



# *Importing Personal Property Into Belize*

## **HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS**

### **CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

#### **Customs Regulations:**

**Client must be present at Customs clearance.** All shipments are subject to inspection. Used household goods and personal effects can be imported duty-free if owned and used for a minimum of one year. Sales tax of 9% is applicable on new household effects based on CIF value. Items must arrive within six months of owners' arrival.

Belize nationals must have been out of the country for at least one year to be entitled to duty-free entry of household goods and personal effects.

New wood items including furniture require an import permit.

**\* Please check with your Destination Agent before importing ANY items made of wood**

#### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Passport including photo page
- ✓ Residence or Work Visa
- ✓ Bill of Lading/Air Waybill (express B/L is acceptable)
- ✓ Comprehensive inventory list

#### **Diplomat Status:**

**Foreign diplomats are granted duty free entry**

#### **Required Documents:**

- ✓ Diplomatic Franchise
- ✓ Passport copy
- ✓ Comprehensive inventory list

### **RESTRICTED/DUTIABLE ITEMS**

- ✓ Medications – requires a physicians prescription
- ✓ New items (less than one year old) are dutiable and require purchase invoices
- ✓ New sports items, computers, stoves and refrigerators are an exception; duty-free if new
- ✓ Bicycles are subject to 8% sales tax and 1% environmental tax
- ✓ Foodstuffs, plants and plant materials
- ✓ Items made of wood – require an Import License from the Ministry of Trade prior to importation

### **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

- ✓ Narcotics/illegal drugs of any kind
- ✓ Firearms with out the proper permits
- ✓ Pornography

**NOTE:** Penalties for possession of prohibited items is very severe and jail sentences are long.

Please review the complete list of prohibited/restricted items at <http://www.customs.gov.bz/restricted.html>

## IMPORTATION OF PETS

Dogs and cats can be brought into Belize with out quarantine. However, they must be inspected for health by a quarantine officer. If vaccines are required for your pets, they must be noted on the Import Permit

### Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Vaccination – including rabies, issued no more than six months prior to departure
- ✓ Health Certificate – not more than 48 hours prior to departure
- ✓ International Health Certificate
- ✓ Import Permit – obtained through the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA)

## IMPORTATION OF VEHICLES

Vehicles are examined by Customs officers for valuation and are subject to duty depending on year of manufacture and condition of the vehicle.

If imported from the US must have a US Customs” *Investigation for Theft* “stamp.

Diplomats- No restrictions apply and the vehicle is free of duty

Valid U.S. or international driver’s permits are accepted in Belize for a period of three months after entry.

### Required Documents:

- ✓ Certificate of Title and Registration,
- ✓ Import Permit- required for boats (very difficult to obtain if the boat is wood)
- ✓ Commercial Invoice/Bill of Sale
- ✓ Insurance Policy & log book showing length of ownership if vehicle is used
- ✓ Driver’s License or International Permit

### NOTES:

**Entry & Exit Requirements:** A person who is a citizen of both the U.S. and Belize is able to enter Belize with only a Belizean passport; such dual nationals should be aware, however, that a valid U.S. passport will be required in order to board a U.S.-bound flight from Belize

**Safety & Security:** US citizens are encouraged to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, to stay current with the latest safety and security announcements dispersed by the Embassy in your area. Your enrollment can also help the Department of State reach your family and friends in case of emergency.

Borders between Belize and Guatemala are in dispute, but the dispute thus far has not affected travel.

Visitors should avoid trekking or other activities near the Belize-Guatemala border to ensure that they do not inadvertently cross the border into Guatemala.

**Crime:** The incidence of crime, including violent crimes such as armed robbery, shooting, stabbing, murder, and rape, remains high. Specific groups such as the elderly, women, or gays are not singled out for victimization; however neither are they immune from being targeted for robbery or assault. Homosexuality is not widely accepted in Belize culture and homosexual behavior may be subject to prosecution as an “Unnatural crime” under Section 53 of the Belize Criminal Code.

Although Americans are not specifically targeted because of their nationality, in recent years the Embassy has noted an increase in crimes against tourists at resorts and on the roads and river ways or between popular tourist destinations and archeological sites. Although there are armed guards stationed at many of the archeological sites, armed criminals have been known to prey on persons walking alone or in small groups from one site to another. While many theft victims are unharmed and only robbed of personal belongings and cash, victims who resist assailants have suffered injury.

**Fumigation of Wood Packing Materials:** At this time Belize does not require the ISPM 15 requirement

**Qualified Retired Person (QRP):** Please inquire with your destination Agent or Belize Tourist Board for

current information and requirements for retiring in Belize

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

Department of State: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1055.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1055.html)

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>

USDA: [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov)

<http://www.customs.gov.bz/>

Embassy of Belize: <http://www.embassyofbelize.org>

**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.**