**Resolve to Travel More in 2016**

As 2015 draws to a close, it’s time for New Year’s resolutions. And in 2016, one resolution worth your consideration is to simply travel more.

Wherever you go, the act of getting away can help relieve the stresses that build up in everyday life and make you feel recharged and ready to tackle whatever comes next. Travel is also a way to keep your mind and body strong.

That travel can help make you healthier and happier is not just an opinion. A report by the Global Coalition on Aging found that after being on vacation for only a day or two, the vast majority of people are able to leave the stresses of work behind and relax. According to Paul Nussbaum, a neuropsychologist at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Medicine who participated in the report, travel “challenges the brain with new and different experiences and environments.”

Some of the strongest evidence that there are physical benefits to taking a break comes from the Framingham Heart Study, which has followed residents of Framingham, Massachusetts, since 1948 and is responsible for much of our knowledge about cardiovascular health. Among its conclusions is that there’s a connection between more frequent vacations and longer, healthier lives.

The benefits of travel even extend to the workplace when we return. In 2006, the accounting firm Ernst & Young found that for every additional 10 hours of vacation time its employees took, their year-end performance rating improved by 8 percent. Employees who took more frequent vacations were also less likely to leave the company.

Think about the places you’ve been and the conclusions from those studies will likely make sense. Travel is fun and exhilarating. It takes you out of your routine, can give you a burst of energy, and can provide you with unique experiences that just might enrich your life.

Taking a trip keeps you active. It’s an opportunity to use your muscles and stretch your legs, whether that means walking, hiking, cycling, swimming or even dancing the night away.

When you’re finding your way around a new place, or dusting off your high school or college foreign language skills, travel has the capacity for keeping you mentally sharp, too. It can also give you a chance to relax by the pool, on a beach or onboard a ship and read – or perhaps write – that book you just never quite found time to get to at home.

Travel is a way to broaden your world and meet new people. It stimulates the senses with new tastes and smells and sights and sounds. It teaches all of us to be more flexible and patient, to see things from a different perspective.

By placing travel on your list of New Year’s resolutions, you can make a commitment to yourself to explore more of the United States and more of the world. Perhaps you’ll revisit a favorite spot, or take a vacation to a place you’ve never been. Maybe you’ll finally get to that dream destination, family trip, romantic getaway or adventure you’ve been thinking about for years.

If you’ve made travel one of your New Year’s resolutions, your travel agent can help you keep it.