

# Road less travelled

Aruna Rathod on women who holiday alone

Once upon a time, a vacation meant getting the family together. This concept does not necessarily apply anymore.

With children and their agendas and husbands busy with work, more women are travelling alone — whether for work or just on a break.

**Jaishree Sharad**, a cosmetic dermatologist, has visited more than 10 countries on her own. “My husband is a laproscopy surgeon who is busy. This makes it difficult for us to travel together. The conferences are a great learning experience and I cannot miss them,” she says candidly.

## Not just for work

Not all women travel alone only for work — some do it just to take a break. “I need the solitude. Even on a holiday with the family, you tend to check if the children have eaten or what are they upto. So finally it’s not a break. But if I am alone I just need to look after myself,” says **Anandi Rao**, a homemaker and mother of two teenagers.

Anandi makes it a point to visit a new destination at least once a year with friends. “I am busy with the home most of the time. But whenever I can, I visit my relatives outside Mumbai or abroad, so have time for myself and rejuvenate.”

For **Geeta Shah**, a textile consultant, travelling alone just happened. “My husband was never free when I had the time. I let go of many opportunities to travel abroad. I decided to go alone,” she says.

## All over the world

Like Jaishree, Anandi and Geeta you don’t need friends, relatives or jobs that allow you to travel — you can just book any tour. Tour operators and travel agencies have zeroed on this niche and are now offering tours — all over India and abroad — only for women.

“This facility is superb. I don’t need to visit any relative or friend. I just book myself into any tour and off I go for a week to 10 days,” says **Manju Nahate**.

There are plenty of advantages of these ‘women-only tours’. Besides the freedom of packing only for yourself, you can even make many new friends.

## Chill-out time

Statistics show that in of a group of 20 travellers, there are at least four women who travel on their own. “What’s better than seeing the world on your terms? Since most of them are done with their duties as mothers and have grown-up children, they definitely deserve a few days to be by themselves to chill out,” says a tour operator.



ALONE TIME: Jaishree Sharad