



## CATCHING THE LIGHT - EXPLORE SPAIN'S BEST PROPERTY HOTSPOTS

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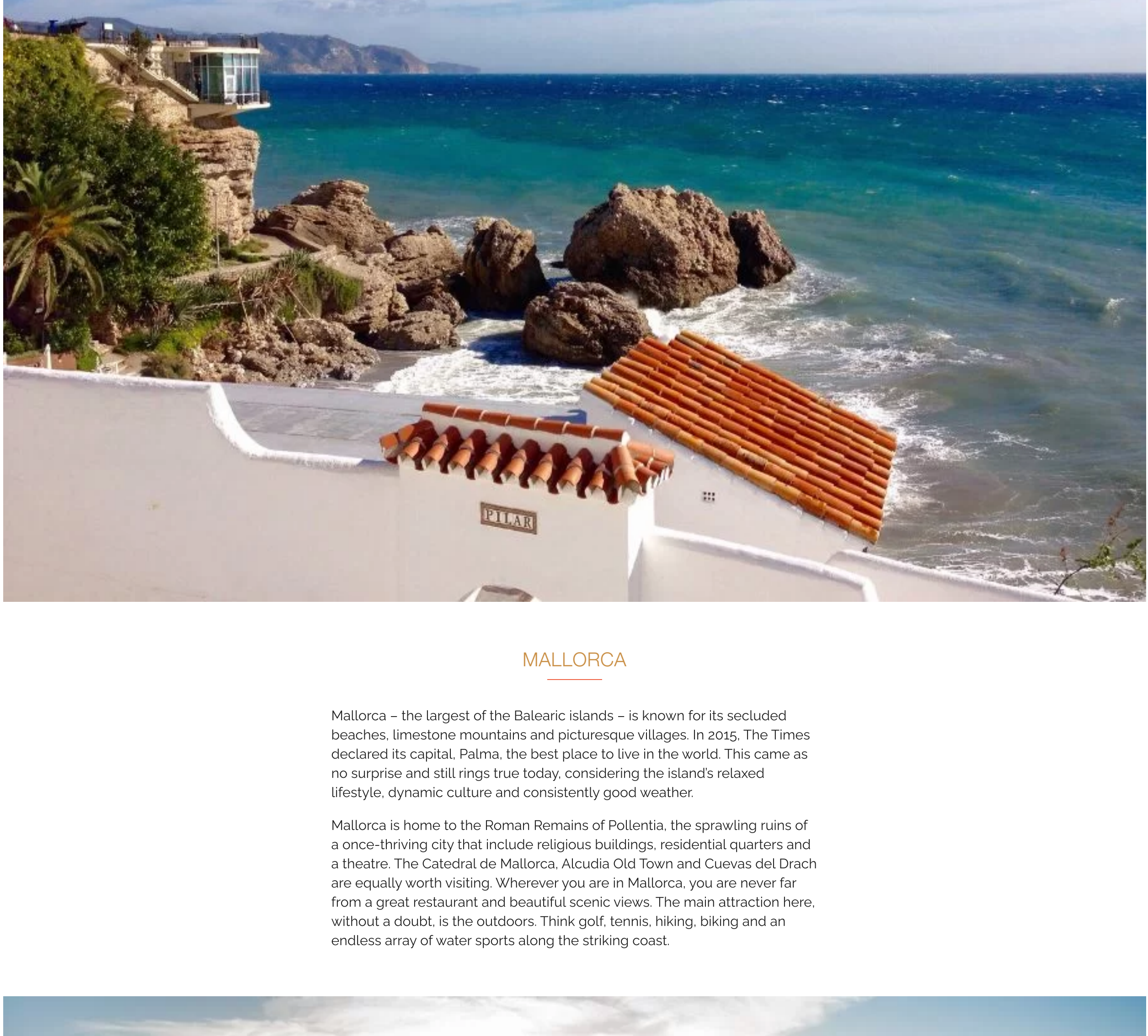
### BECOME A KEYHOLDER OF REAL ESTATE IN SPAIN OR ON ITS BALEARIC ISLANDS – THE MEDITERRANEAN DESTINATION OFFERS AN EXTENSIVE LIFESTYLE DIVERSITY.

The horizon is dissected by mountains and skyscrapers along the Iberian peninsula, where the climate is that of the Mediterranean, the coast is endless, and modernity is creeping into a landscape defined by tradition. Spain is a firm favourite among holidaymakers thanks to its pleasant climate and diversity of landscapes, but have you ever thought of moving there?

Tied with Italy and following Portugal, Spain was rated as the second-best country in Europe for retirement by *Moving to Spain*. The report was based on cost of living, healthcare, population and home prices.

