

Bringing Pets to Panama

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 19:22 - Last Updated Tuesday, 04 May 2010 18:49

Here is an information request from a member about bringing pets to Panama. Roberto Chocolate

Hola!

I met senior chocolate in a line at El Rey, Coronado back in Mar/April 2009. I believe our conversation involved the authenticity of an Oreo in Panama. My family and I live in NL, Canada. We are returning to Panama in the fall and this time we will bring our mini-schnauzer. I know I have to arrive during business hours at pty but the I'm not sure about the papers I need, ie: do I need a health certificate notarized? Do I need papers stamped by the panamanian consular? I hope you can give me some advice. Thanks! I'll be sure to pack some Oreo's in my suitcase! Rochelle

Roberto's Response:

Dear Rochelle,

Sure! Bring the diabetic Oreo's! (actually what I need is Becel Margarine!!!).

Lord 'tunderin Jesus my girl - from Newfoundland you say? I lived above The Circle Lounge on Water Street in St. John's while I was training with The Memorial University wrestling team. I also spent two years in Goose Bay, Labrador (Can you say brass monkey's??)

OK, "How to Import a pet to Panama" by airport (we did both - flew in and drove in. The first time we flew in we used a service, then did it on our own after that)

First, check with the airline - that will be your biggest challenge. If the pet is small, they may allow a carrier cage in the cabin with you. If not, it will have to go in cargo (pressurized/air conditioned/heated)

The airport code for Tocumen Airport where all international flights arrive is PTY. Tel: (507) 238- 4322 (when calling from Canada, start with dialing 011 then the area code, then the number. Cell phone numbers in Panama are eight digits and start with a 6.

NOTE: The cage must be an airline approved carrier cage by Pet Cargo or similar - we re-enforced the screws with rope - they rattled off the first time. We also used doggie pee pads, but weren't needed.

To drug or not to drug.

Our vet suggested we NOT drug the dogs - and they seemed fine. Our older dog (Berkley the 13 year old Black Lab) was not too happy, but not too stressed either. The puppy Lucky-Lucky

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(1 1/2 year old Golden-doodle) was totally fine). We were delayed 12 hours in Toronto - and had to walk the dogs multiple times waiting.

Be prepared for delays!! Bring extra food, water, treats, etc.

The dog will need a ticket (it was \$200 each when we flew with out with two dogs on Air Transat in 2008) and a sign on the outside of the cage with the dog's photo, the dog's name and breed, and your info.

NOTE: You must have a home address in Panama where the dog is going to be home quarantined for 30 days.

NOTE: They will ask if you live near a farm or if your pet has been near cows, pigs or sheep. If the answer is yes, your pet will be denied entry into Panama.

You will need a Cuarentena Para Animales Menores (Permission for Home Quarantine for Domestic Animals) form, filled out and notarized. (sent in 10 days prior to arrival)

Once this is submitted, you will receive a letter from The Minister of Health including the owners full name, passport number, the pet's name, type, breed, sex, age and weight of the animal, and where it will be residing in Panama. Also it will include the arrival time, date and airline.

To get the Home Quarantine form, e-mail: consular@embassyofpanama.org or www.embassyofpanama.org

Washington DC Telephone: (202) 483- 1407

Send this form (WITHIN 10 DAYS OF TRAVEL) along with:

1) Signed, stamped and notarized International Health Certificate For Dogs and Cats from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. (CIFA)

2) Certificate of rabies vaccination (vaccination must have been done within 30 days and 6 months - no sooner, no later)

3) Money order \$30 payable to: Consuado General de Panama (everything in Panama is in US Dollars)

4) Self-addressed stamped envelope (we did all ours by E-mail so this was unnecessary)

Send/Fax these forms to to Ministry of Health: FAX: (507) 212- 9449 or (507) 238- 4059.
Hours: Mon. - Friday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and 7:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.

Contact: dcontreras@minsa.gob.pa

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All forms for the Panamanian government must be notarized, and get the notary authenticated (find out where the nearest Canadian Office of Government Forms Authentication is) and then stamped by the Panama consulate. There are fees for each of these stamps/approvals.

Call/e-mail your nearest Panamanian consulate for help, or go on their website. E-mail: consular@embassyofpanama.org or the website www.embassyofpanama.org

ARRIVING IN PANAMA

On arrival, go immediately to the Banco National branch just outside Customs at the airport and pay \$21 to MIDA and \$130 to Ministerio de Salud Control de Alimentos y Vigilancia Vetrinaria (The Minister of Health) Bring the receipts of payment to the Customs and Immigrations staff along with all your original paperwork and get your pet.

The Direccion de Salud Animal del Ministerio de Desarrollo Agropecuario (animal health minister) in Panama's number is (507) 266- 2303 E-mail: dinasal@cwpanama.net

NOTE: If you arrive after 4 P.M. or on a weekend, your pet will need to stay in Quarantine at the airport. The cost in 2008 was \$12/day. (the airport vet staff were really nice. They walked the dogs, fed them, gave them water and played with them).

Due to the times most Canadian flights arrive in Panama, you may have to stay at airport overnight - make a reservation at the only airport hotel, Hotel Riande Aeropuerto. It is worn and musty, but clean and serviceable, and they have an airport shuttle. www.hotelesriande.com/aerpuerto/index.asp

Pet Relocation Services

If you want to use a service, we used Mario@movetopanama.com - In 2008 the cost \$200+ for 2 dogs. Mario and his staff speak excellent English and can also help you get your own medical certificates, Immigration Visa's, etc.

Another service is Rana Dorada Movil Intl, Jose Saenz E-Mail: Bocasfrog@yahoo.com or jose@goldenfrog.net

All of this is worth it when you see your pet racing around on the beach, or chasing iguanas and butterflies and having a ball in Panama.

Roberto Chocolate

PS: Write and tell us how it goes - bring us up to date on the latest fees/forms etc.