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## Customs and the holiday period Tips for a relaxing holiday without any problems at customs



Bonn (ots) -

In the next few weeks, the long summer holidays will begin throughout the whole of Germany. The holiday period is the main travel period. Many travellers will be asking themselves what holiday souvenirs and mementoes may be brought back home from abroad, so customs is providing you with information on the travel rules.

Uwe Schröder, President of the Central Customs Authority, offers the following advice: "Travellers should inform themselves in advance of the most important customs regulations so that the best weeks of the year remain a happy memory and there are no unpleasant surprises at customs when returning from holiday. For the principle 'ignorance of the law is no defence' also applies to travel. And the fines can be significant even in the case of supposedly minor infringements. "

Travellers can obtain a very good overview of the most important customs regulations via the free smartphone app "Zoll und Reise". To avoid roaming charges the app does not require an internet connection, so it is also very suitable for use during a holiday abroad. In addition, detailed information is available at [www.zoll.de](http://www.zoll.de).

Germany's Customs Director General, Uwe Schröder: "The app 'Zoll und Reise' provides you with clear, simple and reliable assistance regarding your holiday souvenirs. With just a few clicks one can find out what is permitted and what is not and which import duties may be payable."

### Travellers' allowances

On entering Germany from non-EU countries, special tax areas (e.g. the Canary Islands or the British Channel Islands) and Heligoland, goods being carried for non-commercial purposes may be brought into Germany duty-free up to the following quantities and values per person:

Tobacco goods provided the importer is at least 17 years old:

- 200 cigarettes or
- 100 cigarillos or
- 50 cigars or
- 250 grams of smoking tobacco or
- A proportional assortment of these products

Alcohol and alcoholic drinks provided the importer is at least 17 years old:

- 1 litre of spirits with an alcohol content of more than 22 percent by volume or undenatured ethyl alcohol with an alcohol

content of 80 percent by volume or more or

- 2 litres of alcohol and alcoholic drinks with an alcohol

content of not more than 22 percent by volume or

- a proportional assortment of these products and
- 4 litres of non-sparkling wine and
- 16 litres of beer

#### Fuel

- For each motor vehicle, the amount contained in the main

tank and up to 10 litres in a portable container

#### Other goods

- Up to a total value of 300 euros
- In the case of air and sea passengers: up to a total value

of 430 euros

- In the case of travellers under 15 years of age: up to a

total value of 175 euros

The goods for which a specific quantity threshold applies are not included when calculating the total value of the goods.

For travel within the EU there are in principle no restrictions. However, an exception is made for so-called stimulants (e.g. spirits, beer, tobacco) and energy products that are subject to national excise duty throughout the EU. Therefore, with regard to these goods specific provisions and quantities must be observed even when travelling within the EU.

#### Medicines

When entering or re-entering Germany, medicines may be brought into the country in an amount corresponding to the traveller's usual personal requirement. A maximum of three months' supply of each medicine, taking the recommended dosage into account, is viewed as the normal personal requirement. In this regard, it is not relevant whether the medicines were previously taken out of Germany and are being brought back or whether they were purchased abroad. It is also irrelevant whether the medicines are authorised or registered in Germany. However, there are also medicines that may not be brought into Germany even for the traveller's own personal use. These include fake medicines, e.g. a counterfeit of a medicine already authorised on the market that is not made by the original manufacturer.

#### Species conservation

In order to protect endangered animals and plants, customs advises you not to bring back animals or plants as souvenirs of your trip. Through buying such items, tourists - usually out of ignorance - contribute to the endangerment of many species throughout the world. The trade in protected animals and plants, parts thereof or goods made thereof is strictly regulated. Infringements are consistently prosecuted. In the worst case, you can expect the goods to be confiscated and large fines or even criminal penalties to be imposed. The animals and objects that enjoy special protection can be found at [www.artenschutz-online.de](http://www.artenschutz-online.de).

#### Protection of objects of cultural value

A holidaymaker cannot necessarily recognise objects of cultural value at a glance. "Objects of cultural value" are objects that are significant for archaeology, history, literature, art or scholarship. They include rare minerals and antiques, important books, paintings and drawings. In many countries, these are subject to very strict export restrictions or prohibitions. Any persons wishing to bring a special souvenir back from holiday should therefore always inform themselves what may and may not be taken out of the country concerned, or should forego such souvenirs altogether.

#### Product piracy

Clothing, fan merchandise, cosmetics, handbags, watches and similar goods of notable brand-name manufacturers are often offered for sale in holiday destinations at knock-down prices. But beware! Many of these supposed bargains frequently turn out to be low-quality fakes that may be very dangerous to health. Counterfeit textiles, for example, are not seldom manufactured using toxic dyes. Customs therefore recommends that you do not buy such goods when on holiday.

#### Cash and cash equivalents

Please observe that cash and cash equivalents (cash and securities) you are carrying with a value of 10,000 euros or more must be declared in writing to customs, of your own accord and without being requested to do so, when you are entering or leaving the European Union. This measure is intended to combat money laundering and to prevent the financing of terrorist organisations. When crossing a border within the EU, cash and cash equivalents in the value of 10,000 euros or more need only to be declared

orally if you are requested to do so. Anyone who fails to declare cash or cash equivalents or gives incorrect or incomplete information commits an administrative infraction. This infraction may be punished with a fine of up to one million euros.

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