

 **Building your dreams and investment in El Salvador!** 

Free International Buyer's Guide

A Practical Guide to Buying Property in El Salvador from the U.S. ➔

Purpose of This Document

This guide gives Salvadoran buyers and foreign investors living in the U.S. a clear, practical roadmap for purchasing real estate in El Salvador — from getting authorized to buy remotely, to closing safely and registering the property in your name. It is written in plain language, without unnecessary legal jargon, so you can move forward with confidence at every step.

What's Inside This Guide

➔ Module 1 — Requirements & Buying From Abroad

The Special Power of Attorney (POA), how to authorize it through the Salvadoran consular network or an authorized notary, and the basic documents you'll need.

Module 2 — The Legal Path, Step by Step

From the Promise to Purchase to final registration, including why the CNR Extractive Certification is the single most important safeguard before sending any money.

Module 3 — Financing & Investment Options

Mortgage financing for Salvadorans abroad versus paying in cash, and how to move funds the right way.

Module 4 — Costs, Taxes & Closing Expenses

A full breakdown of every fee on top of the sale price, so there are no surprises at closing.

Module 5 — High-Value Areas & Staying Safe

Where buyers are investing today, plus how to avoid the most common fraud patterns — including scams involving family members.

1 Requirements & Remote Purchases

You do not need to fly to El Salvador to buy property there. The most common tool for buying remotely is the **Special Power of Attorney (Poder Especial)** — a legal document that authorizes a trusted person, or a licensed attorney/notary, to sign documents, receive the deed, and complete registration on your behalf. Once granted, your representative can carry the transaction through to the end without you needing to be physically present at any point.

Option A: Salvadoran Consulate

Schedule an appointment at your nearest Salvadoran consulate in the U.S. Bring your valid DUI or Passport and your NIT. The consul authenticates the power of attorney, which is then sent to El Salvador for use before a notary or directly at the CNR.

Option B: Authorized Notary

A Salvadoran notary licensed to operate can prepare the POA with you in the U.S., or in some cases remotely, depending on current notarial rules. Your real estate agent or attorney in El Salvador can recommend a notary experienced with international clients.

Basic documents you'll need

- **NIT** (Tax ID) — issued or homologated by the Ministry of Finance (Hacienda).
- **Valid DUI** (Salvadoran buyers) **or Passport** (foreign buyers).
- For foreign nationals: documents legalized with a **Hague Apostille**, since El Salvador is a member of the Hague Convention.
- Proof of address and, if financing, U.S. income documentation (see Module 3).

2 Legal Path & Step-by-Step Purchase Process

Every purchase follows the same general sequence. The order matters — skipping the verification step is where most problems start.

- 1 **Find the property & make an offer.** Work with a licensed, reputable agent who can provide a clear ownership history.
- 2 **Sign the Promesa de Venta (Promise to Purchase).** A preliminary contract that reserves the property and sets the price, timeline, and any deposit — always in writing, never a verbal agreement.
- 3 **Request a Certificación Extractiva from the CNR.** This is the vital step: it confirms who legally owns the property today and reveals any liens, mortgages, or disputes **before** you send a single dollar.
- 4 **Sign the Escritura Pública de Compraventa.** The final purchase deed, drafted and authorized by a notary, formalizing the transfer of ownership.
- 5 **Send payment through a regulated channel.** International wire transfer with a documented, traceable source of funds (see Module 3).
- 6 **Register the deed at the CNR.** This is what makes your ownership official and enforceable; registration typically takes a few weeks.
- 7 **Transfer utilities and property tax records** into your name to close out the process.

3 Financing & Investment Options

Mortgage Financing

Several Salvadoran banks lend to citizens living abroad. Typical requirements include a stable U.S. employment history, recent **W-2s** and 2–3 years of **tax returns**, a satisfactory credit report, and a down payment (commonly in the 20–30% range). A bi-national mortgage broker can help match you with the right lender and paperwork.

