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TRAVEL

The Passport blog

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Business travel gets a female touch

By Nick Easen



Dukes Hotel in London has been offering rooms with "feminine touches", such as glossy lifestyle magazines and a make-up mirror since 2011.

As more women join the global workforce, new services geared specifically towards female business travellers are popping up, from cab services to female-only hotel floors.

According to a January 2012 study by Amadeus, a global travel technology group, the number of female business travellers across the Asia-Pacific region is expected to rise sharply over the next two decades, as corporations become more equal in their management structures.

The survey of more than 1,500 business and leisure travellers estimates that in 2011, roughly 4.5 million international business trips were made by women from Singapore, South Korea, Japan, India, China, Indonesia and Australia. By 2030, that number is

expected to increase 400%, driven primarily by growth in the number of Chinese and Indian women climbing the corporate ladder.

Philip Ho is general manager of [Asia Fast Track](#), a company that provides female-only meet, greet and chauffeur services at airports from Macau to Manila. “We’ve seen a steady increase in enquiries from female executives flying around and into the region as they become more aware that these services are possible,” he said.

But it’s not just in Asia. Land in [Dubai](#) or [Abu Dhabi](#) and women can now hail a pink-roofed taxi at the airport or shopping mall to ensure there is a female driver behind the wheel. These cabs are for women and families only.

“In corporate travel, female executives are often interested in two specific areas: safety and connectivity,” said Sonja Hamman, from London-based [Wings Travel Management](#), which specialises in corporate travel. “Women want to know whether a hotel has security staff 24/7 and whether each floor requires card access so that people from the bar or off the street can’t come up to their floor. These are features that will bring a level of comfort to a female traveller.”

Around the world, women-friendly hotel rooms have sprung up as a response. Since late 2011, the [Dukes Hotel](#) near London’s Piccadilly has been offering rooms with “feminine touches”, such as glossy lifestyle magazines and a make-up mirror. On arrival you’ll be met by female staff members who will show you to your room. And in 2012, the [Four Seasons Hotel](#) in Houston, Texas, launched its “Gal on the Go” programme; when a female guest checks in on business, the front desk will direct her to its women-only floor, whose rooms are equipped with extra amenities including yoga mats, jewellery boxes and a make-up kit.

There’s even a traveller network dedicated to connecting and informing female business travellers. [Maiden Voyage](#), which currently has around 2,000 members worldwide, aims to bring together female road warriors who might want to meet for dinner or a drink if they’re travelling on their own. The website features female friendly hotels and offers tips on things to watch out for, from drink spiking in bars to double locking hotel room doors.

Web link

<http://www.bbc.com/travel/blog/20130213-business-travel-gets-a-female-touch>

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