

The Complete Guide to

# BUYING PROPERTY IN SPAIN

Your Step-by-Step Roadmap to Spanish Property Ownership

- ✓ Complete mortgage process explained
- ✓ Document checklists and timelines
- ✓ Cost breakdowns and tax information
- ✓ Regional buying guides
- ✓ Common mistakes to avoid
- ✓ Expert tips from 500+ successful purchases

**Presented by Tharros Brokers**

Trusted Spanish Mortgage Experts | Valencia, Spain

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# 1. Introduction: Why Spain?

Spain continues to be one of Europe's most attractive property markets for international buyers. With over 300 days of sunshine, a lower cost of living than much of Western Europe, excellent healthcare, and a welcoming culture, it's no wonder that thousands of foreigners choose to buy property here each year.

Whether you're looking for a holiday home on the Costa del Sol, a permanent residence in vibrant Barcelona or Valencia, or an investment property to rent out, this guide will walk you through everything you need to know about buying property in Spain as a foreign buyer.

## Why This Guide?

At Tharros Brokers, we've helped over 500 international clients secure Spanish mortgages since 2022. We've seen what works, what doesn't, and the mistakes that cost buyers time and money. This guide distills our experience into practical, actionable advice.

■ **EXPERT TIP:** The Spanish property buying process differs significantly from the UK, US, and other countries. Budget at least 8-12 weeks from mortgage application to completion, and always work with professionals who understand both Spanish law and your home country's requirements.

## 2. The Spanish Property Market in 2026

### Current Market Conditions

The Spanish property market in 2026 remains robust, with demand continuing to outpace supply in popular coastal and urban areas. Here's what you need to know:

- Property prices have stabilized after the 2021-2023 surge, with modest 2-4% annual growth expected
- Mortgage rates are currently ranging from 3.5% to 5.5% depending on your profile and bank
- Non-resident mortgages are readily available, typically up to 70% LTV (loan-to-value)
- The Golden Visa program continues for property investments of €500,000 or more
- Coastal areas (Costa del Sol, Costa Blanca, Balearic Islands) remain most popular with foreign buyers
- Valencia and Malaga are emerging as hotspots for remote workers and digital nomads

### Price Ranges by Region (2026)

Region	Average Price/m <sup>2</sup>	2-Bed Apartment	3-Bed Villa
Costa del Sol	€2,800-3,500	€280K-350K	€450K-700K
Costa Blanca	€1,800-2,400	€180K-240K	€300K-500K
Barcelona	€4,500-6,000	€450K-600K	€800K-1.2M
Valencia	€2,200-2,800	€220K-280K	€380K-550K
Madrid	€3,800-5,000	€380K-500K	€700K-1M
Balearic Islands	€4,000-5,500	€400K-550K	€750K-1.5M

*Note: Prices are approximate and vary significantly based on exact location, property condition, and proximity to amenities.*

### 3. Eligibility: Can You Get a Mortgage?

Good news: Most international buyers qualify for Spanish mortgages. Here are the key criteria:

#### Age Requirements

- Minimum age: 18 years old
- Maximum age at loan maturity: Typically 70-75 years (varies by bank)
- Loan term: Usually 15-25 years (shorter for older applicants)

#### Income Requirements

Banks assess your debt-to-income ratio (DTI). Generally:

- Your total monthly debt payments (including the new mortgage) should not exceed 35-40% of gross monthly income
- Stable, provable income is essential (employment contracts, tax returns, bank statements)
- Self-employed applicants need 2-3 years of accounts/tax returns

#### Down Payment

Buyer Type	Maximum LTV	Minimum Down Payment
Non-EU Resident	60-70%	30-40%
EU Non-Resident	70%	30%
Spanish Resident	80%	20%
First-Time Buyer (Resident)	90%*	10%*

*\*Subject to additional criteria and may require guarantor*

#### Credit History

Spanish banks don't typically check foreign credit scores, but they will:

- Review your Spanish credit history (if you have one)
- Check for any defaults or legal issues in Spain
- Request bank statements showing financial stability
- Verify you have no outstanding debts in Spain

■ **EXPERT TIP:** If you've been rejected for a mortgage in your home country, you may still qualify in Spain. Spanish banks assess applications differently and focus heavily on the property value and your ability to make the down payment.

