

F.Y.I.

Ex-Pat Living



A new online interactive resource from International Living, “Great Value Communities Directory,” allows users to explore highly-recommended towns and cities for low-cost retirement around the world: the “shortlist” of best options.

Compiled by International Living’s team of expat correspondents and editors based around the world, it identifies the communities most worthy of attention for anyone looking for a good-value, low-cost life.

Affordability figures prominently in the criteria used to select these great-value retirement destinations. But in addition to the cost of living, other important attributes help make a place comfortable and attractive for day-to-day living, including: rental and property costs; a comfortable climate; good infrastructure; proximity to amenities like beaches, entertainment venues, natural wonders and more.

International Living recommends Mexico as the #1 ‘easiest place to live’ for Americans considering a move. “The benefits of moving to Mexico have never been more apparent. Today’s Mexico is largely First-World, with high-speed telecommunications, first-run films (in English, with Spanish subtitles) and television shows. You’ll find shopping malls and supermarkets, all carrying many familiar products from home. But you’ll also enjoy a slower, more relaxed pace of life, where children still play in the streets and neighbors know each other. In many ways, Mexico today is like the U.S. was 50 years ago.”

For information, visit www.internationalliving.com

The Five Conversations Contemplating a move

...by Kirk J. Vaux



Kirk J. Vaux

Perhaps one of your New Year’s Resolutions is to begin the process of looking into retirement housing for yourself or for a loved one. Kirk Vaux, Senior Real Estate Specialist, provides these tips.

I think we all can agree, the thought of moving from your long-time family home to a retirement community can seem like a daunting task. Who can I ask to help? Where will I go? What will I do with my stuff?

However, if you engage in these five “conversations” prior to your move, I think you’ll find the entire process much simpler and much more rewarding than you may have expected. Complete this “homework” and you should expect to be a happy senior for many years to come.

1 – Family and Friends

A good rule of thumb is to communicate early and often. Meet in-person with your family and close friends. Listen with open ears, making sure you understand each other’s feelings, desires, goals and timelines.

Hopefully, when all is said and done, your loved ones will indeed be involved. Their help should include a) contacting the professionals typically a part of this process, b) accompanying the loved one on tours of senior housing options. c) help with downsizing, packing and moving.

2 - Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES)*

In my opinion, speaking to a Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES) may be the first person to connect with after your conversation with family and friends:

a) An experienced, full-time SRES will have all the professional contacts necessary for a senior move today...for example Estate and Elder Law Attorneys, Certified Financial Planners and Downsizing Specialists/Move Managers.

b) Your SRES will have extensive knowledge of the senior housing options available.

c) Your SRES will know how to properly prep and sell older homes for

maximum net profit.

* Senior Real Estate Specialists (SRES) are realtors trained to address the needs of home buyers and sellers age 50+.

3 - Estate Planning/Elder Law Attorney

There are a variety of legal documents you will need to have in place before making the transition from your long-time family home in case you become incapacitated or disabled after your move. These include, among others:

a) A will – the written document which designates how the senior’s property will be distributed at end of life.

b) A living trust, designed to avoid probate upon end of life.

c) Two types of powers of attorney (POA) – Healthcare POA and Financial POA. As the names suggest, the first relates to medical care and the second covers anything related to money.

d) A health care directive (or living will) – the document that explains which medical interventions the senior does or does not want at end of life in the event she is unable to speak for herself.

e) Also, the tax considerations of your home sale should be discussed.

4 - Certified Financial Planner (CFP)

Most of us do not know how long we’re going to live or how much medical attention we will need in the future. Over time your healthcare needs will

typically increase, meaning your monthly expenses will typically increase. A CFP will be able to tailor a financial plan for you using your existing assets, including your home-sale proceeds, retirement accounts, government benefits, long-term care insurance, etc. This will allow you to pay for an uncertain future without fear or worry.

5 - Seniors Move Managers/ Downsizing Specialists

A move after living for decades in your home can be a huge task. What to do with all of your stuff?!

Downsizing professionals are there to help! Typically they offer sorting assistance, floor planning, packing and unpacking. They can also assist with moving items to storage, shipping heirlooms to relatives, arrange liquidation of unwanted items and donations to charity. Seniors should figure out the scope of the work and get a couple written estimates. Also, check with the BBB and online reviews to ensure you are making the right choice for your belongings.

So in closing...Let’s be honest. Having some of these conversations are not going to be an easy task, and even the best laid plans will be influenced by changes in health, finances and available support systems. My greatest hope is that the “roadmap” presented here will be useful in creating a happy and productive living environment for you in the future. ♦

Kirk Vaux is a Senior Real Estate Specialist at Windermere Real Estate/East Inc. He can be reached at 206-850-4570 or visit kirkvaux.com.



Are you investigating care for your elderly veteran or family member? Are you surprised at the costs? If so, you’re certainly not alone!

The average monthly costs for assisted living is over \$3,400.00. With a need for assistance and living on a fixed income, getting the needed care can be a real challenge. Unfortunately, many people are unaware that help may be available from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Benefits exist that can absorb 20-50% or even more of these monthly costs. Normandy Park Senior Living is here to help you thoroughly understand your entitlement and benefit rights and help you obtain this vital assistance as quickly and professionally as possible.

Give Angela and Pam a call today and let us help. 206-241-0821

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16625 1st Ave. S, Normandy Park, WA 98148
t. 206.241.0821 info@artegan.com

The Eastside's Premier Downsizing Realtor

Kirk Vaux

Windermere Real Estate, East Inc.
206-850-4570
KirkVaux@Windermere.com
KirkVaux.com

DON'T MISS KIRK'S NEXT COMPLIMENTARY PRESENTATION:

The Senior's Guide to Eating an Elephant ...
Downsizing from your long-time family home, one "bite" at a time!

January 31, 2017 - 10:30AM
Evergreen Place - Independent Retirement Living - Renton

Please call **206-850-4570** to reserve your seat

With **Special Guest Speaker** Downsizing Expert Katie Munoz of Moving Forward