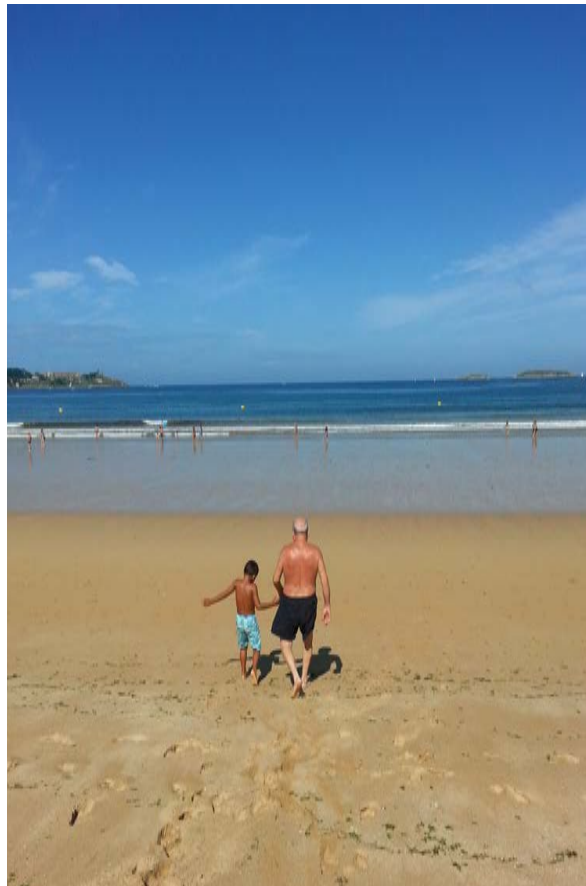


HANDBOOK: GALICIA AND OURENSE



O Océano Atlántico en Praia América (Pontevedra).
The Atlantic Ocean at Praia America (Pontevedra).

(...or how to live towards happiness...)

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Congratulations! If you are reading this guide, it means that you have already done a lot of work to participate in this program. And although the international learning component with its responsibilities and the real fun are about to begin, you need to remember some of the main reasons you probably applied in the first place: developing intercultural advancement and academic/professional progress in an international setting. This outcome depends mostly on you, since you are the first contributor and beneficiary of the experience. Therefore, being proactive -before, while overseas, and upon return- is one of the factors that will directly impact the result. Understand “being proactive” in a holistic way. It is an approach that sometimes requires you to make decisions and choices, while other times you will do nothing -as it happens in your daily life-, or you will be just an observer of everyday occurrences. There are not right or wrong choices when it comes to having a successful overseas experience. As humans we can make the best from less than ideal situations with the help of a positive attitude, ideas, strategies, and tools to better ourselves, and those around us in a constructive way and for future improvement.

While in Spain, Galicia, and Ourense you will gain a quantitative, palpable benefit from your participation in this experience. Some of these positive outcomes have been reported in areas such as language development, intercultural competence, realistic expectations of professional settings, development of professional skills, and credits towards an academic degree. In addition, you are also likely to develop intangible life skills. These take time and you will probably put them to practice without realizing it. Some of the most commonly reported ones, to name a few are a higher degree of independence, better time management, enhanced organization and social skills, an increased sense of self-confidence, flexibility towards error making while developing professional skills, awareness and respect of cultural differences, collaborative and team-working skills, and tolerance towards the Other(s).

Two key ingredients to develop these skills and other ones while concurrently achieving the program goals are flexibility and communication. All participants need to be open to changes that will happen based on circumstances and people, and stay in regular contact with the people that want the best for you. These are, particularly, your program director, your international host-family, and the professionals around you during your stay (school teachers, provider’s staff, etc...). Depending on the situation you will decide how is best to relate to your new friends and acquaintances, and important people from your life in your home country. You are embarking in a process with multiple dynamics at play, and where everybody involved has rhythms and makes progress in ways that may differ from each other. Be flexible!

For those of you going overseas for the first time for academic purposes, the stress of the first days will be eventually over after a period of adjustment, and you will soon

start to see the meaning of your experience, to understand the importance of your original decision to go abroad, and to be ready to take advantage of the opportunities that lay ahead of you. Look for balance, communicate and stay positive!

Although the structure and format of the programs offered in Ourense is similar for all the participating students regardless of where students come from, it is up to the individual participant to contribute in meaningful ways and make it a unique personal experience. Like the *Sargadelos* cups in the picture below, each final product displays different features embedded in the same model. Learn, share, grow and be yourself!



Cerámica artística de Sargadelos. Escaparate en A Coruña.
Pottery by Sargadelos. Display in A Coruña.

The Handbook

This handbook is designed to serve as a resource for those who participate in any of the programs in the city of Ourense. The content is distributed in three main areas of information: “Pre-Departure”, “On-Site”, “Before Return”, and intends to be mostly practical. Although it does not provide details of all aspects related to your program, there is a genuine attempt to cover the most representative topics.

Note that all participants need to make an intentional effort to learn, adapt and grow in order to enjoy this experience regardless of the duration of their program and/or stay. Although this handbook will not make you happy, it does present information, tools and strategies that might help you to build a unique, educational, responsible, and hopefully fun, experience. Like the different routes of the UNESCO World Heritage “Camiño de Santiago” (= “St. Jaime’s Way”) below, each of us will develop a way (= Camiño or Camino) to our destination, whatever that may be. Same as in life, the “way” is what matters, not just the outcome. What we do along the “camiño”, and with “whom” we walk the *camiño* of life makes it meaningful for all of us.



Santiago de Compostela e o Camiño de Santiago: Camiño francés principal e outros roteiros tradicionais. Patrimonio da Humanidade, UNESCO/ Santiago de Compostela and the St. James Way: The main French route and other traditional routes. UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Some of the items discussed in the handbook have been included and expanded following the helpful suggestions and updates from participating students of previous years. If you have questions, doubts, need extra information or want to share your ideas, please, do not hesitate to send us comments.

We gladly welcome your feedback to maintain the accuracy and usefulness of this guide. Please, use the email reference at the end to contact at any time.

PART I: PRE-DEPARTURE

Documentation

Being overseas requires attention to paperwork, documentation, and other useful and necessary items. Bring a valid passport, your University ID, and a credit and/or debit card. If you have an ISIC card, bring it as well. If you are in a program that involves working with students in a teaching setting (primary or secondary schools), please, bring a copy of your background check or a valid equivalent (letterhead from University Department, Program Coordinator, Director, etc...) as well.

Consider the passport as one of your most valuable items. Although losing it is not the end of the world, you want to avoid such a situation. When traveling internationally, to Spain, in Spain and outside Spain (even for a one day trip), take your passport with you at all times. Passports are the only accepted form of identification internationally (photocopies of passports are not legal forms of ID).

Bring also your University ID. It will be helpful to get discounts, promotions and special fares as a student, faculty member and/or university staff. This might be the case when applying for a gym membership, getting a reduced priced in transportation, buying a movie-ticket, entering a museum, visiting monuments and historical sites, and attending other cultural events.

As it happens in all the European Union (UE) “Schengen Treaty” countries such as Spain you do not need a visa, as long as your stay is less than 90 days. If your stay equals 90 or more days, let us know and we will assist you with instructions and documentation to apply for a VISA at a U.S Spanish Consulate. In the case of the 12-15 weeks teaching assisting stays with the C.O.S.T program, VISAS have normally been granted for up to 180 days (6 months) with a “multiple-entry” feature.

Spain is well connected internationally and domestically by plane, bus, and train, and with the expansion of low-cost airlines and speed train lines, traveling has become very affordable, ubiquitous and time efficient. If you have travel plans to other countries before, while in, or after Spain, check the website of the USA Department of State, the U.S Embassy in Madrid, or any of its offices for any updates.

Finally, consider that Spain is one of the top-3 touristic destinations worldwide with approximately 80 million people spending some time within its borders every year. In the main transportation sites (airports, major train stations,) and in touristic destinations you are likely to find people that speak English with different levels of proficiency. See to make plans in advance for both domestic and international traveling to get the best fares, to actually get a seat/spot, to reduce stress and typical traveling issues, and be flexible.

Staying in contact

For some of you, this is the first time in a home for several weeks away from home. Over the years, and mainly in College, we all develop personal relationships that demand our time and attention. This aspect is slightly more complex when living

overseas because of factors such as cultural differences, personal features and the time difference. Everybody needs to understand, you first, that one cannot be in two different places at the same time, nor should try to accomplish this impossible. Try to make the best from your life in your international destination, be flexible, and stay in contact without exhausting yourself. Everybody wants you to have a great experience and you need to be rested. Organize your time to fulfill your academic and professional responsibilities. Plan to set some time aside to enjoy yourself, and observe quiet hours at your host-family setting, which allow for reflection and quality rest.

Tips for this section

1. The time difference between the Eastern U.S and Spain is 6 hours (and most of Western Europe with the exception of the U.K, Portugal, Ireland and Iceland). Twice a year, in Spring and Fall, Spain and the U.S observe “Daylight Savings Day”, where we move the clocks one hour to adapt to winter and summer natural light. The exact day when this is done does not match between both countries, so every year and for a few days, the time difference will be 5, and 7 hours respectively.
i.e. As a reference 12:00 noon in the States, is 18:00 (6:00pm) in Spain.
2. Get used as soon as possible to the 24hrs time schedule. This structure is the norm in Western Europe, and it is dominant in everyday life.
i.e. 7:00 9:00 11:00 13:00 15:00 17:00 19:00 21:00 23:00 hours
3. Consider also the differences with “meals” regarding amounts and times when compared to the U.S. In Spain, lunch happens on weekdays between 13:00-15:00; dinner 21:00-23:00. Friday and Saturday dinners can be later. Lunch on Saturday and Sunday might extend a couple of hours. Remember this schedule when, among other needs, making plans for “eating out”. Most kitchens are closed between these main meals, though many places have “tapas” and “bocadillos”. In Ourense, a few places in the city have a kitchen with extended hours of operation (i.e. from 12.00 noon until 0.00 midnight). Finally, consider that each host-family’s schedule may be different based on their professional schedules and personal needs. Talk to your host-family to decide the best time to enjoy each other’s company over meals.
4. People/families are likely to extend eating time with a “sobremesa” period. This is when people talk about everything, and about nothing. Even if your language competency in Spanish/Galician/Portuguese is limited, and the English language skills of your host family are non-existent, you are likely to be part of this cultural *sobremesa* when it happens. Not doing so might be considered rude, and you would be missing out on a chance for cultural learning and sharing. Each host-family might be different based on schedules, context and your own schedule. Pay attention to details and as the saying goes: “while in Rome....”, and act accordingly.
5. In general, and when compared to Spanish life, the U.S gets up earlier and goes to sleep earlier. Consider this and the time difference when discussing schedules with your host-family, making plans, and when thinking about contacting the people in the US or in other countries. Also, Spanish *siesta* or post-lunch resting time, is disappearing gradually from most peoples’ lives due to changes daily demands, job patterns, and society as-a-whole. If you can enjoy one, seize the opportunity, mostly if you plan to be up until late.

