



Visiting correspondent ELMcN, Chicago IL: I'm a travel agent, and want to do as much business as possible. However, many older clients ask me that question. Of course, it has no pat answer.

There's certainly no lack of pro and anti opinions, and no right or wrong way to go. When we get older and opportunities to travel increase, each of us must make up our own mind. However, for various reasons, I advocate Americans should explore their own country before venturing overseas.

An important factor today is the unsettled international situation. With widespread terrorism and America's somewhat uneasy standing throughout the world, those aspects alone should make any senior think twice before venturing overseas.

In the U.S. and neighbor Canada, there are unlimited opportunities for safe and enjoyable travel. It's there for the taking, whether you're a backpacker on a limited budget or a luxury vacationer with an unlimited bankroll. Consider it patriotic or just common good sense for Americans to support our own travel industry by spending their money here.

So, how do I list the wonders of America for travelers? Consider the natural beauties: national parks, Grand Canyon, California-Oregon-Washington coastlines, Rocky Mountains, Arizona deserts, beaches of Hawaii, Florida Keys, California Redwoods, Texas' Padre Island, Cape Cod and many, many other beautiful destinations.

For man-made wonders, consider New York City, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Nashville, the St. Louis Arch, San Diego, Washington D.C., Montreal and Boston. For fun, there's Walt Disney World, Vancouver, Branson, Hollywood, Las Vegas and many others.

In time of troubles, most travelers always believe the best place to be is home. And home means America. Therefore, as Irving Berlin wrote,

“From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam,
God bless America,
My home sweet home.”