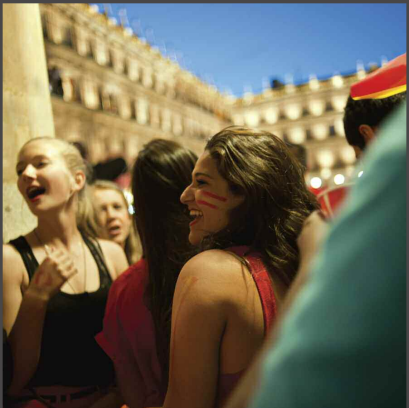




EDU-CULTURE
IMMERSION

Salamanca North & South 2015



Group Immersion Program in Spain
Summer Study Abroad opportunity for High School Students

Salamanca North & South 2015

Group immersion program in Spain



Summer Study Abroad opportunity for high school students

Choosing a Study Abroad program is a big decision. We completely understand that you have to feel absolutely comfortable and confident that this is the best program for you. We understand that the program must include at an absolute minimum:

- Spanish classes taught by native speakers in a quality language school
- A great program city location
- Cultural excursions and activities to support your learning
- An experienced and dedicated team of leaders
- Visits to the Spanish highlights – Madrid, Granada and Seville
- Lots of opportunities to speak Spanish

Salamanca, North & South will fulfill all your Study Abroad needs, and in addition, it will offer you the very unique opportunity to live with a Spanish family in the north of Spain for one week, and experience total immersion.

This is what sets our programs apart – an individual learning experience in an authentic Spanish cultural setting.

Detailed program information

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1. Program structure

Four program components

Like all ECI group programs in Spain, Salamanca North & South 2015 is made up of four distinct program components - each designed to improve your language skills in different ways, and provide you with a sound cultural and historical knowledge of Spain.



1. Madrid - Your introduction to Spain

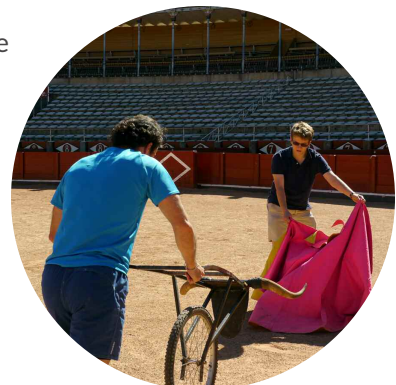
Your adventure begins with three fantastic days in Madrid, visiting the major sites and staying in a high quality hotel in the heart of the city.

This is a great introduction to your program. You will be met at the airport by your Local Leader and taken to your hotel in central Madrid. Over the next three days you will visit the major sites of the city, including the Prado Museum and the Royal Palace. There will be free time to explore the bustling, busy center of modern Madrid. You will sample Spanish cuisine at its best with group restaurant dinners during your stay in the capital.

2. Salamanca - two weeks of study and cultural activities

You will spend two weeks in a centrally located student dorm. There will be daily morning classes and afternoon hands-on and cultural activities, ranging from learning to cook Spanish food to visiting a traditional Spanish ranch, to salsa dancing and playing soccer.

Your daily conversation and grammar classes with native speakers take place at one of Spain's best language schools. This will prepare you for your week of Spanish speaking total immersion.



3. One week of immersion - a unique opportunity to live with a volunteer Spanish family

You will experience one week of living with a carefully chosen family in San Sebastian. There is no better way to improve your Spanish.

This part of the program is individual, and is a wonderful opportunity for you to put your Spanish skills to the test. You will travel to the elegant northern coastal city of San Sebastian, and for one week you will be fully immersed in Spanish family life. There are no group activities, but your chaperones will be on hand throughout.

4. Southern tour - see many of the amazing highlights of Spain.

Your Salamanca, North & South program culminates in four days of touring in the south of Spain. After your Immersion Week in San Sebastian, ECI takes you south to Seville, Granada and the beautiful beach town of Nerja on the Costa del Sol.

