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Front Lines

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Staycations are Back

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Hat tip to consultant Sid Raisch for posting a recent *Business Insider* story on his garden center-centric Facebook group that highlighted the potential for American consumers to stay home this summer.

In fact, according to that article: “While 2025 was the year of the road trip, 2026 may be the year of the staycation.” The war in Iran has prompted higher gas and diesel prices, which is pushing up the price of flying and driving. The article also cites general consumer anxiety over the job market and inflation.

Let’s talk about that inflation for a sec: That aforementioned war has pushed energy prices and gasoline up, based on mid-April inflation data, as well as the price of fruits and vegetables (Victory Gardens?). It’s also nudged up airfare and vehicle maintenance and repair costs, which can encourage consumers to stay home and enjoy their local surroundings.

We can go back about five years to recall the last real “staycation” summer, which resulted in garden centers being sold down to the sidewalls. Now, there’s probably a difference between “can’t leave the house” and “it’s too expensive to go on vacation,” but the potential is definitely still there.
Inexpensive experiences (read, cheaper than a five-day vacation with airfare) could rule the summer, with families looking for fun outings to pass the time. Can you fill in the gap? What do you think? Email me at jpolanz@ballpublishing.com to let me know your thoughts. **GP**