

THE RETIREMENT TRAVEL GUIDE

Destinations • Tips • Itineraries • Health & Safety



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THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME

This guide is designed to help you make the most of your retirement travels across every corner of the globe. Whether you dream of sipping wine in Tuscany, trekking through Patagonia, or cruising the Norwegian fjords, you will find practical advice, destination inspiration, and everything you need to travel with confidence and joy.

WHY RETIREES ARE THE BEST WORLD'S BEST TRAVELERS

- Flexibility to travel off-peak — fewer crowds, lower prices, better experiences
- Time to truly immerse in a destination rather than rushing through it
- Wisdom and life experience that enriches every cultural encounter
- Freedom to extend a stay when you fall in love with a place
- The patience to plan thoughtfully and travel more comfortably

HEALTH, SAFETY & TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Traveling in retirement requires a little more planning — but with the right preparation, there is no reason health concerns should limit where you go. Millions of retirees travel the world every year in excellent health.

BEFORE YOU GO:

- Visit your doctor 6–8 weeks before departure for a travel health consultation and any required vaccinations
- Bring a full list of your medications including generic names (brand names vary internationally)
- Carry at least a 2-week supply of all medications in your carry-on luggage, never checked bags
- Get a letter from your doctor summarizing your medical history and current medications
- Register with your country's embassy or consulate in your destination country (e.g., the U.S. Smart Traveler Enrollment Program)

TRAVEL INSURANCE:

Look for a policy that includes:

- Emergency medical evacuation coverage of at least \$500,000
- Pre-existing conditions coverage (requires purchase within a set window of your trip deposit)
- Trip cancellation and interruption protection
- 24/7 emergency assistance hotline

EUROPE

Europe remains the world's most beloved retirement destination, offering an unparalleled blend of history, cuisine, art, and natural beauty... all within easy reach of world-class medical facilities and well-developed tourism infrastructure.



TOP DESTINATIONS

Destinations	Overview	Best Season	Must Do
Amalfi Coast, Italy	Cliffside villages, Mediterranean cuisine, ancient ruins	May – June Sept – Oct	Boat tour from Positano to Ravello
Lisbon, Portugal	Affordable, warm climate, vibrant culture, fado music	Mar – May, Sept – Nov	Ride Tram 28 through Alfama district
Dubrovnik, Croatia	Medieval walls, turquoise Adriatic, island hopping	May – June, Sept	Walk the full Old City walls at sunrise
Provence, France	Lavender fields, wine, charming hilltop villages	June – July (lavender) Sept (harvest)	Market day in Aix-en-Provence
Scottish Highlands	Dramatic landscapes, whisky distilleries, castles	May – Sept	Drive the North Coast 500 route
Santorini, Greece	Iconic sunsets, volcanic beaches, cliffside villages	Apr – June Sept – Oct	Watch sunset from Oia village

Practical Tips for Europe

- A rail pass (Eurail or Interrail) offers unbeatable value for multi-country travel
- Consider basing yourself in one city for 1–2 weeks rather than rushing between countries
- Portugal and Eastern Europe offer excellent value compared to Western Europe
- Many European museums offer free or discounted entry for seniors - always ask
- Pack layers: even summer evenings in coastal and mountain regions can be cool!

ASIA & THE PACIFIC

Asia and the Pacific offer some of the most transformative travel experiences on the planet; with ancient spiritual traditions, extraordinary cuisine, breathtaking landscapes, and a warmth of hospitality that leaves most visitors longing to return.



TOP DESTINATIONS

Destinations	Overview	Best Season	Must Do
Kyoto, Japan	Zen temples, tea ceremonies, cherry blossoms	Mar – May Oct – Nov	Dawn walk through Fushimi Inari torii gates
Bali, Indonesia	Spiritual temples, rice terraces, world-class spas	Apr – Oct (dry season)	Sunrise hike on Mount Batur
Chiang Mai, Thailand	Night markets, elephant sanctuaries, Thai cuisine	Nov – Feb (cool, dry)	Thai cooking class in the old city
Queenstown, NZ	Stunning fjords, wine country, adventure activities	Dec – Feb (summer)	Milford Sound cruise from Queenstown
Hoi An, Vietnam	Lantern-lit old town, tailors, Vietnamese street food	Feb – July	Cycling through rice paddies at sunset
Rajasthan, India	Maharaja palaces, camel safaris, vibrant bazaars	Oct – Mar (cool)	Sunrise at Taj Mahal, Agra

Practical Tips for Asia & Pacific

- Hire a local guide for at least a day in each country: the context they provide is priceless
- Stay in boutique heritage hotels and ryokans rather than international chains for authentic experiences!
- Be mindful of food safety: drink bottled water and opt for cooked food at busy stalls
- Carry small denomination local currency at all times; many markets and temples are cash only
- Japan's JR Pass offers exceptional value for travel between cities



THE AMERICAS

From the wildlife-rich Galapagos to the vibrant streets of New Orleans, the Americas offer an extraordinary diversity of landscapes, cultures, and adventures... many of them right in your backyard.