Phone

A cell-phone is the best device for you to try to contact people and to be reached at any time. In addition, students are advised to get a local Spanish SIM-card and phone number during their stay. Students are responsible for this expense and for the charges derived from its use.

Check if it is convenient (and if you can) to “add” an international calling or data feature to your current U.S provider plan for some time or your whole stay in Ourense. Then, this could be disconnected/discontinued via the Internet or by phone after your arrival, while activating a new Spanish number for the rest of your stay.

The best prices (deals), and service are found locally with carriers that operate from Spain. As an international temporary visitor, you are only eligible to purchase a Pre-Paid plan with a Spanish carrier for your device (for other options, you need to be a resident, have a long-term visa -more than 90 days- and have a bank account in Spain). Some of you might arrive to mainland Europe, or to Spain a few days before coming to your final destination in Ourense. If this is your case, we suggest that you use all of your devices’ wifi capabilities, software, programs and applications to stay in contact until your Spanish phone number is operative. Free wifi is widely available in Spain with various degrees of reliability and quality in most coffee-shops, airports, malls, shopping-centers, parks, streets, and lodging facilities (hotels, hostals, etc).

If you want to get a phone-plan in Spain, you can do it on your own, or upon arrival to Ourense, your local provider staff will take you to a phone-store of carrier “Orange” to get a Pre-paid plan “Mundo”. Bring your passport to the “Orange” cell-phone store as the only valid source of identification.

Students can choose to add data (Internet) to their Pre-paid plan for a charge, or get only phone calling and SMS features, while having access to data via wifi in the places where this feature is available for free. Note that the host-families in our programs are not required to have wifi.

Cost. Expect to pay between €20 for a SIM card which then you can use to get a Pre-paid plan (depending on features such as data, #megas, #minutes in the plan, and usage), plus the cost of the device (phone) if you need one. i.e. There are different “Mundo” plans: €7, €10, etc... If you get a “Mundo” plan that costs €10, this will be deducted from the cost of the SIM card (€20), leaving €10 euro of balance to use. All “Mundo” plans can make free phone calls to anyone else that has “Mundo” plan.

Tips for this section

1. Any smartphone will work anywhere in the world IF the device is "unlocked". To verify if your device is "locked/unlocked" contact your carrier. If it is “locked” request them to unlock it since you would like to use your device while away from the U.S. Also, the wifi feature will work even without a calling/data plan or without a SIM/Mini SIM, or chip, in places where wifi is available. This might require registration (free) to an internet site prior to having access (i.e. some airports).
2. Ask also your carrier representative about placing your U.S. phone number/account line on "suspension", or “hold”. This means that: you will suspend

your U.S. service for the period you decide (starting date/end date), you will keep your phone number, and you will not pay for the period you are away (most of the companies provide this service for free or a small fee: i.e. \$10/month). We suggest the starting date for the suspension to be set a bit after your departure from the U.S (a day or two), and the reactivation date one day before your return. Sometimes, you can do this on your own from the carrier's phone application.

This "suspension" may not be possible if you are on a family plan. Do call your carrier, though, to verify #1 above, and see if #2 is possible. You will be able to use these savings to use later for your Spanish local phone number.

Internet: Wifi, Skype, LINE, WhatsApp, etc

Free wifi is widely available, and as a whole, easily accessible in Spain. Some places offer their networks for free but they are secured with a password while others have it open. If one wants to use wifi at a coffee-shop, first ask if they have it (many times there are signs/icons indicating availability), and ask for the network name and the password (if they have one). Then, order a drink or a small bite: coffee, tea, soda, mineral water, "tapas", sweets, etc. For as little as €1.20 for coffee, you can be hours connected and warm.

Host-families are not required to have Internet in the house (wired or wifi). If this feature exists, students can have access to it at no extra cost. Participants in the programs in Ourense who are 18 years or older are adults according to Spanish Legislation. Therefore, participants are responsible for the on-line use and on-line activities while connected to the Internet.

Tips for this section

1. Do bring an outlet adapter for your device/s. If you forget to bring one, or need more, your local provider staff or someone from your host family can go with you to a store to purchase this item. If you are not sure what to look for, check "euro adapter" in the Internet for options. Prices vary depending on what type of adapter you get: From €1.50-€10.00. These two are very common:



2. Consider becoming familiar and downloading to your devices these applications: Skype Wifi, Skype, LINE and WhatsApp. This will allow you to video-chat, or talk for free to other people IF they have the same applications on their devices (computers, tablets, phablets, smartphones). As some of you know, this is very useful to keep up with friends and family. LINE is one of the competitors of WhatsApp. Your Program Director (if any) and your on-site coordinator prefers LINE, and will use it to be in contact.

Finances and Money

Cash is widely used in Spain, and a preferred method of payment for small purchases in places such as coffee-shops and small businesses. Debit/Credit cards are commonly accepted, especially with the MasterCard and VISA logos (much less American Express, and very rarely Discover). Get in touch with your Bank/Credit Union customer service to verify that your card is valid overseas, and inform your financial institution that you will be away for an extended period of time. This prevents them from blocking or freezing your account/credit/debit card when the first charges from overseas start to appear in your account.

Consider getting a card with chip technology or a contactless card. The industry in Europe is ahead of the US and cards with a magnetic strip might not be longer accepted. Finally, digital credit cards or digital wallets (like Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay, Alipay, etc) are not very common though their use is increasing.

Tips for finances and money

1. Your local provider does not support payment with a credit/debit card. Your program may not include housing as part of the total cost. If this is the case, your best approach is the use the ATMs while in Spain to withdraw cash in euros.
2. You are also responsible for your independent travel and your personal expenses.
 - Your flight gets delayed and transportation to where your new family lives is not available or convenient late at night (you need a last-minute hotel room).
 - Your flight gets rerouted to another European country, or another airport in Spain and the airline is not responsible.
 - Transportation costs to Ourense from the airport of your arrival may not be part of your program (train, bus, taxi).
 - Local transportation in Ourense such as to/from the host family, to/from the school-placement, and personal use, is not part of your program.
 - Phone charges (€15-20 euros to get a local SIM-card and activate a local line).
 - You decide to eat-out at any time.
 - Medical expenses. Check with your health insurer to see whether you would need to pay first and be reimbursed later, and features of the health plan for international stays.
 - Unexpected expenses.
 - Have some cash for your first 4-5 days of expenses, in € and/or \$, or both, until you verify on-site that your debit/credit card works for purchases and/or ATM withdrawals. Bring some cash, cash is King (and Queen)!!
3. Attention to credit card fees. Every time a credit card is used to purchase a product or a service overseas, your Bank/Credit Union may assess a fee. The fee may not be priced in the item, but it shows up in the bank statement, normally as a separate charge. Also, if one withdraws money from an ATM, in addition to the fee assessed by the USA card issuer, customers also pay a fee for using the ATM. If you use an ATM, withdraw the largest daily amount allowed to minimize the impact of these fees. Consider getting a Foreign Transactions Fee Free (FTF) credit card, and become

familiar with its features. In Ourense, we have located a fee free ATM of a Credit Union: Caixa Rural. Address: Avenida de la Habana, 4.

4. When using an ATM in Spain, consider withdrawing money during banking business hours (9:00-14:00hrs). If anything happens while at the ATM, there will be someone inside the bank/credit union to assist you. Some financial institutions do also open now one or two afternoons during weekdays. If you plan on doing some travel over the weekend or holidays, get some cash a day or two before. Although ATMs are always operative, banks are closed during weekends and holidays. Finally, attention to personal safety when using ATMs, some have doors with locks, some are on the actual street. Always be aware of your surroundings.
5. The option of getting “cash-back” when you purchase items, such as groceries, in grocery stores or chain stores does not exist in Spain. In the absence of a bank account, the easiest and most common method that gives you access to your money is by using a debit/credit card at an ATM.
6. Make sure you have easy access to the phone number of your bank/credit union and your Credit/debit card company in case you need to report a lost or stolen card, or any issues derived from the use of cards. Consider the 6hrs time difference.

Many situations can happen with credit/debit cards, do contact us if you see yourself in need of assistance. We are local and we have plenty of experience internationally, we know where to go and what to do, and we will be happy to assist you.

Transportation

Open a map of Spain (Googlemaps is fairly accurate), and become familiar with the names of cities, location of cities, and location of train stations and airports that you will be using. There is no airport in Ourense, but very well connected train and bus stations. We strongly recommend using the train to come to Ourense, either from Madrid, Barcelona, Santiago or Vigo. Most of the information here pertains the use of this means of transportation. When taking the train, your final destination is Ourense (not Ourense San Francisco). Also, download maps to be used offline from Googlemaps.

The National Spanish Railway Company is Renfe. We recommend checking the website and learn about what is available and when before your arrival to Spain. At the website, choose your language option and check schedules, fares and itinerary information. The on-line website runs promotions regularly with better fares compared to the ticket offices on-site, making it cheaper to purchase train tickets on-line than at the train stations (either at the booth with a staff member or from an automated ticket vending-machines). Most major train stations in Spanish cities offer a variety of services such as cafeteria (with wifi), lockers (consignas), restroom facilities and waiting areas, making your waiting time more amenable. www.renfe.com

In case of doubt, ask at the corresponding Customer Service and/or Information desks/kiosks available at Airports and Train Stations. They are likely to speak some English.

Tips for transportation

1. Upon landing in Spain, you will be tired despite of the excitement of having arrived, and you still need to travel to Ourense. If you have done your homework, you will know how much time you have available before your next move. You may prefer to relax a little bit at the Airport before continuing your journey to Ourense, or at the main train station while trying to use their wifi service for your needs.
2. If your original flight gets rerouted to a different airport (in Spain, or elsewhere), see if the airline can take you to Santiago de Compostela Airport as your final destination. Then, follow instructions on #3b below, on how to get to Ourense. If you decide to come to Ourense right away after landing, continue reading #3. If you cannot (delays, lateness) or if you have other plans, go to #4.
3. **Do not** purchase your Renfe Train ticket to Ourense before your flight lands in Spain. Your flight might get delayed or rerouted, and remember that upon landing, you still have to exit the plane, make it through immigration, claim your luggage, pass customs, and move through the airport towards ground transportation areas, and/or an information stand. You will lose your train-ticket fare if you do not make it on time to the train station. **But**, if you are going to stay in Europe or Spain a few days before going to Ourense, save some money and purchase your train tickets beforehand online. Train tickets are available up to 60 days in advance for up to 40% in savings.

