

United States

Customs Regulations

Household Goods

- * For returning US residents, the duty-free exemption is \$400 if the items acquired abroad accompany you. This duty-free exemption may include:
 - * 100 cigars and 200 cigarettes (Products of Cuban tobacco are prohibited entry into the United States unless the product was purchased in Cuba in accordance with Office of Foreign Assets Control Regulations 31 C.F. 515.560).
 - * One liter wine, beer, or liquor if you are at least 21 years old.
- * The duty-free exemption is \$600 if you are returning directly from a Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act country. The exemption is \$1,200 if returning from American Samoa, Guam, or the US Virgin Islands.
- * Articles imported in excess of your exemptions will be subject to duty.
- * If your purchases and acquisitions exceed the allowable duty-free exemption plus \$1,000, you must itemize - in writing - these purchases/acquisitions on the back of the declaration form. Sales slips, invoices, or other evidence of purchase will be helpful when you complete your customs declaration.
- * Visitors are eligible for the same duty-free exemptions just described regarding cigars, cigarettes, and alcoholic beverages. If you are visiting the United States, your exemption is \$100.
- * The prohibition on Cuban tobacco products applies to both visitors and returning US residents.

Motor Vehicles

- * Automobiles imported into the United States must conform to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emission requirements and Department of Transportation (DOT) safety, bumper and theft prevention standards. See Customs pamphlet "Importing A Car" and "Pleasure Boats."
- * Almost all automobiles purchased overseas do not comply with US standards and will require modification. Vehicles imported conditionally for modification to US specifications, and not modified, or are not modified acceptably, must either be exported or destroyed under customs supervision.
- * Vehicles that were originally manufactured to meet EPA emission requirements may, depending upon what countries the car was driven in, be subject to additional EPA requirements or require a bond upon entry. You are advised to call the EPA for further assistance.
- * Information on importing vehicles may be obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency, Attn: 6405J, Washington, DC 20460, telephone (202) and the Department of Transportation, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance (NEF 32), Washington, DC 20590. Copies of the customs pamphlet, "Importing a Car" and EPA's "Automotive Imports Fact Manual" may be obtained by writing, respectively, the US Customs Service, P.O. Box Washington, DC 20044, or the Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC 20460.

Pets

- * Cats and dogs must be free of evidence of diseases communicable to humans. Dogs older than three months must have proof of a rabies vaccination. This vaccination must have been given at least 30 days, but no more than one year, before the travel date. No such proof is required for pets under any Quarantine Division, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA 30333, or request Customs publication Pets and Wildlife.
- * Cats must be free of evidence of diseases communicable to man when examined at the port of entry. If the animal is not in apparent good health, further examination by a licensed veterinarian may be required at the expense of the owner.
- * Dogs must be free of evidence of diseases communicable to man. Dogs, except those less than 3 months of age, must be vaccinated against rabies not less than 30 days prior to arrival. A valid rabies vaccination certificate must accompany the date of expiration, and bear the signature of a licensed veterinarian. If no date of expiration is specified, the certificate is acceptable if the date of vaccination is no more than 12 months before the date of arrival. Vaccination against rabies is not required for dogs arriving from rabies-free countries.
- * Personally-owned pet birds may be entered (limit of two if of the psittacine family), but APHIS and Public Health Service requirements must be met, including quarantine at any APHIS facility at specified locations, at the owner's expense. Advance reservations are required.
- * Non-human primates such as monkeys, apes and similar animals may not be imported.
- * If you plan to take your pet abroad or import one on your return, obtain a copy of our leaflet, "Pets and Wildlife," US Customs.
- * You should check with state, county and municipal authorities about any restrictions and prohibitions they may have before importing a pet.
- * The US Fish and Wildlife Service maintains very strict controls, restrictions, and prohibitions on importing animals, birds, turtles, wildlife, endangered species, and almost all products made from the foregoing.
- * Contact the US Fish and Wildlife Service at: 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203 (1-800-358-2104) for more information. Also contact the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), USDA, Hyattsville, MD 20782, for health related requirements for animals other than pet dogs or cats.