## 4. The Complete Buying Process

Here's the typical timeline from property search to receiving your keys:

Phase	Duration	Key Activities
Property Search	2-8 weeks	View properties, narrow down choices, make decision
Offer & Reservation	1 week	Submit offer, negotiate, pay reservation deposit (€3K-10K)
Mortgage Pre-Approval	1-3 days	Submit application to Tharros, receive preliminary approval
Due Diligence	2-3 weeks	Lawyer checks property title, debts, legal status
Full Mortgage Application	3-4 weeks	Submit documents to bank, property valuation, approval
Contract Signing	1 week	Sign private purchase contract, pay 10% deposit
Final Preparations	2-3 weeks	Final bank approvals, arrange insurance, funds transfer
Completion	1 day	Sign at notary, transfer funds, receive keys
<b>&lt;b&gt;Total Timeline&lt;/b&gt;</b>	<b>&lt;b&gt;8-12 weeks&lt;/b&gt;</b>	<b>&lt;b&gt;From offer to completion&lt;/b&gt;</b>

## Key Steps Explained

### Step 1: Get Your NIE Number

The NIE (Número de Identidad de Extranjero) is your Spanish tax identification number. You'll need it to:

- Open a Spanish bank account
- Sign the property deed
- Pay taxes
- Set up utilities

You can apply for a NIE before finding a property. Processing takes 2-6 weeks. Tharros can assist with NIE applications or connect you with lawyers who can expedite the process.

### Step 2: Secure Mortgage Pre-Approval

Before seriously house hunting, get pre-approved. This tells you:

- How much you can borrow
- Your approximate interest rate
- Your monthly payment range
- Which banks are likely to approve you

Pre-approval gives you negotiating power with sellers and prevents wasting time on properties outside your budget.

### Step 3: Find Your Property

Work with a reputable real estate agent who understands the needs of international buyers. Key tips:

- Visit properties in person if possible (virtual tours can be misleading)
- Check the property's legal status (licencia de ocupación, etc.)
- Verify the asking price against market comparables
- Consider future resale potential, even if buying for personal use

### Step 4: Make an Offer

In Spain, offering below asking price is common and expected. Typical negotiations:

- Start 5-15% below asking price (depends on market conditions)
- Be prepared to compromise
- Include conditions (subject to mortgage approval, satisfactory survey, etc.)
- Pay a reservation deposit (€3,000-€10,000) to secure the property

■ **EXPERT TIP:** The reservation deposit is usually non-refundable if you back out without valid reason (mortgage rejection is typically a valid reason). Ensure your offer includes appropriate conditions.

# 5. Mortgage Process Step-by-Step

## Working with Tharros Brokers

Here's exactly what happens when you work with us:

1. **Initial Consultation (30 minutes, free):** We discuss your situation, property goals, financial position, and timeline. We explain the process and answer all questions.
2. **Pre-Approval (24-48 hours):** You complete our simple application. We review with our AI-assisted system and provide a preliminary approval showing your borrowing capacity.
3. **Bank Comparison (1 week):** We submit your profile to 12+ Spanish banks. Each provides their best offer. We compare rates, terms, and conditions.
4. **Bank Selection:** We recommend the best bank(s) based on rates, service, and approval likelihood. You make the final decision.
5. **Full Application (3-4 weeks):** We help you gather and prepare all required documents. We handle translations and ensure everything meets bank requirements. We submit to your chosen bank.
6. **Valuation:** The bank orders an independent property valuation (tasación). This confirms the property's market value.
7. **Approval (1-2 weeks):** The bank's underwriting team reviews everything and issues formal approval with exact terms.
8. **Offer Document:** You receive the official mortgage offer. We review every detail with you, explaining all terms and costs.
9. **Signing Day:** We coordinate with the notary, bank, and seller. You sign the deed and mortgage. Funds transfer immediately. You get your keys!

