

Cruise Travel Safety Tips

Be aware of your surroundings. Look on a map before leaving the ship for the general layout of the port; have an idea of where the ship is docked. Don't rely exclusively on a GPS, iPhone or other electronic device for directions; they might be stolen. Carry a paper map with you.

Don't carry your whole wallet around. Carry limited cash and only one credit card. Put them in inside/front pockets. If there are two adults in your party, each should carry a different credit card. That way, if one is robbed, the other will have a working card after you report the stolen card. Hide some cash on your person, so you aren't stranded without any money if you have to hand over your wallet to a robber. Don't keep your ID in your wallet, since you'll usually need the ID to get through customs and back on the ship. If you get mugged, you can hand over the wallet and the thieves will get some cash, a credit card (which you'll cancel as soon as you get back to the ship), and a wallet. Put your ID and some additional cash in a traveler's pouch or money belt.

DO NOT take your passport with you when you leave the ship, unless you plan to rent a car (in which case you'll need it). If it is stolen, you will have a real problem. Very few countries require you to carry your passport around. If not having your passport with you makes you nervous, make a color photocopy of the identity page of your passport before you leave on the cruise, and carry it.

Don't wear expensive-looking jewelry/watches/handbags, particularly when visiting places with extensive poverty (Mexico or Caribbean) or known for pickpockets (e.g. Barcelona and Naples). It just makes you a target for thieves. Write down the name and phone number of the "ship's agent" for the port and carry it with you. Putting it in your cell phone or other electronic device is a good backup, but put it on a piece of paper, too, in case your phone is lost or stolen. You'll need to contact the ship's agent if something bad happens while you're onshore (i.e., you get sick/robbed/miss the ship's departure, etc.) It would be a good idea to also have the number of the nearest US embassy or consulate and a local cab company.