THINKING OF MOVING TO SPAIN?

Your Essential Starter Pack from Be Spain Savvy

INTRODUCTION

Dreaming of a new life under the Spanish sun? You're not alone. Whether it's the lure of the Mediterranean lifestyle, affordable living, or simply a fresh start, Spain offers a wide range of opportunities for individuals and families alike. But before you pack your bags, it's important to make an informed decision. This guide breaks down the pros and cons of life in Spain, explains your visa and financial options, and gives you an insider look at the different regions to help you find your perfect Spanish fit.

WHY SPAIN?

PROS:

- Lifestyle: A slower pace of life, long lunches, and a strong sense of community.
- Climate: Warm weather most of the year in many regions.
- Healthcare: One of the best public healthcare systems in Europe.
- Affordability: Lower cost of living compared to other Western European countries.
- Culture & Food: Rich history, lively festivals, and delicious, regional cuisine.

CONS:

- Bureaucracy: Slow and often confusing paperwork processes.
- Job Market: Can be tough for non-Spanish speakers and limited in some sectors.
- Language Barrier: English is not widely spoken outside major tourist areas.
- Pace of Services: Slower service timelines can be frustrating for newcomers.

VISA & RESIDENCY OPTIONS

DEPENDING ON YOUR SITUATION, HERE ARE SOME OF THE MOST COMMON WAYS TO LEGALLY STAY IN SPAIN:

- Digital Nomad Visa: For remote workers with contracts outside Spain.
- Non-Lucrative Visa: For retirees or those with passive income.
- Family Reunification Visa: For those joining close relatives legally residing in Spain.
- Student Visa: For those enrolling in academic programs.
- EU Citizen Rights: If you're from the EU/EEA, the process is simpler but still involves paperwork.
- Job Seeker Visa: Allows qualified professionals to move to Spain for a limited period while searching for employment opportunities.

Each option has unique requirements. It’s important to start early and seek guidance where needed.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Before making the move, take time to plan your finances:

- Cost of Living: Rent, groceries, and utilities vary greatly by region.
- Banking: Opening a Spanish bank account can be time-consuming but is essential.
- Insurance: Health insurance is required for most visa types.
- Taxes: Research double taxation agreements and local tax obligations.

Pro tip: Track your monthly budget for 3 months before the move to get a sense of your lifestyle needs.

SPAIN BY REGION: WHERE SHOULD YOU GO?

- Madrid: Vibrant, cosmopolitan capital with job opportunities and cultural events.
- Barcelona: A mix of beach life and business with a strong expat network.
- Seville, Málaga, Granada: Historic cities with sunshine, tapas, and charm.
- Valencia: Affordable coastal living and a growing remote work scene.
- Northern Spain (Bilbao, Santander, Galicia): Green landscapes, cooler climate, rich traditions.
- Costa del Sol: Popular with retirees; lots of sunshine and English-speaking communities.
- Cádiz & Surroundings: Laid-back lifestyle, authentic culture, and lower living costs.

INSIDER TIPS

Moving to Spain is a big decision, but you don't have to do it alone. Be Spain Savvy is here to help you plan smart, integrate smoothly, and avoid the usual expat pitfalls.

1. Start the visa process 3–6 months before your planned move.

2. Consider becoming a BESS Subscriber to help with Spanish bureaucracy and and questions that might pop up.

3. Brush up on your Spanish as early as possible—even basic phrases help a lot.