The nation's residential property market remains robust, demand is steady – particularly among foreigners – and the majority of properties are sold freehold. If done correctly, this can be a good opportunity for securing a long-term investment.

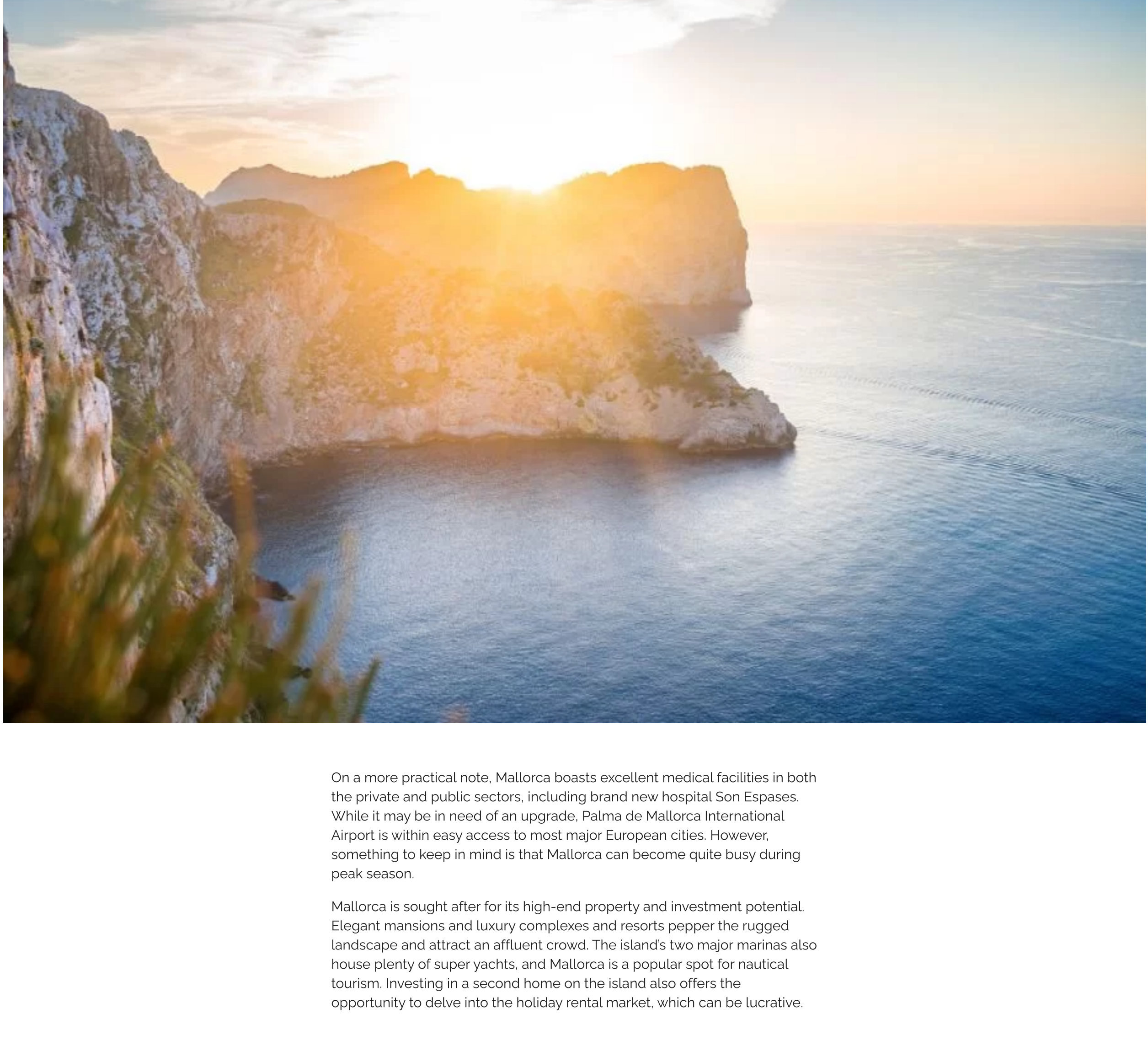
With 17 autonomous regions – or *comunidades autónomas* – divided into 50 provinces, there is a wide choice. For a vibrant city with no shortage of things to do, Madrid is your best bet, but for golf lovers, the greens of Costa del Sol might be more alluring. Or perhaps you're keen to discover the idyllic beaches of the Balearic Islands. There are plenty of spots to choose from, but here are four of our favourites.



