



Renting a car internationally can be a lot more daunting than renting one in the U.S. There are different liability coverage requirements, driving restrictions, and even different vehicles. Before a company sends an employee internationally for a business trip, short-term assignment, or a look-see visit prior to relocating, all parties should consider the following Graebel ReloTRENDS<sup>SM</sup> tips.

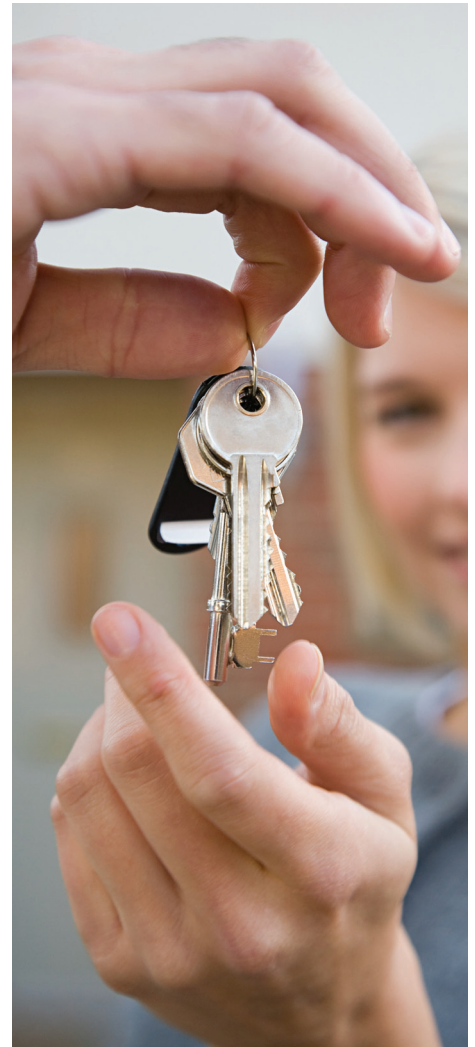
## THE RULES OF THE ROAD: RENTING CARS BEYOND U.S. BORDERS

### BOOKING THE CAR

- > Advanced booking can save money, as often rental rates are higher at the rental counter than over the phone or Internet.<sup>1</sup>
- > Be sure to read and understand rental agreements prior to arriving in the country in which the car will be rented. By doing so, renters can avoid misunderstandings that result from language barriers.
- > Pay close attention to late penalties, gas charges, and other fees that could affect the overall rental rate.
- > Countries have varying makes and models of vehicles – all with different levels of standard features. If certain features are required – automatic transmissions, air conditioning, trunk space, etc. – request these in advance.<sup>2</sup>

### LIABILITY COVERAGE

- > Check with personal auto insurance carriers to see if policies will be applicable overseas. Generally, U.S. auto insurance does not provide coverage for international car rentals, but it may cover driving trips to Canada, Mexico, and some countries south of Mexico.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Sarah Schlichter. "International Car Rental Tips." IndependentTraveler.com, March 31, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Susan Spano. "When Renting Cars Abroad, It's Renter Beware." The New York Times, August 31, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of State. "Road Safety Overseas."

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- > When a car rental is booked and paid for with a Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express, the credit card may offer collision damage waivers, as well as cover some expenses such as towing or deductibles. However, this coverage varies by credit card and by destination country, so call the toll-free number on the back of the card to determine exclusions and claim requirements.<sup>4</sup>
- > Additionally, other forms of insurance – health, homeowners, and trip – may also help cover costs associated with injuries, theft, and damages.<sup>5</sup>

- > Before taking possession of the rental car, always do a thorough inspection for damage and have this noted on your agreement. This will provide protection from being held liable for pre-existing damage.
- > If an accident does occur, take pictures of the scene and other vehicles involved, as this may help with claim processing.

### DRIVER'S LICENSES VERSUS INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMITS

- > U.S. driver's licenses are not recognized in all countries. Before travelling abroad, individuals should obtain an International Driving Permit (IDP), which translates information into 10 different languages and is recognized by more than 150 countries.<sup>6</sup>
- > Obtain IDPs before leaving the U.S. – as an individual's home country must issue the permit. To get an IDP, follow the steps below:
  - Visit a local office of the American Automobile Association (AAA) or the National Auto Club. These two organizations are the only ones authorized by the U.S. Department of State to issue IDPs.
  - Present two passport-size photographs and a valid U.S. driver's license.
  - Be at least 18 years of age.

- Pay a processing fee of approximately \$20.
- > Carry both the IDP and U.S. driver's license at all times. If stopped by law enforcement, the driver must present both forms of ID.<sup>7</sup>

### ROAD SAFETY

- > Before leaving the U.S., individuals who are planning to rent cars should review the driving rules and road conditions of their destination. Suggested resources include:
  - The U.S. Department of State – <http://travel.state.gov>
  - The Association for Safe International Road Travel – [www.asirt.org](http://www.asirt.org)
  - The destination country's tourism office or U.S.-based embassy
- > Always be aware of surroundings when getting in and out of vehicles.
- > Buckle seatbelts.
- > Do not pick up hitchhikers or strangers.
- > Plan routes ahead of time using good international roadmaps or GPS, if available.
- > If the drivers in the destination country drive on the left side of the road, individuals should practice in less populated areas before driving on busy city streets.<sup>8</sup>

### WHAT DO YOU NEED? HOW CAN WE HELP?

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<sup>4</sup> Susan Spano. "When Renting Cars Abroad, It's Renter Beware." The New York Times, August 31, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of State. "Road Safety Overseas."

<sup>7</sup> Sarah Schlichter. "International Car Rental Tips." IndependentTraveler.com, March 31, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of State. "Road Safety Overseas."