Document

You should keep your passport with you at all times while traveling in Spain. It may be required as a source of identification when checking into hotels, changing money, and obtaining other services. Please keep a photocopy of the first two pages of your passport. This copy can be used to obtain new travel documents in the event that your passport is lost or stolen (we will keep a copy as well). Take one or two passport size photos of yourself. You can get these at the Study Abroad office in the Memorial Union.

Also keep a photocopy of any credit cards or bank cards you may have, including the customer service number on the back.

You should obtain an International Student Identity Card through the Study Abroad Center located in the Memorial Union or at AST travel in campustown. The cost is $30. Among the benefits are supplemental health insurance, evacuation and repatriation expenses insurance in case of emergency, discounts on future airline tickets, and access to a toll-free travel assistance number (when all else fails).

Money Matters

You should take a minimum of $300 cash to pay for meals, souvenirs and other incidental items not covered in the course registration fee. Do not take traveler’s checks. Money can be changed at the airport, banks, and most hotels. Smaller bills like $20’s and a few $10’s are easier to cash, especially in hotels and restaurants. We will try to change money at the Madrid airport when we first arrive.

It is very easy to get money from an ATM machine in Spain. You therefore do not need to carry large sums of money with you. However, you need to know what your daily withdrawal limit is. Most ATMs will take Visa and Mastercard. The present exchange rate is about 0.82 euros for one U.S. dollar. Don’t forget to notify your bank or credit card company that you will be out of the country.

Beverages

Bottled water and bottled or canned soft drinks, juices, and other beverages are readily available anywhere.

Things to Bring

It's best to travel as light as possible. Limit yourself to one carry-on bag and one suitcase. Pack a few extra clothes and any items that you can't do without for a day or two in your carry on, in case your checked bag gets lost.

Recommendations

Clothing:
- 2 pairs of jeans or equivalent, 1 pair of dressier pants or skirt
- Several shirts
- Socks / underwear
- Light jacket, sweatshirt or sweater
- Hat or cap for the sun, sun glasses
- Shoes: two pair for walking plus sandals or thongs for the pool or shower
- Toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.
Medications, first aid, and health supplies:
   - Prescription medication (in original container)
   - Aspirin, Tylenol, Advil, etc.
   - Dramamine for motion sickness, if this is problem for you
   - Pepto-Bismol or some other remedy for heart burn
   - Antihistamines if you need them
   - Antibiotic crème, Band-Aids
   - Sun block
   - Insect repellent
   - Anything else you normally need. Most things can be purchased in the country.
   - Leave all medicines in their original containers.

Other items:
   - Hip or fanny pack for camera, film, sun block, etc.
   - Inside pack for passport, money, cards
   - Notebook or journal to take notes and/or record your impressions, pens.
   - Camera and film (film is available, but is more expensive)
   - Travel alarm clock or watch
   - Towel (optional—they are provided, but they’re thin)
   - Spanish/English dictionary (optional)
   - Map of Spain (optional)

It is unwise to bring any unnecessary valuables with you when you travel. Leave expensive jewelry and extra credit cards or ID cards at home. Carry only what you need. It is best to carry all items of value such as plane tickets and money on your person.

**Customs and Immigration**

You will need to show your passport when you check in at the ticket counter in the Des Moines airport, and again when you arrive at the Madrid airport.

On the flight back to the U.S. you will get a form to fill out declaring what you have purchased in Spain and its value. When we arrive at the U.S. airport you will have to show you passport to the U.S. immigration official, then collect your luggage and pass through Customs. You may be asked to open your suitcase, but probably not. You are allowed to bring in duty-free up to $400 worth of goods. There are some restrictions on the quantity of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products you can bring in, also. If you are under 21 you cannot bring back alcoholic beverages.