

SPAIN – Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

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¹ To update the agenda just click right on your moose

I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

Help : How was your experience abroad? If you could go back 1 time, would you go to this university and why ?

My experience was extremely enriching, I liked every bit of it and met lifetime friends. If I could go back in time I would go back to this university but especially for Madrid. I worked and did what I needed to do but I was more interested in the local life and the Erasmus community.

II. Before the travel

A. Preparation

1. Visa

Help : Do I need a visa ? If yes, what is the process ?

NO

2. The flight

Help : what flight did you take (the company name, airport etc.) and when did you take your flight ticket

I booked a Ryanair flight from Marseille to Madrid and a Ouibus from Montpellier to Madrid on the 2nd of November. There is only one international airport in Marseille and Madrid. You shouldn't book your ticket too early or too late. 2 months before is good if you don't want to take too much risk and pay a lot at the end.

3. My luggage

Help : what to not forget in the luggage (what was useful and what you would like to have taken)

Don't forget to take a hat, gloves and a scarf. It's really freezing in January.

Scan/print your ID and the papers given by the universities, it could be useful, you never know.

If you go by plane take a 10kg cabin suitcase and a 20kg suitcase, it's enough.

Take a couple summer clothes it can be very hot mid March. Summer begins in May. If you go back to France for Easter vacation bring back your winter clothes and bring to Madrid your summer clothes.

4. Bank account

Help : did you have to change bank? To respect some amount requirement on the bank account etc.

Ask your bank to increase your withdraw roof, a lot of landlords ask for cash.

5. Insurance

Help : What insurance did you subscribe to ?

Check that your insurance covers repatriation in case.

B. Housing

1. Where to live

Help : Do a google maps capture and circle the area you recommend to live in (and the one you do not recommend)

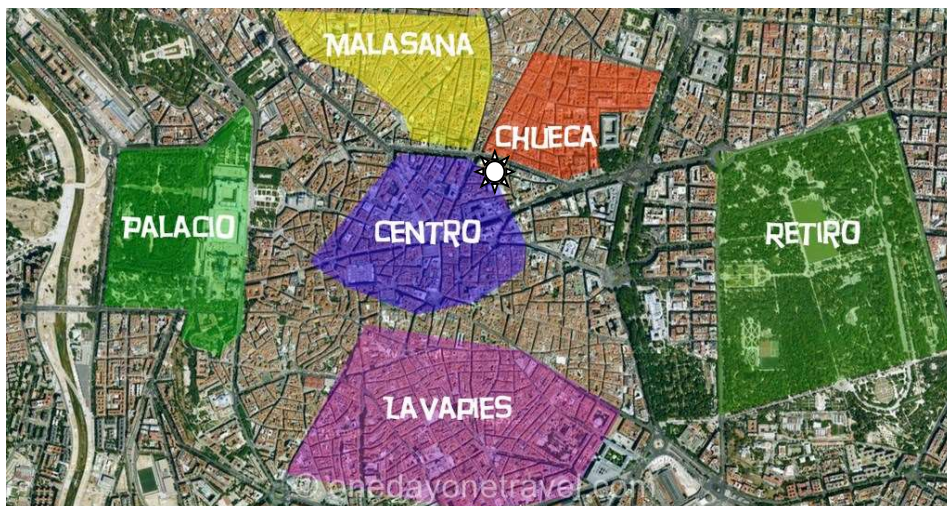
Honestly Madrid is the safest city I have ever been to in my life (especially if you're a woman). There are no safe or not safe areas. The only thing I recommend is to live in the city center. You will be doing lots of activities in the center although your campus (Vicalvaro) will be 40 minutes away by metro. People that lived close to the University strongly regretted their choice.

You should live either:

- Near Grand Via/Sol/Montera/Fuencarral/Hortaleza: This is where I lived, you cannot be more in the center. It's really practical to go anywhere whenever because it is between Lavapies, Chueca and Malasana.
- Malasana: In the center, good neighborhood atmosphere and lots of small shops to buy food and thrifted clothes.
- Chueca: Lots of clubs, LGBTQAI+ friendly. Very open minded area.
- Lavapies: The artist's neighborhood. Pleasant to live in, much more human than the big streets of the center. It's a very trendy area to live in. It used to be quite poor and now it's becoming the new Malasana. I actually would have liked to live there although. It is a bit less safe than the other neighborhoods.

Be aware that the metro stops around 2am but there are night buses and Ubers are quite cheap.

Do not live in Vicalvaro.



I used to live where the little sun is. Unfortunately the flat has now been sold.

2. Find a flat or a room

Help : How did you find your flat? Do you have any recommendation

This is the most important thing you need to know about Madrid.

