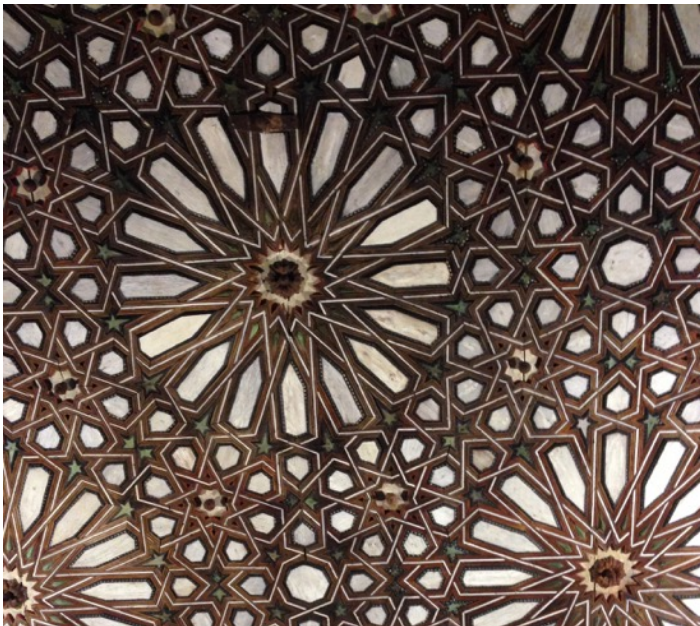


The Emory Student Guide to Salamanca, Spain



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About the Author

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Hi I'm Zoe Pleasure — I am an Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology major and Global Health, Culture and Society minor. I studied abroad with the Emory in Salamanca program in the Spring of 2015. I lived with a homestay near the Rio Tormes close to the cathedrals of Salamanca and the oldest part of the city. While in Spain, I took three classes in Spanish (Spanish Culture, Spanish Language/History, and Spanish Conversation) and two classes in English (Psychology of Memory and Medical Anthropology). My goal of this guide is to provide information to prospective Emory Salamanca students to help the process and the study abroad experience seem less daunting. I also loved my experience in Spain, so I am always happy to relive the semester by sharing my favorite restaurants or cultural experiences.





Considering a semester abroad in Salamanca?

Here are some things you should know...

If you enjoy learning languages and experiencing other cultures, studying abroad in Salamanca could be the right study abroad program for you!

The University of Salamanca is the third oldest university in Europe and boasts beautiful school buildings and impressive history dating all the way back to medieval times.

With Emory's program, you gain access to many of the resources of the university including the libraries and student discounts, and also have the support of the Emory Center and its staff. The Emory Center in Salamanca provides the perfect meeting place for studying and for the weekly meetings you have as a group. The staff that help the Emory program are always helpful with travel logistics and also always there to answer questions about life in Salamanca.

It is possible to study abroad with the Emory Salamanca Program for the full year or the fall/spring semester. Emory also offers a summer program in Spain that visits Salamanca and Sevilla. The semester programs usually run from August-December and January to May.

Students studying abroad with the Emory Salamanca program take a mix of classes with Emory students, international students and Spanish students. The program is great at providing you with a support system when you are exploring a new city and new country. There are a wide variety of classes offered, with most being centered around Spanish language, history, and culture. It is also possible to take psychology, anthropology, economics and political science courses. I thoroughly enjoyed all the classes I took during my time abroad.

University of Salamanca at a glance



Total enrollment:

- Undergraduate: 28,000
- Graduate: 2,240
- Foreign students: 9,200

Founded in 1218 by King Alfonso IX and was Spain's first higher education institution

Academic programs: 250 possible tracks of study

Notable Alumni and Professors:

- Miguel de Cervantes
- Fray Luis de León
- Miguel de Unamuno
- Adolfo Suárez
- St. John of the Cross
- Antonio de Nebrija

Notable Buildings and Architectural Sites:

- New and Old Cathedrals
- Patio de Escuelas
- Escuelas Menores
- Aula Fray Luis de León
- Capilla
- Palacio de San Boal
- Colegio Fonseca

Centro de Emory:

The Emory center is a great place to do work or meet with the program staff to discuss any issues. They usually have snacks and hot tea for study snacks. Most of the group meetings take place in the center and many of the activities start there.

Because I took the Psychology and Anthropology classes offered, I had two of my classes in the Emory Center. There is also an extensive travel book collection and movies to watch during downtime. I also found the free printers there to be very helpful when preparing for a trip.

