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**Ten reasons to move to the Costa Brava**

**By Christopher Longmore**

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After France, Spain is Europe's most popular holiday destination, and the apparent dominance of France is to a large extent due to visitors in transit elsewhere. In 1996 between 1.2 and 1.3 million European tourists visited Spain. It is therefore not surprising that many of them become interested in buying a home there. Spain's property market generally has enjoyed strong growth, with the Costa Brava enjoying a particularly large rise in values. About 20% of foreign owners are more or less permanent residents of Spain, while the remaining 80% bought their property for either holidays or investment purposes.

The Costa Brava is particularly attractive because Summer heat is less intense than further south, Scenery is spectacular, There are beautiful well-preserved mediaeval towns like Pals and Peratallada everywhere, Catalonia is well run with good roads and railways The A7 motorway is never more than a few minutes drive and connects to the French network Barcelona is easily accessible Golf courses are numerous and of the highest standard all year round In winter, there is good skiing in the nearby Pyrenees There are cheap flights to Girona/Costa Brave airport and to Barcelona and Perpignan. Eating out is inexpensive and a real pleasure The cost of living generally is reasonable.

That is an impressive catalogue of benefits. Add that attractive property is still fairly freely available and competitively priced and you will quickly understand the popularity of the region.

Many different nationalities settle here, but unlike further south they are all intermingled, with no "English" estates or "German" estates. The whole atmosphere is much more cosmopolitan. That does not suit everybody.

Before buying anything, do visit the area in and out of season. Resorts that are a buzz in summer often die completely in the winter. To most Catalonians, the Costa Brava is where they go for their summer holidays; they don't live there, and they don't even visit at week-ends out of season. If you are buying just for summer rentals and/or your own summer holidays, that does not matter, but if you are thinking

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of permanent residence, it is a critical factor. Never assume that you may be able to rent your property in winter. It is most unlikely.

If you are thinking of semi-permanent or even permanent residence, you may be concerned that you will find it hard to make friends here, and therefore be somewhat isolated. This is generally not so. Most residents are retired or semi-retired and it is fairly easy to meet new people, particularly of course if you play golf. Incomers tend to be of a similar age and background, even if from different countries. They too want to make new friends.

This may be an advantage or a disadvantage! You will also suddenly find that you have many friends in England wanting to visit you. Some of them may be friends that you thought of only as acquaintances. It can also be difficult for visitors to understand that you are not there just to entertain them, but have your own life to lead as well.

All in all though, the Costa Brava is a terrific place to holiday or live as long as you have thought through your purchase correctly. Our experience comes as part of the package, and our job is to make sure that you make the right decision for you. This is not the Costa del Sol either in terms of weather or life style, but it is culturally rich, welcoming, and offers a great life to those that respond to what it offers.

This article and more can be found at: [Costa Brava Homes](#)

You can found the original article at

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### **The Costa Brava Insight**

**By Christopher B. Longmore**

Starting at Blanes to the south and ending at Cadaques in the North, the Costa Brava offers purchasers natural beauty, proximity to the great city of Barcelona, historic medieval villages, world-famous restaurants like "El Bulli" at Roses, innumerable excellent sporting opportunities including world famous golf courses and ski-ing in the Pyrenees.

Girona/Costa Brava airport now has four flights a day from London Stansted. There are innumerable flights from almost everywhere in the UK to Barcelona, and local train services are excellent, as is the road network. English is widely spoken, but it is a big asset if you speak a little Spanish. No-one expects you to speak the local language - Catalan.

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Although cooler in winter than the Costa del Sol further south, it is also cooler in summer with daytime temperatures around 30c. Lunch on the terrace is a year round option except perhaps in December and January. The atmosphere is also very different, more sophisticated. Incomers are of many nationalities, usually retired or soon-to-retire professionals. Generally they are well travelled, fairly well-off, and sociable, but there are no foreign "ghettos" as occurs further south, so no English restaurants, pubs and bars. Eating out locally is however an inexpensive, and therefore frequent, pleasure.

This is not a travel guide. Our aim in telling you about the main towns and resorts of the Costa Brava, is to try to give you a feel for what would be the right area for you. When making a buying decision, do make sure that you are clear about what you want. Some parts of the Costa Brava die out of season. That may not matter if you don't plan on being here out of season, but can be soul-destroying otherwise.

You can find all information complementing this article at Costa Brava Homes (  
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The original article is at

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Is highly recommended that you visit

, a page

containing a map of the most important towns and resorts in the Costa Brava.

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