

A large, modern, multi-story building with white facades and curved balconies is the central focus. The building is situated on a hillside with lush green landscaping, including palm trees and various shrubs. In the foreground, a paved path runs across a grassy area, with two people riding bicycles. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Guide To Buying **OFF
PLAN**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: WHY OFF-PLAN, WHY NOW, WHY US	03
THE OFF-PLAN JOURNEY (FROM RESERVATION TO KEYS)	04
LEGAL PROTECTIONS AND CONTRACTS	05
MONEY, TAXES AND CLOSING COSTS	05
ROLES & COORDINATION	06
ASSIGNMENTS, RENTALS & EXIT	06
EXAMPLE PURCHASE	07
YOUR TRUSTED ADVISOR	08





WRITTEN BY
JAMES EVANS

MANAGING PARTNER
JAMES EVANS

PARTNER
ALINA NOUAIMEH

ADMINISTRATION
HOLLY EVANS

MARKETING
RICHARD TERRANA

WWW.JUSTREALESTATE.ES

INTRODUCTION: WHY OFF-PLAN, WHY NOW, WHY US

Introduction

Buying off-plan on the Costa del Sol is a safe, sensible way to secure a new home or investment at today's price. You reserve a specific property, sign the developer's standard private purchase contract, make small stage payments protected by bank or insurance guarantees, and complete once the licence of first occupancy is granted. Handled properly, the process is calm, predictable and efficient.

Why work with us

We've worked directly with leading developers across Marbella, Benahavís, Estepona, Mijas, Fuengirola and Málaga since 2001. We track every active and upcoming development and have first-hand access to decision-makers and full document packs: floor plans, plan sets, specification lists, payment schedules, delivery windows and any permitted choices or upgrades. We know which developers are trusted and proven, where their product performs, and which units offer the strongest orientations, views and layouts. Our role is to put the right options in front of you early, sense-check pricing and positioning, and keep the paperwork and timings neat from reservation to keys.

How the journey works

You choose a unit that fits your goals—orientation, views, layout, noise profile, parking and storage. A modest reservation holds it while your lawyer confirms title, the building licence and the document set. You then sign the developer's standard private purchase contract, which fixes the price, plans and specification, the timetable of stage payments and the delivery window. Construction moves through clear milestones—structure, enclosure, installations and finishes—and your payments follow the timetable in small, guaranteed stages. As completion approaches, the town hall issues the licence of first occupancy; you sign at the notary, the property is registered in your name, and you receive keys, manuals, warranties and meter readings. A professional snagging inspection captures minor items for the developer to remedy, backed by statutory warranty periods.

How your money is protected

Every euro transferred before completion is covered by an individual bank or insurance guarantee issued in your name. If agreed delivery conditions are not met, those instruments allow prepaid amounts to be reclaimed. Keep each guarantee with its matching payment receipt so the protection is clear and traceable. This system is standard in modern new builds here and is why buying off-plan is financially safe when the steps are followed.

What we handle for you

We identify the right developments and units early, request and organise all documents, coordinate your lawyer and lender, and keep progress simple to follow. You receive timely updates, photos where useful, clear notes on any choices or upgrades and their cut-off dates, and a tidy file that makes completion smooth and keeps the property “exit-ready” for the future. After handover we remain available to help with utilities, furnishing, rentals or resale planning.

Why off-plan makes sense now

Prime plots are limited, modern specifications reduce running costs, and demand for high-quality homes remains strong in the best micro-locations. The most desirable orientations and layouts go early; acting quickly—while keeping safeguards non-negotiable—is the way to secure value without taking on risk.

THE OFF-PLAN JOURNEY (FROM RESERVATION TO KEYS)

The process begins by identifying a specific home whose orientation, views and internal layout align with long-term desirability. Scarcity drives value on the Costa del Sol, so selection focuses on positions that will remain compelling a decade from now. Accurate floor plans, specification lists and delivery programmes frame the choice, distinguishing truly comparable units from those that are merely adjacent on a site plan.

For mainstream launches, reservations are typically €6,000–€10,000; at the high end, developers may set the reservation around 1% of the price. The window between reservation and contract is brisk—usually about thirty days—so documents are gathered and verified immediately. The goal is simple: secure the right unit fast, while keeping safeguards non-negotiable.

The private purchase contract that follows is the developer’s standard instrument. It fixes the price, embeds approved plans and specifications, defines a timetable of stage payments and frames the delivery window. Every euro transferred before completion is protected by an individual bank or insurance guarantee issued in the buyer’s name, so payments track construction with a clear, auditable trail of guarantees and receipts.

