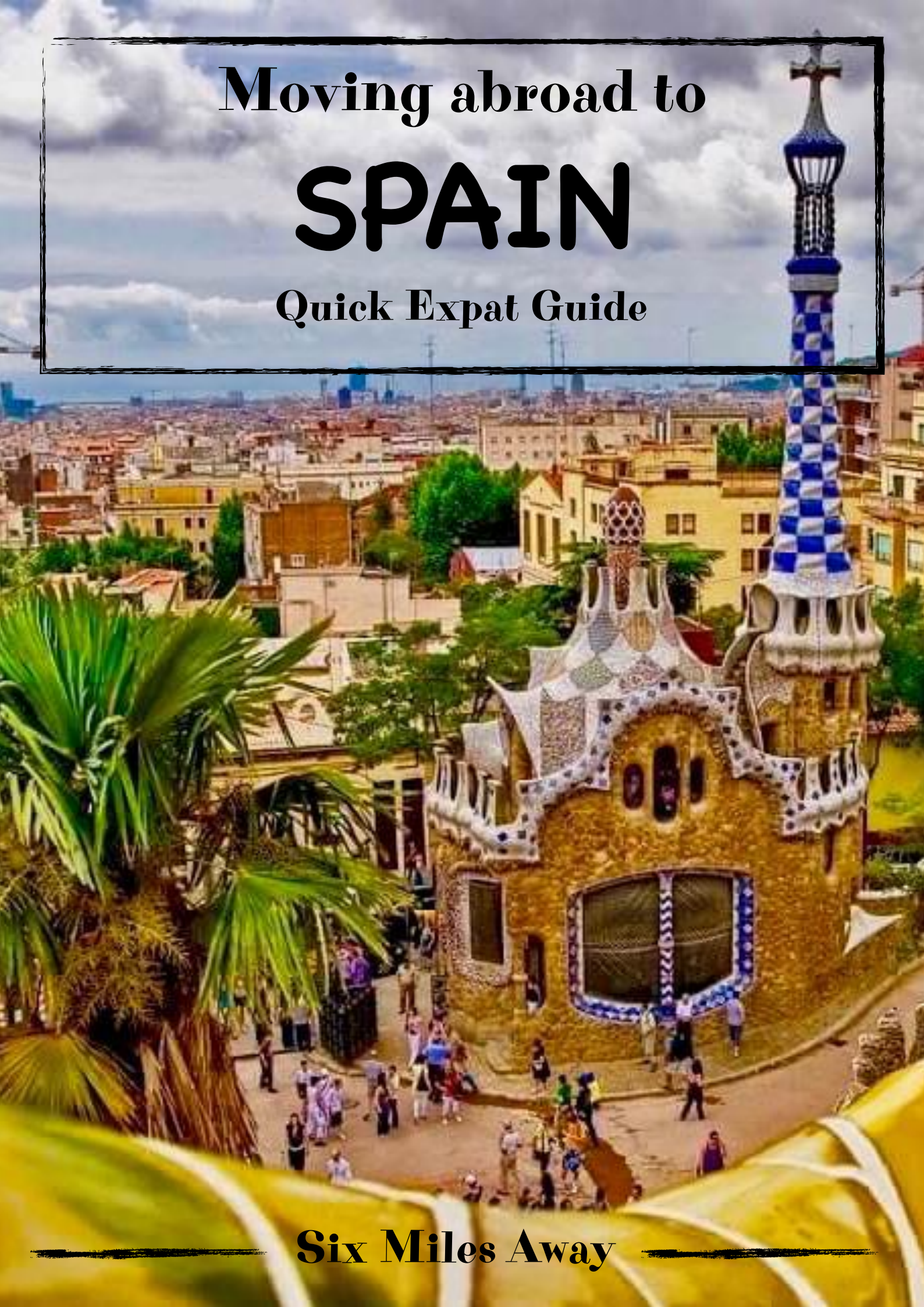


**Moving abroad to**

# **SPAIN**

**Quick Expat Guide**



**Six Miles Away**

## What to expect from this guide?

Moving to a new country can sometimes be overwhelming. This quick expat guide will provide you with all basic information in order to move abroad to Spain. It will cover topics on how to live and work in Spain, including pre-arrangements and once on the spot. Below, you can find a short list of the exact content.

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## Step 1: Applying for a Visa

There are different VISA's for different purposes. If you are from one of the countries in the EEA, you don't need to apply for a VISA and can move on to **Step 2: Applying for a NIE Number**. If you are from outside the EEA, you have the following options for long-term stay:

- 1) Work visa
- 2) Student visa
- 3) Visa for retirement or family reason

On the following website, you can find an [overview of all available types of visa for Spain](#). It provides you with a list of all required documents, you will need for your application. There are certain types of visa, which you can even apply for online.

Furthermore, find the general [visa application form](#) here.

## Step 2: Applying for a NIE Number

### What is it?

A NIE Number stands for “Número de Identificación de Extranjero” and is an unique identifier. It allows you to open a bank account, pay taxes, apply for a driver licence as well as access social benefits and public services.

### How to apply?

In order to apply for a NIE Number, you will need to visit an “Oficina de Extranjeros” or designated police station with all required documents. Make sure to bring time along with you, as it can be a while.

You can find [contact information & addresses of “Oficinas de Extranjeros”](#) for the biggest Spanish cities and the [application form for NIE](#) on the following websites.