Flying to Santiago, Vigo or Porto (northern Portugal) is normally not faster, or cheaper. These are secondary airports and you are likely to be waiting for hours (layover) in a major airport before boarding a flight to either of these smaller cities. We strongly recommend landing in Madrid and then taking the long-distance train to Ourense. Still, depending on the time of the year, you might be able to find good deals.

- a) Landing in Madrid Airport. Your train station of reference in Madrid is “Madrid-Chamartin”, which is about 15km from the airport. Check a map online. All trains from Madrid to the north and northwest of Spain (Galicia and Ourense) depart from this station. Options to get to Madrid-Chamartin Train station from Madrid Airport are: Commuter Trains, Taxi, Bus or Metro. We strongly recommend Commuter Trains.

After landing and when you are cleared through Immigration, claimed your luggage and passed Airport customs, you need to go to Terminal 4. The Renfe Ticket Office and Vending Machines are at the Basement level/Lower level of this terminal. There is also a free shuttle that connects the airport terminals.

You need 2 tickets: a Commuter train ticket (“Cercanías”) from the Airport to Madrid Chamartin Train Station and a long-distance ticket from Madrid Chamartin to Ourense (not Ourense San Francisco). Ourense is where your host family resides. If you have purchased the long-distance ticket, Madrid-Ourense online beforehand, take a picture/screenshot of the ticket. While at any Train station, you can go to the vending machines and print this train ticket with the “localizador” number on top of the ticket, or you can go to the Renfe Office counter and ask them to print a ticket for you. Then, get also your 2nd ticket for the short segment: Madrid Airport-Madrid Chamartin Renfe Train station with the Commuter Trains service (=“Cercanías”). Ask at the Renfe Office counter for assistance to get this paper ticket.

Frequency and travel time between Madrid Airport and Madrid-Chamartin Renfe Train station by Commuter Train (=“Cercanías”): every 25 minutes for a trip of about 20-30 minutes. Frequency and travel time between Madrid-Chamartin Renfe Train station and Ourense Train station: 5-6 trains per day and about 4h30 minutes. These trains have a cafeteria and restrooms: drinks are very affordable in the train, but food items tend to be pricey and lack options. Tip: purchase food at Madrid Chamartin Station and enjoy it while waiting for the train or take it to-go and enjoy while in the train. Finally, Madrid-Chamartin RenfeTrain station has lockers for all luggage sizes.

Cost.

Commuter Trains (about €5) are free with the purchase of a “long distance” train ticket. But you still need to get a paper ticket from the Vending Machines or the desk. The cost for the long-distance train is about €45 for a one-way same-day ticket when purchased at the Airport Renfe Train ticket offices. The cost is the same regardless of which station you purchase in person. The fare might be lower online even though this difference is minimal if the purchase takes place on the same day of travel. If you buy in person, use your student ID to get a Tarjeta Joven (“Young Card/Pass”) that might allow you to receive discounts with Renfe. Train tickets can also be purchased and printed in vending machines at the Train stations. If you use this option the price is the same as in the ticketing office.

Taxi service is also available from Madrid Airport to downtown Madrid for about €30 flat rate. Public Bus service is also available for about €6. Metro is available for about €6, but it is inconvenient when traveling with large suitcases, and it makes frequent stops at metro stations. Check online for more information on any of these options.

Finally, Ourense is not the last stop of that train route so you will not see the name “Ourense” on the information boards at Madrid-Chamartin Train station. Rely on the information on your paper ticket that specifies the train number and the time of departure and match it with the same information on the Boards to find out the departure Platform number, and/or ask at the corresponding Customer Service and Information Desks/Offices. They are likely to speak English.

- b) Landing in Santiago de Compostela Airport. You need to go to the Train station in Santiago de Compostela. Take the city-bus or a taxi. The bus stops every 30 minutes in front of the Airport Terminal; travel time is about 30 minutes, costs about €3 one-way. The bus has a stop in front of the Train station building. Taxi is also available for about €20 flat rate.

In downtown Santiago, the bus first passes close to the Renfe Train station “Estación de Ferrocarril” making a stop at a nearby street. Then, the bus heads uphill to downtown, going back to the Renfe Train station (“Estación de Ferrocarril”) where it makes a stop in front of the station Terminal/Main Hall. At the Renfe Train Ticket office, or from the vending machines get your information and tickets to Ourense. Travel time is about 40 minutes and costs about €17 one-way for the best/fastest trains. Other trains, less regular, slower and of lower quality are about €10 and need about 90 minutes.

If you find yourself with time and some energy, venture towards old-town Santiago UNESCO World Heritage Site to enjoy the views, the walk, and relax. The Renfe Train station in Santiago de Compostela does not have lockers (consignas).

- c) Landing in Vigo Airport. You need to go to the Train station in Vigo. Take the city- bus or a taxi. Travel time is about 30 minutes. We recommend the taxi to get to one of the two Renfe train stations of Vigo: Urzaiz or Guixar. At the Renfe Train Ticket office, or vending machines get your information and tickets to Ourense. Travel times and fares depend on the type of train and range from 90 minutes to 2 hours and €10-15 for one-way. Check online beforehand to see which train station you need.
4. If you have decided to not come to Ourense right away upon landing and relax/rest for a few days in Madrid, Santiago de Compostela (or somewhere else), or because there are no more trains/buses available that day, follow these indications.

You can book your lodging from the USA or anywhere online: sites such as booking.com, or hotel.com, Airbnb, etc offer many lodging options based on your preferences.

Tips for Madrid

Find lodging around Madrid-Atocha Train station. This station has lockers for all luggage sizes. The day of your final travel by train to Ourense, you can get on another Commuting Train at Madrid-Atocha Renfe station to Madrid-Chamartin Renfe train station easily. The area of Atocha station is a cultural mecca: museums, parks, monuments, coffee-shops, restaurants... and easy transportation to other parts of the city for shopping, sites, etc

Tips for Santiago de Compostela. Finding lodging in downtown Santiago is easy. There are many hostels and hotels that cater to the thousands of pilgrims that walk the “Camino de Santiago” every month, travelers and tourists alike.

For more details on transportation about Madrid and Santiago go back to #3.

5. “Jet lag”: try to get used to the local time as soon as possible. One way to help is by not sleeping until it is nighttime at your local destination. Stay hydrated drinking water and natural juices. Stay away from caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, sodas) and alcoholic beverages since they increase dehydration. This applies to all your transportation segments (plane, bus, train) until you get to your final destination.
6. Allow plenty of time between travel segments and to commute to/from train stations. If time is in your side, you will be less stressed.
7. Plenty of resources are available for you from information desks and customer service representatives at airports, train stations, and other professionals who are likely to speak English to a certain degree of quality. Also, other travelers such as yourself can be very helpful. In case of doubt, ask for help!

When you know your final arrangements, please contact your local provider via LINE/email to offer an update of your traveling schedule, mainly, your arrival time to Ourense, so that your host-family or your local provider can welcome you at the train or bus station.

Packing

Spain is a modern country where you can find anything you need when it comes to clothing, shoes, personal items, and more. Your regular brands and other good or better quality alternatives are available as well. Your host-family will do your laundry as many as two (2) times per week, one with whites and one with colors. Consider this when thinking about what to bring to Spain. In addition, you may find some interesting items to buy in Spain for you and/or for family and/or friends. Leave some room in your luggage: you do not need to stuff your suitcases to come to Spain.

Tips for packing

1. Take a large suitcase (max 23 kg or about 46 lbs. IATA norms), and take a small/medium carry-on. Place the carry-on inside the large suitcase, packing both the area around the carry-on and the carry-on. This combo is checked-in at the airport so that the airline will transport it from departure to destination. When in Spain, you will have a carry-on for your short trips plus extra space for your European “goodies” at the end of the program. Check the airlines information on restrictions and other baggage allowances.
2. If you want to enjoy the “hot springs” in Ourense, or the coastal Iberian sun at the beaches (depending on where and when you travel), you probably want to have a swimming suit, flip-flops and sun lotion. You can also purchase these in Ourense.
3. Save space and do not bring a towel, a hair-dryer or an umbrella since host-families will have these items available. Maybe bring a small towel for personal use while traveling. Avoid traveling with jewelry and/or “hanging” items on you. Put them in your personal bag.
4. Pack a set of clean clothes in your plane carry-on/bag. Things do happen: your luggage may not come until hours/days after your arrival to Spain, and you will find yourself in need of clean clothes. If you prefer not to be stressed about this, take with you in the plane a pair of clean socks, a t-shirt, underwear and comfortable pants (and an empty plastic bag for the used items), and any other personal items you use regularly (a toothbrush, tooth paste, etc...).
5. Bring any medications you may need or a doctor’s prescription/photo with the name and/or the information of your medications with you or in the carry-on/bag.
6. Check the weather! And in general, bring a raincoat, and a winter coat (unless you are coming between May-September). You can also purchase these items in Ourense.

What is happening?

We know you are busy with your academic, personal and/or professional life. However, since you are going to be living overseas for some weeks, try to follow the local news and get a sense of the current social, economic, and cultural events/topics of Spain. If you are not familiar with the language, just check the headlines from on-line newspapers and related webpages. This information will guide your expectations and will help make your transition easier, helping to control culture shock.

- www.laregion.es

- www.lavozdegalicia.es

- www.farodevigo.es

- www.rtve.es

- Spain: www.elpais.es (available in English)

PART II: ON-SITE

Galicia (fast facts)

- Galicia is one of the 17 autonomous communities (regions) of Spain. It comprises four provinces, A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense and Pontevedra. There are seven cities in Galicia with a population of more than 80.000 people: Vigo, A Coruña, Ourense, Santiago de Compostela, Pontevedra, O Ferrol and Lugo. The autonomous government of Galicia (established in April 1981) is called the "Xunta de Galicia". The three branches of government: Executive (the Xunta de Galicia), Legislative (the Galician Parliament), and Judicial (the High Court of Galicia), are headquartered in Santiago de Compostela, the capital of the region.



Distribution of the four provinces in Galicia (bold lines) with municipalities (Ourense in red).

