

# TRAVEL SMART TIPS

## Tips For Women Traveling Alone

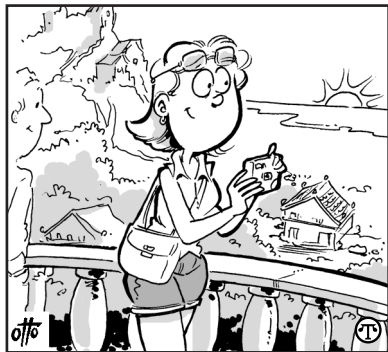
(NAPSA)—Women are increasingly traveling by themselves for business or pleasure. And while their reasons for traveling are similar to their male counterparts, women traveling alone have very different concerns. From safety issues to cultural variations, women travelers encounter a variety of difficulties that can be avoided if the necessary precautions are taken.

The American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) explains 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. Here are some tips from the ASTA travel experts:

• **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.

• **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. 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.

• **Travel Documents**—Make



**For women traveling alone, there are a number of factors to consider when planning the trip to ensure safe passage and return.**

two copies of important travel documents—one 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.

• **Transportation**—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 important, where not—to go.

For more information, visit [www.travelsense.org](http://www.travelsense.org).