

*NOTE: The following section is an interpretation of the Mexican rules and regulations regarding the importation of goods into Mexico. Each customs inspector is an individual, and as such, he or she may interpret the rules slightly differently.*

# Chapter 13

## MOVING YOUR STUFF TO COZUMEL

Copyright 2012 by Ric Hajovsky

[Return to Home Page](#)

### Items Allowed into Mexico with a *Visitante* visa

New or used personal items, such as clothing and toiletries, are allowed so long as they are in accordance with the duration of the trip, and their quantity does not suggest that they can be commercialized. (Note: you can only bring clothing that belongs to you personally; you cannot bring in clothing for someone not accompanying you on the trip.) Besides the personal items, each *Visitante* visa holder is also allowed:

- Two cameras or video cameras, and one video recorder and their power sources; 12 rolls of unused film or video cassettes; printed or filmed photographic material;
- two cellular telephones; one laptop computer or notebook; a copier or portable printer; a portable projector, and accessories
- Two sports items, four fishing rods, three surfboards (with or without sails) and their accessories, trophies, one stair climber, and one exercise bicycle
- One portable radio/tape recorder; or a digital music player; or a portable compact disc player/recorder and a DVD player/recorder, and a pair of portable speakers and their accessories
- Five laser discs, 10 DVD discs, 30 compact discs, 10 audio cassettes and 5 storage devices or memory cards for any electronic equipment.
- Books and magazines, in quantities not suggesting that they could be the object of commercialization
- Five toys, including collectibles, baby travel items, including hygiene and toys, car seat, crib, walker, and accessories,

- One video game console with video games
- One blood pressure measurement device; one glucose measurement device; medications for personal use in reasonable amounts (in the case of psychotropic or Schedule 2 or 3 drugs, the medical prescription should be present)
- One pair of binoculars and one telescope
- Valises, trunks and suitcases as necessary
- Passengers 18 years old, or older, may bring in up to 20 packs of cigarettes, 25 cigars or 200 grams of tobacco and up to three liters of alcoholic beverages and six liters of wine
- Baby accessories, such as strollers and baby-walkers
- Two musical instruments and their accessories
- One camp tent, camping equipment, and accessories
- Handicapped or older travelers may bring assistance items for personal use, such as walkers, canes, wheelchairs, and crutches
- A set of tools including its case, 1 drill,
- Bedding, including a set of sheets and pillowcases, a set of towels, a set of bath towels, a set of table linen, and a set of kitchen implements
- Two dogs or cats and their accessories, (pet food and used pet bedding may be disallowed) provided that they have their zoo-sanitary import certificates.

You can also bring gifts with a value of up to \$50 dollars per person, or \$250 dollars per family of five.

You are also allowed in addition to the above items, merchandise valued at \$300 dollars or less (with its invoice) if arriving by air; \$75 dollars if arriving by ground transportation (unless during Holy week, summer, New Year, or Christmas, when the land allowance is the same as the air allowance). For the specific dates of these periods, see [www.aduanas.gob.mx](http://www.aduanas.gob.mx)  
 If you bring a desktop computer, you must pay duties (.008 percent) and taxes (16% at border, 11% at airport), as long as the value of the computer and its peripherals and

accessories do not exceed US\$4,000. If the total value of the computer and its peripherals and accessories exceeds US\$4,000 you must hire the services of a customs broker.

If the total value of duty-free items exceeds \$3,000 dollars (not including the desktop computer), you may be required to hire a customs broker to handle your paperwork. If the total of duty-free goods is under \$3,000 dollars, you may enter the goods without a customs broker and pay only the IVA of 16% if by ground transportation, or 11% if arriving at a Quintana Roo airport as your first entry-point into Mexico. Payment may be made in advance through the internet at [www.banjercito.com.mx](http://www.banjercito.com.mx) or [www.aduana.gob.mx](http://www.aduana.gob.mx) under "Payment of Foreign Trade Duties"

Once your duty is paid, you must press a button on the stop light. If you receive a green light, you may be on your way. If you receive a red light, the officials will inspect your merchandise to make sure you paid the correct duty.

