

The Ultimate Guide to Senior Travel in 2021 (Tips and Questions to Get You Moving)

You've daydreamed of traveling so many times before you retired.

You used to look out your window at work and wish you could explore the world.

Now the kids are raised and have kids of their own. You worked hard to get to this moment (even though it's still hard to believe how quickly the time has flown).

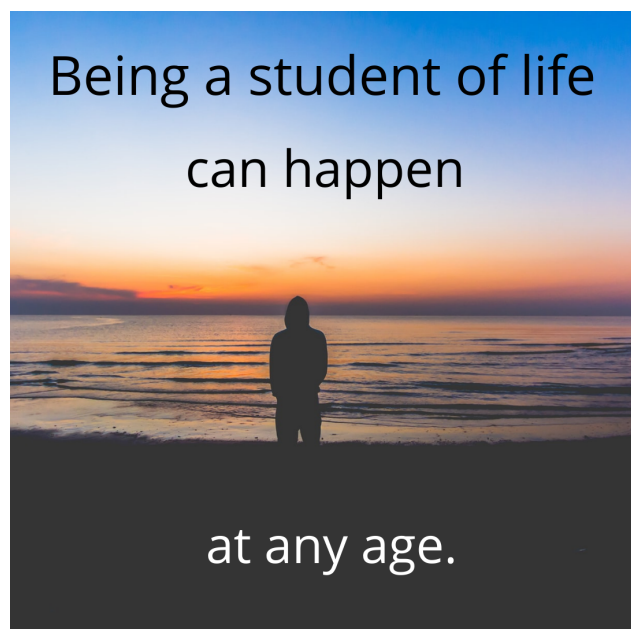
It's your time now.

Time for you to start traveling.

Sure, you've accumulated some years, but **don't let that intimidate you**. With some planning and know-how, these can be your best years.

Today's senior traveler is taking on the world with more gusto than ever before.

[Studies](#) show the physical and mental health benefits of staying active and engaged in the world. Senior travel is a great way to accomplish this. **Traveling keeps you curious about the world and awakens your mind with new experiences and people.**



Figuring out where to start your senior travel adventures can be a bit overwhelming, right? The world is not lacking in resources, but you might feel like you need a personal assistant to make sense of it all.

With a few easy questions, you can determine what your first destination might be along with some resources to get you there.

1- Think about Where YOU Want to Go

Gone are the days where you have to take family-friendly vacations and load up the car with everyone asking, “Are we there yet?”

This is now YOUR time.

First, you have to figure out what *sort* of traveler you are. **Be honest with yourself and your abilities to avoid future disappointment.** Remember to dig in and do what *you* want, not what you think you *should* want.

How to Uncover What Sort of Senior Travel Interests You

Answer these questions to start your planning process. Are you more into:

- Adventure or leisure?
- Water or land?
- Staying close or venturing to another country?
- Discovering nature or meeting locals?
- Volunteering to help others or learning about a region?
- Traveling on a tight budget or splurging a little?

There are no right or wrong answers, and maybe you find yourself wanting all of the above. Wonderful!

Senior travel is only as limited as the traveler’s capacity or interest. If you want to climb a mountain in Nepal, you can do that! If you want to sit back in a pub in Ireland, you can do that! **Often the best trips are a balance between adventure and relaxation, but**

it’s up to you and anyone you’re traveling with to decide.

Senior Travel Tip: If you are not physically able to do an activity at home,



don't expect yourself to be able to on vacation. **Embrace where you are.**

Take ten minutes and jot down places you’d like to see and activities you’d like to do.

Don’t overthink this, okay?

You don't have to know exactly where you want to go. Just start brainstorming the types of things you'd like to see and do.

Chances are, you have a destination in mind that you've been thinking about for years, right?

Start there.

You might find you are a senior who wants to take several different trips to a variety of places and a wide range of activities mixed with leisure. Jot it all down on your travel wish list.

If you don't know where you want to go, but you have a preference for certain landscapes, write those on your list for now.

Once you can pin down your desired outcome and environment of a trip, the research on *how* to make that happen becomes easier to navigate since you now have a starting point to help you start planning your trip.

2- Are Senior Travel Groups for You?

Now that you've started to narrow down some of your desired destinations or general landscapes, you now have to think about *who* will go with you. If you're married or in a relationship, perhaps this is a no-brainer.

Or maybe you want to plan a fantastic girl getaway or a dude destination. Time with your friends is sometimes exactly what you need to breathe new life into you.

Many senior travelers are widows, widowers or divorced, so the idea of traveling alone is daunting, but it doesn't have to be. There are so many senior travelers who are facing this same dilemma, and there are a variety of travel groups that are excellent ways to meet other travelers to connect with.

If the idea of searching the internet seems too impersonal to you, try doing what baby boomers are best at: Having actual, real conversations with people.

Call a travel agent and tell her what you're looking for.

Stop by a friend's house and see if they've heard of any senior travel groups.

If you are computer savvy and don't mind a little research, there are several travel blogs devoted solely to senior travel, often written by senior travelers. If you find one that seems to match your speed, consider reaching out to the writer and asking questions or guidance to find a senior travel group.

Senior Travel Groups: Kayaking at 80? Sure!



If you do opt to travel with a group, using your answers from the first question, determine what sort of group you'd like to look into:

Adventurous Senior Travel Groups: [ElderTreks](#), [ROW Adventures](#), and [Walking the World](#)

You're never too old for adventure, but if you're not interested in rigorous activity, this doesn't mean you're not up for an adventure. **There's a wide range of activities included in adventure travel, so don't write it off until**

you see what's available.