You will fly from San Sebastian to Seville, where you will visit the unique Alcazar, followed by a day in Granada, where among other highlights, you will visit the Alhambra and experience a flamenco show. Your final two days will be spent in the beautiful resort town of Nerja on the Costa del Sol, enjoying beach activities and kayaking.

2. Your program town - Salamanca

Salamanca is one of the most popular cities in Spain in which to study Spanish, and it's clear to see why. As one of the country's most prestigious university towns, Salamanca is ideally suited to the many students it accommodates year-round, both Spanish and international, with its cultural life and a user-friendly downtown.



At the heart of the city is the imposing central hub - Plaza Mayor. This vibrant and bustling square, which easily rivals St. Mark's in Venice, is the scene of daily entertainment, café culture, music, shopping, evening strolls, ice cream parlors, and all forms of general crowd gathering. You too will enjoy soaking up its ambience.

Although you will live in a dorm and eat your meals there, should you wish to sample the delights of Spanish restaurants, there is a myriad of choices in Salamanca, from traditional Spanish, to French, and even Japanese, and all within a student budget.

One of the most amazing aspects of Salamanca life is that it is so walkable. The old, historic center, where you will live and study, is a tangle of winding streets and lanes, where you can regularly stumble across a cool café or a quirky bookshop. And at night... the town planners have helpfully 'uplit' many of the most beautiful central buildings, including the cathedral, and the university. The effect is breathtaking - warm cream stone in soft gold light - magical.

You will be blown away by the beauty and vibrancy of Salamanca, and will only leave with a promise to definitely return.



3. Classes & activities

During your two weeks in the program town of Salamanca you will spend weekday mornings taking Spanish classes and afternoons & weekends taking part in fun and cultural activities and excursions.



Classes

In Salamanca we work with a highly regarded and internationally recognized language school in the center of the city. Established in 1991, our partner school specializes in teaching Spanish to foreigners. All language teachers are native speakers and have degrees in modern languages, as well as professional experience teaching Spanish as a foreign language.

The school is well-equipped, with spacious modern classrooms, a computer room with Internet access, assembly halls and common rooms for study and meetings, all of which are air-conditioned.

Important information about classes:

- You will be assigned to a particular class level based on a placement test you complete before leaving the US.
- There are four fifty-minute classes each morning, Monday through Friday.
- The maximum number of students per class is ten.
- In the first two classes you will study grammatical structures and their practical applications (grammar).
- In the second two classes vocabulary and colloquial expressions are analyzed (conversation).
- You have the opportunity to earn up to three semester units of credit* through The University of Southern Mississippi.

**There is an additional cost for the university credit option.*

Language Partners

To complement classes we have our unique Language Partner program - structured conversational sessions with Spanish teens and university students. In groups of two to three, you will spend a few hours visiting a local sight or café together - a great opportunity to ask questions about what it is like to be a young person living in Salamanca. Many of our students report back to us that this was one of their favorite activities!

University credit - build your college application

ECI's university credit option gives you the opportunity to earn up to three Spanish semester units through the University of Southern Mississippi. These credits are transferable and are accepted by most accredited universities in the United States.

Important information about earning credit

1. If you opt to earn credit for this program you will be given a course number and description by the university, which will be based on a placement test. The course will be worth up to three semester units of credit.
2. Transcripts remain on file for you to use when you apply for and ultimately attend a university after high school. Three units of credit are equal to one semester-long course at a university.
3. You must sign up for credit in the spring prior to your summer program.
4. All enrollment paperwork for university credit is sent directly to you by ECI.
5. You will take a placement test online prior to departure, usually in April/May.
6. You will be required to do some additional work. Specific details of these requirements will be given to you prior to the time you must make your decision to enroll for the credit (usually in the spring).
7. Following the completion of the program, USM will assign you a letter grade that goes on an official transcript.
8. You can include the completion of this course on your college applications and send out copies of your official transcript to your prospective universities/colleges. You can also choose NOT to send out the transcript, based on your satisfaction with your letter grade.
9. A fee of \$560 is paid to the University of Southern Mississippi, plus a \$175 administrative fee paid to ECI.

