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Security Tips For First Time Travelers

By Pat Murphy

For some, traveling is a way to do business while for others, it is their time for enjoyment. Frequent

travelers often know the ins and outs of traveling locally or overseas. However, statistics reveal that these travelers are usually people who travel for business whose main objective is to meet and talk to clients. Clearly, all they need is a hotel room. But pleasure fliers, or those who travel for vacations need more than just hotels. They travel to learn and explore new places and cultures. If you are one of them or planning to be just like them, you need a handful of general travel security tips to help keep your travel safe and enjoyable.

It is never a bad idea to learn something about the culture of the place that you plan to visit. Learn about the social norms, manners of dress, cuisine, form of government, and religious practices. Informing yourself about a nation's history, culture, customs and politics make your stay more significant. Even if English is a global language and spoken almost everywhere, it is to your advantage to try to learn the language of the locals. Grab a few useful phrases, greetings, and all other relevant information about your destination from the local library, travel books, and the Internet. Another general travel tip that is usually neglected is bringing light luggage. A lighter and less bulky luggage allows you to explore more freely and gives you ease of movement. This does not mean that you leave your essentials behind; rather, this means that you take only what is essential. Take only your toiletries, medicines, money substitutes, camera, and enough change of clothes. It is advisable to take clothes that are versatile and easily matched with other clothes in your luggage. For example, black trousers or pants go well with almost anything more than printed or embroidered jeans. It is also important to secure all travel documents like passports and travel insurance. Invest in a body document bag and wear it under your clothes. Better yet, deposit valuable documents in the hotel safe. Being tourists in a new place gets you special treatment but it also makes you a special target for theft.

Avoiding overseas theft is one factor that makes traveling safety necessary. One way to avoid being a target is to dress simply and conservatively. The less jewelry, gadget, or expensive accessories you put on, the less your risks of getting robbed are. Thieves are attracted like bees to a honey pot to any show of affluence. Consider bringing only travelers's check or a credit card or two as cash substitute. Putting name tags on your bags and luggage is a good idea but it also allow bad elements to identify you. Travel security specialists suggest putting covered tags on the inside and outside your luggage. A

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hint for those who plan to travel: get the local US consul's office address and phone number. They provide assistance to American travelers who find themselves in trouble. These general travel tips do not mean to scare you out of international travel but to put you in your guard. Abroad, you are not in your territory and you are subject to the local laws; it is better to exercise safety practices.

For more valuable information on General Travel, please visit

<http://www.freewheelingtravel.com>

A Travelers Guide To Currency Exchange

By Stephen Kreutzer

Exchanging currency is something frequent travelers must become familiar with. There are many different currencies around the world. Finding out how to exchange currency and where to do it can help travelers get the most out of their money.

The following outlines the major places that will exchange money for travelers. Also indicated are any problems or concerns about exchanging currency using the methods.

1. Airports. Airports will exchange currency for travelers at desks they have set up for this purpose. They usually offer exchange rates that are the worst available. They charge high fees which can sometimes be as high as 20% of the exchange amount. This type of exchange is most convenient for the time pressured traveler. It is conveniently located at the airport and it is easy to do a transaction.
2. Banks. Local banks are happy to exchange currency. They often offer the best rates and do not charge fees that are too high. Banks tend to use exchange rates based on the actual traded values. Banks, however, are limited in hours of operation and may be unable to exchange certain currency or large amounts.
3. Credit and Debit cards. This is the quickest and easiest way to exchange currency. Most major credit cards work world wide without hassle. The exchange rates are competitive which keeps them low. Travelers should alert their credit card company that they are using it outside of their home country so it does not get deactivated as security precaution.
4. ATM machines. They are easy to use, but also pose a risk of high fees associated with their use. Travelers wishing to use ATM's outside of their home country should discuss fees first with their bank.

Travelers may find many different places to exchange currency. The four listed here are the most commonly used options. Each has an up and down side and the one a traveler chooses depends on their own needs and concerns.

Stephen Kreutzer is a freelance publisher based in Cupertino, California. He publishes articles and reports in various ezines and provides resources on currency exchange at

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