

Wow, in March I realized I have been in this business we call travel for 30 years. (I guess when I admit that, I also have to confess I am no longer in my 30s!) Looking back at my career and the changes that have taken place, one facet that is different today from the early 1990s is the increase of family multigenerational trips that Americans are taking each year. I find that my own clients are reflecting this trend as well.

I find it exciting that many are intent on crafting memories with their children and grandchildren. And when creating those memories, there is no one ideal or perfect destination. I see some clients taking the kids to family-friendly spots like Disneyworld or Universal Studios. Others prefer Washington, D.C., for a history lesson; or cities like Paris and London to visit iconic landmarks; or Africa for seeing wild animals in their natural habitat. The list goes on and on.

Finding the destination that suits you and your family will take a bit of thought and conversation. Many find this process to be an exciting and important aspect of a successful trip. To make this process go smoothly, here are a few things I suggest considering.

Schedule versus destination

It might be necessary for you to travel during a school holiday or over specific dates. Restrictive travel dates may mean your personal choice might not be a “good time” to travel to a particular destination. If this is your situation--schedule trumps destination--this might help you decide where to go. But if you are keen on a particular destination due to your personal interest, a child’s interest, or other factors (heritage trip, next destination on the bucket list), then you might be willing to travel when it is an optimal time for the destination rather than personal schedule. Given this, most travel seekers will first decide if schedule is key or if destination is the driving factor.

On the subject of destination

When deciding to take the children/grandchildren on a multigenerational trip, here are a few things to consider when determining a destination.

- Is there one particular spot everyone wants to visit, such as that so-called bucket list destination? If so, easy decision! If not, then more detailed conversation and consideration will come into play.
- Consider their interests. What are your children/grandchildren interested in or fascinated by? Have they expressed curiosity or made comments about a destination? Can you match that interest or activity to the destination that intrigues them? Snorkeling in Mexico! LEGOLAND in California! Cooking classes in Italy! The possibilities are endless.

Other considerations

Budget: Make sure your desired travel budget is a match for the destination being considered. Holiday travel, for instance, can bring premium prices and larger crowds depending on the destination.

Duration of a trip: Determine the travel time to get to your destination and whether a time change is involved. If you are thinking of a long weekend and the kids want to go to Europe, it may be best to hold off on that trip until you can be gone longer.

Activities: Preplanned activities are important to make the best use of your time and to make sure you get to see and do what you came for. But while structure is important, remember to consider how much activity kids will be receptive to and how much you can handle as well. Don't over plan.

Travel professionals: Whether you know exactly when and where you want to travel or just have two or three destinations in mind, travel professionals can help you navigate the process easily to help you find your ideal destination based on schedule, interests, duration, and budget. They can then craft a personalized itinerary including flights, hotels, and prescheduled activities, freeing you to enjoy the pre-travel journey as well as the travel itself. You are embarking on an experience that no one will forget.