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## New generation embrace the “golden gap year” as they head to retirement, according to survey

**A new generation of traveller is here with more than two fifths of over 55s (42%) claiming to be adventurous, according to a recent survey.**

A poll by Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines found that 37% of retirees surveyed described themselves as adventurous with almost a quarter (24%) of 55 and overs saying they have got more adventurous with age and three in 10 (29%) admitting they travel more now they are retired than they ever did.

More than a third (34%) of retirees claimed they never took the same trip twice and 38% said they were planning to visit multiple countries in 2024

with 35% of 55 and overs surveyed choosing cruising as the best way to explore multiple destinations.

**James Moss, Journey Experience Coordinator at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, said:**

“The gap year is usually a rite of passage traditionally associated with school-leavers, but our research shows the prevalence of what has been dubbed ‘the golden gap year’ where people over 55 are travelling more than ever before, particularly after retirement which seems to have unleashed their sense of adventure even further.

“This is a group that is embracing the freedom to travel and experience new things more than any other. They have worked hard all their lives and cared for others and now is the time for them to enjoy what life has to offer and really seize the day.

“Our guests are adventurous, curious and excited about the world around them. They recognise the value in cruising as a way to visit multiple countries, immerse themselves in new cultures, try new foods, explore the hidden gems of destinations, embrace the wonders of nature and are enthusiastic about learning and experiencing new things.

“They really love our smaller ships which can take them to more interesting places – to the furthest reaches of Norway’s lesser-known fjords, through narrow waterways and canals and to the very heart of some of the world’s most beautiful cities. And they also choose us for our friendly, warm welcome and our itineraries and on board experiences which are hand-crafted to help get the most out of the destinations we are visiting.”

In its survey of more than 2,000 people, Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines also discovered that people were actively choosing to set money aside for travel when they retire with more than a quarter (27%) of Brits already having a pot set aside for this purpose.

And, with the average retirement travel saving for Brits at £14,000\*, 55s and over surveyed are planning on spending an average £4,800\* per person on holidays in 2024 alone.

This tallies with the latest ONS figures\*\* which show a 37% rise in spending

by over 65s on trips abroad in last four years.

**For further information on Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, visit [www.fredolsencruises.com](http://www.fredolsencruises.com). Book online, call Reservations on 0800 0355 242 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6pm, Saturday 9am to 5pm), or contact your ABTA travel agent.**

### **“Retirement gifted us golden years of adventure”**

Lyn and Steve Stokes retired at the age of 48 with a dream of travelling the world – and 20 years later they have completed their bucket list of destinations.

The pair, who both worked for local government in Bedford, have ticked off 46 countries on 124 Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines sailings and have spent an incredible 1,330 nights at sea.

As well as visiting most of Europe, they have ticked off Greenland and Egypt and have spent five Christmases in the Canary Islands.

Steve, 68, said: “I distinctly remember being asked by a colleague what I planned to do when I retired. I had saved most of my working life and I suddenly realised that retirement was going to be the opportunity to do things we had always dreamt of – gifting us with golden years of adventure.

“Up until that point, we had tended to visit the same resort for two weeks every single year. We hadn’t really travelled much when we were younger and building a career had seemed the focus.”

Lyn, 64, said: “Retirement certainly made us much more adventurous.

“Some of the highlights for us have been visiting the southern tip of Greenland and standing on deck while we passed through icebergs, seeing the pyramids in Egypt and the Northern Lights in Norwegian Fjords.

“We have had 20 blissful years of retirement so far and although we have

ticked off the list of countries we had on our original bucket list, we fully intend to continue to travel the world by cruise ship.

“Cruises are the very best way to travel the world – you get on, unpack and then you are on holiday. Every night you go to sleep and in the morning, you wake up somewhere new. We particularly like the smaller ships and bespoke itineraries at Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines and their ships tend to be filled with people just like us who want to see the world in style.”

## Notes

The research was conducted by Opinion Matters, with 2,009 respondents in the UK, nationally representative across Age, Gender and Region, between 05.01.2024 - 08.01.2024. Opinion Matters abide by and employ members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles.

\*£14,056 and £4,800 average saving calculated by taking the mid-points of a scale with ranges.

\*\* ONS research 2022 - [Travel trends - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/travel-trends)

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