



HOW TO SHIP A MOTORBIKE ...

Which passionate motorcyclist has never dreamed of crossing the USA on the legendary Route 66, discovering Australia with a motorcycle or driving through the famous Panamericana once.

Of course these dream tours are twice as nice if you can do this with your own motorcycle.

Anybody who has decided to go on a tour like this must think about the transport of their beloved ride in addition to normal travel preparations. Sending a motorcycle is not witchcraft, however, there are a few important points that you should observe so your dream vacation does not turn into a nightmare.

The most important thing is to begin with the transport specifics early on, this means in the optimal case six months and at latest 3 months before the planned vacation.

You should definitely ask the following questions:

1. Desired mode of transport / sea or air freight
2. Packaging
3. Required documents
4. Customs formalities

Below you will find a few tips and useful information for this:

Air freight and air freight packaging

The transport by air freight is surely the fastest and most comfortable variation, however, the costs are significantly higher compared to delivery by

sea freight. The biggest advantage of air freight transport is the relatively short duration. Another advantage is the good availability of the air freight terminal, which in most cases is not far from the passenger terminal.

Packaging

The motorcycle does not have to be completely packaged for delivery by air freight, but this is highly recommended. It is best to place it in a box or a crate in order to avoid damage and theft. Simply talk to a local motorcycle dealer, they are often happy if they can get rid of packaging free of charge. Of course, there is also the option of packing the motorcycle yourself or one of the countless professional packaging companies can be assigned with this.

Regardless of the variation you choose, the safety measures below must be observed. Other luggage can also be stored along with the motorcycle, provided that it is not hazardous material. (for example, methylated spirit, motor oil). You should definitely make sure that the packaging is as compact as possible, because the bigger the box, the higher the freight costs.

Here are a few examples for possible air freight packaging:

Safety guidelines

Motorcycles must be checked as a hazardous good for delivery by air freight. All motorcycles must be delivered in a clean state, with max. X filled tank, however, max. 5 liters, and with a disconnected (+pin off) or isolated battery. If these guidelines are not followed, the airline may refuse to transport your motorcycle. In particular for import into the USA / Canada / Australia / NZ, all motorcycles must be completely free of oil residue and insects, otherwise there may be additional costs for extensive cleaning on site.

Saddle bags, cases and tools attached permanently to the motorcycle may remain on the motorcycle, however, customs must be able to inspect them at all times (provision of a set of keys to the freight agents at the airport). Do not store any flammable goods in the pannier bags!

Lead and follow-up times

The motorcycles are not transported on the same flight as the owner due to logistical reasons. Unpredictable delays during loading and documentation, delays in flights and changes to the aircraft are accompanied with a high risk and, in the event of a short provision and transportation, may lead again and again to a late delivery. In order to rule out this risk, you should generally plan on a lead time of approximately 10 work days.

Sea freight and sea freight packaging

Sea freight in general is an inexpensive alternative to air transport. However, this variation is often connected with significantly more work and organizational efforts – and you have to do without your motorcycle already six to eight weeks before you begin your trip. You additionally have to pay fees and storage in the destination country. While these are fixed amounts in Chile, the USA and Australia, particularly in third world countries this may amount to more (“bribes”) that cannot be calculated beforehand.

The approximate delivery times from Switzerland to the arrival harbors are as follows:

North America East Coast	3 weeks
North America West Coast	4-5 weeks
South America East Coast	3 weeks
South America East Coast	5 weeks

North Africa	3 weeks
South Africa	4 weeks

Middle East	3 weeks
Indian Subcontinent	3-4 weeks
Asia	4-5 weeks
Australia/New Zealand	5-6 weeks

In contrast to air freight delivery, the motorcycle should be packaged in a stable wooden or metal box during delivery by sea freight. The motorcycle must be secured well in the box so that the motorcycle is not damaged during the trip if there are strong waves.

Required documents (air and sea freight)

You need a valid passport, your driver's license (we recommend bringing an international driver's license) as well as your vehicle ID. In some countries (for example, Australia and New Zealand), a so-called Carnet de Passages en Douane (CPD) is required for the import of a vehicle registered abroad. You can order such a CPD from TCS. Information about this can be found on the TCS homepage under: <https://www.tcs.ch/fr/camping-voyages/informations-touristiques/reglementation-du-vehicule/documents-circulation.php>

Customs formalities

Normally the customs formalities (for a “temporary import”) and the affiliated processing fees must be executed and paid for the by the customer in the destination country. Neither due customs nor processing fees by local authorities are included in the freight price. Customs clearance on Sundays and holidays is normally not possible.

Insurance

We recommend taking out transport insurance. This can either be done through a private insurance company or through the transport company in charge of the transport.

You should also check if the insurance protection from your existing motorcycle liability / comprehensive insurance is also provided in the corresponding destination country. If not, an additional insurance must be taken out to cover the countries being visited.

Do you have any other questions?

Then go ahead and call us or send us a message – we will help you as soon as possible.

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