

# España

## Madrid

### The capital of the Spanish Empire

since 1562, Madrid is located at the geographic center of the Iberian Peninsula along the Manzanares River. Madrid is a rich, thriving cosmopolitan city that combines tradition and modernity to make it one of the most exciting cities in Europe. Its art galleries, museums, and spectacular nightlife attract people from all over the world year after year.

Madrid was not documented until the late 10th century. Today, the city is marked with the contributions and signs of past inhabitants and historical events. From the Romans to the Reconquista (when Spain was reclaimed from the North African Moors), through the reigns of various monarchs, the city is a visual face of the rich culture and history that has accumulated through the ages. Madrid is the place for anyone looking for mouth-watering tapas, historic architecture, and passionate expression for all forms of art right at their fingertips.

Students who go to Madrid will learn Castilian, or “Castellano,” which refers to the

Spanish language spoken in Spain, while “Spanish” is often used for the Spanish language spoken in other parts of the world. Castilian first emerged as a dialect spoken in northern Spain, later becoming the official language of the country. Even when traveling through the different regions of Spain, one can expect some variation in pronunciation and accent, but most schools will teach Castilian in its purest form.

**Juventud y Cultura** offers a program during the month of July at The Real Colegio Alfonso XII, inside the famous Monastery-Palace of El Escorial (about 25 miles northwest of Madrid), constructed by the Spanish Emperor Philip II in the 16th century. It is often called the “Eighth Wonder of the World,” and has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

The program includes 15 lessons of Spanish per week; school materials; a Diploma at the end of the program; day trips on Saturdays to places of interest such as

Toledo, Salamanca, etc., and two half-day trips to Madrid; visits to the Zoo, Aqua Park, and Amusement park; arrival and departure transfers; and full board accommodations inside the wonderful Monastery-Palace of El Escorial. Students have the opportunity of practicing all kinds of sports in the Bosquecillo — the sports facility of the school. They even have professional magicians giving magic lessons, once or twice a week.

**OISE Madrid** specializes in intensive Spanish language training in the heart of the city’s business district. The school’s aim is to provide a full-immersion experience in which students gain the maximum possible language exposure. Students can choose between individual programs, group training with a maximum of just four students per





group, or a combination of the two.

A typical day combines press review sessions, classroom time, guided self study, and a program of social activities to make the learning process as varied and dynamic as possible. Whether students are relaxing over coffee, discussing the morning's news, or working on a complex language structure, tutors are on hand to encourage them to express themselves in clear, confident Spanish.

OISE Madrid focuses on communicative skills within a small group and an individual framework, which gives students both the time and the space to develop the confidence that leads to greater accuracy and greater fluency.

**Paraninfo**, in central Madrid, has invested in the development of a program to easily, enjoyably, and effectively learn Spanish. Thanks to its ideal location in the cultural and commercial center of the city, easy access to public transport, vast knowledge and experience, the school has built an enviable reputation over 35 years.

Students enjoy a multicultural atmosphere, high quality teaching, and an excellent learning environment. They can take classes from two weeks to nine months, and have the

choice of an intensive or super-intensive course in small groups or a one-to-one program.

Paraninfo is an "Accredited Instituto Cervantes School." Upon completion of the course, students receive recognized diplomas. Accommodation is available in shared flats or with Spanish families.

## Castilla y León

Castilla y León is not only the largest region in Spain, but it is also the largest region in the European Union. Formed when the Kingdoms of Castilla and León united, the area is covered with the royal monuments of past monarchs.

Located to the northwest of Madrid, Castilla y León is divided into nine provinces: Ávila, Burgos, León, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Valladolid, and Zamora, each of which has its own unique characteristics and specialties. For example, Salamanca, a university town in western Spain, is best known for the University of Salamanca, which is the oldest university in Spain. Burgos, which is located in the north, is often visited for its massive cathedrals, such as the Burgos

Cathedral, which was named a UNESCO site in 1984. In the center of the region is the capital, Valladolid, where thousands of visitors flock each year to see the city's array of historic castles.

Castilla y León is also famous for the full-bodied wines of its vineyards and its natural landscapes. Known as the birthplace of the Castilian language, Castilla y León is supposedly the place to learn Castilian in its most traditional form.

## Ávila

**Letras Castellanas** is located in Ávila at the foot of the Central Mountain Range, and is the highest city on the Iberian Peninsula. The school was founded with a new concept of teaching Spanish to foreigners, which is to provide instruction in the purity and clarity of the language, without variations in dialect and pronunciation.

The school offers a variety of classes, including a course for teachers and private lessons. They also offer cultural Spanish courses, which provide instruction in Spanish business, gastronomy, history, and more.