It was very comforting for me to have a place where I could study and rehash my experiences in Salamanca with other Emory students and the program directors.

Financing your study abroad experience

While abroad, you will be a fully enrolled Emory student and will continue to pay Emory tuition. The main difference in cost between a semester at Emory and a semester in Salamanca are the living costs and the travel costs. Below is the budget sheet for the Salamanca program in Fall 2016:

Emory Tuition: \$23,650
Program Fee (paid through OPUS): \$3,720
Airfare: \$1,300
Visa: \$160
Books: \$135
Personal Expenses: \$2,200

With the Salamanca program, three meals every day and usually around three program excursions (2-4 day trips) are included.

All meals are cooked by your homestay family for you. In Spain, the biggest and most important meal is lunch, which usually occurs around 2:30pm. Breakfast is small with coffee, yogurt and toast, usually. At lunch, we usually ate some sort of stew with lentils or white beans and chorizo or some sort of meat with vegetable side. For dinner, I usually ate a small portion of pasta or soup. A few nights a week I would eat dinner out with my friends instead of dinner at home, which the host families are used to. I made sure to tell my host mom that day or the day before that I would not be eating dinner at home. All the food I ate in Spain was great and some of my favorite meals were ones cooked by my host mom.

On the excursions, breakfast is included and one cultural lunch. The program fee also includes weekly activities in Salamanca with the Emory group.

One of the biggest expenses while abroad is additional travel. In order to get to the Madrid Airport, you must take a bus that leaves straight from the Salamanca bus station to the bus station at the airport. While flights in Europe are much cheaper than those in the U.S., traveling is still expensive for a college student budget so be aware of your personal budget and figure out where you want to splurge and where you want to save.

As for financial aid, you can carry financial aid and scholarships from Emory overseas. Here are a few additional scholarships that you may be eligible for:

Study Abroad Travel Grant

If you are currently receiving financial aid from the College, you are eligible to apply. Awards range from \$500 to \$1,200.

Gilman Scholarship

If you are receiving a Pell Grant, you are eligible to apply. Recipients carry out a follow on project after returning to promote studying abroad and/or the Gilman Scholarship. Average award is approximately \$4,000.

Make sure to check the Study Abroad website when you are applying to see if there are any other new scholarships being offered.



Packing Tips

Clothing:

If you are studying abroad for just a semester in Salamanca, you will definitely experience two very different seasons. For the fall semester, students will start out in the summer like weather with highs of 80° and lows of 55°. Once November rolls around, the weather will be more winter like where a winter coat will be necessary. When I arrived in Salamanca in January, the temperature was an average high of 46° and low of 32°. As the semester went on, the city started to warm up and I was not wearing a full winter coat by around mid-March. The spring is temperate with some hot days into the 70s. I would recommend bringing enough clothes for about two weeks, because that is how often I went to the laundromat or my host mom washed my clothes. Spaniards dress up much more than Americans do, even for school and walks around town, so be prepared.



Technology:

As for technology, I would recommend bringing a laptop, a phone you can use with WiFi, and some sort of digital reading device and little more than that. On weekends I would usually just bring my Kindle and my iPhone that was WiFi capable. I brought a few paper books and my Kindle, and I was so happy to have my Kindle just because it saves so much space while packing.

Suitcase:

I would recommend limiting yourself to one rolling suitcase, one small duffel bag and one backpack. You should be able to carry all your luggage by yourself fairly comfortably.

School Supplies:

I would recommend buying school supplies in Salamanca, there are many great paper stores with journals and pens etc.



Foods to Try



Food specific to Salamanca:

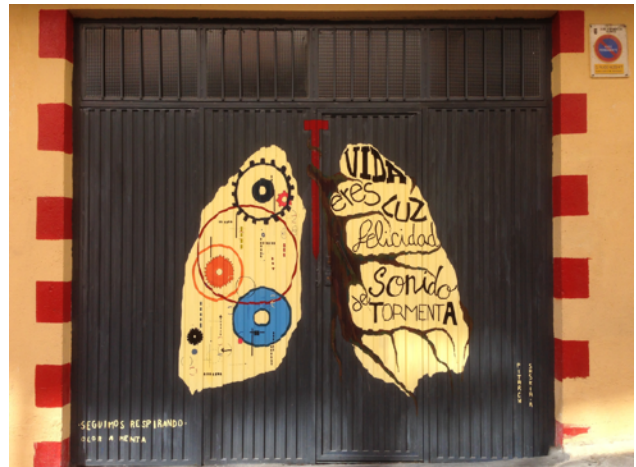
- Cocido (in Salamanca)
- Cochinillo asado (in Castilla y León)
- Hornazo
- Farinato (my favorite!)
- Chanfaina salmantina
- Lots of stews with lentils or beans
- Expect a lot of pork products!

