

New place like home

When fulfilling careers wind down, it's time to break out and explore fresh horizons. Meet three tireless adventurers crowning their well-earned leisure with pleasure

Photography: Tamvisut/Getty

Mike Edwards, 62, from Northwich, Cheshire.

Lives at Sullivan Retirement Residence, Siem Reap, Cambodia



I lost my wife five years ago and shortly after that I sold my haulage business and decided to move somewhere like Portugal. I went to the *A Place In The Sun* live show in London where I met Tom Sullivan of the Sullivan Residence, simply because his stand had a huge picture of Angkor Wat, which I recognised from television history programmes.

'Tom asked me if I'd considered East Asia. I hadn't but, because they have a free two-week trial, no long minimum stay beyond that and no financial deals locking you in for ages, I thought, "What the hell? I'll try it for six months." I've been here over a year now and I'm really enjoying it.

'The 12-unit complex has a pool, a communal roof bar and a games room and, from the minute you wake up to when you go to bed, there's nothing to worry about. Cleaners come every week, food is laid on twice a day. There are two drivers to take you wherever you want, but I also often like the 20-minute walk into town. They make it very easy for you to be yourself here.

'On a Saturday and a Sunday, it's nice to wander about Siem Reap and decide where I'll eat. Sometimes it's a takeaway because they're so cheap – there's lots of British and European food, and obviously



Iconic Buddhist temple Angkor Wat is near to Mike's new home in Cambodia



The stylish Sullivan Retirement Residence opened its 12 apartments in January 2024

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Cambodian, which I really like.

'Tom's a brilliant host. Every week he puts on an activity or event somewhere like the Raffles Hotel, and then once a month further afield like the floating villages or to see the amazing sunset on the Tonlé Sap lake. I've been to the lake five times now. I've been to Angkor Wat twice, and I've also seen 50 monks in their bright orange robes playing in a waterfall, which was a first.

'I've got on well with the other residents but I also like my own company. There are a few bars I go to where I know people but, if I want to be on my own, I'll sit in the corner with a beer, my Kindle and read Jack Reacher or a historical novel. My daughters have been over to see me and, with FaceTime, I see more of them now than when we lived nearby. The biggest surprise for me is that I've actually settled into it. I've got a nice life and I'm not seeing a reason to go back.'