

Costa Rica Country Guide - IAM

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Country Guide: Costa Rica

Due to the current coronavirus/COVID-19 situation and restrictions in various countries, the below information may not be accurate. This pandemic is a fluid situation. Check with authorities for local laws and restrictions concerning movements.

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Used Household Goods and Personal Effects

Documents Required

- Copy of passport
- Rated original bill of lading (OBL) / airway bill (AWB)
- Packing list in English or Spanish

Specific Information

- Customs clearance takes approximately 10 business days from the date of shipment arrival.
- The items and weights identified on the OBL must match the actual items in the shipment or a fine of 250 USD will be levied and clearance will be delayed.
- All shipments are subject to physical inspection.
- Diplomat shipments are duty free.
- Returning citizens may receive a partial tax exemption if having lived abroad for at least 24 months preceding import; proof from the Costa Rican consulate in the origin country is required and must indicate the number of years of residence lived abroad.
- Liftvans, airvans, wooden crates, and boxes arriving in containers or single shipments must be fumigated per ISPM-15 guidelines and visibly marked on at least two opposite sides of the container in permanent black ink.
- Certain wood packing materials are exempt from ISPM-15 regulations; contact the destination agent for specific information.

Motor Vehicles

Documents Required

- Original title
- Original purchase invoice
- OBL

Specific Information

- Duties range from 45% to 70% of the retail value of a vehicle.
- The import of motor vehicles is not recommended as duties may exceed the value of the vehicle.
- Contact the destination for additional information.

Pets

Documents Required

- Rabies vaccination record
- Veterinary health certificate (2 copies)
- International certificate (APHIS Form 7001) is recommended
- Authorization from the Costa Rican Health Ministry obtained at origin from the Consulate / Embassy

Specific Information

- Documents must be received by the destination agent prior to the arrival of the animal and are subject to examination upon arrival.
- Animals over 3 months of age must be vaccinated against rabies.
- Quarantine is not currently required unless the pet is deemed unhealthy upon examination then the pet may be kennelled in a government facility.

Restricted/Dutiable Items

The following items are subject to taxes:

- Arms and ammunition (a permit from the Ministry of National Security is required for returning citizens or residents)
- Dangerous objects (a permit from the Ministry of National Security is required for returning citizens and residents)
- Plants (a phytosanitary certificate and permit from the Ministry of Agriculture are required prior to import)
- New household goods / new furniture (an original invoice or a statement under oath of the value of the item is required)
- Household / electrical appliances (the brand, serial number, and model must be listed on the packing list)
- Wedding trousseaux, inheritances, gifts and souvenirs
- Carpets
- Antiques and works of art
- Furniture (wooden items / ornaments require a permit from the Ministry of Agriculture)
- Precious metal objects, such as jewelry, coins, etc. (purchase receipts / invoices are required)
- Non-motorized vehicles, such as bicycles, watercraft, etc. (duties depend on value, year, model, cubic centimeters, and features)
- Wine and alcohol (permits from the Ministry of Health /Ministry of Economy are required)
- Tins and food (a permit from the Ministry of Health are required) (3 copies)

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics, drugs and medicines (permits from the College of Pharmacy and Ministry of Health are required)

- Pornographic and subversive materials
- Explosives

Consignment Instructions

Recommended: Contact the destination agent to ensure all requirements have been met prior to import, especially for differences regarding air / sea shipments.

Cultural and Other Information

[CIA World Factbook](#)

[Wikipedia Entry for Costa Rica](#)