Prohibited/Restricted Articles

Restricted articles include:

- * Cigars and Cigarettes: Not more than 100 cigars and 200 cigarettes (one carton) maybe included in your \$400 exemption. (See other exemptions levels for exceptions.) Products of Cuban origin may be included if purchased in Cuba. This exemption is available to each person. Your cigarettes, however, may be subject to a tax imposed by state and local authorities.
- * Liquor: One liter (33.8 fl. oz.) of alcoholic beverages may be included in the \$400 exemption if:
 - * You are 21 years of age or older
 - * It is for your own use or for use as a gift
 - * It is not in violation of the laws of the state in which you arrive (See other exemption levels for exceptions.)

Note: Most states restrict the quantity of alcoholic beverages you may import. If the state

in which you arrive permits less liquor than you have legally brought into the United States, that state's laws prevail. Information about state restrictions and taxes should be obtained from the state government as laws vary from state to state.

- * Alcoholic beverages in excess of the one liter limitation are subject to duty and Internal Revenue Tax.
- * Shipping alcoholic beverages by mail is prohibited by United States postal laws. Alcoholic beverages include wine and beer as well as distilled spirits.
- * Certain articles considered injurious or detrimental to the general welfare of the United States are prohibited entry by law. Among these are: lottery tickets, narcotics and dangerous drugs, obscene articles and publications, seditious and treasonable materials, hazardous articles (e.g., fireworks, dangerous toys, toxic or poisonous substances), and switchblade knives (however, a one-armed person may import a switchblade knife for personal use, if the blade is 3 inches in length or less.)

Artifacts/Cultural Property (Objects/Artifacts)

- * Law prohibits the importation of pre-Columbian monumental and architectural sculpture and murals from certain countries in Central and South America without proper export permits. These importations are restricted no matter where the artifacts are shipped from, be it the country of origin or elsewhere.
- * Federal law and international treaties prohibit the importation of any articles of stolen cultural property from museums, religious, or secular public monuments. Would-be buyers of such property should be aware that, unlike purchases of customary tourist merchandise, purchases of cultural objects do not confer ownership should such an object be found to be stolen. Imports of certain archeological and ethnographic material (e.g., masks or textiles) from Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, and Mali are restricted and require export certificates from the country of origin. Purveyors of such merchandise have been known to offer phony export certificates, and again, prospective buyers should be aware that customs inspectors are expert at spotting fraudulent export certificates that accompany cultural property. Additional restrictions are expected to be imposed on material from countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Central America.
- * These restrictions are aimed at providing international access to cultural objects to all members of the public for legitimate scientific, cultural, and educational purposes. For more information, contact the United States Information Agency, Washington, DC, (202) 619-6612.

Biological Materials

- * Biological materials of public health or veterinary importance (disease organisms and vectors for research and educational purposes) require import permits. Write to the Foreign Quarantine Program, US Public Health Service, Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA. 30333.

Books, Video Tapes, Computer Programs and Cassettes

- * Pirated copies of copyrighted articles - unlawfully made articles produced without the authorization of the copyright owner - are prohibited from importation into the United States. Pirated copies may be seized and destroyed.

Trademarked Articles

- * Foreign-made trademarked articles may be limited as to the quantity which may be brought into the United States if the registered trademark has been recorded with customs by an American trademark owner.
- * The types of articles usually of interest to tourists are 1) lenses, cameras, binoculars, optical goods; 2) tape recorders, musical instruments; 3) jewelry, precious metalware 4) perfumes; 5) watches, clocks.
- * Persons arriving in the United States with a trademarked article are allowed an exemption, usually one article of a type bearing a protected trademark. An exempted trademark article must accompany you, and you can claim this exemption for the same type of

article only once each 30 days. The article must be for your personal use and not for sale. If an exempted article is sold within one year following importation, the article or its value is subject to forfeiture.

- * If the trademark owner allows a quantity in excess of the aforementioned exemption for its particular trademarked article, the total of those trademarked articles authorized may be entered. Articles bearing counterfeit trademarks, if the amount of such articles exceeds the traveler's personal exemption, are subject to seizure and forfeiture.

Ceramic Tableware

- * Some ceramic tableware sold abroad contains dangerous levels of lead in the glaze that can leach into certain foods and beverages served in them. The Food and Drug Administration recommends that ceramic tableware, especially when purchased in Mexico, China, Hong Kong or India, be tested for lead release on your return or be used for decorative purposes only.

