

Wild at heart

Why retirement is the perfect time to discover the world — and yourself. Words: Rhiane Kirkby

When we think of gap years, we picture teenagers fresh out of school, heading for ‘time out’. Backpacking in Thailand, Australia or the Americas is, for them, the ultimate way to put ‘real life’ on hold while they discover who they are and what they want to do with the rest of their lives.

And yet gap years are fast becoming popular among older people, too, for the same reasons. Travel for this generation has become less about ticking off a bucket list, and more about a journey of self-discovery — meeting new people and experiencing new adventures.

Why do it?

“I tell every one of my clients to take a gap year,” explains retirement guru and mindset mentor George Jerjian. “A later-life gap year — or even six months — is not just about visiting dream destinations. It’s about exploring new places, ideas, feelings and experiences. Done well, it will stretch your mind, change your perspective and broaden your horizons. It will help you discover who you want to be, and what you want in this next chapter of your life.”

This is a sentiment shared by Glynis Sullivan. The receptionist

decided to travel the world as soon as she retired, after watching others sit and plan adventures for years, only to never undertake them.

“They became ill, had strokes, or just couldn’t travel,” she explains. “My mantra is: do it now — it’s later than you think.”

Plan ahead

A gap year, like any big adventure, needs careful thinking. Experts suggest you should start to plan at least five years before you retire and budget for it, too. Be mindful that travel costs are rising and that you’ll need to set aside funds for insurance, car hire and equipment. Remember that a high interest, fixed term savings account will give you a better return on your investment.

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▲ Discover new destinations and change your perspective PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY

Enlist the experts

Travel consultants the world over specialise in retirement gap years, and it’s worth taking their counsel. They’ll work with you as you map out your journey, planning a route and choosing the best times to visit.

With experts on board, you’ll avoid pitfalls such as the expense of peak times and the heat of the midsummer sun. And their local knowledge means you will get the most out of the destinations you visit.

Picking places to go

Deciding where to begin and end your adventure needs careful consideration. Your travel plan shouldn’t be so packed that it becomes a stress-inducing race to the finish line. But if you meander care-free, you may not make the most of your time.

If far-flung destinations are on your bucket list, the time to prioritise them is now. In years to come, you may have less interest in a long haul.

Words from the wise

As with any adventure, it’s useful to hear from people who have done it all. These are their top tips to get the most out of your travels:

- If you’re single, try travelling as part of a tribe. When you experience places with a group, or perhaps a grandchild, you see them in a multifaceted light.
- Be brave enough to step outside your comfort zone and do things you would never have imagined yourself doing.
- House-swap or rent a room at the heart of a community, rather than stay in a hotel. Put yourself in the hands of locals who know a place.

Navigate the complicated London property market with ease

Consider partnering with PCB Lawyers LLP, a law firm that specialises in real estate, for expert guidance in the often confusing field of the London property market

Dealing with the Greater London property market can often be a stressful and incredibly time-consuming endeavour. Whether its obstructive lawyers, a lack of communication, hidden costs or unexpected delays, the whole process can be confusing and anxiety-inducing. That’s why it pays to partner with a law firm that specialises in real estate who can provide expert guidance.

Say hello to PCB Lawyers LLP. The firm provides expert help to investors, landlords and homeowners so they can navigate unforeseen obstacles and complete property transactions efficiently and painlessly. At a time when many are up against countless other competing demands and stress factors, the legal process should serve to remove these tribulations, not add to them. PCB Lawyers LLP understands this and is committed to helping you avoid unnecessary delays and failed transactions, giving you speed, clarity and peace of mind in its property dealings instead.

The firm has more than 40 years’ experience in leasehold, new build, commercial, and landlord and tenant matters, and works with most, if not



all, of the blue-chip developers and agents, as well as giants in the overseas banking industry. It’s helped countless individuals and companies overcome these challenges through clear and efficient communication and by taking a proactive approach.

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