

# Air Travellers: Please Be Sure Your Documentation is in Order!

**R**equirements for travel documentation are changing.

As a Notary Public with an office close to the Vancouver International Airport, I am called upon by various scheduled and charter airlines to take affidavits required for travel purposes.

I caution all travellers to investigate—well in advance of your arrival at the airport to depart to any destination—the exact documents that will be required to board the plane.

My best advice to passengers is to **contact the airline on which you are traveling** to get the current requirements for the following.

- Proof of Citizenship and visa requirements
- Acceptable Identification for destinations that do not currently require passports

You also need to ask what documents the airlines recommend if a minor child is travelling without one or both parents.

I have been advised that the airlines will quite often refuse to permit passengers to board the plane if the passenger's documentation is incomplete. Why? Fines of up to \$10,000 are levied on the airline by government agencies and/or the foreign immigration offices of the destination country if the airline transports a passenger with incomplete or incorrect documentation.

Each airline has its established requirements. Travellers should be familiar with the most current travel requirements. It is quite heartbreaking to see a family arrive at the airport to go on the vacation they have been saving for and looking forward to . . . only to be denied boarding due to incomplete documentation.



I never give advice as to what documents are acceptable for what purpose. I always take the instruction of the airline on which the passengers are travelling.

Do not risk missing your holiday.  
Do your homework well in advance of your departure date. ▲

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# Buying a Casa in Mexico

**O**n the final day of our vacation last year, my husband and I made an offer on a *casa* (house) in San Blas, Nayarit, Mexico.

We could not resist the 70,000 price tag—70,000 pesos, that is—approximately CAN\$6500.



A friend in San Blas—a mortgage broker from Prince George—had purchased a house there the year before. When we went to his home for dinner, he gave us some interesting advice.

In Mexico, it is the Notario Publico who is the important professional in a land transaction. The Notary is the one who must verify the *Escritura* (title) and it's not an easy process.

There is no Torrens System. The seller will often arrive at the Notary's office with sheaves of old papers. Each person on the title must sign—in the Notary's presence! This can be especially difficult when all members of a large family own a share and half of them are working on *el otro lado* (the other side—in the US). It is up to the Notary to verify the title and decide when the money should change hands.

A foreigner cannot legally own land within 50 km of the coast, so the Notary must then arrange a *fideicomiso*—a renewable 50-year bank trust—which means the bank actually holds the title in your name. A property purchased in this manner can be willed to your beneficiaries.

Our friend estimated our notarial costs would be CAN\$3500—half the purchase price, in this case!



In the end, we decided not to buy the little wreck—it needed too much work and didn't have secure parking or a yard. Since we'd signed nothing and put nothing down, we were free to change our minds once we returned home. Next trip, we'll look for something in better shape—and perhaps wider than 9 feet. ▲

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