

CONSUMER INFORMATION

Avoid international travel document scams

July 27, 2017 by Bridget Small Consumer Education Specialist, FTC

If you are planning a trip outside the US, you have probably been collecting tips on everything from great restaurants to comfortable walking shoes. Here is our contribution: when you search for information online, you may find official-looking websites that offer travel documents, information and services. But some official-looking sites are copycats — imposters — that can put your money and personal information at risk.

The FTC's international partners say copycat visa websites are very common. One country's ambassador said an imposter built a look-alike site with pictures, application forms and frequently asked questions copied from the government's official site. The imposter site offered visa applications, but charged high fees, including fees for services that were free on the official site.

To avoid a copycat site, get your information about international travel, visas and passports from the U.S. Department of State. **Website link:** <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>

Type in a country's name and you will get:

- links to consulates and embassies
- a summary of the travel documents you need
- important local information

You also can search for travel information on websites from a country's ministry of foreign affairs or embassy. If you find what you think is an imposter site, please report it to the FTC @ <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov>



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