



ES Studies Report

GRANADA 2017

30/1/17 - 19/5/17

Why did I choose to study European Studies?

European Studies was the main reason that I applied to the University of Manchester to begin with. I was very lucky, the first time I applied I had no idea the European Studies program existed. However the second year of applications I discovered that I didn't have to stop studying Spanish, and I could even go on placement in Spain. Since then Manchester was my first choice of University and I am so happy that I got accepted and managed to finish the ES program. I started learning Spanish when I started first year of secondary school since my aunt had moved to Spain and married a Spanish guy, who didn't and still doesn't speak any English! So a major motivating factor for continuing Spanish was to be able to communicate with him. But I had also put so much time and effort into learning Spanish the whole way through school that I really didn't want to just forget everything that I had learned.

I am really happy that I continued with European Studies, especially once we reached clinical years it was really difficult to find motivation to go to class in the evenings and to make time to do Spanish homework. A lot of us considered dropping out of the course at some point in the first 4 years, but we are all grateful that we didn't!

Life in Granada

THE CITY

Granada is a smallish city, with a really beautiful, old and interesting centre, with tons of history and different 'barrios'. Probably the most famous is the Albaicin – the old Arabic quarter which is full of tiny streets, whitewashed houses in really steep streets up the hill. Further up the valley is Sacromonte, the old *gitano* barrio. This area is really stunning, it also has whitewashed houses but here they are built into the side of the mountain and a lot of people live in cave houses. This is the traditional flamenco area of Granada, since flamenco is traditionally *gitano*. Underneath the Alhambra is an area called the Realejo, which is one of my favourite areas of Granada. It also has lovely old buildings but is a lot more of a practical area to live in than the Albaicin or Sacromonte. It has a really cool atmosphere with tons of bars and cafes, Calle Navas in the Realejo is one of the best tapas streets in Granada. The centre of Granada is also beautiful, with lots of really nice plazas again with tons of tapas bars and cafes and shops.

FOOD AND DRINK

Some of the best things about Granada are its size and the tapas. Granada centre is incredibly easy to get around by foot, everyone walks everywhere! Plus every street that you walk up and down is full of tapas bars. Granada is one of the last cities in Spain which still has a proper tapas culture. In any bar, literally ANY bar, if you order a cold drink – alcoholic, fizzy drink or even nestea, you will also get a tapa. The price of a small beer

(Caña) is invariably 2 euro. Coke, nestea, wine, tinto de verano etc normally are 2.20-2.50. It is also possible to ask for a 'tapas extra', where you get food without the drink and is normally 1.50. There are a lot of rules about tapas which we only discovered by trial and error, but somehow everyone else just seems to know;

1. Kitchens close normally between 5 and 7/8pm, you can get tapas for lunch and dinner but not as a snack in between.
2. A caña I think does have an official measurement (might be a 1/3 of a beer) but the size changes depending on which bar you are in.
3. A tubo is the next size up in the beer glasses, but is still less than a botella.
4. Cañas and tubos tend to be the draft beer – normally Alhambra.
5. Tapas tend to be either good in quantity or quality, there are only a few places you can get both!

Tapas Recommendations;

1. Chantarela – in the city centre, the tapas are big and really great quality, really busy on weekends
2. Bar de Enrique – a tiny bar which serves really good quality food as well
3. Los Diamantes – there are three of these around Granada, they serve amazing seafood.
4. El Delirio – a Mexican tapas place near Calle Navas
5. Bar Restaurante La Tarara – also near Calle Navas
6. Botanico – in the city centre
7. Basil in the 'Plaza Romanilla'

During the week most restaurants have a 'Menú del día' which normally costs between 9 and 11 euro. You get a two course meal, plus bread, plus either dessert or coffee. Sometimes a drink is included. If you want more food than tapas a good option is to get some tapas and then share a 'ración', which most bars offer, they are big plates made for sharing.

