



Importing Personal Property Into Guatemala

HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Customs Regulations:

The client must be in Guatemala for the shipment to clear Customs. All shipments are subject to inspection. Used household goods and personal effects are subject to duties and taxes of about 27% of total CIF value.

New household goods are considered commercial entry incurring full duties and taxes ranging from 5% - 40% of CIF value plus 12% of VAT. Used household goods are assessed by Customs officials taking into consideration the values on inventory list and the physical inspection of items.

Surface shipments: Clearance at a bonded warehouse is highly recommended. Ocean shipments are cleared at the first port of entry.

NOTE: Household goods and vehicles CAN NOT be listed on the same OBL, Destination Agents must have exact consignment instructions prior to dispatch of shipment. The destination address must match the NIT card. Once the import policy is made for the customer and authorized by Guatemalan Customs it can not be amended, therefore if any details are incorrect and subsequently refused by Customs, the Customs Agent (broker) must obtain legal authorization from Customs Authorities by a resolution which takes 10-15 days, creating delays and demurrage charges.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Passports - original, with latest entry stamp, for all family members
- ✓ Visa – a tourist visa is acceptable
- ✓ Work Permit – not required for entry, depends upon employer
- ✓ NIT card – (Guatemalan Tax ID card), obtained from Finance Ministry in Guatemala City: either customer's or employer's (if they are paying the tax and duties on the shipment)
- ✓ "Cedula" – identity card for returning Guatemalan citizens
- ✓ Bill of Lading/Air Waybill – 2 originals: vehicle requires it's own OBL, regardless if it is in the same container as household goods
- ✓ Comprehensive inventory – in Spanish or English, list cost of items but not the "insured values" all appliances/electronics need make, model & serial numbers included
- ✓ Delivery Instructions – contact information much match the NIT card, includes billing and insurance information

Diplomat Status:

Foreign diplomats of accredited Embassies and international organizations or members of government are granted tax and duty free entry of their personal effects and household items either new or used.

Diplomatic shipments are subject to inspection. Diplomats must submit the Diplomatic Franchise for processing to the Embassy or International Mission in Guatemala before the shipment is released.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Diplomatic Franchise and all documents above

RESTRICTED/DUTIABLE ITEMS

- ✓ Sporting guns require a permit from the Ministry of Defense approved prior to importation
- ✓ New items - subject to tax & duties up to 40% of CIF + 12% VAT and require original receipts
- ✓ Appliances – requires a license otherwise appliances will be seized at Customs: license takes 2-3 days to acquire and is valid for 15 days after issue date; obtain a license through Customs by submitting make, model, year of manufacture, type of refrigerant used, NIT number or passport
- ✓ Refrigerators & air conditioners require an Import Permit
- ✓ Electronics – must state serial number, make & model
- ✓ Plants - require a Phytosanitary Certificate notarized by the Consulate
- ✓ Foodstuffs - only 2 kgs allowed, require Certificate of Purity notarized by the Consulate
- ✓ Alcohol – 6 bottles of wine or spirits is duty free in excess of that will incur duty
- ✓ Tobacco – 80 cigarettes or 3 ½ ounces of tobacco is duty free in excess of that will incur duty

PROHIBITED ITEMS

- ✓ Narcotics/illegal drugs of any kind
- ✓ Pornography and subversive material
- ✓ Explosives, ammunitions and weapons
- ✓ Pre-Columbian archaeological items or colonial antiques
- ✓ Appliances - Items produced prior to 2000 will be denied entry; Items containing R11 & R12 are prohibited

IMPORTATION OF PETS

It is recommended to have the both the Health Certificate and vaccination record stamped at the nearest origin Consulate prior to departure. Quarantine is not required; however pets are subject to duty. The only exception is proven pedigreed pets.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Vaccination – including rabies & parvovirus, dated less than 30 days prior to arrival
- ✓ Health Certificate - dated less than 30 days prior to arrival, endorsed by origin Consulate
- ✓ AWB – original
- ✓ Pedigree – if applicable

IMPORTATION OF VEHICLES

A 12% tax based on CIF value is determined by Customs. Vehicles with these accessories: AC, CD players, MP3 players, magnesium wheels etc. are considered “luxury” accessories resulting in higher duty. All vehicles undergo a physical examination to verify make, model, serial numbers of engine and doors. Vehicles are granted a 30 day temporary permit upon entry. Once plates are issued client must pay duties (IPRIMA). Clearance of vehicles takes 2 weeks. Diplomatic vehicles are duty-free. Vehicles over 10 years old are prohibited.

