



Q: I'm a retired teacher and want to travel by myself. It gives me total independence and freedom to set my own pace. I've gone with groups, but gave up because of the restrictive schedules, boring companions and other bothers. What's your opinion on a single, 67-year-old senior woman seeing the world by myself? *Ms MML, Boston MA*     A: First of all, we strongly suggest you go with at least one healthy companion . This is particularly necessary in cities and countries with current reputations as potentially dangerous. As you plan your schedule, check online for the latest recent crime rates, political unrest, extreme poverty and other reasons for you to be cautious or stay away.

If research indicates your destination is currently safe, make intelligent schedules for hotel room, entertainment and dining. When checking in, ask the hotel host about special events and add them to your plans. When in public, especially crowded areas, keep your purse safe by tucking it under an elbow with the strap over your shoulder.

Also have a cover for your smart phone or camera, and wrap its strap around your wrist. In addition to obeying all safety precautions, it's a good rule to keep your traveling companion close by your side at all times.