TOURISM

There are a few things which Granada is most famous for, the Alhambra being the most important. It is really impressive, huge and imposing and with incredibly intricate designs. It is a collection of different palaces all built by different people. I would really recommend going to visit it! In February you can easily buy tickets on the day (there are hidden ticket machines around the side of the building where the gift shop is – no-one knows they are there and they have a much shorter queue) but by the time you get to March and April tickets can be booked out for a month in advance. They do release a lot of tickets every morning at 8am, but again by the time March/April come around you have to be there at 5am to get into the queue, or else you won't get a ticket. There are a lot of places you can buy tickets around the city, but the one we used was the Caixa Bank

Machines. The Nasrid Palace is the most famous part of the Alhambra, it is incredibly beautiful, old and intricate. Because it is the most popular/famous part when you buy a ticket it has a specific entrance time to the Nasrid palace. You can go and see the rest of it at any time but make sure you're on time to get into the queue to see the Nasrid Palace.

Most tourists in Granada just walk around to see everything, the major activities are wandering, eating and drinking. There are some Miradors around the city which have some amazing views! Mirador de San Nicholas is the most famous and is really incredible. Mirador de San Miguel Alta is also spectacular, it does live up to its name of 'alta' though, there are 300 steps leading up to it! It's kind of hard to find – especially on google maps because it seems to be called 'ermita de san miguel' instead.

ANDALUCÍA

Andalucia is an amazing region of Spain, we have travelled quite a lot within Andalucía during our four months. There are a few different ways of doing this, the ALSA buses are really good normally and in general they are the only public transport out of the city (Granada doesn't have any trains). However, a lot of Spanish people use BlaBlaCar instead of public transport so that's quite a good option too.

Ronda

I went to Ronda, which is a town famous for having a very beautiful gorge with a bridge over it with an Erasmus Group called 'Best Life Experience Granada'. It was the only trip I went on with one of the Erasmus Groups. I am glad that I went, otherwise I wouldn't have got to see Ronda. But travelling with a really big tour group – there were two coaches of us – isn't my favourite way to travel or be a tourist. I am happy that I went however because it was cheap and otherwise buses to and from Ronda aren't great.



Malaga

I've been in and out of Malaga airport a few times but always got the bus straight to Granada and didn't actually see the city (watch out for bus times between Malaga Airport and Granada – you might need to stay overnight in Malaga). Malaga is nice enough, the centre is really pretty and the port is impressive, but it is REALLY touristy.

Alpujarra

A group of us, two from Manchester and some of our flatmates, booked an Airbnb for a night in the Alpujarra. This is a collective name for the small villages on the south side of the Sierra Nevada. They are traditional white villages and some of them are really high up into the mountains. They are full of flowers, really beautiful and there is some great hiking around the mountains. There are some buses there from Granada but we ended up hiring a car and driving everywhere to be able to have some more independence. The Airbnb we rented was really, really beautiful, it was just on the outskirts of a village called Cañar. The most beautiful village I think is Pampaneira, and the other ones in the same village; Bubion and Capileira, are also both really stunning. If you want to go I thoroughly recommend the air bnb we stayed in, it was really cheap, slept 5 people and had the best view I think I've ever seen. It is pretty rustic, it was handbuilt 3 years ago by a (very hippy) family down the hill slightly and does have outdoor bathrooms, but honestly it was absolutely unbelievable.



Sevilla

Sevilla and the Alpujarras were my favourite places to visit – Sevilla is a great city to wander around, its old centre is really beautiful and the cathedral and Alcazar are stunning. The city also has a really big river in it and all the way along the river is a

park/walk etc. I stayed in the best hostel I had ever been to while I was there – it is called La Banda and has a really nice terrace where they have happy hour and a family dinner every night! I left it too late to book accommodation for the week of 'Feria' but it seems like that would be a great time to go visit.

