

## The Nicaragua Costa Rica Border Crossing at Penas Blancas

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More information at <http://PanAmNotes.com>

### Penas Blancas Border Crossing

Open: 6AM

Remember: No necesita ayuda. Por favor, dejame in paz, no voy a pagar. Vaya!

\$US accepted at all points except for Costa Rica auto insurance

Exit Nicaragua:

Pass the line of big rigs. Pay \$1US/person municipal tax (keep stamped receipt). Be sure to have cordobas or exact US change.

Veer left toward a dirt road, there will be a man at a guard station who will check your stamped receipt and passports.

Continue forward and follow the signs toward Budget car rental (you will circle left around a set of official looking buildings).

Park to the left of Budget car rental.

At the far end of the parking lot near the blue water tower is the unmarked immigration building.



Nicaragua Immigration

There will be a few unofficial individuals offering immigration exit forms for a small fee (tip). We tipped 5 Cordobas for two forms.

Inside, hand over the form and pay \$2US/person for exit stamps. Exact change was not necessary but is recommended.

To check your car out of the country find a customs agent, they wear polos with DGA embroidered on the front. You can find these agents milling around the parking lot. The agent will sign your Nicaraguan vehicle permit.

Next, find a police officer to sign the vehicle permit. Neither official inspected our vehicle or even asked to see it.

Aduana is next, the building is located near the red water tower at the opposite end of the parking lot.



Nicaragua Aduana

The agent will look over your original registration, title, vehicle permit and passport before handing you over to a police officer (next window) who completes the exit paperwork for your vehicle.

We made a couple of copies of the canceled permit (but this is not necessary). The original vehicle import permit (now canceled) will be given to the last official as you drive out of the country.

### **Costa Rica Border Crossing**

Open: 8AM

Remember: No necesita ayuda. Por favor, dejame in paz, no voy a pagar. Vaya!

\$US accepted at all points except for Costa Rica auto insurance

Enter Costa Rica

Fumigation is first, there is an office on the left and you will veer right to go through the sprayers. Pay the fee at the office before driving through.

We paid \$6US but our receipt was for \$10US. This price seems to vary greatly depending on the whims of the agent on duty.

We don't recommend stopping as the automatic sprayers douse your vehicle completely. Take an immediate left after going through fumigation.

Once you get back on the paved road veer right and drive half a km to the blue immigration building. There is a connected restaurant and bar. Park under the overhang.



Costa Rica Immigration

We encountered a helper before parking who handed over tourist forms and tried to get himself hired. We said no thank

you and drove away.

Fill out the form and get your entry stamp inside the building (\$0US).

Mandatory insurance is \$15US and must be paid in Cordobas. The insurance office is next to the bank inside the immigration building.

Make copies of your new insurance policy and your freshly stamped passport in the insurance office.

To get your vehicle import permit go across the street to a small building, an official will ask for copies of insurance, title, passport, and driver's license. You will receive a form to fill out vehicle information. When the form is complete the official will record the information, inspect your vehicle, and provide you with a vehicle inspection receipt (save this).

The final aduana stop is about a half km down the road on the right. The building is hidden away among the trees and you cross a covered walkway to get there.



Costa Rica Aduana

This is where all accumulated paperwork is taken and turned into a formal vehicle permit (valid 3 months). This step is the most time consuming as the official must type up all the information that was previously handwritten at the last stop.

At the border exit, further down the road, show your vehicle permit, passport, and give up your vehicle inspection receipt.

**EXCHANGE RATES (as of 3/27/11):**

\$1 US = \$22.12 Cordobas (Nicaragua)

\$1 US = \$494.59 Colones (Costa Rica)

\$1 Cordoba (N) = \$22.35 Colones (CR)

This information is free and we encourage recirculation, we only ask for a shout-out to PanAmNotes.com.

Please email with any questions or corrections: [us@panamnotes.com](mailto:us@panamnotes.com).

Buen viaje!