

THE FUTURE IS SHE SEASON 3

# THE FUTURE IS SHE

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SPECIAL

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

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## Roam alone: A guide on solo trips for women

Got a case of wanderlust? Then you've come to the right place. Learn how to chart the course of your lone adventures with courage and confidence



Often romanticised in films and literature, solo travel offers a chance to become the protagonist of one's own story. It can lead to personal discoveries, a journey towards healing, and exploration of uncharted territories, among other adventures. For women especially, independent travel can be an agency over one's life decisions. Narya Vora, a brand manager, has found solitary getaways to be a confidence-boosting experience. She shares, "From planning and budgeting to navigating local culture and becoming street-smart, the experience imparts several essential skills. More importantly, it makes you believe in your ability to be self-sufficient."

**CHART YOUR COURSE**  
The first step is to figure out what you desire from the experience. Be it a wellness retreat, a laid-back staycation, or a cultural extravaganza, choose a place and plan the itinerary based on a well-defined objective. For instance, entrepreneur Bhavna V prefers to tend to her wellness needs in Rishikesh. "It's one of the most serene places to visit alone. I can rejuvenate with yoga sessions by the river or enjoy a comforting cup of coffee at one of the many

promising cafes the city offers for much-needed restoration. This slice of heaven has something for every visitor, from spiritual enlightenment to adventures galore," she expresses.

**TREAD SAFELY**  
Monika Choudhary, a growth strategist for an interior design and architecture studio, finds it empowering to explore unfamiliar places on her own. Recalling her most

memorable experiences, she talks about her visit to Khiva, Uzbekistan. "Since I was looking for a destination that offered history, culture, and unparalleled beauty, Khiva proved to be a captivating oasis that transported me back in time. The intricate architecture and camel rides through golden dunes at sunset, accompanied by flavourful local cuisine around the campfire, made it an unforgettable experience."

Choudhary also mentions that she felt welcomed by the locals, who take immense pride in their heritage and culture. "Female travellers can expect a safe environment characterised by warm hospitality and low crime levels," she states. But what exactly makes a getaway safe for women? Vora believes it starts with selecting the right accommodation. She explains, "If you feel more secure in private settings, a homestay or

a hotel with cottages is preferable, depending on the budget. While hostels offer cheaper alternatives for those back-packing, the safety factor can become more complex."

**THE POWER OF COMMUNITY**  
Even if you're travelling alone, you don't have to be by yourself. To connect with others and embrace diverse experiences, participate in group activities like a culinary class,

handcraft workshop, or heritage tour. Speaking about her stay in Pudukkottai, Vora elaborates, "In the laid-back, community-centric atmosphere, it was easy to join tours and engage with locals, which helped me discover the beaches, offbeat locations, and markets. Since I prefer exploring places on foot, the stunning architecture with French influences, combined with the walkable and safe streets, guaranteed an unforgettable stay."

**DESTINATION NEXT**  
If you also feel inspired to set out on a solitary expedition, let's look at some more options; Bhavna V recommends Italy. "There's so much you can do on your own, from cafe hopping and retail therapy to quiet relaxation on the beaches down south. Whether it's a visit to a winery or a gondola ride in Venice, Italy abounds with scenic beauty."

For those seeking a closer-to-home getaway, Singapore is an excellent choice, with its reliable

infrastructure, seamless connectivity, and diverse mix of cultures and activities. Nepal is also a great destination, where you can enjoy a wildlife safari and trekking amidst stunning landscapes, along with its rich culture and welcoming locals. Another budget-friendly option is Sri Lanka, which promises beautiful beaches, lush tea plantations, ancient sites, and flavourful cuisine. While it's necessary to remain cautious during your solo travels, try to go with the flow, address any issues as they arise, and fully embrace the journey. Ultimately, it's about celebrating yourself and your independence.

## To all the single ladies...

If you're not ready to mingle, we're here to respect your call. It's time to embrace singledom with open arms (and minds)

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In no hurry to find 'the one', many women today are choosing to go solo. Nevertheless, singledom is often misconstrued as a bleak outcome for women rather than a self-made choice. Whether it's the idea that a partner makes one complete or the pressure to get married according to societal expectations—women are deconstructing antiquated notions.



herself up from adverse situations. She elaborates, "This doesn't imply I need to do everything on my own; it's okay to ask for help, but resilience is also valuable. Although I'm open to getting

together with someone in the future, even if it doesn't happen, I will be okay."

As women find their stride in the personal sphere, singledom isn't a setback or a

compromise but a celebration of self-exploration and empowerment.



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**FREEDOM TO CHOOSE**  
Neha Raj, a learning designer, believes that having autonomy over one's life is the recipe for a fulfilled life; this could mean partnering with someone or not. "Focusing on myself and enjoying one's own company are viewed as rebellious acts in a world where society dictates personal autonomy for women, especially in India. We seldom discuss how singledom is liberating, with endless possibilities of self-discovery, self-care, and understanding your needs, strengths, and shortcomings," she elucidates. Furthermore, as more women gain financial independence, they're better able to take control of their lives. "The privilege to steer our decisions, explore our talents, and earn a living, reaching a wider range of women, allowing us more agency," comments Raj.

**SWIPE RIGHT ON YOUR NEEDS**  
Being unmatched can help set a foundation for personal freedom. Proudly single, wedding planner Divya Chadha also affirms that singledom gives women an opportunity to discover what they truly desire in life instead of the cookie-cutter story of a happily ever after. "Society often stigmatises unmarried women past a certain age, leading many to marry for the wrong reasons. On the other hand, having the agency to make your own decisions—whether it is travelling solo or with friends, or choosing how to spend your money and live your life—is empowering and ensures you never settle for anything that curbs your freedom," she says. Chadha also mentions that she doesn't need a relationship to feel fulfilled. "Happiness comes from within. If you're not content with who you are and what you do, romance may not necessarily change that," she opines.

**SOLO SURFING**  
Single or taken—it's unfair to be reduced to one's relationship status. To this end, Aditi Shah, a social media manager, questions why a woman is made to feel her life is incomplete if she doesn't find someone to share it with. "It completely disregards that we are whole on our own and do share our lives—with friends, family, and even pets. The most important relationship I have is with myself. The absence of a partner doesn't make me alone. I'm perfectly comfortable in my company. I can do whatever I want, whenever I like while focusing on other life goals such as career, health, and travel," she expresses. Furthermore, Shah reveals that being on her own has helped her develop the emotional skills to pick

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