## What documents do I need?

Most of the times you will need to bring the following documents along:

- Valid passport or national ID card
- Completed NIE form
- Stamped self-addressed envelope (this way they can send you your NIE Number by post)
- Proof of address

Depending on your personal situation and nationality you may be required to bring additional documents.

**NOTE:** The application of a NIE Number comes with a small fee (about 10€).

## Step 3: Opening a Bank Account

There is a big variety of banks to choose from. Of course, each of them have different conditions, so you will have to find the best match for yourself. Find a list of the most popular banks below:

Caixabank

HSBC

Sabadell

Santander

**NOTE:** Spain has two different types of banks which are cajas and bancos. Bancos are usually street and privately owned banks. Cajas on the other hand are state-run/more local banks.

## Documents to bring along when opening a bank account:

- Valid passport or national ID card
- Proof of address (e.g. rental contract) and employment
- NIE number
- Residence permit (if you are from outside the EU)

During your decision it will be worth considering the following topics:

### **1. Fees**

Annual fees vary, depending on the type of account. You can compare the most popular banks on the following [website](#).

### **2. Online Banking**

Most banks nowadays make life very easy and offer great apps for transactions, bank statements etc. Other banks still provide TAN machines that you have to carry around with you in order to make a transaction. I personally prefer an app over a machine but this, of course, depends on your personal preferences.

### **3. Contactless/NFC**

It is worth double checking if your bank offers contactless payment. It is very fast and convenient (no PIN needed). It reduces fees per transaction (in case your bank charges) and it can only be used up to a certain amount per purchase (e.g. 30€). So, in case your card gets stolen, the thief can only access a low amount of money while you manage to block your card.

## **Step 4: Finding Accommodation**

I recommend you looking for an apartment or room once you arrive in Spain. You can stay in a hostel, bed & breakfast or [Airbnb](#) before.

There are main platforms and letting agencies you can look for places to stay:

[Tucasa](#) (Spanish only)

[Venta de pisos](#) (Spanish only)

[Servihabitat](#)

[Comprarcasa](#)

[Idealista](#)

Please keep in mind that these agencies sometimes take a fee, if they find you a place to stay.

## Which documents will I need?

- Evidence of employment or proof of savings / monthly income
- NIE Number
- Passport or alternative ID
- Personal references (get these ready before you travel)

## What to pay attention to?

When searching for and renting a place, pay attention to the following:

### 1. Mould

When you get invited for viewings make sure to double check the bathrooms carefully. Most of the time bathrooms don't have windows. In this case make sure they have a proper working fan in order to absorb humidity. Otherwise you will have issues with mould very quickly.

### 2. Rental Period

Contracts can be over a period of 1-12 months. It really depends on what you find. In most cases the 30 days' notice period, if you want to leave, applies. More details on renting a property in Spain can be found [here](#).

**NOTE:** Long term lettings properties don't require landlords to hold a licence, whereas short term lettings (under twelve months) and holiday lettings (under three months) do.

### 3. Additional Costs

In popular cities you can find most apartments furnished. That's why the renting prices are higher as well. In bigger cities, external bills such as water, electricity, gas, Internet and refuse are often included. Should that not be the case, you can sign up with the following providers:

- **Electricity & Gas:** Sign up with [Grupo Endesa](#), [Iberdrola](#), [Union Fenosa](#) and [Hidrocantábrico](#). More information can be read [here](#).
- **Internet:** Depends on your location. It could be [Movistar](#), [Vodafone](#), [Orange](#), [Eurona](#) etc. You can find out the best deal on [here](#).

- **Refuse:** Most of the times municipalities charge an annual fee. Ask at your town hall.

## What about rent prices?

Rent prices in Spain are usually lower compared to other European countries. However, in main cities it can be more expensive. Don't forget that additional costs for water, electricity, Internet, refuse etc. might not be included and will come on top of your rental price.

## Step 5: Finding a Job

If you are not self-employed or a digital nomad, you will need to find a job in order to finance your stay in Spain. Useful job websites are the following:

[The Local](#)

[Infojobs](#)

[Monster](#)

[Xpatjobs](#)

[Jobsinbarcelona](#) (English speakers)

[Lingobongo](#) (English teaching jobs)

[Educajob](#) (Jobs in education sector)

**NOTE:** The easiest way to find jobs will be in larger cities such as Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia, Sevilla and Malaga, especially if you don't speak the language yet.

## Step 6: Health Insurance

If you are an EU citizen, you are entitled to free basic healthcare in Spain, when providing your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

If you are working in Spain, you are also entitled to free basic healthcare since you make monthly contributions via payments (those are automatically deducted from your monthly wages) as well as your employer on your behalf. You will most likely have a Tarjeta Sanitaria Individual (TSI) health card, which

is valid for four years. Whenever you present your TSI card, you don't have to pay any fees when being treated in hospitals or by doctors in Spain. However, there is a 60% prescription fee at pharmacies, you will have to pay during your purchase.

### **How to find a doctor?**

You can either check on the phone book under "medicos" or on the local healthcare authority website.

Find below potential **privat** health care companies to sign up with:

ASSSA  
Sanitas Helath Insurance  
ADESLAS  
BUPA

Here you can find a list of more private health care insurances in Spain.

## **Step 7: Staying Connected**

### **Which mobile provider should I choose?**

In order to stay connected, you should get a prepaid SIM card. This way you won't have problems when leaving Spain since you are not bound to contracts. Below, you will find a list of the most common cellular providers:

Moviestar (cheapest)  
Orange  
Jazztel  
Tele2  
Vodafone / ONO