



Non-Traditional and Budget-Minded Accommodations for Senior Travelers



Perhaps your desire to travel is great, but your budget to tackle your bucket list is minimal. That's ok. If you are willing to be a little less conventional in your approach to travel, you can still save money while getting a more authentic experience.

Some of the best options for seniors include:

Hostels – No, they aren't just for backpacking 20-somethings who have left home to "find" themselves. Many overseas hostels are immaculate, loaded with amenities, and offer private rooms with bathrooms. They are a "best kept secret" in travel circles. Learn more at Hostelworld.com and Hostels.com.

House sitting gigs – Homeowners often look for older, more mature individuals to do house sitting—perhaps including care for the family pet(s)—and this can be one way for seniors to travel on the cheap. Resources to learn more include TrustedHousesitters.com, Housecarers.com, and HouseSitMatch.com.

Couchsurfing – Yes, seriously. This increasingly popular mode of travel involves joining a social network of fellow travelers (Couchsurfing.org) who believe in fostering friendly cultural exchanges through local meet-ups and/or hosting travelers (who stay on their couch, an air mattress or in a spare bedroom). Visit the site to learn more and join in!

House swapping – For people who own their own home (or even live in an apartment, if the lease doesn't prohibit it) and are willing to "swap" with someone in order to travel without incurring hotel and lodging fees, this may be a great option. Check out opportunities at Homexchange.com and [HomeBaseHolidays \(Homebase-hols.com\)](http://HomeBaseHolidays.com).

Adventures – Enjoy a full immersion experience in another culture through a variety of travel styles (and costs) by booking through one of these sites geared to adventurous explorers: IntrepidTravel.com, Gadventures.com, Wildland.com, and MythsandMountains.com.

Volunteer – One way to travel for free (or at very low cost) is to volunteer in your area(s) of expertise. Visit Idealist.org for thousands of opportunities in exotic locations. (In particular, explore options with "housing available.") Imagine helping out in a wildlife sanctuary in Brazil, at an orphanage in Tanzania, for a community development program in Uganda, or conservation programs in Costa Rica. All these and many more are listed on the site.

So, regardless of your budget, there is a way to go forth and see the world!

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