



2 PASSPORTS TRAVEL KEY

How to travel with 2 passports

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SMART DUAL CITIZENSHIP SPECIAL 2 PASSPORT TRAVEL KEY

By Lara Olivetti

Border police and airlines typically do not handle travelers with multiple passports.

Because officers have to identify you quickly and focus on a secure flow at check point, you want to avoid any further uncertainty by booking your trip and checking in with the right passport.

The right passport is **the passport of your destination country.**

Here it's how that works in practice.

On your way to Europe

If you are a citizen of the country to which you are traveling, *you must enter with that country's passport.* As a consequence, most countries in the world require their citizens to show the passport of the country they are entering (or find themselves in).

That is a basic principle of Italian law, and common to the law of most countries in the world.

The same applies to countries that are connected by special agreements. If you do not have the passport of your destination country, but you have one of another country that has a good connection to your destination country, then show that passport to the border check upon entry and exit.

Example: if you are traveling from Mexico to Italy and hold 2 passports, one Mexican and one French, you will use your French passport for a smooth access to the Italian or European border. That is because both France is tied to Italy and most European countries by special agreements (they are Member States of the same European Union). According to that agreement, they share the same external border, (part of) the visa policy and border checks.

In practice

In order to always be on the SAFE side at any European border check always show the passport of the country border that you are meeting. In particular:

- > 1. If you have an Italian passport and fly directly to an Italian airport, you will show that passport (and only that) to the Italian border police upon entering or exiting Italy, at any airport or other border crossing.
- > 2. If you arrive on any another airport in Europe, again show your Italian passport. That is because Italy has privileged relations with all European countries and citizens can enter them freely, together with their family members.
- > 3. Once you enter your other country of citizenship OUTSIDE of Europe, feel free to show your other passport.

Which checks are you meeting on your way IN and on your way OUT of Europe?

You will meet 3 checks on departure:

1. Airline counter employee: for your flight check-in
2. Security - the travel security administration officers (TSA)

3. Immigration - the border police at your landing point.

4. Possible additional Immigration check within Europe, to and from the free-movement area of Europe (Schengen Area). That is why you meet an additional immigration check when going through states like Denmark, the UK, Switzerland, etc...

Find here [an official map of the Schengen area](#)

At each of these check points, the border police may control your identity. Your boarding pass data must match with your passport's.

IMPORTANT: you will meet the same 3-4 check points on your WAY OUT from Europe. That is a significant difference from non European countries.

OTHER CHECKS: you will meet border checks on your way back to the your country of residence. That is a non EU entry check and you are supposed to show the passport of that country.

Important:

If you have 2 passports but none is of any Schengen State (e.g. a Serbian and a British one) a stay limit applies: you may stay only 90 days every 180 within the whole Schengen area. At the end of the 90 days stay, you cannot use the second passport to buy 90 more days.

The stay limit applies to the person, NOT to the passport. So the border police may identify you as the same person who stays already for 90 days and punish you for overstaying. The applicable penalties vary from country to country.

RECAP

Check point officers expect you to have ONE only passport to identify you.

Which passport should you show when traveling to Italy or Europe?

ON YOUR WAY TO EUROPE

Show your Italian passport - and ONLY that - at the check-in, at security check and to the immigration (border police) officers upon entering any European country.

ON YOUR WAY OUT OF EUROPE

Show your Italian passport - and ONLY that - at the check-in, at security check and to the immigration (border police) officers upon exiting any European country.

ON YOUR WAY BACK HOME

Do you live in North or South America, Australia or any non-European country? You should show the passport of that country, if you have it

If you don't, you should show the passport with your visa or residence permit granted by that country.

Questions?

Please leave your question or comment [on my blog at this page](#). I reply to all.