, but you get the idea!