Drug Paraphernalia

- * The importation, exportation, manufacture, sale, and transportation of drug paraphernalia is prohibited. Persons convicted of these offenses are subject to fines and imprisonment. As importation's contrary to law, drug paraphernalia may be seized by US Customs.

Firearms and Ammunition

- * Firearms and ammunition are subject to restrictions and import permits approved by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF). Applications to import may be made only by or through a licensed importer, dealer, or manufacturer.
- * Weapons, ammunition, or other devices prohibited by the National Firearms Acts will not be admitted into the United States unless specifically authorized by ATF.
- * No import permit is required when it is proven that the firearms or ammunition were previously taken out of the United States by the person who is returning with such firearms or ammunition. To facilitate reentry, persons may have them registered before departing from the United States at any customs office or ATF field office.
- * Exports are subject to the export licensing requirements of the Office of Defense Trade Controls, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520, (703) 875-6644.
- * For further information on imports, contact the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20226, (202) 927-8320.
- * Residents of the United States carrying firearms or ammunition with them to other countries should consult in advance the customs officials or the respective embassies of those countries as to their regulations.

Fish and Wildlife

- * Fish and wildlife are subject to certain import and export restrictions, prohibitions, permits or certificates, and quarantine requirements. This includes:
 - * Wild birds, mammals including marine mammals, reptiles, crustaceans, fish, and mollusks and invertebrates
 - * Any part or product, such as skins, feathers, eggs
 - * Products and articles manufactured from wildlife and fish
- * Endangered species of wildlife and products made from them are generally prohibited from being imported or exported. All ivory and ivory products made from elephant or marine mammal ivory are also generally prohibited from being imported. Antiques containing wildlife parts may be imported if accompanied by documentation proving that they are at least 100 years old. (Certain other requirements for antiques may apply.)
- * If you contemplate purchasing articles made from wildlife, such as tortoise shell jewelry, leather goods, or other articles made from whalebone, ivory, skins, or fur, please contact, before you depart, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Law Enforcement, P.O. Box 3247, Arlington, VA. 22203-3247. Information on the limit for migratory game birds for import and export can also be obtained from this office. Ask for their pamphlet,

"Facts About Federal Wildlife Laws."

- * If you plan to import fish or wildlife, or any product, article or part, check with customs or the Fish and Wildlife Service first, as only certain ports are designated to handle these entries. Additional information is contained in our leaflet, "Pets and Wildlife," US Customs.
- * Federal regulations do not authorize the importation of any wildlife or fish into any state of the United States if the state's laws or regulations are more restrictive than any applicable Federal treatment. Wild animals taken, killed, sold, possessed, or exported to the United States in violation of any foreign laws are not allowed entry into the United States.

Hunting Trophies

- * If you plan to import a hunting trophy or game, check with the Fish and Wildlife Service first. Such items generally require a Fish and Wildlife license and only certain ports are designated to handle these entries. Trophies may also be subject to an inspection by APHIS for sanitary purposes. General guidelines for importing trophies may be found in their publication: "Traveler's Tips."

Warning: There are many different regulations governing the importation of animals and animal parts. Failure to comply could result in extensive and expensive delays in clearing you trophy through customs.

- * In addition, federal regulations do not authorize the importation of any wildlife or fish into any state of the United States if the state's laws or regulations are more restrictive than any applicable Federal treatment. Wild animals taken, killed, sold, possessed, or exported to the United States in violation of any foreign laws are not allowed entry into the United States.

Food Products

- * Bakery items and all cured cheeses are admissible. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service leaflet, "Traveler's Tips," provides detailed information on bringing food, plant, and animal products into the United States. Imported foods are also subject to requirements of the Food and Drug Administration.

Fruit and Vegetables

- * Most fruits and vegetable are either prohibited from entering the country or require an import permit. Every fruit or vegetable must be declared to the Customs officers and must be presented for inspection, no matter how free of pests it appears to be. Most canned or processed items are admissible.
- * Applications for import permits or requests for information should be addressed to Quarantines, USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Federal Bldg., Hyattsville, MD 20782, or call (301) 734-8645.

