Tips on Traveling to Canada

Documentation: U.S. Citizens
a. Entering Canada by Air
   • All persons, including U.S. citizens, travelling by air between the U.S. and Canada are required to have a valid passport, or other valid travel document such as an Air NEXUS card. This applies to all travelers, regardless of age, including children.

b. Entering Canada by Land or Sea
   • Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) does not require U.S. citizens to present a passport to enter Canada; however, Americans do need a passport or equivalent travel document to get back into the U.S. Thus, Canada and U.S. border requirements may be different on paper, but are in practice, the same. Canada will not allow a U.S. citizen into the country that does not have the proper documentation to return home.
   • For entry into the United States via land and sea borders, U.S. citizens must present either a U.S. passport, passport card, NEXUS card, Enhanced Driver’s License or other Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)-compliant document. Therefore, if entering Canada by land or sea, you are required to present one of the following documents: a valid passport; a passport card; NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST Card; enhanced driver’s license.
   • The only exception to this requirement is for U.S. citizens under the age of 16 (or under 19, if traveling with a school, religious, or other youth group) who need only present a birth certificate (original, photocopy or certified copy), Consular Report of Birth Abroad, or naturalization certificate.

Documentation: Non-US Citizens
a. Entering Canada by Air
   • All persons, including U.S. citizens, travelling by air between the U.S. and Canada are required to have a valid passport, or other valid travel document such as an Air NEXUS card. This applies to all travelers, regardless of age, including children

b. Entering Canada by Land or Sea
   • Non-U.S. Citizens should present both a passport and a VISA (if you are arriving from a country for which one is required) to enter Canada

Crossing the Border: General
• You will be meet by a Canadian Border Services Agency officer at your port of entry that requires you to show your identification, state your reason for travelling to Canada, length of stay and may further inquire to your citizenship in Secondary Services and Inspection. Answering all questions honestly and directly will make your crossing as quick as possible.
• When crossing in Canada, you will be asked if you have any goods to declare, in particular any food, animal or plant products. It is recommended you do not travel with any of these items.
For further information and clarification about traveling into Canada, we highly recommend reviewing the links below as there are strict rules about travel to Canada you may not be aware of.

http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/noncan-eng.html

Crossing the Border: Air

- When entering Canada by air, you will be required to fill out and present a Canadian Customs Declaration Card. The card requires the passenger to fill out information in regards to their name, home address, flight they arrived on, purpose of the trip, duration of the trip as well as any items you wish to declare.
- You will need to fill out a similar form upon your arrival back into the U.S., if the U.S. is your final destination.
- You will pass through Canadian Customs upon your arrival in Canada at the arrival airport.
- On your way home, if you are travelling back to the U.S., you MAY pass through U.S. Customs at the Canadian airport you depart from, depending on your departure airport. Many of the larger airports in Canada have U.S. Customs and Border Protection areas stationed in the airport as a means to ease the volume of citizens passing through the Customs area in the U.S. airports. Canadian airports that do have U.S. Customs and Border Protection areas are listed below. Therefore, clear through U.S. Customs prior to boarding your flight home to the U.S. from the following airports:
  - Calgary International Airport
  - Edmonton International Airport
  - Halifax Robert L. Stanfield International Airport
  - Montreal Trudeau International Airport
  - Ottawa MacDonald-Cartier International Airport
  - Toronto Lester B. Pearson International Airport
  - Vancouver International Airport
  - Victoria International Airport
  - Winnipeg International Airport
- In terms of what you can/cannot bring into Canada while flying in, do not fly with perishable items, including fruits and vegetables, dairy, meats etc. in addition to the regulations for all air travel in regards to carry-on restrictions.
Crossing the Border: Car

- Please ensure that you and all passengers have their own documentation in hand in advance of pulling into the border crossing area.
- All passengers are to remove any hats, hoods, ear buds, sunglasses, etc. and have their own documentation ready to present. We recommend they only speak when spoken to/asked a question by a border officer to ensure that the process goes smoothly and quickly.
- The driver will be the point of contact with the border officer.
- Once all passengers have shown their documentation and been cleared for entry, you are on your way.
- Wait times for border crossing is estimated at 10 min (Monday – Thursday) and 20 minutes (Friday – Sunday and holidays).

Currency

- The currency used and accepted for payment in Canada is the Canadian Dollar (CAD)
- Denominations are available in:
  - Notes/Bills - $5.00, $10.00, $20.00, $50.00, $100.00 etc.
  - Coins - $0.05 (Nickel), $0.10 (Dime), $0.25 (Quarter), $1.00 (Loonie/One Dollar Coin), $2.00 (Twoonie/Two Dollar Coin)
- Please note that Canada no longer manufactures the Penny/$0.01. Instead, the cost when paying in CASH, it is rounded up or down to the nearest $0.05. I.e. $25.06 will cost you $25.05 cash but $25.09 will cost you $25.10. If paying via credit card or debit, the actual cost listed what you will be charged.

Money Matters

- Commonly accepted forms of payment are cash, credit card, debit cards.
- Travelers checks are not widely accepted in Canada anymore.
- If you are paying via credit card, please be sure to notify your credit card company that you will be travelling outside of the country so they do not suspend your card due to suspicious location activity.
- If you are paying via debit card, please be sure that your PIN is 4 digits only as many ATM machines will only accept 4 digit PINS. Also, the account you will be withdrawing money from should be the primary account on your debit card. You may not be given the option to choose additional accounts at a foreign country ATM and will default to whatever account is set up as your primary account.

Personal Exemptions

- The duty-free exemption, also called the personal exemption, is the total value of merchandise you may bring back to the United States without having to pay duty. You may bring back more than your exemption, but you will have to pay duty on it. In most cases, the personal exemption is $800 USD.
- The exemption is only $200 USD if either of the following conditions apply. 1) You have been outside of the U.S. for less than 48 hours or 2) you have used your personal exemption on a previous trip outside the U.S. within the previous 30 days.
Beware the Mobile

- If you plan on using your mobile device while outside of your country of residence/in Canada, please be sure to call your mobile provider to discuss options for your international services on your mobile. You will be charged simply for roaming, as well as international data usage and calling. So, if you plan to use it, purchase a package for the time you will be in Canada to ensure you don't return home to a large bill.

Two Official Languages

- Canada has two official languages: English and French.
- While travelling in the province of Québec, the primary language spoken is French. Many attractions, shops and tourist destinations will speak English as well but please be aware that you may encounter some residents that do not speak English or it is broken English.
- The remaining provinces and territories in Canada speak English as their primary language. There are parts/cities or towns in all provinces and territories where they speak French first, however, many of these areas are removed from the large city centers you would be visiting as a tourist.

Canadianisms

- There are a few sayings/phrases we have in Canada that are a bit different then other English speaking countries. For example: Canadians refer to soda as "pop", the alphabet letter "Z" is pronounced "Zed" in Canada and, washrooms = bathrooms = restrooms = toilets, Mounties are the "Royal Canadian Mounted Police" and yes, they ride horses, and finally, Tim Horton's is a coffee and baked goods food chain in Canada. It is a part of the culture, way of life and everyone has to stop for "Timbits" on their trip…which are donut holes!