MARBELLA HOMES



THE COMPLETE BUYER'S GUIDE · 2026 EDITION

Buying Property in Marbella

Every step from your first brief to the keys: budget, NIE, banking, legal due diligence, the arras contract, taxes, completion and ownership. With a dedicated section for buyers from the Gulf.

8–9%	12–13.5%	19	GCC
RESALE BUYING COSTS	NEW-BUILD BUYING COSTS	STEPS, BRIEF TO KEYS	DEDICATED SECTION

Registered Real Estate Agent (API) · Member of COAPI Málaga N° 1012 · Certified valuations by TAS API



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Buying Property in Marbella

> Marbella has become one of Europe's most desirable destinations for international property buyers. Its Mediterranean lifestyle, prime real estate, international schools, golf courses, private marinas, fine dining and excellent connections to the rest of Europe offer a rare combination of lifestyle and investment.

Buying in Spain is straightforward when you are supported by the right professional team. At ST Marbella Homes we guide international clients through every stage of an acquisition: property selection, legal assistance, NIE applications, banking, tax advice, completion and property management. This guide explains, step by step, everything you need to know before you buy, with a dedicated section for buyers from the Gulf (GCC).

CONTENTS

01 Before you start: requirements and budget

02 NIE, bank account and source of funds

03 Property search and legal due diligence

04 Reservation and the arras contract

05 Purchase taxes and costs

06 Completion at the notary

07 Taxes and costs after buying

08 Important information for GCC buyers

09 After-sales services

10 Your complete buying checklist

· Frequently asked questions

01

PART 01

Before you start



Step 1. Define your property requirements

The first step is understanding exactly what you are looking for. We begin with a private consultation to establish your requirements, investment objectives and preferred lifestyle.

Property categories

- Luxury apartments and penthouses
- Private villas and estates
- Golf properties
- Sea-view properties
- Beachfront residences
- New developments and off-plan projects
- Investment properties
- Land and development opportunities
- Hotels and hospitality assets
- Commercial buildings and offices

Popular locations in Marbella and the surrounding area

- Marbella Golden Mile
- Sierra Blanca
- Nueva Andalucía
- Puerto Banús
- La Zagaleta
- Los Monteros
- Benahavís
- El Madroñal
- Estepona
- San Pedro de Alcántara

Together we establish your budget, number of bedrooms, privacy and security requirements, views, amenities and the intended use of the property, whether a second residence, a family home, a holiday property or a long-term investment.

Step 2. Establish your total budget

Before arranging viewings, establish your **total acquisition budget**. The purchase price is not the only expense: buyers must also allow for property taxes, legal fees, notary fees and registration costs.

As a general planning guide in Andalucía:

- **Resale property:** approximately 8–9% in additional acquisition costs.
- **New-build property:** approximately 12–13.5% in additional acquisition costs.

Example for a €1,000,000 property:

EXPENSE	RESALE PROPERTY	NEW-BUILD PROPERTY
Purchase price	€1,000,000	€1,000,000
Main purchase tax (ITP 7% / VAT 10%)	€70,000	€100,000
Stamp duty (AJD 1.2%)	Included in ITP regime	€12,000
Other purchase expenses (estimate)	€10,000–€20,000	€10,000–€20,000
Estimated total	**€1,080,000–€1,090,000**	**€1,122,000–€1,132,000**

Illustrative figures. Professional fees, VAT on services and individual circumstances must be confirmed before completion.

02

PART 02

Legal and administrative requirements

Step 3. Obtain your NIE number

The NIE (*Número de Identidad de Extranjero*) is the Spanish foreigner identification number. It is essential for foreign nationals undertaking economic or legal activities in Spain, including buying property, paying property taxes and completing certain banking procedures. You do not need to become a Spanish resident to obtain one.

Documents generally required

- Valid passport.
- Completed EX-15 application form.
- Proof of payment of the government fee (Modelo 790, Código 012).
- Explanation of the economic reason for the request, such as buying property.
- Any additional documentation requested by the authority.

Where to apply

- At the Spanish National Police or the relevant immigration office in Spain.
- Through the Spanish Embassy or Consulate responsible for your country of residence.
- Through an authorised representative, where the applicable requirements are met.

Processing times depend on the authority and consulate. ST Marbella Homes can coordinate the process with the appropriate legal professionals.

