

## **"TOURISM TIDBITS" FROM TOURISM & MORE, INC.**

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"Tourism Tidbits" is published monthly in English and Spanish, Portuguese and Turkish. Mtra. Patricia Koalska of Mexico does the Spanish translation, Ericka Amorim of Lisbon, Portugal provides the Portuguese translation, Elise Magras from the French Caribbean provides our new French translation, and Dr. Turgut Var provides the Turkish translation.

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### **TOURISM & MORE'S "TOURISM TIDBITS" for July 2011**

#### **Safe Tourism Produces More than Merely Safe Communities. It Produces a Whole new World of Marketing Opportunities**

Often the tourism industry hears the complaint that tourists do not deserve special treatment. Even some Police departments will make the false claim that they treat everyone the same, and therefore special attention provided to visitors is not only wrong but also goes beyond the parameters of community security. Finally it is not uncommon to hear that as local citizens pay taxes they deserve better police protection. Tourism safety ought to be everyone's business. Tourism is a major economic generator, and tourists pay taxes both directly to places of lodging and indirectly through sales taxes or value added taxes. Additionally, a safe tourism community is the foundation for a safe community. This may be the reason that many in marketing are now using the term "Security Marketing". For too long marketing experts believed that their efforts were meant merely for television and magazine ads, catch phrases and new branding. All of these are an important part of marketing, but the savvy marketer now knows that tourism security marketing is also an essential part not only of the product's overall quality but also as a way that outsiders judge the product's viability. Tourism security is more than mere closed circuit cameras, it is the way that we watch over the person's health concerns, the food that the visitor consumes, the lessening of risks, the development of safe and clean streets and our ability to sell a product that satisfies not only our guests but also our residents.

Below are just a few of the ways that tourism security and safety spill over into the community at large and help to better the entire community's quality of life.

Many people outside of the of tourism and visitor industry either are unaware of or have forgotten the many benefits that tourism brings to a community's citizens. Among these are economic benefits such as increased job opportunities, additional sources of customers and thus increased spending, multiple- economic diversification sources with a guarantee that a community's tourism business cannot be outsourced or moved away. Tourism also acts a way to showcase a community and its local products and tourism requires an infrastructure of good roads, airports, and good service. All of these serve to benefit both the visitor and local citizen alike. From a social perspective tourism not only generates local pride but a positive sense of community. The fact that tourism thrives best in an environmentally favorable environment means that successful tourism industry is also the key to good economic development.

To help tourism professionals and marketers explain the importance of tourism security then to both their local government officials and to local police departments here are a few pointers that may help.

**-Locals also frequent their community's tourism districts.** Tourism districts are often the places in a community with the highest concentration of restaurants and nightlife establishments. The local citizenry also uses and frequents these same locations. Robbers do not know the difference between a local and a visitor, and if visitors are not safe in these districts then neither are the locals who visit these same tourism zones.

**-Almost anyone visiting a community for purposes of economic development begins as a visitor.** Communities seek economic development and those people scout new locations in which to open businesses first start out as visitors. If they do not feel safe, then the odds are that they will not come. Protecting visitors is another way to assure economic growth and vitality.

**-Most criminals are equal opportunity thieves.** It is very rare for a criminal to know or care about whom he or she is robbing. Criminals are as prepared to steal or rob a local as well as a visitor. On the other hand, visitors are often easier targets than are locals and criminals know that there is a lower possibility that visitors will report the crime or return to prosecute the criminal. A community that is uninviting for criminals to prey on tourists is even less inviting for criminals to prey on the local population.

**-Training restaurateurs, hoteliers, cab drivers and other tourism providers in basic tourism security provides them with the necessary tools in case some one from the local population is also attacked.** Learning such key safety rules as: When we train people when to call or not to call emergency police numbers such as 911 in the United States then both members of the community and visitors are safer. When an incident

does occur the police are more likely to solve the crime if they receive an accurate and brief description of where the incident occurred, about what time it occurred and if the perpetrator is still at the scene of the crime or has fled. Teaching locals how to describe a suspect's race, height, weight, hair color and any other distinctive characteristics improves both local and tourism security

**-Good tourism safety implies safe shopping experiences.** Shopping is the number one "tourism sport." That means that good tourism safety demands that shoppers are able to spend money in local malls and business districts that form the commercial heart of any community. Good tourism security means that both locals and visitors alike can frequent stores and not have to worry about purse-snatchers, parking lot theft and muggers who often frequent these districts. It also means that both citizens and visitors alike need not be bothered by people harassing them or by issues of prostitution.

**-Many of the basic rules of tourism security are often applicable to community security.** For example when we teach visitors tourism security principles such as: they should always park in areas that are well lit and well-traveled, not to carry and show large amounts of cash, or to be vigilant around cash machines, then we are also setting the stage for a local community's safety. Locals, as much as tourists, often leave valuables in their vehicles, may be harassed or even robbed by street "salesmen" or con artists, and are subject to crimes of distraction such as pickpockets.

**-Both visitors and local citizens need good, safe, and well-lit streets.** Tourism security demands streets with good signage, proper lighting and streets that are pothole free. These same basic qualities are essential for local citizens as well and not only help to prevent crime but also assure car safety.

**-Private tourism security and even bouncers add to a community's overall sense of safety.** Some communities have developed private-public partnerships so that the media, private security firms and police work together to assure that places of assembly such as bars, hotels and restaurants not only remain safe but also add to the economic vitality of a community.