TOP DESTINATIONS

Destinations	Overview	Best Season	Must Do
Patagonia, Chile/Argentina	Glaciers, trekking, condors, end-of-world scenic hikes	Nov – Mar	Trek the W Circuit in Torres del Paine
Oaxaca, Mexico	Indigenous culture, mezcal, food capital of Mexico	Oct – May	Day of the Dead festival (late Oct/Nov)
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador	Unique wildlife, snorkeling, Darwin's paradise	Jun – Dec (dry season)	Snorkel with sea lions at Kicker Rock
Quebec City, Canada	French heritage, winter carnival, cobblestone streets	Jun – Aug (warm) Jan – Feb (winter)	Stroll Old Quebec within the city walls
Charleston, South Carolina	Antebellum architecture, Low Country cuisine, rich history	Mar – May Sept – Nov	Sunset cruise on Charleston Harbor
Cartagena, Colombia	Colorful colonial city, Caribbean coast, salsa culture	Dec – Apr (dry season)	Sunset cocktails atop the city walls

Practical Tips for the Americas

- Consider a cruise for the Caribbean, Alaska, or the Galapagos
- National Park Senior Pass (USA) provides lifetime access to all U.S. national parks for a one-time fee — an extraordinary value
- In Central and South America, use only licensed taxis or rideshare apps like Uber for safety
- Mexico and Colombia have transformed dramatically: many areas once off-limits are now vibrant tourist destinations

AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST

Africa and the Middle East offer the most visceral, awe-inspiring travel experiences on earth; from the raw power of the Serengeti migration to the ancient wonder of Petra carved into rosered sandstone cliffs.



TOP DESTINATIONS

Destinations	Overview	Best Season	Must Do
Serengeti, Tanzania	Zen temples, tea ceremonies, cherry blossoms	Jun – Oct (dry, best wildlife)	Hot air balloon at dawn over the plains
Marrakech, Morocco	Spiritual temples, rice terraces, world-class spas	Mar – May Sept – Nov	Sunrise camel trek in the Sahara Dunes
Petra, Jordan	Night markets, elephant sanctuaries, Thai cuisine	Mar – May Sept – Nov	Petra by Night candlelit experience
Cape Town, South Africa	Stunning fjords, wine country, adventure activities	Oct – Apr (dry summer)	Drive the Cape Peninsula to Cape of Good Hope
Cairo, Egypt	Pharaonic monuments, Pyramids, Nile cruise, timeless history	Oct – Apr (cooler)	Nile felucca sailing at sunset
Oman	Maharaja palaces, camel safaris, vibrant bazaars	Oct – Apr	Wadi Shab canyon hike and swim

Practical Tips for Africa & Middle East

- Book safaris with reputable operators: quality varies enormously and the experience depends on your guide
- Pack high-SPF sunscreen, insect repellent, and antimalarial medication where applicable
- Dress respectfully in Muslim-majority countries, ex. covering shoulders and knees
- Morocco and Jordan are both exceptionally safe and welcoming to independent travelers
- Many African countries require visas in advance, check requirements 3 months before departure

PLANNING YOUR PERFECT TRIP

SAM
TRAVELS

The 9-Month Planning Calendar

9 Months Out	Choose destination, set budget, research visas
8 Months Out	Book flights, major tours, and accommodations
6 Months Out	Book restaurants, activities, airport transfers
3 Months Out	Confirm all bookings, arrange pet/house sitters
1 Month Out	Download offline maps, apps, and documents
1 Week Out	Reconfirm all reservations, charge all devices

"TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW YOU WILL BE MORE DISAPPOINTED BY THE THINGS YOU DIDN'T DO THAN BY THE ONES YOU DID. SO THROW OFF THE BOWLINES. SAIL AWAY FROM THE SAFE HARBOR."

-- MARK TWAIN

HOW TO:

Pack Smart

The golden rule of retirement travel: pack half of what you think you need, then remove one more item. You can buy almost anything in the world's major cities, and rolling luggage is far less liberating than a well-packed carry-on.

- Choose luggage with 4 spinner wheels for easy maneuvering in airports and cobblestoned streets
- Pack clothing in neutral colors that mix and match
 - Aim for the 1-2-3-4-5 rule: 1 jacket, 2 shoes, 3 bottoms, 4 tops, 5 socks/underwear for a week
- A small day pack for city exploring keeps your main luggage locked at the hotel
- Compression packing cubes are life-changing!
 - Organize by category and always know where things are
- Bring a universal power adapter and a small power bank for long travel days



Travel Slow

- Rent an apartment rather than a hotel for stays of a week or more: cook some meals, shop local markets, feel at home
- Choose accommodation in a neighborhood rather than the tourist center
- Learn 20 words of the local language. Locals respond to the effort with extraordinary warmth
- Say yes to the things locals do:
 - Sunday markets
 - Neighborhood festivals
 - Regular lunch spot with no English menu
- Leave room in your itinerary.. the best travel moments are rarely the planned ones



Final Word

You have earned this. The passport stamps, the sunrises from mountain peaks, the markets fragrant with new flavors, the dinners that last three hours because the conversation is too good to end. All of it is waiting for you!

Travel well. Travel often. Travel with wonder.

LET ME PLAN YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

WORK WITH A TRAVEL PLANNER

I CAN HELP WITH:

- Custom itineraries for any destination, any budget
- Solo trips, couples' getaways, family vacations, & honeymoons
- Group travel coordination (yes, even with that one friend)
- Hotels, tours, transfers, restaurants & more

READY TO START PLANNING?

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SAM TRAVELS

"THE BEST
JOURNEYS BEGIN
WITH SAYING YES."