

# Customs Information

## **Documentation needed for yourself and your crew:**

As of 2009 every person onboard (adults and children) will need a passport to travel by air between the USA and Canada. There are currently (June 1, 2009) a few other acceptable forms of documentation for travel by land or sea. Click [here](#) for information on current list of Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative accepted documentation.

## **RESTRICTIONS FOR TRAVEL TO CANADA**

1. The Canadian government has restrictions on **Canadian citizens** chartering boats in the U.S. to cruise into Canadian waters.<sup>1</sup> If you are a Canadian citizen you will either need to restrict your cruising to U.S. waters or post a bond with the Canadian Government allowing you to cruise to Canada, refundable upon returning the boat to US waters. If another adult member of your crew is a non-Canadian citizen you may transfer the charter into their name, avoiding Ottawa's travel restriction.
2. Anyone with a criminal record (including a drunk driving conviction) may be excluded from Canada. A waiver of exclusion may be issued but several weeks are required and a processing fee must be paid. Visit <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/5312E3.asp> for more information on this process.

## **Procedures:**

Customs procedures on both sides are very courteous, civilized, and simple. These few steps will help keep it that way.

**Cardinal Rule: Touch land at customs dock before any other stops.** You must clear customs before anchoring, landing a dinghy/kayak, or touching a dock (other than the customs dock), a mooring buoy or another boat. Your crew may help you secure the boat at the customs dock, but will need to get back on board while you (the skipper) clear customs. (No dog walking on Customs dock.)

**Documentation:** Everyone aboard, including children, will need a passport to clear customs. In some cases other documentation may be acceptable. Visit [http://www.getyouhome.gov/html/lang\\_eng/index.html](http://www.getyouhome.gov/html/lang_eng/index.html) for other accepted forms of documentation that may apply to you.

## **I. CLEARING INTO CANADA**

- Normally you will clear customs at Bedwell Harbor (May-September), Sidney, Victoria, Nanaimo, White Rock or Vancouver.
- *Common things to avoid:* \*apples, blueberries, quince, peaches, nectarines, plums, cherries (or bring them the cores/pits in a plastic bag), potatoes, corn on the cob, firewood.

- *Limited items:* (per adult) No more than 1.5 liter of wine, **or** 1.14 liter spirits, **or** 24 cans of beer per adult. No more than 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars, or 2 kilograms of tobacco. (Further information 250-363-3618 or <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/information-for-consumers/travellers/visitor-to-canada/eng/1389644337592/1389644527136>.)

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Write down the documentation/registration number from the ship's papers, and the names, citizenship, birth date, and passport # of all passengers. Bring the customs worksheet and your charter agreement to the office or dock phone. Leave the ship's papers on board. You will need written permission from a parent or legal guardian for any children that are not your own. Only the skipper may leave the boat until after you have cleared customs – ALL OTHER PASSENGERS MUST REMAIN ONBOARD UNTIL CLEARED.
2. Log the Canadian clearance number onto the customs worksheet in your Guest Notebook. You will use it for reporting to US customs.

## **II. CLEARING BACK INTO THE USA--IN CANADA LESS THAN 48 HOURS**

- Clear Customs at Roche Harbor, Friday Harbor, Point Roberts or Port Angeles. (If everyone aboard has Nexus call 800-562-5943.)
- Each person may bring articles valued up to \$200 US duty free. (Family members may not combine exemptions.) US will disallow some product from Canada including eggs, beef and chicken, citrus.
- Bring the number from the Customs User Fee sticker (on sailboats: attached to the aft side of the binnacle, just below the wheel; on powerboats: posted near the boarding gate or door. That number tells Customs that we have already paid the \$27.50 entry fee for you.
- Bring the Canadian Customs clearance number with you.
- Log the US "release number" on your notebook Customs sheet for your protection. Please keep your customs sheet to turn in at the SJS/SJY office on your return.
- Normal hours are 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday - Saturday. If the office is closed when you arrive, call 1-800-562-5943. Call from the customs dock, not from the boat or cellular out on the water.

## **III. CLEARING BACK INTO THE USA--IN CANADA MORE THAN 48 HOURS**

Each person may bring articles valued up to \$400, including (if at least 21 years of age) 1 liter alcoholic beverages, 200 cigarettes and 100 cigars. (Family members may combine their exemptions.)

Duty is based on the amount exceeding the \$400 exemption. US will disallow some product from Canada including lamb, goat, whole tomatoes and peppers, allium vegetables, citrus, out of season fruits or fruits and vegetables of unclear origin. Specific restrictions available at:

[https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/82/~travelers-bringing-food-into-the-u.s.-for-personal-use](https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/82/~travelers-bringing-food-into-the-u.s.-for-personal-use)

## CANADIAN CUSTOMS OFFICES

- **Bedwell Harbor (S. Pender Island)** 5/1 - 8/30 9am - 8 pm; 9/1-30, 9am - 5pm. Open May through September.
- On standby: 8pm-midnight. From midnight-8am there is a \$56.00 fee. Number: (250) 629-3363 or toll free at 1-888-226-7277.
- **Victoria and Sydney** manned 24 hours, all year. Toll free at 1-888-226-7277.  
Victoria: (250)363-3339 Sydney: (250)363-6644
- **White Rock** - (nearer Blaine than Pt. Roberts) 24 hrs, (604)531-7581 or 1-888-226-7277.
- **Nanaimo** - 24 hrs, (250)754-0341 or 1-888-226-7277.
- **CanPass** – Six to eight weeks processing, \$25 fee, immediate family only. Toll free: 1-888-226-7277.

## UNITED STATES CUSTOMS OFFICES

- **Friday Harbor** – (360) 378-2080 (customs dock normally manned, call 800-562-5943 after hours)
- **Roche Harbor** - same phone and policies as Friday Harbor
- **Point Roberts** - (360) 945-2314 (customs dock normally manned, call 800-562-5943 after hours)
- **Port Angeles** - (360) 457-4311 (Call for appointment. Clearance available until 6:30 pm year round and until 9 pm during the summer.)

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<sup>1</sup> Charters to southeast Alaska: Exceptions to Ottawa's travel restrictions apply when traveling *through* Canadian waters while transiting between Bellingham and southeast Alaska. Please call for details. 1-800-677-7245.