

First of all, cruises are by far the most safety-conscious vacation destinations. Getting on an off a cruise ship requires at least as much security as at any airport, and often much more. Additionally, throughout the sailings, day and night, security officers are always close by, either in person or available in seconds by phone call.

Having said that, a single senior woman should always take the basic steps to protect herself when she's on any journey. Here are some tips for personal safety on cruises:



1. If you're thinking about signing on for a cruise alone, and you can be comfortable with the option, consider sharing a cabin with another woman passenger. The price is better, and you get a full-time companion for personal security at shipboard events and shore excursions. For most cruises, you can ask in advance to match up with someone who'd be most compatible by age and other factors.
2. Use the old camp buddy system whenever you plan to go ashore. Choose one, preferable a gang, of other passengers and stick together. Keep your travel buddy in sight at all times, including bathroom breaks. Never go off by yourself to see a city's charming dark alleys, narrow streets and other potential safety hazards.
3. When aboard, don't accept invitations to visit a single male passenger's cabin unless you're with at least one other person. It's also a safe idea to stay away from moonlight strolls along the deck with a male passenger you've just met.
4. Don't accept alcoholic drinks from anyone except shipboard bartenders and waiters. However, even if you feel safe at a ship's bar, on all occasions, don't drink alone. Be there with at least one other buddy.
5. Once in your cabin alone, always lock the door, and as you do with hotel rooms, don't open the door except for staff and passengers you've already met and can identify. If the person says he's a ship's employee, and you're not sure, don't open the door until you can make a phone check with ship's security. Whenever you leave your cabin, be sure the door is locked during your absence.