

The Spanish Police

The police forces in Spain are very different from the UK.

There are 3 forces which do very different things.

Local Police.

These are based in most large villages and towns, and are responsible for duties similar to the UK's traffic wardens. They issue parking fines, marshal parades and events, and collect fines and issue summonses. They are allowed to be armed, but they have to buy their own guns, and are only paid for the bullets they shoot in the line of duty.

Guardia Civil.

Based in almost every town over 10,000 people, these are a para military police force. They are all professionals who serve 25 years, living much as a soldier does. They are armed, with everything from a pistol to tanks. They run the traffico who look after the roads, and are responsible for investigating crimes through to anti-terrorist work.

If you have a crime to report these will be your normal first point of contact, but they have very restricted opening hours, and are closed for siesta and most weekends.

National Police.

Based mainly in the cities, they cover many tasks including immigration and crime investigation.