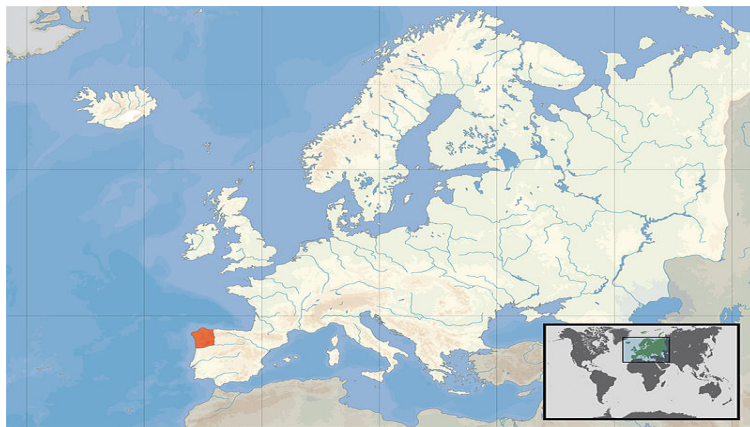


Galicia, Northern Portugal and Western Spain (NASA).

- Galicia has five cathedrals, the most famous being in Santiago de Compostela. This is also the last stop of the “St. James Way” (Camiño de Santiago, O Camiño, El Camino): a pilgrimage route that goes East-West through northern Spain and comes from different parts of Europe, dating back to the Middle Ages. In the last 30 years, the Camiño has achieved international fame again attracting hundreds of thousands of people every year from all over the world. The Camiño is not only for tourists but also for all kinds of people with a cultural, spiritual, adventurous or personal goal.
- From the Northwest port town of A Coruña, a Spanish Armada departed during the attempted invasion of England in 1588. In 1589, terrible weather conditions scattered the Spanish fleet which was easy prey for the English navy and resulted in the almost total destruction of the Spanish Armada. Many of the ships did in fact survive the English onslaught, but were lost or destroyed as they headed unintentionally hundreds of miles off course into the North Sea, around Scotland and Ireland.
- Galicia has many rivers, most of them quite small, and is known throughout the rest of Spain as “the land of a thousand rivers”. The largest and longest is Miño River, which splits Galicia in its course from Northeast to Southwest, creating a natural border between Spain and Portugal before entering the Atlantic Ocean. Miño River is depicted in the Galician Regional flag as a blue diagonal line.

- Galicia's most popular regional wines are the five (5) certifications of origin: Albariño, Ribeiro, Ribeira Sacra, Valdeorras and Monterrey. The province of Ourense hosts four of these quality-labeled wine certifications. Ribeiro wines were in the ships of Christopher Columbus' 1492 trip that led to the "discovery" of the "Americas". Upon return to Europe, one of Columbus' ships docked in Baiona (Pontevedra/Galicia), a second one arrived to Lisbon (Portugal) and the third one never made it back. These two ports were the first in the "Old World" to learn about the existence of "unknown" lands to the Europeans across the Atlantic.
- Argentina's capital city, Buenos Aires, has the largest single city population of Galicians anywhere in the world. In Galician popular culture, Buenos Aires is deemed to be the "fifth province" due to migration in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Despite his efforts to destroy the concepts of regional identity, language and culture during his dictatorship of almost 40 years (1939-1975), General Francisco Franco was in fact from Galicia. The founder of the Spanish Socialist Party, Pablo Iglesias, at the end of the 19th century, is also from Galicia, and was born and raised in the same town as Franco (O Ferrol/El Ferrol).
- Contemporary Galicia is connected with a number of civilizations that also shaped the Iberian Peninsula identity and its ways of being and doing for centuries. Among them, you can find features of Pre-Roman (Celtic), Roman, Germanic, Visigoth, Arabic/Muslim, Christian and Jewish cultures in different cultural traits, from monuments, to food, to architecture, urban planning, landscaping, and trade. Ourense province ranks 3 out of 50 provinces in Spain in the category of number of historical sites/monuments.
- Not so long ago, as happened in many areas in the world, Galicia was a kingdom with its own dynasty and royal family. And as it also happens worldwide, you can still see traces of that past in present life Galicia.

Adapted from: <http://www.galiciaguide.com/Galicia-facts.html>



Antigo Reino de Galicia, século X / Old Kingdom of Galicia in the 10th century A.D.

The Host-City: Ourense

Your host country is Spain, integrated by 17 Autonomous Communities (Regions) and 2 Autonomous cities in Northern Africa (Ceuta and Melilla). These regions are at the same time integrated by Provinces, of which there are 50 in the country. Ourense is the city-capital of a Province of the same name located in the region of Galicia. In Galicia, there are 4 Provinces: A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense and Pontevedra.

Ourense has a population of about 106,000 (2014) making it the third largest of Galicia after Vigo and A Coruña. In 2016, 6% of the population was of foreign origin.

Ourense is crossed by Miño River, the largest and longest river in Galicia, although there is a total of four rivers that merge in the city area. The surrounding mountains display forests of mainly oak and pine trees. Many locals travel to the Atlantic coast of Galicia in June-September: the Rías Baixas on the southwest and the Rías Altas on the northwest, both between 1-2 hours away by car, and to Portugal. Many people have family or property in the tiny villages of the countryside and/or the coastal towns which see a huge population increase in the days and periods of vacation.

One of the main touristic attractions of the city is related to the presence of numerous hot springs as Ourense holds one of the greatest amounts of geothermal water in Europe, second only to Budapest (Hungary). Most of the springs in and near Ourense are free of charge, and can be reached by city-bus or walking. The origin of this geothermal activity is the existence of water (and rainwater) being heated at about 3km down surfacing in the area through fractures in the bedrock creating these hot springs with mineral and medicinal waters in different parts of the city-area. The Municipality of Ourense is one of the founding members of the EHTTA (European Historic Thermal Towns Association). See pics at: <https://ehdda.eu/portal/ourense/>



The economy of the city/province is predominantly depending of the service sector, mostly administrative (local, regional and national government), educational and health related. Other relevant industries are construction, textile factories and fashion designers, automotive suppliers and car parts, agriculture, cattle, poultry and derivatives, wine, hospitality business and tourism.

Ourense: Weather Essentials

Altitude: 143 meters above sea level

Latitude: 42° 19' 31" N - Longitude: 7° 51' 35" W

The city is in the heart of a valley, with a microclimate that brings hot dry summers and cold winters with temperatures that may fall below zero at night. Spring and Fall are very temperate, with regular transitions between seasons in terms of temperatures and colors. For any weather related information, check the Agencia Estatal de Meteorología (AEMET) site: www.aemet.es and this popular Czech site for coastline weather originally created with surfers in mind: www.windguru.cz/es

It is recommended that students have clothing and shoes appropriate for cold weather (except May-October), rain and walking. Do not forget that most of your daily transportation will be on foot, so be prepared to enjoy walking!

See this table for Ourense Climate Essentials (1972-2018), in Celsius and metric system:

Mes / Month	Xan	Feb	Mar	Abr	Mai	Xuñ	Xul	Ago	Set	Out	Nov	Dec	Ano / Year
Record high	22.0	25.0	30.6	32.9	37.4	40.9	42.6	42.7	41.2	34.9	26.3	22.4	42.6
Average highs °C	12.7	15.1	18.7	19.8	22.9	27.5	30.2	30.6	27.5	21.7	15.9	12.8	21.3
Daily mean °C	8.0	9.2	11.9	13.3	16.2	20.2	22.5	22.6	19.9	15.6	11.1	8.5	14.9
Average low °C	3.4	3.2	5.0	6.7	9.5	12.8	14.8	14.5	12.3	9.6	6.3	4.1	8.5
Record low °C	-7	-8	-6.8	-3.2	-0.4	2.4	6.4	1.5	3	-3	-6.8	-8	-8
Average precipitation mm	89	66	59	72	64	36	20	22	57	112	103	112	811
Average precipitation days (≥ 1 mm)	10.2	8.6	8.4	11.1	9.5	4.6	2.9	3.3	5.8	10.4	10.5	11.2	96.9
Mean monthly sunshine hours	87	115	166	180	205	249	278	268	204	138	84	70	2,052

Highlights:

- Lots of blue skies every month, at least 2/3 of days per month, is not cloudy.
- Every year it rains approx. 96 days or 25% of the days, on average.
- Ourense gets 2,052 hours of sunshine per year.

Ourense: Transportation

To/From the city

The city is a transportation hub for road and rail communications in Galicia and from Galicia to the rest of Spain and Portugal. It is served by the national railroad service operated by Renfe, featuring direct routes to Vigo, Santiago de Compostela and A Coruña, and other Spanish cities such as Madrid, Barcelona and Bilbao. Ask your host family and friends for help and advice. For information on schedules and fares you can go directly to the train stations (Estación de tren/ferrocarril) during business hours, check the local newspapers, check an updated online map of Spain railroads, or visit Renfe's website: www.renfe.com

The bus station (Estación de autobuses) operates many national and international routes. Check the local newspaper and ask your family and friends for help and advice. Significant companies are www.avanzabus.com www.monbus.es www.dainco.es www.alsa.es

In general, it is recommended to travel by train whenever available in long (i.e. Ourense-Madrid), and short distances (i.e. Ourense-Santiago, Ourense-A Coruña, Ourense-Vigo, Ourense-Vigo-Porto). For local destinations in Galicia, small towns in northern Portugal, and other parts of Spain where there is no direct train service, look up your bus options, or a combo of train and bus. ie. For Salamanca, Cáceres, Mérida, Sevilla, the bus is a good alternative. Another option is a car-sharing/car-pooling service. This is an option for which you need to register online with the providers. A well-known one is BlablaCar: www.blablacar.com

For European destinations, try to use low-cost airlines from Galician airports (mainly Santiago), Porto "Sá Carneiro" Airport in northern Portugal, or Madrid "Barajas" Airport, and for domestic destinations you may be able to find great deals to fly-out towards the Canary Islands, Málaga, Alicante, etc...

In the city

Ourense is a very walkable city. For most of your daily routines, you will walk at most for 30 minutes to get to any of your destinations. Public transportation is available (bus), as well as taxis. We encourage students to get a city bus-pass to when using the bus system. To get a bus pass, bring your Passport and cash, and a local staff member or someone from your host family will assist you going to the automated machines at any branch of "Abanca", the banking institution that manages the concession that operates this service.

Get good shoes/boots for your daily walking routine before or upon arrival to the city. Your feet need to stay healthy!

Ourense: What to do?

