

## How to Travel Solo Successfully

James Baldwin said it best. "I met a lot of people in Europe. I even encountered myself" (Baldwin, 2014). Solo travel will not only reveal colorful new heights, it will also introduce you to yourself - your resiliency, your sense of adventure, your independence. Learning how to travel solo is as intrinsic as tying your shoes, and it is something that can be learned today.

The first, most obvious, way to travel solo successfully is to research your area. The number one indicator of a tourist is someone stopped in the middle of the sidewalk scanning the GPS on their phone. According to World Travel News Report, four in fifteen tourists will be pickpocketed if they stand still on a busy street (Parker, 2019). Arrive well-informed on the area. Understand the public transportation system to the point where you can blend in as a local.

Also, in line with safety, you may want to splurge on accommodations. You can stay alone in a hostel, but read the reviews carefully. Make sure it is in a safe area and security is a priority for them. You might even want to consider a private room, some of which include a private bath.

In terms of fun, pack for your lack of companionship. Bring a blank journal to record your adventures. Pack a paperback to enjoy while you wait out a rainstorm in a coffee shop. World traveler Samantha Byrnes says, "I never travel with friends. When I'm exploring a new continent, my journal is my only sidekick" (Byrnes, 2018).

This allows her to absorb her new surroundings, make new acquaintances, and focus on the act of encountering herself. Byrnes continues, "We lost sight of ourselves in the day-to-day. We focus on work, family, to-do lists, chores. Solo travel allows us to return to ourselves so that, when we resume our day-to-day activities, we can give our all" (Byrnes, 2018).

Learning how to travel solo successfully is an achievable feat. You can stay safe if you remain knowledgeable on the area and choose your accommodations wisely. Beyond that, you can experience true transformation through the simple act of carrying a tattered old journal. What do you say? Will you explore solo travel? Choose wisely, for it just might change your life forever.