#### MALLORCA

Mallorca – the largest of the Balearic islands – is known for its secluded beaches, limestone mountains and picturesque villages. In 2015, The Times declared its capital, Palma, the best place to live in the world. This came as no surprise and still rings true today, considering the island's relaxed lifestyle, dynamic culture and consistently good weather.

Mallorca is home to the Roman Remains of Pollentia, the sprawling ruins of a once-thriving city that include religious buildings, residential quarters and a theatre. The Catedral de Mallorca, Alcudia Old Town and Cuevas del Drach are equally worth visiting. Wherever you are in Mallorca, you are never far from a great restaurant and beautiful scenic views. The main attraction here, without a doubt, is the outdoors. Think golf, tennis, hiking, biking and an endless array of water sports along the striking coast.



On a more practical note, Mallorca boasts excellent medical facilities in both the private and public sectors, including brand new hospital Son Espases. While it may be in need of an upgrade, Palma de Mallorca International Airport is within easy access to most major European cities. However, something to keep in mind is that Mallorca can become quite busy during peak season.

Mallorca is sought after for its high-end property and investment potential. Elegant mansions and luxury complexes and resorts pepper the rugged landscape and attract an affluent crowd. The island's two major marinas also house plenty of super yachts, and Mallorca is a popular spot for nautical tourism. Investing in a second home on the island also offers the opportunity to delve into the holiday rental market, which can be lucrative.

#### IBIZA

Ibiza sits to the southwest of Mallorca and is equally part of the Balearic archipelago. Although perhaps better known for its lively nightlife, visitors to the island can also discover sleepy towns, quiet beaches and a relaxed pace of life in this pine-clad paradise.

The island boasts a spectacular natural landscape that has earned it four spots on the UNESCO World Heritage list: the acropolis of Dalt Vila, the underwater Posidonia seagrass meadows, the Punic Necropolis of Puig des Molins and the Phoenician archaeological site in Sa Caleta. Much like Mallorca, Ibiza is a thriving hub of outdoor activity, sailing, diving, biking, and hiking should be high on your list. The island has a host of fantastic dining options – including a handful of Michelin-starred eateries – that offer the best of Mediterranean and international cuisine.



Ibiza provides an excellent standard of living. The climate is comfortable year-round and warms up nicely during the long summers – luckily, the sea offers a refreshing refuge from the heat. The public healthcare system is efficient, and private hospitals provide excellent medical facilities, too. Ibiza Airport is relatively small but has a very appealing VIP lounge; it is well-served by major European cities and airports on the Spanish mainland. However, take into account that Ibiza has quite a young demographic and can get crowded in summer and a little isolated in the off-season.

