



## PREPARING FOR YOUR 2019 SPANISH EXCHANGE TOUR SCARSDALE HIGH SCHOOL

*Directors: Mr. Mitchell Thompson & Mr. Vincent Modafferi*

### PACKING

The best rule to follow is to not over-pack! Portage is not included, and you will be carrying your luggage through airports and your home stay accommodations. When considering the clothing and accessories that you would like to bring along, you will likely be well prepared by bringing just half of what you have laid out. Once packed, try carrying your suitcase up and down a flight of stairs. If it's too heavy, lighten your load. A few key suggestions for your packing list:

- One suitcase plus one carry-on (small backpack or shoulder bag)
- Comfortable shoes, two pairs, as you will be doing a lot of walking while exploring
- Layering is a great way to anticipate variations in temperature
- Coordinate your wardrobe so that you can mix and match outfits throughout your trip; you may want a nicer outfit for the evening
- It is customary to never bare your shoulders or knees in churches and cathedrals, as a sign of respect
- A change of clothing in your carry-on, in case of loss or delay of a checked suitcase
- Alarm clock
- Photocopy of your passport
- Your toiletries and essential supplies; TSA guidelines for carry-on bags advise "3-1-1" (liquids/aerosols/gels in three ounce (100 ml) or less containers, all items must fit in *one* zip-top bag, of *one* quart size)
- Medications not exceeding 100 ml should be packed in your carry-on (travel with a written prescription as well, in case you require a refill due to loss)
- Medications over 100 ml must be accompanied with a prescription to be considered for exemption by TSA

### WEATHER

Madrid's average high temperatures range from 50 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit. Lows range from 35 to 40 degrees. One thing you can be sure of about the weather is how little you can be sure of. Temperatures can range from chilly to mild, but conditions are generally pleasant and dry; however, it is wise to bring a travel umbrella or light rain jacket to be best prepared.

### VOLTAGE & ELECTRONICS

In the United States, the electric current is 120 volts, where in Spain it is 230-240 volts. If you are traveling with small electronics such as an electric razor, be sure to use those adaptable to correct volts and bring a voltage adaptor with you.

### VALUABLES

Consider that the loss of a sentimental or costly item will upset anyone's travels. The easiest way to avoid this is to leave items at home that you cannot bear to lose. While traveling, use your best judgment in financial matters. When traveling with bags and purses, place the strap across your chest for added security, and keep wallets in your front pocket. Never leave money or valuables unattended, and use common sense.

### LUGGAGE

Tumlare strongly suggests traveling with one suitcase, preferably with wheels, and one small carry-on bag. Additionally, please note the following summary of American Airlines luggage allowance. These general details are subject to change; check directly with the airline regarding their specific policies prior to your departure:

**Each traveler can bring on board one carry-on bag and one personal item, as well as check one suitcase free of charge, per the following guidelines.** It is customary for airlines to weigh your carry-on bag to ensure compliance.

- **Carry-on Bag** - Baggage may not exceed 45 linear inches (or 114 cm) in combined length, width and height, including any handles and wheels. Baggage must fit easily in the Carry-on Baggage Check (approximately 22" x 14" x 9" or 56 x 35 x 23 cm), which is located near check-in counters.
- **Personal Item** - American Airlines allows for an additional personal item, such as a purse, briefcase, laptop bag OR a similar item such as a tote. The personal item must be smaller than your carry-on bag and must fit under the seat in front of you.
- **Checked Bag** - The maximum dimensions allowed for your checked suitcase are up to 62 linear inches (157cm), with a limitation of 50 lbs. (23 kg) per bag. Additional checked bags will be charged a minimum fee of \$100 by the airline at check-in, per direction.

- Any items you purchased at the airport, including duty free, form part of your hand baggage allowance. If you go over your allowance of 2 bags, you may have to check in one of your extra bags at extra cost.

## PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passports are required of all U.S. citizens traveling to Spain. The name on your passport must match the name on your airline ticket. Visas are not required for Spain for U.S. citizens, however if you are not a U.S. citizen you may need one. It is your responsibility to contact the local consulate's office of the countries you are visiting to investigate your personal circumstances. **Your passport must be valid for at least 3 months beyond your planned date of departure** but we suggest a minimum of six months after your planned return to the United States.

## CURRENCY

The EURO is the official currency in Spain. While currency fluctuates on a daily basis, €1 (EURO) = \$1.15 is the current approximate exchange rate.

## CREDIT CARDS & ATM WITHDRAWALS

When traveling abroad, be sure to alert the issuing banks for any credit cards you plan to bring. This will assist their fraud detection departments, and help prevent a security hold on your card. While credit cards will generally provide the best exchange rates, you should also familiarize yourself with your bank's fee structure for international withdrawals and purchases. MasterCard and Visa are widely prevalent in Europe; American Express, less so. Most ATM machines have numeric keypads only (no letters), and are usually equipped for a 4-digit PIN code. As a cautionary note, traveler's checks are not widely accepted and can incur fees when used.

Of note regarding newer "Chip and Pin" cards: these types of credit cards are becoming the standard in most European countries. These new bank cards are standard sized, with both an embedded chip and traditional magnetic strip. American style cards might not work at automated payment machines or some establishments, however most will accept them. If you prefer and in advance of your trip, most banks will provide you with this type of card if you request it from them and advise that you are planning for overseas travel.

## SPENDING MONEY

It is a good idea to begin your travels with enough local currency for the first few days of your tour. Your trip includes three lunches on your excursion days. Please review the particular needs of your tour with your group leaders, and allow your personal spending habits to influence you in planning for spending money.

## TIPS

Tips for your coach driver and local guide are included for your five excursion days. Please note that for restaurants where meals are not provided by Tumlare we suggest 10% of the total amount of your bill, where service is not already included on your bill.

## ARRIVAL DAY ADVICE

Spain is six hours ahead of Scarsdale, NY! One of the best ways to acclimate to your new schedule is to set your watch ahead to the local time in Europe as soon as you settle into your airline seat. It is a small trick of the mind, but it can help you adjust to your new time zone upon arrival. A good night's rest will help you to be energized for your first day abroad. Rest up in advance of your departure from the U.S., and avoid napping on arrival day; it will help to regulate your sleep on tour.

## COMMUNICATION ABROAD

If traveling with your cell phone or other device, be certain to check with your service provider to ensure coverage and rate plans, and the best ways to avoid roaming and expensive bills. ***Please keep in mind that data roaming on your smart phone can be extremely expensive!***

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- US/Boston During Business Hours +1 800 223 4664
- US/Boston Emergency After Hours +1 617 256 7251
- Madrid During Business Hours: +34 9 154 275 84
- Madrid Emergency After Hours: +34 9 119 229 04

## TOUR MANAGERS

We are pleased to introduce you to your local guide **Luis David Zapata** for your five excursion days. An official Tour Guide in Madrid and throughout Spain, Luis David is bilingual and fluent in English, French, and German, and his mother tongue is Spanish. His interests include music, playing the guitar, reading, travelling, history and art, cinema, theatre, and languages. He participated in exchanges in Le Havre and Toulouse, France, and in Germany, to improve his language skills. Luis David looks forward to assisting you, and welcoming you to his home country!

