

Linda MacMillan

REINVENTING THE HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE:

Travel *for the* Young *at Heart*



The top five travel destinations for Canadians travelling outside Canada are the United States, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Cuba.

Tracy Kelvin, Senior Groups Co-ordinator with travel wholesaler Goway Travel (www.goway.com) in Vancouver says experiential travel is becoming increasingly popular with older adults. They are looking for quality of life experiences, not just pictures to admire when the trip is over. From cooking schools in Tuscany to ecotourism in Costa Rica or longterm stays to embrace a culture different from their own, seniors are planning vacations that reflect their personal interests, hobbies, and values. Although Goway is a wholesaler and not a Seniors Tour company per se, a large part of their client base is over age 50.

Tracy has combined travel expertise with her passion for golf to take her business in a whole new direction. Partnering with CPGA Golf Professional Ginny Golding, they plan and escort very successful golf adventures to exotic locations like Australia and Fiji, South Africa, and Mauritius in November 2008, and New Zealand in February 2009. Tracy coordinates travel for the emerging

category of **voluntourists**, such as groups of volunteers from Habitat for Humanity going off to various areas of our world to build homes for the disadvantaged and disenfranchised.

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Many older people are exploring new parts of the world and getting a better sense of specific communities by doing home exchanges. Instead of hopping on a tour bus for 1 hour or 1 day of scrambled sightseeing, people get to immerse themselves in the daily life of a community.

Home exchange Websites and people taking advantage of these opportunities are mushrooming. Tracy is now booking travel for a group going to the Gold Coast of Australia in October for the annual conference of an International Exchange group known as the Friendship Force.

Their mission is *To promote world peace and understanding by creating an environment where individual friendships can be established across the barriers that separate people.* www.thefriendshipforce.org

Medical Coverage

Whatever your personal travel preferences, out-of-province and out-of-country medical coverage is a must. The older we get, the higher the cost of coverage and the more likely there is a pre-existing medical condition that can affect eligibility for coverage.

If you currently have good health, now is the time to buy ongoing travel insurance and to consider coverage that can help financially if you suffer a serious health problem or accident at home or while travelling.

Critical illness insurance and longterm care insurance can be an effective way to protect against skyrocketing expenses at home and unknown expenses outside Canada. For more information, consult your independent insurance broker.

Depending on where you travel and the length of your stay, you might need to be immunized. Check with your doctor or a medical clinic and the Public Health Agency of Canada for requirements. www.phac-aspc.gc.ca

Vaccines

Get your vaccines at least 6 to 8 weeks prior to leaving, to ensure the immunizing agent has time to work.

Taking medications across borders can be tricky, as can sourcing prescriptions or medication if you don't take adequate supplies. Be sure to take enough medication to get you

through your trip but not so much that it would create suspicion.

Make a list of all medications you are carrying and what they are treating.

Leave an identical list at home with other important documents. Be sure someone knows where it is and how to access it.

Important Documents

Get your essential documents in order—Will, Power of Attorney, insurance documents, financial information, copies of travel documents, passport information, list of medications, and so on.

Be sure to have a valid Will in place before setting off on your next adventure.

Help people help you in case of trouble by having your papers ready and accessible.

That's where professional advisors can help immensely. If your clients are going away, ask them if they have taken care of these things and, if not, encourage them to do so. That can be as important for a day trip to Seattle as it is for an extended trip overseas.

With the trip booked, papers in order, travel insurance in place, passport in hand, and bags packed, savour the experience, take time to relax between days of exploring, and heed Mae West's advice, "You're never too old to become younger"!

Here are a few Websites to whet your travel appetite.

www.elderhostel.org
(educational tours and experiences)

www.eldertreks.com

www.seniortours.ca

www.disabledtravelers.com
(travel for people with disabilities)

www.snowbirds.org

www.gapadventures.com

Discount Travel/Last Minute Deals

www.travelzoo.com

Great deals, if you can be spontaneous

www.gotoday.com

Specializing in Europe, Asia, and package deals



The author's sister Mary Lightly in Tuk Tuk. Photo was taken by Mary's husband David Lowe. Both are teaching in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

www.vacationoutlet.com

Top-brand hotels and cruise lines

www.icruise.com and www.thecruisehound.com

Weekly specials, clearance sales

Home Exchanges or Rentals

www.intervac.com

Claims to have largest number of listings of any site. Individual country sites worldwide, including Canada

www.homelink.ca

Canadian site is part of the Brussels-based HomeLink International (www.homelink.org)

www.homebase-hols.com

UK-based Website specializes in exchanges in Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and other countries

www.homeexchange.com

Major site that claims to have 12,000 listings

www.seniorhomeexchange.com

Volunteerism

www.voluntourism.org

If you are a professional in any industry or business wanting to specialize in a maturing market (boomers or seniors), we encourage you to obtain the CSA designation to learn about the unique and evolving needs of Boomers and Seniors. For more information, contact Bob Poders.

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www.canadacsa.com

Linda MacMillan, CFP, EPC, CSA, is a Communications Consultant with the Canadian Academy of Senior Advisors (CASA). CASA offers the Certified Senior Advisor (CSA) designation course, training professionals on how to make their business more "Boomer and Senior Friendly."

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