

Seasonal Retirement Abroad

Many Canadians for whom the principal motivation for retiring abroad is climate elect to maintain their Canadian residency and spend several months of each year in a warmer place. The southern United States is a popular destination for these so-called snowbirds because it offers the advantages of proximity and cultural affinity. Florida and Arizona, in particular, have substantial winter populations of Canadians, as do a number of other sunbelt states. Bermuda and the Bahamas offer the advantage of proximity for Canadians who can afford the higher cost of living in those countries. Those seeking a lower cost of living often choose Mexico, Costa Rica or other places in Latin America and the Caribbean. Destinations in the southern hemisphere, such as Australia, New Zealand and Chile, while farther away, offer snowbirds the possibility of an endless summer.

Immigration and Citizenship Issues

Country of Destination Regulations for Visitors

Retirees who live in another country for less than six months each year can simply visit that country as tourists. Most countries welcome Canadian visitors who come for recreational purposes, and a valid passport is usually the only requirement.

The United States does not require Canadian visitors to have a visa. The only requirement is that the immigration officer at the port of entry is satisfied that your trip is for recreational purposes, and you must maintain your tourist status while you are there.

Mexico is also open to seasonal Canadian visitors. A Mexican tourist card, which is technically a *Forma Migratoria de Turista* (FM-T) visa, is good for 180 days and can be obtained at any port of entry.

Many countries have more stringent limitations on the length of