

consider beginning an appropriate exercise program at least a month before your departure.

Expecting to carry a backpack? You might want to do a few training walks to get used to it. You can start light and work your way up to carrying the full capacity.

If you're experiencing the hot flashes of menopause, pack a

In many parts of the world, a woman's traditional role is in the home. The concept of a woman as a business executive is much less common. Understanding the customs and proper business protocol at your destination is imperative.

Learn to greet your business host in his or her language. This show of respect and consideration is always appreciated.

Always meet your business contacts in the lobby of your hotel. Avoid giving out your room number.

Print your business cards in English on one side and in the language of the host country on the other. Especially in countries

wardrobe of "layers" that can easily be adjusted to your fluctuating body temperature.

A small magnifying glass is perfect for reading the tiny print on maps.

Make very sure that you have adequate health and travel insurance.

In India, men generally don't shake hands with women. They greet them by placing the palms of their hands together and bowing slightly.

where women generally don't hold key corporate positions, this will eliminate any misunderstanding about the rank and position you hold within your profession.

Find out the correct way to give and receive business cards. In China (including Hong Kong) and Japan, you're expected to use both hands. However, in parts of the Middle East, you must never use your left hand, as that hand is considered unclean.

Dress appropriately. If local women don't wear trousers to the office, you shouldn't either. Wear sensible shoes that allow you to stand for long periods and to move quickly if necessary.

Learn how to decline food graciously during business dinners so that no one will be insulted. For example, in Asia, leave some food in your bowl. This implies that your hosts have fed you well and you're no longer hungry.

Understand that, in some countries, even if you do business with men during the day, you may be seated separately, with women only, for evening dining.

Canada has over 270 "points of service" worldwide where consular officials are ready to help you if needed. If you encounter problems while travelling abroad, contact a Canadian embassy or consulate. Addresses and telephone numbers are listed in our booklet *Bon Voyage... But*.

In Korea, the highest-ranked businessperson, whether female or male, is expected to enter and exit a meeting-room first.

In certain cultures, businessmen may consider it acceptable to proposition or to flirt with visiting businesswomen. Don't be offended. A simple and direct "no" is appropriate.

Before offering gifts to your hosts, make sure that the type of present and even the colour of the wrapping paper are culturally acceptable.

If you require urgent assistance abroad, you can make a collect call to Foreign Affairs Canada in Ottawa, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at (613) 996-8885, or e-mail us at sos@international.gc.ca. See *Bon Voyage... But* for more information on consular assistance.