Required Documents:

- ✓ Bill of Lading or Carte de Porte– 2 originals, notarized by Guatemalan Consulate at origin
- ✓ Delivery Instructions
- ✓ Certificate of Title and Registration – original, notarized by Guatemalan Consulate at origin
- ✓ Bill of Sale/Purchase Invoice – original & 2 copies, notarized by Guatemalan Consulate at origin
- ✓ NIT number & Passport
- ✓ Vehicle Condition Report from a certified mechanic

The Destination Agent must have the “pre-alert” documentation of chassis, engine & door serial numbers along with the make and model an engine size prior to dispatch of the shipment.

NOTES:

Fumigation of Wood Packing Materials: Guatemala adopted ISPM15 standards for wood packaging material (WPM). Shipments into and out of Guatemala must have the required marks on the wood materials.

Health: Water is to be considered contaminated, thus it is advised to consume only bottled or otherwise sterilized water. Only eat well-cooked meat and fish, preferably served hot. Pork, salad and mayonnaise may carry increased risk. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled.

Dengue fever may occur. Dysentery and diarrhoeal diseases are common. Visceral, cutaneous and mucocutaneous leishmaniasis also occur. Hepatitis A occurs and inoculation is recommended.

Central America-4 (CA-4) Agreement: In June 2006, Guatemala entered a “Central America-4 (CA-4) Border Control Agreement” with El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Under the terms of the agreement, citizens of the four countries may travel freely across land borders from one of the countries to any of the others without completing entry and exit formalities at immigration checkpoints. U.S. citizens and other eligible foreign nationals, who legally enter any of the four countries, may similarly travel among the four without obtaining additional visas or tourist entry permits for the other three countries.

Safety and Security: Large demonstrations occur throughout Guatemala, often with little or no notice. Due to uncontrolled drug and alien smuggling, the Guatemalan border with Mexico is a relatively high-risk area, in particular in the northern Petén Department. The most dangerous area in that region is on the northwestern border in the area that includes the Sierra de Lacandon and Laguna del Tigre National Parks. Extra precautions are required when U.S. Government personnel travel to the region.

Virulent rumors of child stealing and murder for organ harvesting continue to be reported in several different areas of Guatemala frequented by Americans. Rumors of foreigners stealing Guatemalan children have also surfaced in the area surrounding the Tajumulco Volcano in the Department of San Marcos. The U.S. Embassy has received reports, as recently as March 2009, of restless villagers in the Petén who are suspicious of anyone they believe to be involved in baby kidnapping and organ harvesting.

The following recommendations will help residents and visitors alike to increase their safety:

Avoid gatherings of agitated people. Attempting to intervene may put you at risk of attacks from mobs. Avoid close contact with children, including taking photographs, especially in rural areas. Such contact can be viewed with deep alarm and may provoke panic and violence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Caniz International Corp.: Guatemala City, Guatemala

USDA: www.aphis.usda.gov

US Department of State: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1129.html

Embassy of Guatemala: <http://www.minex.gob.gt/>

FIDI Global Alliance

IATA Travel Centre

International Associations of Movers

The information presented herein is based on customs data available at the time of printing and is frequently subject to change without notice. It is the responsibility of the owner or importer of the household goods to comply with the current customs restrictions, regulations, and duties of the country to which the goods are imported. We strongly advise customers to contact the consulate or embassy of the destination country for the most current information on customs regulations, restrictions and duties for importing household goods, personal effects and vehicles.