Cultural activities

Experience Spanish culture first-hand through a range of fun, daily and weekend activities - including an excursion to Segovia, a visit to a bullfighting arena, horseback riding at a local Spanish ranch, and a soccer session. Also enjoy a "ghost" walk, movie nights and tapas tasting with Language Partners. Learn new skills during a Spanish cooking workshop, a salsa dance evening and a Spanish art class. Each day also includes free time for you to get together with friends and explore your own interests and hobbies.

4. Immersion Week

We are enormously proud of this unique program component. It continues to be one of the main highlights of the trip and is proven time and again to be the most beneficial aspect of the program.



You will travel by bus from Salamanca to San Sebastian, where you will be met by your volunteer host family. After brief introductions, your family will take you to their home, where you will be warmly welcomed. The majority of our families have teenagers of a similar age to you, and one of the goals for the Immersion Week is that you develop a strong bond with the children in the family, and even form the beginnings of a life-long friendship. But as this is a host family immersion, we encourage you to also spend as much time as possible building a relationship and talking Spanish with all family members, whether it be the grandmother or the toddler in the family.

You will either have your own room or share with a host family sibling. During the week you will speak only Spanish and there will be no group activities. You will simply fit in with the routine of your Spanish family. This is your genuine and unique opportunity to live the life of a Spanish teenager. During this week your family may take you on local sightseeing excursions or to visit friends, or may simply spend a lot of quality time with you at home, going about their daily lives. Regardless, all of this is immensely valuable in helping you to improve your spoken Spanish and knowledge of Spanish culture.

Your US leaders will be in San Sebastian with you and will be on call 24/7 in case you have any issues or concerns. They will also check in with you regularly by phone to make sure you are settling in and comfortable in your family.



5. Where will you stay?



In Madrid

You will stay in a centrally located hotel, within walking distance of all the major highlights, including the Puerto del Sol and the Plaza Mayor. We always choose high quality hotels, and usually 4*. You will be in a twin room (two beds) with en suite facilities. Breakfasts will be at the hotel and evening meals in city center restaurants.

In Salamanca

You will spend your two weeks in Salamanca living in a residencia (dorm-like accommodation) in the heart of the old city, just a short walk to the language school and all the major sites and amenities Salamanca has to offer. All your meals will be eaten at the residencia in their canteen. You will stay in a twin room, and sometimes a triple. All bedding and towels are provided. The residencia has a common area for relaxing, and laundry facilities, which are available to you.

In San Sebastian

During your Immersion Week in the north of Spain, you will live in a family home in the coastal town of San Sebastian. This could mean staying with a family in an apartment in the heart of the city, or in a beautiful and large house in one of the surrounding small towns or villages, but still within the San Sebastian region.

During the tour

In Granada and Seville you will stay in city center, high quality, comfortable hotels in twin rooms. In Nerja on the Costa del Sol you will stay in a beachside resort hotel, very close to the beach and within walking distance to the small seaside town center of Nerja.

6. The ECI team

We have a whole team of ECI staff who create the Salamanca program. Each one is highly trained and is expected to meet exacting ECI standards.



US leaders

Are responsible for your welfare from the moment you board the plane together in the US until the return journey. Most chaperones are high-school language teachers with extensive travel abroad experience, and all are enthusiastic leaders, fully trained by ECI. Many are Spanish teachers who take the opportunity to spend their summer in Spain as a way of maintaining their Spanish links and enhancing their classroom teaching skills. ECI carefully selects chaperones on the basis of language ability, maturity, patience, judgment and professionalism.