Construction proceeds through recognisable phases—structure, enclosure, installations and finishes—evidenced by progress reports and certifications. Specification choices, when permitted, are handled before cut-off dates and treated as capital decisions: upgrades that improve comfort, efficiency or durability tend to preserve value; purely decorative changes seldom shift rental or resale outcomes.

As delivery nears, the town hall gets ready to issue the licence of first occupancy, it normally takes 3 months from completion but this enables utility contracts and mortgage drawdown. Completion at the notary formalises title, registers ownership and hands over the operating pack—keys, manuals, warranties and meter readings—so the property is functional from day one.

Snagging follows as a normal, finite phase. A professional inspection produces a room-by-room list of minor items for remedy within agreed windows, supported by Spain’s layered warranty periods for finishes, installations and structure. With documentation kept orderly throughout, the asset remains “exit-ready” for refinancing or resale whenever strategy requires.

LEGAL PROTECTIONS AND CONTRACTS

The legal framework is straightforward and protective when followed in sequence. It begins with a brief reservation to hold a defined unit, followed by the developer's standard private purchase contract. The contract fixes price, embeds the approved plans and specification, sets the timetable of stage payments, and defines an expected delivery window. Crucially, each euro paid prior to completion is covered by an individual bank or insurance guarantee issued in the buyer's name, so funds remain recoverable if contractual delivery conditions are not met.

Pre-contract checks focus on fundamentals rather than negotiation theatre: clean title and charges confirmed via a recent *nota simple*, an issued building licence aligned to the technical project, identification of the guarantee provider, and a payment schedule that corresponds to verifiable construction milestones. With these elements in place, the risk profile is low and the process becomes largely administrative.

Guarantees operate as the backbone of financial security. Each stage payment is matched to its own guarantee; the pair—payment receipt and guarantee—forms a clear audit trail through the build. If a timetable moves, the practical step is to document the cause, obtain a revised programme and ensure validity of any existing guarantees for funds already transferred. Where a development permits assignment of the contract before completion, the applicable rules and fees are defined in advance so timing decisions can be made with precision.

Documentation is kept coherent from the outset: reservation, contract, plan set and specification list (*memoria de calidades*), payment schedule, guarantees with matching receipts, the licence of first occupancy and, at completion, the deed and handover pack. With the core protections embedded—licence verified, milestones evidenced, guarantees active—the contractual path is clear, predictable and designed to protect capital throughout.



Money, taxes and closing costs

New-build homes in Andalucía incur VAT (IVA) at 10% of the purchase price, plus Stamp Duty (AJD) typically around 1.2% in this region. You'll also budget for notary and registry fees, legal fees, and—if you finance—the lender's valuation and arrangement costs at completion. Commercial units, stand-alone garages and plots may attract different VAT rates; we confirm the exact schedule once the unit is chosen.

Cash flow mirrors the build. After the modest reservation, stage payments follow the contract timetable, each one protected by its own guarantee, with the final balance due at the notary on handover. Because lenders in Spain typically assess borrowers and fund at completion, it is sensible to secure an approval-in-principle early, refresh documents nearer the handover month, and plan foreign-exchange transfers in steps if income or savings are in another currency.

Rule-of-thumb buyer cost items on a new build in Andalucía:

- VAT (IVA) on the price: 10%.
- Stamp Duty (AJD) on the deed: approximately 1.2%.
- Notary and land registry: usually a few tenths of a percent combined.
- Legal and mortgage costs: dependent on lender and complexity.



Roles and coordination

A capable independent lawyer verifies title, licences, the contract pack and the guarantees, attends the notary (or acts via power of attorney), registers the deed and manages taxes and fees. The developer and builder deliver per the approved project, provide progress updates and the handover pack, and address snagging within agreed windows. The bank or insurer issues guarantee instruments against each stage payment; where a mortgage is used, the lender funds at completion once the occupancy licence is granted. Our role is to curate suitable developments, place accurate documents in your hands quickly, secure the right unit early, and keep the process tidy and time-aware from first reservation to keys.

Due diligence on developers

Track record matters more than brochure gloss. Look for delivered schemes in the last cycle, delivery timing versus promise, and a consistent culture of documentation—clean payment schedules tied to certifiable milestones, prompt issuance of guarantees, and transparent communications

around programme changes. These are quiet signals of professional execution and a better predictor of experience than any marketing superlative.

Assignments, rentals and exit

Very few developments allow assignment of the contract before completion, often with rules or fees. If assignment optionality is important, it should be confirmed early and reflected in your timing. For owners who intend to let, holiday-let and long-let frameworks differ by municipality and by community by-laws; planning this pathway ahead of handover keeps the first season orderly. Keeping a clean file, plans, guarantees, receipts, licence, deed and manuals together, also leaves the asset “exit-ready” should you decide to refinance or sell later.

