

Air Freight from China to Geneva

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➔ Air Freight

China → Geneva · via GVA air / Genoa sea · clearance by Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG)



Cargo handling on the China–Geneva lane.

Geneva is international organization and luxury goods hub, and it is served through GVA air / Genoa sea. That combination is what actually sets your delivery date on this lane — the inland leg is same-day, so the clearance date is effectively the delivery date.

Clearance itself is handled by Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG), and typical dwell at the gateway runs 2–5 days.

How this lane actually runs

Switzerland charges customs duty by gross weight, not customs value — so heavy packaging directly increases duty on low-value goods, and light high-value goods are treated generously. It is also outside the EU customs union, so cargo arriving through Rotterdam or Genoa clears a second time at the Swiss border. VAT at 8.1% is among the lowest in Europe.

Air gateways used	ZRH (Zurich), GVA (Geneva), BSL (Basel)
Air transit, China to gateway	4-6 business days
Gateway serving Geneva	GVA air / Genoa sea
Inland leg to Geneva	Same day from the gateway
Typical clearance / dwell	2-5 days
Peak season to plan around	Sep-Nov

Duty, tax and clearance into Geneva

Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) assesses duty and tax on cargo arriving for Geneva consignees. Current regime: VAT 8.1%; customs duty is assessed on gross weight rather than value, which is unusual and changes how packaging affects cost, with a de-minimis position of Duty and VAT waived when the total tax due is under CHF 5.

Conformity is the part most first-time importers underestimate: CE marking generally accepted; Swiss labeling rules for consumer products. Getting this wrong is expensive because it usually cannot be fixed after the cargo has landed.

Restrictions and known friction points for Switzerland: Weight-based duty means excess packaging is a direct cost. A separate Swiss clearance is required even for goods transiting the EU. Some agricultural and food products face high protective rates.



Handling on the GVA air / Genoa sea routing serving Geneva.

Before you book: Geneva checklist

- Check the de-minimis position (Duty and VAT waived when the total tax due is under CHF 5) against your invoice value before you decide how to split the shipment.
- Compare gross weight against volumetric weight ($L \times W \times H \div 6000$) — the higher figure is what gets billed on air and express.
- Budget for the inland leg: same-day delivery beyond gateway clearance to reach Geneva.
- Plan around the China-side windows too: Chinese New Year and Golden Week both compress capacity on the Switzerland lane.
- Confirm the consignee in Geneva can act as importer of record — Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) will not release cargo to an unregistered party.
- Declare lithium batteries, magnets, liquids and powders up front — retro-declaring after booking usually means re-planning the whole shipment.

Frequently asked questions

How long does shipping from China to Geneva take?

China to the Switzerland gateway is 4-6 business days. On top of that, allow 2-5 days of clearance with Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) and a same-day inland leg to Geneva.

What duty and tax will I pay importing into Geneva?

Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) applies: VAT 8.1%; customs duty is assessed on gross weight rather than value, which is unusual and changes how packaging affects cost. The de-minimis position is Duty and VAT waived when the total

tax due is under CHF 5. Under a DDP arrangement these are pre-paid, so nothing is collected on arrival in Geneva.

What certification do I need for Switzerland?

For regulated goods, plan for: CE marking generally accepted; Swiss labeling rules for consumer products. Missing conformity paperwork is the single most common cause of a hold, and in most cases it cannot be remedied once the cargo has arrived.

When is the busiest time on the China–Switzerland lane?

Space and rates tighten around Sep–Nov, plus the China-side windows of Chinese New Year in January or February and Golden Week in early October. Book one to two weeks earlier in those periods.

What documents does Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) require?

A commercial invoice with HS codes, a packing list, the bill of lading or air waybill, a certificate of origin where it lowers duty, and any product certification (CE marking generally accepted; Swiss labeling rules for consumer products). We prepare and file these as part of the service.

Is sea freight cheaper than air freight into Geneva?

Per kilo, yes — usually by a wide margin. The trade-off is time: 30–40 calendar days via a continental port by sea versus 4–6 business days by air to the Switzerland gateway, before clearance and the same-day inland leg. The crossover point is normally somewhere between 100 and 300 kg depending on the density of your cargo.

