

Travel & Discovery

Small Steps Can Pay Big Dividends On Your Next Trip

By Julia Ryan

(NAPSA)—Here are some practical and affordable ideas that can help you get more enjoyment out of your next vacation.

• **Give yourself extra time at the airport.** While every airline is different, most will tell you to arrive at the airport from one to two hours before departure to check your bags and have ample time to proceed through increased security screening. Please check your airline for suggestions. If you cut your time too close, neither you nor your bags will make the flight. For connecting flights, your bags should be checked through.

If you've booked separate tickets on separate airlines and you have to transport your own bags, make sure



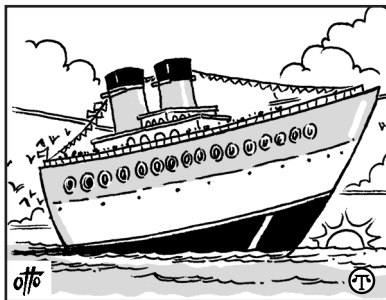
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you have enough time to pick them up for rescreening, which could take an additional one to two hours.

These are all good reasons for carrying on if you can. With the increased security measures in place, remember that traveling on a separate flight from your baggage is generally not allowed.

• **GPS and DVD devices can spell fun for travelers.** Check out such things as Global Positioning System devices and Electronic Maps. The handheld GPS devices are sleek, compact, lightweight and sometimes even waterproof. They can usually tell you exactly where you are, even if you don't know.

Leading GPS technology uses satellite signals to pinpoint your location and even tell you how fast you're going. Many contain



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detailed street maps and allow you to download more maps, driving directions, restaurants and popular destinations.

Also consider packing a portable DVD player. They're small, lightweight and the size of a thin hard-back book, making them suitable for planes, trains and automobiles. These can be a great way to keep the kids—and adults—entertained during long trips.

• **You can make that solo cruise more affordable.** Consider sharing a room with another solo traveler of the same sex and pay only the per-person cabin rate. These "guaranteed shared" programs are offered by many cruise lines. Usually, they also take into consideration such factors as age and smoking preference before they find you a roommate. Shop around.

Even if you are traveling by yourself, it doesn't mean you have to be alone. Ask the maitre d' and crew members to seat you with other single travelers at dinners, events and shows.

Julia Ryan is vice president of Travelers Advantage.