

INTRODUCTION

Women travel for countless reasons, whether to discover new frontiers, pursue business opportunities, or simply to rest and relax — not unlike men. But when it comes to health and security, and how travellers are affected by the religious and cultural beliefs of the foreign countries they visit, there's a huge difference between women and men. The truth is that women face greater obstacles, especially when travelling alone.

Consular Services assists thousands of Canadian women in distress abroad each year. The problems they face are diverse. Petty and violent crime, culture shock, poor sanitation, the dangers and disappointments of international cyber-dating — the challenges are many.

But so are the benefits. With careful planning, common sense, and respect for religious and societal differences, you can minimize your risks and maximize your chances of having a safe and successful trip.

Consular Services has developed this booklet to help inform and prepare you before you leave Canada. The booklet offers a preventive, female-friendly approach to tackling the security, cultural,

health, and social concerns of women travellers. It should be read as a close companion to our primary booklet, *Bon Voyage, But...: Essential Information for Canadian Travellers*.

We wish you a joyful and trouble-free journey!

OFF TO A SAFE START

Know the risks

The more you know about where you're going, the safer and happier your travels will be. Before you leave, be sure to complete a risk assessment of any country you're thinking of visiting. It will help you to choose a destination where you'll feel safe and in your comfort