



IS IT SAFE?

Bordeaux

SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY GUIDE

SAFETY GUIDE SERIES

Overall Safety Assessment

RATING: Safe — one of France's safer major cities; standard vigilance around Saint-Jean station and Saint-Michel after dark.

Bordeaux ranks as the 7th safest place in France for solo female travelers, with an overall safety rating of 4.4 out of 5 in recent surveys. The historic UNESCO-listed center, Chartrons, and Saint-Pierre are all comfortable for solo travel at nearly all hours, and the tram system (TBM) is well-lit, camera-monitored, and runs late with dedicated night service. The Gironde department records notably fewer thefts per capita than Paris.

The primary risk is pickpocketing at Place de la Bourse and around Gare Saint-Jean, plus standard nighttime caution in the Saint-Michel district and immediately around the train station, where the atmosphere shifts after dark. Summer heatwaves (35°C+) are a genuine health consideration, and the wider Gironde region sits in an active wildfire band June–September.

RATING SCALE

★★★★ = Very safe ★★★ = Safe ★★ = Use awareness ★ = Avoid at night = Avoid

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY

Neighbourhood Safety at a Glance

AREA	RATING	NOTES
Golden Triangle / Place des Quinconces	★★★★	Bordeaux's most prestigious area — upscale, well-patrolled, excellent safety record.
Chartrons	★★★★	Wine district, good lighting, regular tram connections, safe for evening wandering.
Saint-Pierre / Place de la Bourse	★★★★	Active day and evening; watch bags in the busiest tourist clusters.
Saint-Michel (daytime)	★★★★	Multicultural, vibrant, generally safe by day.
Saint-Michel (after dark)	★★★	Some quieter side streets feel less comfortable at night; stick to the main square and busier streets.
Place de la Victoire (late night)	★★★	Active student-nightlife area Thursday–Saturday; rowdier late, standard nightlife caution.
Around Gare Saint-Jean (night)	★★★	The clearest “extra caution” zone in the city after dark — don't linger longer than necessary.
Suburban outskirts (Les Aubiers, Grand Parc)	★★	Higher crime rates, limited tourist relevance — not on a standard 48-hour itinerary.

COMMON SCAMS & RISKS

Common Scams & Risks

Petition / clipboard scam:

The most common documented scam in Bordeaux, concentrated at Place de la Bourse. Someone approaches with a clipboard for a signature or donation; an accomplice picks pockets during the distraction. Decline and keep moving.

Pickpocketing:

Concentrated at major tourist sights and Gare Saint-Jean. Standard cross-body, zipped-bag awareness resolves most of the risk.

Late-night Saint-Michel / Gare Saint-Jean:

Not dangerous in a violent-crime sense, but the atmosphere thins out and can feel uneasy after dark — take a taxi or tram rather than walking through unfamiliar streets late at night.

Heat exhaustion (summer):

A genuine health risk during July–August heatwaves (35°C+). Use the free public water fountains throughout the historic centre, wear high-SPF sunscreen, and limit outdoor sightseeing to before 11am or after 5pm.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

Health & Medical

CHU de Bordeaux — Hôpital Pellegrin (main emergency hospital, 24/7)

Place Amélie Raba Léon, Bordeaux. Tel: +33 5 56 79 56 79.

Hôpital Saint-André — Emergency Department

1 Rue Jean Burguet, Bordeaux. Also open 24/7.

SOS Médecins (24/7 house-call doctor)

Tel: 3624, or book via sosmedecins-bordeaux.com.

Duty pharmacies (24/7)

Pharmacie des Capucins, 28 Place des Capucins (24 hours); Pharmacie des Grands Hommes, 1 Place des Grands Hommes (8am–8pm, extended hours). Dial 3237 or check lepharmacien.fr for the nearest on-duty pharmacy.

Insurance note

EHIC/GHIC cards cover emergency treatment at public hospitals for EU/UK citizens at reduced cost — this is not a substitute for travel insurance, which is strongly recommended for all visitors given the potential cost of ambulance transport, scans, or repatriation.

SOLO WOMEN TRAVELERS

Solo Women Travelers

Bordeaux is broadly comfortable for solo women — pedestrian-friendly layout, well-lit central streets, and a low overall crime rate support confident independent exploration. Standard precautions apply after dark: avoid isolated streets in Saint-Michel and around Gare Saint-Jean, stick to well-lit central routes, and use the tram (which runs until 1am with night bus service after) rather than long walks home from nightlife areas. Locals note the occasional insult or unwanted comment from people loitering near the station, but genuinely threatening incidents are rare — staying polite, keeping distance, and moving toward a busier area resolves most situations.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Emergency Contacts

SERVICE	CONTACT
Emergency (EU-wide)	112
Police	17
Fire	18
Ambulance (SAMU)	15
CHU Bordeaux — Hôpital Pellegrin (24/7 ER)	+33 5 56 79 56 79
SOS Médecins (house calls)	3624
Poison Control Bordeaux	05 56 96 40 80
Taxi Télé (reliable licensed taxi)	+33 (0)5 56 96 00 34