

**Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor
for the City of New York**

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Lost luggage handler snuck food stuffed with narcotics through JFK, looted passenger baggage

BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, BRIDGET G. BRENNAN, New York City's Special Narcotics Prosecutor, and JAMES T. HAYES, JR., Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), announced today the indictment and arrest of six individuals who imported narcotics from Ecuador through privately-owned parcel delivery companies across the Tri-state area. The group, headed by JORGE GUERRERO, received parcels containing narcotics that had been transported from Ecuador to JFK International Airport on cargo planes. The narcotics were concealed in empanadas and chocolate bars, among other foods, and soaked into scuba diving diplomas.

GUERRERO is also charged in a grand larceny conspiracy for using his position as a driver for American Distributors, a private company that delivers lost luggage, to steal clothing, jewelry, electronics and other valuables from airline passengers' bags. American Distributors, which is not charged in the indictment, handles lost luggage delivery for numerous airlines at both JFK and LaGuardia Airports.

The arrests, which took place early this morning, were the result of a six-month wiretap investigation by the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor and HSI's JFK Narcotics Smuggling Unit, Team 3. The defendants are scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Manhattan Supreme Court, Part 61. During the probe, GUERRERO and his contacts in Ecuador were heard discussing transporting shipments of cocaine and heroin. GUERRERO also discussed stealing personal property from airline passengers' baggage and attempted to make arrangements to have security tapes erased.

Agents conducted court authorized searches at three residences in Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx this morning. Inside the home of GUERRERO and his wife CECILIA GUERRERO, at 106-26 Union Hall St., Apt. 1, in Jamaica, Queens, agents found three ledgers detailing the sales of items that GUERRERO stole from airline passengers dating back to 2011. The agents recovered 13 suitcases, some with tags bearing other people's names, and over 50 handbags by designers such as Louis Vuitton, Michael Kors, Burberry, Coach and Prada. Also seized were a combined total of 15 iPads, iPods and laptop computers, 20 cameras, 50 watches, 30 pairs of sunglasses, bottles of high end liquor, perfume and new clothing with tags still attached.

A search of defendant RIQUI PEREZ's home at 400 East 187th Street in the Bronx yielded a combined total of half a kilo (more than a pound) of heroin and cocaine. Agents also searched a Brooklyn building at 192 27th Street, owned by defendant NOE FERNANDEZ, and found Western Union wire transfer receipts to an Ecuadorian narcotics supplier. Also seized were multiple cell phones, a small quantity of marijuana, one .45 caliber round and drug paraphernalia, including a scale, strainer, bags and drug cutting agents.

Narcotics Conspiracy

Over the past three months, agents identified and intercepted five packages containing more than 11 pounds of narcotics from a warehouse at JFK Airport and private parcel delivery companies (known as express consignment businesses) in Newark, N.J. Cocaine and heroin were concealed inside various foods, which were packaged in professional looking wrappers and boxes and marked with brand names as if bound for retail stores. In total, agents seized approximately four kilograms of cocaine (nearly 9 lbs) and one kilogram of heroin (over 2 lbs).

Agents intercepted three parcels at a warehouse at JFK Airport on three separate dates.

- May 28 – 1 ½ kilograms (over 3 lbs) of cocaine is found stuffed inside empanadas.
- June 25 – Agents seize a pound of cocaine secreted in the bottom of a container of homemade sugar and oatmeal cookies.
- July 12 – A stack of scuba diving diplomas is seized. Laboratory tests revealed the diplomas were soaked in nearly 1 ½ kilos (over 3 lbs) of liquid cocaine.

Shipments were also seized at two parcel delivery companies in Newark, N.J.

- May 3 – Agents intercept approximately 500 grams (over a pound) of cocaine concealed in chocolate bars and nearly 300 grams (more than half a pound) of heroin concealed in round chocolate candies.
- June 8 – Approximately 500 grams (over a pound) of heroin is found inside sesame candies.

As part of the drug smuggling conspiracy, the parcels containing heroin and cocaine were shipped on commercial cargo planes that flew direct from Guayaquil, Ecuador to JFK Airport. Once at JFK, the packages were brought to the warehouse and then distributed to parcel delivery companies throughout the Tri-state area; including locations in Corona, Queens, Newark, N.J., Peekskill, N.Y., Ossining, N.Y. and Danbury, Conn. The parcels were then picked up by GUERRERO or another member of the drug trafficking ring.

