

For parents retiring abroad, you can send locally delivered flowers, a photo book, a meal, or an experience they can enjoy together. Choose something that suits their new routines, and check delivery rules before you order.

Start with something they can enjoy together

Retirement may give your parents more time for slow breakfasts, day trips, or hobbies they have been putting off. A gift that fits those plans can feel more personal than a generic retirement keepsake.

Think about what they already enjoy and what is available where they live. A few ideas are easy to arrange from a distance:

- A bouquet delivered by a florist near their home, with a note from you.
- A reservation at a restaurant they like, if you can arrange payment in advance.
- A photo book filled with family pictures and short captions.
- Tickets to a garden, museum, concert, or other outing they would enjoy.
- A video call with family, planned around a meal or a small celebration.

If one parent loves surprises and the other likes a plan, tell them enough to keep the day free without giving everything away. A surprise lunch is less fun if they have already eaten.

Make flowers feel personal

Flowers are a lovely way to mark the first day of retirement, especially when you cannot be there in person. Choose colors they like or flowers you know they enjoy. If you are unsure, ask the florist for a seasonal arrangement that is easy to care for.

Add a note that sounds like you. Mention a memory, thank them for something specific, or say what you hope they enjoy in this next chapter. A few honest lines can mean more than a long message borrowed from a card.

Check that someone will be home for delivery, particularly in hot weather. If your parents have pets, ask the florist about the flowers and foliage in the arrangement, since some plants can be harmful to animals.

Plan around distance and delivery

Ordering from a business in your parents' country can be simpler than mailing a parcel across a border. You may have a better choice of delivery dates, and you can avoid the uncertainty of international shipping.

If you do send a parcel yourself, check the destination country's rules before packing food, seeds, plants, or other restricted items. Your parents may also have to pay customs charges. Allow extra time, and put their full address and a contact number on the order.

For a digital gift, check that it can be used in their country. Some tickets, subscriptions, and gift cards have location restrictions. It is also worth confirming that an activity is accessible and that its date suits both of them.

Questions you might have

What if I do not know their retirement plans?

Ask a simple question about what they are looking forward to. Their answer may point you toward a hobby, outing, or quiet treat.

Can I send one gift for both parents?

Yes. A shared meal or outing works well, especially if it reflects something they both enjoy.

How can I celebrate with them from abroad?

Arrange a video call after their gift arrives. You could invite family members to join and share a favorite memory.

For more detail, see gift delivery in another time zone