> **Important:** an NIE is an identification number, not a residence permit or visa.

Step 4. Open a Spanish bank account

A Spanish bank account is not an absolute legal requirement for every purchase, but it makes the process considerably easier. It is used to pay the purchase price, property taxes, community fees, electricity and water, insurance, maintenance and, where applicable, mortgage instalments.

Documents commonly requested by Spanish banks

- Valid passport and, if already issued, your NIE.
- Proof of residential address in your home country.
- Proof of occupation or business activity.
- Evidence of income and financial position, and bank statements.
- Source-of-funds documentation.
- Tax identification number in your country of residence.

All documentation must satisfy the bank's anti-money-laundering and compliance requirements. Opening an account is subject to the bank's approval, and requirements vary between institutions.

Step 5. Prepare your source-of-funds documentation

Spanish banks, lawyers and notaries must comply with anti-money-laundering legislation, so international buyers should be ready to show where their funds originate: salary and employment income, business ownership and dividends, company profits, the sale of another property, inheritance, investment portfolios or other legally documented sources of wealth.

For larger acquisitions we recommend preparing this documentation **before** signing a reservation agreement. It prevents unnecessary delays later in the transaction.

03

PART 03

Property selection and legal checks



Step 6. Property search and private viewings

Once your requirements are clear, ST Marbella Homes prepares a personalised selection, including off-market opportunities, and arranges private viewings with owners, developers and collaborating agencies. We assess each property for location and access, privacy and security, architecture and build quality, views and orientation, amenities, investment and rental potential, and future resale value.

If you cannot travel to Marbella straight away, we arrange virtual presentations and video viewings.

Step 7. Legal due diligence

Before committing to a purchase, an independent Spanish property lawyer should carry out a full legal review. This is one of the most important stages of the process.

Ownership and registration

- Identity of the registered owner and the Land Registry extract (*Nota Simple*).
- Property boundaries and registered surface area.
- Existing mortgages, charges or restrictions.

Planning and building legality

- Building licences and planning permissions.

- First Occupation Licence or equivalent documentation.
- Legal status of extensions and renovations.
- Planning restrictions, outstanding proceedings and cadastral information.

Financial obligations

- Outstanding community fees, property tax (IBI) and municipal charges.
- Outstanding utility bills and any other registered debts.

For new developments

- The developer's legal status, building licence and construction documentation.
- Payment schedule, and bank guarantees or insurance protecting advance payments where legally required.
- Completion and delivery conditions.

> Never rely only on a viewing or on the seller's assurances. A proper independent legal investigation is essential.

04

PART 04

Reservation and purchase contract

Step 8. Reservation agreement

Once you have chosen a property and agreed the price, the next step is normally a reservation agreement. It identifies the property, the price, the reservation payment and the conditions for proceeding. In luxury transactions the reservation payment is often between €6,000 and €20,000, depending on the property and the agreement.

Before transferring money, your lawyer should verify the seller's identity and authority, the ownership details, the reservation terms, the refund conditions, the exclusivity period and the agreed price.

> **Never transfer funds to an unverified personal or company account.**

Step 9. Private purchase contract (contrato de arras)

After the reservation and initial legal checks, the parties normally sign a private purchase contract. A deposit of around 10% of the price is common, although the amount and its legal consequences depend on the contract.

The contract should clearly set out the identification of buyer and seller, the property description, the price, the deposit, the completion deadline and conditions, any fixtures, furniture or inclusions, the consequences of withdrawal and any special conditions.

Under a traditional *arras penitenciales* agreement, Article 1454 of the Spanish Civil Code provides that the buyer may withdraw by forfeiting the deposit, and the seller may withdraw by returning double the deposit. Not every deposit agreement has this legal character, so the contract must be drafted properly and reviewed by your independent lawyer before you sign.

05

PART 05

Purchase taxes and costs

Step 10. Understand Spanish property purchase taxes

The purchase tax depends on whether you buy a resale or a new-build property.

A. Resale property: Property Transfer Tax (ITP)

In Andalucía, the general ITP rate is **7%** of the purchase price or the applicable tax base.

PURCHASE PRICE	ITP AT 7%
€500,000	€35,000
€750,000	€52,500
€1,000,000	€70,000
€2,000,000	€140,000
€3,000,000	€210,000

The applicable tax base must be checked against the cadastral reference value and the rules governing the specific transaction.