As soon as you get to your final destination, see if there is a chance to integrate part of your life back home with your life abroad. One way of doing this is by participating in activities and events available in Ourense. Whatever it is you do, try and find a team, a club, a site, or a venue that relates to your interests. Or maybe you want to try something new and unique. A few events in the city and nearby area are:

- Oct-Dec: Outono Fotográfico (Photography Exhibition)
- November: OUFF (Ourense Film Festival), Carreira de San Martiño (10K Race), and “San Martiño” Day: Chesnuts and Bonfires
- December: Christmas related activities & MOTI (Mostra de Teatro Infantil) / Theater for Kids)
- January: “Three Kings” Parade
- February: “Antroido” Carnival/Mardi Gras
- March: Women’s Day, several events throughout the month
- April: Easter related activities and events
- May: Labor Day, “Día de Os Maios” (street art creations), and “Día das Letras Galegas” (Galician Writers’ Day)
- May-June: Festa do Boi (Bull’s Fair)
- June: Corpus Christi related events. City festivities.
- June: Hogueras de San Juan (Bonfires)
- August: MITEU (Mostra Internacional de Teatro Universitario/ International Festival of University Theatre)
- Jan-Feb & May-Jul: Rebaixas (Sales)
- Ourense Traditional street market: the 7 and 17 of every month

Your host-family, classmates and local provider staff will be happy to share ideas with you. Check the printed or on-line press for daily events, local radio and TV for updated information: monthly flea-markets, live music, film screenings in original version, etc

- “La Región” (Ourense), also <http://www.laregion.es/>
- “Faro de Vigo (Ourense edition), also <http://www.farodevigo.es>
- “La Voz de Galicia” (Ourense edition), also <http://www.lavozdegalicia.es/>



Festa dos Maios. Ourense, Maio.

“Os Maios” celebration. Ourense, May.

Ourense: Where to go?

Ourense offers a variety of activities, that unlike Madrid or Barcelona, or large cities, you can enjoy in less than 1 hour travel distance. Depending on the season, the offer of leisure activities goes from doing outdoor sports, to participating in seasonal festivals, races, river canyon tours, winery tours, hiking, kayaking, skiing, astronomy observations, tours of medieval monasteries, biking, night-life events, afternoon of tapas and cafés, sun-bathing at world class beaches, museum visits, UNESCO World Heritage sites, UNESCO Biosphere Reserves and National Parks. More routine activities are available in places such as movie theaters, gyms, free outdoor spas/hostsprings or pools. i.e: Teatro Principal, Centro Comercial Ponte Vella, Sala Berlin and the Auditorio are venues where one can enjoy movies, theatre, classical music concerts, and other musical and art related events.

Due to the proximity of Ourense to other cities, some interesting activities are available in nearby locations such as Vigo, Santiago de Compostela, A Coruña, Lugo and Pontevedra. These cities can be easily reached by train (about 1 hour), or bus.

Madrid is 5 hours away by train and the airports of Vigo, Santiago, A Coruña and Porto, serve locations both in Spain and International destinations where one can travel to with low-cost airlines. These are very popular and when/if planning in advance, you can find amazing deals.

You just need time to get information (ask your host-family, the local provider staff, your new friends, uncle/aunt Google), and time to enjoy these activities, and yeah, a bit of money depending on your interest. When being away from Ourense, you need your original passport with you at all times, it is the only valid form of identification away from the U.S. Finally, check your Program “Calendar/Itinerary” to see the holidays and non-school days that apply to the weeks you will be in Ourense.



Termas no Río Miño. Ourense, Xuño / Hot Springs, Miño River. Ourense, June.

Living in Ourense: Safety, meals, water and more

There is a University Campus in the city that host about 6,000 students. This campus, embedded in the Universidad de Vigo system (Vigo-Pontevedra and Ourense), and the neighboring areas attracts many young people of college age from/to the city. If you want to explore a more dynamic Spanish college town, visit historic Santiago de Compostela, or Salamanca. These two famous University towns boast more than 25,000 students each, and their campuses attract a variety of students from many countries.

There are plenty of coffee-shops (cafeterías), patios and outdoor places where you can relax with a cup of coffee, tea, soda or any drink of your choice. More and more places feature Internet services (wifi) everywhere in town, even in the city parks. Some of the “Casco Vello” (“Old Town”) cafeterías, bars and restaurants, and in residential areas as well, are open from the early hours of the day until late at night.

Ourense is a comfortable city, where the cost of living is very affordable and with one of the lowest crime rates in Western Europe, when compared to similar cities of the same size.

Talk about your likes and preferences so that you can get advice about sites and spots that you may enjoy: vegetarian restaurants, Asian style restaurants, breweries or places that specialized in beer and/or wine products. Although Galicia is considered to be “pork-country” and you will be able to enjoy all pork-related products here (pig ears, pig tail, etc), meat (beef) and poultry items, and fish and seafood are abundant and affordable due to the geographical location of the region, local culture and demand. In general, tap water is potable unless your family says otherwise (if they live in a building with old water pipes), and bottled water (mineral water/spring water) is very affordable and a common item to order in one of the many cafeterías.

If you want to eat-out, for lunch time, you will see signs and flyers advertising “Menú del día”, or “Plato del Día”. “Menú” is between 9-11€ (more in weekends), and consists of a first and second course, and dessert. Some places include bread, a drink, and coffee in the price, but others do not. “Plato del Día” is normally cheaper and consists of one course and again, sometimes bread, a drink, and coffee are included. Check first. “Buffets” are becoming more and more popular as well and there are a few in Ourense. Expect kitchens to operate between 13:00-16.00 hrs.

For dinner time, you have your regular restaurants, bares de tapas, pizza places, etc. Weekends is a popular time for locals to hop from tapas to tapas going to different places in one evening. Expect kitchens to work between 21.00-24.00 hrs and later. A few places have extended hours kitchens, from 12.00 noon to 0.00 midnight.

Tipping is not expected when you go out to restaurants, bars or cafeterías. The staff in the hospitality industry gets a regular salary and does not rely on tips. However, if you enjoyed the service and you feel like tipping, most people will gladly accept it. i.e: A typical example for a restaurant. A final check comes for two people and the total is €20.20. For the convenience, a customer may as well leave €21.00 or €22.00. This practice is welcome but not expected either.

Culture Shock: Is It Me?

Culture shock (CS) can be defined as the personal disorientation one may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to contexts such as traveling, moving between social environments, etc. Four main different phases have been identified as part of CS: honeymoon, frustration, adjustment, and mastery.

Although cultural differences between Spain and Galicia, when compared to the USA, are not exactly large, individuals react and adjust differently. So you need to be prepared for culture shock, which is expected to happen at some point and with some degree. Understand and accept the fact that many aspects are going to be different from your life in your home country. Be comfortable with the idea of experiencing new food items, new drinks, as well as new ways of socializing and, expectations and situations. It is ok to not feel comfortable, and each person will react differently. Some of the reported problems of CS include language barrier, information overload, homesickness, boredom, dependency, etc

Tip for this section

1. Just because you are from the USA, it does not mean that you will agree with your government decisions in domestic and international affairs, nor that you are aware of these actions. The USA is a huge, diverse country where a multiplicity of ideas, situations and interests converge. That same diverse, and many times contradictory reality, applies to Europe, Spain and Galicia. If you find yourself in a situation where the conversation seems to go nowhere, request and offer respect for different ideas, and get some fresh air!!
2. In Spain, you will see that people converse loudly, use body language a lot and talk very close to each other when compared to the USA.... It is not about you, the concept of physical space in Spain does not match the one expected in the USA standard culture. People get physically close when conversing face-to-face.
3. Make an effort to appreciate the local culture and landscape, and to learn and share with people aspects of your own culture. Try to put in perspective any negative thoughts that may cross your mind. Remember to be flexible, to communicate and to stay positive.

For more information on culture shock, please, check these sites:

- GVSU has excellent information about the topic
<http://www.gvsu.edu/istudents/culture-shock-20.htm>
- CESA. "dealing with culture shock." Management Entity: Office of International Research, Education, and Development. Web. 29 Sept. 2009.
<http://www.oired.vt.edu/cesa/currentstudents/cs_culturalshock.htm>

Local Provider: Receiving Site Coordination

Your provider is D3N3, a local family-own company founded in 2016. The people working of D3N3 have traveled internationally (visited and stayed) to more than 40 countries, are connected through a network of friends, colleagues, and partner companies/customers in Spain, northern Portugal, and many other places. Students are likely to meet the following people from D3N3 during their stay in Ourense: Dosi, Rosa and Alberto.

Dosi, manager of your local provider company, is a Physics major that founded his first start-up in the mid 1990's with the goal of promoting and developing cultural and leisure activities. Since then, he has been involved in numerous activities from summer camps, to professional science gatherings, and astronomy events, to name a few. He has been cooperating with international programs since 2014, and in 2016, a new company "D3N3" (read: "De tres en tres") was created to continue providing these professional services. Dosi speaks Galician, Spanish, English and some Portuguese and German.

Rosa is a professional photojournalist, blogger, and History major. She worked in the field of photojournalism for more than 25 years. Her photography job has been exhibited numerous times, earned her a few awards, and took her to places as diverse and apart as Mexico, Brazil, or refugee camps in northern Africa. In the recent past, she has taught photography at the University of Santiago de Compostela and she continues to do that in Ourense at different venues. Rosa joined D3N3 in 2016. She speaks Galician, Spanish, French and some Portuguese and English.

Alberto is a Translator and Interpreter of English/Spanish/Galician, with specializations and years of experience in the medical field and U.S. taxation. He is an English Philology major and has taught in U.S Universities and Colleges for almost 20 years. In 2012, he had his first study abroad experience as Program Director in Trujillo (Spain), and he loved the challenges and opportunities of the program. Since then, Alberto has redirected his professional interests towards the never-boring field of study abroad and internships, trying to help students developed their cultural competence, awareness and professional/academic skills during their stays in Spain. He speaks Galician, Spanish, English, and some Portuguese and French.

Ourense: Housing

You will be living with a Spanish family where you will have your own room. Your stay includes three (3) meals, seven (7) days a week, linen, blankets and towels, and laundry twice a week (if needed). Generally, since your family will cook for everybody, you will not have access to the kitchen to cook for yourself, though some families will love it if students offer to cook for everybody from time to time. Even though living with a family brings some limitations, many students report their homestay as a highlight of their time in Spain!

Homestays and flats are carefully screened. All accommodations are safe, clean, centrally located, or easily accessible by public transportation.

Host-Family and Students Rights and Responsibilities (#1 through #8, below)

Due to cultural differences, lifestyle and expectations, misunderstandings can happen between the student and the host family. In order to minimize these issues, we have prepared a list of rights and obligations that both students and host families adhere to and accept. This list has been prepared to clarify responsibilities and help to avoid situations related to the listed items. Both students and host families receive a copy of this document.

