

Travel bugs that I'm not missing at all

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AMERICAN humorist Erma Bombeck observed the first piece of luggage on the carousel never belongs to anyone. What comes around, goes around and around and around.

People always crowd luggage carousels just so they can drop their heaviest suitcase on my foot. I don't miss this about international travel and what else don't I miss about international travel? Let me count the ways.

Apart from New Zealand, we ain't goin' nowhere. What a relief. There are many joys in international travel but airports are not among them. All airports are a vision of hell.

I won't miss crossing the wasteland in all weathers between the drop-off and the terminal at the awful Adelaide Airport. I won't miss the long lines at check-in, even longer lines for security and I especially won't miss the longest lines of all, at the dreaded Los Angeles airport.

The spectacular rudeness of US Homeland Security personnel at endless security checkpoints is galling and, oh, so happily avoided. You have to remove your shoes and belt but there's nowhere for you to sit down to put your shoes back on so you suffer in your socks. That said, the security personnel at Adelaide Airport are comparatively cheery and obliging.

I'm not missing the anxiety of luggage. There's Kerry Packer, James Packer, alpaca, and I'm Over Packer. I've paid a fortune to take things I didn't need all over the world. As a chronic over packer, I always pay excess baggage, which serves me right but I'm not missing the worry of my luggage not arriving with me. This happened to me 14 times in four years.



What's hot/ what's not

HOT

Sausage sizzles again at Bunnings.



The venerable Windsor Theatre at Brighton.



South Adelaide Football Club.



Rain.

NOT

Hahndorf, pictured, needs a huge carpark.



Property developers circling the Wayville Showground like vultures.



The Budget is like the Brownlow Medal count for accountants.

My one attempt to beat the system and travel with just hand luggage didn't work because my carry-on bag was more than 7kg and had to be checked in. Damn. I then watched almost every other passenger bring on hand luggage bigger and heavier than mine. Double damn.

You either have way too much time

at airports or not enough time, which is scary. As a smoker, I've spent a large part of my life outside airports, in all weathers, watching people being dropped off. You can always tell the people who are dropping off family members who've been staying with them. Their relief that their guests are finally leaving is palpable.

I won't miss the scrummage on planes to put your carry-on luggage in the locker above your seat, nor will I miss people who must squeeze past you to access that luggage in flight. I won't miss the hell of the middle seat nor being trapped on a delayed plane and, worst of all, the person in front of you reclining their seat.

Duty-free shopping is not much fun any more and no bonanza. You can't bring more than 25 cigarettes into Australia, thanks to former health minister Nicola Roxon, and you have to be so careful buying booze. Don't buy it unless you are getting on your last flight to somewhere. I've lost bottles of top-shelf scotch and gin to very happy security personnel in Havana and Tahiti.

But the worst part of international travel is the poignancy of saying goodbye to people and places knowing you'll probably never see them again. Still, I've been so lucky to be able to travel and it is better to have loved and lost than never to have had the seat in front of you recline.

The arts and tourism have been very badly hit by the pandemic and I urge you to support travel agents when possible. I go nowhere outside of SA without the help of a travel agent, especially because they are invaluable when things go awry, as surely they will.

Peter Goers can be heard weeknights and Sundays on ABC Radio Adelaide.



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