

Gender & Women's Topics While Abroad

Adjusting to a new culture, environment, and potentially different or unfamiliar gender roles can present students with a variety of thoughts and feelings. Some locations may be more challenging to adjust to than others due to the gender norms and roles of its given culture. Interactions between men and women, between men and between women will vary and be treated differently. Preparing yourself is a sure way to ease the adjustment period and cultural shock. A worthwhile study abroad experience is all about researching the country and city you will be living in.

Traveling as a woman does not mean that you should avoid certain countries. Female students have successful study abroad experiences in as many countries as males do. Read through these resources, talk with past program participants and chat with the Study Abroad office staff about any concerns you may have.



[What Women Need to Know Abroad](#)

[Sexual Harassment Prevention and Safety](#)

[For Women Travelers](#)

[Her Own Way](#)

[Journey Woman](#)

[Cultural Grams](#)

[Culture Crossing Guide](#)

[Sexual Assault Support and Help for Americans Abroad](#)

Before You Leave, find out:

- What are the gender relationships in the host culture?
- What are considered typical general roles in my host culture?
- What are the gender stereotypes of Americans in my host country?
- How do men treat women in my host country?
- Are there differences in “power” based on gender?
- How do my personal values of gender compare with my host cultures attitudes about acceptable gender roles?

Some female students have a hard time adjusting to attitudes they encounter abroad, in both public and private interactions between men and women. Some (but not all) men openly demonstrate their appreciation of women in ways that many American women find offensive. Sometimes the attention can be flattering. However, it can also become very annoying, and potentially even angering. Local women who often get the same sort of treatment have been taught how to ignore the attention, but many American women still find this hard to do. Eye contact between strangers or a smile at someone passing in the street or the casual dress of many American students on campus may result in totally unexpected invitations

-from James Madison University, Office of International Programs