

LIVING *the* RV LIFE

YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LIFE ON THE ROAD

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INTRODUCTION

If you've been searching for ways to bring more freedom, fun, and travel into your life, you've come to the right book! We believe RVing is a fantastic way to live that offers all this and more.

In this book we'll share what the RV life is all about, what it offers, and just about everything you need to know to get you on your way. Many people are interested in RVing, but they get discouraged by what they see as obstacles—financial considerations, family, career, etc.. But what if you didn't have to wait until retirement to go on long trips? What if you could find a way to live (and travel) on just about any budget? What if you could live an adventurous life while still working and parenting? Our goal is to show you how to make your RVing dreams a reality so you can start living these adventures sooner rather than later!

Life on the road is not all sunshine and rainbows, epic hikes, and national parks. We still wash dishes, work, and pay taxes. But when you're doing these things while living a fulfilled, adventurous life, they seem a lot easier to manage. We'll give you a solid, honest overview of what to expect—the good, the bad, and the in-between—and share the stories of a wide range of people living the RV life to help you decide if it's right for you.

It's a big life change, with many personal, financial, emotional, and practical considerations that need to be addressed. And we're here to walk you through them. Each chapter will better prepare you for the road ahead and help you get from where you are to where you want to be.

As you make your way through this book, you're going to have a lot of questions, and we'll have plenty for you too! We recommend that you take notes as you go along and start creating an action plan to keep you on track.

And while there's a lot to learn before, during, and after you hit the road, you'll find that this book offers loads of practical information, guidance, and useful resources to help you navigate the journey. Because it *is* a journey, and one that will take you to places that you never even imagined—around the country, throughout the world, and within yourself.

Are you ready? Buckle up! You're in for one heck of a ride!



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"I'm so inspired by the beauty of North America that my age will not stop me from exploring!"

THERE WAS A TIME AFTER MY HUSBAND PASSED WHEN I FELT there was no future for me. I had done it all. I had owned my own multimedia business for twenty years, raised my kids, had a great garden. . .what more could I do? I was done. Wow, was I wrong!

When my husband, Gene, passed in 2013 after forty-seven years of laughing and loving, I was devastated. I'd never thought about moving away from Anaheim, California, because I loved my garden (you can still see my old gardening videos on *YouTube* at RVFreeDa). But I watched some *YouTube* videos that inspired me to research the possibility of living full-time in an RV. In early 2016 I made the commitment, and by November 8 of that year I had sold my house and was living on the road. I was sixty-nine years old, traveling as a solo woman RVer.

I didn't get rid of everything before I left, though. My husband was an artist, and I was his muse. His art made me laugh, and there was a lot of it in our home. I could not and still haven't parted with all of it. I plan on taking my time to savor it until I'm ready. Other than that, I'm free from the stuff that tied me down.

With my love for gardening, I fantasized about a double-decker bus with a garden on the top deck. Haha, like that would work. My best friend's husband was a mechanic who had passed a year before my husband. They had a 28-foot 1993 Class A with 50,000 miles on

Freida, 71

FULL-TIME RVER SINCE NOVEMBER 2016

YouTube: RVFreeDa

Instagram: @rvfreedausa

Facebook: Rvfreeda



it. She offered to sell it to me for \$500 and was happy to get it out of the driveway. I invested \$10,000 replacing aged parts and preparing it and the truck I tow behind it for the road, and took off with my two dogs—a German shepherd called Seesmic and my dachshund, Mikee.

I decided to celebrate my seventieth birthday (in 2017) in Seward, Alaska. So I drove up to Bellingham, Washington, boarded the ferry with my RV, and headed to Haines, Alaska. I had planned to go to northern Alaska, but the beauty of Seward overwhelmed me and I stayed there all summer. The camp host, Tim, and the friends I met there threw me a huge party on the beach of Resurrection Bay. It was amazing and the best birthday celebration I have ever had.

I started my return trip down the Alaska Highway in early fall of 2017, drove through Canada, and then headed to Tennessee to see my three grandkids and enjoy the holidays with them before returning to visit my friends in California after the best year of my life. And it was all because I discovered through all my RVing mentors on *YouTube* that I was NOT done yet! If your health is okay, then your age should never stop you. Fear that I was too old just about stopped me from having the best year of my life—and that was just the start. I want you to know that you are NOT DONE YET either!

WHY I LOVE RVING

CHAPTER 8

LEGALLY SPEAKING

Domicile, Mail, Voting, Banking, and Taxes

“The path in front of you is rarely a straight line. It’s full of bumps, twists, and turns. Embrace the bumps in the road. They are the road.”

—Ellen Bennett (a.k.a. the Apron Lady), American entrepreneur and chef

As you move toward your RVing life, you may be wondering about some basic logistical items—how to get your mail, and what address to use for things like your driver’s license, taxes, and bank accounts. Then there’s how to vote, pay your bills, and handle your banking. If you are maintaining a home and RVing part-time or taking extended trips, it’s likely that you will keep your home base. But if you plan to RV full-time, you will have many practical decisions to make around which state you will call home. The decisions regarding your full-time RV life are multifaceted, and you’ll need to weigh the pros and cons of everything when narrowing down to what will work best for you. In this chapter we’ll walk you through the most important things you need to know so you can feel confident that you are making sound decisions that will support your legal, financial, and personal needs on the road.