Local Leader

We always have at least one native Spanish speaker as part of the chaperone team. This Local Leader has expert local knowledge which is vital to the smooth running of the trip. A constant source of local information and guidance throughout the trip, these leaders are instructed to speak **ONLY** Spanish for the duration of the trip.

Program Coordinator

Our Program Coordinator is based in Spain and, together with our European team, coordinates the activities, excursions and all the other pieces that make up the program, including arranging accommodations, the language classes and Meet & Greet personnel. All planning takes place well in advance of your arrival in order to ensure a smoothly run and successful program.

Host Family Coordinator

Our HF coordinator is a high school teacher based in San Sebastian and arranges the volunteer families for each of our students. The ECI Immersion program is well established in the area, and our Coordinator is able to recruit volunteer families to host through her high school connections in the region, in both her own and neighboring schools. Our program is highly regarded among the local community, and Spanish families look forward to welcoming a US student into their homes each year. The family/student matching process starts with you writing a letter to your prospective family, giving details about your interests and hobbies. Our Coordinator will arrange a family best suited to you based on this information.

US team

Before your trip starts, you will be in communication with our US team who will provide you with all the information you need during the application process. It is their role to guide you through the application process, including advice about writing your letter, uploading photographs, university credit, and making payments. They will also make sure you have all the necessary pre-departure information, including an itinerary and Study Abroad Student Handbook, giving you practical advice about your program. They will also arrange an online pre-departure meeting in preparation for your travel to Spain.

7. A day in Salamanca

Every day of your trip will of course be different, but during the program town portion in Salamanca, each day will follow a specific pattern:



8-9AM: Breakfast

9AM-1PM: Attend morning classes

1PM-1:30PM: Daily meeting with chaperones & other students

1:30PM-4PM: Lunch at the dorm. Free time for relaxation

4PM-7PM: Join ECI leaders for afternoon activities

7PM-9PM: Enjoy free time with friends

9PM-10PM: Dinner at the dorm

10PM- 11:30PM: Enjoy group cultural & social activities with chaperones and/or Language Partners

11:30PM: Groups meet up for check-in

Midnight: Back at the dorm in time for curfew

On weekends (Friday & Saturday) check-in is 1:30 AM, curfew 2AM

After dark, students are always in chaperoned groups for activities.

8. In their own words

Some of the many great comments we've had from parents and students about last year's Salamanca North & South program.



Parents

"The summer abroad program was a great experience for our daughter. She told me that she definitely wants to do a Junior year abroad when she is in college!"

- **Melinda Luster, parent**

"Our daughter had the time of her life. She grew and matured in so many ways. She made great friends, really used her Spanish, loved the museums, and enjoyed walking through the towns taking pictures and looking at the architecture and historic sites."

- **Sarah Willmer, parent**

"ECI runs an excellent program and made the whole experience, from registration to trip to home, feel easy to negotiate and carry out. Thank you to all the US staff and Spain staff."

- **Maria Miceli, parent**

"ECI's study abroad program was very well organized. Our daughter has become more confident and able to communicate in Spanish."

- **Jessica Fass, parent**

Students

"My Immersion host family was so nice and treated me as one of their own kids. They explained various cultural aspects to me and took me to historical sites. It allowed me to really practice my Spanish skills."

- **Anais Mitra**

"I felt very welcome in the Immersion family home and in their daily lives. They did an excellent job of immersing me into their culture."

- **Charlotte Lobdell**

"My host family's food was delicious and they treated me like one of the family. They took me to do many activities such as sight seeing, going to the beach, and riding bikes. It gave me a better understanding of the Spanish lifestyle."

- **Eena Kosik**

"My immersion family always had activities planned for me and I never felt bored. My understanding of how to use the language improved immensely during that week."

- **Patrick Scalise**

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- Eena Kosik

"My host brother introduced me to his friends and made a special effort to include me. Staying with an immersion family was the best possible way in my opinion to immerse myself in Spanish culture. The Immersion Week was by far the best part of the entire trip. I wish I could have stayed longer with my family."

