

Tips for Travelers with Special Needs - For Women

Women traveling alone in Vietnam face no particular safety issues, and common sense should keep anyone safe. If alone, female travelers in Vietnam (everyone really) are repeatedly grilled about their marital status, and if single, pitied — a bit exhausting after a while. Some women even revert to wearing wedding bands to end those conversations before they begin. No particular vigilance is required for female travelers, as violent crime is minimal in Vietnam, but the usual precautions about walking alone at night and hitchhiking certainly apply as anywhere. “Cat-calling” happens but is rarely sinister or followed by any action.

Check out the award-winning website Journeywoman (www.journeywoman.com), a “real life” women’s travel information network where you can sign up for a free e-mail newsletter and get advice on everything from etiquette and dress to safety; or the travel guide *Safety and Security for Women Who Travel*, by Sheila Swan and Peter Laufer (Travelers’ Tales, Inc.), which offers common-sense tips on safe travel.

Tips for Travelers with Special Needs - For Travelers with Disabilities

Most disabilities shouldn’t stop anyone from traveling. There are more options and resources out there than ever before. Most major hotels in the large cities of Vietnam — Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi — can accommodate travelers with wheelchairs, but hotels in rural areas are unlikely to provide such services. Ramps are uncommon. Many travel agencies offer customized tours and itineraries including [Vietnam visa on arrival](#) for travelers with disabilities. TUN Travel offers escorted tours and cruises that emphasize sports and private tours in minivans with lifts. Access-Able Travel Source offers extensive access information and advice for traveling around the world with disabilities. Accessible Journeys caters specifically to slow walkers and wheelchair travelers and their families and friends

Organizations that offer assistance to travelers with disabilities include MossRehab (www.mossresourcenet.org), which provides a library of accessible-travel resources online; SATH (Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality annual membership fees: \$45 adults, \$30 seniors and students), which offers a wealth of travel resources for all types of disabilities and informed recommendations on destinations, access guides, travel agents, tour operators, vehicle rentals, and companion services; and the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), a referral resource for the blind or visually impaired that includes information on traveling with Seeing Eye dogs.

For more information specifically targeted to travelers with disabilities, the community website DuLichSo (www.dulichso.com) has destination guides and several regular columns on accessible travel. Also check out the quarterly magazine *Emerging Horizons* (\$14.95 per year, \$19.95 outside the U.S.); and *Open World* magazine, published by SATH (subscription: \$13 per year, \$21 outside the U.S.).