Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by katieadah - 2008/04/09 18:26

Hello,
I have a 7 year old AQHA mare and an unregistered yearling colt (sire unknown!) in the United States, that I am having imported this summer. I've had the mare, Peachface Breeze, since she was a yearling ('adopted' during my gap year work in the States and trained by me every summer since then) and can't wait to finally have her on the same soil as me, BUT...am having concerns/anxieties/worries about the whole process. I'm having them quarantined and exported by Nedpoint Quarter Horses, at least as far as Amsterdam, and then hopefully to the UK by John Parker. Does anyone have any experience of either Nedpoint or John Parker or any other import/export companies?

I'm trying to get an overall idea of costs, besides that of quarantine and import, etc., such as tax and handling charges and am wondering if anyone could give my any kind of a breakdown of costs from their own experience of importing, is possible?

And to continue the onslaught of questions (I am desperate for any and all advice I can get to make it all as smooth as possible for the horses!)...the horses are out on pasture just about all year round. They are in North East Nevada where pickings are reasonably slim and the grass is definitely not as lush as ours here in the UK and am really worried about their transition to grass. I am planning to have them stabled for the first month, with a gradual transition to grass, as I hope to have them out on grass livery year-round as soon as they are ready. Does anyone have any tips on this process and also advice on whether they think a month of gradual turn-out is a sensible idea?

I'd love to hear from fellow QH/Western Riding enthusiasts, and all advice is very welcome! :-)

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by westernsaddler - 2008/04/09 18:55

Well I used Gordon Hamilton a few times and it cost £700 form Germany to the UK. He was very calm, quiet and patient and the horses arrived in good spirits.

I think gradual turnout is a great idea. Or put them onto a bare paddock and gradually extend the area.

Good luck :)

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by scotty - 2008/04/09 19:06

John Parker has a good reputation from everybody I spoke to when I was trying to buy a filly in the US.

I think you have to accept that however good the transporters some horses cope easily with the whole process but some find it much more stressful and take time to settle down.

Good luck!

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by mejopa - 2008/04/09 19:41

We imported two mares from Canada in 2006 and whole process was very smooth. John Parker was very good and sorted out a VAT query very quickly.

We did the turnout very gradually as the mares had been in quarantine for a month before they flew. Literally 5-10 mins a day in hand for a couple of days, then increased by about 1/2 hour a day. We fed hay, not haylage, while they were in, and no hard feed at all. I think it was about a month before they were out 24/7. Probably overcautious, but it was problem free.

Good luck!

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by Cowboy - 2008/04/09 20:26

Hi katieadah,

I imported my mare three years ago and I wrote a whole article entitled "AQHA Palomino Mare for Sale" posted on this site and still in the archives, about the entire process.
I used Nedpoint and John Parker and the whole thing was totally painless. Both companies were brilliant to use and totally professional in all ways. Holly arrived in fantastic condition and seemed completely unconcerned about the whole deal.
I realise that many horses do not handle the trip as well as she did but she was fine.
As I remember, she went straight into our usual winter daily routine of early turn out and in her stable at night. She came from San Antonio, Texas and has not found our climate a problem. Actually, although she grows almost no winter coat, she neither needs or wants more than one good rug on at any time. She is much tougher in that respect than many other home bred horses on the yard.
I still have all the paperwork from her import and would be more than happy to have a chat with you about it, PM me if you think that would help.
Good luck with it all and hope it turns out well for you.

Cowboy

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by Roland - 2008/04/09 20:33

Hi Ive seen some horses arive at my trainers from the states with John parker
they seem to be ok some ended up with minor bumps, they seem a very professional firm with helpful and good staff if you PM quarterhorse mad on here she has imported a few and should be able to advise you..good luck

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by CatG - 2008/04/09 23:44

Another vote for John Parker. He takes care of all the paperwork; fantastic lorries, great communication and extremely professional. Horses always arrive relaxed and in good condition.

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!

Posted by QQH - 2008/04/10 09:53

We have used LOC and P&L Luck from Europe and both have been fantastic - couldn't have taken any more care and sorted everything.

Parker's are excellent from farther afield I understand - I didn't arrange it but my filly came over with them from the US year before last as a weanling and, although tired and somewhat headshy, she was fine in a few days.

Watch the grass - mejopa is correct, start them slowly then, hopefully, all will be well!

Good Luck with it all.

J

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by tansi - 2008/04/10 10:41

John Parker bought a horse over for me from Germany 2 yrs ago and recently a mare from Vienna, they were brilliant, the day she should of come over on the ferry the French were on strike so John Parker stabled her at their facilities over there. She arrived
in England looking really well, it only cost £700 from Vienna, so very pleased, definately recommend them. :)

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by horsesfirst - 2008/04/10 11:13

I'd recommend LOC everytime. They import export horses around the world all the time and do the paperwork etc for you. Liz is very friendly, very professional. All her drivers are horse people first, drivers second, so if there are any problems they will spot them and sort them out for you. No bashed tails or illness going unnoticed with this company. www.lochorsetransport.com

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by elkay - 2008/04/10 18:15

Hi,

I used Nedpoint and John Parker for importing my 2 year old mule, and they were great.

Import duty and VAT were all settled by the agent in Amsterdam, and I paid John who paid him.