Cash Purchase

Paying in full avoids financing timelines and interest, but funds must move through a **regulated international wire transfer** with a clearly documented origin — never cash-in-hand or informal channels. This protects you and satisfies El Salvador's anti-money-laundering (UIF) requirements.

A quick note on moving money

- Wire funds only after the property has been verified through the CNR (Module 2, Step 3).
- Keep records of every transfer — bank statements, wire confirmations, and the source of funds.
- Never wire money to a personal account without a signed formal contract in place.

4 Costs, Taxes & Closing Expenses

Budget for these costs on top of the purchase price:

Concept / Tax	Estimated Rate	Practical Note
Transfer Tax (ITP)	3%	Applies only to the amount exceeding \$28,571.43 USD.
Notary Fees	1.0% to 2.0%	For preparing the Public Deed of Sale.
CNR Registration	~\$0.63 per \$100.00	Property registration fees.
Special Power of Attorney (Consulate/Notary)	\$150 - \$300 USD	Processing cost to send representation from the U.S.

Worked example

On a \$150,000 property: Transfer Tax applies to \$121,428.57 (\$150,000 – \$28,571.43) at 3% ≈ **\$3,642.86**. Add notary fees of roughly **\$1,500–\$3,000**, CNR registration of about **\$945**, and your POA cost of **\$150–\$300**. Total closing costs typically land around **4–5% of the purchase price**.

5 High-Value Areas & Staying Safe

Where you buy shapes both lifestyle and return on investment. Here's a snapshot of the areas drawing the most interest from international buyers today:

San Salvador **CAPITAL · RENTAL DEMAND**

Strong year-round rental demand from professionals, close to major employers. Apartments and condos are the most popular product for buy-and-hold investors.

La Libertad / Surf City **TOURISM · APPRECIATION**

El Salvador's fastest-growing coastal corridor, driven by surf tourism and new infrastructure. Popular for short-term/vacation rentals with strong recent appreciation.

Costa del Sol **ESTABLISHED · BEACH HOMES**

A well-established beach community, popular with retirees and second-home buyers looking for a quieter, more settled coastal option.

Santa Ana **VALUE · GROWTH**

El Salvador's second-largest city offers lower entry prices, a growing commercial base, and colonial architecture in a walkable city center — attractive for value-focused buyers.

⚠️ Critical Mistakes to Avoid ("Red Flags")

- ❌ **Sending money to personal accounts** of relatives without a signed formal contract — even when the seller is family.
- ❌ **Not requesting a recent Extractive Certification** before handing over any deposit or reservation payment. Ownership and liens can change; always verify right before you pay.
- ❌ **Buying land with an "Assignment of Possessory Rights"** (Cesión de Derechos Posesorios) believing it is a registered property deed. This is not the same as legal title and can leave you unable to register the property in your name.
- ❌ **Skipping a licensed notary or attorney** to save on fees — the cost of a bad deal far outweighs the savings.

Required Documentation Checklist ✓

 Salvadoran Buyer • Valid DUI or Salvadoran Passport. • NIT (matched with DUI). • Notarized Power of Attorney (if not traveling). • Proof of U.S. income (if financing).	 Foreign Buyer • Valid passport from country of origin. • NIT obtained from the Ministry of Finance (Hacienda). • Power of Attorney with Hague Apostille. • Source of Funds (UIF compliance).
---	--

✳ Have questions or ready to take the next step?

If you'd like personalized assistance finding the ideal property or starting your secure purchase process from abroad, we're ready to support you every step of the way! 🏡👉

VISIT [HORIZONPROPERTYIESSV.COM](https://horizonpropertyiessv.com)

Go to horizonpropertyiessv.com, fill out our form, and we'll connect you directly with a certified real estate agent. Make your investment a reality today! 🏡👉

This guide is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, tax, or financial advice. Requirements, fees, and processes can change; we recommend confirming current details with a licensed Salvadoran attorney or notary and a qualified tax advisor before proceeding with any transaction.