

Travel Notes for Students in Summer Study Abroad in Madrid

Madrid is one of the most interesting and exciting cities in Europe. Below we have included some suggestions not only about living in Madrid, but also about preparing for your trip. You may want to purchase a Madrid travel guidebook to complement and add to the information contained in these pages and in your orientation folder. Knopf, Lonely Planet, Fodor's, Insight Guides, and others have published guidebooks specifically about Madrid. In addition to travel guides, we recommend that you do some reading about Spanish history, politics, and culture before the trip. Your professor will assign you a pre-program reading packet.

Online Sources/short articles about Madrid

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/spain/madrid/travel-tips-and-articles>

Movies

Mi Calle (My Street) (1960)

"Authentically evokes Madrid in the 1920s."—Carlos Aguilar, author, *The Spanish Cinema Guide*. Focusing on the personalities living on one street, director Edgar Neville illustrates the social and political upheavals of pre-war Spain on a local, bittersweet level.

La Flor De Mi Secreto (The Flower of My Secret) (1995)

A Pedro Almodóvar comedy about the unhappy love life of a successful romance novelist; features a colorful cast of eccentrics and beautiful scenes of Madrid; other Almodóvar films set in Madrid include *High Heels* (1991), *Kika* (1993), and *Live Flesh* (1997).

El Día De La Bestia (Day of the Beast) (1995)

A comedic horror film, which follows a fallen priest and a good-hearted but violent heavy metal fan as they wreak gory havoc all over Madrid in an attempt to save the world from the Antichrist.

Abre Los Ojos (Open Your Eyes) (1997)

Remade as *Vanilla Sky* starring Tom Cruise and set in New York, the original version by director Alejandro Amenábar stars Eduardo Noriega as the man without a face in this psychological thriller; features a spectacular scene of Gran Vía emptied of traffic.

Books

"Luces de Bohemia," by Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1920)

Evocative play by one of Spain's most influential dramatists. *Bohemian Lights* unfolds on the streets of a pre-Civil War Madrid rife with grotesque characters, social inequality, political unrest, and hypocrisy; available in English in *Valle-Inclán Plays: One* (1990).

La Colmena, by Camilo José Cela (1951)

Early novel by the Nobel Prize-winning author; evokes the harsh reality of post-war Madrid through the lives of more than 100 characters who pass through a neighborhood café; published in English as *The Hive*.

The Fifth Column and Four Stories of the Spanish Civil War, by Ernest Hemingway (1969)
Inspired by the author's time as a correspondent in war-torn Madrid. The novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) evokes the guerrilla warfare that took place in the mountains just outside of Madrid, while *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) finds the Lost Generation ending their Spanish odyssey in a pre-war Madrid of good times, fine eating, and heavy drinking.

Captain Alatriste, by Arturo Perez Reverte (1996)
The adventures of a dashing swordsman-for-hire in 17th-century Madrid; fans often follow Alatriste's tracks through modern-day Madrid de los Austrias; made into a 2006 feature film.

Music

Compilations:

Alaska y Sus Canciones de la Movida, by Alaska
Alaska was a star of the *movida madrileña*, the alternative socio-cultural movement of art, music, nightlife, and decadence that exploded in the years after Franco's death. Inspired by punk, New Wave, and electronic pop, these classic songs capture that heady era.

Devil Came to Me, by Dover
Backing catchy pop melodies and English lyrics with thunderous, grunge-inspired guitars, this album propelled the Madrid-based group to European fame.

Entre Dos Aguas, by Paco de Lucía
One of the most revered albums by the Spanish guitar maestro; when it was released in 1973, the title song marked the beginning of "new flamenco" by bringing the guitar to the forefront and adding congas, bass, and other instruments.

Grandes Éxitos, by José Mercé
One of the most popular *cantaor* (flamenco singers) working today; singing since a child, this Madrid-based artist brings a passion to his performances that entralls both flamenco purists and mainstream fans.

Siempre en Madrid/Always in Madrid, by various artists
Produced by the Madrid Tourism Office; a series of original songs blending traditional Madrid melodies with jazz and flamenco.

La Verbena de la Paloma, by Tomás Bretón
One of the greatest *zarzuelas* of all time; zarzuela is a traditional form of Madrid operetta, which originated in the 17th century.

Classic Songs:

From an 18th-century orchestral classic to an 80s pop anthem, these Spanish songs were inspired by Madrid:

1. "La Puerta de Alcalá" (The Gate of Alcalá), Ana Belén y Victor Manuel
2. "Retirada Nocturna de Madrid" ("Procession of the Military Night Watch in Madrid"), Luigi Rodolfo Boccherini
3. "Te Dejo Madrid" ("I Leave You Madrid"), Shakira
4. "Ultima Mirada" ("The Last Look"), Juan Sin Miedo
5. "Vuelvo a Madrid" ("Return to Madrid"), Ismael Serrano
6. "Yo Me Bajo en Atocha" ("I Get Off in Atocha") and "Pongamos Que Hablo de Madrid" ("Let's Say I'm Talking about Madrid"), Joaquín Sabina

A Few Notes on Madrid

Geography: Madrid is both a city and part of a larger province known as Madrid. Madrid proper is made up of about 3 million people. The city is made up of a series of neighborhoods. Getafe is not in the city, but rather in the surrounding province. Madrid is the third largest city in Europe, with a high standard of living, although it has been hit hard by the economic crisis.

Although Madrid is on the same latitude as NYC, it is high up on a plateau, away from the water. Thus, it is freezing in the winter and very hot in the summer. In fact, people joke that Madrid is nine months of winter, followed by three months of hell. July is, in fact, the hottest month, with temperatures often in the high 80's or low 90's. However, temperatures have been known to drop to the 60's. Temperatures will be measured in Celsius in Europe.

