



We've been on at least a dozen bus tours since our retirement, including visiting areas of the US, UK, South America, Russia, Italy and France. My suggestion ... and it may not apply to every senior ... is to choose a tour that is not restricted to seniors. Yeah, we know. You've done your child-raising years and now you don't want other people's kids yelling and jumping around nearby when you travel.

However, just a couple of years ago, our most enjoyable bus tour took us from California's Marin County along the coast south three hundred miles to San Diego. Maybe we were just lucky, but the companions we enjoyed most and who related to us best were the children. Traveling with their parents and grandparents on our California tour were youngsters from Hong Kong, Africa, South Korea, Ireland and Scotland. As an often impatient senior, I've experienced unruly kids on cruises, tours, flights, restaurants and elsewhere. And I've griped that they ruined the whole trip. However, on this bus tour, our new young friends must have been too busy enjoying the beautiful California coastline and other wonders to misbehave.

I don't want to say anything against American kids. In fact, we raised two of our own, but our little bus companions from other lands seemed to be experts at relating to us, the old folks. They did it in such a respectful, loving way, they made the journey a delight. Often, when we were getting on or off the bus, one came up and offered a hand to help. When we were in restaurants, they were very well behaved, and sometimes shared their desserts with us.

Maybe it was because, unconsciously or not, they shared their joy and wonder with us. Therefore, next time you book a tour, consider one that includes kids, as well as the usual grumpy old folks.