

Tavira Property Brokers

**Free Buying Guide
Everything You Need
to Know**

REVEALED

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Introduction

Buying property abroad can be a daunting task for some. In reality it is no more complicated than buying property in your home country.

If you follow some simple rules and use common sense you will find things move swiftly and smoothly letting you enjoy your purchase under the gorgeous skies of the Algarve.

Getting Started

You will probably begin your search on the internet. There are many reputable property sellers in Portugal, but as is the case everywhere, a few rogues too. In order to protect yourself check that the agents you have decided to view property with have an AMI number. This is a legal requirement for all estate agents. Also check that it is up to date. If you are using a broker, they will have ensured that every agent they use is acting in accordance with these legal requirements.

Heading for Portugal

So, now that you are sure that everything is in place and all legal requirements are met, you can arrange your flights, accommodation and make appointments with the relevant agents.

Organising appointments can be time consuming and many people feel anxious about the agents being pushy and are also worried about language issues. One advantage of a broker, and it is crucial in this respect that they have a local presence, is that they can help in making appointments, advising where best to stay and accompany you on visits. This may help you feel more secure and relaxed. You will know that you are going to be given impartial advice and can be safe in the knowledge you have someone on your side!

You have made your choice and make an offer

Now let's say you have found the perfect property and you are ready to buy What happens now? As in any property purchase you make an offer. Once the buyer & seller agree on a price the next step is to get the property taken off the market! This is done with a reservation contract which is refundable. Usually you would be asked to pay up to around €5000.00 (this will vary with agents, vendors and type of property). You will need to provide a copy of your passport and give all relevant personal details. The money is then given to the agent or solicitor as a deposit.

Funding your Purchase

You may need to arrange finance in which case you will have to speak to your financial advisor at home or in Portugal. The financial advisor will have access to a large number of mortgage products. Alternatively, you could approach a bank in Portugal. You need to consider that banks will only offer you their own products. The amounts banks and financial Institutions in Portugal will lend is around 70% - 80% of the purchase price and is based on their valuation.

Solicitor

You will also need, if you have not already done so, to find a solicitor. It is recommended very strongly that you find one that speaks your native tongue so communication is as easy as possible.

The solicitor will perform all the necessary searches and check whether the property has any debts or charges against it. Solicitor charges vary, but generally are 1% - 1.5% of the purchase price. The solicitor will also help in arranging your Fiscal Number which is a legal requirement for purchasing in Portugal. Obtaining the number will cost an additional €250.00 per couple approximately.

The solicitor can be given a power of attorney to act on your behalf right up to and including signing of the deeds. Of course, if you can prefer, you can do this yourself. Most solicitors in Portugal have an excellent after sales service and can ensure electricity, gas and water bills are changed into your name, with direct debits set up, to make the procedure as simple as possible.

Promissory Contract

After 'reserving' your Algarve property the normal next step is the a promissory contract. This is a document between you and the vendor where you both write down the conditions of your agreement - things such as price, payment conditions, time to completion, and other specifications. Before signing the promissory contract you should see the registration of the property to ensure that it belongs to the vendor and there is no current mortgage on it, or any charges or obligations.

Property Transfer Tax

Following agreement of the promissory contract you will need to pay your IMT - Imposto Municipal sobre Transmissões de imóveis - which is a property transfer tax payable only once when you are buying a property in the Algarve.

The IMT tax must be paid before any transfer of ownership of a property located in the Algarve can happen.

Normally the property transfer tax is paid before the final deed changes hands, but sometimes it has to be paid with the promissory contract, usually if you take possession of the property with the promissory, or if the promissory contract includes a clause allowing the buyer to transfer their position on the contract to a third party.

If you have a solicitor, he or she will arrange for your property transfer tax to be paid.

Deeds and Possession

After paying the property transfer tax (IMT) you may take possession of the deed for your Algarve property.

The deed is a document prepared at the notary that transfers the ownership of the property to the buyer. At this stage the property should be clean and free of any charges because you are going to buy the property as specified in the deed.

Lastly, you will need to register your purchase of a property in the Algarve, something which takes place at the property registration department and finance department.

