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Getaways for guys

by John Ross
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When his buddies started getting hitched, Darren Hitz did what most guys do when sending a friend from freedom into matrimony: They drank a lot.

"We never really got the chance to talk until at the airport on Sunday," joked Hitz about numerous bachelor parties spent watching his friends pass out. "And then we'd be shaking at work until Wednesday."

Thinking that a groom's final weekend with his friends could use a good kick in the rear, Hitz began Adventure Bachelor Party in 2004 to add a rewarding sober twist to the standard chugfest.

Whitewater rafting and skydiving trips are the most common, but the former marketing agent has planned cattle drives in Texas, shark-hunting trips in Miami, coastline ATV rides in Mexico, and others.

"My customers are usually about 25 to 35—they've gotten past the 22- to 24-year-old range where it's still just straight boozing," he explained. "It's more of a time where you're deeper in your career, maybe you have a wife or kids, and you want to figure out a time when you can hang with your friends and just do some bonding."

The customizable excursions include meals, shuttles, usually two evenings out and the adventure of choice. Most range from \$300 to \$600 per person, excluding airfare (guests book that themselves).

And to make the job easier on the best man, Hitz takes care of the grunt work.

"I think of myself as a cross between a travel agent and a tour operator," Hitz said. "I'll fly in...and basically take a city by storm—go to all the bars, the restaurants that I've lined up, the hotels, the outfitters—and map out the whole thing."

It's a unique experience, Hitz said, that most grooms (and brides) can get behind. "I actually promoted a lot with women at bridal shows and wedding coordinators—as an alternative to going to Vegas or getting hookers or strippers."

For contact info and sample trip itineraries, click to [adventurebachelorparty.com](#).

November 9, 2006

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