

► in the UK so he understood English tastes and was very easy to communicate with.

“From the time we spoke to the builder to completion took around one year, which wasn’t at all bad.

“We visited about four times at particular stages during that period. We changed things – such as the kitchen – as we went along, so the cost changed.”

The final cost was €450,000 (£306,500) and he says they are very happy with the result.

“We live here – it is not a holiday home where we hang our clothes for a couple of weeks then go home – so it had to be just the way we wanted it.”

Steve Spooner, a 29-year-old motor mechanic from Bromley in Kent, recently bought a plot at Monte Mayor Golf & Country Club, Costa del Sol, through Carrington Estates, where he plans to begin building a four-bedroom, three-bathroom villa with private pool and spa in November. However, it is not his own dream home he is building but someone else’s.

“I have reserved a plot, two thirds of an acre, with sea, golf and mountain views,” he says. “My intention is not to build a villa for myself to enjoy but to build it to sell and then use the profit to fund the building of my own dream home.”

Spooner has budgeted €900,000 (£614,000) including plot price, architect’s fees, project management fees, licenses, labour and landscaping for the build.

“If the Spanish market stays the same as it is now, I would expect to sell that finished product, 18 months down the line, for between €1.4 million and €1.8 million,” he says. “That’s a minimum of €500,000 profit. Not a bad salary for a year and half’s work.”

Current developments that offer plots for private villa projects on the Costa del Sol include Valderrama, Sotogrande, Monte Mayor Golf & Country Club, La Zagaleta, Marbella Golf Resort and La Reserva de Madroñal. Located several kilometres inland



on the road to Ronda, one plot for sale at La Reserva de Madroñal is priced €780,000 (£537,500) through Carrington Estates. Covering an area of nearly 6,000m², the plot can be built on to the buyer’s specification and design, or the developer will build a pre-specified villa type on a palatial scale – 1,300m² – for an all-inclusive price of €3 million (£2,069,000) including the plot.

Also on the Costa del Sol, Oyster International Properties, which provides an all-round service that includes land procurement, design and build on behalf of clients, has plots for sale with sea, golf and/or mountain views for sale at £50,000 (around €73,000) for 1,000m² in Benahavis, 10km inland of the luxury resort of Puerto Banús.

Elsewhere in Spain, on the Costa Blanca, Oyster International has 10,000m² plots for sale in a semi-rural area approximately 45 minutes’ drive inland from Alicante. “Including plot price, a 200m² three-bedroom, three-bathroom villa with pool could be yours for as little as £145,000 (€213,500),” says director Grieg Fairclough. “A resale property of similar proportion in a comparable location already built could cost as much as £220,000 (€324,000).” ■

Self-builders can save as much as 30 per cent, even when they use a project manager and an architect

With a self build, you can customise your house to your exact specifications

SELF BUILD TIPS

1 Once the land is bought (your lawyer or notary will check there is no debt on the land as new owners can inherit debt in Spain), an initial planning application is required to show the ownership of the land and where the building will be located. This must be submitted to the College of Architects (COA).

2 Once approved and architect’s fees have been agreed, a Building Licence Application and Certificate of Payment form (available from the local authorities) will be granted.

3 A qualified architect will draw up the outline design.

4 The building licence (allow between 2.4 and 4.5 per cent of the build cost figure for the fee) should be applied for to the local council, stipulating the details of the owner, architect and proposed project and an estimated cost to complete the planned works (excl tax).

5 Once the licence has been approved (this can take up to three months), you must provide a more detailed project application, project of execution and a health and safety study. Once the paperwork has been presented to the local authority registrar, you will receive confirmation of the final licence approval, indicating commencement and conclusion dates.

6 Keep to your proposed time schedule. It can cost 20 per cent on top of the original fee if construction doesn’t begin before the conclusion date.

7 Between the basic licence and the detailed application, you have a right to make slight changes provided they are within regulations.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT SELF-BUILD PLOT

Location As with all property, it has to suit your requirements and be accessible

Views Sea or mountains – anything but another property directly in front of you

Size Size of plot and permitted

build volume – make sure you check the size of your house is allowed on the plot

Utilities Preferably choose a managed development where utilities are in place – unless you want to put the sewers in

Access Topography and suitability. On top of a mountain may afford great views, but building access and practicality may be a problem

Investment potential Will it be worth more than you paid when you come to sell?