Córdoba

Córdoba was one of the places I really wanted to visit, I had put this visit off until April/May so that the weather would be better. I ended up slightly running out of time though, I went for a day trip during the May Day bank holiday. It was actually a really good day trip and I thoroughly recommend visiting Córdoba!! The mezquita is the most famous monument in Córdoba and it was great but it was also slightly over rated and overpriced. Some of the other old buildings and palaces are really cool though. The old jewish quarter around the mezquita is really beautiful and really nice to wander around.

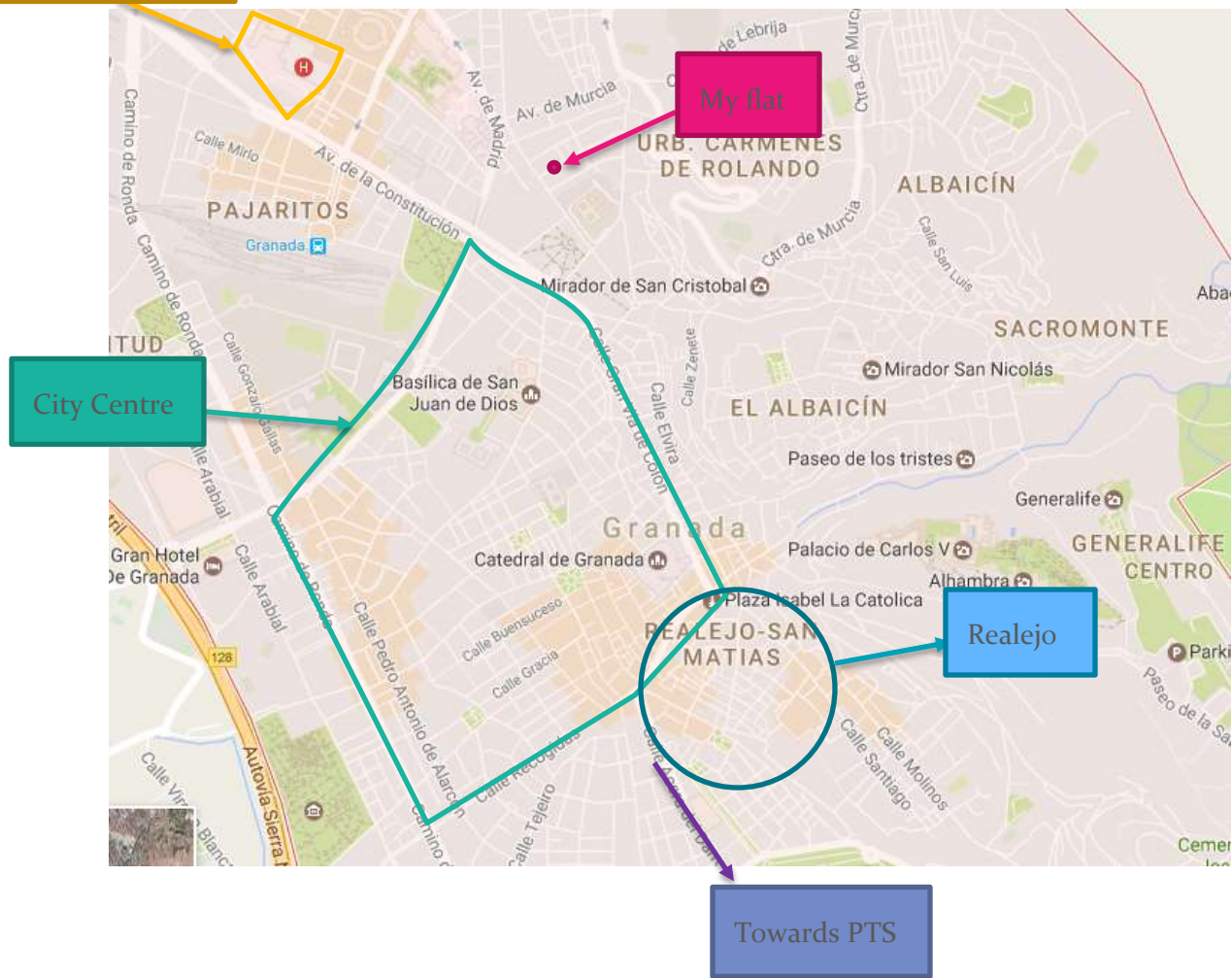
ACCOMMODATION

I arrived in Granada without anywhere to live, which I think was a good idea but was pretty stressful! In hindsight I should have waited longer and not panicked and signed a contract within the first 24 hours. Luckily I ended up with a nice flat with great flatmates so it all worked out for the best. I had decided to live with Erasmus students as I thought they would be the most interested in making new friends and exploring the city/Andalucía. Again in hindsight there is no way to predict that, and some of the other students who lived with Spanish people get on really well with them and we all hang out together. My flat was just outside the city centre on a street called Calle Parra Alta de Cartuja. It has been a really nice area to live in, close enough to the centre that it's an easy walk, there are some nice squares, parks and cafes. The one thing I don't like is that I wish our flat had a balcony, or even better a terrace!

My ideal flat would have had a terrace and been actually in the city centre, but I am only paying 165 euro a month in rent (plus 30 euro for bills) so I knew I was choosing price over location and sunbathing facilities.

The other important things to know are that most flats don't have central heating, and most flats use gas canisters to heat hot water and for cooking. My advice would be to find a flat which has some sort of heating (even if it's electric radiators) and make sure you always have a spare bûtano (gas bottle) because they run out at the most annoying times – it keeps happening to me mid-shower.

Hospital Virgen de las Nieves



Placements; and differences in hospitals between the NHS and Spain

In Granada we did 4x4 week placements. We were given a list of five to choose from and I chose to go to Úrgenicas, Otorinolaringología, Medicina Interna and Cardiología. As of this year there are three hospitals in Granada, Virgen de las Nieves, San Cecilio and PTS. Virgen and San Cecilio are right beside each other and near the Plaza de Toros. PTS is a new hospital and it is a bus ride to the south of the city centre in a neighbourhood called Zaidin. I ended up spending 2 months in PTS followed by 2 months in Virgen de la Nieves.