Top 10 Tips on Finding your Perfect Property

1. Make sure that you consider other areas rather than just Tavira itself. Because the area is not as yet that well known there are often great properties and bargains to be found in the neighbouring villages such as Cabanas, Vila Real de Cancela and Santa Luzia. These properties may be hard to find but could be well worth a look.
2. Do consider a property that might require a little bit of work or updating. It used to be the case that English speaking and reliable tradesmen were hard to find in Tavira. This made undertaking any renovation or refurbishment work a much harder task than it is today. Nowadays there are a number of top class English speaking builders and contractors of all types who can carry out work efficiently and to a high standard. The other good thing is that prices for this sort of work remain reasonable.
3. Do watch out for a well known estate agents trick. In Portugal there is generally no sole agency. What you may find is that different estate agents will have the same properties on their books but simply call it by a different name to someone else and then charge a different price. Different estate agents can charge different levels of commission and you will find the odd one who will try and charge considerably more. This could result in your paying thousands of extra Euros for your property.
4. Do consider using a Property Broker to combat this type of thing. Property Brokers such as Tavira Property Brokers work on behalf of the buyer not the seller. Their service is completely free to buyers and they can access the whole of the property market. They can find you your perfect property and, more importantly, make sure that you buy it at the best possible price.
5. If you do use a Broker use them to carry out the research on your behalf. A lot of properties are advertised on the internet but there will always be some that are a little harder to locate. A Broker with a local presence and local contacts can sometimes unearth the best bargains.
6. Do not visit Tavira to carry out property hunting during the month of August. You will find that it is just too hot for doing much more than relaxing on the beach or by the pool. Also, a lot of estate agents take their holidays at this time and it could be that a property viewing trip will turn out to be a frustrating experience with many offices closed.

7. Do try to learn a few words of Portuguese before you go. Whilst a lot of the locals will speak a few words of English they really do appreciate it when visitors at least have a go at speaking some Portuguese. Even a simple Ola is well received.

8. Make sure that at the start of your property search in Tavira you find yourself a reputable English speaking lawyer. Again, this will be something that your Property Broker can help with. It is always the case that you should use an independent lawyer and not one who acts on behalf of the estate agents selling the property you are interested in.

9. Remember you will need an NIF number to buy a property in Tavira or anywhere else in Portugal. This is an identity number for foreigners buying property in Portugal and is a legal requirement. Your Property Broker or your lawyer will be able to help you obtain and complete the necessary paperwork.

10. Finally, please do remember to relax and enjoy your property search in Tavira. The buying process is not too complicated particularly if you remember the tips in this article. I am sure you will find your perfect property in Tavira and, who knows, one day, we could be sat together sipping a nice cold beer whilst looking out at the Mediterranean sea.

Buying Land to Build on

At Tavira Property Brokers we are finding that more and more clients are coming to us asking if we can locate for them a plot of land rather than an already built house.

It seems to us that there are several reasons for this. Of course the main one being that you have complete freedom (subject to planning permission) to design the exact house of their dreams. There are no developers' constraints and you are free to have the rooms in the colours, sizes and designs you choose.

There are now number of reputable architects and builders in the Eastern Algarve who can turn a project like this into reality.

Another move is towards self-build. As in the UK we are seeing more and more talented DIYers taking on the task of building their own home. There is a huge amount of satisfaction to be gained in knowing that the home you live in was built by your own hands. One thing to bear in mind though is that to do this you would have to register yourself with the local authorities as a builder. Additionally, as in the UK, electrics and plumbing must be checked by a qualified person.

If you are interested in plots of land there are (as always in Portugal) a few points to bear in mind. Make sure that, if the plot does not already have planning permission, it will be possible to obtain

this. As in the UK, planning here is a minefield. We can only recommend that you take professional advice.

Building work can take time in Portugal. Be prepared for everything to take just a little bit longer than you thought it would. Suppliers will be late, builders will disappear for a couple of days, materials will be wrongly ordered. Sorry but that is the way it is!! Take a deep breath, relax and be safe in the knowledge that it will all be finished.

Of course if you do go down the "build your own route" a lot of these problems will be avoided.

If you are interested in a land only purchase please do not hesitate to get in touch. With our local knowledge we just might be able to find you the perfect plot.

Property Pricing - Something to be aware of:

The fascinating backdrop of the fish and vegetable market in Tavira makes for some interesting photographs. The fresh fish is intoxicating the second you walk in but for some property purchasers in Tavira it is not just the local market that can smell a bit fishy.

There are a number of unscrupulous property companies or individuals setting up along the Algarve and calling themselves "Advertisers". These people are not registered estate agents in Portugal and are not legally allowed to sell properties.

The most worrying thing about these companies is that they seem to charge a different price to that offered by the actual local agents. In some cases they are adding thousands of euros to the cost of a home as their commission.

