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The Most Bizarre And Unusual Retirement Lifestyles



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The idea of retirement typically conjures up images of Florida and grandchildren. But for retirees looking for a little more excitement during their golden years there are some more unconventional options to pick from. As Bedda D'Angelo, a financial planner out of Durham, North Carolina, puts it, "Don't get me wrong. Retirees enjoy their grandchildren but for the most part they have other fish to fry."

So for folks who might shudder at the thought of babysitting Frank Jr. for a more than a couple of days, there are few offbeat retirement paths to consider that aren't all about playing cards and bird watching.

Samantha Vient is a certified financial planner in Orange, California who specializes in working with retirees looking to move out of the country at least part-time. "Retirement abroad may not sound like the most unusual situation but depending on the location it certainly can be," Vient says. Central American countries like Panama, Costa Rica and Nicaragua are rising in popularity among some of her clients.

"The amount of time they spend there depends on how much they have to retire on. A couple retiring on social security and a small pension is going to move there full time. They will end up buying a house there for less than \$200,000 and stay. Often the cheaper medical costs are an incentive to stay there too."

Of course, Mexico is the top international retirement location for Americans. A study by the International Community Foundation surveyed 1,000 U.S. retirees living in Mexico and found that 79% cite lifestyle as the reason for choosing Mexico, and 75% attributed their decision to the cost of living.

"Whether you are wealthy or trying to live on your monthly social security checks, retirees who live in Mexico can stretch the dollar a lot further. Housing and healthcare (including hospice care) are the areas where the biggest cost savings can be realized," Vient says.

Some retirees never really retire at all and continue to work well into their golden years. But there's a difference this time around. "The pressure is off so it can be much more fun," D'Angelo says.

