

You had a long flight from that outstanding vacation. You've landed back in the USA (only one hour from home) via rented car, and you have arrived at the baggage belt that will *eventually* send your bags to you. Never could figure out why in most European airports, **your bags beat you to the carousel**, but here in the US you can plan on a wait of 10 to 15 minutes....and you know, **YOUR** bags will be the last ones dropping on the belt. And of course, you know too that if there are *two* chutes the bags will come down, you will *always* pick the one furthest from you....which means that although you have been standing close to the carousel, someone (hopefully only 1 or 2) will gradually slide in front of you and you won't be able to see the bags coming at you. And so, the baggage tango begins. You were smart enough to put some large yellow or orange ID tag on your and your bags, so maybe your luggage will stand out from the other 100 bags your size and same color ... but, the bright tags are probably on the up or bottom side from you and you can't see them anyway. Well, while waiting you *could* go and get a baggage-cart ... course, that will cost you ... unlike in most foreign countries where they're **free!**

Well, someone decided they had enough of that "waiting" problem" and they are willing to share that with you – for a fee, of course. If you'd like a \$25 (or less) gizmo to put on your bag that will tell you when it's approaching, you can stand off to the side from the other sweaty passengers and make some calls on the cell-phone, or read the hometown newspaper, or just gloat over those other poor folks waiting for their bags.

The SECRET ... a wireless transmitter that looks like any other baggage tag, but has an off-on switch that you can turn in before giving it to the airline check-in agent when you get on the plane at the beginning of your travel. There is no battery usage until it turns itself on when it is within 90 feet of you at the baggage carousel. You have a receiver in your pocket that looks like a key-fob and you turn that receiver on as you walk into the baggage reception area. When your bags come down the chute and get within 90 feet of you, your magical tag starts beeping and blinking; and you can elbow your way to the edge of the belt and pick up your long-lost bag. Worth a try? Easy. On your computer, just type easy2pick into a Google search page. You'll find a number of pages of sites where you can buy it. And, you're on your way for less nuisance of waiting for your luggage. **One other method:** Travel **First Class** and some airlines will insure that you are not only the first ones off the airplane at your destination ... but your baggage is the *first* bags into the carousel ... of course, that *may* cost a little more than a \$25 tag.

Flying **WEST** on your next travel trip? Recently confirmed that Japan hotels/travel/restaurants are **still expensive** - and more than USA travel ... but just slightly further south, Taiwan is unbelievably cheaper for those same items that almost everywhere in the US. Temps, too, are like Florida, Georgia and even now in December, you can expect 55-60 degree highs in Japan (they will call it 12-15 which is C rather than F) and 3-5 degrees higher in Taipei. Lots to see in both countries but don't drive in Tokyo. In Taipei go to the top of the "101", the 2nd highest building in the world (last year, the highest). The elevator takes 30 seconds to get you up there. Plan **now** to enjoy ... **TRAVEL.**

Submitted by AGCM Moon Mullen USN RET