You should:

- *Not book an apartment on internet even with a nice and organized landlord or even an AGENCY. You have lots of chances to be scammed and that the apartment doesn't actually exist.*
- *Go on the website "Idealista" and search for apartments in the area you want to live in. Book visit appointments before you arrive in Madrid; you'll gain time once there.*
- *Book a hotel/airbnb in the center of Madrid a week before University and Erasmus activities begin.*
- *Always visit the apartment before taking it.*
- *Take your time to choose the right apartment; if you rush you'll make mistakes. Don't hesitate to ask questions about who lives here, what are the rules (for parties, cleaning, etc.).*
- *Only book an apartment with a landlord ahead NOT an agency. Agencies in Madrid are the typical Erasmus scam, they ask for a huge amount of money for the deposit and rarely give it back to you (ex: Aloha rooms agency).*
- *Last thing, you'll have to live with flatmates, Madrid's apartments are huge and too expensive to live alone. Plus, it's much more fun!*

3. Cost

Help : How much should I plan for a room?

Life in Madrid is quite cheap but not the flats...

450€ – 600€ a room.

In general 450 is low to have an acceptable room/flat but if you don't live in the center it is possible. In Malasana, Chueca and near Sol count about 500€ minimum. Lavapiés is a bit cheaper.

III. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

Help : How was the process, what did you have to do?

Stop at Vicalvaro metro station.

Enter the campus and go in front of the library.

Listen to the ESN group for parties and trips and enter their whatsapp group (the Wesa group is a scam).

In the library there will be a big meeting with all the Erasmus and the academic people. They will explain you everything for your learning agreement etc. ESN will explain you how to get your ESN card.

Don't wait to book the Erasmus integration weekend, there's not much place available.

B. Information on the university

1. Class

Help : for each class tell us how was the class, what did you like and not like, would you recommend it for the next student?

- *Strategic Management: Very theoretical, authoritarian teacher, very hard exams and lots of homework. Although you'll learn some facts about companies. If you take this course choose the "business school part" it is easier to pass if you are okay with participating during the class.*
- *Introduction to Economics: Nice and funny teacher (very poor level of English so very difficult to understand).*
- *Macroeconomics: Interesting teacher*
- *National and International Environment of the Firm: I really do not recommend this course; the teacher denies the effects of global warming during 10% of his course. Plus, he reads his slides during the entire semester.*
- *International Human Rights Law: Very interesting teachers and super friendly, lots of debates during the class, seminars are organized during the time of the course with interesting interveners.*
- *International Economics: Interesting course, nice teacher. Lots of (little) group projects.*

I heard the marketing classes were really good from other Erasmus students but I didn't try them.

Try to go to a lot of classes on the first week before deciding which ones you'll choose in your final agreement. You have until mid February to do so.

2. Exam

Help : How was the exam?

Strategic Management: 4 qcm throughout the semester or the 4 at the end. 4 case studies to write or 4 case studies to debate about (I recommend this way, it is called "business school part"). 4 questions to answer to in May.

For the rest of the course I don't really know; as it was the covid area we did everything on our computers.

IV. When I life there

A. Safety

Help : Is it safe? Is there areas or times I should avoid

Everything is safe in Madrid even for women, people part of the LGBTQIA+ community or none white people.

There are always lots of people in the streets. During the night if you don't want to walk alone there are night buses or cheap ubers.

B. Phone and Internet

Help : How to be able to call and have internet

Most of phone contracts have unlimited calls and internet in Europe. If not, you'll have the wifi at university and coffee shops to look up how and where you want to go.

C. Events

Help : How to know about the events?

Join the ESN Whatsapp group, they'll send you every month the schedule of the month. You need to buy the card at the beginning to join the events and trips.

With ESN: I recommend going to the integration weekend, the barcrawl, the Flamenco show, Sevilla.

If you like museums you should go during the first weeks, you'll be so busy after (Reina Sofia and Thyssen are the best in my opinion). Know that there are some free days/hours and some museums are free with your university card (French and Spanish worked).

If you like house music or even techno you need to go to Elrow Madrid Carnaval, La Riviera club, El Mondo club and Brunch In the Park on Sundays.

D. Sports

Help : What sport can I do ? and how?

No idea.

E. Eating

Help : Any recommendation? Or good tips (e.g. aninternational house buffet)

Stop Madrid (good local wine and tapas).

100 Montaditos (2€ pint of beer).

F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

Help : How did you get access to the bus, car or bike

Going to uni: If you're in the center you'll take the metro line 9 until Vicalvaro in direction of Arganda del Rey.

Getting your metro card: This takes a bit of time. You need to go to the office of Wesa in Gran Via and ask for an appointment with the metro office (it is their only service which is not a scam). Then go to the metro office and they will create a metro card for you.

G. Travels

Help : What do you recommend and what do you not recommend

You have to go to Sevilla especially if there is the national ESN event.

You should go to Toledo it's free with the metro card.

By the way if you arrive at the airport, buy a 10 trips ticket + one airport trip. You'll need these 10 trips before making your metro card at the office.

H. Any other information you would have liked to know about

Help : What would I liked to know if I could have gone back in time

Don't sleep too much, time flies!