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Want a memory of the trip that won't add to the clutter?

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Stephanie's Top 3 Souvenir Picks

I am a thoroughly anti-trinket and anti-clutter type of person. I'm also not an enthusiastic shopper. I used to be happy to return from trips with only pictures and memories. Over the last few years however, I have found some items that I love bringing home with me. The criteria? The object has to be relatively useful, not take up too much space, and make me happy every time I look at it. Drumroll, please...



Art Prints

I fell in love with these two Blue Ridge Parkway prints while we were visiting North Carolina about four years ago. As a present to myself, I actually spent the money to have them matted and framed when we returned home from our trip. I quickly realized that by hanging prints of the places that we have traveled, we were filling our home with wonderful memories. The best part? You don't have to shop for these while you are on a trip. Although we have come home with a wooden wall piece from the Fingerlakes and a wonderful Long Trail print from Vermont, many times we just go online afterwards and find a piece of art that best represents the trip to us. We now have prints of Acadia, Cape Hatteras, and many more of my favorite places hanging on the walls of our home.

The [National Park Service](#) creates great prints that are available at visitor centers, but you can easily get them online at places like www.allposters.com. We also really, really love the [See America Project](#), which crowdsources designs of our national treasures from artists all over the country.



Magnets

Yes, I am totally serious. These ubiquitous souvenirs are a guaranteed score no matter where you travel. If you look closely, I promise you will find one that you actually like. They take up so little room, yet hang out in a spot that you visit dozens of times a day, packing lunches, prepping dinner, and filling sippy cup after sippy cup.

Kids love to play with magnets, and this is a great way to keep young ones connected to trips they might easily forget. We keep many of our magnets on the RV refrigerator. This adds a bit of decoration to a small space and offers a daily reminder of the wonderful journeys that we have enjoyed.

Oh, and they are really cheap. Basically the cheapest thing you will buy. Ever. Now you are getting a handle on what makes me tick.



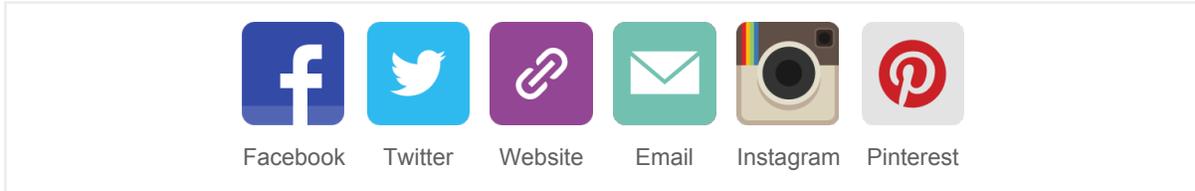
T-Shirts

I know that this idea is not revolutionary for most people, but it took a while for me to come around. I'll be honest with you, I used to laugh at Jeremy when he would buy a t-shirt with a big ole' location written across the front. Then I realized if you keep your eyes open, you can usually find at least one really cool t-shirt that represents a special part of your trip.

Four years ago we bought College of the Atlantic t-shirts for the boys when we were visiting Acadia, Maine. Of course we purchased the shirts a bit big, so we got more than a year's worth of wear. Max and Theo wore those shirts a million times, and every time I threw them in the washing machine, folded the laundry, or picked them out of the dresser drawer, I was transported back to that amazing trip we took when they were just two years old.

I'm keeping a collection of these shirts as they grow out of them. I'm not particularly crafty, but I have a few ideas kicking around. I'll keep you posted...

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