

UCLA Travel Study – Barcelona, Madrid, Granada

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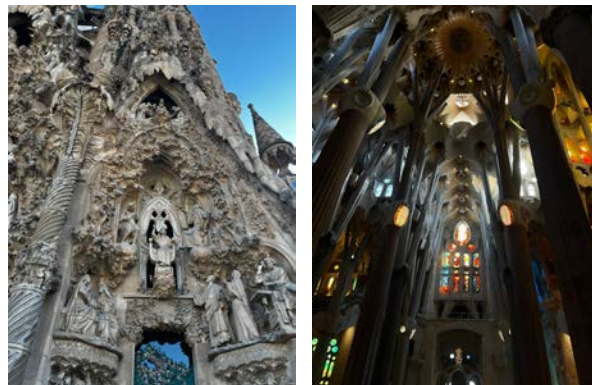
### **Souvenirs from Spain**

Studying abroad seems like something that's essential in the college experience. I knew it was something I wanted to do before I left UCLA. I was so glad to have chosen the UCLA Travel Study Program in Barcelona, Madrid and Granada. Classes took place in the morning until the early afternoon, after which we had scheduled excursions and tours and had free time to enjoy the city and have dinner. A five week trip, many stops to pressed coin machines and nine cities later, there aren't enough words to describe the memories I made and the growth I experienced studying abroad in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

#### **Barcelona: July 31, August 1-3**



The program began in Barcelona. In the afternoons, we got to visit the Picasso Museum and see Picasso's periods as an artist reflected in his paintings. We also walked through the Barrio Gotico and learned more about the work of Antoni Gaudi, a Spanish architect who designed La Pedrera and the Sagrada Familia, the largest unfinished Catholic church in the world. I was blown away by how tall and detailed the Sagrada Familia was and how much taller it was going to get, as it was still under construction.



La Sagrada Familia



Picasso Museum



Barrio Gotico



La Pedrera

### **Zaragoza: August 3**

On our way to Madrid, we made a stop in the city of Zaragoza, a city in the autonomous region of Aragon. We explored the city and had lunch in the Plaza del Justicia, then gelato in Pilar Square.



Plaza del Justicia



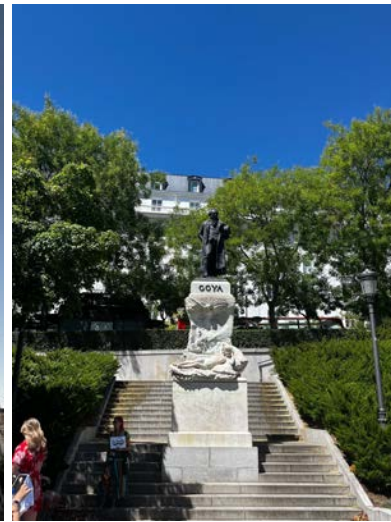
Gelato in Pilar Square

### **Madrid: August 3-6**

Madrid had some of my favorite sites that we visited. We visited the Museo Nacional del Prado, which had artwork from the twelfth to the twentieth century, and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, which had artwork from the twentieth century and on. One of my favorite excursions would have to be the Museo Nacional del Prado, as it was home to many Goya and Picasso paintings and I had only ever seen Goya's work in school textbooks.



Buenavista Palace



Statue of Goya

### **Toledo: August 6**



On our way to Granada, we stopped in the city of Toledo. The city had a beautiful view as soon as we arrived, a bridge and a river beneath it. In Toledo we visited the Church of Santo Tomé, Sinagoga del Tránsito, the Jewish Quarter, and the Toledo Cathedral. We got to explore the city, have lunch, and our professor encouraged us to try the delicious marzipan, as it is said that the marzipan is the best from Toledo.



Toledo Cathedral



Toledo, Spain

### **Granada: August 6-September 2**



Our stay in Granada was the heart of the program, it was where we spent most of our time. Our schedule remained mostly the same, however, we had more free time after classes to explore parts of the city (and study of course.) Some of the highlights of our stay in Granada were our visit to the Alhambra and Generalife and a cooking class, in which we learned how to make traditional Spanish dishes: tortilla de patata, gazpacho, and paella. During the same week, we also saw a flamenco show and had the opportunity to take a flamenco class to learn some of the basic steps.

Flamenco developed in the region of Andalucia, the region of Spain in which we were staying, and it was a wonderful experience being able to see a piece of Spanish culture while also learning its history and about the characteristics that make flamenco different from other forms of dance. Flamenco consists of instruments such as a guitar, castanets, the palms of your hands, and even your voice. In Granada, we also visited the Alhambra and Generalife, a beautiful palace that featured Islamic art and architecture and gardens with beautiful plantlife and fountains.





La Alhambra

**Nerja & Malaga: August 12 and August 26**



During the program, students have two free weekends to travel. Some friends and I decided to visit Nerja and Malaga, two of the cities on the coast. There is a bus that can take you there in less than two hours. We explored the city and spent time at the beach. The Mediterranean water was beautiful, clear, and was refreshing from the hot days we had been having in Granada.



Nerja, Spain

## Cordoba and Sevilla: August 19-20



During the third weekend of the program, we left Granada for a weekend in Cordoba and Sevilla. When we arrived in Cordoba, we visited the Mezquita of Cordoba. In Sevilla, our morning consisted of a tour of the Alcazar, a Moorish royal palace, and the Plaza de España. Sevilla was one of my favorite cities that we visited in Spain, and as a huge Star Wars fan, I was delighted to have been able to visit one of the filming spots from Episode II. This picture from the film lined up perfectly with a picture I took of the Plaza. In the afternoon, we had a tour of the Seville Cathedral.



Mosque – Cathedral of Cordoba



## Plaza de España, Sevilla

Studying abroad has quickly become one of the highlights of my time at UCLA. I would recommend this program to anyone who enjoys learning and wants to travel and for the summer. I loved the duality of the program; as we were learning about the history and culture of Spain in class, it was enriching and at times unbelievable to be able to see everything our professors mentioned in person.

Before studying abroad, I could count how many places I had been to outside of LA, and had only traveled out of the country once when I was very young. At times it was very surreal to know that I was on the other side of the world and while it was the middle of the day for me, my family was still sleeping (Spain is nine hours ahead of LA!)