
Removals to USA

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Moving to The USA can be plain sailing

If you're contemplating moving to the USA, there's probably only one thing uppermost in your mind - your new life in an exciting new country. And who could blame you? But what about the bit that precedes it – the move itself?

Moving to any new country has potential pitfalls, and like every other country, the USA has its own particular requirements when it comes to immigration, especially post 9/11, since when there has been a marked shift of emphasis for US Customs.

What can I take with me?

For example, following the Bio terrorism Act of 2002, you would be well advised to wave farewell to your wine cellar or prized malt whisky collection. And did you know that far from saving you money, packing some goods yourself rather than leaving it to the experts could actually cost you, as well as causing additional delays at US Customs? For a start, if it's not on the remover's inventory then it will not be covered by the insurance. And it will almost certainly arouse Customs' suspicions – why have you decided to pack these items yourself? That will incur a full Customs investigation, which takes time and you will be charged a fee.

With lots of other issues to consider, as well as what may at first seem a daunting amount of documentation – including copies of visa and passport, US Customs Importers Declaration, and Power of Attorney Form - selecting a reputable, good quality international removals company is vital. It can take away much of the stress of moving and make it much easier for you.

With America being so vast, the length of transit can vary greatly. Universal Removals quote port-to-port transit times (not door-to-door, that takes a little longer) of between 7-12 days to New York, 14-15 days to Miami and 25-29 days for Los Angeles. Quite a difference.

You will be advised on the method of shipment, which has a major bearing on the removals costs and be helped to complete your paperwork including the all-important Inventory of Goods.

We strongly discourage people from shipping any alcoholic beverages or foodstuffs. Any shipment arriving at any US port containing foodstuffs requires pre-clearance before shipment can commence. Even then you need a very full descriptive inventory for wine and alcohol, including country of origin and alcoholic strength, and there are varying rates of duty applicable accordingly. Remember also that some counties in some states are still 'dry', and prohibit entry. So our advice is to leave it behind and find a safe home for it – don't forget, we also offer first-class secure storage facilities!

Importing plants into the United States is prohibited, as in most non-EU countries, and with only a few minor exceptions, importing a motor vehicle into the USA is off the agenda. Even a European specification Harley Davidson motorbike, the embodiment of all things American, cannot be imported because it would fail emission controls!

What about insurance?

Insurance is another key issue. Check that all your Inventory items are covered for everything from minor breakages to the ship sinking! And you have to consider replacement values for your items in the country you are moving to, not the one you're leaving.

The Universal Advantage

At Universal, we are highly experienced in this field, and have a specialist dedicated international division on hand to advise you of everything you need to do, pack and fill in. We will appoint a dedicated Move Manager to you, who will look after your move from start to finish, right to your new American front door!

Whatever the particular demands of your move, it's likely that we have come across them many times before! We've been asked most questions over the years, although there's always something new. Our advice is, first make sure you get 2 or 3 quotes for removals, and make notes about each company you speak to, so you can be sure who promised what, and that you are comparing like with like. Check the volume and service quoted on, and be careful of the transit times quoted