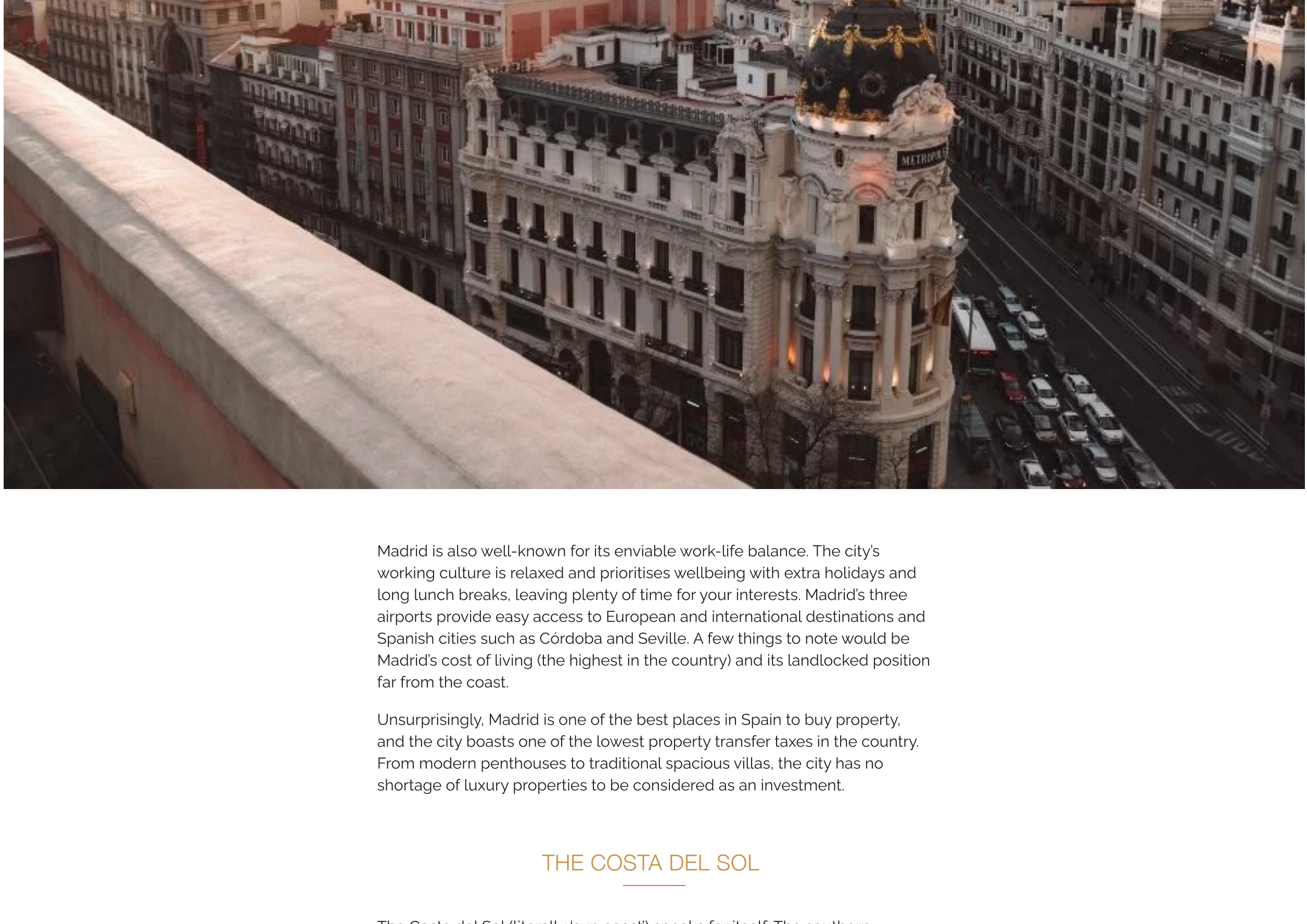
The real estate market in Ibiza is prosperous and poses an excellent investment opportunity; it is currently the most resilient property market of the Balearic islands. Due to the recent rise in new residents (many of whom are international buyers), house prices are steadily increasing, and demand is growing. The island has expensive and luxurious properties that promise to become more valuable with time.

#### MADRID

Madrid – Spain's capital and largest city – hosts one of the largest expat communities in the country; just under 30% of the population is international.

This vibrant metropolis is equally sought after by locals and professionals thanks to its plethora of cultural activities, work opportunities and lively social scene.

The Spanish capital combines metropolitan elegance with a diverse history. Home to more than 40% of the country's international businesses, Madrid is Spain's most influential economic hub. Here, modern landmarks, including highrises Torres de Colón and Torre Cepsa, contrast with ancient sites such as the Egyptian Temple of Debod. As with any major city, there is no shortage of fine dining options and shopping streets to while away your weekends. Football, basketball, cycling, padel and tennis are popular pastimes, and the Centro Nacional de Golf allows for a round not far from the centre.



