

Women Traveller Travel Tips



Would your husband rather sit at home watching football than go globetrotting with you? Are you single or divorced and looking to travel with a group of adventurous, like-minded women? Or are you looking for a girls-only getaway with your daughter or best gal pal?

Women travel together for these and many other reasons -- which is why a growing number of tour operators and travel clubs have formed to cater to intrepid female travellers. These companies have fun, audacious names like Gutsy Women Travel and Wild Women Travel, and they offer a plethora of women-centric trips from hiking excursions in the Rockies to gourmet tours of Tuscany.

Whether you want to take an organized tour or would rather plan your own independent gals' getaway, there's a wealth of resources out there for women travellers. Below are our best safety tips for women travelling on their own, as well as a list of the top female-centric travel sites and vacation providers.

General Tips for Women Travellers

Most tips for women travellers, and indeed all travellers, come down to one thing: common sense. It's the kind of stuff your parents told you growing up -- don't walk in strange neighbourhoods after dark, lock your doors, don't leave your valuables lying around, be alert.

An intrinsic part of travelling is paying attention and adapting to the cultural milieu in which you travel, which means an awareness of gender roles and expectations. Learn everything you can about the values and customs of a country, and be aware of how you should tailor your behaviour to fit into that culture.

Don't do anything you can't imagine a local woman doing (or yourself doing at home) -- like following strangers to out-of-the-way places or accepting lodging or rides from men you don't know. It's also not a good idea to wear flashy jewellery or show a lot of money in public places.

But more than that be aware of local attitudes toward women in the country in which you are travelling. Do women tend to wear concealing clothes in that country? If so, don't draw attention to yourself with short shorts, plunging necklines or tight tank tops. Many women travel experts recommend wearing long, loose-fitting clothes when travelling internationally, which also offers the added benefit of concealing money belts.

In some cultures, a woman travelling alone is considered to be available. If you want to ward off unwanted advances from foreign men, try wearing a (fake) wedding ring. Avoid eye contact with unknown men, as this may be construed as an invitation.

Know the equivalent of "911" in whatever country you're visiting, and make sure you have a functioning cell phone with you at all times.

Travel Tips For Women (cont)

Leave a copy of your itinerary with a friend or family member back home and be sure to check in regularly by phone or e-mail. It's also a good idea to register your presence with your home country's embassy when you're travelling internationally. Finally, when you leave your hotel, let the front desk know when you should be expected back.

Walk confidently, as though you know exactly where you're going (even if you don't!). Don't stop in the middle of the sidewalk to look at a map or rifle through your purse; distracted travellers are easy prey for thieves.

Conceal some cash in your shoe, sock or bra -- enough to pay for a cab ride if you find yourself in a dangerous spot.

If you are attacked, use caution when reporting the crime. In certain countries, police may not be very sympathetic to female victims. Your hotel or embassy can advise you of the best course of action.

Trust your instincts. If you feel uneasy or uncomfortable in a certain situation, move on.

Hotel Security Tips

Choose the right accommodations. Hotels that require room access through a lobby area are infinitely more secure than motels with access from the outside. We also recommend choosing a B&B or inn rather than a large hotel with a cavernous lobby and hundreds of rooms. Loitering strangers are much more conspicuous in smaller lobbies, and many women feel safer and less anonymous at a property where the front desk staff recognizes their face and is aware of who's coming and going.

Before booking a hotel, research the neighbourhood. How safe is it? Are there nearby businesses that will be open and busy after dark? It's worth paying a little extra for a hotel in a more secure neighbourhood.

Avoid first-floor rooms -- break-ins are less likely on the upper levels of a hotel. Ask for a room near the elevators.

When checking in, ask the desk clerk to write your room number on a piece of paper rather than announce it. If he or she announces it in a crowded lobby, ask for a different room.

When you enter an elevator, position yourself next to the button panel and make a mental note of where the "alarm" or "bell" button is so that you can push it if needed.





Women Travel Tips

If your hotel room comes with a sliding glass door and balcony, always check to be sure the door is locked. Your balcony may be connected to the one next door, granting easy access to your room. You'll want to make sure your windows are locked as well. Check each time you re-enter the room -- housekeeping may have unlocked them for one reason or another. Familiarize yourself with the way the locks on the doors and windows work so you can release them quickly in case of an emergency. If any of your locks don't work, ask for a new room.

Don't open your door for anyone, including "housekeeping" or "room service," without verifying the identity of the person at your door. If you haven't called for room service, call the hotel's restaurant. Do not open the door.

Sleep with comfortable shoes and your room key on your nightstand. A small flashlight is a good item to have nearby as well.

Don't give your room number to strangers, no matter how friendly. It's also wise to let men think that you're traveling with a companion who is sharing the room with you.

Unattended hotel fitness centers or pools are best avoided, especially if there aren't many other guests there.

If you take a cab back to your hotel after a late-night dinner or meeting, don't be afraid to ask the driver to wait until you are inside the hotel before he pulls away. Add an extra \$1 - \$2 dollars to the tip and he'll do so with a smile.

If you are trying to park in the hotel lot late at night and someone is lurking around the lot, park in front of the door in the check-in area and go to the front desk. Ask the clerk to have someone from hotel security meet you in the lot and escort you into the hotel.

Women who feel foolish about asking for extra security are women who endanger themselves. Use your gut instinct. If you feel uncomfortable, scared or threatened, there's probably something wrong. Hotel security is there for a reason. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

Driving Tips

Remember to keep your car doors locked at all times. If you have a breakdown, use your cell phone to call the police and then wait in your car with the doors locked. If you are approached by someone other than the police, stay in the car and crack your window open.

Park in well-lit areas. Do not keep anything in your car that will be an invitation for theft. Lock belongings in your trunk and take valuables into your hotel room with you. Avoid renting a hatchback car -- everything in your trunk will be visible to thieves



Ask for an up-to-date map when you arrive in a city or rent a car. If you need to ask for directions, ask families or women with children. Say: "Where is X? I'm meeting my husband there."

Source – Independenttraveller.com

--updated by Sarah Schlichter