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Bringing wine to the U.S.

Question: I'm flying to the States and I want to bring a case of South African wine with me. Can I do this? What will I have to pay?

- Anyone over 21 can bring in one bottle of wine tax and duty free.
- If you want to bring more, that's fine, but you must declare it, and you might have to pay tax on it. Most wine is included in AGOA, and is therefore not subject to duty.
- In Atlanta, the duty + tax for wine is 34.6 cents for every litre (6.6 cents in duty and 28 cents in tax - you will probably only be charged the tax).
- You would need to pay it in U.S. currency - either cash, check (or credit card at some ports of entry).
- **BUT: most ports of entry don't collect anything if the duty or tax amounts to less than \$10.00.**

If you are bringing in a substantial amount of wine (like more than 10 cases), it is best to contact Customs at the port of entry ahead of time. The contact information is available online at <http://www.customs.gov> (link to ports).

The above only applies to wine that you personally bring with you on a flight back to the U.S. (This information was gathered from talking with a Customs agent in Atlanta, April 2003).

If you are shipping wine, it is much more complicated, and you will be subject to federal and state taxes, as well as state import restrictions, at your destination. Some states are very strict about the importation of alcohol without a license. Contact the Department of Revenue's alcohol section in the state of destination for further information. Another less complicated, but very expensive option, is to courier wine back to the U.S. Contact any major wineseller for information (such as Caroline's Fine Wines in Cape Town).