## Our Promise to You

- ✓ English-speaking advisors at every step
- ✓ No jargon - we explain everything in plain language
- ✓ No hidden fees - complete transparency on all costs

- ✓ Response within 4 business hours to all inquiries
- ✓ We only get paid when you successfully close (no upfront fees)
- ✓ Continued support even after closing

## 6. Required Documents Checklist

Gather these documents early to speed up your application:

### Personal Identification

- Valid passport (full color copy of every page)
- NIE number certificate (if you have one)
- Proof of current address (utility bill, bank statement - less than 3 months old)
- Marriage certificate (if applying jointly)
- Birth certificates for dependent children (if relevant to income assessment)

### Income Verification

- **If Employed:** Employment contract, Last 3 months' payslips, Last 2 years' tax returns, Employer reference letter
- **If Self-Employed:** Last 2-3 years' business accounts (certified by accountant), Last 2-3 years' tax returns, Proof of business registration, Bank statements showing business income
- **If Retired:** Pension statements (last 3 months), Proof of pension source, Bank statements showing pension deposits

### Financial Documentation

- Last 6 months' bank statements (all accounts)
- Proof of deposit/down payment funds
- Investment account statements (if applicable)
- Details of existing debts (mortgages, loans, credit cards)
- Proof of other property ownership (if applicable)

### Property Documentation

- Property listing/details (your agent provides this)
- Private purchase contract (once you've made an offer)
- Property registration note (nota simple)
- Building plans and licenses (licencia de primera ocupación)
- Community fees statement (for apartments)

■ IBI (property tax) receipt

■ **EXPERT TIP:** All documents in foreign languages must be officially translated into Spanish. Tharros works with certified translators and can arrange this for you at cost. Budget €50-150 per document for translation.

## 7. Costs & Taxes Breakdown

Budget for these costs in addition to your down payment and property price:

### One-Time Purchase Costs

Cost Item	Amount	Who Pays	When
Transfer Tax (ITP)	6-10% of price*	Buyer	At completion
VAT (IVA) on new builds	10%	Buyer	At completion
Stamp Duty (new builds)	1-1.5%	Buyer	At completion
Notary fees	€600-1,500	Buyer	At completion
Land registry	€400-800	Buyer	After completion
Legal fees	€1,000-2,000+	Buyer	Various stages
Bank arrangement fee	0.5-1% of loan	Buyer	At completion
Valuation fee	€300-600	Buyer	During process
Mortgage deed tax	~€100-300	Buyer	At completion
Estate agent commission	3-5% + VAT**	Usually seller	At completion

\*Transfer tax rates vary by region (6% in Valencia, 10% in Catalonia, etc.)

\*\*Agent fees are negotiable and sometimes split between buyer/seller

### Example: Total Cost on €300,000 Property

Item	Cost
Property price	€300,000
Down payment (30%)	€90,000
Mortgage loan (70%)	€210,000
Transfer tax (8% average)	€24,000
Notary + registry	€1,200
Legal fees	€1,500
Bank arrangement (1%)	€2,100
Valuation	€400
Other fees	€800
<b>Total cash needed</b>	<b>€120,000</b>
<b>Total cost (price + fees)</b>	<b>€330,000</b>

### Ongoing Annual Costs

- **IBI (Property Tax):** €300-2,000/year depending on property value and location
- **Community Fees:** €600-3,000/year for apartments (maintenance of shared areas)
- **Non-Resident Income Tax:** ~€200-600/year if property is not rented (imputed income tax)
- **Rubbish Collection:** €100-200/year

- **Home Insurance:** €300-800/year (required by mortgage lender)
- **Utilities:** €100-300/month depending on usage

## 8. Regional Buying Guide

Each region of Spain offers unique advantages. Here's our insider guide:

