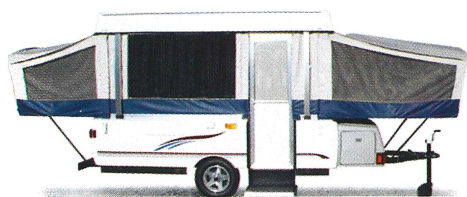


Top travel toys:



Folding Tent Trailer



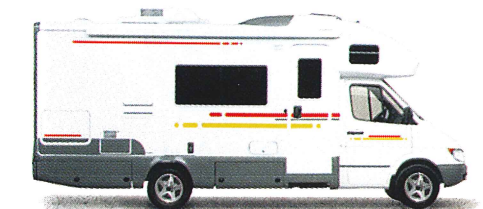
Van Conversion Motorhome



Truck Camper



Class C Motorhome



Class B Motorhome



Class A Motorhome



Fifth-wheel Trailer



Find the perfect 'home on wheels' at any budget

by Christie Judson

Every year, millions of born-to-be-wild Canadian RV enthusiasts head out on the highway looking for adventure.

Whether they're heading down south or taking in a few of the more than 4,000 campgrounds between here and Nova Scotia, they're sure to find plenty of action.

And, according to Go RVing Canada, they'll be able to do so at a relatively affordable price.

In fact, an independent cost-comparison study released by the organization found typical RV vacations are up to 75 per cent less expensive per day than any other type of family trip, regardless of duration, distance or location – a statistic that is sure to get a lot of people's motors running.

Taking advantage of the potential cost-savings does not necessarily mean you will have to give up all the comforts of a traditional vacation, notes Mark Blondin, sales manager at Fraserway RV in Abbotsford.

"With the addition of slide-outs and more innovative floor plans, today's units are quite different from what we sold 20 years ago," Blondin says. "A home on wheels would be a good description."

Falling under the RV umbrella, the most basic and affordable option is a folding tent trailer. Ranging from approximately \$9,000 to \$15,000 for a new model, Blondin says the light and compact trailers can be towed by most family vehicles and are great for first-time buyers.

Although Blondin notes tent trailers are an affordable way to take advantage of the RV lifestyle,

he admits that as families grow, owners are likely to graduate to the larger and more expensive travel-trailer category within a few years.

"There's almost always a progression," he said. "(But) everybody's appetite for travel is different."

Buyers can expect to pay \$110,000 or more for a new, fully loaded, luxury fifth-wheel complete with a spacious two-level floor plan and sleeping room for eight.

From \$15,000 to \$40,000, truck campers offer a relatively affordable option for adventurous families and individuals who like to jump in and go. While boasting ultimate manoeuvrability and convenience, living quarters are compact and sleeping room is limited to four.

For those looking at ultimate comfort and the security of being in a single, self-contained unit, Blondin says motorhomes offer a wide range of comforts and conveniences.

"As far as travelling, they are nice because you can sit comfortably together," he said.

There are three classifications of motorhomes: Class A (typically \$80,000 to \$300,000-plus); Class B (typically \$65,000 to \$120,000) and Class C (typically \$65,000 to \$100,000).

Blondin suggests families and snowbirds who are considering buying into the RV lifestyle might consider renting as a great way to help narrow down the list.

"You may not be able to rent exactly what you'll end up buying, but it can help weed out what you don't want." 