

In response to numerous requests from members of the Branch referring to leave in Spain we have decided to set out the main points in this article in the hope that it will be of value to future visitors.

For entry into Spain unaccompanied ratings require a passport and visa and, assuming that one's visit is a short one, it is only sensible to arrange this before arrival. The visa can only be obtained from: The Spanish Embassy, Consular Section, 21 Cavendish Square, London, W 1. Passports and postal orders for £1 8s. 6d. must be included with the letter of application, and it will normally take up to about 14 days before your 'visa-ed' passport will be returned. The visa allows three visits into Spain with no restrictions on internal travel. Passports can, of course, be obtained through any Ministry of Labour and National Insurance Office in the U.K.

Before crossing the border sterling must be changed either on the free market in Gibraltar or

at the Spanish customs post. The free market is quite open and 'legal' and offers a much higher rate of exchange. Any shop with a number chalked on the doorway or on a small board is declaring the daily exchange rate which at present varies between 130 and 140 pesetas to the pound sterling. On the other hand, if it is your intention to shop in Spain, it is preferable to accept the lower rate of exchange at the Spanish frontier to avoid complications when you return with the rabbits. You must be able to produce a receipt from the Spanish money office to the value of the goods which you are 'exporting'.

It is perhaps superfluous to add that plain clothes must be worn. Travellers from Gibraltar to Spain will find the frontier open between 0900 and 2145, and 0045 (0145 on Sunday mornings) is the latest time at which you can return.