

Senior Discounts Save You Money

The number of deals available to older adults has risen sharply.

Need a reason to brag about your age? Now you have one.

Your senior status entitles you to discounts for anything from eating in your favorite restaurant to strolling through a national park. Whatever your passion, there's a good chance you can do it for less.

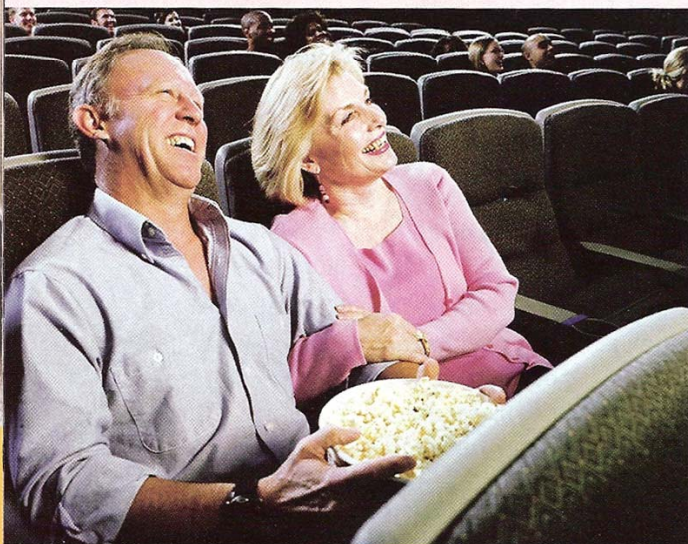
If what you're craving is pure entertainment, you can buy tickets to the movies, theater and casino bus rides at a reduced rate. If you're an early bird who relishes that first cup of coffee, fast-food restaurants may entice you to adopt a new morning routine by offering free coffee to senior citizens in the early morning.

The trend toward senior discounts just keeps growing, according to Joan Rattner Heilman, author of *Unbelievably Good Deals and Great Adventures That You Absolutely Can't Get Unless You're Over 50*. "Retail stores, restaurants and hotels feel

they must offer senior discounts to compete with others who offer them," she says.

David Smidt agrees: "Senior discounts are getting bigger and better," says the president of SeniorDiscounts.com. His online firm has seen its senior discount directory grow from 25,000 to 125,000 listings over the past three years. Reduced prices are available for home security and eye-care products, automobiles, bowling, golf and even haircuts! Log on to www.seniordiscounts.com or call 1-800-372-7513 to find what's listed in your area. If you don't have internet access at home, you can often sign on at your local library.

Feel like getting away yet convinced discounts only apply to those high-priced luxury vacations? Think again. Amtrak offers travelers, 62 years of age and older, a 15 percent discount on a rail ticket.



You can buy tickets to the movies, theater and casino bus rides at a reduced rate.

*Simply selecting
the “right” day
of the week
means bargains.*

Charter buses, Greyhound and car rental agencies also chose to get in on the action with senior discounts. (Ask about other discounts too, though: An alternative car rental rate may be cheaper than the senior rate.)

If you decide to take to the sky, some airlines allow seniors to fly for less. America West, for instance, deducts 10 percent for anyone 62 and older. The toll-free number is 1-800-235-9292.

Simply selecting the “right” day of the week means bargains. Some stores earmark certain days as “senior citizen days” so older people can buy products cheaper. You need only flash your identification and anything in the store is less expensive than what you see on the price tag.

Yearning to travel back to your younger years? Zoos are great for reawakening your inner child. Some zoos offer “Senior Days.”

Aching to get outdoors? For a mere \$10, the Golden Age Passport gives those 62 and older free lifetime access to the national government’s parks, monuments, wildlife refuges, historic landmarks and recreational areas. The



passport also provides a 50 percent discount on federal use fees for the facilities and services, such as camping, swimming or tours. Other passes are available to persons under age 62 for a higher fee. Visit www.nps.gov/parks.html online to learn more about the national parks and Golden Age Passport, or call 202-208-4747.

Kmart, Wal-Mart and Whole Foods markets offer seniors merchandise at a cheaper price. Museums, music, beauty supplies ... the list goes on and on.

“People are becoming used to discounts,” Ms. Heilman says, “and they now know to ask for them.” According to Mr. Smidt, “Businesses that never offered discounts before will offer them just for the asking.”

It seems entering the golden years has its advantages. The key to securing a better rate is remembering to ask. Assume anything can be had for a discount, and, in most instances, you’ll be right. ■