



There are many options for the holiday weekend travel plans. Active seniors hit the road for a favorite beach, forest, park or mountaintop. Others with more ambitious plans book flights to exotic lands, posh resorts and sunny isles.

If you plan the traditional holiday travel routine, a few suggestions may ease your way through the busy weekend with less trouble, some savings and possibly more enjoyment. 1. Get up and out early: If driving or flying, start your weekend on Wednesday or Thursday night. The roads and airports will be less crowded, and you'll find ticket prices lower. Also, if on the road, maybe the guys at the gas station haven't yet posted their sky-high holiday weekend prices.

2. Do the red eye route: If flying, check with your airline or travel agency about night schedules. Ticket prices are cheaper, airports are not as busy and road traffic is lighter. If the flight is more than three hours long, take comfy clothes and an eyeshade. Use the time to get some sleep. Then you'll be fresh for holiday festivities at your destination in the morning. Make your return flight a red eye, too.

3. Drive by night: If you're traveling with other adult family members, set up a schedule of each to drive in two- or three-hour shifts, so that you can keep going while others snooze in the back seat.

4. Driving vs flying: Consider the reality that a six-hour road trip involves about the same amount of total time on the clock as a three-hour flight, considering all air travel entails. And better yet, driving takes you door to door in one comfy vehicle, with no lugging luggage, security checks, schedule delays and everything else that stretches out the hours and your patience.

5. Go if you have the dough: If you live near a port city or can get there conveniently, try a holiday weekend cruise. They're all inclusive, cheaper and more convenient than booking a hotel or resort for the weekend. Also, once aboard, there are no worries about traffic, airport hassles and delays.

Travel on holiday weekends can be fun for everyone. All it takes is some smart preplanning and ability to keep ahead of what every other traveler is doing during those busy, busy days and nights.