

Be Safe

When You Travel with
Worldwide Central Travel



Informational Shorts on Travelling Safe

The Key to a Good Scam

Some scam artists disguise themselves as good Samaritans. You are in a train or bus station. You have lots of bags to carry, in addition to your luggage. You figure that the bus or train will not depart for a few hours so you can store everything in a locker and then retrieve it later. While the newest locker technology uses credit cards, the older lockers use a mechanism whereby you insert coins, turn the key-which engages the lock, and then you take the key away with you.

In this case, as you are struggling with all your packages, a kindly person offers to help. After ensuring that everything fits into the locker, he closes the door, gives you the key, and bids you farewell and walks away. What a great city, you say to yourself - and such friendly people too. Two hours later you hear the departure announcement. You go to the locker but 1) The locker is open and empty or 2) The key does not seem to fit and you don't know that it is empty.

What happened?

That kindly stranger arrived at the bus terminal or train station early that day. He reserved a number of lockers by inserting coins and removing the keys. Then he waited for some victims. As soon as he saw you struggling he went into ↑ acting mode and pretended to be the helpful stranger. After helping you put your valuable in the locker, he had the correct change handy so he inserted it for you and then handed you a key. Unfortunately this was the key to one of the other lockers he reserved that morning. (*Variation: You insert your own coins but the stranger grabs the key and hands you a different one from his collection*).

While you were killing time until your departure was announced, the scam artist returned and took everything from your locker. In some cases he will leave the locker open, but some evil scammers will lock the locker so that you have to spend some panicky moments trying to open it with your key, only to discover that the locker is empty.

The Lesson

Always be in control of your valuables. Don't allow others, no matter how kindly they appear, to be in contact with anything that is important to you. Thank them and tell them you'll manage by yourself. If they become persistent, simply walk away. If you really need help, ask one of the official staff or a porter to help you. You should always be the one who takes the key from the locker. Keep it in your hand until you are out of viewing range of other people. (*After all, you don't want to advertise where you have stashed the key and then have your pockets picked*).

We are delighted to partner with Steve Gillick (President of Talking Travel / www.talkingtravel.ca) who has been in the travel industry for over 30-years and is a well-respected speaker and travel educator. These are designed to give you information about travel scams and how scam artists work. The goal is to be aware and informed. Still, there is no guarantee that, despite all precautions, you can completely avoid scam artists. We hope you enjoy these and that you travel safe.

