



## Travel Benefits For Those Ages 50 and Up



One of the best things about aging is being able to enjoy the fruits of your labor without as many obligations as you might have had when you were a younger adult. For example, many men and women have a lot more freedom to travel once they turn 50.

Many of today's older adults have a wealth of discretionary time, and those who focused on retirement planning from an early age have the money to fund a recreational lifestyle. Travel companies and other businesses understand that Baby Boomers and

other seniors are valuable customers and are rolling out the red carpet with a bevy of discounts and perks.

AARP Services, Inc. has long been a trusted resource in senior-based information and resources. The organization continues to broker relationships with various companies to arrange deals on travel-related services and products for older men and women. Members of AARP can link directly to deals through the organization's website.

In addition to companies that work with AARP, many other travel companies have discounts or other perks available to men and women over 50. All consumers need to do is inquire about such benefits. When in doubt, log on to the company's website or give their customer service department a call.

Here are some other ways to secure deals on travel and other services.

- Do some networking. Fellow seniors who log in to chat rooms or who are members of social clubs may have the inside scoop on age-based travel deals. Learn the ropes from others who have been there before you and take notes on which companies offer the best deals.
- Read the fine print. Understand the details of senior discounts and compare them to other promotions offered to anyone, regardless of age. You may be able to get a better deal or combine offers if you're not locked into a senior plan. Also, check the dates when deals are valid to ensure you can travel when you want to.
- Always carry proof of age. Whether it is a

driver's license, AARP card, passport, or birth certificate, carry proof of your age at all times. You do not want to miss out on a discount because you cannot verify you are 50 or older. Though being mistaken as younger could be a boost to your ego, it will not benefit your bottom line.

• Explore airline perks. Men and women 55 and older may be eligible for 'golden-agers' discounts at major airlines. Such deals are not typically advertised, so you may need to speak with an airline representative to secure the discount. Seniors also can request special services, such as baggage assistance, priority seating and a ride to the gate, at the airport.

• Try negotiating with vendors. If you cannot find a senior discount, consider negotiating with vendors

for deals. Local hotels or businesses may prove more flexible than national chains. It never hurts to ask for a senior discount.

• Embrace flexibility in scheduling. Unlike students or business travelers, seniors tend to have freedom with regard to the days of the week when they can travel. You have the flexibility to go and come as you please without having to coordinate with vacation time or school breaks. Use this to your advantage and travel during off-peak times when crowds will be small and rates may be lower.

Don't feel down if you're approaching another milestone birthday. Entering into your golden years gives you access to a variety of perks and discounts that can save you time and money on travel.

## Dating After 50



Sweaty palms, heart palpitations and nervousness are common first date symptoms. Many people can remember the feelings of excitement and fear they felt the first time they went out on a date as a teenager. But those who

find themselves back in the dating pool as mature adults quickly learn that dating jitters still may be present even after all this time.

Recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau finds that those over the age of 50 are now divorcing at double

the rate of younger people. Loss of a spouse is another reason the over 50 crowd may once again be dabbling in dating.

Recent reports say that 40 percent of online daters today are over the age of 50. Successfully navigating the waters of matchmaking sites or old-fashioned meet-and-greets means reacquainting oneself with a few handy tips.

- Don't open up with your extended history. Older daters have more life experiences and potentially a greater number of past relationships. Recognize that you both may bring former spouses and even children to the table, but don't feel the need to delve into all of your adventures (or misadventures) on the first date. Early dates are not for setting the entire course of your relationship. They're for getting acquainted and seeing if this is a relationship you want to continue. Getting too personal right off the bat can sabotage a

relationship before it starts.

- Take it slow. There's no need to rush anything along. Biological clocks or perceived societal notions no longer may be causing pressing relationship deadlines. Take the first date and any other subsequent dates at a pace that's mutually agreed upon. It may take several months to years before all of your truths come out, but for now focus on having fun until you're both ready to share more.
- Look for the positives. Before you decide a person is not for you, make a note of all of his or her positive attributes. What do you like most about him or her? Initial negativity or doubts may stem from your fear of

rejection. Be open to others who may not fit your type.

• Don't get discouraged. The person you first meet may not be the right fit. Don't let this turn you off of dating. The right person may be the next one around the corner.

• Meet in public places. Many dates begin with the intention to meet for a physical date later on. Always keep safety in mind when setting a rendezvous with someone you don't know well. Choose a public meeting spot, such as a busy restaurant. Ask a friend to check in on you via phone call. Consider a double-date if you're weary. Take your own car and meet at the date

location rather than being picked up at home.

• Wait for intimacy. It may take a while before you feel comfortable getting intimate with someone new. This person should respect your feelings and not pressure you into a physical relationship until you are both ready. Also, give the other person time to grow comfortable with intimacy. Dating after 50 means taking chances, going slow and exploring new relationship possibilities that make you feel comfortable.



Preplanning one's funeral is an easy thing to ignore. Actually, the best time to do it is now. There is no perfect age to begin the conversation, but why wait for the unexpected?

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