Failure to declare items may result in a fine of 115% of the total amount of the value of the items undeclared. If entering by private vehicle, the vehicle carrying the undeclared goods may also be forfeited.

### **Prohibited Items**

If any of the following prohibited items are found, they will be confiscated. If guns, ammunition, or illegal drugs are found, you will go to jail. Firearms and ammunition are strictly forbidden, except specially permitted sporting guns for hunting purposes. Sporting guns must meet the requirements outlined in section 4 of the Manual of Tourist Entry. Permission to import sporting guns must be applied for at a Mexican Consulate inside the US or Canada before you enter Mexico.

### **Other prohibited items include:**

Fresh or frozen meat, cheese, eggs, milk, yogurt

Plants and plant material

Fruit, vegetables, seeds and spices

Gasoline other than what is in your vehicle's gas tank

Live predator fish

Totoaba fish, fresh or frozen

Turtles, turtle eggs, or products made from turtle

Poppy seeds or poppy-seed flour

Marijuana (*Cannabis indica*), marijuana seeds, medication prepared with marijuana, or extracts, mucilage, or condensed products of marijuana

Juice and extracts of opium, prepared to smoke

Heroin, as a base or hydrochloride of diacetylmorphine

Medication prepared with acetyl morphine or its salts or its derivatives

"Garbage Pail Kids" trading cards

Thallium sulfate

Isodrin, Aldrin, Heptachlor, Drinox, Endrin, Mendrin, Nendrin, Hexadrin, or Leptophos insecticides

Goods declared “archaeological monuments” by the *SEP* (the Secretariat of Public Education

### **What a *Residente Temporal* or *Residente Permanente* visa holder may bring into Mexico**

To bring your household items in with you into Mexico on a one-time-only basis and within 90 days of receiving the visa, you must first complete a *menaje de casa*, a manifest listing all the items, brands, models, serial numbers, and their values for customs. This *menaje* must be submitted and approved by a Mexican Consulate in the US or Canada before you enter Mexico. Together with 4 copies of the *menaje*, you will also need to submit to the Consulate 4 copies of your valid passport, 4 copies of your *Residente Temporal* or *Residente Permanente* visa, proof of residence in the country of origin (driver’s licence will work), and the name of the place where you will be residing in Mexico. A fee will be charged for processing the *menaje*.

Article 90 of the Mexican Customs Law, states all items must be used) not new (personal items, household furniture and personal possessions, such as clothes, books, furniture, appliances, computers, entertainment electronics, musical instruments, and artwork. The artwork must not constitute complete collections for the installation of expositions or an art gallery. You may also bring in scientific instruments and tools necessary for your profession or hobby, but they cannot be of a quantity needed for the installation of laboratories, clinics, or workshops. All items listed as allowed for *Visitante* visa holders are also allowed to be brought into Mexico by both *Residente Temporal* or *Residente Permanente* visa holders.

The list of prohibited items is the same as the one for the *Visitante* visa holders.

### **Bringing your pet to Mexico**

Pets entering Mexico with their owners (by air, sea, or land) must have a Health Certificate (*Certificado Zoosanitaria de Exportacion*) issued by an official authority or by a licensed veterinarian of their home country. This document must be on a vet’s letterhead, include his permit number, and dated no earlier than 10 days prior to your arrival in Mexico. It must contain your name, a description of the pet (sex, race, color, etc.), and your final destination in Mexico. It must also state that your pet was examined and found to be in good health, that it has been treated for internal and external parasites within the last 6 months, and it is now free of external parasites. You must also show proof of vaccines against rabies and distemper, administered at the most 15 days before entering into Mexico. At the border, take your pet to the zoosanitary kiosk at the port of entry and present the documentation to facilitate your pet’s entry into Mexico. There is no entry charge for up to two pets. More than two incur entry fees. The pet’s used bedding or similar items are not allowed into Mexico; only one day’s worth of pet food is allowed to enter with each pet. If the Mexican veterinary inspector is temporarily unavailable at the time you wish to enter with your pet,

the cost of putting the pet up until he is able to inspect it is at your expense. The above regulations refer only to cats and dogs. Other species have different entry requirements, which you can get from the offices of *SAGARPA*, Av. Cuauhtémoc No. 1230, Col. Santa Cruz Atoyac, Del. Benito Juárez, C. P. 03310, Mexico, DF, or emailing [contacto@senasica.gob.mx](mailto:contacto@senasica.gob.mx)