### Costa del Sol (Málaga, Marbella, Estepona)

**Best for:** Year-round sunshine, golf, luxury lifestyle, established expat community

**Pros:** 320+ days of sunshine, excellent infrastructure, international airport, strong rental demand

**Cons:** Higher prices, very touristy in summer, some areas overdeveloped

**Average price:** €2,800-3,500/m<sup>2</sup>

**Rental yield:** 4-6%

### Costa Blanca (Alicante, Benidorm, Torrevieja)

**Best for:** Beach lifestyle, value for money, British expat community

**Pros:** More affordable, great beaches, good rental market, strong UK connections

**Cons:** Some areas feel very "British", summer crowds, less cultural authenticity

**Average price:** €1,800-2,400/m<sup>2</sup>

**Rental yield:** 5-7%

### Valencia

**Best for:** City living, culture, beaches, value, authentic Spanish life

**Pros:** Third-largest city, beaches in the city, lower cost than Madrid/Barcelona, great food scene

**Cons:** Less international than Barcelona, summer humidity, smaller airport

**Average price:** €2,200-2,800/m<sup>2</sup>

**Rental yield:** 4-6%

### Barcelona

**Best for:** Urban sophistication, culture, international atmosphere

**Pros:** World-class city, excellent transport, beach and mountains, strong economy

**Cons:** Most expensive, tourist saturation, higher taxes, rental restrictions

**Average price:** €4,500-6,000/m<sup>2</sup>

**Rental yield:** 3-5%

### Madrid

**Best for:** Career opportunities, central location, culture, authentic Spanish life

**Pros:** Capital city, job market, museums, excellent transport, true Spanish experience

**Cons:** No beach, extreme summer heat/winter cold, expensive, landlocked

**Average price:** €3,800-5,000/m<sup>2</sup>

**Rental yield:** 4-6%

### Balearic Islands (Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza)

**Best for:** Island lifestyle, natural beauty, prestige, investment

**Pros:** Stunning scenery, high-end market, year-round interest, ferry connections

**Cons:** Most expensive, island isolation, limited availability, strict building regulations

**Average price:** €4,000-5,500/m<sup>2</sup> (higher in prime areas)

**Rental yield:** 3-5% (but high seasonal rental potential)

■ **EXPERT TIP:** Don't just visit during summer! Experience your chosen area in winter too. What's bustling in July might be a ghost town in January. Consider year-round livability.

## **9. Common Mistakes to Avoid**

Learn from others' expensive errors. Here are the top mistakes we see:

### **1. Not getting pre-approved before house hunting**

You waste time viewing properties you can't afford, and you have no negotiating power with sellers. Get pre-approved first to know your exact budget.

### **2. Skipping the lawyer**

Spanish property law is complex. A good lawyer (€1,000-2,000) can save you tens of thousands by catching issues with property title, debts, illegal constructions, or unfavorable contract terms.

### **3. Not understanding the total costs**

Buyers budget for the down payment but forget about the 10-15% in taxes and fees. This causes stress and sometimes deal collapse. Budget correctly from the start.

### **4. Falling for scams**

Unfortunately, property fraud exists. Warning signs: pressure to pay cash, seller reluctant to use notary, price too good to be true, fake rental income promises. Always use registered professionals.

### **5. Not visiting in person**

Photos lie. Virtual tours don't show noisy roads, problem neighbors, or the 10-minute walk to the beach that's actually 30 minutes uphill. Visit before buying if at all possible.

### **6. Ignoring resale value**

Even if you plan to keep the property forever, circumstances change. Buy property that will appeal to future buyers: good location, reasonable size, decent condition.

### **7. Not checking the community fees**

That affordable apartment might have €300/month community fees. Always ask for the community fee amount and what it covers before making an offer.

## **8. Rushing the process**

Property purchases take 8-12 weeks minimum. Trying to rush leads to mistakes and oversights. Give yourself adequate time for each step.

## **9. Buying sight unseen**

Unless you're an experienced investor with reliable boots on the ground, don't buy without seeing the property yourself. At minimum, have a trusted representative inspect it.

## **10. Not comparing mortgage offers**

Accepting the first bank's offer costs you money. A 0.5% lower interest rate on a €200,000 loan saves you over €15,000 over 20 years. Compare multiple banks through a broker like Tharros.

## **10. Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Do I need to speak Spanish?**

No, but it helps. For the property purchase and mortgage process, you can work entirely in English with Tharros and English-speaking lawyers. However, for daily life, learning basic Spanish improves your experience significantly.

### **Can I get a mortgage if I'm over 65?**

Yes, but it's harder. Most banks want the mortgage fully repaid before age 70-75. So if you're 65, you might only get a 5-10 year term instead of 20-25 years. Some banks are more flexible for older applicants with strong financial profiles.