GUERRERO's wife CECILIA GUERRERO, who played a key role in the importation scheme as the money manager, was among those arrested this morning, as were two other individuals who worked with GUERRERO and maintained contact with the source of supply in Ecuador, NOE FERNANDEZ and JUDY CAMPOS. GUERRERO sometimes split shipments with FERNANDEZ and CAMPOS. Also charged are LUIS AMABLE CAISA ALTAMIRANO, who picked up packages for GUERRERO, and RIQUI PEREZ, GUERRERO's main customer.

Thefts from Luggage

In addition to the drug smuggling scheme, GUERRERO is also charged in a conspiracy to steal valuables from baggage that he transported in connection with his legitimate job. Employed as a driver for a private company that delivers lost luggage to airline passengers, GUERRERO routinely rifled through baggage and removed items he believed he could resell. Computers, iPads, jewelry, designer

handbags and clothing, including new underwear with tags still attached, and whole pieces of luggage were among the items GUERRERO stole. Airline passengers are estimated to have lost thousands of dollars in goods as a result of GUERRERO's scheme. The investigation revealed that GUERRERO also picked up drug packages during his trips to deliver lost luggage across the Tri-state area.

Clothing and electronics carry a much higher selling price in Ecuador than they do in the U.S. GUERRERO lined up buyers in Ecuador and arranged for the goods to be transported there. In one case, a female airline passenger called GUERRERO to report that expensive items, including Louis Vuitton handbags, were missing from the luggage he had just delivered to her. GUERRERO directed the woman to report the problem to the airline instead. Soon afterwards, GUERRERO was heard discussing plans to sell a Louis Vuitton handbag with a potential buyer.

In another instance, GUERRERO's wife asked him to buy her a suitcase. GUERRERO told his wife that he had a suitable bag that belonged to a female airline passenger. GUERRERO discussed plans to swap out the passenger's suitcase with a different bag when he went to make the lost luggage delivery.

Special Narcotics Prosecutor BRIDGET G. BRENNAN said, "I congratulate Homeland Security on their exemplary work on this case, which exposed security breaches in the private lost luggage courier business. Whether using access to international cargo to profit from Ecuador's bargain wholesale prices for narcotics, or pilfering designer underwear from personal luggage, the Guerrero organization rarely overlooked an opportunity to earn a dishonest dollar. Homeland Security continues to vigilantly protect ports of entry, and work closely with us on local issues such as narcotics importation and organized larceny rings." BRIDGET G. BRENNAN also thanked Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown for his office's assistance in the investigation, as well as Homeland Security's U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

"Guerrero and his crew were mistaken when they thought they could allegedly use our airports to smuggle their drugs and get away with it," said JAMES T. HAYES JR., special agent in charge, of HSI New York. "HSI works aggressively to prevent illicit drugs that threaten the safety and security of our communities from entering our border."

INDICTED DEFENDANTS	CHARGES
Jorge Guerrero 106-26 Union Hall St. Apt #1 Jamaica, Queens 12/9/1972	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct Conspiracy 5 th – 1 ct Attempted CPCS 1 st – 6 cts Attempted CPCS 3 rd – 6 cts
Cecilia Guerrero, aka Mercedes 106-26 Union Hall St. Apt #1 Jamaica, Queens 10/28/1978	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct Conspiracy 5 th – 1 ct Attempted CPCS 1 st – 2 cts Attempted CPCS 3 rd – 2 cts
Riqui Perez, aka Mi Rica 400 East 187th Street, Bronx 12/19/1964	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct Attempted CPCS 1 st – 2 cts Attempted CPCS 3 rd – 2 cts
Noe Fernandez, aka Ratata 192 27th Street Apt. 1R, Brooklyn 3/26/1984	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct
Luis Amable Caisa Altamirano 4040 69th Street, 1st floor Woodside, Queens 4/6/1960	Conspiracy 2 nd – 1 ct Attempted CPCS 1 st – 1 ct Attempted CPCS 3 rd – 1 ct

Judy Campos, aka La Flaca
23 Gloria Court, Staten Island
7/23/1984

Conspiracy 2nd – 1 ct

The charges and allegations are merely accusations and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.