

Historic vehicles

Here in Spain an Historic vehicle is defined as one more than 25 years old. This means that for the majority of us our first pride and joy falls into this category; blimey how time flies

Mine was a Mark 1 Cortina in navy blue with a bench seat and column gear change; before that I had a Lambretta LI 150 replete with extra lights, crash bars and stickers. Oh how I felt the part popping along with my Parka overcoat flapping in the breeze behind me whilst trying to avoid the rockers or “greasers” as we called them on their faster Matchless, BSA’s and Nortons. The registration number of the scooter was CNN 9C which I saw being used as an example in a scooter shop with the fleeting thought to ask them for royalties

Whilst the vast majority of vehicles that expats bring to Spain with them are modern (1988 onwards) a few have brought older vehicles because they just can’t part with them or because they are genuinely “classic”. Re-registering such vehicles has its pro and cons and for the aficionado the advantages hold sway

Imagine that your cherished car was built without seat belts, or that the indicators are of the semaphore variety as sported by Morris Minors, it would not pass a standard ITV test as it clearly does not meet modern requirements. As for the emissions, who cared about those back then? The good news for you is that the car can be inspected and registered “as is” if it is to be classed as Historic, so if your windscreen wipers slow down as you go faster as in the Ford Popular, no problem. The only “but” is that the headlights have to conform to Continental standards and point to the right hand kerb or be flatlined

Other advantages are that the periodic ITV inspections are less frequent, there is no road tax and your insurance premiums may be lower. Sporting number plates denoting the status of the car should add value if you decide to sell it. The car could have been made anywhere for instance the USA as well as Europe or Japan

The disadvantage of re-registering a vehicle onto Historic plates is the cost to do so which is around €700 more than for a standard re-registration, however in some circumstances you would have no choice unless you owned the car before coming to Spain. Most of you are aware that registration tax, also referred to as import tax, is levied here. For vehicles first registered before 1997, the tax is charged at 12% of the vehicle value. The best way to obtain a valuation is to search the web in your own country for a similar vehicle for sale, naturally for such a purpose you would find the lowest valuation that you can; no need to throw it away!

Older vehicles are often called Classic and my research indicates that this term is used to define any vehicle made post World War II up to the modern era which will have ended 25 years ago, so is a rolling period. Vintage describes those rarer vehicles made after WWI until the 1930’s. Between these two periods, the term pre war classic is used. Just thought you may wish to know, but for a lengthy debate on this, please contact your nearest classic car club of which there are a few over here

Whilst I have mostly referred to cars, the same equally applies to motor bikes with the same pros and cons and cost expectations. Remember those cylindrical chokes and saddles straight off a pushbike with coiled springs? But you can't beat the roar of a 500 Bonneville, a sound I was always wary of. But hey, don't hold it against me; we were all young and stupid once, so if you have such a bike I'd love to meet you, nearly as much as if you have a 1960's classic Lambretta!

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