All of my placements were really good, I didn't know what I was expecting but I actually learned more medicine than I thought I would! The biggest difference I noticed is that confidentiality doesn't exist. Families are often told diagnoses before patients and automatically get given an update straight after ward round. I was really surprised by this at the start, but it's a part of the Spanish system and healthcare culture which you have to get used to. I don't like it much but in a way it is nice that families are a lot more involved than in the UK.

My favourite thing however is how little hierarchy there is between consultants, trainees, students and nurses. Everyone is always really friendly and in general have a much less formal communication style between the medical team but also when they're talking to patients. I was really surprised the first few days whenever everyone swore a lot in hospital. But turns out that in Granada everyone swears all the time, including in consultations. Another good thing is that students tend to finish at about 2pm. All the doctors finish at 3pm, unless they are on 'guardia', which is a 24 hour on call shift, so they tend to let students go while they're doing paperwork at the end of their shift.

The other thing which is probably important to know is that you will need to bring a white coat – or buy one here. There is no other dress code, jeans and a t-shirt under a white coat (bata) is the norm.

URGENCIAS

I really liked my first placement in A&E, my supervisor was a really lovely and friendly man who loved teaching. Sometimes I thought he should teach less and see more patients though! It seems like here they do a lot more imaging than in the UK, so when I was in the Trauma area of A&E everyone had about 3 xrays and a CT. It made me a lot better at interpreting radiology which was really useful! A&E is structured a lot differently here compared to the UK. The doctors all have a consulting room which they stay in and patients come in and out. The 5 areas in PTS are; 1) Básicas, which is kind of the equivalent of minors, but they get all the admin stuff as well as things which 'shouldn't be in A&E' 2) Polivalentes, which is medical majors 3) Trauma, which is everyone from chronic lower back pain to broken bones 4) Críticos is resus 5) Observaciones is where patients go to wait for results or wait to be admitted.