All parties are asked to promote communication and hold a flexible and positive attitude when dealing with any of these situations. Host-families and students are expected to show a reasonable and open attitude at all times so that the experience of living together is both educational and beneficial for everybody.

If the host family and/or the student realize that the presence of a third party, a mediator, can be beneficial, do not hesitate to use this option. At D3N3, we would be happy to contribute if these situations were to occur, as it has happened in the past.

1. Conditions of the stay

General. The student will have a private room, with natural light (window/s), a desk or study-table, a chair, a closet, a shelf/es and appropriate lighting features. The family will not keep any personal items in this room. If a student plans to be absent at any given day/night, s/he should tell the family in advance. If the family needs to alter this routine to attend to other needs, they are asked to contact the student as well. Host-families and students should talk to find the best way to communicate with each other: phone-calls, SMS, Line, WhatsApp, etc...

Meals. The stay includes full board: three meals per day, seven days a week. Students must be on time for meals unless there is a different agreement with the host-family or need based on schedules. If a fieldtrip is planned, the student can have breakfast the morning of departure and dinner the day of arrival in case of need. If/when students travel independently, s/he should inform the family, the Program Director, and the local provider's staff using the corresponding form ("Independent Travel form"). There are no reimbursements or refunds for the days that you do not eat

and/or sleep with your host-family. These include programmed cultural trips, your own independent travels, or someone coming to visit you.

In general, families will prepare a variety of food items that will include an abundance of fruit and vegetables. Host-families will take into consideration any special dietary needs such as vegetarian diets, or allergies to any products based on the information you provided in the Housing Questionnaire. This information is made available to the families beforehand to make sure they can accommodate this need. Upon arrival to the host-family setting, students are encouraged to communicate with their host family about any aspect related to the student's and the family's well-being that they deem relevant.

Other. If the family plans to be absent from the house, they need to contact the student. The host family will leave food for the student, and inform about where s/he can find it. Students can have access to the fridge and with the host-family permission, students can buy and keep in the fridge small items such as yoghurt, refreshments, etc... Host-families are not responsible for buying these small items beyond the regular use for daily meals.

Host-families may, if the schedules and the situation allow it, invite students to celebrations, parties, and/or family events, though these invitations are not required or expected. Students may kindly reject these invitations as well. As a reminder, students are not here on vacation, but participating in a University academic program compounded by several aspects that involve academic work and cultural development, each of them with different responsibilities and duties. All of us, students included, can contribute to have healthy working and studying habits, as well as good resting and leisure activities for the benefit of program participants, host-families and students, and their performance.

2. Personal and Medical Care, and Laundry

Students have access to the shared family bathroom, and have the right to, at least, one hot shower per day. If the broiler needs to be turned on so that the student can shower, we ask the host-families to teach the student how to do it in case a responsible person from the family is absent.

The student is responsible for organizing and maintaining his/her private room tidy and according to the standards of the family. Host-families and students are encouraged to communicate about this aspect and find an arrangement that satisfies both of them. Students are not allowed to eat in the bedroom or to keep perishable items there. Host-families provide linen, blankets, and towels. Students have the right to at least having their laundry done twice (2 times) a week, one color and one of whites. Host-families will tell students about the next laundry day. Clean bed linen will be provided at least once a week. Finally, it is asked that items such as a hair dryer, a beach towel, an umbrella and/or other items of frequent use are available for the students based on demand/need.

If a student needs medical attention, we ask students to request assistance from their host-family first, and to inform the Program Director asap. Host-families are familiar with the Spanish universal public health system, one of the best in the world, and any issue might just be solved with a visit to the pharmacy to get a prescribed medication or over-the-counter drugs, and/or a visit to a family doctor. If necessary, your host-family, your Program Director and/or local provider staff will accompany you a medical facility (reference at the end of this guide). Students are encouraged to consult with their health insurance plan from the U.S about the procedure for payment and/or reimbursement of medical expenses for an international stay such as this.

3. Staying in Contact: Phone and Internet at the Host-Family

(See Pre-Departure section: “Staying in contact”, for additional information)

Phone: Students have cell-phones and/or electronic devices that can be used to be connected. Students are not allowed to use the landline from the house (if there is one) to make international phone calls. Students can receive phone calls to the house landline (if there is one), as long as these phone calls are not very long. In the case of a student getting an international phone call, the student needs to inform the family and must pay attention to the time difference, and in general, students are asked to avoid such phone calls after 23:00 (11:00 pm). Host families are asked to share as soon as possible the number of the landline, if there is one, and/or the cell-phone number that they will decide to use to facilitate the communication among all of the parties.

Internet: Host families are not required to have Internet in the house (wired or wifi). So far, all the host-families that have participated in the program have wifi in their households. If this feature exists, students can have access to it at no extra cost. Participating students are adults according to the Spanish legislation; therefore, students are responsible for their use and activities when connected to the Internet.

4. Keys

Host-families give students a set of keys to access the house/apartment. In most cases this involves two keys, one for the street door, and a second one for the apartment door. Keys must be returned at the end of the program, or if the student changes host-families. If the student loses the keys and the lock needs to be replaced, the student will be responsible for this extra cost.

5. Guidelines and Tips: Do's and Don'ts? And Schedules

For many students, going overseas implies living in a family setting again for the first time in years. Most U.S students that are in College live in dorms or share an apartment, and in general may have not lived in a family setting for some time. In addition, you will be residing with a family in a culture which is different compared to the U.S. Even though it is possible to find many affinities, consider the following to make your adjustment and the host family's one as smooth as possible:

- a) When you are done with your meals (lunch, dinner), do not leave the table right away. If, as advised, you paid attention the first days, you might have noticed that your family extends meals time with conversing, or sharing time at the table. Try to be part of this relax time, and do not be rude disappearing.
- b) If/when you are excused from the table, follow the family practice, whichever that is: place it in the sink, dishwasher, or just leave your used plate at the table.
- c) #1 and #2 above are crucial if there are children in the family. Your presence is not to disrupt the family routines but to contribute to it in a meaningful way. Be a model of behavior for kids. No matter how much in a hurry you are to attend that important need you might have: kids first.
- d) Your host-family setting is not a hotel. Family members are not at your service. Make them part of your conversations and your life.
- e) Students are not at the service of the family either. You are not to do baby-sitting, or watch over small kids alone unless it is requested in case of need or you have permission from the family. Sometimes there are unexpected needs: use your common sense and try to help if you are asked and if it sounds reasonable.
- f) Some families will be happy to compensate students for English language classes for their kids. Any arrangements for such an activity are to be conducted between the family and yourself. If you reach a deal, commit and follow through.
- g) Students are free to come and go as they please. There is no curfew, but when coming back late at night inform your host-family, respect the family's quiet time, and minimize your noise at all times.
- h) It is absolutely forbidden to have or consume illegal drugs in the host-family place, and during your participation in the program.
- i) Use resources such as water and energy responsibly. Electricity is much more expensive in Spain compared to the U.S. Turn the lights off when exiting a room.
- j) Exchange phone numbers or contact info to facilitate communication.
- k) Try to spend quality time with your host-family. Minimize your time using the Internet at the host-house (if available) to develop meaningful relations.
- l) Feel free to politely reject an invitation for any host-family trip or gathering. If the family makes such plans and you are invite it, understand that there might be a modification or cancelation of these plans due to unexpected factors. Do not complain and play it by ear!
- m) Do not rely only and all the time on online communication to talk to your host-family. i.e. If you are in your room, and you want to communicate with your host-family, make sure that they are not at home before you send a message with your cellphone. If they are at home, try to talk face-to-face with whoever you are trying to communicate. In Spanish culture, sending a message from your room to your host-mom/dad if they are in the apartment/flat, is childish and rude. Try to convey messages face-to-face first even if there is a language barrier, and only after trying verbal communication, go ahead and try to communicate in writing.
- n) Bathroom etiquette. For both male and female students. Sit down when using the toilet and leave the sit down after you are done. Do not dispose of garbage, plastic in the toilet. Place sanitary pads, tampons and similar items in the trash bin. In

general, try to leave the bathroom in the same condition as when you entered it. If you have questions about any of this, ask your host-family.

- o) Use your cell-phone at the dining table only for apps such as google translate to help you communicate with your host-family. Again, observe your host-family routines and follow suit.

6. House Visits

As a general rule, students are not allowed to have visitors in the host-family house. However, this depends on each of the host-families. If students receive permission from the host-family to have friends over, students are asked that these visits do not extend into late at night. Any overnight stay needs to be approved by the host-family. If a family member or a friend from outside Ourense comes to visit, they are not allowed to spend the night at the host-family's house. However, the student can stay with his/her visitors at a hotel, hostel, etc as long as they inform the host-family in advance. We encourage students to communicate with their host-family first to inquire about their preferences, and to inform families so they know what to expect.

A good quality hotel room in Ourense fares at an average of €40-50 per night.

7. Host-family: Issues

Students are guests in the host country but they need to make an effort to adapt to the new culture. Spain is a Western, modern and in many aspects similar country to the U.S and its European counterparts. However, there are still significant differences, some visible, some intangible that shape its culture and expectations. Due to these, misunderstandings can happen between the student and the host family. If a case like this were to happen, the host-family and/or the student must contact the Program Director and/or a local provider staff to resolve any miscommunication, and to create viable channels where communication is restored based on trust and respect. Only when a satisfactory solution for all the parties is achieved through mediation, healthy communication can be restored. In rare circumstances, the differences are impossible to reconcile and one of the parties may wish for a change. This could be a change of host-family because the student prefers to stop his/her stay, or because the host-family prefers not to continue hosting the student. We want to avoid these outcomes and for that, good communication between everyone is vital.

8. Notes

- a) If the student is working in his/her room, s/he is allowed to use the lights in the room if the available natural light is not enough, or if s/he is studying at night.
- b) Host-families are asked to not limit the spaces available to the student in the apartment: using the living-room to rest, watch TV, or studying as long as it is at reasonable times, or when it is not being used by the family, access to the kitchen to get a snack, a drink, etc...
- c) Students might be made responsible for any property damages that might occur during his/her stay in the apartment.
- d) At the end of the program, students will be asked to complete an evaluation where they can report about their experience. We will also ask host-families for their

feedback a few times during the program. Comments and suggestions from both will help us improve the experience for all the parties involved and to implement changes if necessary.

