



WHEN YOU TRAVEL
WITH US, YOU'RE
NEVER REALLY
ALL ALONE.



cosmos
TURNING TRAVEL DREAMS INTO REALITY SM

WE'RE WITH YOU

Is there such a thing as a "typical" traveler? We don't think so. Our travelers run the gamut in age, interests, likes and dislikes. For couples, solo travelers, boomers and families alike, travel preferences have never been so diverse. Nor has the world of travel been so accessible and appealing. This new reality raises the question ... is there any reason in the world not to travel?



We understand, traveling alone can be nerve-racking, but it can be equally exhilarating.

And, traveling with Cosmos is a great way to go.

When you travel on your own with us, you're never really all alone. Our expert guides are there with you, securing the right accommodations for the best price and transportation from place to place. They're there to help you prioritize your schedule, visiting the must-see sites first while also leaving you plenty of time to wander and discover each destination. And, even better? We keep the door open for you to meet a few like-minded travelers and friends on your journey.

In short, we act as your companion, helping you see and experience everything you want to and nothing you don't, with no strings attached.

Isn't it time for you to venture out and experience all the world has to offer ... on your own? So ... go ahead. You may discover that solo travel is the only way to go. And, should you have any questions or concerns along the way, our team is always available with answers, to calm your nerves and help turn your travel dreams into reality. Just give us a call on 1.800.425.3575—we're here to help.

We wish you happy and safe travels – enjoy the ride!

A large, high-angle aerial photograph of Central Park in New York City. The park's green lawns, winding paths, and numerous trees are clearly visible. To the right of the park, the city streets and the iconic lattice structure of the Eiffel Tower are partially visible. The image serves as a background for the main headline.

I WANTED TO SEE IT FROM THE TOP.



WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD.



Why do you travel? To relax, to indulge, to get away from it all or to learn about other cultures, explore new countries and experience different traditions? Regardless of your reasons, one thing is certain: While you're away, exploring the world, you're bound to discover new things about yourself, too. And that fact couldn't be truer when traveling on your own.

Solo travel is about setting your own terms and not worrying about anyone else's needs. It's your time to please no one but yourself. Traveling alone doesn't just push you out of your comfort zone; it gives you carte blanche to indulge your interests and passions, and to get to know yourself in new and exciting ways.

Single travel means there is no compromise on what to see, where to eat and what time to leave. When your schedule is your own, you are in charge to do exactly what you want.

You don't have to appease anyone, or worry that you are tiring someone when lingering at a museum or strolling through the plaza. You can experience the world without someone else's agenda influencing your trip.



“We wander for distraction, but we travel for fulfillment.”
— Hilaire Belloc

All this means that the discovery of travel as a solo can be a much deeper experience—if well-planned, that is. This guide is all about making sure that happens, making the most of your experience. In a world where money buys so many material things, traveling alone allows you the chance to invest in yourself and get an experience that enriches your mind and your soul.



SOLO TRAVEL: THE RISE OF THE SINGLE TRAVELER

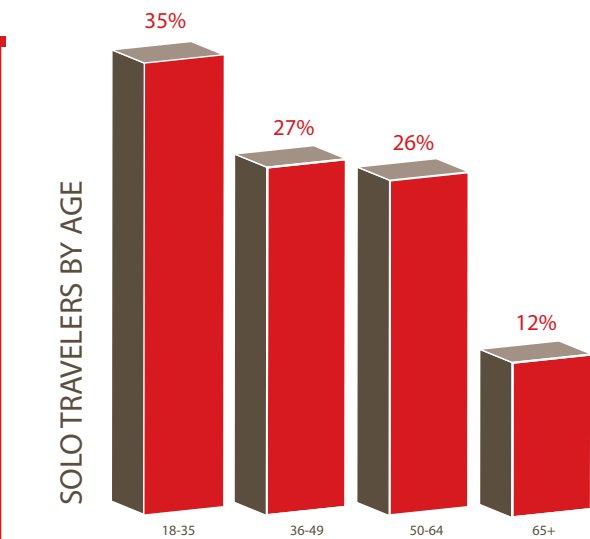
Why venture out on your own? Maybe you can afford to travel, but your friends can't? Maybe you have time off from work that doesn't mesh with your partner's schedule? Maybe you're dying to explore a destination that doesn't interest your family or friends? Or, maybe you just crave some time alone? Regardless of your reason, single travel has never been more popular or easy, as more and more Indians each year choose to go the solo route.