B. New-build property: VAT and stamp duty

For a qualifying first transfer of a residential property from a developer: **VAT (IVA) 10%** plus **stamp duty (AJD) 1.2%** in Andalucía.

NEW BUILD AT €1,000,000	AMOUNT
VAT (10%)	€100,000
AJD (1.2%)	€12,000
Total purchase taxes	**€112,000**

Garages, storage rooms, commercial units and other elements may be taxed differently.

C. Notary, Land Registry and legal fees

ITEM	TYPICAL PLANNING ALLOWANCE
Notary	€800–€2,000
Land Registry	€500–€1,500
Independent legal fees	Around 1% of the price + VAT
Administrative and document expenses	Variable

Indicative budgeting figures, not fixed government tariffs.

D. Mortgage financing

Non-resident mortgages are subject to individual bank approval. The lender will assess your income, financial position, credit history and the property, and may request your passport and NIE, proof of income, employment or business documentation, tax returns, bank statements, details of existing liabilities and a valuation. The bank will set out the financing conditions and associated costs.

06

PART 06

Completion of the purchase



Step 11. Prepare for the notary appointment

Once the legal checks are complete and financing is organised, the completion date is set. Before it, make sure your NIE is available, the funds are ready, the bank has completed its compliance checks, the final deed has been reviewed, all agreed conditions are met and any powers of attorney are valid.

If you cannot attend in person, completion can be signed by a properly authorised representative, subject to the notary's requirements. Powers of attorney granted abroad may need notarisation, an apostille or legalisation, and a sworn translation, depending on the issuing country.

Step 12. Sign the public deed (escritura pública)

Completion takes place before a Spanish notary. The parties sign the public deed, the buyer pays the outstanding balance, the seller receives payment, the keys are handed over on the agreed terms and the notary authorises the deed. Congratulations: you now own your property in Marbella.

Step 13. Register your property

After completion, the purchase taxes are settled, the deed is submitted to the Land Registry, ownership is registered, and utility and community records are updated. Your lawyer or appointed representative can coordinate these procedures.

07

PART 07

Taxes and costs after buying

Step 14. Annual ownership costs

- **IBI (annual property tax):** the municipal tax, calculated from the cadastral value and the local rate. It varies by municipality and property.
- **Community fees:** payable in residential developments, covering security, gardens, pools, maintenance, cleaning, communal facilities, building insurance and management. Premium gated communities with extensive facilities may have higher fees.
- **Utilities:** electricity, water, internet and other services, billed by consumption and contract.
- **Property insurance:** building and contents insurance is strongly recommended.
- **Non-Resident Income Tax (IRNR):** non-resident owners may have Spanish tax obligations even if they do not rent the property. Personal-use properties may be subject to an imputed income calculation; rental income must generally be declared in Spain.
- **Wealth Tax:** non-resident owners may be subject to Spanish Wealth Tax on qualifying Spanish assets. A tax adviser should assess this before acquisition, particularly for high-value properties.
- **Inheritance and Gift Tax:** Spanish rules may apply to Spanish property even when the owner and beneficiaries live outside Spain, so ownership should be part of your wider succession planning.

08

FOR BUYERS FROM THE GULF

Important information for GCC buyers

Many of our clients are families and investors from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman. These are the questions they ask us most often.

Applying for an NIE and opening a bank account from the Gulf

NIE applications can generally be started through the Spanish diplomatic mission responsible for your country of residence. Spanish banks may also ask GCC clients for company ownership documents, commercial registration certificates, salary certificates, audited accounts or other supporting financial information.

Step 15. Does buying property give you Spanish residency?

No. Buying property in Spain does not automatically grant residency, citizenship or a right to live permanently in Spain. Spain ended the real-estate Golden Visa programme on 3 April 2025. GCC nationals who wish to spend extended periods in Spain must consider the appropriate visa or residence route for their circumstances. An NIE does not provide immigration rights.

Step 16. Should you buy personally or through a company?

Ownership can be personal (one individual, or jointly between family members, usually with simpler administration) or through a company (an existing foreign company or a Spanish company, sometimes used for investment or business structures). The right structure depends on your objectives, tax residence, financing, inheritance planning and intended use. **Company ownership does not automatically reduce tax.** Always obtain independent Spanish and international tax advice before deciding how to buy, especially for joint family ownership or succession planning.

