



The 10 worst cities for pickpockets

TripAdvisor travellers and editors have compiled a list of ten cities where pickpockets are most likely to strike. Visitors would do well to watch their bags in major European cities, where many popular outdoor attractions are tourist havens - and prime targets for purse-snatchers.

"Pickpocketing is a true art and whilst thieves can strike anywhere, home or abroad, tourist hot-spots often yield far richer-pickings. The combination of an awe-struck traveler and a bag bulging with local currency, not to mention passports, cameras and credit cards, is an appealing prospect for any light-fingered thief," said Amelie Hurst, TripAdvisor spokeswoman.

1. Barcelona, Spain

One TripAdvisor reviewer compares Barcelona pickpocketing to a generally practiced and accepted sport, like football. For those who'd rather stay off the field, take caution: Las Ramblas, the famous wide, pedestrian walkway full of life, music, and people at all hours of the day and night, is the perfect place to get your purse poached.

2. Rome, Italy

With its ancient buildings and astounding historical and cultural attractions, Rome is full of both tourists and incredible things to sightsee. With thousands of people admiring the Trevi Fountain or the Pantheon, it's easy for a pickpocket to lift a camera or purse with a quick snip of scissors or some clever handiwork with a zipper.

3. Prague, Czech Republic

The famously beautiful Charles Bridge is lined with 30 baroque-style statues, as well as thousands of tourists who crowd its ancient stones each year, making a perfect recipe for pickpocketing. Before taking in the view of the Vltava River and the Prague Castle beyond, be sure valuables are strapped down.

4. Madrid, Spain

El Rastro flea-market and the crowded metro are often cited as spots where unfriendly pickpocket schemes can put a damper on a visit to this beautiful city. However, travellers should also beware that in museums (Madrid has many) pickpockets can be crafty as well, preying on distracted tourists.

5. Paris, France

The City of Light draws enormous crowds from the base of the Eiffel Tower to the steps of Sacré-Coeur and everywhere in between. But enormous crowds can also be found below ground, in the city's metro system, where travellers should be especially cautious.

6. Florence, Italy

It is certainly easy to see why tourists would be distracted by the majestic beauty of Michelangelo's David and the other incredible and awe-inspiring works of art and pieces of history all around Florence . When admiring Michelangelo's creation, or at its replica in busy [Piazza della Signoria](#) , be alert that others may have their attention on your wallet.

7. Buenos Aires, Argentina

Buenos Aires is a vibrant and culturally rich city with much to offer, from the famed Teatro Colon to the city's many distinct neighborhoods. However, if while sightseeing you find you are suddenly covered in "bird droppings" (likely mustard) and a "friendly" local (likely a thief) happens to be standing by with napkins to help you clean up, beware.

8. Amsterdam , Netherlands

It's easy to get carried away in Amsterdam with so many fun things to see and do, but don't be too taken in by the canals and the friendly, laid-back atmosphere – pickpocketers have been known to take advantage of countless tourists in this enchanting city.

9. Athens , Greece

This legendary city features countless ancient monuments, many of which are outdoors. Whether visiting the Parthenon on the Acropolis, or anything else in this magnificent historic city, keep the bags close to your chest while your eyes admire the rest.

10. Hanoi , Vietnam

The capital of Vietnam has its charming Old Quarter, littered with monuments and colonial architecture, and the city also features 600 temples and pagodas, making it a beautiful and unique place to visit, but also a place to stay alert for mischief.

TripAdvisor's Top 5 Tips to Avoid Being Pickpocketed

1. Never keep your wallet or valuables in your back pocket, even if it buttons up—it's by far the easiest target.
2. Beware of the distraction tactic, such as dropping something near you, squirting something on you, or simply jostling you. Be on guard when in crowds, and secure your belongings.
3. Pickpockets often work in pairs or groups and it's not just the usual suspects. Be cautious with any strangers—sometimes people who don't look like they'd be a threat, such as children or the elderly, can be part of larger operations.
4. Stay alert in confined spaces and near passageways. Try to avoid standing near the doorways of trains as groups of pickpockets can rush at you when the doors open.
5. Before you set off on a trip, pare down the contents of your handbag or wallet – the smaller the bulge, the less likely pickpockets are to covet it.

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