### **What interest rate can I expect?**

As of 2026, rates range from 3.5% to 5.5% for non-residents, depending on your profile and the bank. Residents typically get 0.3-0.5% better rates. Fixed rates are available for 5-30 years, or you can choose variable rates tied to Euribor.

### **Can I rent out my property?**

Yes, but be aware of regulations. Long-term rentals (12+ months) require registering with the tax authority and following landlord-tenant laws. Short-term holiday rentals face restrictions in many areas and require specific licenses. Check local regulations.

### **What about healthcare?**

EU citizens with residency have access to Spanish public healthcare (excellent and free/low-cost). Non-EU residents need private health insurance (€50-150/month depending on age). Many retirees use private insurance even with public healthcare access for faster service.

### **Do I need to become a resident?**

Not necessarily. You can own Spanish property as a non-resident. However, becoming a resident offers benefits: better mortgage rates, lower property taxes, access to healthcare, and ability to work or receive pensions in Spain.

### **What about inheritance tax?**

Spain has inheritance tax (6-34% depending on region and relationship). If you own property in Spain, your heirs will pay Spanish inheritance tax on it. Proper planning (Spanish will, trusts, life insurance) can minimize this. Consult an international tax advisor.

### **Can I get my money out of Spain later?**

Yes. Spain doesn't restrict capital movement. When you sell, you can transfer proceeds to any country. You will pay Spanish capital gains tax on any profit (19-26% for residents, 19-24% for non-residents depending on amount), but after that the money is yours to move freely.

### **How long does the entire process take?**

From finding a property to getting keys: 8-12 weeks typically. Add 2-4 weeks if you don't have your NIE yet. Cash buyers can complete faster (4-6 weeks). Complex situations or slow-moving sellers can extend to 14-16 weeks.

### **What if the bank rejects my mortgage?**

Tharros applies to multiple banks simultaneously, so if one rejects you, others might approve. Our 94% approval rate means we're very good at matching clients with the right banks. In the rare case of total rejection, we'll explain why and suggest alternatives (larger down payment, different property, etc.).

# 11. Ready to Get Started?

You've now learned everything you need to know about buying property in Spain as an international buyer. The process might seem complex, but with the right guidance, it's straightforward and rewarding.

## Your Next Steps

### Step 1: Get Pre-Approved (Free - 24 hours)

Complete our 3-minute application at [tharrosbrokers.com/apply](https://tharrosbrokers.com/apply)

You'll know exactly how much you can borrow and your estimated monthly payment.

### Step 2: Schedule a Consultation (Free - 30 minutes)

Speak with one of our mortgage advisors. Ask questions, discuss your specific situation, and get personalized advice.

Email: [tharrosgroup@gmail.com](mailto:tharrosgroup@gmail.com)

Phone: +1 519-829-0717

### Step 3: Download Additional Resources

Visit our blog at [tharrosbrokers.com/blog](https://tharrosbrokers.com/blog) for guides on:

- How to get your NIE number
- Spanish property tax explained
- Best banks for non-residents
- Regional property guides
- And much more

### Step 4: Join Our Newsletter

Get monthly updates on Spanish mortgage rates, market news, and buying tips.

Sign up at [tharrosbrokers.com](https://tharrosbrokers.com)

## Why Choose Tharros Brokers?

- ✓ **>500+ mortgages approved** since 2022
- ✓ **94% approval rate** (industry average: 55%)
- ✓ **12+ Spanish banks** competing for your business
- ✓ **€50M+ financed** for international buyers
- ✓ **4.9★ rating** from 200+ Google reviews
- ✓ **English-speaking advisors** who understand your needs
- ✓ **No upfront fees** - we only get paid when you successfully close

- ✓ **23-hour average** pre-approval time
- ✓ **Full support** from application to key collection and beyond

## **Ready to Own Your Dream Spanish Property?**

Get your free pre-approval in 24 hours

**Visit:** [tharrosbrokers.com/apply](https://tharrosbrokers.com/apply)

**Email:** [tharrosgroup@gmail.com](mailto:tharrosgroup@gmail.com)

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*Thank you for downloading this guide. We look forward to helping you achieve your Spanish property dreams!*