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## Family Fun on a Houseboat on Lake Mohave

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There was a beautiful moment as I was sitting on the back deck of our houseboat, enjoying the glorious sunset over [Lake Mohave](#) in [Nevada](#), when I glanced over at my husband and son splashing around in the water and thought life couldn't get more perfect.

Renting a houseboat in the middle of the desert during the second week in August could have been the biggest misstep; instead, it turned out to be the most wonderful, joyous, incredible surprise.

I'd booked the boat, which we dubbed "Biggie" because it was able to sleep 12 very comfortably, from [Forever Resorts](#) on a last-minute getaway for the three of us plus my dad and stepmom

As we drove toward the [Cottonwood Cove Resort & Marina](#), which is a short drive from Laughlin, Nevada, and Bullhead City, Arizona, the sheer beauty of the region completely overwhelmed us.

By the time we got to our boat we were just excited to get onto the lake, a reservoir formed by the Davis Dam on the Colorado River—especially as the temperatures seemed to skyrocket by the minute.



Best of all, the place seemed to be almost empty as many families from California were already heading home to get their kids back to school, meaning we had vast amount of natural park space to ourselves. Yes, it was hot, particularly the beaches and the rocks, but the views were extraordinary and the water temperature perfection. The 28,000 square feet of lake is also very clean and home to many fish including common carp, rainbow trout, and striped bass, making it popular with divers (there are also two submerged wrecks to see).

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- Washington, DC
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

- Oceania
- South America

At first glance a houseboat rental may seem pricey, but with enough people to share the price it's way more affordable than owning a comparable boat, which can empty your pockets of anything upwards of half a million bucks. For 12 people, a weeklong stay on our boat totaled around \$680 per person, but you could bring that down to around \$410 per person on a 59-foot boat.

But boy, did our exquisite 70-footer deliver. We had four private queen-size bedrooms and two queen-size sleeper sofas, two full baths, a grand-size hot tub on the top deck, a sun canopy with rope lighting, a wet bar with icemaker and refrigerator, air conditioning, a GPS tracking system, and a 36-inch satellite TV, DVD, and CD player in the main salon. Because of the location and the fact that we had a fully equipped kitchen on board (including four marshmallow forks and a measuring cup and spoon set—very important!), we prepared and ate all our meals on the boat and saved in the “eating out on vacation” category.



We would barbecue most nights and eat our dinner sitting on the deck listening to the water. It got chilly at night, but it was unusually quiet, which if you're a city dweller can be unnerving until you get used to the sound of absolutely freakin' nothing. It was a fantastic way to unplug and re-connect with nature. Cell phone reception isn't reliable on Lake Mohave, so we put all of our phones and iPads in a shoebox for the week and no one went near them. It was a wonderful break from technology.

I thought we would moor the boat in a different cove every day, but it takes a lot of work to moor and untie something that large. You need some serious muscle power to tie up this puppy securely, so make sure a few of your travelers are hardy, capable, and willing to get their feet wet. We got the message after a couple days of huffing and puffing, and so we found a cove we liked and stayed put all week. They have a one boat per cove policy, so coves are uncluttered and you feel miles away from anybody or anything. Bliss.

Another tip: Plan childcare for your tie-up and leaving times. You'll need all adult hands on deck, and the kids won't be able to help, so have one designated adult there to watch out for them.

Fortunately you can rent a smaller boat for the day to explore—just remember to factor in a gas budget. Ours came to around \$125 for four hours on the water. We all loved the fact that we could zip around the lake, see the terrain, and swim off the boat, particularly my son, who practiced his diving skills all week. He's now virtually Olympic grade and he's only six.



We got through tubes and tubes and tubes of sunscreen; we used it constantly, and I'm glad we did. By the end of the second day, I even wished I had some UV protective clothing. I'd definitely invest in some for our next trip and also some sandals or deck shoes with grip. I also spent the entire journey in my Keen's, which worked brilliantly on the hot rocks and sand. Make sure your kids are protected and strapped into hardy sandals, too.

Packing is key when staying on a houseboat. Don't bring a mountain of suitcases, just bring the essentials in soft duffel bags you can fold and store easily. Storage on boats is always at a premium so the less you bring onboard the better.

This really was a fantastic family holiday. My husband literally had to carry me off the boat on the last day, as I was so in love with it. I would heartily recommend the houseboat, as it was the perfect way to switch off and enjoy quality family

time; you won't be disappointed, not unless you demand reliable cell phone reception and want your kids plugged into an iPad instead of nature. If that's your thing, then maybe you should leave the lake to the fish.