

## Information release

### EEC-Spain offers advice on shopping for Valentine's Day and preventing consumers from falling victim to online fraud

The European Consumer Centre in Spain encourages consumers to shop responsibly and to read the terms and conditions of offers carefully to avoid problems.

Madrid, 11 February 2026.- Valentine's Day is celebrated every year by many couples and is used by many companies to increase commercial offers, encouraging consumers to make purchases and increase the number of leisure activities. Therefore, it is important to be aware of consumer rights and pay special attention to advertising conditions to ensure that they comply with the contract. With this in mind, the European Consumer Centre in Spain offers a series of recommendations for responsible shopping and to better understand our rights.

#### Vouchers and gift boxes

In the case of purchasing an experience box or voucher online, with some [exceptions](#), there is a right of withdrawal, meaning that the item can be returned within fourteen calendar days of purchase. However, it should be noted that if the voucher or experience is linked to a specific date or period of execution, there is [no right of withdrawal](#).

#### Restaurants

Information about all products, services, and prices offered by the restaurant must be clearly and accurately displayed on menus, signs, or blackboards, and must be visible and accessible to consumers.

All prices must be complete and include the cost of the product, taxes, and any additional charges. The price of dishes that are not on the menu must also be provided.

Before paying, it is advisable to check the bill or receipt to ensure that the items listed correspond to what has been consumed.

Regarding reservations and penalties, if the restaurant applies special conditions for reservations (for example, advance payment as a deposit, minimum consumption, or penalties for late cancellation or no-shows), it must inform customers clearly in advance. In addition, it is advisable to be wary of disproportionate or non-transparent penalties.

#### Flowers

It is advisable to consider the advantages of buying from local shops and neighbourhood florists, which not only save you long journeys but also generally offer lower prices.

#### Package tours

If you are giving a package tour as a gift, the applicable legislation is that governing [package travel](#). In such cases, any breach or problem—whether relating to transport or accommodation—must be claimed from the company with which the package tour was booked.

#### Dating websites

Since 2022, in our country, services with digital elements, such as online dating websites, also have a new 2-year guarantee. Therefore, in cases where, for example, the dating website does not work properly, the personal account cannot be accessed, or the chat service is not provided normally, users will have the right to claim repair of the service, a discount, or termination of the contract. In addition, the new regulations also consider contracts for the supply of digital content or services to be those in which, in exchange for providing personal data, the consumer receives a service or accesses digital content.

#### Jewelry

The store must differentiate between items made with precious metals and those with low alloys (plated and coated). The percentage of precious metal used must be identified: 24 karats (100% gold), 18 karats (75% gold), 14 karats (58.5% gold). For pieces coated with precious metals, the metal, the thickness of the coating in microns, and whether it is plated or electroplated must be indicated. Pieces must be engraved with the hallmark of origin identifying the manufacturer and importer, as well as the guarantee hallmark to ensure the quality of the piece.

#### Payment methods

It should be noted that online stores can choose the payment methods they offer their customers, but they must also inform them of the available payment options before finalizing orders. CEC-Spain recommends consumers to be cautious with stores that only accept payment in advance, as in the event of problems with the product, they could lose their money. In addition, European legislation stipulates that no additional fees may be charged for the most commonly used payment methods, such as credit cards, direct debit, or bank transfers. With regard to credit cards, it should be noted that these types of cards offer the possibility of canceling unauthorized transactions through chargebacks. This allows fraudulent

charges or duplicate charges to be resolved. To do this, it is recommended that you first try to resolve the issue with the merchant and, if this does not work, contact your bank to request a refund.

### Minimum legal warranty

Since January 2022, consumers have been entitled to repair or replacement of products with conformity defects and, if this is not possible, to a price reduction or refund within three years of purchasing the new product. In the case of products with digital elements, in Spain, the warranty period is reduced to two years, and if the item purchased is second-hand, the legal warranty will be agreed between the buyer and the seller and will be for a minimum of one year.

### Right of withdrawal. 14 days to return online purchases

In general, with online purchases, except for certain exceptions, there is a [14-day](#) period to terminate the contract. In other words, the consumer has the right to return the product and receive a refund, without penalty and without having to justify the reason. However, there are some exceptions, such as personalized products as custom-made clothing; engraved jewelry; digital content that is not presented on a physical medium, such as games, music, videos, or e-books; audiovisual recordings or sealed computer programs that have been unsealed; tourist accommodation, car rental, and food services; as well as services related to leisure activities, such as tickets to a concert or theatre for a specific date.

### New customer service standards

The [Customer Service Act](#) strengthens consumer rights in relation to large companies and basic services: it requires companies to provide a free, accessible service with clearly identified channels of communication in contracts, invoices, or on websites; and sets quality standards such as limiting telephone waiting times to no more than three minutes, prohibiting the use of answering machines as the sole means of customer service, always offering the option of personalized service by an identified person, and offering individualized and personal support and assistance to vulnerable people. Companies have until the end of December 2026 to adapt to the new rules.

### Also, remember...

- Ask for a receipt.
- Find out if they accept exchanges or returns.
- Whenever possible, go to establishments that are members of the Consumer Arbitration System, as they offer an additional guarantee in the resolution of disputes.
- Advertising is binding, so the product or service must comply with everything specified.
- Read the terms and conditions carefully.

### And when shopping online...

- Check the company's identity: name or business name, tax ID number, address, contact details. This information is usually available in the Legal Notice or General Terms and Conditions on the website.
- Confirm the basic product information: price, additional costs, payment method, delivery times, right of withdrawal, offer validity period.
- Check that the website is secure by verifying that the URL begins with https.
- Always read the terms and conditions.
- Pay by credit card rather than bank transfer.
- Before buying from a [marketplace](#), check who is selling the product, its origin, where it was manufactured, the seller's country, delivery times, shipping and return costs, how to make a complaint, or how to exercise your right of withdrawal. Remember that, in the event of problems with a third party, the marketplace is not necessarily directly responsible for the complaint and that regulations require companies to respond to complaints within a period not exceeding 30 days.
- Be wary of dark patterns. These marketing techniques, commonly used by some online retailers, involve pressuring consumers with social engineering messages such as "last few items left," "ten people already have this product in their cart," or "only 3 items left." They are designed to manipulate consumers into making impulse purchases. For this reason, ECC-Spain wants to raise awareness among all consumers so that they are alert to identifying these tactics and do not allow themselves to be influenced into making impulsive and hasty purchases.