Unfortunately Moon developed shipping fever (a very horrible pleuropneumonia that has a mortality of 10-50%, sad to affect up to 10% of equines travelling long distance) so although she arrived in excellent bodily condition, we had to go straight into intensive veterinary treatment - she did fine, thank goodness, and recovered very quickly. On the basis that the risk factors for pleuropneumonia are things that one really cannot avoid when flying horses (e.g. stress; heads tied so they cannot drop head to floor - well you can't have loose mule on a 747...!!!!) I don't think it reflects on the carriers at all - it was bad luck. There was a lot of turbulence on her flight and although she outwardly coped fine, it cannot have been a pleasant experience for her (thus more stress than average flight perhaps). But it is something to be aware of - long distance travel is not risk free for the horse and you have to be very vigilant when they arrive.

Because Moon got shipping fever, a contact of mine who imported a mule from Texas a couple of moths after Moon arrived, decided to use International Racehorse Transport who flew directly into the UK, thus cutting travel time down by 24 hours and eliminating the Amsterdam-UK leg. This would cost more in VAT for an expensive animal, (as I understand it, VAT is charged at the rate applicable to the country in the EU the animal enters) which is I think why Luxemburg or Amsterdam are favoured as entry points. She seemed very happy with IRT.

Insurance is tricky. Mortality insurance is easy, John Parkrs can arrange, although I sorted it out myself with the same company - and you can insure for the cost of the animal AND the import costs, and it is a 60-day policy - but I could not find vets fees cover. I started Moon's Pet Plan policy 14 days before she arrived in Europe (the limit of their geographical limits) with the intention of her having medical & accident vets fees cover at the first possible moment - they initially refused to pay her vets bill from the pneumonia on the basis that they said her cover was not actually valid until her feet hit UK soil, but when I queried this they changed their mind straight away. Whether it was because I pointed out the 14-day illness exclusion is specified as to exclude pre-exiting conditions, and I can prove she was healthy on examination the day the policy started (vet check on arrival in EU)... or whether it was because I cc'd the letter to Pet Plan's director whom I know, I am not sure, but to their credit they were on the phone within a few hours of the letter arriving with them and a cheque followed the next day.

Hope this is of some use,

good luck!

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by michelle_towers - 2008/04/10 19:57

We used IRT to fly Montana from Aus in 2006 and found them very informative and helpful. Did all the paperwork for us and we picked him up from the airport ourselves - the lady even stayed behind to help with the dodgy lights on our trailer at around 11pm at night! They also brough with them his many rugs that we left with him in Aus. Would recommend them anytime and he flew straight too. And stepped off the contained looking well and happy.

Post edited by: michelle_towers, at: 2008/04/10 19:58

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by katieadah - 2008/04/11 09:39

Thanks so much, everyone, for replying. Lots of useful information, and it's reassuring to know John Parker is a good choice. Keep the advice coming!!

A few of you have mentioned IRT - I contacted them a little while ago, and they seemed only to offer me (well, the horses!) transport to Amsterdam. How much did the trip direct to the U.K. cost? Did it include quarantine, etc.?

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by JoBrown - 2008/04/11 16:23

I have just imported my Fourth QH using Nedpoint and John Parker, she arrived in great condition at Easter ! Cost was $4150 for Nedpoint which covers Quarantine, Flight to Amsterdam, and Health Paperwork. John Parker's bill incl the duty and airport clearance at Amsterdam was a tad under £1k. I phoned several Import/Export and Quarantine companies this time round to get comparitive quotes and they all worked out double what is cost me using Nedpoint. I have no hesitation recommending both Nedpoint and John Parker. Good Luck !

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by michelle_towers - 2008/04/11 18:34

Hi there katie i'm one of the people who has used IRT although i shipped from Australia so things maybe a little different. It cost around £3500 to ship and they don't quarantine at this end for Aus only that end and they organised all that and it was included in the costs. That might help.

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by zenithqhorses - 2008/04/11 22:25

I used IRT last year (california to UK)and the whole cost was an eye watering £7,000. Nedpoint and JPs are better value.

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by michelle_towers - 2008/04/12 07:49

Hi the zenithquarterhorses thats astronomical - are you sure that figure wasnt dollars $7000 equals roughly £3500 - i'm told that horses cost a similar amount to import from Aus as they do from the US and thats pretty good value since Aus is a 24hr flight and the US is just half of that??

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by zenithqhorses - 2008/04/12 18:10

Hi Michelle,
sadly no, it is the real cost in bristish pounds. I nearly died, given my mare had come over from the US 18mths earlier for £4500

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by Cowboy - 2008/04/12 19:17

Hi Zenith,
Did you bring her directly into UK? One of my friends made that mistake and the cost was prohibitive to say the least?

Cowboy.

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Re:Help, advice, tips for importing please!!
Posted by quarterhorsemad - 2008/07/09 22:00

I have imported several horses over the years. I have used Nedpoint and John Parker for all of them. I can recommend both lots of people. Cost was around £3500 all in for the last one and the seller would not do a Bill of Sale for less than the actual purchase price so I expected to pay more import duty. As the dollar is low, it works out a bit cheaper at the moment. The horses on the whole travelled well, although I did notice that some of them did lose a bit of weight, however they soon put it back on again (took about a week to 2 weeks). Just watch the difference in grass/feed over here and adjust gradually, especially as many QH's are good doers. All mine went on 'Top Spec' feed balancer, some dengie alfa A (or HiFi) and not much else except grass(until winter), that way you are sure they are getting all the nutrients they need without overdoing them. Good luck with it all and enjoy your horses when they get here.

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