- e) We all wish that the students' and families' experience is beneficial. To make this happen, please do not hesitate to contact your local provider staff at any time during the program to ask for/offers ideas, advice, assistance, and in general, any comment or observation that will help all of us improve, and repeat another year.
- f) Some students have low-Spanish language skills or speak only English. We ask the host-families to try to facilitate communication using any language they are familiar with (including English and Galician) as much as possible. If the student speaks Spanish, we ask the host-families to use both languages.
- g) If, at the end of the program, the student wishes to stay for a longer period of time with the family, s/he should discuss this request with the corresponding family and reach an agreement to compensate the host-family on his/her own account based on the terms they agree. If the mediation of your local provider staff can be useful, we will be happy to assist.
- h) Mail/Receiving packages. Please, use the mailing address from your host family and the name of one of your host members for incoming mail (packages as well). Include: "Host Person Full Name" and Attention to: "Your name". Note that any package that is received in Spain will incur in extra fees from Customs, and these can be very hefty. Consider whether the items you are receiving are worth paying an extra \$20, or \$30 just to get them. Your host family will help you in the process of receiving these shipments but you are responsible for the cost. Please, be proactive and follow up with your host family for the payment.

Your local provider's goal is to offer the student the opportunity to become and feel like a family member, and to be integrated in the daily life of the family. We want to collaborate with families that are interested in knowing the students and their culture, and that are available to talk to the student to help them learn and be familiar with the diverse aspects of Galician and Spanish culture, and in particular about life in Galicia. We are interested in families that offer something else than a rental room.

If your experience with the host-family does not match this description or standards, please, let us know immediately. And if as a host-family, your experience with the student you are hosting does not meet the desired standards, let us know immediately as well: programas@altega.com

Thank you very much for being part of this housing experience.

ALL PROGRAMS

Classroom Site and Meetings

If you are attending class for academic credit, or if your Program Director decides to hold a group session or individual session with you, these meetings are likely to take place at the “Liceo de Ourense” or “Liceo”. This cultural organization, founded in the year 1850, moved in 1870 to a palace built by and for the Oca Valladares Family in the 16th century. The building has three floors, meeting rooms and classrooms, lounge areas, offices and a coffee-shop in the interior courtyard.

Name: “Liceo de Ourense”.

Address: Rúa Lamas Carvajal, 5. Ourense 32005

To learn more, check: <http://www.liceodeourense.com/2.0/>
or <http://turismodeourense.gal/recurso/pazo-de-oca-valladares-liceo/>

EDUCATION, COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES AND C.O.S.T PROGRAMS ONLY

1. Host-Schools

Your study abroad program might include a placement with a local school where you will work with a cooperating teacher and local teachers, or just a set of organized visits to a local school. If your program does not include this feature, skip to the following page.

All Schools belong to the Spanish national educational system. Still, there can be slight differences between them. Placements/visits can be in a public school or a private school, and private ones can be religious (mostly catholic) or secular. If you have any preferences, we will try to accommodate your request, but be flexible.

2. Host-Schools: Cooperating Teachers (CT)

Your first day at your host School, you are likely to meet your Cooperating Teacher (CT), and you will get a tour of your school. During the tour, you will be informed about the spaces that you can use while being at the School, as well as the most important norms and regulations pertaining this academic environment. Listen carefully and if there is anything you do not understand, ask as much as you need. The CT is the person responsible for your academic and professional development. Even though you will be asked to assist in different classes with different teachers, refer to your CT for any questions, concerns and issues that may arise during your placement. The school placement intends to have five (5) or less teachers, depending on needs, schedules, and level (Primary, Secondary) under the coordination of one (1) CT.

Note: Interaction between Spanish students and U.S assistants. Your students in Spain are minors under Spanish Legislation. Therefore, you are never to be alone with any student without your CT, a teacher, or without the presence of another member of the School system. No exceptions whatsoever. This applies to both the school grounds and outside of the school. If you have any doubts, talk to your CT, your Program Director from the U.S, or contact the local provider staff at any time.

3. Host-Schools: Guidelines, Basic Expectations and Dress Code

- a) Some schools will let you use and stay in the Teacher's Lounge (if there is one) between classes or during breaks. Other Schools will not, or they do not have one.
- b) Spanish students may see you as a "role-model" of behavior and attitude. How you dress, the language you use and how you conduct yourselves will be observed by these young minds, and the local teachers. In class, do not use cell-phones, or engage in any activity unrelated to the class (i.e: reading a book), do not place your feet on chairs, and do not do anything you would not do in your USA placements either (i.e. no food or drinks allowed in the classrooms), and absolutely no smoking anywhere in the School grounds or close to it.
- c) Some teachers will be very interested in creating with your assistance "international" activities/events to engage students from Spain and from the U.S. i.e: A letter/email correspondence partnership, on-line group chats, etc... We encourage your active participation at all times, and we also recommend that you do not make any promises or commitments that you cannot follow through. Appreciate the interest and state that you will explore the opportunity, or state that you are in no position to make those commitments yet.
- d) Same as in the U.S be courteous, respectful, arrive on time, inform your Cooperating Teacher and/or local staff of any issues that may happen. Be yourself, learn from the experience, and enjoy it.
- e) Dress code: is business casual. i.e.: No ties, no suits, no high-heels, no sneakers, comfortable clothes for both men and women. Preferably no jeans. Attention to the use of intense perfumes and/or colognes since these can prompt allergic reactions in local students and co-workers.



Celebracións de Antroido. Vilariño de Conxo. Ourense, Febreiro.
Carnival celebration. Vilariño de Conxo. Ourense, February.

ATHLETES PROGRAM, ONLY

This program includes a membership to use the Universidad de Vigo, Ourense Campus sports facilities, both indoors and outdoors, and specifically the University pool and the gym/fitness center.

For more information and pictures about this center, see CDU AQA Ourense at:

<http://aqadeporteysalud.net/Centros/aqa-ourense/>

or

<https://deporxest.uvigo.es/WebDeportesUVigo/instalaciones/datos.jsp?idInstalacion=63>

ALL PROGRAMS: Exercising and Maintaining An Active Lifestyle

The sports complex of the University of Vigo, Ourense Campus is open to any member of the Ourense community who wants to use the facilities for a fee. Any student of any program can get a membership to use these facilities. There also many privately owned gym-facilities, and places where you can practice yoga, conduct regular physical activities and maintain yourselves physically active. If you are interested, and this feature is not part of your international program, let your host-family or us know, and we will assist you.

Ourense is a very walkable city. Before you realize it, you will have completed a few kilometers of walking every day just to attend to your basic needs (classes, going to/from training/placements, sightseeing, window shopping, etc...). If you are interested in a more active physically-demanding experience, running (and other types of exercise) is very popular along both banks of Miño River. There is a trail that connects each side of the river via pedestrian bridges north and south of the river (upstream and downstream) which in total runs for about 13 kilometers (a bit more than 8 miles). In many parts of the trail, you will be running/walking next to the many hotsprings available in the area which make Ourense one of the geothermal capitals of Europe.

Traveling

Programmed Trips

Your program may include programmed activities such as cultural trips. If this is the case, all your expenses are covered with your original program fee (transportation, lodging, meals, entrance to museums and sites). These days that you will be away from your host-family you are responsible for your personal expenses (shopping, and in general, expenses not related to the cultural activities). There are no refunds of reimbursements if you do not to participate in any of these planned activities. A detailed itinerary/calendar of activities will be present in due time.

Independent Trips

Some of you will have a few long-weekends (Fri-Sat-Su) to benefit from other aspects of your overseas experience such as personal cultural trips. In addition, holidays and non-schooling days will happen every academic semester. Your local provider D3N3, your CT, and/or your Program Director will inform you of these days in advance so that you can make your personal travel arrangements.

If you travel independently, there is a form to keep everybody informed of these plans that all student need to fill out and send. Please, inform your host-family and your Program Director, or your on-site Local Provider Coordinator.

There are no refunds or reimbursements from the days that you will not be with the host family, or the days you decide to “eat-out”. Whether it is a cultural trip included in the program or your own independent traveling, host-families get compensated the same amount.

Suggestions for weekend and/or 1 day escapades

These are some of the places reachable by train and/or bus from Ourense. Each of them offers unique opportunities for things to do, people to see and places to go.... If you get two-way tickets, ask for discounts as well as when buying entrance tickets for cultural events and historical sites. Bring your college ID and your passport to qualify for discounts or reduced fares.

In Galicia

- A Coruña province: A Coruña city (Torre de Hércules, UNESCO World Heritage Roman Lighthouse); Santiago de Compostela, city (UNESCO World Heritage “Old Town”); Finisterre, town, and Lighthouse (“the end of the land known the Roman Empire”); Fishing towns: Muxía, Malpica, etc... Carnota (the longest beach in Galicia).
- Lugo: UNESCO World Heritage “Roman Walls”. Ribadeo: Praia das Catedrais (Beach), a natural monument with a supernatural dimension.
- Pontevedra city; the Atlantic Coast: Praia América (beach); Parque Nacional Illas do Atlántico (National Park of the Atlantic Islands); coastal towns: Combarro, Sanxenxo, Portonovo, Cangas, Baiona, Nigrán, A Guarda and Monte Santa Tegra (views of Miño River, the Atlantic Ocean and Northern Portugal).
- Ourense: Monasterio de Oseira; Manzaneda: Winter resort station; Celanova (9th century monastery); Castro Caldelas (medieval Castle); Ribadavia (Jewish Quarter); Monastery routes; Sil River Canyon and Ribeira Sacra wineries; Parque Náutico Castrelo de Miño: eating-out, kayaking, paddle-boats, swimming in a dam; San Cibrán de Las: Parque Arqueolóxico da Cultural Castrexa Lánsbrica (Museum and historical pre-Roman site).

Outside Galicia

- Madrid, Barcelona, Salamanca, Bilbao.
- UNESCO World Heritage “Old Towns”: Salamanca; Burgos; Ávila; Segovia; Toledo (Christian, Muslim and Jewish cultures); Cáceres; Granada; Seville; Córdoba; Mérida (National Museum of Roman Art, Roman Theatre and Amphitheatre).

- Parque Nacional de Mongrague (migratory birds and one of the largest colonies of vultures in Europe), etc, Trujillo (medieval “old town”).
- León; Oviedo; Gijón; Santander (Parque de Cabárceno: want to see elephants, giraffes and African animals outdoors?); Astorga; Zamora; Ponferrada.
- UNESCO: Caminos de Santiago, etc...
- Porto (Portugal): UNESCO World Heritage “Old Town”, a lovely place to visit.

Santiago de Compostela Airport operates 15 international routes, and Porto (Portugal) a few dozen ones.

More information about Galicia

Lonely Planet

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/search?q=galicia>

TourGalicia (Regional Government): maps, applications, and lots of information

http://www.turgalicia.es/subportada-de-descargas-e-utilidades?langId=en_US



Xamones curados e derivados.
Cured “Jamón” and pork products.

