

Christine was checking her email at an Internet café in Barcelona, when a young man sat down next to her and began to chat. As the stranger was leaving, Christine realized that her knapsack, containing her wallet and travel documents, had disappeared. She shouted, "*¡Basta!*" and confronted the thief before he could escape. From then on, she never put her bag down for even a second in public areas.

If you are travelling in developing countries, pack a small flashlight. Power failures can be frequent.

Study a street map of your destination in advance. Avoid opening a map while out on the street – or do so as discreetly as possible – in order not to give the impression that you are lost or vulnerable.

Well before leaving home, be sure to obtain a valid Canadian passport and an appropriate visa for every country on your itinerary. Understand the terms of each visa, as you could be arrested for violating visa conditions in some countries.

Maintain contact with friends and family back home, especially if you are travelling solo. Whether by letter, fax, email or telephone, keep them posted on where you are and where you are heading next.

If touring solo for the day, leave a note in your room explaining where you are going. If you do not return as planned, this information could be used to help track you down.

Always carry the address or a business card from your hotel or bed and breakfast. If you get lost, approach another woman on the street and show her the address. She may be able to point you in the right direction.