Did you know?

- 11% of travelers travel solo
- 9 million women travel abroad solo each year

Where do you fit in? Think you are too old or young to travel alone? You're not. In fact, solo travel has no age requirements or limitations. You are simply one of those many experiencing the sights, sounds and cultures of the world.

Here's the proof:



DO
EXACTLY
WHAT

YOU WANT



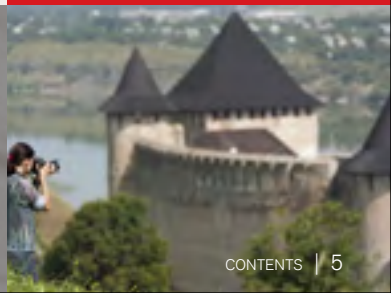
“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

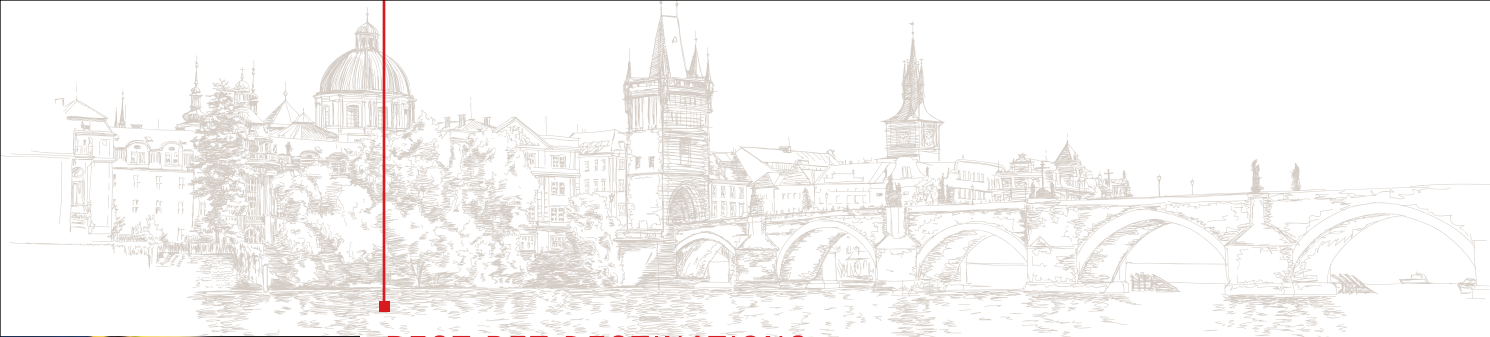
– Mark Twain

Tips for Flying “Solo”

Whatever your concerns or questions are about solo travel, we're sure the many single travelers who came before you had the same thought but found the will and the way to proceed. To get you on your way, here are some practical tips to help you venture out into the world of solo travel.

Start Smart. Before you decide where to go, consider perusing guidebooks and conducting online research to get a feel for the people, culture, sites and excursions you're bound to encounter and experience. Guidebooks geared toward single travelers list accommodations, hangouts, restaurants and meeting places where you can meet up with a variety of people for an excursion or a meal. They can even help you find a traveling companion for part of your trip. There are also a slew of apps (for your smart device or tablet) that can help with your planning; and some that you won't want to do without once you **are on the ground.**





BEST-BET DESTINATIONS

The truth is that some places are easier to navigate and simply better destinations than others for the first-time Solo Traveler. Europe and North America are the top destinations suggested by travel professionals for a first solo vacation. And, in general, English-speaking countries are known for their friendliness and hospitality. Think about Ireland, Britain, USA and Canada when beginning to plan your travels. Also, you can look at Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany.

