

Madrid, with a population of just over three million, is Europe's fourth largest city - after London, Paris and Milan - and its highest capital, at 650m (2132 feet) above sea level.

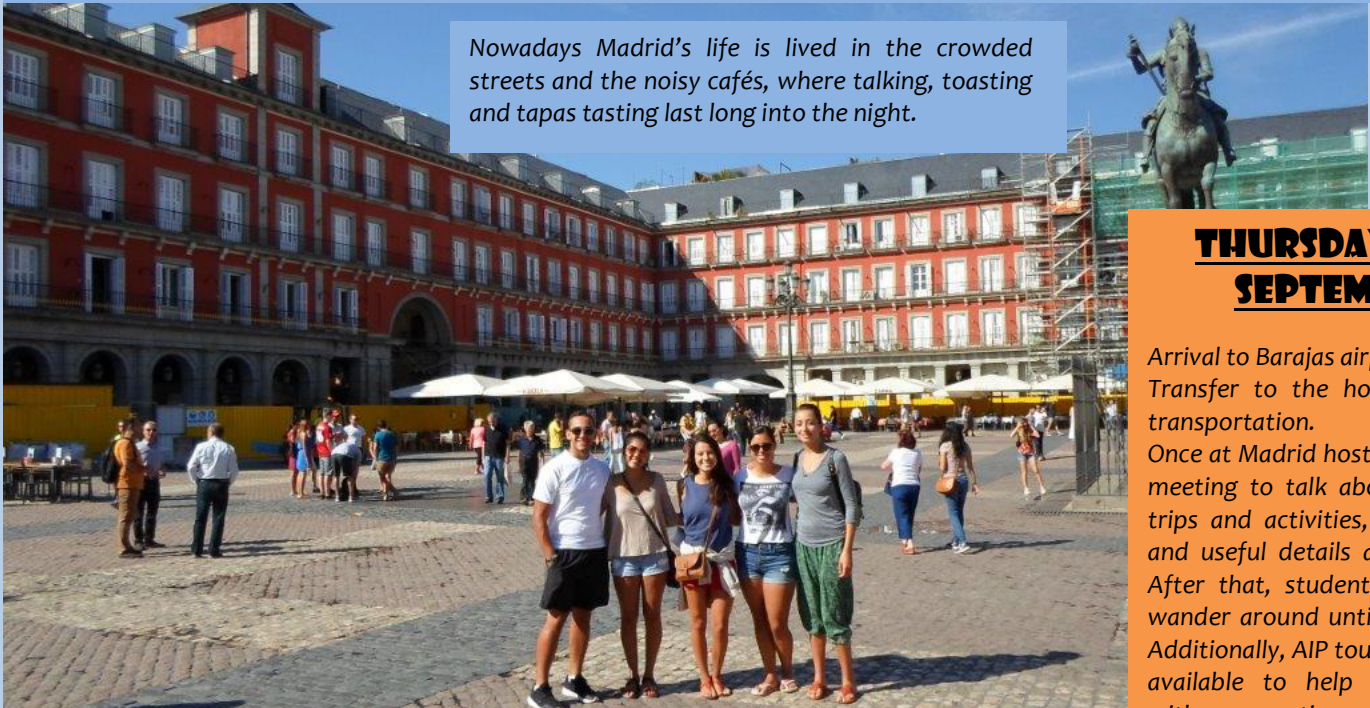
It is a cosmopolitan city, a business centre, home to the central public administration, the Government of the State, and the Spanish Parliament as well as being the habitual residence of the Monarchs. Madrid is not one of the most important cities in Europe but in the world and all kind of possibilities for the visitors are to be enjoyed with unique settings like the Royal Palace and places that know no equal, like the Plaza Mayor, the Retiro Park, the Plaza de España as well as Madrid's museum mile, with more masterpieces per square foot than virtually anywhere else in the world.

Madrid, can trace its origins to the times of Arab Emir Mohamed I (852-886), who ordered the construction of a fortress on the left bank of the Manzanares River. It later became the subject of a dispute between the Christians and Arabs until it was conquered by Alfonso VI in the 11th century.

During the 18th century, under the reign of Carlos III, the great arteries of the city were designed, such as the Paseo de la Castellana and Paseo del Prado. What remains today of the distant past are mainly the Baroque and neoclassical structures of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as the Plaza Mayor, Royal Palace ...

The capital has opened itself up to the world and the world has come to know Madrid, the city that guards its treasures, unveiling them to us little by little, surprising visitors with its hidden corners, secrets and combining its local flavour with that of Europe as a whole; the city in which business, culture and leisure activities get together themselves into an environment which makes a visit to this capital city an unforgettable experience.

Nowadays Madrid's life is lived in the crowded streets and the noisy cafés, where talking, toasting and tapas tasting last long into the night.



THURSDAY 08TH SEPTEMBER

Arrival to Barajas airport.
Transfer to the hostel by public transportation.

Once at Madrid hostel, mandatory meeting to talk about upcoming trips and activities, hostel policy and useful details about Madrid. After that, students are free to wander around until dinner time. Additionally, AIP tour guide will be available to help students out with any questions and will lead to places where to change money, get cell phones or calling cards, city maps and so on... in order to make a little bit easier students arrival into Spain.

Note - Please be aware that most of the rooms may not be ready to check-in before 1-2 pm.

08'30 PM Dinner

FRIDAY 09TH SEPTEMBER

10'30 AM

Walking tour & Prado Museum (after lunch).

This is a great way to see the city's monuments and sights, allowing students to get an overall view of Madrid with the flexibility to stop in a few locations while running the visit to enjoy some of the most remarkable buildings, squares, etc ...

Scheduled tour takes around 2-3 hours.

01'30 PM End of tour. Free time for lunch.

08'30 PM Dinner

**MADRID ACCOMMODATION
HOSTAL AGUILAR
Carrera de San Jerónimo, 32
(2nd floor)
CONTACT PHONE
(34 + 91 - 429 59 26)**

SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER

Free morning to wander around Madrid city historical center before departure towards Valencia. Take a closer look to the vibrant Malasaña & Chueca districts with its shopping areas and famous markets such as the Mercado de San Antón, a unique setting recently restored to its splendor where your eyes will dazzle with all their different stalls selling fresh products and stylish tapas.

10'30 AM Check-out from hostel.

Transfer (not included) to Atocha train station with our train departure scheduled at 11.40 AM.

01'30 PM Arrival to Valencia and end of tour (host families distribution).