The other issue with this sort of unregulated company is that, if you go to them for advice on the purchase procedure in Portugal, you have no way of knowing that what they say is going to be correct. With no regulation and perhaps no experience at all you really could regret ever coming across this sort of organisation.

So how do you avoid these cowboys? First of all you could register with a number of estate agents. These are all regulated. The problem with this of course is that it is time consuming. Additionally do not forget that the estate agent is always acting on behalf of the vendor. The vendor is their client.

The other solution is to consider a genuine property broking service. Property brokers are not the same as the advertisers mentioned above. Property brokers work exclusively for the buyer. Their job is to get the best possible deal for the purchaser and carry out a lot of the leg work in finding a property. A genuine property broker will not charge the buyer commission and will in fact be trying to reduce the price that will be paid. The broker is paid by the actual selling agent, in other words a share of the money that is already in the sale price and which you as a purchaser will be paying anyway.

It really does make sense to consider using a broker. It will not cost you a penny more than you would have paid anyway and, instead of all the money going to the selling agent, it is funding someone to look after your interests as a buyer.

Another great advantage of a property broker is that they will have access to most, if not all, of the market. This means that they have no vested interest in pushing any particular property, unlike an estate agent. If the potential buyer does not like what one agent is offering the broker simply goes to the next. For the purchaser it means one point of contact instead of registering with numerous agents.

There are a number of reputable brokers in the Algarve and the good ones generally cover quite specific areas. It is difficult for a broker to genuinely have the local knowledge required by clients if they try and cover too large an area.

Summer in Tavira

Over the course of three months “Summer in Tavira” offers both locals and visitors the opportunity to experience diverse Portuguese and international cultural first hand at a number of venues throughout the city.

It’s not just about partying either. “Summer in Tavira” takes a look at contemporary culture in many different forms of expression, including animation, theatre, gastronomy and travel.

The idea of the festival, which for centuries did the rounds of the farming communities at the end of each agricultural cycle, keeps at its heart the history and traditions of the town. This gives it a connection with the past but offers the vitality of the present.

The culture embraces current society and therefore makes it relevant to a modern town with a long and colourful history that now offers a wonderful balance of art, knowledge, leisure, history and pleasure.

Folklore, Fado and band music are performed in Tavira alongside street theatre, contemporary visual arts, book fairs, European and documentary cinema.

There will be bands and artists throughout July and August in the amphitheatre

12 things you didn’t know about Tavira

Tavira is an undiscovered gem on the Eastern Algarve. Read on to find out more about it.

1. Tavira is steeped in history and the town actually dates back to around 1.000 BC. During the Moorish occupation the fishing industry of this town was of huge importance and this industry remains a staple of Tavira today.
2. It is believed that the original name for Tavira was Baal Saphon.
3. Tavira has a defunct tuna canning industry. The high brick chimneys from the factory are protected and storks now use them as their nesting sites.

4. Tavira is only 30 minutes drive away from Faro international airport. Faro is served by a number of international airlines including budget carriers. This makes it an easy long weekend destination from all parts of the UK.
5. Unlike in Spain, Tavira restaurants are open for business from around 7pm in the evenings. This means that if you want to have a meal in a busy restaurant packed with locals as well as tourists you do not have to wait until after 10pm.
6. Tavira has a castle which dates back to the 13th century and 37 (yes, 37) churches.
7. Tavira has miles of beautiful beaches which are on an island situated in the Rio Formosa. There are regular and easy boat transfers to the beaches which are well serviced by small bars and restaurants.
8. In 1755 a massive earthquake with an epicentre some 200km south west of Cape St Vincent hit the Algarve. Much of Tavira was destroyed by the quake which is estimated to have been as high as 9 on the Richter scale. This earthquake is sometimes known as the Lisbon quake because of the extent of damage caused to the capital city.
9. The so called "Roman" bridge which links the town's two halves (separated by the Rio Gilao) is actually of Moorish origin.
10. The Moors controlled Tavira until 1242 when Dom Paio Peres Correia fought a bloody battle to win back the town. This happened after 7 of his knights were killed during a so called truce. The battle had a terrible effect on the population of the town with many people dying in the fighting.
11. Tavira has a camera obscura. This unusual camera provides visitors with a fascinating circular view of the town.
12. Tavira has a growing property market but development is low rise and well controlled by local planning. Property remains good value with everything available from stunning detached villas to spacious apartments in the heart of the town.

Tavira General Information

Tavira is a fascinating mix of the old and the new. There is beautiful and huge beach on the Ilha de Tavira just across the Rio Formosa, easily reached by ferryboat. On the island you will find a variety of bars and restaurants set back from the beach, where you can enjoy a seafood lunch at bargain prices before heading back to the sun lounger.