Safety First

As a Solo Traveler, are you concerned about standing out? The reality is that a Solo Traveler can blend in more easily than a group and can avoid being identified as a tourist. The best rule of thumb for traveling alone is to follow your intuition. If it doesn't feel right, don't do it.

Review these suggestions on how to protect yourself and stay safe while away.

- Carry good identification, and keep it in more than one place.
- Always remain alert and trust your instincts.
- Avoid being a target by leaving your expensive (or what looks expensive) jewelry at home.
- Wear a money belt or carry your valuables in an inner pocket.
- Make copies of important travel documents, like your passport, and leave them in a safe place.
- Avoid appearing like a tourist. Plan your itinerary and check maps and train schedules before you go out for the day (or use your tablet or smartphone as your guide).
- Stick to walking through open and public places, especially at night.
- Walk confidently, like you know where you are going and where you are.
- Travel on a group tour
- Consider locking the zippers on your bags and even bringing a cable lock to secure your belongings to your seat while in transit.
- Leave a copy of your itinerary with a loved one at home and check in with them periodically.
- Carry a cell phone and give the number to family and friends before you leave in case of an emergency.

EXPLORE



WHAT IS A SINGLE SUPPLEMENT?

While most hotels charge a room rate, travel providers (tour operators, cruise lines, etc.) charge per person based on two travelers per room. This is because their products are packages that include elements bought on a per-person basis as well as some bought on a per-room basis. A 'single supplement' is a common charge for travelers requesting single accommodations. The amount is reflective of the cost to have one person instead of two for those elements that are bought on a per-room basis.

For example, if a hotel room is \$100 regardless of occupancy, the tour operator builds in \$50 per person based on two travelers. Therefore, the single supplement is \$50 to cover the cost of the hotel room.

There are a couple ways to navigate around this charge:

- **Single Rooms:** There is sometimes an inventory of single rooms available, but these are limited and tend to get booked faster, so you need to book early—at least 9 months before departure.
- **Special Offers:** Some travel providers offer limited-time deals reducing or waiving the single supplement. When you call, ask them about "solo-friendly" deals.
- **Single Share Programs:** There may be a program that can pair you with another solo traveler of the same gender. This turns a single room into a twin, eliminating the need to charge the supplement. Cosmos (CosmosVacations.in) offers this type of program.

ENJOY THE

RISE



One of the best reasons to travel alone is to make your trip all about you.

That means it's also up to you to make the most of your trip. Here are a few tips to help you truly enjoy your experience.

- **Push yourself out of your comfort zone.** Smile and talk to people. It's a sure way to meet new friends, boost your confidence and learn about the town or city you are visiting.
- **Do as the locals do.** Get up early to visit the local markets in Paris or take advantage of the siesta to rest up for late night illumination tours in Rome.
- **Talk to strangers.** Locals love to talk about their home and usually love to give you their opinions on the best places to eat, areas for shopping and sites to see. Chances are the locals can offer you insight into the hidden gems in each destination such as parks, restaurants and off-the-beaten-path hot spots for a truly authentic experience.
- **Eat well.** Don't let the thought of eating alone in a restaurant keep you from enjoying the local cuisine and restaurants. A book, journal or eBook reader can be your best companion. Consider a seat at the counter or bar where it is easier to strike up a conversation with the regulars, the bartender or other single diners. For more privacy, find a restaurant with booths. Cafés, bistros and outdoor dining are also great options for single travelers. Also, consider trying out the street food or visit the local farmers market for a picnic in the park.





LET YOUR SMARTPHONE OR TABLET BE YOUR GUIDE: TOP APPS FOR TRAVEL BLISS

Trip Advisor—Based on tripadvisor.com, this app offers lists of hotels, restaurants, flights and points of interest with access to Web site ratings, reviews and recommendations.

Kayak—Booking rooms and flights is fast and simple with this app from Kayak.com. From departure times and seat assignments to hotel details, this app will direct you to the best sites to book your trip.

Lonely Planet Travel Guide—With as many apps as they have guides and phrasebooks, Lonely Planet gives you the rundown on the “who, what, when and where” for just about every destination you can imagine.

