

## **African Ivory - The Laws In Short!**

It would be useful to you to understand the laws on the sale of Ivory, and the laws regarding the import and export of ivory (endangered species only).

- According to UK and EU laws in conjunction with CITES (Convention International Trade in Endangered Species) the trade in Ivory is banned outright, this means that the sale, transport, import, export, etc, is strictly prohibited, the only exception is to antique specimens.
- For an Ivory to be classified as an antique specimen it must predate 1.6.1947.
- The ivory must be in a worked form, this means all unworked ivory, off cuts, tusks, teeth, etc, are prohibited to be exported, imported or sold. One thing with this rule is that you could have a 200 year old tusk which you can prove is 200 years old, but you will not be permitted to sell it, get it certificated, imported or exported. However you would still be legally allowed to own it and admire it, but never ever sell it.
- The ivory must be in its original worked form, this basically means that if your item has been repaired, and the repairs contain ivory, you need to be certain that the ivory/repair is pre ban. A common misconception here lies with people believing that old ivory can be re worked, it cant!!! If you attempted to carve a piece of ivory, even if you knew it was 100 years old, you would be breaking the law exactly the same as someone carving a modern tusk..
- As the UK is part of the EU, you are perfectly entitled to transport antique ivory in and out of any EU destination (to another EU destination), I think this stems from the fact that on paper we are all one state, so in theory taking your ivory from the UK to France for example is no different to taking your Ivory from Wales to Scotland, however it is also worth noting that although under EU law this is allowed, certain EU counties take a dim view on this and have been known to disregard the ruling and class an importation in the same way as they would from a non-EU country, which typically ends up with confiscation and the item being destroyed (for example it has been known in Germany for them to remove the ivory keys from a piano !!!), another point worth mentioning is that the laws change frequently and drastically, so what you were allowed to do today, may not be what you are allowed to do tomorrow!!! So it is always beneficial as with all legal issues to double check that everything is the same as the last time.
- Ivory can be exported and imported providing it is antique and you apply for the relevant import and export permits from CITES, these are costly and time consuming, however if you intend to export or import Ivory be warned, doing so without permits is no different to being caught importing 100 elephant tusks illegally, it is a serious offence, don't do it.

## **The Law in the US:**

AFRICAN ELEPHANT: This is on the C.I.T.E.S. endangered species list. The importation, selling and buying of this ivory IS NOT ALLOWED INTERNATIONALLY. It cannot be exported or imported to the U.S. and most of the countries delegated to the U.N., BUT... it is LEGAL TO OWN, SELL, BUY, or SHIP within the boundaries of the U.S. and there are NO PERMITS or REGISTRATION requirements! The majority of African elephant ivory is "old estate" ivory that was brought into this country since its' inception.