



The rise of female travellers

"Be a smart and open minded traveller, and take calculated risks."

– **NaushinA.**

"In cities which are considered unsafe, always take a photo of the number plate of the vehicle you are travelling in and send it to someone who can monitor your movements."

– **Sadia F.**

"Always have a 'don't mess with me' look. Vulnerability attracts negative attention."

– **Aruba C.**

"Spend that extra money and take a cab if you don't feel safe."

– **Jesin S.**

"Carry numbers of friends and relatives of where you're going, in case of emergency."

– **Farheen K.**

"Research on your destination prior to getting there so you are self-dependent."

– **Raisa T.**

THE world today is becoming a more travel-friendly place. Societies are encouraging people to "go out there and explore." Movies, books and songs are emphasising that travelling is "cool". Websites like Airbnb, TripAdvisor and HostelWorld have opened up travel to people of all socio-economic backgrounds.

There are many women today who travel by themselves or in groups – which was unthinkable even a few years back.

A lot of reasons have contributed to this change. Many girls moved abroad to pursue higher education and learn to be independent as a result. Local universities also have batch trips both in Bangladesh and overseas.



The travel bug has bitten Bangladesh too, with a lot of young people now keen to discover the uncharted territories of this beautiful country. And just like the rest of the world, Bengali women are also becoming more courageous.

Gone are the days when girls were restricted to the house and told they could travel with their future husbands.

At a professional level, females who work in NGO's are expected to travel outside of Dhaka for field visits, and women in various multinational organisations even get the opportunity to go abroad for business trips.

Parents and guardians should also be given credit for being more open minded and letting their girls out into the world.



Something interesting happens when girls travel on their own: they discover that the world is really not the big, bad place they have been told about all their lives. Granted, you have to exercise a healthy dose of caution, especially in cities which are infamously female-unfriendly. However, a female traveller in a safer city can explore to her heart's content, and will probably receive friendlier behaviour from locals than her male counterparts. Be aware of the difference between helpful and over-friendly and you'll be fine.

So what are you waiting for? Grab some of your best female friends, choose a destination, and get planning! You will find that it doesn't matter where you go, every experience will be just as fulfilling. As the seasoned explorers will remind you, travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer.

Getting itchy feet after reading this article? Head to all-girls travel blogs such as Travelettes, Her Packing List and Girls Abroad for handy tips on packing, safety, sightseeing and more.

By Mehereen Aziz

Photo courtesy: Mehereen Aziz