PART III: BEFORE RETURN

Shopping

One of the activities that many of us enjoy doing is shopping, either for ourselves or for a good friend and/or family member. You will have the opportunity to do that while in Spain.

There are different levels of sales tax (VAT) in Spain depending on the type of item purchased (super-reduced: 4%, reduced: 10%, standard: 21%). Sales tax in Spain is 21% for clothes, shoes, and in general, all cultural activities. You can see this in any ticket/receipt of items you might have already purchased.

Understanding Tax-Free

Only stores with a visible "Tax-Free" sticker on display qualify for this extra-discount. In Spain, there is no minimum expenditure anymore to qualify for a tax-free exemption. So, if your shopping is significant and the amount of tax displayed on the ticket is worth the paperwork, request the tax free forms if the business is part of this system.

Process: In general, you purchase the items at a given store and with your passport request a tax-free document. Once you exit Spain, through the point of departure, look for the tax-refund office (Customs desk) at the Airport before check-in your luggage. There, you will get another document stamped. Then check-in your luggage, cross the gates towards the boarding area of the airport and look for the tax-free refund Offices before boarding the plane. Show the stamped documents and passports and get all the money you paid in taxes back (minus a commission).

Legislation on how to receive your tax-free purchases changes periodically. Consult on-line or ask the store staff directly.

Suggestions for Shopping Unique Items in Galicia

These are a few ideas that might help if you are still thinking about getting a gift/souvenir or a "sth" unique from Galicia.

- 1. T-shirts.** This store customizes the designs, makes them on the spot (you can see the end-version on a computer screen). Your local provider orders its t-shirts from Otis and Monica, owners. They speak excellent English.
Store name: "Lobishome". Ourense address: Rúa Ervedelo, 44
Price: €10-€20
- 2. Galician Pottery/Ceramic.** This traditional world-famous blue-painted ceramic and pottery institution still makes its products at the two factories they have in Lugo province. In orange and red tones since the 1970's. Every year they release new products: coffee and tea sets, lamps, pendants, necklaces, shotglasses. Items to protect people against "the evil-eye" or curses are very popular.
Store Name: "Sargadelos". Ourense address: Avenida da Habana, 12
Price €2 - €1,000+

- 3. Food items and lottery.** Considering the restrictions from the USDA, remember that any importation of pork-based products is prohibited. Better enjoy the chorizo and jamón in Spain than seeing how it is thrown away in front of you by a US customs official. However, these items are allowed:
- Chesnuts, in the jar version with chocolate or caramel, or syrup. It is called “marrón glacé” and they are original from Ourense. Found only in Galician supermarkets brands (Gadis, Froiz) and some local stores. (This item is also produced in some parts of France).
Price: €6-€12 per jar, depending on type of chesnut and size.
 - Before Christmas in Nov/Dec, people start to stock traditional Christmas desserts and sweets. All of the grocery stores have special tables, shelves and space for “turrón” and holiday products.
Price: €2-€10 per package, depending on weight, type of turrón, etc
 - Chocolate. As happens with most regions of the planet where cacao is not harvested, in Spain is possible to get your local versions of chocolate away from the major world-commercial players. A local brand, “Chocolates Chaparro” markets thick chocolate bars that you can melt and make your own hot chocolate favorite. Another company, “Chocolates Valor” from Villajoyosa (Alicante) has achieved national status for its chocolate products. These items travel well if packed with care. Available in most supermarkets.
Price: €2-6 per package.
 - Lottery ticket. The famous “El Gordo” tickets (Spanish Christmas Lottery). This is a 100+ year tradition, extremely popular and the biggest lottery worldwide. The event takes place every December 22. Price: €20/ticket.
- 4. Books.** What a better way to show where you have been than going to a bookstore and get a book with images, pictures and stories of Galicia. There is a large variety, even in English.
Price: €6-€100+

Reverse Culture Shock: Is It Me, Again?

Another challenge for returning participants in study abroad programs or overseas experiences is reverse culture shock. In brief, it refers to the difficulty of re-adapting to the other life and realities back home. Students have reported how their priorities, values and the way they think of themselves and their cultures is reexamined. It is important that participants talk and are able to seek help/counseling to receive assistance in this situation.

Each participant student experience is going to be different. In general, reverse culture shock is characterized by changes in two elements: an idealized view of home and an expectation of familiarity. Home may fall short of what you had envisioned after your return since now you have references for comparison, and reality may have changed back home since your departure: people have their lives, and issues, lack of interest on the part of friends and family, etc This may lead to frustration, feelings of alienation, and misunderstanding/s.

In general, if you feel disengaged, euphoric, irritable and hostile or have difficulties readjusting and adapting to life back home, you are probably experiencing a case of reverse culture shock. This is not unique to you, talk to people and to professionals to help you find the way back to your new, adapted goals.

Some extra reading, can be found here:

- GVSU site: <http://www.gvsu.edu/istudents/culture-shock-20.htm>
- [AllAbroad.us – Readjusting to Home](#): Mentors address the most important issues students have when returning home after study abroad.
- [IES – Institute for the International Education of Students](#) Site on how to market your study abroad experience, including building your resume.
- [Teach abroad](#) Guide to international teaching positions.
- [Volunteer Abroad](#) A country-specific guide to volunteering overseas.

CONTACT

Emergencies European Union and Spain: Dial 112

The safety and well-being of all the participants (host-families, students, professors, teachers, local provider staff, etc) is a priority.

In Case of Emergency or Accident

This is the Protocol to follow:

- Stay Safe: Help/assist to place people and yourself out of danger
- Inform: Emergency services in case of need. Dial 112
- Assist: Any person in need until emergency services arrive
- Communicate: with your local provider and/or the Program Director asap.

In case of emergency in Ourense, your Program Director, and/or your Host-family and or D3N3 staff will use this medical provider and this 24/7 facility located in a well-known and easy to reach downtown area:

Centro Médico El Carmen
Avenida de La Habana 50, 52, 71
Ourense, 32003
<http://www.centromedicoelcarmen.es/>

Non-Emergency and General Medical Situations

Students in the program have medical insurance with international coverage. As a result, services such as medical expenses (doctor's visits, drugs, visits to the dentist, etc), or expenses derived from legal assistance, are covered.

Some U.S universities offer health coverage via providers that have identified local health care facilities that will provide medical services when needed. If your insurance policy operates in this way, you might be able to avoid the paperwork of the reimbursement. However, you will also need the information of the specific local medical facility. If your host-family or your local provider does not have this information, you will be taken to the medical facility specified above. It is the responsibility of the student to learn these details and if applicable, pay, ask for and keep the corresponding invoices and/or receipts to request any reimbursements from their insurance upon return to the U.S.

Host-families are asked to assist students in case of need (visit to the doctor, going to the pharmacy, etc), and to inform the Program Director and/or D3N3 staff if they are unable to do this so that someone else will be available for assistance.

In a non-emergency situation students will be taken to the medical facility mentioned above, unless they or their insurance have a different preferred medical facility. You can also ask for a translation of the medical documentation: diagnosis, treatment and invoice.

Pharmacy. This service is available 24hrs a day, 365 days a year in every town. Look for the green cross signs and if that pharmacy is closed, check the display windows for information about the nearest on-call Pharmacy. If you are not sure and/or you are not in Ourense, look for a hotel, a taxi driver, a police officer, a business that might be open where you can ask for help.

Local Provider Contact: D3N3
Ourense - Spain

D3N3

- Email: programas@altega.com

- Phone

- (24h/7)

- Alberto Veiga, Ph.D. Coordinator: Bilingual Galician/Spanish, Fluent English

- Phone: Only 1 of them will be active at any given time

- U.S. number: +1- 517 303 3746

- Spain number: +34 - 645 675 917

- (24/7)

- Dositeo Veiga. D3N3. Manager. Bilingual Galician/Spanish, Intermediate English

- Spain: TBA (To Be Announced)

APPENDIX

Cell-phone: Plan Features. Pre-Paid “Orange”

Remember that any smart cell-phone can access wifi even in “Airplane Mode”. Sometimes you will need to register before you have access, other times, service is available with a password, and other times, the network service is open.

To get a phone-plan on your own, please, follow below for a Pre-paid plan in Spain with the carrier: “Orange”. Bring your passport to the “Orange” cell-phone store as the only valid source of identification.

If by the time you arrive to Ourense you do not have a Spanish phone number yet, a local staff member will go with you to a designated “Orange” cell-phone store.

Students can choose to add data (Internet) to their Pre-paid plan for a charge, or get only phone calling and SMS features while having access to data via wifi in the places where this feature is available for free.

Specifics

Compañía: ORANGE

Carrier: ORANGE

Plan Prepago: “Mundo” 4G + Tarjeta Prepago. Coste €20,00 approx.

Prepaid Plan: “Mundo” 4G + Prepaid Card. Cost €20.00 approx.

Summary

Students pay €20,00 for a SIM card and receive €20,00 balance. From this amount, deduct the cost of the desired data plan keeping the rest as balance. Balance does not expire.

Feature	Description	Charges*	Details * as of September 2019
International calls 24/7	Connecting fee Per minute	29.9 cents 0.01 cents	i.e: USA 1 mt = 29.91 cents; 10 mts = 30.00 cents
Domestic calls 24/7	Connecting fee Per minute	26.9 cents 0 cents 7 cents	Duration: 7 days after recharge From day 8 if no recharge
“Mundo” to “Mundo” calls 24/7	Connecting fee Per minute	0 0	30 days after recharge including initial purchase If no recharge, from day 31 pricing = domestic calls
Data (optional)	5MB 7GB 15GB	€7/month €15/month €20/month	If you finish your data allowance, internet does not cancel, it just slows down. If you recharge, call 1470 to reactivate the Plan (fee call)

1. All pricing in Euros €
2. Customer Service: dial 1470: Free. For recharges and Plan reactivation (after 30 days).
3. Minimum recharge of €5.
4. “Connecting fees”: apply to each phone call unless indicated.
5. All students are advised to have this “Mundo Plan” since calls “Mundo” to “Mundo” are free for 30 days. If, and when you recharge €5, you get another 30 days extension.

Image



Imaxe de satélite: Península Ibérica (España e Portugal), norte de África (Marrocos) e sur de Francia. / Satellite Image: Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal), Northern Africa (Morocco), and Southern France. NASA Earth Images.

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- Ourense Climate Essentials (1972-2000): www.aemet.es
- Satellite Image: Iberian Peninsula, Northern Africa, and Southern France. NASA Earth Images:
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=76777>
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(Updated September, 2019)

Prepared by D3N3

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