

5 things to consider before a sea or tree change

Before you swap your briefcase for a beach towel, have you thought carefully about what life in a quieter location will really be like?

If you've spent most of your life in the fast lane, retirement might be your chance to change gears. And if you're considering a sea or tree change, you're not alone. Recent statistics show that many non-city-dwelling baby boomers are choosing to make their home in Australia's coastal or hinterland regions.¹

The idea of waking up to ocean sounds or birdsong can be tempting when you're used to the noise of heavy traffic. But before you pack your bags, remember that relocation is a major life decision. You should consider the financial and emotional impact it may have – and be sure to do your research, or you could end up regretting it later.

Here are five questions to ask yourself before you relocate:

1. What are you looking for?

Think clearly about how you want to spend your time after you leave the workforce – and remember, you'll have a lot more of it. For instance, if your ideal lifestyle involves quiet walks on the beach or fishing, a seaside town might suit you down to the ground. But if you love shopping, going to shows and trying out new restaurants, a sleepy locale could quickly grow dull.

Next, think about the people who you enjoy spending time with. Do you have friends in the new location – or will you need to start all over again? And will the move take you far away from your children, grandchildren or close friends?

2. Can you access all the services you might need?

When you're healthy and active, it's hard to imagine having health or mobility issues. But as you get older, chances are you'll need more access to hospitals, medical centres and specialists. If you move somewhere remote, these services might be far away or else could have limited facilities.

You should also consider how far your proposed sea or tree change will take you away from shopping centres, government services and other public amenities.

3. Have you visited the area in different seasons?

Before you commit to a particular destination, aim to visit it first at different times of the year. Otherwise, you may get a nasty shock when the weather changes. For instance, a north coast town's mild winters and sunny springs could become unbearably hot and humid in summer, whereas a charming rural property may experience plummeting temperatures when winter sets in.



And if your proposed location is popular with tourists, make sure you visit it first during high season, when noisy revelers may kill the vibe. On the other hand, remember that your entertainment options might be severely reduced during the low season.

4. Do you need a visa or permit?

If you're keen for an adventure, you may be lured to move overseas in retirement so you can experience a new culture and have the chance to make your dollars go further. But remember that your ideal destination may also have strict visa and permit rules.

For instance, if you're thinking of moving to Bali, be aware that an Indonesian retirement visa can only be extended for up to five years. It also has plenty of other conditions attached around your income and insurance arrangements.

5. Can you afford it – both immediately and in the long term?

Lured by cheaper regional property prices? While selling your city home might allow you to buy your dream home in a regional area, think carefully before you dive in head first. Remember, if your sea or tree change doesn't work out for you, it might be extremely hard to sell up and re-enter the property market somewhere else.

And if you're thinking of staying active in retirement by picking up some part-time work, your employment options may be limited in a quiet location.

Need some advice?

Moving somewhere new can be a life-changing experience, but it could also have a significant impact on your finances. Your financial adviser can help you crunch the numbers and tailor a financial plan to see you through the move successfully.

1 ABS (2015) 3235.0—Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia

Speak to us for more information

If you would like to know more, talk to your Count financial adviser. They can give you more detailed information on the best approach for your situation.

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