Meats, Livestock, Poultry

- * Meats, livestock, poultry, and their by-products (such as ham, frankfurters, sausage, pate), are either prohibited or restricted from entering the United States, depending on the animal disease condition in country of origin. Fresh meat is generally prohibited from most countries. Canned meat is permitted if the inspector can determine that it is commercially canned, cooked in the container, hermetically sealed, and can be kept without refrigeration. Other canned, cured, or dried meat is severely restricted from most countries.
- * You should contact USDA-APHIS-VS, Federal Building, 6506 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782, for detailed requirements or call (301) 734-7830.

Plants

- * Plants, cuttings, seeds, unprocessed plant products and certain endangered species either require an import permit or are prohibited from entering the United States. Endangered or threatened species of plants and plant products, if importation is not prohibited, will require an export permit from the country of origin. Every single plant

or plant product must be declared to the customs officer and must be presented for inspection, no matter how free of pests it appears to be.

- * Applications for import permits or requests for information should be addressed to: Quarantines, USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Federal Building, Room 632, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782, (301) 734-8645.

Gold

- * Gold coins, medals, and bullion, formerly prohibited, may be brought into the United States. However, under regulations administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control, such items originating in or brought from Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea are prohibited if not properly marked by country of issuance.

Medicine/Narcotics

- * Narcotics and dangerous drugs, including anabolic steroids, are prohibited entry and there are severe penalties if imported. A traveler requiring medicines containing habit-forming drugs or narcotics (e.g., cough medicines, diuretics, heart drugs, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, antidepressants, stimulants, etc.) should:
 - * Have all drugs, medicinal and similar products properly identified
 - * Carry only such quantity as might normally be carried by an individual having some sort of health problem
 - * Have either a prescription or written statement from your personal physician that the medicinals are being used under a doctor's direction and are necessary for your physical well-being while traveling

Prescription Medicine/Drugs

Warning

- * The Food and Drug Administration prohibits the importation, by mail or in person, of fraudulent prescription and non-prescription drugs and medical devices. These may include unorthodox "cures" for medical conditions including cancer, AIDS, and multiple sclerosis. While these drugs and devices may be completely legal elsewhere, they may not have been approved for use in the United States, even under a prescription issued by a foreign physician. They may not legally enter the United States and may be confiscated.
- * For additional information, contact your nearest FDA office or write:
 - Food and Drug Administration
 - Division of Import Operations and Policy
 - Room 12-8 (HFC-170)
 - Fishers Lane
 - Rockville, MD 20857

Merchandise from Embargoed Countries

- * The importation of goods from the following countries is generally prohibited under regulations administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control: Cuba, North Korea, Libya, Iraq and Iran
- * These restrictions do not apply to informational materials such as pamphlets, books, tapes, films or recordings.
- * Specific licenses from the Office of Foreign Assets Control are required to bring prohibited merchandise into the United States, but they are rarely granted. Foreign visitors to the United States may be permitted to bring in small articles for personal use as accompanied baggage, depending upon the goods' country of origin.
- * Travelers should be aware of certain travel restrictions that may apply to these countries. Because of the strict enforcement of these prohibitions, those anticipating foreign travel to any of the countries listed above would do well to write in advance to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20220, USA.
- * There is no limit on the total amount of monetary instruments which may be brought

into or taken out of the United States nor is it illegal to do so. However, if you transport or cause to be transported (including by mail or other means) more than \$10,000 in monetary instruments on any occasion into or out of the United States, or if you receive more than that amount, you must file a report (Customs Form 4790) with US Customs (Currency & Foreign Transactions Reporting Act, 31 U.S.C. 1101, et seq.). Failure to comply can result in civil, criminal and/or forfeiture penalties. Monetary instruments include US or foreign coin in current circulation, currency, traveler's check in any form, money orders, and negotiable instruments or investment securities in bearer form.

Other Useful Information

* No information available

PLEASE NOTE: Customs regulations and requirements; applicable duties, taxes and other government fees levied against the owner's effects are subject to change without notice. Every effort is made to maintain current country by country customs information, however, due to constantly changing conditions, we recommend you contact the country's nearest consulate office for the most current information.