Triplt—The app will make the required itinerary with the information with complete details about the place, travel and even the weather info for added comfort.

Packing Pro—The perfect solution for the person who always forgets something at home, Packing Pro creates lists of what to pack, either based on your own list or from a set template. You will never be without a toothbrush again.

Google Translate—Like having an interpreter in your pocket, Google Translate translates phrases by typing them into a small word box, or use the speaking option to say a phrase.

Vocre—This app translates whatever you say into the mic to the selected language. Speak into your mic and Vocre will say and write the phrase you are looking for.

XE Currency—Say goodbye to doing math in your head when trying to negotiate with a street vendor, the XE Currency app converts any currency into any other currency on demand.

Help Call—Ideal for Solo Travelers, Help Call auto-detects your location and pulls up one-touch access to local police, fire stations and ambulances in 126 countries.



A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES MUST BEGIN WITH A
**SINGLE
STEP**



“Travel is like a giant blank canvas,
and the painting on the canvas is
only limited by one’s imagination.”

— Ross Morley

SOLO TRAVEL-FRIENDLY: TRAVEL OPTIONS

No traveling companion? No problem. Solo travel comes in all shapes and sizes. Whether you have an unlimited budget or just want to get away for a long weekend, there are so many opportunities to experience the world on your own terms.

Escorted Tour Vacation—Our personal favorite ... escorted tour vacations (aka group tours) take care of all of the logistics and details for you, helping you experience the “best” parts of a destination while letting someone else be in charge. You can also venture out on your own – or with a newfound, like-minded travel companion (or three) from your group – to explore your interests and passions.



And escorted tours tend to have several Solo Travelers on each departure, making it very easy to make connections. On Cosmos (CosmosVacations.in), for example, an average of 20% of travelers on each departure are solos. And because the nature of the group is social and outgoing, you’ll find that connecting with other fellow travelers is easy, as well.

And when it comes to accommodations, many tour operators will pair Solo Travelers with a same-sex roommate (if this is of interest to you). Some tour companies will also waive the single-supplement fee for trips to specific destinations.

Do-It-Yourself Vacation—If you are very independent-minded and prefer the idea of researching and planning your trip on your own, then a do-it-yourself trip might be right for you. When it comes to researching accommodations, keep in mind that many large hotels charge the same rate whether you are one person staying in a room or two. Bed and breakfasts and some smaller inns will charge on a per-person basis, so you can spend less on lodging and more on what’s important. Remember that your chances of meeting other travelers are better at a bed and breakfast or inn where guests usually gather at the breakfast table and in common areas.



Independent Travel Packages—Maybe you enjoy the freedom of planning your own trip but don’t have time to figure out all the logistics? Generally, with a travel package, all travel and accommodations are arranged for you, along with an itinerary that includes some pre-scheduled activities and a good amount of free time to explore on your own. This type of package provides a balance for travelers who want to take advantage of the benefits of an organized trip, but don’t want to follow a set itinerary or timetable. If this sounds like you, Monograms (GlobusJourneys.in) may be a perfect option for you. **MONOGRAMS**

River (Small-Ship) Cruises—On a river cruise, you can experience the villages and towns built on and around the rivers that are the lifeline of many countries. Seeing the landscape up close is one of the main advantages of a river cruise.

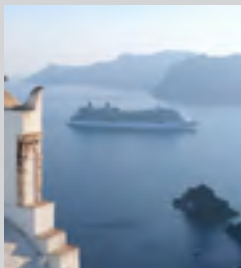


In addition to finding like-minded travelers in your intimate river cruise group, like escorted tours, these trips are usually inclusive: travel, meals, accommodations, excursions and all other accommodations are included in the price.

While you tend to find a higher percentage of couples on these cruises, you can usually find companies that will discount or waive their single-supplement charges on specific departures; Avalon Waterways (AvalonWaterways.com) is one of them.



Ocean (Large-Ship) Cruises—Are you looking for the comforts and conveniences of home while visiting various towns and cities? Cruises let you see the sites during the day, knowing that you are coming back to a familiar place at night. On a cruise, you can sign up for excursions or activities, and also venture out on your own. And because you are traveling with a large number of people on board, you can connect with other travelers in a safe environment.



