



Seniors Travel Tips

"Life's Adventures are Just Beginning!"

Travel Planning Checklist

This guide is to help you be your own travel agent. Consider the list to be a 'memory jogger'. It should be used to help you remember many elements of the travel planning process. This checklist is designed to help you think of things that you may not have thought about and to most importantly, have fun in planning your travel.

Determining the Realities

- What is my budget?
- What are my time constraints?
- What type of accommodation am I used to V.s.? What type of accommodation can I afford?
- What limitations do I have with travel insurance? Investigate the risks of not being covered for pre-existing illness etc. Is it worth the risk of an international holiday or should I stay domestic from this perspective. **PLEASE check this first before you plan or book anything.** If you are not covered, it could financially ruin your retirement if something happens.
- Transportation options

Background

- What season is it in terms of weather?
- What season is it in terms of travel costs – low, shoulder, and peak?
- Hint – avoid high / peak seasons where you will find cheaper alternatives and less people

Accommodation – what to look for and ask in your email, 'going direct'

- Senior discounts are often not necessarily the best. Be sure to also ask for 'best rate of the day'
- Ask if there are any value add options available to be thrown in?
- You may need to call some places
- Check out the seasonal variations in prices?
- Ask for any specials outside of your requested dates if you can be flexible?



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Airfare and Airline

- Consider travel periods and work around these, including – time, day, month
- International airfare seasons are – Low, Shoulder, and Peak. You should get these dates and work out your fare from here
- Avoid school holidays and long weekends for cheaper fares
- Consider early bird specials and compare to last minute
- Are the airport arrivals central to the city?
- Check if prices include:
 - Food
 - Priority boarding
 - Seat allocation
 - Checked baggage
 - Sporting equipment
 - Entertainment
- Credit card transaction fees
- Customer service capabilities
- Check-in policies
- Check the cancellation fees
- Check the change fees
- What happens if things go wrong e.g. if they cancel flights. Do they put you up in accommodation or are you left to your own devices?
- There tends to be very few senior fares offered these days. Best to keep an eye out in the travel section of your newspapers



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Tour Companies

- Compare large well known brands to local guides or organizations
- Find a local guide that specializes in your area of interest
- Check credentials: safety, reliability, licensed, length of business operation. Search for reviews on the Internet
- Check tour company personality – are you their target customer? Are you going to be compatible with other travelers on tour?
- If you book a package tour, is the guide local or intimate with the area?
- Check the lodging
- What restaurants are you eating at?
- Are local businesses providing the services? Are they reliable?
- Does the itinerary offered match your interests?
- Does the tour have the right balance of sightseeing and down time? This is generally a personal preference
- Is the company environmentally conscious?
- Make sure you thoroughly compare the costs and the inclusions of all the tour packages you are considering.

Car Hire

- How many miles will I be traveling? Then check best fee structure to suit your needs.
- Do I need unlimited mileage or a deal with limited mileage with additional mileage fees?
- Car size. How many bags do I fit in the trunk / boot? Be realistic
- Check rates on weekly V.s daily rental (sometimes it is cheaper to hire weekly even if you only have 4 or 5 days)
- Go online / call and check rates often, they change regularly
- Book a good deal when you see it, it probably won't be there when you get back
- Compare insurance inclusions**
- Are there secret insurance and costs to be paid on pick up?
- Does my driver license cover the country I am going to?
- Do I have enough money on my credit card if the rental company blocks the funds to secure the excess?
- What are the one way drop off fees?
- Check online travel companies, travel aggregators and car hire companies directly. There is a great variation in car hire rates.



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Online Travel Agents

- Check and compare online travel agencies
- Check and compare travel search engines
- What are the online 'service fees'?
- Customer service capabilities
- Cancellation policies
- Change and amendment policies and fees

Travel Insurance

- Read the small print and compare rigorously. Here are some items you may want to include:
- Travel supplier bankruptcy
- Trip cancellation in case of illness
- Theft
- Travel delay protections
- Medical emergency coverage
- Legal liability
- Cancellation due to insurrection
- Natural disaster
- Note. You will not find coverage with any company for pre-existing illness.

Miscellaneous

- Join loyalty programs
- Money – research the best way to take
- Book day tours of must see attractions to avoid queues