

Community Comment  
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## Summer Travel

Has the process of traveling ever been fun? It sure isn't today. In the old days, ordinary people had no time or resources for travel. Before the civil war in our country, most people lived all their lives within a fifty mile radius. The wagon and trails west changed this for a precious few. It was the railroad that began to change our concept of travel. Steam powered the rails and opened ocean traffic for more ordinary folks. But it was the airplane that radically changed travel for the masses. And today, we have flying busses.

Air travel has gotten dreary and tedious. It seems as if every flight is full and airports are now places of tight security, long lines, and delays and cancellations. You can probably tell that traveling makes me grumpy. But the destination in travel is still the same thrill it was as my first trip way away from home.

We had the happy occasion to be invited to a friends wedding in Cambridge Massachusetts. This very old college town is home to Harvard University. We live in a college town and love to visit them. Our friend's youngest daughter lives there and married a young man who was born and raised in Boston. If you can stand the travel and the expense, Boston is a great City to visit. A sense of history and patriotism is found everywhere. Even the small cemeteries offer surprising and compelling reminders of the founders of this great idea for government. To come across names we know from simple school history classes on a headstone makes you realize that these were real people. They were mortal and imperfect, and they helped create something brilliant.

The wedding was simple and elegant. Our friends lived here and for a time we raised children together. Their youngest and our youngest were the best of friends. Because they moved to advance professionally, the kids friendship lost its tightness. But this wedding seems to have rekindled something in these two young women. I hope so. Old friends are priceless.

Since we were in the travel mode, we took the opportunity to visit my wife's family in Michigan. Because we have family there, many years ago we bought a small cottage on a tiny lake in Northern Michigan; Up North as it's called. The cottage is simple and the lake is mostly used for non-powered boats, which fits us. I like to row for exercise and still-water kayaking is safe and fun. My other daughter met us with our two grandchildren and we spent a wonderful week doing nothing much but playing in the water. And, of course, we hosted a string of old friends and family members. We think it's important for our kids and theirs to get to know their cousins and aunts and uncles. And there are many to meet. One of Sharon's great nieces visited us here earlier in the summer. It was her first trip to the Pacific Coast. At nearly thirty and a teacher, we think

it's important to see new places and meet different people. She is a delight and we will be seeing more of her.

Travel has become dull and tedious. But the destination still makes it worth the expense and the hassle. The Pacific North Coast is different than the farm in Michigan. And Italy or the Netherlands are different than the U.S. Travel opens hearts and minds. It reminds me that incoming high school students are arriving for the school year from all around the globe. Welcome them and learn from them.

This has been Sam pennisi for community comment.