People: People of Madrid refer to themselves as madrileñas, if they are female, and madrileños, if they are male.

Greetings: Upon greeting and saying goodbye, women and men (or two or more women) who are friends or acquaintances typically exchange two cheek kisses. Men typically shake hands with each other. These kisses are the equivalent of a handshake or a hug commonly exchanged among friends in the U.S. One or two kisses is a standard greeting in Madrid.

Personal Space: Americans tend unconsciously to maintain a wider circumference of personal space than do most Spaniards and are sometimes made uncomfortable by physical contact that sometimes takes place. Stepping back from a person is considered rude.

Body Language: The "o.k." sign in the U.S. is not "o.k." in Spain.

Spoken Language: It's okay if you don't know any Spanish at all, but it is a good idea to learn a few greeting terms, please and thank you, etc. Spaniards appreciate any effort made to understand their language.

Crime

Madrid is a safe city. However, pickpockets and purse snatching is common in tourist areas. Pay attention.

Adjusting to a New Environment and Culture

When exposed to a different culture and environment, many people experience a temporary sense of physical and psychological disorientation, sometimes referred to as “culture shock.” The physical stresses and strains of international travel often contribute to a sense of being “out of sorts.” Different behavioral norms, as well as new sights, smells, and sounds, that one encounters when visiting another country, may compound this feeling of disorientation. A good night’s rest is often enough for some people to feel more “themselves,” even when encountering things with which they are unfamiliar. For others, culture shock lingers and may result in depression, anxiety, withdrawal, insomnia, irritability, and acute nostalgia for home. Talk to other students or to one of the Program Director if you are feeling overwhelmed.

Suggestions for Packing

Clothing

People in Madrid dress more formally than Americans. Thus, please feel free to dress comfortably for class, but for field visits, have a professional outfit.. Here are a few suggestions for clothing to pack:

- pair of sneakers
- 2 other pairs of shoes that are comfortable for walking
- 3-4 short and long-sleeved shirts
- a pair of jeans and 2 other pairs of pants or a skirt
- a week’s worth of underwear and socks
- one or two t-shirts
- pair of shorts
- exercise clothes for hot weather (if you plan to jog/walk)
- a sweater or light jacket
- shoes suitable for business
- sleep clothes

Medicines, toiletries, etc.

- prescription medications (with copies of the prescription—usually on the label) or devices, such as an inhaler; bring enough of your prescription meds. to last you for the trip and beyond
- over-the-counter medications that you might regularly or periodically take for cold, flu, headache, indigestion, etc.
- contact lenses and/or glasses; it is a good idea to bring a back-up pair as well
- contact lens solution (available, but may not have your preferred brand.)
- sunblock
- hair products
- dental hygiene products
- feminine hygiene products (if applicable)
- razors
- deodorant

Documents/identification

- plane tickets and copies of plane tickets and itinerary
- passport; photocopy of passport
- a second photo i.d.

Items for Class

- 2 notebooks
- Pens
- Laptops might be a good idea to bring so that you are able to read for class.

Miscellaneous items

- camera
- personal journal/trip diary
- photos from home
- paperback books in English that you can leave behind
- hat
- address book or list for postcards/e-mail

Madrid Summer Program Orientation Checklist

Before you leave home:

- Do you have your passport?
- Have you made two extra copies of your passport, one to bring with you and one to leave with someone at home?
- Do you have at least one other form of identification?
- Do you have your itinerary (e-ticket), and have you made a copy for someone at home?
- Have you notified your credit card company that you will be traveling in Europe?
- Do you have a sufficient supply of prescription medicines?
- If you wear glasses or contacts, do you have a backup pair or extra contacts?
- Have you packed appropriate clothing? Do you have mainly casual, light weight clothes, with at least one nice, professional outfit? (You will have access to laundry facilities.)
- Do you have an unlocked cell phone or made arrangements for foreign phone service with your cell phone company (or an unlock code for your phone)?
- Do you have an ATM card and let your bank know that you are traveling to Europe?
- If you are bringing your laptop or other appliances, do you have the appropriate adaptor? (3 prong, round)
- Do you have your contact information cards, and did you leave one for someone at home?
- Do you have all your readings—both books and pdfs available? Each professor will provide readings in a dropbox for you to access. We will NOT post items on TWEN. Once we are in Madrid, we will have access to UCIIM platform.
- You will receive a UCIIM email address.

Upon arrival:

- Upon arrival, you will clear immigration; you will pick up your checked luggage; and you will clear customs. Outside of customs, you can either take the train into Madrid, and then a subway to your apartment, or train directly to Getafe for the dorm, or take a taxi, or look for a van and driver if you have asked for us to make arrangements for pick up for you.
- It's a good idea to use an ATM as soon as you arrive at the first European airport. Spain is part of the European Union and uses Euros.
- If you are staying in the dorm, we will have one of the Spanish students available to greet you and orient you to the dorm, campus and surrounding area. The student will ensure that you get into the dorm and room without an issue.
- Saturday evening, we will have a Madrid orientation party in downtown Madrid at a rooftop restaurant. Details to follow. You are expected to arrive in Madrid in time for this orientation party. The event will not start before six p.m.
- On Monday morning, classes begin at the UCIIM campus in Getafe promptly at 9:30 a.m.
- Please check the syllabus your professor will provide you online regularly. As with any program including field visits and guest speakers, schedules can change last minute. Please be flexible and aware that class activities could change.