Some cruise lines now offer accommodations designed strictly for singles, helping you avoid the single supplement typical when staying solo in a double occupancy cabin on a cruise ship.

DO IT YOURSELF

READY TO GO... ALMOST



COSMOS & YOU ... THE SOLO TRAVELER

We have already shared some of the reasons to consider an escorted tour when traveling the world on your own. Here are even more reasons to travel with Cosmos ...

- **Our famous value.** Our complete travel packages include hotel, transportation, sightseeing and a professional Tour Director for as low as \$75/day.
- **Many meals are also included** in your package price, plus you have the freedom to experience the local fare as you wish.
- **Visits to major and must-see sites** are included in your vacation price.
- **Well-chosen, pre-selected hotels** let you relax in a comfortable, clean, safe and attractive environment.
- **Optional excursions** are offered at unbeatable value (you can do as much or as little as your heart desires and your budget allows).
- **You don't have to worry** about how to get from point A to Z and every place in between. Thanks to a dynamic blend of transportation that includes first-class motorcoach, rail, air and/or cruise, we make getting there part of the fun.

COSMOS®
Turning travel dreams into reality™



- **Plenty of leisure time** allows you to explore your passions and interests on your own.
- **Portage is included.** Not handling your own bag helps you really feel like you're on vacation (and, it's another reason you don't feel like you're on your own when traveling solo).
- **We know what we're doing.** In fact, this year, we just celebrated 50 years of showing people (like you) the world.

So, why is escorted travel – and more specifically, Cosmos – a perfect fit for a Solo Traveler like you? All of the above and ... when you travel alone with us, you're never on your own. Our Tour Directors and fellow Cosmos travelers (people interested in exploring the same destinations as you) are always on hand to join you, to entertain you, to show the world to you!

CosmosVacations.in

It's your time to
please no one but
yourself.





TOP 12 SOLO-FRIENDLY TOURS FROM COSMOS

Have we “sold” you on traveling solo with Cosmos? We hope so! Now ... where to go? While Cosmos offers 99 inclusive tours throughout Europe and North America, we’ve highlighted those that tend to have the highest percentage of solo travelers.

- **A Taste of Europe** (8 days)
- **British Panorama** (6 days)
- **Madrid & Andalusia** (8 days)
- **Grand Tour of Turkey** (13 days)
- **Moscow & St. Petersburg** (8 days)
- **Jewels of Slovenia & Croatia** (8 days)
- **Jewels Of Morocco** (10 days)
- **New York, Niagara Falls & Washington DC** (8 days)
- **The Heart of the Canadian Rockies** (10 days)
- **Focus on Scandinavia** (12 days)
- **Prague, Vienna & Budapest** (9 days)
- **The splendors of Italy** (9 days)

As a general rule-of-thumb, the more “exotic” the destination, the higher percentage of Solo Travelers we find on tour.

If your dream destination isn’t on this list, no worries! Every Cosmos tour tends to have Solo Travelers. For a full list of the vacations we offer, visit CosmosVacations.in or call us at **1.800.425.3575** to help turn your travel dreams into reality.



Once you know where you want to go—and the travel style that best suits you—here are a few quick tips to help you on your way:

- **Book at least the first and last night’s accommodations in advance.** Who wants the stress of figuring out where to stay right when you arrive or just before you are ready to leave?
- **Pack light.** Traveling alone means no one is there to carry your bag into your hotel, or lug it in and out of taxis or onto trains. (If you travel with a tour company, like Cosmos, we’ll handle your luggage for you.)
- **Pack accordingly.** Familiarize yourself with cultural taboos and sensitivities to Western dress. For example, shorts or uncovered shoulders are considered inappropriate and disrespectful at many religious sites. Better to be modest than attract unwanted attention.
- **Learn a couple words of the local language.** Locals will appreciate your attempt to speak their language and will generally be gracious in return.
- **Let your smartphone be your guide.** Download any of a multitude of apps out there that may help you once you’re there.

