



In good company

Goodbye, gloomy room service – social network Maiden Voyage helps the solo businesswoman get the most out of a work trip



Words: Joanne Glasbey

Sometimes, even the most dynamic businesswoman can do with a bit of support when travelling on her own. How many women might own up to staying in their hotel rooms and ordering room service rather than facing the prospect of a table for one in the dining room? And how many are reluctant to explore a city alone, or would avoid a bar to sidestep the problem of being the solitary subject of unwanted attention? Quite a number, it seems.

That's what entrepreneur Carolyn Pearson discovered when, disappointed at missed opportunities to explore while she was away on business, she conceived the idea of a network for women business travellers. Maiden Voyage, launched in 2008, wants to help women get the most out of their trip, particularly when the working day has come to a close.

Signing up with Maiden Voyage offers the opportunity to connect securely with like-minded, professional women staying nearby. It could be simply for conversation over a drink, or for dinner, a nightlife foray, or to share an exploration of the city they both find themselves visiting. Also on hand is a team of global ambassadors, ready and waiting to share their insider knowledge,

and available to support and assist members. Their extensive little black books bulge with details of the local business etiquette, dress codes, the best neighbourhood hairdressers, shopping and more, so travellers can make informed and efficient use of their limited free time.

As well as creating a platform through which women can meet up when travelling, Maiden Voyage also recommends female-friendly hotels – those that offer such safety features as double-locking doors, 24-hour manned reception, and discretion when communicating room numbers, plus added extras such as well-lit make-up mirrors and salon-standard hairdryers – often with exclusive benefits, like room upgrades or spa treatments. Above all, safety is always the top consideration.

Now with more than 8,000 members across 80 countries, Maiden Voyage has become the global voice of the female business traveller – and it's free for an individual to join.

Created by women, for women, it delivers the opportunity to make solo business travel safe, liberating and more exciting – and gives new meaning to the term 'company travel'. ●

maiden-voyage.com

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