



IS IT SAFE?

Marseille

SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY GUIDE

Is Marseille Safe?

★★★★★ Overall Rating

Marseille has a rougher reputation than most French cities, and it's a partly deserved one for its northern quartiers — neighborhoods that sit well outside any visitor's itinerary. Inside the tourist core (Vieux Port, Le Panier, Cours Julien, Notre-Dame de la Garde, La Corniche, the Calanques), Marseille is safe with ordinary city awareness.

The realistic risk for a solo traveler is pickpocketing — concentrated around Gare Saint-Charles, on crowded metro lines, and in the busiest stretches of the Vieux Port — not violent crime. Marseille's honest rating reflects this real gap between its reputation and the tourist-zone experience, rather than either overselling or overwarning.

Neighbourhood Safety at a Glance

Area	Rating	Notes
Vieux Port	★★★★	Busy and safe day and evening.
Le Panier	★★★★	Very safe by day; stick to lit main lanes after dark.
Cours Julien	★★★★	Lively at night, generally safe, standard nightlife awareness.
Gare Saint-Charles area	★★★★	Watch belongings closely; pickpocketing hotspot, especially at night.
Calanques / La Corniche	★★★★	Safe throughout the day; go with water and daylight hours in mind.

Transport & Common Scams

Getting Around Safely

The metro and tram are efficient and generally safe, but Gare Saint-Charles and its surrounding streets warrant extra bag awareness, especially after dark.

Bus 60 to Notre-Dame de la Garde and buses toward the Calanques are safe and well-used by both residents and visitors.

Avoid walking alone late at night through the northern quartiers or unlit residential side streets outside the tourist core — this applies to any traveler, not solo travelers specifically.

Common Scams to Know

- The "friendship bracelet" scam near Notre-Dame de la Garde and Sacré-Cœur-style tourist sites — decline and keep walking.
- Fake petition signers near the Vieux Port who distract while an accomplice picks pockets — politely decline any clipboard approach.
- Unmetered "taxis" outside the train station — use official ranks or a rideshare app instead.

Health, Solo Travel & Emergency Contacts

Health & Medical

Tap water is safe to drink. Pharmacies (green cross) are common and pharmacists can advise on minor issues without an appointment.

Sun exposure on Calanques hikes is the most common visitor health issue — there is little to no shade on most trails, so carry more water than feels necessary.

Solo Women Travelers

The Vieux Port, Le Panier, Cours Julien, and La Corniche are comfortable for solo women to explore by day and evening, with active café culture providing natural places to sit and observe.

Use standard precautions around Gare Saint-Charles at night and give the northern quartiers a wide berth regardless of time of day — this is true for all travelers, not a solo-specific concern.

Emergency Contacts

Emergency (all services)	112
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Police (Police Secours)	17
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Ambulance (SAMU)	15
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US Consulate General, Marseille	+33 4 91 54 92 00
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Tourist Police (Vieux Port)	+33 4 91 39 80 00
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BEFORE YOU GO

- ☐ Save 112 and your hotel address in French before you land
- ☐ Keep bags zipped near Gare Saint-Charles, day and night
- ☐ Give the northern quartiers a wide berth — no visitor reason to go
- ☐ Carry a printed or downloaded copy of this guide offline

goingsolo.life/maps/marseille