

Longevity Lessons From Blue Zones

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A 'long and healthy life' is what we wish for ourselves and our loved ones. It is the most used and most repeated best wishes greetings!

Most of us think that that longevity of life is just about food or just exercise. But, at the end of the day, longevity and quality of life is also about lifestyle – our activities, social interaction, our religious and spiritual practices, and how we de-stress. But physical activity built in our day-to-day life and what we put in our mouths, how much and when, is worth a close look, too.

Communities living with good health and longevity on this Earth have been identified from time to time. These are places where people routinely live 80, 90 or 100 years. It is worth examining the practices that the long-living residents of these communities follow.

In 2005, Dan Buettner with National Geographic termed these communities as Blue Zones. Five Blue Zone communities are described on the next page.



FIVE POPULAR BLUE ZONES OF LONGEVITY

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- ▶ **Loma Linda, California (East of Los Angeles, USA):** Here the Seventh-day Adventist residents rank among North America's longest-lived people. Living in tight-knit communities, they are strict vegetarians and a very religious group of people who teach new lessons on the power of faith, friendship, and fruit.
- ▶ **Icaria, a tiny Aegean Island (Greece):** Here the residents eat a Mediterranean diet rich in olive oil and vegetables and drink red wine. Icarians live 8 years longer than Americans, have about a 20 percent lower rate of cancer, a 50 percent lower rate of heart disease, and almost no dementia.
- ▶ **Nicoya Peninsula (Costa Rica):** Residents of this Pacific Coast peninsula consume a diet based on beans and corn tortillas. The people of this area regularly perform physical jobs into old age and have a purpose of life known as “plan de vida.” They are twice as likely as Americans to reach a healthy age of 90.
- ▶ **Sardinia (Italy):** This Mediterranean island is home to some of the oldest males in the world where a substantial proportion of men reach 100. They live on mountain sides, work on farms, and drink red wine. They practically follow the same lifestyles since Christ.
- ▶ **Okinawa (Japan):** Okinawa is home to the world’s oldest women, who eat a lot of soy-based foods and practice tai chi, a meditative form of exercise and have a purpose of life known as “Ikigai”.



LOMA, LINDA, California: East of Los Angeles, Adventist residents teach new lessons on power of faith, friendship, fruit.



ICARIA, Greece: Tiny Aegean island residents live 8 years longer than Americans, with 50% rate of heart disease and no dementia.



NICOYA, Costa Rica: Pacific coast peninsula, residents with colored houses, fruits & twice as likely as Americans to reach a healthy age 90.



SARDINIA, Italy: Mediterranean island, maximum male centenarian residents in world with same lifestyles since Christ.



OKINAWA, Japan: South Pacific islands, residents with world’s longest-lived women on foods that help live longer.

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“What are the similarities across these Blue Zone communities?”

- They get moderate, regular physical activity, most often as part of their jobs or livelihoods.
- They feel that their lives have purpose.
- They practice stress reduction.
- They moderate their caloric intake.
- They enjoy a plant-based diet.
- They have moderate alcohol intake, mostly enjoying wine.
- They engage in spirituality or religion.
- They engage in family life.
- They engage in social life.

These similarities provide a guide for all of us that want to live a long, healthy, productive life!

Blue Zones Power 9[®]