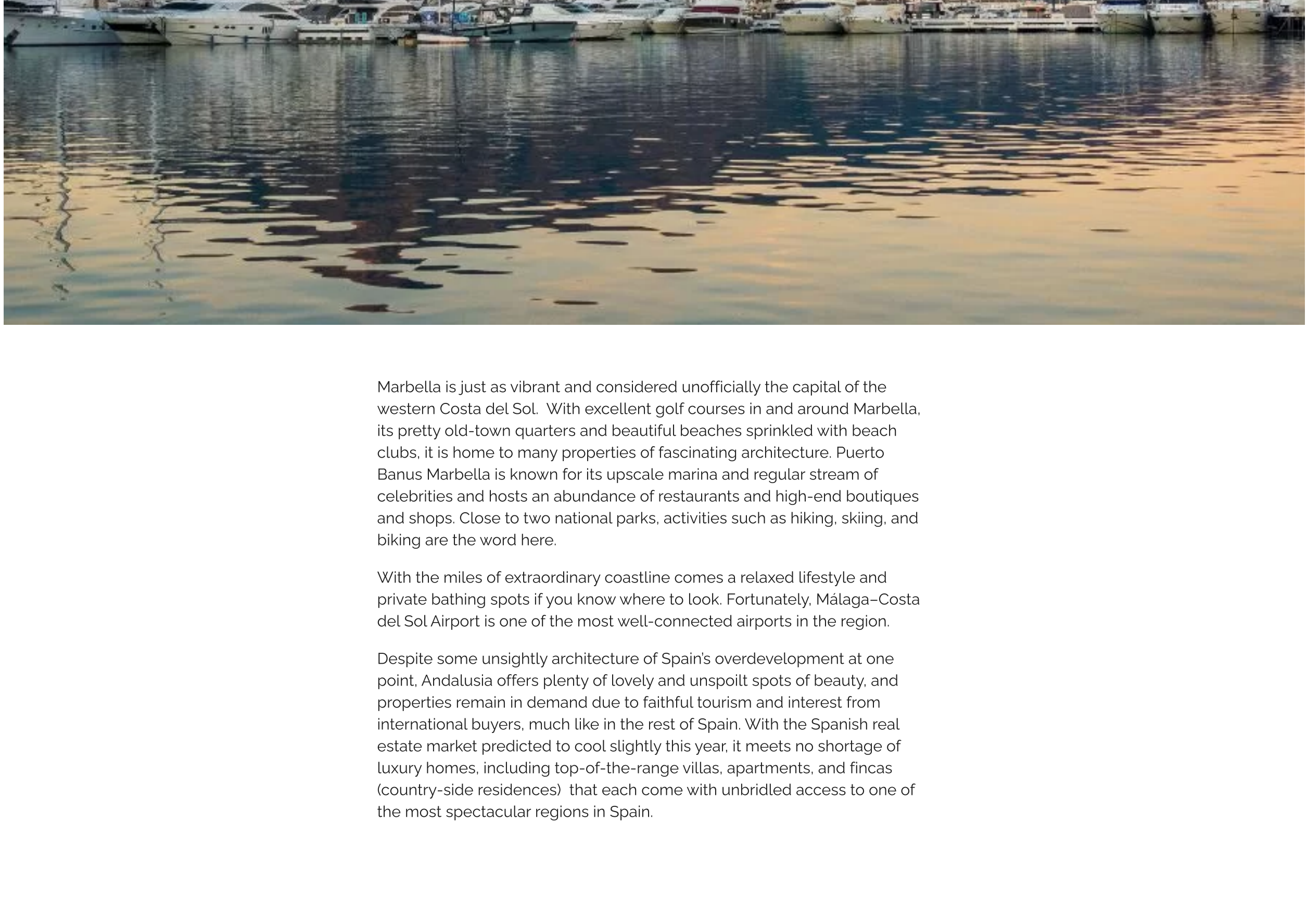
Madrid is also well-known for its enviable work-life balance. The city's working culture is relaxed and prioritises wellbeing with extra holidays and long lunch breaks, leaving plenty of time for your interests. Madrid's three airports provide easy access to European and international destinations and Spanish cities such as Córdoba and Seville. A few things to note would be Madrid's cost of living (the highest in the country) and its landlocked position far from the coast.

Unsurprisingly, Madrid is one of the best places in Spain to buy property, and the city boasts one of the lowest property transfer taxes in the country. From modern penthouses to traditional spacious villas, the city has no shortage of luxury properties to be considered as an investment.

#### THE COSTA DEL SOL

The Costa del Sol (literally 'sun coast') speaks for itself. The southern Spanish region is blessed with striking beaches, lovely villages, remarkable weather and the relaxed attitude that characterises the Spanish coast. This is an ever-popular destination among holidaymakers and expats alike.

Sotogrande and Marbella are two of the region's most exciting destinations for elevated living. Sotogrande is known for its high-end properties, marina, and social activities such as polo and golf (in fact, the Costa del Sol is reputed to be the best place in Spain to play both sports). The natural landscape is equally alluring; the Guadiaro River estuary is a fantastic spot for birdwatching.



Marbella is just as vibrant and considered unofficially the capital of the western Costa del Sol. With excellent golf courses in and around Marbella, its pretty old-town quarters and beautiful beaches sprinkled with beach clubs, it is home to many properties of fascinating architecture. Puerto Banus Marbella is known for its upscale marina and regular stream of celebrities and hosts an abundance of restaurants and high-end boutiques and shops. Close to two national parks, activities such as hiking, skiing, and biking are the word here.

With the miles of extraordinary coastline comes a relaxed lifestyle and private bathing spots if you know where to look. Fortunately, Málaga–Costa del Sol Airport is one of the most well-connected airports in the region.

Despite some unsightly architecture of Spain's overdevelopment at one point, Andalusia offers plenty of lovely and unspoilt spots of beauty, and properties remain in demand due to faithful tourism and interest from international buyers, much like in the rest of Spain. With the Spanish real estate market predicted to cool slightly this year, it meets no shortage of luxury homes, including top-of-the-range villas, apartments, and fincas (country-side residences) that each come with unbridled access to one of the most spectacular regions in Spain.