



Guest Writer JRO'L, Springfield IL: Retired more than 10 years, I'm very fortunate to still be a happy world roamer. This year so far I've traveled coast to coast for a family holiday reunion, along with a Grand Canyon adventure and a cruise to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. I'm currently planning for an upcoming 50th wedding celebration next year in Las Vegas.

Am I slowing down at this very advanced age? Of course. It happens to all who survive to 65 and beyond. We need to compensate for it by being more aware of potential delays and hazards. To travel today, everyone faces the ordeals of wall-to-wall crowds, airport body scanners, gridlocked highways, crime, accidents and, worst of all, creeping terrorism. Some tips from this seasoned sojourner may help when you're traveling: 1. Be realistic about your ability to travel alone. After running through endless airport walkways for decades, I can't do it any more. These days, I always travel with a companion, for safety and to wheelchair me to waiting areas. I also get wheels for when we arrive at our destination airport, to make getting away from the mob scene as quickly as possible and into a waiting cab or bus.

2. Try to stay calm, no matter what happens. This is easier said than done these days. The inevitable traffic jams while driving to the airport, and then the no-spaceparking lot are just the beginning of the usual problems of flying.

3. Get to the airport early. If the airlines say make it two hours for international and one hour for domestic, obey the rule. That means you should be actually in the waiting area ready go aboard then, not still trying to park or looking for a bus from the parking lot.

4. Travel light. Leave the big, bulky suitcase at home. Not only do you have to pay an extra \$25 to \$50 to some airlines to check the damned thing. After your flight lands, you'll waste another hour fighting all the other passengers trying to find it on the carousel. Use a wheeled carry-on, and anything that doesn't fit, jam it into a backpack, purse or pockets of a roomy travel jacket. Leave everything at home except absolutely necessary stuff.

5. Accident prevention is a serious concern for the senior traveler. Whether flying, driving or on a cruise ship, be extra careful about streets, paths, walkways, railings, decks and steps. Be

totally conscious of every situation where uncertain footing can cause a fall. Don't rush for any reason, and when you're shaky about getting from here to there, get hands-on help with wheels subbing for feet.

6. Be safe from crime wherever you travel. Older tourists are vulnerable targets for thieves, pickpockets and muggers, especially in big city streets. Never venture down strange areas alone, especially at night. Don't walk around with large sums of cash on you, nor flash it when making purchases.

Summing up: You'll enjoy senior travel totally if you're constantly on total alert!