

Travelling alone overseas??? Beware.....12,000 people yearly are kidnapped.....

Weekend Herald says: Kidnap insurance cover worldwide huge.... US\$400 million a year premiums paid!

Ransoms paid in 2yrs Nigeria US \$100 million.... Al Qaeda in West Africa alone makes millions taking hostages.

Was something sinister going to happen? Was it just an attempt to frighten me to rip me off? Did Kiwi ingenuity and a level head save me?

*20th October 2010
The French Embassy
Foreign Affairs,*

Please investigate my concerns re my "taxi" from Charles de Gaulle airport to Paris recently.

I have just returned from a speaking engagement in Paris and very concerned with a "taxi" lift I accepted from airport.

Arriving at approximately 8.10pm 12th October 2010, I already knew there was a strike on.

I was the last through Customs, where I was more or less waved through to baggage. My baggage was alone on the conveyer belt, so loaded my trolley, & proceeded to drink station to purchase a bottle of water before heading outside for a taxi.

There was no security through all check points and the airport was basically empty, by 9pm only a few travellers and what looked like a couple of police.

At the drink station I was approached by a rather tall solidly built, black man, (looked to me Negro) & asked if I needed a taxi, answered 'yes'.

He waited while I purchased my water & lead the way outside to his flash large black minivan, it was not a taxi stand & no other vehicles were around. He loaded my luggage into the back & I stepped inside to the back seating.

The minute the doors locked, I knew I had made a mistake, I literally woke up. My gut was telling me this was different, this was not the normal "taxi".

I realised my normal cautiousness to anything out of the norm, had not kicked in quick enough. I put my lapse down to 30hrs of flying & not sleeping...

We started travelling fast....so I questioned the driver, how much & how long would it take to Paris? & why didn't he have a taxi sign on his vehicle?

No questions were answered satisfactory. I became nervous...so decided to continually check though window for signs saying Paris.

The driver drove like an absolute maniac and at times was driven of motorway, with no signage to 'Paris'.

Of course my mind was also travelling @ 200 miles an hour as to how the hell was I to get out of this situation...only idea at this time, was call someone on mobile, no good it didn't work in France & was packed away in luggage, but next best thing, pretend to, it was dark in the back.

I talked loudly for a long time about distance, the van, looking forward to seeing my friends etc, actually anything I could think of.....

What seemed like an eternity, we drove back on motorway for the rest of the journey to City!

*Yes, with great relief, approximately, 45 minutes later, this nightmare ended (normally 20-30 minute drive) & parked across the road from my Hotel, he could have pulled up outside!
Could not pay the fare by credit card & was ripped off 80 Euro \$149.30 NZ.....my return to airport 18 Euro!*

I did not query the fare as just relieved that I arrived there in one piece, so would have paid any price to get there safely.....

*Tourists need to beware.....has this happened to a tourist before?
Has there been kidnappings in France under similar certain stances?*

*Please advise of your investigation asap.
Thank-you*

*Regards
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