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## **CBP Highlights What to 'Know Before You Go' for Holiday Travel**

12/19/2012

**Washington** — With the holiday travel season upon us, U.S. Customs and Border Protection is reminding travelers that there are several important things they can do to ensure smooth and efficient processing upon arrival in the U.S.

Travelers should remember to have the proper documentation to enter the U.S., a passport for all air travelers, and a Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative compliant document for travelers 16 years and older if entering the U.S. by land or sea. Additionally, those travelers from Visa Waiver Program countries should remember that they must apply for a new Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) every two years, or if they have been issued a new passport.

For frequent international travelers, the CBP Global Entry program offers expedited clearance at airports for pre-approved, low risk travelers. As of this week, more than 500,000 travelers have now enrolled directly in Global Entry, while 1.3 million travelers receive the benefits of Global Entry by being enrolled in one of the other CBP trusted traveler programs. U.S. citizen trusted travelers and Canadian citizens enrolled in NEXUS also receive the benefit of being eligible to participate in TSA's PreCheck program when flying domestically.

Because many travelers like to celebrate the holidays with festive foods and beverages, CBP reminds travelers to check ahead of time to ensure any agriculture or animal products they are bringing with them are admissible into the U.S. Every year, CBP intercepts more than 54,000 prohibited agriculture items at ports of entry, nearly 150 every day.

Travelers are also urged to check the CBP website to familiarize themselves with the duty exemptions when traveling with goods, especially if transporting gifts or alcoholic beverages around the holidays. Typically U.S. citizens and residents are allowed \$800 worth of goods and one liter of alcohol duty-free. For more information visit [CBP.gov/travel](http://CBP.gov/travel). ( [Travel](#) )

### *Travel Checklist*

- Have all the required travel documents for the country you are visiting, as well as approved and valid identification for re-entry to the United States. Passports are required for air travel. Visit [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) for country-specific information ( [travel.state.gov](#) )
- For citizens of Visa Waiver Program countries, make sure that you have an approved Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) before boarding. For those traveling on a visa, have a completed I-94 form when approaching CBP processing.
- Have a completed Customs Declaration form (6059b) upon reaching CBP processing. Declare everything you are bringing from abroad, even if you bought it in a duty-free shop. Know that things bought abroad for personal use or as gifts may be eligible for duty exemptions. If you are bringing them back for resale, they are not.
- Know the difference between prohibited merchandise (which is forbidden by law to enter the U.S.) and restricted merchandise (items needing special permit to be allowed into the U.S.). For more information, please visit the Restricted/Prohibited section of the CBP website. ( [Restricted/Prohibited](#) )

- Do not attempt to bring fruits, meats, dairy/poultry products and/or firewood into the United States without first checking whether they are permitted. For more information, please visit the Bringing Agricultural Products Into the United States section of the CBP website. ( [Bringing Agricultural Products Into the United States](#) )
- Build additional time into trips during busy travel seasons and understand that CBP must conduct a thorough inspection of the nearly one million travelers entering the country each day.
- Understand that CBP officers can inspect you and your personal belongings without a warrant. This may include your luggage, vehicle, and personal searches and is meant to enforce our laws as well as protect legitimate travelers.
- Monitor border wait times for various ports of entry. ( [BWT](#) ) Travelers are encouraged to plan their trips during periods of lighter traffic or to use an alternate, less heavily traveled port of entry. For more information, travelers can find up to date wait time information on the CBP website.
- If you are a frequent international traveler and haven't already become a member of a trusted traveler program, sign up now. For more information, please visit the Trusted Traveler section of the CBP website. ( [Trusted Traveler](#) )
- Familiarize yourself with the "Know Before You Go" section of CBP.gov. ( [CBP.gov](#) )

*U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.*

## see also:

### ▶ on [cbp.gov](#):

[Travel](#)

[travel.state.gov](#)

[Restricted/Prohibited](#)

[Bringing Agricultural Products Into the United States](#)

[BWT](#)

[Trusted Traveler](#)

[CBP.gov](#)