

For those who would like to connect with other women on the road, here are some suggestions:

As soon as you begin your journey, start plugging into the female

network. Finding a good source may lead you to many others. Local women are usually as pleased to meet you as you are to meet them.

Carry referrals from women back home. Take advantage of the contacts they made when they travelled.

In larger cities, make a quick check of local directories under the headings "female," "woman" or "travel." This can produce wonders. You'll probably find listings for craft collectives, women's bookstores, women's entrepreneurial councils and women's organizations.

Check with the Canadian embassy or consulate for any listings of women's expatriate clubs and

organizations. Members of these groups can sometimes be an excellent source of information. They might even invite you to one of their cultural events.

"A woman travelling is able to gather up those encounters and observations, moments of clarity or frustration, wonder or defeat. And they all become part of her personal history."

*Donna Nebenzahl,  
women's columnist  
and feature writer*

Think about joining a female-guided walking tour. It's not only a wonderful way to learn about a place, but it's also a perfect way to meet other female travellers. Be sure to chat with the leader; she'll be a worthwhile source of

female-friendly information.

In less populated places, the person who runs the place where you're staying will probably know everyone in the village and will be ready to provide advice and introductions.

Carry a small notepad and coloured pencils. While children might not understand the language you speak, they'll delight in drawings you make for them.

Pack photographs of your home and family. They're perfect icebreakers wherever you travel.

If you can't make yourself understood in the local language, seek

out female teenagers. Chances are they're studying some English at school and will take pride in being your translator.

the customs of the host country? It becomes an interesting and educational challenge.

For a good source of information on dress codes for women worldwide, check out the *Journeywoman* Web site (see the "For More Information" section).

When visiting a religious site, a woman should always dress conservatively. A woman traveller should carry a scarf in case she needs to cover her head.

Give some thought to how you dress. At home, you'll encounter few, if any, clothing restrictions, but it still makes sense to dress conservatively. Leave your valuables at home.

If you travel into developing countries and male-dominated societies, make every effort to dress modestly. In some places, customs based on religious and moral beliefs strongly influence the way the women dress. For you to blatantly break these rules would be considered irreverent and might put you in jeopardy. Why not adapt your clothing to fit

Outside North America, a one-piece swimsuit is generally a safer choice than a bikini. In some countries, local women might swim entirely clothed, in accordance with their religious beliefs.