

A very experienced CNN travel writer recently listed some inexpensive things to do when traveling to make the trip more economical and enjoyable. The list was excellent, suggesting such things as going to cheap local sports and entertainment events, picnicking in the parks, riding local buses and reading local newspapers for discounts and bargains.

However, as a very veteran wanderer, I felt the suggestions seemed to be aimed at younger travelers. Here are my simple, quick tips for we seasoned wanderers:



1. Eat where the locals eat. If you like Mexican, Italian, Indian and other ethnic foods, follow local families to their favorite places. There's a dim sum place just off Grant Avenue in San Francisco. Go up a steep street 100 yards, find the almost-hidden entrance to the basement, etc.
2. OK, so you're a senior tourist, but when in a strange land, don't make a big deal out of it. If you're loud, demanding, wear bright clothes, have a camera dangling and toss money around like breadcrumbs, you may as well put a sign on your back that says ROB ME. Blend in and know some basics of the language, and you'll not only be safer, but you'll enjoy the experience much more. If you buy food and other stuff from stores and outdoor vendors, looking un-touristy will give you a plus when bargain prices way down.
3. Before you go out to eat, get entertained or buy anything, check your hotel room magazines and the local daily newspapers. Clip coupons for discounts and freebies. Las Vegas is an example, now that Sin City is desperate for visitors, where you can find many deep discounts on dining, shops, tours, entertainment and other offerings.
4. In most places you travel, there are usually many inexpensive or totally free places to visit. Parks are free, as are some zoos, monuments and museums. If you're hanging around London's Buckingham Palace at the right time of day, you can see and hear colorful parades and changing of the guards.

With Las Vegas as another example of freebies, the whole night time downtown area becomes

an enormous overhead sight and sound show called the Fremont Street Experience. Other areas have free water shows, animal acrobats, animated fantasy figures, beautiful poolside walkways, fake pirate battles, bird sanctuaries and a dozen other attractions designed to enthrall any cheapskate.

So, when you're far from home and don't want to squeeze too many pennies out of your purse or wallet, check out the free and cheap stuff. The experience could be even more fun than events that cost mucho dineros, francs, yen, rubles or pounds.