



Overseas horse transport; how to import your horse

Kim Hoover

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Overseas Horse Transport Walks Us Through Importing a Horse

I just bought a horse in Europe. Now that I've done that, what is my next step?

Congratulations! The first step is to contact myself, Kimberly, from Overseas Horse Services. I will get the ball rolling to secure a shared co-load for the air stall [another horse or two also looking for a flight to Western Canada]. Next, I will need the address and contact details of the seller, a bill of sale or invoice for the horse, and proof of payment to the seller (such as a wire receipt from bank) to begin paperwork for the importation.

How soon should I expect my horse to come home? How often are there flights to Calgary?

Flights are every Monday and Wednesday from Luxembourg to Calgary. The only considerations that can slow down the arrival of your horse include the payment to the seller so that the horse can be released and available for flight, scheduling affordable commercial transport pick up dates to bring the horse to quarantine or the airport, pre-flight quarantine, and securing co-loads for a flight. Having three horses per pallet is the most cost-efficient way for horses to travel. Of course if you buy three horses, you don't need a co-load – your three horses complete a pallet and can be shipped together right away. If you buy one or two horses you will have to wait for the other horse(s) of the co-load to enter quarantine. Usually horses don't have to wait more than a week or two to enter quarantine. Flights do slow down from October to March without regular international competitions to help attract horses for co-loads.

What expenses are involved and which of them can fluctuate?

Overseas Horse Services, partnering with an agent in Europe, can organize door-to-door transport. This covers pick-up road transport from the sellers, 7-10 days of quarantine and health testing, health papers, export documents, flight, professional groom care, CFIA quarantine inspection, permits, import fees, brokerage, customs clearance, quarantine and health testing on the arrival side, CEM courier and road transport. For a very general estimation, a gelding's import costs could range from \$10,000-14,000, a mare could range from \$12,000-\$16,000, and a stallion could range from \$14,000-\$20,000. Quarantine and health testing requirements are different for mares and stallions which contributes to the different import costs. The expenses that can fluctuate quote to quote include the aforementioned quarantine differences due to the sex of your horse, CEM testing requirements, the cost of Canadian GST paid to customs (based on 5% of the value of your horse), arrival side quarantine (at our facility or your own), and road transport in a sterilized, sole-use trailer by OHS, a commercial shipper or your own trailer. It is always best to ask for an up-to-date accurate quote once you know the sex, location and value of the horse.

Can I claim back the GST I pay Canadian customs?

In order to claim back GST paid on your horse, the buyer of the horse must first be a company with a Registered GST number. You will be able to claim back the GST you paid on items related to the commercial activities of your company; this is completed by claiming input tax credits on line 106 of your



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GST return (or line 108 electronically). It is best to contact your accountant with any further questions. Individuals and companies without GST numbers will not be able to claim the GST back.

[How long will my horse be in quarantine once he has landed on Canadian soil?](#)

The quarantine in Europe is 7 days for a gelding and 10 days for mares and stallions. Once the horses arrive in Canada, quarantine is 7-10 days for geldings, 21 days for mares and 45 days for stallions. The factors that can change the length of quarantine include how busy the CFIA labs are at the time of submission, statutory holidays that can affect work days for CFIA and your veterinarian, and time/temperature sensitivity of the CEM swabs.

[Can I quarantine my new horse at my barn or do I need to use a special facility?](#)

Quarantine at your own location is possible, as long as the horse can be in a separate area of the stables away from other horses. There can be absolutely no nose-to-nose contact between horses. Quarantine horse handlers cannot touch the other horses in the barn. Fly spray, disinfectants, gloves, coveralls and sterilization products are recommended to control the spread of any potential disease. Horses in quarantine can be worked or exercised, but can only be in the arena when there are no other horses present. OHS can arrange a CFIA inspector to visit your stable to determine whether you can quarantine at your own facility.

[Who accompanies my horse on the airplane, and what is their experience level?](#)

Professional grooms travel with the horses on the airplane. These grooms are certified flight grooms who have years of experience with horse flights and come from a lifetime of riding, competing, trailering, grooming and owning horses. From my own experience flying horses, they give you a lot of signs before they even leave the ground if they will behave or if they will be difficult to manage. Once the horses are in the air, travel is usually quite smooth! Flying your horse is, of course, a risk for the horse owner, but accidents and injuries during flights from Europe to Calgary are VERY infrequent. The new air stalls we use in flight also aid in keeping horses safe.

The new animal terminal at the Calgary International Airport has stables for use right at the airport! Horses that land in the middle of the night can now rest until 9am in our new stalls, at which point they will get cleared by CFIA and Canada Customs. Hay, water, electrolytes and, if requested, bran and grain will be provided.