

**Travel Light, Travel Smart**

It's a good idea to travel light. As a woman alone, you'll be far less vulnerable and much more independent if you're not loaded down with heavy luggage and extra bags. Depending on your style of travel, a small suitcase on wheels or a backpack is a good luggage choice. Try to make sure you have at least one hand free at all times.

A few days before your departure, you might want to try some test walks. Pack your bag and make your way around the block. Visualize yourself climbing subway stairs or getting on and off a train unassisted. You'll probably go home and reduce the bag's contents by half.

A fanny pack, tote bag or small day pack is useful for shorter excursions. If you plan to do a lot of shopping, you'll need an extra lightweight bag to bring your souvenirs home.

It's smart to keep your luggage locked at all times. Carry several small locks and two sets of keys.

Avoid expensive-looking camera bags. They may only serve to

identify you as a wealthy tourist. Be creative. Try using a diaper bag instead.

Luggage tags with flaps that hide your name and address from inquiring eyes are a smart idea. They protect your anonymity and thwart would-be thieves who may try to identify the empty home you've left behind.

Taking a handbag? One that has zipped inner compartments for added security and a thick shoulder strap that goes over your head as well as your shoulder is ideal. The best way to carry your handbag is in front of you, next to your stomach. This way, it isn't easily accessible to pickpockets.

"The three most important things about travelling: pack light, always wear comfortable shoes and smile!"

*Erin Woodley, Canadian Olympic silver medallist, synchronized swimming, 1996*