It seems that many conversations that I have with friends and family recently have revolved around everyone's plans for summer get-aways.

I'm 99 percent sure of my vacation plans, but my curiosity was peaked when I had heard of a relative that went on a "ecological vacation" to Central America, where they learned about preserving nature, foraged for food in the forests and slept in trees.

I began to wonder if instead of lounging on some beautiful beach in Florida, should I seek out an adventurous vacation where I would learn about my deep inner self and widen my perspective of the world around me?

After much touring the Internet and deep reflection, I have come across a collection of vacations I would never, never, never take, but offer them to you as perhaps a future choice of your get-away summer vacation. Each of these vacations listed here had recommendations from "Everyday Joes" like ourselves that has taken these trips and cherished each and every moment of them.

• Adventure Vacations to the
North or South Pole

Take part in a visit to the poles or a three-day visit to the Ice Station Borneo. You can take a hot air balloon for a ride over the North Pole or participate in Arctic skydiving or snowmobiling. Yes, I would love to see the beauty of the Poles, but I hate being cold, especially super sub-zero cold with icicles dangling from places they shouldn't be. So I guess if they could give me the tour in a warm bus with cushioned and heated seats and with a restroom, I'd be all for gazing through the tinted windows at the beauty around me.

• Whitewater rafting along side
crocodiles in Africa

The charming nickname of the river you would be on is called "Highway to Hell." Enough said.

• Running with the bulls in
Pamplona, Spain

Spain is a beautiful country I've been told, and I understand this provides a super adrenaline rush. But I think I can get the same adrenaline rush from a big bowl of rocky road ice cream.

• Yacht racing

Every year vacationers take a month and race boats from France to Brazil. The sailing wouldn't be bad. I think I would enjoy that, but the little note at the bottom of the page says that due to strong storms in the region, 10 percent of the participants are usually thrown overboard at some time during the trip. Hmmmm, I think I will pass.

• Mountain climbing in Switzerland.

Again, the beauty of the area would be enticing. But falling rocks, extreme changes in weather, sleeping in little tents hooked to the side of a mountain thousands of feet in the air somehow doesn't fit my bill for a relaxing retreat.

• Rodeo training in Wyoming

Besides the threat of whiplash, sore behinds, the possibility of being gored, smashed or kicked by a big ol' bull or horse, sprained muscles and broken bones, I think this sounds like all kinds fun, don't you?

• Covert operations training

You will be taken to a secret training base where a hand-picked group of Green Berets and

contract mercenaries from the world's toughest special operations units will teach you all the actual skills needed to become a spy. You will learn how to run through barricades, detect booby traps, drive evasively etc, etc. Then one of your group is "kidnapped" and you get to battle it out in simulated war fare with paint ball guns. It says this vacation is for someone who loves "loud noises."
I thought vacations were meant to get you away from loud noises and annoying people! This one is definitely a no-no.

Anyway, hope you enjoyed my list. I believe I will just be a shallow, self-centered vacationer this year. I am going with the beach in Florida, where I can just relax with book in hand. I think I can live with the guilt. But I will be thinking about all those people on those adventurous vacations and being every so grateful I'm not with them.