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Tourist Rental Licences in Spain: What You Need to Know

Short-term holiday rentals in Spain are strictly regulated. To legally rent a property, you must obtain a **tourist licence** (Vivienda de Uso Turístico, VUT/VFT), comply with regional rules, and follow community and national regulations.

Failure to do so can result in **finest up to €600,000**, especially with new tightened rules from 2025 so getting it right is critical.

1. What Is a Tourist Licence?

A tourist licence is the official authorisation allowing a property to be rented for **short-term holiday use**.

Key points:

- Regulations are **regional**, not national (e.g., Costa del Sol falls under Andalusia, via Junta de Andalucía).
- Without a licence, renting short-term is **illegal**, even if you own the property.

2. Who Regulates Tourist Rentals?

Two main authorities:

Regional Government (Junta de Andalucía)

- Issues licence number
- Manages tourism registry
- Sets minimum requirements

Town Hall (Ayuntamiento)

- Confirms planning compliance
- Can restrict tourist use by zoning
- Enforces local rules

Important: A regional licence **does not override local planning restrictions**.

3. Which Properties Can Obtain a Licence?

Properties must meet several conditions:

- Legally built
- Suitable for residential use
- Compliant with urban planning
- Access to utilities
- Habitability standards (LPO / Licencia de Primera Ocupación)

Typically eligible:

- Urban apartments with LPO
- Legal new-builds in approved zones

Higher risk properties:

- Rural homes
- AFO properties (without LPO)
- Buildings with community restrictions

Tip: Each case must be assessed individually.

4. Community of Owners & New Restrictions

Since April 2025, **community approval is mandatory** for new licences:

- Minimum 60% majority vote (3/5) required in the owners' association
- Existing licences remain grandfathered
- Restrictions apply **from the approval date forward**

Implication: Even if a property is legal, it may be **unable to operate as a holiday rental** without community consent.

5. Application Process & Timing

Step-by-step:

1. **Check eligibility:** LPO/habitability, urban planning, energy certificate, safety standards (fire alarms, AC, WiFi in some regions), and no moratorium zones.

2. **Get community approval:** Required for new licences post-April 2025.
3. **Gather documents:** Title deed, LPO/habitability, energy certificate (CEE), liability insurance (€300,000+), floor plans, responsibility declaration, guest registration proof.
4. **Apply regionally:** Submit via regional tourism portal (e.g., Andalucía Decree 28/2016); inspection may follow. Processing time: 4–12 weeks.
5. **National registration:** From July 2025, obtain VUD ID/NRA for platforms like Airbnb.

Processing times:

- Compliant properties: as little as 48 hours
 - If issues arise: several weeks
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6. Owner Obligations After Licensing

Once licensed, owners must:

- Display the licence number in all marketing
- Register guests with police
- Maintain habitability and safety standards
- Comply with tax obligations
- Respond to inspections if required

Non-compliance can result in fines or licence withdrawal.

7. Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Assuming ownership automatically grants permission
 - Ignoring community rules
 - Using a licence without planning compliance
 - Relying on old or transferred licences
 - Failing to keep documentation up to date
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8. Regional Variations

Region	Key Requirements
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Andalucía	Responsibility statement, appliances/AC, guest data to police
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Region	Key Requirements
Valencia	Community consent, entire property only, 5-year renewal
Madrid	CIVUT suitability certificate, separate entrance often
Catalonia	PEUAT zones, strict quotas, no new licences in some areas

9. Practical Tips

- Always use a **lawyer or gestor** for applications (€1,000–€20,000, varies by region)
 - Display the licence number visibly and ensure platforms delist unlicensed ads
 - Budget for potential delays and verify compliance with new 2025 rules
 - Existing rentals are grandfathered but check **renewals and ongoing obligations**
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Key Takeaway

A tourist licence is **not automatic**. It sits at the intersection of:

- Planning law
- Regional tourism rules
- Community approval

Success depends on: eligibility, documentation, legal compliance, and community consent.

While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, property details and regulations may change so please confirm any specific information with the relevant authorities.