American hotels have long appealed to families with children's play areas and special menus, but then suggested accommodations in grand suites or adjoining rooms to handle the clan. Now the hospitality industry is catching up to family demand, as well as to European resorts where triple or quad rooms, often booked by families, are common.

"Today, the amenity war between hotel brands is being fought in the configuration of the guest rooms," said Chekitan Dev, a marketing professor at the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration.

The just-opened Asbury hotel in Asbury Park, N.J., offers family rooms with tents children can sleep in and bunk rooms accommodating up to eight. Renovated in late 2014, the Garland hotel in North Hollywood, in Los Angeles, added four family suites with nooks for bunk beds, TVs and DVD players. And the water park chain Great Wolf Lodge offers a variety of family rooms, from those stocked with Diaper Genies, Pack 'n Plays and swim diapers to bunk beds in wolf-themed dens.

In urban areas, the rise of cheap-chic hostels, such as Freehand in Chicago and Miami or Safestay in Edinburgh and other cities in Britain, present affordable options, including rooms with multiple bunks. Even the Linq Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas has added 12 rooms with bunk beds, starting at $69 a night.

Whether your family plans to travel domestically this summer or further afield, the following new and improved hotels and resorts offer more than just shelter. You might find a lion next door, your own horse or s'mores at evening bonfires.

UNITED STATES
Summercamp

Martha's Vineyard, in Massachusetts

Named in homage to the Methodist camp meetings held in the cottage-filled Oak Bluffs area since the early 1800s, the new 95-room Summercamp hotel has revitalized the 19th-century Wesley Hotel. Its bright, playful décor features nostalgic accents like wall-mounted vintage tennis rackets and archery bows, dragonfly-print drapes, platform beds with marine rope for bedposts and child-friendly bunk beds. Porches wrap the hotel, which overlooks the harbor, but for those who want more action, there's Ping-Pong, Twister, movie screenings in the recreation hall and cornhole games on the lawn. The hotel lacks a restaurant, but stocks its Camp Canteen with retro snacks including Cracker Jacks, "penny candy" and Dreamsicles. Rooms from $445; summercamphotel.com.

Opal Sands Resort

Clearwater, Fla.

Beach-loving families will find Gulf of Mexico views from all of the 230 rooms at the shorefront Opal Sands Resort, each done in tones of driftwood and sea blue. Chairs and cabanas are available for rent at the beach, where the shallow and often calm water attracts swimmers. There's also a zero-entry pool, which gradually slopes deeper, like a natural beach, and poolside food service. Other restaurants include the Italian Sea-Guini, which has a pasta-making station, and the beachside Sandbar, with live music on weekends. The resort is near the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, home to the stars of the movie "Dolphin Tale" and its sequel, and it is about a 10-minute walk to Pier 60, which stages a nightly sunset festival with street performers, including musicians and jugglers. Rooms from $269; opalsands.com.

Harborside Hotel, Spa & Marina

Bar Harbor, Me.
A convenient base for exploring nearby Acadia National Park or taking a whale-watching or lobstering tour in family-friendly Bar Harbor, Harborside Hotel, Spa & Marina offers country club-style amenities with a casual spirit. Guests have access to the Bar Harbor Club, with an oceanfront swimming pool, tennis courts and a club for children 5 to 12. Among its 193 rooms, five Kids’ Suites, which include a separate room with a bunk bed, TV, DVD player and video game console, were recently added to the hotel. Four new Boat house Suites offer more space, with two bedrooms, a full kitchen and a rooftop patio with a hot tub. Located in town, the resort is within walking distance of shops and restaurants and frequently hosts evening bonfires with s’mores. Rooms from $239; theharborsidehotel.com.