### **Importing your vehicle into Mexico**

A foreign registered vehicle can be temporarily imported for a maximum period of 180 days. The permit issued will be valid for multiple border crossings. A Temporary Import Permit may be had by applying at one of the *designated* Mexican Consulates (not all offer this service), over the internet with *Banjercito*, or at some *designated* (not all offer this service) US/Mexican border crossings.

You can get a jump on things by getting your Temporary Import Permit while you are still in the US or Canada by accessing the *Banjercito* website, [www.banjercito.gob.mx](http://www.banjercito.gob.mx), and fill in the application via the internet. Follow the directions and you will receive a permit and your holographic sticker in the mail.

Vehicle liability insurance is compulsory for foreign-plated cars entering Mexico. Good policies may be purchased in the US or Canada through American Automobile Association (AAA) or the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA). See the section on **PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION** for a list of more automobile insurance companies.

### **Applying for the Temporary Vehicle Import Permit at the border**

At the Mexican port of entry (make sure the one you chose is one authorized to issue permits), you must present your valid passport, your Mexican visa, the vehicle's original certificate of registration, the original vehicle title or a document that certifies legal ownership of the vehicle (original and photocopy. If there is a lien on the vehicle, a notarized letter from the lienholder authorizing you to take the vehicle into Mexico), your valid driver's license (original and photocopy), \$51.04 USD for the permit fee (the fees change every six months according to law), an international credit card issued outside of Mexico (American Express, Diner's Club, VISA or Master Card) in the name of the owner of the vehicle. They will make out a credit card charge slip in an amount from \$200 USD to \$400 USD (depending on the age of the vehicle) which you will sign and they will keep as surety. If you do not have a credit card, you must post a bond assessed on the value of the vehicle. Alternatively, a surety in cash can be made at *Banjercito*.

After inspecting and accepting your documents, the customs official will inspect your vehicle, photograph the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) plate, affix a holographic sticker to the inside of your windshield, and give you a customs declaration detailing the temporary import of your vehicle. This form must be returned at the border crossing if you leave Mexico again with your vehicle. At that time, the credit card slip you signed for the surety will be destroyed (they did not put a hold on the funds with your credit card company, they just held the slip), or your cash deposit refunded, and you will be given a receipt. If the

declaration form is not returned, the bond or surety deposit will be forfeited, or your credit card will be charged, and you will not be allowed to import another vehicle into Mexico.

### **How long can you keep the car in Mexico?**

Article 106 of the Mexican Importation Law says that your car registration is valid in Mexico so long as your visa is valid, regardless of whether or not your foreign plates are expired. This means that if you have a *Residente Temporal* or *Residente Permanente* visa and keep it renewed each year, you can keep your foreign-plated car in Mexico and never have to register it again. However, if you leave Mexico with your car after the initial 180 days, you must turn in the permit and sticker at the border when you leave and buy a new permit when you return. See the section on **PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION** for more details.

### **Authorized drivers**

Section IV of the article says the vehicle can be driven in Mexico by the owner/importer, his or her spouse, their parents and grandparents, their decedents, their brothers or sisters, or by a foreigner who has the same immigration category as one of those herein referenced, or by a Mexican citizen, provided in this latter case, that a person authorized to drive the vehicle is within the vehicle. Once inside Mexico, you must keep the holographic sticker on the windshield and a copy of the registration paper in the vehicle. A copy of your current visa and passport should always be with you as well. See the section on **PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION** for more details.

[Return to Home Page](#)