- Gabriel Grand

"My Spanish improved an incredible amount during the immersion week, but in the dorm I was able to spend time and get to know kids on the trip, some of which I know will be my friends for life."

- Emma Pearl Willmer-Shiles

"My host family was very accommodating and nice. The host family took my Spanish to an entirely new level. I

felt like a member of the family. I was able to make Spanish friends and get an inside view of the culture. Immersion was a key factor in acquiring fluency."

- Joe Chafkin

"My immersion family always had activities planned for me and I never felt bored. My understanding of how to use the language improved immensely during that week."

- Patrick Scalise

"Living with my Immersion host family we ate meals together every day and I met all of my host sibling's friends. Spending time with locals made me feel like part of the Spanish culture. I felt like I learned the most Spanish this week."

- Tara Schwinger

"A great trip to Spain! Lots of memories made and a great experience. You have to come in with an open mind because you'll always be exposed to completely new experiences. When you're open to trying new things, you'll always be pleasantly surprised."

- Hanah Mezheritsky

"During the Immersion Week I was able to become more independent with speaking Spanish and getting to experience daily life as my family does. I felt extremely welcome and got to spend a lot of time getting to know my host sister and her friends."

- Kate Culbertson

9. Am I eligible?

To take part in this program you must:

- Have completed coursework equivalent to one year of high school Spanish by June 2015. Exceptions can be made with a teacher recommendation.
- Be between the ages of 14 and 18.
- Receive a positive teacher recommendation. ECI provides the form.
- Be committed to speaking and improving your Spanish.
- Be open to new experiences and unfamiliar cultures.
- Be able to make responsible choices and act in a mature manner. ECI leaders chaperone conscientiously, but cannot be with you 24 hours per day.
- Be in good physical health, able to walk distances, climb stairs & carry luggage.
- Have a valid passport.

10. Meet and Greet service

You have the choice of traveling round trip on one of our chaperoned flights (organized via our travel partner STA Travel) or making your own separate flight plans.

If you make your own separate flight plans, you are also responsible for making your own arrangements to meet up with the chaperones and group, unless you choose our Meet & Greet Service, which carries an additional fee of \$185 minimum per direction. With the Meet & Greet service, an ECI representative will meet you at the airport or any other designated arrival place. Shortly before your departure, ECI will provide you with all necessary contact information, phone numbers, and a detailed meeting place and time. You will then be taken to join up with rest of the group.

The Meet & Greet service is also available for the return trip, and we highly recommend it in either direction if you are not traveling with the group.

Remember that airline schedules are always subject to change. Please contact ECI to discuss the Meet & Greet option.

11. Dates and fees

When?

June 24th to July 23rd 2015

Fees?

\$7695 + airfare

Program price includes:

- All accommodations
- All language classes, group activities, excursions and admissions
- All transportation abroad
- All meals during Homestays, Dorm (Residencia) stays & Host Family Immersion Week
- Two meals per day during full-day weekend excursions and during days of travel
- Chaperone/student ratio of 1/8

Program price does not include:

- Airline tickets (*Students can purchase airline tickets on the designated chaperoned flights from San Francisco or JFK via our travel partner STA Travel www.statravel.com or 1.877.777.8717. Students may also purchase their own tickets independently.*)
- Spending money
- Optional activities
- Some lunches
- Insurance
- University Credit Fees (should you choose this option)

12. What next?

Based on our years of feedback, we can safely say that, as a student, you will have the time of your life, make new friends, experience authentic Spanish culture, and gain a sense of independence and new-found confidence. As a parent, you will feel secure in the knowledge that ECI's programs are carefully planned and executed, that every detail is taken care of, both before and during the trip, and that a committed and experienced team of US and local leaders will ensure each program matches/exceeds your expectations.

Need more information?

