

We planned to settle in a warm-weather community, far from cold, snowy Buffalo, New York. The RV was a perfect way to keep our plans flexible, because it could take us anywhere in the country on our own time schedule and budget. No need for hotels, trains or planes, nor all the costs and inconveniences they require.

Our RV has a small, efficient electric kitchen with stove, fridge, washer, dryer and other appliances. While we occasionally stopped at restaurants, we bought our own fresh foods and ate most meals in the RV or outside under our awning. When we stopped for fuel at highway rest stops, we often ate in pleasant nearby picnic areas.

With a target of a 2,700-mile journey to Los Angeles from Buffalo, we each drove about 150 miles in daily shifts at the wheel. We were on the road from 6 a.m. to sundown, with several rest and sightseeing stops along the way.

To make the journey pleasant and memorable, we spent some hours in St. Louis, Tulsa, Albuquerque, the Grand Canyon and Las Vegas. Hotel rooms away from the glitzy Vegas Strip resorts were actually less expensive than campground overnight fees. That allowed casino visits, live entertainment, leisurely showers, swimming, comfortable hotel beds and economical buffet dinners for several days.

Because we had the total freedom of our retiree timetable, we were able to savor all of the journey. We arrived in Los Angeles refreshed and ready to start our sunset years. We're now checking out attractive retirement apartment and housing communities in Southern California between San Diego and Santa Barbara.

While our RV allowed us to travel economically, it also provided us with the vacation trip of a lifetime. We wish other new retirees bon voyage to enjoy the same experiences and for many more years beyond.