

Exporting or selling a Spanish car

A letter has recently been received by a reader and the contents should be of interest to anyone exporting their Spanish car or considering selling one

Dear Graham

We always enjoy your column- Mediterranean Motoring- and find it very helpful. We are moving to Portugal in the not too distant future and would welcome your thoughts on what to do about our car. We have a Spanish Ford KA (13 years old) which we had planned to run until it was no more as it is still in excellent condition and has also been extremely reliable. We would like to upgrade to a 4 door Ford Fiesta. One idea is to sell our KA before leaving, cut all ties with motoring in Spain and buy a Fiesta in Portugal. It is a fact that cars are more expensive in Portugal and so another idea would be to buy the Fiesta over here before we leave and then re-register the number plate in Portugal. We would much appreciate your opinion on this. If you wish to print this query please feel free to do so but we would be grateful if you would not publish our names.

With many thanks and kindest regards

Hello Reader

Thank you for your email and kind words. I also am lead to believe that cars are expensive in Portugal and in addition that the registration tax is much higher than in Spain though I cannot corroborate this

My advice would be to try and find via the web a company that could re-register a car for you in Portugal to establish just what the costs would be. Otherwise contact the British consulate in that country to see if they can provide the name of a lawyer specialising in motoring matters (they will not provide details of businesses)

Also if you google second hand cars for sale in Portugal you should come across websites that will give you an idea of the costs of buying a car there

Selling a car

I have sold personal cars here and found that the best way is to put Se Vende/ For Sale notices in the car windows. If you sell it please ensure that the car does get transferred to the name of the buyer or you will remain liable for road tax and any fines incurred; this is a common problem in Spain. I can undertake the transfer for you or you can go to a specialist gestoria

If you take a Spanish registered car outside of the country it must be de-registered in Spain or you will remain liable for road tax. I or a specialist gestoria can undertake this for you

Registration tax

It is widely known that the Spanish charge registration tax, commonly referred to as import tax. This tax is levied on all new cars bought in Spain and by extension most vehicles imported here. The tax is based upon the official value of the car (well I guess it would or we would all have receipts for 10 bob, or to you post-decimal youngsters a few pounds). The values are fair and below the market cost. It is then multiplied by a percentage determined by the CO2 emissions to arrive at the tax. Exemptions do exist but within a strict time frame. Other countries such as Portugal and Ireland also levy the tax so it is not unique to Spain

The cost and process of re-registration varies significantly between countries. At one time it was simple, and cheap to re-register a car in the UK, but clients who have recently done this advise that the system is now similar to the Spanish one, but without the taxes. Another client has mentioned that in France it takes a few minutes and €50. The point is to check it out first before you take your car elsewhere or you may be in for a nasty shock or even a pleasant surprise

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