- Please email our main office: info@educulture.com
- Check out our FAQs on the website - educulture.com
- Watch our informative videos - available on the website: educulture.com/about/video-gallery/
- Read our blog posts on a wide variety of Study Abroad-related topics - educulture.com/blog/
- Take a look at our Facebook page and Twitter feed - facebook.com/Edu.Culture.Immersion
- Take a look at our Twitter feed - twitter.com/educulture

Want to talk to someone at ECI?

Call our main office at: **510-261-8182**

Ready to sign up?

Complete our online application - educulture.com/sign-up/

Application Procedure 2015 Summer Programs

1. The fastest way to reserve a space on the chosen program is to use our online option for application and payment. Go to <http://educulture.com> and click the **How to Apply** link. Complete the **Preliminary Application Form** and pay a \$500 deposit to reserve your spot. This deposit will be credited towards the total summer Program Fee.

Alternatively, you may complete the application page found at the end of this packet and mail it with a \$500 check made payable to ECI.

2. **Instructions on how to log in and complete the application will be emailed to you once the initial online application and deposit submitted.** Please ensure that all portions of the application, including the Host Family Introduction Letter and photos, are completed.
3. Please ensure that the Teacher Recommendation Form is received by ECI within within the next four weeks. If a student is not accepted into our program based upon an unfavorable teacher recommendation form during this time period, all payments will be refunded, minus an administrative fee of \$150.
4. Ensure that the **Personal Responsibility Contract** is signed. Please mail or email a scanned copy back to ECI.
5. A second deposit of \$1000 deposit will be due within three weeks from receipt of your initial application.
6. We will confirm receipt of your deposits via email.
7. The balance of payment is due by April 1, 2015.

Please note: this is our general payment plan. To arrange a customized option or for any additional information, contact us at 510-261-8182 or at info@educulture.com.

Additional Payment Information – 2015 Summer Programs

- All deposits will be deducted from the Total Program Fee.
- It is your responsibility to make sure all payments arrive at ECI's office by their due dates. You must assume responsibility for late payments due to mail delays or other unlikely circumstances. Students whose payments are not received on time may lose their place in the program or be subject to a late payment charge.
- Applications made 60 or fewer days prior to departure will be treated on an individual space-available basis. Full payment will be due at the time of application, and completed application materials will be due within one week.

Edu-Culture International (ECI) Refund Policy

Prior to December 3, 2014: **All Program Fee payments less \$150**

Between December 3, 2014, and March 4, 2015: **All Program Fee payments less \$500**

Between March 4, 2015, and June 3, 2015: **All Program Fee payments less \$1200**

After June 3, 2015: **No refund**

Cancellations must be received by ECI in writing by the above dates for refunds.

Any student who is unwilling to abide by ECI guidelines or who is believed to jeopardize the welfare of others will be dismissed without refund of program fees and sent home at the expense of his/her parents. ECI reserves the right to cancel any program due to insufficient enrollment. In this case, all program fees would be refunded.

ECI **does not** provide medical, travel or cancellation/interruption insurance. Please ensure you arrange medical and travel insurance prior to departure. We also strongly advise the purchase of cancellation/interruption insurance.

Preliminary Mail-In Application Form

Please mail this page with a \$500 check to ECI:

Edu-Culture International
P.O. Box 2692
Berkeley, CA 94702

Check the program to which you are applying:

SPAIN:

- Salamanca North and South
- Southern Spain and Barcelona
- Individual program in Spain (Costa del Sol)

FRANCE:

- Nice, Beaches and Paris
- Individual program in France (French Alps)

Please print the **student and parent email addresses** clearly on the form below, as future correspondence will be sent to you via those email addresses.

Parent Name(s) _____

Best Day Phone(s) _____ Best Evening Phone(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

Parent Email _____

Student Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Student Email _____

Student's School _____

Foreign Language Teacher _____

Years of foreign language completed as of June 2015 _____

(2 yrs. of middle school count as one year of high school)