

# A GUIDE FOR LGBT TRAVELERS IN THE AMERICAS



Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) travelers face some challenges and restrictions in the Americas.

Attitudes and laws toward LGBT acceptance and rights span a wide spectrum throughout the region. However, state-sponsored persecution is generally less prevalent and less acute when compared with countries throughout other regions such as Africa and the Middle East.

Anti-LGBT laws persist in parts of the Caribbean, where same-sex acts remain illegal in 11 countries. Country-dependent penalties consist of prison sentences from two years to potential life terms, though in practice such laws are rarely enforced. In contrast, a number of countries in the Americas have taken significant political and legal steps to protect rights for LGBT individuals.

At its worst, anti-LGBT sentiment in certain countries has contributed in part to some of the highest levels of violence against LGBT individuals in the world.



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Northern Triangle

The Northern Triangle is a region within Central America encompassing the countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

An area plagued by gang violence and some of the highest homicide rates in the world, the Northern Triangle is a higher risk area in the Americas for targeting of and social discrimination against LGBT individuals. Same-sex acts are legal in these countries, though same-sex marriages are not performed or recognized. El Salvador is the only country of the three to have implemented some protections against discriminatory employment practices based on sexual orientation.

### South America:

**Brazil:** Recent changes in the political leadership in Brazil have increased the security risks for the LGBT community. On 1 January 2019, President Bolsonaro removed language that protected the LGBTQ population under human rights guidelines. LGBT groups in Brazil have reported several incidents since then of hate crimes targeting members of the community.

**Chile:** In Chile, there has been a 45% increase in reports of hostility toward LGBT people in 2017. While same-sex activity is legal in Chile, Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) travellers should exercise precautions, including to avoid drawing attention to their sexuality.

**Argentina:** Argentina is still considered one of the most LGBT permissive in the region.



## LEGAL STATUS AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES

A number of countries in the Americas have taken significant political and legal steps to protect rights for LGBT individuals - nationwide or localized prohibitions of discriminatory practices based on sexual orientation have been implemented in at least 14 countries throughout the region.



## BE AWARE

Travel risk managers should ensure that travelers are aware of any anti-LGBT legislation and hostile cultural attitudes in their destination countries before traveling and encourage travelers to conduct their own research.

LGBT travelers in parts of the Americas, particularly the Caribbean and Central America, should be aware that there is a credible risk of harassment or, in rare cases, legal implications if they draw attention to their sexuality. They should therefore avoid drawing attention to themselves or their profile through public displays of affection, by their dress or the display of accessories that indicate their sexual orientation, by their behavior, or by expressing opinions on LGBT rights issues in public.



SAME SEX  
ACTIVITY IS ILLEGAL IN:

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
BARBADOS  
BELIZE  
DOMINICA  
GRENADA  
GUYANA  
JAMAICA  
ST KITTS & NEVIS  
ST LUCIA  
ST VINCENT & THE GRENADINES  
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Map: Legal status toward homosexuality in the Americas

**WORLDWIDE REACH. HUMAN TOUCH.**