

Tips for Women Traveling Alone

Now more than ever, women are traveling by themselves for business or pleasure. And although their reasons for traveling are similar to their male counterparts, women traveling alone have very different concerns. From safety issues to cultural variations, women travelers encounter a variety of difficulties that can be avoided if the necessary precautions are taken.

To learn how you can travel safer, read these tips from the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA). Some of the most travel-wise people in the world, ASTA members understand that while it pays for both men and women to be educated travelers, it is imperative for women to plan every step of their trip — from packing a suitcase to choosing a hotel room — to ensure a safe return.

Know Before You Go – Learn as much about the destination as possible, especially when traveling to a foreign country. An area’s religious or cultural beliefs can directly impact you, compelling you to adapt your dress and demeanor to comply with local customs. Also, what is regarded as sexual harassment in one country is part of the social fabric of another, so avoid form-fitting or revealing clothing to prevent unwanted attention.

Welcome to Hotel Safety – Get to know the staff, who will be familiar with guests and are able to more effectively monitor who enters and exits the building. Ask beforehand if a member of the staff will be available to escort you to your room if you arrive late at night. Ask for a room on a higher floor near the elevator but away from emergency exits, stairwells, and any renovation work. Never accept a room if the clerk loudly calls out your name and room number.

While at the front desk, grab a card from the counter with the hotel’s name, address and phone number on it, and keep this card on you at all times. Once inside your room, make sure the door has a peephole and a deadbolt. If it doesn’t, make sure you don’t open the door to someone you don’t know.

Travel Documents – Make two copies of [important travel documents](#)—one set for the trip, and one for friends or family to keep at home.

Packing Smart – Pack light so you won’t be weighed down and look weighed down, both of which would make you an ideal target for pickpockets. Avoid expensive looking baggage and clothing, lock all suitcases and only use covered luggage tags with your office address written on it rather than your home. Carry only one credit card, and don’t keep all your money in one place.

Transportation - Explore transportation options available at your destination ahead of time, especially if you will be arriving late in the evening. Travel agents can help determine the safest choice and make the necessary arrangements. If renting a car, carefully examine maps, write out directions in advance and bring along a cellular phone.

Know Your Surroundings – Study a map of the area you will be visiting. Learn as much as possible about getting around the streets to avoid looking like a lost tourist. Ask the concierge about where—and, more importantly, where not—to go.

The Best Vacation Memories are Good Vacation Memories – There may be safety in numbers, but there is also safety in knowledge. With some advance planning and the advice of a professional travel agent, your vacation or business trip can be safe, hassle free and memorable.

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