Why work with JUST

We map the entire Costa del Sol development pipeline and maintain direct lines to the decision-makers behind each scheme. That gives you early access to unit releases, first-hand floor plans and specification packs, and clarity on payment terms and delivery windows. We know the trusted and proven developers and the micro-locations where their product performs. Our job is to help you secure the right home quickly, keep protections active at each transfer, and carry the file cleanly to keys—so you benefit from today’s pricing without taking on unnecessary risk.



EXAMPLE PURCHASE

- Reservation to hold unit: €6,000–€10,000 (or ~1% on higher-end launches).
- Private purchase contract (\approx day 30–40): total paid reaches 40% (reservation credited).
- Mid-build milestone: a further 20% tied to a verifiable stage (e.g., structure or enclosure).
- Completion with occupancy licence: 40% balance at the notary; deed signed, keys and handover pack delivered.
- Guarantees: all pre-completion payments carry individual bank/insurance guarantees in the buyer's name.

Variants exist (e.g., PPC to 20% \rightarrow one or two smaller milestones \rightarrow 60% at completion), but the 40% / 20% / 40% rhythm is common on prime launches.



- Tax and cost summary (new build in Andalucía)
- VAT (IVA) 10% is paid with each stage payment (reservation/PPC/milestones/completion) in proportion to the amount invoiced.
- Stamp Duty (AJD) ~1.2% is paid at completion on the declared purchase price.
- Notary and Land Registry are paid at completion (typically ~0.5–1.0% combined, size-dependent).
- Legal and any mortgage costs are case-by-case.
- Worked example (purely illustrative)
- For a €500,000 new build using 40% / 20% / 40%:
 - Reservation: €10,000 + €1,000 IVA.
 - PPC to 40% (less reservation): €190,000 + €19,000 IVA.
 - Mid-build 20%: €100,000 + €10,000 IVA.
 - Completion 40%: €200,000 + €20,000 IVA
 - AJD ~1.2% = €6,000
 - Notary/Registry (approx.) and any legal/mortgage fees.
- All figures are examples; exact scheduling and percentages are defined by the developer's terms.

YOUR TRUSTED ADVISORY PARTNER

Why sellers choose us—not just to list their home, but to sell it well

At JUST Real Estate, we don't measure success by how many properties we list. We measure it by how smoothly we guide our clients through the sales process—and how much value we help them realise.

In a crowded market filled with agents promising the same thing, we stand apart by offering something sellers really need: advisory expertise, global reach, transparency, and results.

👉 Advisory Role: From Start to Signature

When you work with JUST Real Estate, you get more than a listing agent. You get a strategic partner who:

- Assesses your property properly based on real market data
- Advises on pricing strategy, staging, and preparation
- Coordinates your legal and documentation process
- Designs and executes a bespoke marketing plan
- Handles all buyer contact, feedback, and follow-up
- Negotiates with professionalism and authority
- Follows through—until the final signature at the notary, and beyond

Whether you're selling a modern villa, a beachfront apartment, or a development plot, our team knows how to position your property to attract the right buyer—and guide the deal safely to completion.

VISIT US ONLINE



- Catch the freshest features
- Updated daily
- Read anytime, anywhere

WWW.JUSTREALESTATE.ES



🌍 Local Knowledge, Global Reach

JUST Real Estate is based in the heart of Marbella, but our reach is international.

We work with:

- Buyers and investors from the UK, Scandinavia, Belgium, the Middle East, and beyond
- A curated network of collaborating agents, vetted for professionalism and client quality
- International portals, advisors, and relocation networks

Our team speaks multiple languages, understands cultural nuances, and is trained to manage complex, cross-border transactions with ease.

TESTIMONIAL

“JUST has been a great support and advisor to us on our property purchase and sale in Marbella. They were very engaged and approachable, offered advice beyond just managing the purchase transaction, and helped with work that needed to be done after the purchase. A very friendly and straight forward company to deal with.”

Sir Noel Quinn,
Former Global CEO, HSBC

Contact Enquiries

For all property enquiries
please contact

Alina Nouaimh

+34 600 689 749

alina@justrealestate.es

Research Enquiries

For all research enquiries
please contact

James Evans

+34 643 390 376

james@justrealestate.es



This report has been prepared for informational purposes only and does not constitute financial, legal, or investment advice. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, JUST Real Estate makes no guarantees or warranties, expressed or implied, about the completeness, reliability, or suitability of the data, analysis, or opinions contained herein. Market conditions are subject to change, and past performance is not indicative of future results. Readers are encouraged to conduct their own research and consult with qualified professionals before making any financial or real estate investment decisions. JUST Real Estate accepts no liability for any loss or damage resulting from reliance on the information in this report. Any reproduction, distribution, or unauthorised use of this material is strictly prohibited without prior written consent.