OTORINOLARINGOLOGÍA (ORL)

I also was in ORL in PTS, this is where all the ORL adult outpatients are. I was in clinic pretty much all the time. My supervisor was great again, really friendly and liked to teach. He had recently had to stop operating though, due to eyesight problems, so I only spent a few days in theatre with one of the other doctors. My supervisor was a Head and Neck specialist and I never thought I would know as much about ENT as I do after that placement. Which has turned out to be a really good thing because I have an F1 job in ENT! Apart from clinic and theatre I also spent some time in audiometry.

MEDICINA INTERNA

This was the first time I had been on a ward in Granada and it was really quite different. My supervisor was a consultant who has 8-10 patients under her care every day and she does a ward round – normally by herself – every morning. If the consultants are allocated a student or a junior residente then they all do the round together. This means that the consultants job is much more hands on than it is in the UK. They do all the writing up ward rounds, planning, prescribing and discharging.

CARDIOLOGÍA

This was the most varied placement I had, I went between Cardiac Cath Lab, the Ward, Arrhythmia clinic, pacemaker reviews and ablation. Some of these were a lot more interesting than the others, ablation is a very long and complicated procedure which I did not find very interesting to watch. But overall I learned a lot more cardiology on this placement than I did in my 3rd year cardio placement in MRI.

What have I gained from ES Placement?

I have obviously improved my Spanish a lot, not just speaking but also reading. When I first arrived I bought The Hunger Games in Spanish and started trying to read it. I was incredibly slow to start with but now I can read it quickly and easily. If I'm honest, that is one of my greatest achievements so far – it's a long book!

Aside from the language I have a much better appreciation of just how hard it is to move to another country where you don't speak the language. I have heard a lot of people complaining in the UK about how different ethnic groups stick together and speak their own language a lot. It's because it is SO MUCH EASIER. Honestly, sometimes after a long time speaking Spanish all I wanted was to speak English to someone.

Practical Information

The medical school always talks about these placements as European Studies Placements, they are actually run through Erasmus and you have to have to do all the Erasmus paperwork. This can be annoying but it does mean that you get an Erasmus Grant, which in total amounts to around a thousand Euro – although it is only released in parts, we still have to get the last 30% and it will only be released after we get back (a normal Erasmus semester will last until the end of June so they release it for the last month but unfortunately this is after we leave). It is also possible to get Spanish classes either in Manchester or in Spain covered by the grant too – but this is only reimbursed after the placement so I am still waiting to get the money for this back. The grant was also late being given to us, so prepare for a few weeks in Spain without it!

Before ERASMUS

1. Get the learning agreement sorted EARLY. It has to be signed by you, uni of Manchester and Granada. It also has to be really specific, there is a specific design you have to fill out which is available on MyPlacement. I didn't realise this and had to do it twice!

In Spain

1. It's a good idea to arrive the week before starting placement, moving country is stressful and it's nice to have time to settle in before being thrown into placement.
2. You need to go to the Facultad de Medicina (beside PTS) to get Raúl to sign your Certificate of Arrival, the grant is not released until after this
3. The Transfer of Information form is a GMC requirement that you have to do in April of 5th Year. This has to be hand signed and deliver to SWAPS in Stopford. We only realized it had to be hand signed the week before and had to pay extra for posting it. I recommend doing this early!

Useful Contacts

My email;

Just in case you have any questions. Also, if you want to get in touch with my landlord just send me a message and ask. My landlord is a really nice man called Pablo, and he has a ton of different flats he rents to Erasmus students around Granada. He also has some really big houses in the Albaicin for students too, these are between 15 and 20 beds and sounded like a great opportunity to live in a large community but there were only more expensive rooms left when I was looking.

Raúl Lugo, Secretary in the Facultad de Medicina

- medori@ugr.es

Alsa is the bus company for between cities in Spain, their website is useful

- www.alsa.es