



### *Airline prices can soar out of sight with add-ons*

Q: Why do airlines advertise one price, but when you pay, it's actually at least 25 percent more. For instance, I booked a round-trip flight online from LAX to JFK for next month. It was advertised on TV as a one-day special deal for \$399. When I clicked in all the information, the bottom-line price was \$513. Why can't the airlines be honest and just advertise the real total price? If we must pay it, we'll accept that, but all the phony price ads are frustrating.

A: Many reasons for the annoying practice. First, the airlines correctly say it isn't their fault there's a bunch of add-ons for government taxes, fuel company surcharges and other expenses. They must pass these charges on to consumers. However, the airlines can't hide behind extra surcharges of \$25 to \$50 a flight they're adding on for holiday travel, nor their increasing practice of hiking charges for checked baggage and in-air food and drink.

Don't get us wrong. U.S. airlines, like any other free-enterprise organizations, need to make money to pay their employees, keep their stockholders happy, maintain the their equipment, meet tough schedules and provide the best services possible. And they do it 99.9% of the time. However, passengers have rights, too.

The only advice we can offer from [travel55plus.com](http://travel55plus.com) is that ticket buyers need to be aware of all pile-on charges at time of purchase. Before booking flights, do your homework and confer with internet or hometown travel agents for the best available bargains. Fortunately, and unless everything in the nation becomes socialized and controlled by the government, airline prices will be determined by the free enterprise system of supply and demand.

Simply put, if airline prices keep going higher, people will look for other forms of transportation and fly less. In fair competition and minimum government interference, then airlines will be forced to compete by lowering prices.