

SMOKER'S PARADISE LOST - SPAIN TO LAUNCH A SMOKING BAN



Spain remains one of the few EU countries which persistently allow smoking in most public places. Not for long, however. It is expected that a bill which prohibits smoking will pass through parliament on 2nd January 2011.

Spanish bars and restaurants are famous for their smoky atmosphere as most visitors love to sit down, nibble on local tapas, enjoy a nice drink and somehow, a cigarette is the natural part of the scene. The Spanish have a reputation of devoted smokers and when in 1996 a law was issued which prohibited smoking in the workplace, mainly locals loudly protested.

As the EU strives to fight against smoking, the Spanish government has decided it is time to act. Studies are published every year monitoring the impact of second-hand smoking on the death rate of restaurant and bar staff, not to mention the many lost lives due to smoking-related diseases. **A new bill which will prohibit smoking in bars, cafes, restaurants and other public places is to be discussed on 2nd January.** Chances for it not passing through parliament are very slim, indeed. We're not sure about those e-cigs and vapes though since most people are using it now for health and cost reasons. It might just be the solution from this smoking ban.

From being a country which embraces smoking, Spain is to transform into one of the strictest states. **Many representatives of the hospitality sector are expressing their doubts and worries;** many believe that most of their clientele are smokers who come to enjoy the tapas and coffees – in combination with the freedom to smoke anytime, without having to step out in the street. **They estimate a ban is likely to be a major set back for their business welfare.** They suggested hermetically sealed smoking areas; nevertheless, the idea was dismissed.

With or without protests, Spain is on its way to become one of the strictest EU states with regard to smoking tolerance.

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