

Complete Buyer's Guide to Real Estate in San Miguel de Allende

Chris Van Cise | Live the Dream Team | Keller Williams Mexico

Welcome to San Miguel de Allende

Congratulations on considering San Miguel de Allende for your next property purchase! This UNESCO World Heritage city has been voted the **#1 Best Small City in the World** by Condé Nast Traveler multiple years running, and for good reason.

With its stunning colonial architecture, vibrant arts scene, year-round perfect climate, and welcoming expat community, San Miguel offers an unparalleled lifestyle for those seeking their dream home in Mexico.

Why Work With Chris Van Cise?

Credential	Details
Experience	150+ Closed Transactions
Recognition	Rookie of the Year - KW El Faro
Leadership	Lead Listing & Sales Agent - 8 Consecutive Years
Network	Keller Williams Mexico - 180,000+ Agents Worldwide
Languages	Bilingual (English & Spanish)

The Purchase Process in Mexico

Buying property in Mexico is different from the US or Canada. Here's what you need to know:

Step 1: Offer to Buy (Carta Oferta)

The process begins with a written offer that includes:

- Property details and agreed price
- Deposit amount (typically 5-10% of purchase price)
- Contingencies and conditions
- Proposed closing timeline

Step 2: SRE Permit (For Restricted Zone Properties)

If the property is within 50km of the coast or 100km of a border, foreign buyers need either:

- **Fideicomiso (Bank Trust):** A Mexican bank holds title on your behalf for 50 years (renewable)
- **Mexican Corporation:** For commercial or investment properties

Note: San Miguel de Allende is NOT in the restricted zone, so direct ownership (Fee Simple) is possible.

Step 3: Due Diligence

Before closing, we verify:

- Clear title with no liens or encumbrances
- Property tax payments are current
- Utility bills are paid
- Building permits and construction compliance
- HOA regulations (if applicable)

Step 4: Buy-Sell Contract (Contrato de Compraventa)

A formal contract is drafted including:

- Complete property description
- Purchase price and payment terms
- Closing date and conditions
- Representations and warranties

Step 5: Notario Selection

In Mexico, a **Notario Público** is a government-appointed attorney who:

- Verifies legal ownership and clear title
- Calculates and collects taxes
- Prepares the deed (Escritura)
- Registers the property transfer

Important: The Notario is NOT like a US/Canadian notary. They are highly trained legal professionals with significant responsibilities.

Step 6: Closing Costs Calculation

Expense	Typical Cost	Paid By
Acquisition Tax	2-4% of assessed value	Buyer
Notario Fees	1-2% of sale price	Buyer
Title Insurance	0.5-1% (optional)	Buyer
Appraisal	\$300-500 USD	Buyer
Trust Setup (if needed)	\$1,500-2,500 USD	Buyer
Annual Trust Fee	\$500-800 USD	Buyer

Step 7: Final Walkthrough

Before closing, we conduct a final inspection to ensure:

- Property condition matches the contract
- All agreed repairs are completed
- Appliances and fixtures are present
- Keys and access codes are ready

Step 8: Signing at the Notario

At the closing appointment:

- Buyer and seller sign the Escritura
- Funds are transferred
- Keys are handed over
- Notario registers the deed

Step 9: Post-Closing

After closing, we help you:

- Transfer utilities to your name
- Set up property management (if needed)
- Connect with trusted service providers
- Navigate any remaining paperwork

Step 10: Welcome Home!

You're now a property owner in San Miguel de Allende. Welcome to the community!

Buyer Consultation: What to Expect

During our initial consultation, we'll discuss:

Property Preferences

- Type of property (house, condo, land, ranch)

- Number of bedrooms and bathrooms
- Must-have features and amenities
- Preferred architectural style

Location Priorities

- Proximity to Centro Histórico
- Walking distance preferences
- View requirements
- Neighborhood atmosphere

Financial Considerations

- Budget range
- Financing needs
- Investment goals
- Timeline for purchase

Lifestyle Goals

- Primary residence or vacation home
- Rental income potential
- Retirement planning
- Family needs

Understanding the Mexican Notario

The Notario Público plays a crucial role in Mexican real estate:

US/Canada Notary	Mexican Notario
Witnesses signatures	Full legal authority
No legal training required	Law degree + 5 years practice
Limited liability	Government-appointed position
Minimal fees	Significant fees (1-2% of transaction)

The Notario’s responsibilities include:

- Verifying seller’s legal right to sell
- Ensuring property is free of liens
- Calculating and collecting taxes
- Preparing and registering the deed
- Maintaining permanent records

Frequently Asked Questions

Can foreigners own property in Mexico? Yes! In San Miguel de Allende (which is not in the restricted zone), foreigners can own property directly in their name with full ownership rights.

Do I need a Mexican bank account? Not required, but recommended for paying utilities and property taxes. We can help you set one up.

What about property taxes? Property taxes in Mexico are significantly lower than in the US or Canada—often just a few hundred dollars per year.

Is title insurance available? Yes, several US-based companies offer title insurance for Mexican properties. We can provide recommendations.

How long does the buying process take? Typically 30-60 days from accepted offer to closing, depending on complexity.

Contact Chris Van Cise

Ready to find your dream property in San Miguel de Allende?

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