

[Travel Tips for Seniors](#)

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On July 27, 2005, Mike was interviewed by Dr. James Griffin, Station Director of KEOM 88.5FM. We spoke together about seniors and travel. Here's the script from that Community Focus segment.

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7/27/2005

Travel Tips for Seniors

Dr. Griffin: So, Mike, what are we talking about today?

Mike: I thought that, with a little summer left, it might be nice to talk a little about travel. There are many websites that provide resources and direction for seniors who want to travel. And, there are more opportunities than ever for rich travel experiences for seniors. The tricky thing is becoming informed about the destinations, planning your trip carefully, and personal security.

Dr. Griffin: When making arrangements, do you have any suggestions?

Mike: We have always found the recommendations of Tom Parsons, founder of BestFares.com to be very good. His site is a fee-based site, but much of the information is free. Additionally, the Internet is a marvelous resource for travel planning. In many cases, you can defray the cost of one year of Internet service by the purchase of just one Internet only fare. I have saved literally hundreds of dollars on individual fares just by searching the Internet. This goes for air travel, accommodations, and rentals. Generally, I start searches by checking the major travel sites like Hotwire, Travelocity, Expedia, and Orbitz. Then, for plane fares, I check the individual airlines themselves, both their sites and their phone services. Generally, Internet purchases will be cheaper. I also check the bid sites, primarily Priceline. You may also want to check a travel agent or the local BestFares. They often have a knowledge of special discounts, waivers, and special deals that can reduce your costs. After I have checked these resources, I feel like I have enough information to make a choice.

Dr. Griffin: In terms of planning, what do seniors need to bear in mind?

Mike: When planning the trip, careful consideration needs to be given to destinations and activities. The Centers for Disease Control advises that 4-6 weeks in advance of a trip, you contact the CDC's Travel Health website for area-specific travel advisories, immunization information, and specific disease-prevention steps. Additionally, you should make sure that personal affairs are in order, including the preparation of a Directive to Physicians (formerly called a Living Will), a Durable Power of Attorney for Health, a will, and any other needed legal documents. As well, passport matters should be in hand. Make copies of your travel documents and write down Travelers Check documentation at home. Make sure someone is available to check on your home while your gone.

Dr. Griffin: You mentioned that security was an issue as well.

Mike: Right. Security is very important. We already hinted at some of the issues when we reminded travelers to make photocopies of travel documents and to write down at home the serial numbers of Travelers Checks. Also, early in preparations, check out the State Department Travel Advisories web site. According to [About.com](#) you should register with the US Embassy if your traveling internationally and will be in a given country for longer than two weeks. That way, if someone is trying to reach you, the embassy will know how to contact you. Keep careful track of your belongings, and don't take anything from strangers. Don't take expensive items with you, and avoid carrying cash and multiple credit cards. Keep a copy of the front page of your passport with you and at home. Familiarize yourself with the laws of your destination. They may be quite different from ours. But, despite all those cautions, travel can be one of the very best tonics for any of us. [Miriam Beard](#) offered her wise thoughts on the value of travel when she said, "Certainly, travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living."