The old town itself lies either side of the River Gilao with the famous "Roman" bridge linking the 2 parts. The traditional narrow streets are interspersed with weathered cobbled squares with small shop, bars and restaurants surrounding them.

Be like the Portuguese and enjoy a coffee (or something stronger) in the cool of the morning whilst watching the town burst into life.

For the historian there are a number of old buildings including the church of Santa Maria do Castelo dating back to the thirteen century.

Property in Tavira ranges from modern villas and apartments to traditional village townhouses. Here at Tavira Property Brokers we will do everything we can to help you find your perfect property in Tavira.

Neighbouring areas

Cabanas is a traditional fishing village alongside the Rio Formosa. In recent times there has been a gentle expansion into tourism with a number of low rise shops and bars coming to the village. However, the area remains tranquil and the town has a lovely relaxed feel.

Whilst there is not a huge amount of property in Cabanas, at Tavira Property Brokers we do sometimes find some wonderful homes here.

We also always search on behalf of our clients for property in Pedra del Rey, again a small village that is starting to see some lovely homes appearing.

In **Pedra del Rey** stands an olive tree that is believed to date from the 17th century. It is probably one of the oldest in Portugal.

Santa Luzia is another interesting village very close to Tavira. It is again a traditional fishing community and there are a number of excellent Portuguese seafood restaurants here. It is known locally as the "Capital do Polvo" or Octopus Capital !!

We are starting to see more property in Santa Luzia but it remains a peaceful area.

Vila Nova de Cacela is a slightly larger town than the villages above between Tavira and the Spanish border.

The town is close (2km) to some wonderful beaches lined with a few decent bars and restaurants. Property in Vila Nova de Cacela consists of a good range of beautiful villas and apartments.

Vila Nova de Cacela is a perfect area to live in or own a holiday home. Tavira Property Brokers can use its network of agents to help you find the perfect property in Vila Nova de Cacela.

Altura is a small town popular with tourists and people looking for a holiday home. One of the reasons for its popularity is that, apart from its white sandy beach and quality restaurants, it is close to no less than 5 gold courses. At Tavira Property Brokers we help our clients find the perfect property in Altura whether it be near the beach or new golf course developments.

Tavira – Final thoughts on the undiscovered gem of the Eastern Algarve

When people ask me about Tavira I can honestly say that I sometimes don't really know what to say.

Do I tell them about the stunning miles of empty beaches, the fact that the town has its own island just off shore, the memorable seafood meals I have had there, the seemingly endless rounds of festivals when the whole town parties, the unbelievably low price of a beer or a coffee.....

Or do I just say "Oh it's alright there I suppose, I am not sure you would like it though."

Why the dilemma?

On the one hand I have a business that involves recommending Tavira to people looking to buy a property in Portugal or more specifically a property in Tavira. On the other hand I don't want my beautiful town and area being over run by mass development.

Fortunately the local authorities have got it just right. There is no doubt that the town of Tavira and also the villages around are expanding. But the new building is sympathetic to the environment and surroundings. You will not find huge ugly tower blocks here.

No, the new property in Tavira is either low rise apartments, usually set in beautiful gardens with a generously sized communal pool, or detached villas with their own grounds and private pool.

Occasionally, a traditional town house near the centre of town comes on the market and these are usually snapped up very quickly.

People love the fact that the older properties in the narrow cobblestone streets are naturally cool in the summer yet warm in the winter. The proximity to the bars and restaurants of town is another added bonus.

The restaurant and bar scene in Tavira is lively and great fun. The locals love to party but all, young and old alike seem to enjoy themselves by having noisy conversations with their friends and family. It's rare to see a local in a drunken state and you certainly do not get any of the mindless chanting so common in the UK on a weekend night.

Restaurants are open late and are always happy to provide either a snack or a full 3 course meal. The local seafood is fantastic and you will not believe the prices.

The other great thing about Tavira is its proximity from the UK; just 2 hours by plane into Faro from Gatwick and then a half hour or less drive. If everything goes to plan and you are brave with your timing to get to the airport in the UK it's possible to do it in just a fraction over 4 hours from London. Don't cut it too fine though and miss your plane, (as I have done).

Tavira is certainly a jewel in the crown of the Algarve, but it is not a gaudy, flashy diamond, but, rather, it is a quiet and beautiful, understated sapphire.

Please come and have a look at the great property in Tavira.....but, just not all of you.