

Tips for the solo traveller

Taking off on a solo travel adventure can be exhilarating, unfiltered by anyone else's preferences or prejudices, where you're able to indulge your every whim on your time and your terms. Of course, travelling alone can have some disadvantages too, especially around safety.



Ensure that your passport is in good condition - lamination is intact, pages are not torn or missing and the dates are valid for at least a few weeks after your planned return. A passport that appears to have been tampered with could cause you a great deal of inconvenience, including refusal of entry at a foreign airport.

Protect your vital travel documents and cash - Take all necessary precautions to safeguard your passport and other ID documents, travel tickets, money, credit cards and insurance documents. Avoid carrying these items together, as a loss or theft could leave you entirely without any identification and funds. Leave copies of your documentation and itinerary with someone at home to be safe. Many hotels also have a locked safe in which you can keep passports. The added benefit of taking out travel insurance is that in the event of your travel documents being lost or stolen, assistance can be provided by directing you to the nearest embassy or consulate or getting in touch with your bank if you require a replacement card.

Get covered for any medical emergency - A medical mishap while travelling abroad could be a serious spanner in the works - and a very expensive exercise. To ensure the costs for any unexpected emergency medical treatment and possibly medical evacuation can be paid upfront and won't be added to your travel budget, it is essential to have travel insurance in place that covers any medical emergencies and provides support and on-the-ground assistance in a time of crisis.

Get in touch

The key to staying safe on your solo travels is thorough preparation. For more information on how best to protect your solo trip visit www.chubbtravelinsurance.co.za

W While you may relish the time to be alone with your thoughts and just catch up on 'me' time', Chubb Travel Insurance provides some important tips to keep your solo travels safe and hassle-free:

Thoroughly check user ratings and online reviews - We've all heard the horror stories of the photoshopped images and exotic destination descriptions that turn out to be a far cry from reality. The last thing you want is to walk into a dodgy dive when you're miles away from home, and on your own. Make use of online travel platforms to get honest reviews from travellers who have been there and can provide first-hand experience.

Understand social and local customs - Savour the local cuisine, visit the historical sites and immerse yourself in the culture, but also take the time to research local and social customs. While it's true that most tourist destinations are forgiving of minor transgressions, it's always good to know what the accepted behaviours and norms are. Religious and customary beliefs will also influence aspects such as dress code, manner of address and greeting,

consumption of alcohol and so on. Find out before you find yourself in an awkward situation.

Safety first - Long flights are hard on children and harder on parents when dealing with an inconsolable child who is completely out of routine. Try plan flights around your child's sleeping habits if possible. Make sure you keep handy any required medication prescribed by your doctor. And remember to make the flight part of the journey - download plenty of apps and games on your phone or tablet to keep your little one entertained.

Embrace technology - Many places offer free-wi-fi so your smart-phone or tablet will be an absolute travel-must to take photos and videos and stay in touch with family and friends via Skype and Whatsapp. Remember that data roaming can be very expensive, so make sure your phone is unlocked for the country you're visiting and rather buy a local SIM card with a data plan. Another great idea is to scan and save all your vital documents to the cloud so you can access copies from anywhere - Dropbox is a great cloud solution for this purpose and can be easily linked to your phone or tablet.