Step 17. Can you buy without travelling to Spain?

Yes, in many cases. With a properly prepared and authorised power of attorney, a legal representative can act for you: applying for the NIE, handling bank procedures (subject to the bank's acceptance), signing reservation and purchase documents, completing at the notary and handling registration afterwards. The exact powers and formalities must be confirmed by your Spanish lawyer and notary.

Step 18. Can you rent your property?

Yes, subject to the legal requirements. Short-term tourist rentals are regulated by Andalucía and by each municipality. Before buying an investment property, check the tourist registration requirements, municipal planning restrictions, community statutes and decisions, licensing, tax obligations and rental management costs. Never assume a property can automatically be operated as a holiday rental.

We advise in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Speak to us privately.

09

PART 09

After-sales services

Step 19. Your property, professionally managed

Our relationship with clients does not end when the deed is signed. Through trusted professional partners we can coordinate property management, maintenance and repairs, interior design and furnishing, renovation, pool and garden maintenance, security, utility registration, insurance, rental management, concierge services, vehicle and airport transfers, and introductions to local professionals. Our objective is to make owning a home in Marbella as comfortable as possible, particularly for clients based in the Gulf.

10

PART 10

Your complete buying checklist

- [ ] Define your property requirements.
- [ ] Establish your total acquisition budget.
- [ ] Select your preferred location.
- [ ] Obtain your NIE.
- [ ] Prepare your financial and source-of-funds documentation.
- [ ] Open a Spanish bank account, if required or appropriate.
- [ ] Select your property.
- [ ] Appoint an independent Spanish property lawyer.
- [ ] Complete legal and planning due diligence.
- [ ] Sign the reservation agreement.
- [ ] Sign the private purchase contract.
- [ ] Arrange the purchase funds or mortgage.
- [ ] Prepare the notary appointment.
- [ ] Sign the public purchase deed.
- [ ] Pay the applicable purchase taxes.
- [ ] Register the property.
- [ ] Arrange utilities and insurance.
- [ ] Set up annual tax and maintenance arrangements.

QUESTIONS BUYERS ASK US

Frequently asked questions

How much are the total buying costs in Marbella?

As a planning guide, allow approximately 8–9% on top of the price for a resale property and 12–13.5% for a new build in Andalucía, covering taxes, notary, Land Registry and legal fees.

What is the property transfer tax in Andalucía?

Resale properties pay Property Transfer Tax (ITP) at a general rate of 7%. New builds bought from a developer pay 10% VAT plus 1.2% stamp duty (AJD) instead.

Can foreigners buy property in Marbella?

Yes. Foreign nationals can buy property in Spain. You will need an NIE, documented source of funds and, in practice, a Spanish bank account.

Do I need to be in Spain to buy?

Not necessarily. With a properly authorised power of attorney, a legal representative can apply for your NIE, sign the contracts and complete at the notary on your behalf.

Does buying a property give me residency in Spain?

No. Spain ended the real-estate Golden Visa on 3 April 2025, and an NIE is not a residence permit. Extended stays require the appropriate visa or residence route.

How much is the deposit when buying in Marbella?

A reservation payment of €6,000–€20,000 is common in luxury transactions, followed by a deposit of around 10% of the price when the private purchase contract (arras) is signed.

How long does it take to buy a property in Marbella?

It depends mainly on the NIE, bank compliance checks, legal due diligence and financing. Preparing your documents and source-of-funds evidence early is the best way to avoid delays.

Can I rent out my property as a holiday rental?

Only if it meets the tourist rental rules of Andalucía and the municipality, and the community statutes allow it. Always check before you buy.



NEXT STEPS

We advise in Arabic, English, French and Spanish

1. Tell us your budget, preferred areas, timing and intended use.
2. We prepare a private selection, including off-market homes, and arrange viewings in person or by video.
3. We coordinate NIE, banking, your independent lawyer and the legal due diligence.
4. We accompany you through reservation, arras contract, completion and beyond.

PRIVATE ENQUIRIES

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Legal and tax disclaimer: this guide is for general information and reflects the Spanish and Andalusian framework as at November 2026. Tax legislation, administrative requirements and individual circumstances may change. It does not constitute legal, tax, financial or immigration advice. Obtain independent advice from qualified Spanish professionals before entering into any transaction.