

Gibraltar





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Overview

Gibraltar derives from Gebel Tariq (Tariq's Mountain) - named after Tariq Ibn Zeyad who led the eighth century conquest of Spain with a combined force of Arabs and Berbers crossing from Africa. Gibraltar's unusual status was not acquired until nearly 1000 years later, long after the Islamic invaders had been driven out by the Spanish, as a consequence of the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht which brought an end to the War of the Spanish Succession and gave the territory to the British.

Since the death of Franco in 1975 and the return of democracy to Spain, relations between London and Madrid improved immensely in every area – except Gibraltar. The current Spanish position was first outlined by Felipe Gonzalez, Spain's Socialist premier during the 1980s when he suggested joint Anglo-Spanish sovereignty. Successive Spanish governments have since refined the proposals, allowing for possible EU or NATO involvement. The British have no major objection, providing they are guaranteed continued access to the military bases. The problem is the Gibraltarians want none of it: no handover; no joint sovereignty. In 2002 the Gibraltar government led by Peter Caruana organised a referendum to assess the popular mood. As expected, it returned a huge majority favour of the status quo.

Known as the 'Rock' Gibraltar is home to a surprisingly diverse range of attractions. Steeped in history, which has evolved from its strategic location at the southernmost tip of the Iberian Peninsula, visitors are met with breath-taking scenery, wildlife and architecture that capture the unique flavour of this Mediterranean City and its inhabitants. As a VAT free jurisdiction, Gibraltar's

popularity with visitors is enhanced by its value added shopping experience in famed Main Street.

With the sun shining on average 300 days a year, the climate is typically Mediterranean and residents can expect warm, dry summers alternating with mild wet winters.

Although English is the official language, most Gibraltarians are fluent in both Spanish and English.

Lifestyle

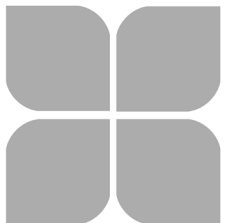
Thousands of people who work in Gibraltar choose to live in Spain and commute across the border on a daily basis. Most frontier workers park their car in nearby La Linea and either walk, bike or catch a bus to work. Thanks to Gibraltar's diminutive proportions a 20 minute walk will take you to the main thoroughfare – but make sure you remember your passport because you will need it enter and exit border control.

Going out

There are bars and bistros throughout the town and the two marinas operating under Mediterranean licensing hours and selling British beer. Restaurants are varied and cover all price ranges. Gibraltar's geographical location and its history as a British colony means it offers a large selection of British dishes as well as French, Spanish, American, Moroccan, Italian, Chinese and Indian cuisine. Spirits and tobacco are substantially cheaper than in the UK for identical brands.

Southern Spain

Gibraltar is within walking distance of Andalucía. The beautiful Southern Spanish landscape stretches from the mountains to the sea: the world famous beaches of the Costa de la Luz are within easy reach for summer weekends away and it is less than three hours drive to Europe's most southerly ski resort, the Sierra Nevada.



The historic and culturally rich cities of Cadiz, Jerez, Seville and Granada are close by and the White Villages of Andalusia wait to be explored.

There are numerous activities that will keep you busy. Choose from:

- Kite surfing/wind surfing in Tarifa (www.tarifa.net)
- Scuba diving /snorkeling/deep sea fishing in on the Costa del Sol
- Skiing/snowboarding/walking/mountain biking in the Sierra Nevada (www.sierranevada.co.uk)
- Golf (www.andalucia.com/golf/home.htm)
- Night life (www.andalucia.com/entertainment/nightlife.htm)
- Explore Morocco by taking a 45 minute ferry to Tangers from Tarifa (www.frs.es)

Thanks to consistently excellent weather in Southern Spain and Gibraltar there are numerous outdoor activities to take up. It's up to you how much, or how little you partake.

Gibraltar Health Care

The Gibraltar Health Authority operates a Group Practice Medical Scheme whereby contributors to the system receive free health benefits. Should you become a contributor all your medical needs will be met either on The Rock itself, or by outside providers, which are arranged by the scheme.

As an employee in Gibraltar paying tax and social insurance – if you decide to live in Spain you are also able to use the Spanish National Health Service due to the contributions you make in Gibraltar.

Currency

Although Gibraltar produces its own bank notes and coins, the Monetary Unit of Gibraltar is actually UK Sterling. Sterling Currency Notes issued by the Bank

of England are therefore legal tender and in circulation alongside local notes and coins.

Income tax system Gibraltar

Individuals may choose to pay tax under the Allowance Based System or the Gross Income Based System. Under the Gross Income Based System individuals will receive no allowances and will pay tax on their gross assessable income at the following rate;

Individuals with gross assessable income not exceeding £16,000:

- the first £10,000 of assessable income - 10%
- balance - 20%

Individuals with gross assessable income between £16,001 and £25,000;

- income of £16,001 to £17,000, on the first £5,000 - 0%
- balance - 20%
- income of £17,001 to £18,000, on the first £4,000 - 0%
- balance - 20%
- income of £18,001 to £19,000, on the first £3,000 - 0%
- balance - 20%
- income of £19,001 to £20,000, on the first £2,000 - 0%
- balance - 20%
- income of £20,001 to £25,000, on the first £1,000 - 0%
- balance - 20%

Individuals with gross assessable income exceeding £25,000

- the first £25,000 of assessable income - 20%
- the next £75,000 of assessable income - 29%
- the remainder of the assessable income - 35%

Individuals who have opted to be taxed under the Allowances Based System are charged to tax on their taxable income which arrived at by deducting personal and other allowances from the assessable income at the following rates:

For every pound of

- the first £4,000 of taxable income - 17%
- the next £12,000 of taxable income - 30%
- the remainder of the taxable income - 40%

Social Security

The amount of social security a candidate pays is a fixed rate of £25.27 per week, rather than in the UK for example which is on a sliding scale. For more information please visit <http://www.gibraltar.gov.gi/>

Accommodation

There are plenty of websites online that list properties for rent and sale in Gibraltar and Spain.

These include;

www.vivaestates.com
www.brayproperties.com
www.bfagib.com
www.idealista.com

What can you expect to pay when it comes to renting properties in Spain or Gibraltar?

In Gibraltar you will be paying;

- £600 for a one bedroom flat
- £750-800 for a two bedroom flat
- £1000 - £1500 for a three bedroom flat

In Spain you will be paying:

- £400-550 for a one bedroom flat
- £550-700 for a two bedroom flat
- £700-1000 for a three bedroom flat