

Some info about transporting items between EU countries

Carrying alcohol and tobacco when travelling between EU countries

As a rule, excise duties must be paid in the country where alcohol and tobacco are consumed. However, there are exemptions for private individuals when travelling between EU countries. This exemption applies as long as the products purchased are for your own use and not for resale. As taxes (VAT and excise) are included in the price of the product in the country where you bought it, no further payments are due in any other EU country.

However, to determine if the products you have bought are for your own use, EU customs authorities can look at several different elements such as, if you own or work for a commercial business, how the goods are packaged and transported etc. They will also look at the quantity of products you are travelling with. For this reason, each EU country can set their own guideline values for the quantities of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages that you can bring in. These guideline values may not be lower than the following:

Goods	EU guideline values
Cigarettes	800
Cigarillos (cigars weighing maximum 3 grams each)	400
Cigars	200
Tobacco	1 kg
Spirits (for example whiskey or gin)	10 litres
Fortified wine (such as sherry or port)	20 litres
Wine	90 litres (of which only 60 litres can be sparkling)
Beer	110 litres

Carrying animal products, food or plants in the EU

If you are traveling in the EU you can carry meat or dairy products with you as long as they are for your **own personal consumption**. This also applies to plants or plant products, such as cut flowers, fruit or vegetables as long as they have been grown in an EU country and are free from pests or disease.

Rules at border for coming back to the U.S.

1. Every single plant or plant product including handicraft items made with straw, must be declared to the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer and must be presented for CBP inspection, no matter how free of pests it appears to be.
2. Bringing fruits and vegetables depends on a number of factors. For instance, consider the apple you bought in the foreign airport just before boarding and then did not eat. Whether or not CBP will allow

the apple into the United States depends on where you got it and where you are going after you arrive in the United States. The same would be true for Mediterranean tomatoes. Such factors are important because fresh fruits and vegetables can introduce plant pests or diseases into the United States. One good example of problems imported fruits and vegetables can cause is the Mediterranean fruit fly outbreak during the 1980s. The outbreak cost the state of California and the federal government approximately \$100 million to get rid of this pest. The cause of the outbreak was one traveler who brought home one contaminated piece of fruit. It is best not to bring fresh fruits or vegetables into the United States.

USDA regulates only honey and beeswax that is being imported for use as feed for bees in apiaries. Generally, travelers can bring in comb honey, royal jelly, bee bread, or propolis if it is intended for personal consumption.

Products traveler CAN bring if commercially packaged/prepared (declare all at entry)

- Hibiscus flowers contained in herbal tea products are permitted entry, subject to inspection.
- Herbal tea products containing ginseng or goldenseal are permitted, subject to inspection, if commercially packaged and ready to be boiled, steeped, or microwaved in liquid.
- Commercially packaged herbal products containing lemongrass are permitted subject to inspection.
- Dodder (*a.k.a. Semen cuscatae, Cuscuta chinensis, or tu si zi; Cuscuta japonica, or toshishi or tosaja*) is permitted in herbal tea products if contained in individual, ready-to-steep tea bags and dodder is processed sufficiently for seed color to be gray.
- Herbal tea products containing citrus (*Rutaceae*) leaves, flowers, bark, roots, peel, or fruit are enterable if the product is commercially packaged and ready to be boiled, steeped, or microwaved in liquid, or if package is labeled as having undergone required heat treatment. Otherwise, entry is prohibited.
- Herbal teas containing bark from *Prunus* trees (apricot, cherry, peach plum, etc.) may enter if commercially packaged and ready to be boiled, steeped, or microwaved in liquid, or if package is labeled as having undergone required heat treatment. Otherwise, entry is prohibited.
- Masala chai, if all components are finely ground, may enter any port except for Hawaii or Puerto Rico, subject to inspection. If not finely ground, please contact USDA's Plant Protection and Quarantine Permit Services office at (301) 851-2046 to inquire about requirements.
- Roobios tea is permitted, subject to inspection.

RESTRICTED or PROHIBITED products containing herbal ingredients

- Coca leaves and khat (Arabian tea) are restricted as federally controlled substances.
- Products containing bark derived from endangered plants protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) are restricted. Please see <https://www.cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php> for more information.
- Any product containing barberry (*berberis*) leaves or *Prunus* (apricot, cherry, peach plum, etc.) flowers is prohibited from entry.

Whole Coffee Berries (a.k.a. coffee cherries): Fresh coffee berries—defined as the unprocessed, whole coffee fruit with pulp—are **prohibited entry at all U.S. ports of entry** because the pulp presents an exotic fruit-fly risk.

USDA does **not allow** travelers to bring back most eggs or egg products from countries affected with certain serious poultry diseases:

- Highly pathogenic avian influenza
- Virulent Newcastle disease
- There are **two exceptions**:
- Commercially packaged and labeled, cooked, shelf-stable, fully finished food items from affected countries that are in unopened packages are allowed.
- Cooked eggs or egg products from affected countries will be inspected by U.S. Customs & Border Protection. Items appearing to be “thoroughly cooked throughout” will be allowed entry. Items that do not appear “thoroughly cooked throughout” will not be allowed without special certification and an import permit.

3. The importation of absinthe is subject to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations (21 C.F.R. 172.510 and the Department of the Treasury's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau regulations (27 C.F.R. Parts 13.51, 5.42(a), and 5.65. The absinthe content must be "thujone free" (that is, it must contain less than 10 parts per million of thujone); the term "absinthe" cannot be the brand name; the term "absinthe" cannot stand alone on the label; and the artwork and/or graphics cannot project images of hallucinogenic, psychotropic or mind-altering effects. Absinthe imported in violation of these regulations is subject to seizure.

4. Travelers entering the United States must declare all agricultural products on their U.S. Customs forms. U.S. agricultural inspectors will examine your items to be sure they meet entry requirements and do not harbor harmful foreign pests or diseases. U.S. inspectors have the authority to make a final determination about whether your products can enter the country. We recommend that you keep receipts and original packaging of agricultural products as proof of their country of origin. ***As long as you declare all the agricultural products you are bringing with you, you will not face any penalties—even if an inspector determines that they cannot enter the country.***