

Title:

Travel Saftey - Using Intuition

Word Count:

535

Summary:

Travel safety can mean trusting our intuition. We didn't, and the result was a trip to a South American jail, dragging a thief by his shirt.

Keywords:

travel safety, safe travel, travel

Article Body:

"We've been robbed," I told Ana. "All of it." I grabbed the thief, who was no longer acting drunk at all. It was a lesson in travel safety.

It started when both my wife and I had a strong feeling we shouldn't get on that bus in Cuenca. Neither of us said anything, because a taxi was two dollars, and the bus cost only twenty-five cents. It seems a bit TOO frugal now.

Ana found a seat, but there was no seat for me. I was packed in with the other commuters standing up. I noticed the drunk pushing his way through the crowd, randomly going this way and that, and I knew something was up. I instinctively reached into my pockets to check on my money. I had just visited the ATM. The \$170 in my pocket was the most cash we had carried during the entire trip. Still there. The old guy pushed against me like he was trying to find a place to stand comfortably. I checked my again.

Five minutes later some space opened up near Ana, and I moved over to her. When I reached into my pocket again, it was empty, and the other pocket was empty too. I never felt a thing. I told Ana, and saw that the old drunk was still on the bus.

We got off at the next stop, dragging the thief with us. An officer appeared, and a crowd formed. The thief was sober now, pulling his pockets out and insisting again that he was innocent. Search him, he said, and I did, but I understood now that his associate was long gone with the money, probably off the bus at a previous stop. His role had just been to distract me and push me into the right place on the bus.

He begged to be let go, and we knew we couldn't get the money back. Nonetheless,

we had the officer take him to the police station on his motorcycle while we followed in a taxi, paying with a twenty from under the sole of my shoe. Filing a complaint at least meant he would spend the night in jail, and though he would be released in the morning for a lack of evidence, his finger prints are on file now.

Travel Safety Lessons

Most likely, a money belt probably would have prevented the robbery. Closing pockets help too, although I had a wallet stolen from a zippered pocket once, and I didn't notice until forty minutes later. Fortunately it was a decoy-wallet, put there for just such an occasion - another little travel safety trick.

Other travel safety tricks? Put your money in at least three different places, like under the sole of your shoe, in a pocket you pin inside your clothes, and in your shaving kit. Carry two credit or debit cards in separate and secure places. Carry a list of "lost or stolen" phone numbers in another place. In areas with much crime, leave expensive watches and jewelry behind.

Learn a few tricks and you can travel more safely. Our experience also shows the importance of learning to trust your intuition. That was our lesson in travel safety.