

# Smuggling: A How-To Guide

by Thomas LLOYD

Smuggling is great. Recently I returned to Canada with a hilarious amount of cheap booze and smokes. I also returned with rocks, soap, flower petals, and stolen socks. I had to cut my trip to Italy short because my brain was starting to calcify. I couldn't think straight, and wanted to return to Canada, so I giddily packed my luggage, laughing at every article I crammed in. I knew there was no way I was getting into Canada. My carry-on alone had two pounds of fresh rose petals. And beside them was a bag of bread crumbs. Yes, I had gone crazy.

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Then I decided to bring booze back. I packed a lot. Then the cigars. A lot of them, too. Booze and smokes make sense, but I still can't explain where twenty pairs of socks came from. Or where all my underwear ended up. But I somehow got from Italy to Canada without getting anything seized, and I am now left with over three hundred cigars and an obscene amount of liquor. So here's my account of how I got here, and maybe some of these tips may prove helpful for when you go crazy in a foreign country.

When you pack your luggage the night before, remember that the luggage X-ray machine scans from side-to-side, and that your luggage is likely going to be placed right-side-up and the longest side parallel to the machine. X-rays read only density, and cloths can be packed really densely. Metal objects are okay if randomly placed, but bottles are best placed so that their profiles will look like a circle, not like a long bottle. And wrap the bottles in a lot of plastic bags in

case they break, and try to keep each piece of luggage close to the legal limit.

You can go way over the limit if you want, as I once did: when I was caught I offered to declare my 1.75 litre bottle, but the taxes added were way too much. You're allowed to take 1.14 litres into Canada duty free, so under law I was able to ask them to open the bottle and make my 1.75 into a 1.14. I was escorted into a wash-room, and the guy opened the bottle and poured out one or two shots. So, in theory, this 1.14 litres could be distributed between as many bottles as you want.

All right, so you get to the airport with your luggage packed with booze and smokes, and immediately your luggage is whisked away when you get your boarding pass. Your luggage won't appear again until you get to your final destination, so unless your carrying something really weird, you won't get caught until you're on Canadian soil.

Now you go through passport and currency control, and they X-ray your carry-on here. This machine X-rays from the bottom up, and you get to place your bag, coat, and shoes on the conveyer belt however you chose. Remember profiles. And remember that these guys are looking for spoons, forks and box-cutters, not two cartons of smokes, fifty cigars, or a great big glass bottle of whiskey. They will physically look through every pocket of your carry-on, at least in theory.

Now that you're inside the air terminal, head for the duty free shop. Buy your limit of booze, and you'll get it in a bag sealed with tape. Then walk closer to your gate and go to another duty free shop, and buy your limit again. You can buy as much as you want, as you won't be inspected again until you get off the plane. So get on the stupid plane, and you won't be X-rayed again until the next international airport. You can easily walk on a plane carrying hundreds of cigars and tons of booze, just remember to

keep your receipts.

When you're on the plane be sure to stockpile free booze. Don't even think of going near your five litres above you. Every time the booze cart rolls by, you're entitled to ask for as much booze as you want. Drink one, hide one. Nothing sucks more than when you get cut off on a plane (it will happen), but when you are cut off say "I'm sorry and I understand. I've just been out of Canada and haven't had any whiskey in months. Can I have an American coffee and a can of 7-Up?" Put your hidden whiskey in your coffee, gin in your 7-up, and chug your little bottles of wine. But do all this around two hours before landing.

I did this, but the trouble I ran into was, when the customs declaration forms were passed out, I was way too drunk to fill it out. Then I read the legal limits for booze and smokes. I

thought it was two litres of hard liquor and one hundred cigars - I had double that in my overhead compartment, not to mention my luggage. The limit is in fact 1.14 litres and fifty cigars. But I was loaded and calm as a kitten, so I wasn't too concerned, and made my form as illegible as possible. This may be very important. Let the customs

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