



# Importing Personal Property Into

## JAPAN

### IMPORTING HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

#### **DUTY-FREE ENTRY IS PERMITTED IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET:**

- Shipper must have been in the country for at least 6 months prior to customs clearance.
- Personal effects and professional equipment are duty free, provided the shipper will live in Japan for at least one year and the articles are considered appropriate and are not for sale.
- The total overseas market value of all items excluding restricted items must be less than approximately US\$1600.00 for duty free status. Any items whose overseas market value is less than app. US\$800.00 is not included in the calculation of the total overseas market value of all articles.

#### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

- ✓ Copy of passport, including visa, for unaccompanied items clearance. An original letter on company letterhead may be submitted in lieu of visa if the application has been or will be submitted
- ✓ Original Customs Declarations Forms and two copies (C5360-2) of the same identically completed.
- ✓ Packing List
- ✓ Ocean Bill of Lading or Air Waybill
- ✓ Detailed alcohol listing, if applicable.
- ✓ Video List, if applicable
- ✓ Invoices of any new items, if applicable.
- ✓ A "Report for the Import of Rice" must be submitted to customs and the Local Food Office (for free import of up to 100KG rice per year.)

**Note:** It is helpful for the customs authority to know how long the shipper will reside in Japan, for the purpose of determining the quantity of items considered reasonable and appropriate for the use

#### **PROHIBITED ITEMS**

- Narcotics, Illicit drugs and/or paraphernalia
- Counterfeit, altered or imitated articles of coins, paper money, banknotes or securities
- Books, drawings, carvings and any other articles that are considered pornographic, obscene or immoral
- Articles that infringe upon patents, utility-models, designs, trade marks, copyrights or neighboring rights
- Firearms, swords, pistols, revolvers and all types of ammunition
- Fresh fruit including apples, pears, quince, nectarines, peaches, plums, apricots and cherries. Pineapple and green bananas are allowed.
- Tylenol Cold, Nyquil, Nyquil Liquicaps, Actifed, Sudafed, Advil Cold & Sinus, Dristan Cold/ "No Drowsiness", Dristan Sinus, Drixoral Sinus, Vicks Inhaler, Lomotil.
- Some plants and meat products are prohibited or restricted.
- Animals classified as endangered species

**Note:** Importation of all fresh fruit, vegetable or meat products should be avoided. For additional information, consult the USDA.

#### **RESTRICTED ITEMS:**

- New furniture is dutiable at approximately 4% plus 5% consumption tax.
- Alcohol, tobacco products and perfume should be declared and are restricted to personal use only.
- Rooted plants, fur, meat, shell and stuffed animals require a quarantine certificate
- Precious metals
- Currencies (including travelers checks, securities etc.)
- Cosmetics and prescription medicines

## IMPORTING MOTOR VEHICLES, VESSELS, PETS AND ART

### IMPORTATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES:

- Automobiles are excluded from unconditional duty-free entry; however, they may be imported duty-free under Article 15-1-(9) of the Customs Tariff Law for the specified usage.
- The conditions for the duty-free entry are as follows:
  - The automobiles must have been used for at least one year prior to importation
  - The automobile must not be sold for two years, after duty-free importation is permitted.
- A consumption tax of 5% is levied on automobiles. But, if the vehicles are recognized as a part of a household goods and personal effects shipment, the consumption tax may also be exempted.
- Once imported, automobiles must be registered with the Prefectural Transportation Office. Prior to registration, the automobiles must conform to the safety and environmental standards stipulated in the Road Vehicles Act. Registration and inspection fees vary with the automobile's engine size and body type. Unless built for Japan import model, most models will have to be modified to meet Japanese exhaust and safety standards. Testing for exhaust gas clearance alone may require in excess of ¥350,000.00. Importation of automobiles is not recommended.

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ Three copies of the Application for Duty Exemption Form (T-1280)
- ✓ The sealed Customs Declaration Form (C5360-2)
- ✓ The family passport.
- ✓ Any document certifying that the automobile has been owned by the shipper or the shipper's family prior to importation, for example, vehicle registration, receipt of payment, etc.

### IMPORTATION OF VESSELS/AIRCRAFT:

- Vessels and aircraft are required to have been in the possession of the shipper or the shipper's family in excess of one year, for duty-free importation. And as stated before, the vehicles must not be sold for two years after duty-free importation is permitted.

### IMPORTATION OF DOGS AND CATS:

- All dogs and cats imported into Japan from the U.S. require a quarantine exam and quarantine period upon arrival in Japan. Quarantine will last for at least 14 days. The owner is responsible for all costs incurred during quarantine.
- Dogs and cats must be vaccinated for rabies at least 30 days prior to the dog/cat's arrival in Japan. If a pet has been vaccinated more recently, it may be subject to quarantine for up to 45 days. If the pet has no rabies certificate or if the vaccination has expired, the length of quarantine can be 180 days. Check with your veterinarian to see how long the vaccination is valid for.
- A Health Certificate must be obtained for your cat/dog. It should be acquired about 10 days prior to departure.
- If you intend to ship your dog/cat as freight, you will need to notify the Animal Quarantine Station 40 to 70 days prior to its arrival in Japan.

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- ✓ Rabies Certificate and a Health Certificate, both validated (stamped on the back) by the USDA APHIS (United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service).

### IMPORTATION OF ART AND ANTIQUES:

- "Antiques" are defined as works of art that are at least one hundred years old. Works of art and antiques are exempt from duties and taxes, as long as they are a part of a household goods and personal effects shipment. Shipper should supply documents noting the value and period of

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

- Yokohama System Mover Co., Ltd., 2002
- Global Silverhawk, 2000.
- Japan Information Center, "Frequently Asked Questions," <http://www.embjapan.org.sf/faq.htm>, 2000.
- "Guide to the Animal Quarantine Service," Animal Quarantine Service, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, <http://www.animal-quarantine-service.go.jp>, 2000.

**The information presented herein is based on customs data available at the time of printing and is frequently subject to change without notice. It is the responsibility of the owner or importer of the household goods to comply with the current customs restrictions, regulations, and duties of the country to which the goods are imported. We strongly advise customers to contact the consulate or embassy of the destination country for the most current information on customs regulations, restrictions and duties for importing household goods, personal effects and vehicles.**