Volunteer Travel Groups: [Projects Abroad](#), [Love Volunteers](#), and [Travel with a Challenge](#)

When you think of volunteering in another country, you might think of college students, but there are **several opportunities for senior travelers to have enriching, purposeful experiences.** If you are interested in this type of travel, it might be worth looking into.

Learning Travel Groups: [Road Scholar](#), [Backroads](#), and [Go Ahead Tours](#)

Learning is just something that happens naturally on any trip, but if you want to immerse yourself in a culture and really absorb the experience, there are groups who keep this in the forefront of their packages.

Leisure Travel Groups: [Cruise Direct](#), [Grand European Travel](#), and [Adventures Abroad](#)

If taking a trip means totally relaxing and letting the world come to you, then a senior travel group that focuses on leisure is a great option for you.

This list is only a slice of what's out there. You'll be surprised to see the variety of senior travel groups and what their specialties are.

Something to keep in mind when considering group travel is that you are locked into their schedule. If you're a senior traveler who likes to do your own thing, be honest about what's important to you on your trip. If you like the idea of showing up and letting curiosity guide you without an agenda, groups might not be the best route.



If the details stress you out, group travel is for you!

Groups will have senior travelers aged 50 and up, so if you're more active than the average baby boomer, you'll need to do your research to make sure you won't be bored. The same goes for any senior travelers who have restrictions or health concerns and need to take it slower.

Do your research and make sure your group moves at your speed and level of interest.

No matter your situation or interests, there's a travel group for you, if you decide to go that route.

3- Would You Rather Travel Alone? (It's Okay to Say "Yes")

Does the idea of going to a new destination and finding your way on your own feel empowering?

Many travelers of all ages look at journeys as a way to retreat and tap into themselves better. As long as you're capable of caring for yourself, this is an option for you.

Be realistic about your abilities. The obvious advantage of joining a travel group is you know you'll be surrounded by others in case anything happens. **But if you enjoy experiences alone, it is possible with some planning and precautions.**

Single Senior Travel Tips: Start Small and Bring a Phone (Even if Technology Isn't Your Thing)

If you're nervous, rather than talking yourself out of all travel, consider lowering your bar of expectations. **If you want to try traveling alone, think about a *local* weekend destination you're curious about, and start there.**

You'll get a feel if traveling alone is something you might enjoy without the risk of being too far from home. Plan ahead and see if there is a group tour you can enjoy on your first solo trip, so you don't have too much alone time, if that's not something you're used to.



You don't like when people fuss over you. We know. But please bring a smartphone to check in with loved ones.

Technology is not every Baby Boomer's thing, but it is a necessity, especially when traveling alone. If it's not in your comfort zone, ask someone to help you purchase a smartphone and set you up on necessary apps.

You might find you love posting pictures of your adventures to social media! Retirement is the time to open your mind and try new things instead of

assuming something's not for you without giving it a try.

The same tips for anyone traveling alone, also apply to seniors traveling alone.

- ***Be safe.***
- ***Be cautious.***
- ***Always tell a loved one where you will be.***

Check in with them here and there, but remind them the point of taking a trip alone is just that--*to be alone*.

If you can handle those simple guidelines, trips alone might be a lovely thing for you whether you want quiet time to reflect or fun outings to meet new friends.

4-The Two Most Important Words in Senior Travel: Plan Ahead

No matter if you're going to the next state or across the ocean, knowledge is always the most important thing to pack.

Do some research and plan ahead to ensure you are informed of not only the destination but also of the journey itself.

If you are on medication, this is especially important. Keep all meds in their original packaging with your name on it to avoid any snags in the airport. **Consider time zone changes when planning when to take your medication while you're traveling.**

Carry a list of your doctor(s) and medication(s) with you along with contact information. Ask your doctor's advice on what to do on your trip if you lose your medication. **Be sure to keep your medication on your carry-on and never check it in luggage.**

Don't assume all places have the same Covid restrictions and guidelines. Find out how strict that area's restrictions are and if there are several cases being reported in that region. If you have serious health concerns, having this information is vital.

Planning Your Senior Travel is Good for Your Brain and Your Wallet

Aside from being prepared for accidents or sickness, planning ahead can also land you some worthy discounts. **Being a senior traveler definitely has its perks!**

There are senior discounts on everything from hotels to cruises to meals. Travel is often less expensive in the off-season, so planning ahead and learning when that is for your destination might be worth it to your wallet.

Senior travelers can get a discount for almost anything.



These are called "the golden years" for a reason!

Yes, there's a lot of information out there when it comes to senior travel. If you start with these 4 guidelines, you can begin to focus on *where* you want to go, *who* you want to go with, *why* you want to go, and *when*.

Here's some good news if you're still feeling a little nervous. National Geographic recently reported on [a study](#) that shows **planning a trip is good for your mental health**. The anticipation and excitement gives you something to look forward to.

Not only does travel wake up your mind and spirit, but so does the actual planning.

Take some time today to ask yourself what sort of senior traveler you are and where you want to go. Whether you will be traveling alone or finding a senior travel group, there is a place for you.

Enjoy these steps of discovering just who you are and all you have yet to see.

Your eyes will be open every time you travel, and there's no better time than now.

You have arrived.