Other delivery cities in Switzerland

- [China to Zurich](#)
- [China to Basel](#)
- [China to Bern](#)
- [China to Lausanne](#)
- [China to Lugano](#)
- [China to St. Gallen](#)

[All Switzerland freight information →](#)

References & official sources

Duty rates, thresholds and conformity requirements for Switzerland change by ministerial decision, sometimes mid-year. The figures on this page are buyer-planning references, not a customs ruling — confirm the current position for your own HS code with Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) or your broker before you ship.

- [Federal Office for Customs and Border Security \(BAZG\)](#)
- [Tares tariff database](#)
- [WTO — Tariff Profiles \(applied MFN duty by country\)](#)
- [IPPC — ISPM 15 wood packaging standard](#)
- [WCO — Harmonized System nomenclature](#)

- [IMO — IMDG Code for dangerous goods by sea](#)

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Shipping by industry

This page covers the route and clearance picture for the destination. Packing, classification and the compliance step that actually holds a shipment depend on what you are sending — these guides cover that by commodity.

- [Headphones Consumer Electronics & Smart Devices](#)
- [Home Furniture Furniture & Home Products](#)
- [Garden Products Furniture & Home Products](#)
- [Footwear Textiles, Apparel, Footwear & Leather](#)
- [Medical Furniture Medical, Laboratory & Precision Instruments](#)
- [Display Stands Retail, Display & Commercial Fixtures](#)
- [Toys Toys, Sports, Outdoor & Leisure](#)
- [Baby Products Consumer Goods & Gifts](#)
- [Bathroom Accessories Consumer Goods & Gifts](#)
- [E-commerce Fulfilment E-commerce & Retail Channels](#)
- [Bearings Metal Products & Industrial Components](#)
- [Automation Equipment General Machinery & Industrial Equipment](#)

[All 139 industry guides →](#)

Checking the Switzerland duty position yourself

Duty and tax figures on this page are planning estimates. The binding assessment is made by Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG) against your declared HS code at the time of entry; where the amount is material, verify the current rate through [ITC Market Access Map](#) before committing to an order.

Most landed-cost surprises trace back to classification rather than freight. [the WCO Harmonized System](#) defines the heading structure every customs administration builds on, and [ITC Market Access Map](#) will show you the duty a given heading attracts in this destination.

On the air side, anything with a cell or a battery in it, plus liquids, powders, magnets and aerosols, is governed by [the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations](#). Those articles are not refused outright, but they need to be declared at booking so the shipment is built correctly — declaring them late is the single most common cause of an air consignment being offloaded.

Watch: the process behind this route

This guide covers routing and clearance for Geneva. The video below covers the wider shipping process that sits around it.

What Is Chargeable Weight in Air Freight? — Smart Logistics Network. Published on YouTube by a third party; we link it because it explains the process well, not because we produced it or endorse the provider.

Get a rate for Geneva

This lane is quoted per shipment rather than from a published rate card, because the landed cost depends on the commodity, its density, the conformity requirements above and the delivery point. Send the cargo details and we will come back with a full DDP figure.

[Request a quote →](#)

Freight Rates to Switzerland

📦 Cargo Weight (KG)

☐ Enter the actual gross weight of your shipment in kilograms. If you're unsure, fill in the volume fields below and we'll calculate it for you.

☐ Or enter volume (cm) — volumetric weight ÷6000

× ×

Non-integers rounded up. Larger of actual vs volumetric is used.

☐ Number of Boxes

Total chargeable weight = weight per box × number of boxes.

⚠ When you have not filled in the volume information, our prices may be inaccurate.

China to Geneva Air Freight: Rates, Transit and Clearance

Moving cargo to Geneva by air freight — 4-6 business days transit, 2-5 days port dwell, duty assessed by Federal Office for Customs and Border Security (BAZG).

Get a Quote

Send the cargo details and we respond within one business day with a full DDP figure for Geneva.

[WhatsApp Us Send Inquiry →](#)

Geneva by Mode

- [All modes — Geneva](#)
- ☐ [Sea Freight](#)

Other Cities in Switzerland

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Other Europe Destinations

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- [Shipping to Moldova](#)
- [Shipping to Montenegro](#)
- [Shipping to North Macedonia](#)

Customs clearance in Switzerland

Duty and tax position, certification, typical port dwell and what actually holds shipments at this border — plus who files the entry.

[Switzerland clearance requirements](#) →