

## **Re-matriculation to Spanish plates. A quick guide**

### **17 September 2014**

The traffic act that came into force on 9<sup>th</sup> May requires all foreign vehicles to be re-matriculated to Spanish plates within 30 days of importation. This means that if you have a car in your name with a European plate which you are going to keep in Spain and you are resident you have to change to Spanish plates within 1 month. If you are not resident the time limit is 3 months.

The process which we have summarised below is fairly simple but may be different subject to each car's condition.

First you will need to check if the car can be imported. It has to have an EU certificate of conformity (COC) which you may find in the log book or V5 or an "E" number stamp below the chassis number.

If it has, then you need to pass a fairly detailed importation inspection in the ITV which will cost approximately €140-€200. This is the Spanish equivalent of an MOT certificate for road worthiness. You need to take the original log book of the vehicle. They will check the car headlights to ensure they point to the kerb on the right hand side as you drive. If they don't you will need to get these changed in a garage. They will also check that your tyres are the correct ones according to the car manual and they match on each axle. Another thing they will look at is the tow-bars. If your tow bar has not been fitted in Spain it may be illegal and you will have to change it to a Spanish model. They will also look at the registration plate in the sill and make a copy along with the car details under the bonnet to ensure it is legal. Finally, they look at the headlamps, indicators, brakes, steering, traction and exhaust CO2 emissions.

You will then need to pay "matriculation tax" at the tax office and if your car comes from a VAT excluded country such as Gibraltar you may need to pay IVA (import duty). The charge for the matriculation tax will depend on make/model, year of make, engine size and CO2 emissions. This tax can be avoided if you are coming to Spain to live and bring your car as an asset and you meet ALL the following conditions;

- You must have lived in the country of origin for more than 12 consecutive months.
- The vehicle must have been bought in that country of origin without any tax exemptions or tax rebates.
- You must have owned the vehicle for at least 6 months in the country of origin.
- The re-matriculation must be applied for within the established timeline.
- You must remain as the owner of the car for at least another 12 months.

You will have to pay the road tax (Impuesto de circulación or Impuesto sobre vehiculos de tracción mecánica) at your local Town Hall "Suma" office.

After, you'll need to go to the "Dirección General de Tráfico" and take the following documents;

Original log book or “Ficha Tecnica” together with the paperwork from the ITV, a copy of your NIE, passport, prepaid traffic fees, paid road tax, paid “impuesto de matriculacion” and “certificado de empadronamiento”. To obtain the “padron” you need to go to your local Town Hall and take with you your passport, NIE number, utility bill and either a copy of your property deeds or rental contract.

Finally, once the car has been registered you’ll have to apply for your Spanish plates in an authorized garage or car supplier.

The whole process may take around 3 or 4 weeks although if you prefer not to handle all this hassle yourself, you can ask a “Gestoría” (legally registered Company) to do everything for you.