Spanish food in general:

- Pintxos in el País Vasco
- Pulpo a la gallega in Galicia
- Churros y chocolate
- Huevos rotos
- Patatas bravas
- Gazpacho/salmorejo (in southern Spain)
- Paella (in Valencia or all over Spain now!)
- Queso manchego
- Tortilla española

Cultural spotlight: Barrio Oeste

One of my favorite neighborhoods and areas to walk around in Salamanca was the Barrio Oeste or “West Neighborhood” in English, basically. The area is known for its street art and the circular plaza, Plaza del Oeste, with a few restaurants around the perimeter. The neighborhood isn’t in the central, older section of Salamanca but rather is outside of the arc shaped area that most people identify as the central part of Salamanca. The Asociación de Vecinos Zoes is the community organization that has helped to revitalize the area with community outreach programs and the commissioning of street art to liven up the streets. If you start out in the Plaza del Oeste and roam around the streets that project out of it. This is the easiest way to explore the neighborhood and see a lot of the murals. Some cafes that would be worth stopping in to for a coffee or a snack are: La Salchichería, Bar Bonanza, and el Café de Mayte.



Salamanca: the perfect place to study abroad



When people hear that Salamanca is not a huge city like Barcelona or Madrid, many are apprehensive of studying abroad in such a city. This should not be the case! I think that Salamanca is the perfect size for a study abroad experience that both broadens your horizons and allows you to be comfortable in the city. I was able to walk everywhere I needed to get in the city within 30 minutes and the city is teeming with students and academics. There is a great mix of international and Spanish students, which allows you to get exposed to not only Spanish culture, but also cultures on the other side of the globe.



Instead of commuting 30 minutes to school on the subway like many of my friends in larger cities, I was able to walk 10 minutes to the Cursos Internacionales building for morning classes and 7 minutes to the Emory Center for my afternoon classes. Salamanca residents accept international students with excitement and are always willing to help you practice your Spanish or give advice about where to find the best tapas.

I think my study abroad experience would have been more stressful studying abroad in a larger city simply because juggling the new language and new culture was already enough to deal with, even without having to navigate a city of many million people.

Salamanca is also the perfect jumping off point for exploring other regions of Spain and even Portugal. I used train, bus and air travel to visit a variety of places in Spain, Portugal and other countries all around Europe and North Africa.



I found some of my favorite trips of my time abroad to be the ones where I utilized ground transportation to get there, such as San Sebastián, Madrid, La Alberca and Santiago de Compostela.

Homestays

During your time in Salamanca, you will live in a homestay with a Spanish family. Your family could be a different mix of family members. For example, I lived with one woman in her apartment, but I had friends who lived in houses with three generations and multiple homestay siblings. Some people even had cats or dogs. The homestay locations are located throughout the city, but all within walking distance to classes. The walking time can vary with 10 minutes being the shortest and 30-40 minutes being the longest.

While living in another family's house seems intimidating, I really loved my experience and thought living in a Spanish household really complemented my classes and cultural experience in Spain. I am not picky with food at all, so I found all the food to be great even though some of it is very different than the food you usually find at home. Within the first few days, I would make sure to tell your host family about any foods you like or dislike. They are usually very accommodating with any requests you may have.

I would also recommend asking your host family about when lights should be turned off in the house and about how long showers should be. Utilities are very expensive in Spain, so in my homestay we usually did not have lights on during the day and at night I would usually only have a light on in the room where I was studying or sitting.

Part of the reason I think homestays in Salamanca are so successful is because the city has a long tradition of hosting international students. The popularity of Salamanca for students studying Spanish language works to your advantage because many of the residents have had hosted or had exposure to other American students and traditions.



Excursions



Some of my favorite weekends of my time abroad were the excursions I did with the Emory group. Usually each semester, there are around three 2-4 day trips and one day trip. During Spring 2015, I went to Toledo, Portugal, Andalucía, and Lanzarote. All of these excursions were included in the program cost, except for lunch and dinner each day of the trip. During the day, you go on cultural visits and then have free time in the afternoon to explore by yourself or rest. With the guidance of the Emory staff, you are guaranteed to visit the best places and eat at the tastiest restaurants that serve regional cuisine.

My favorite excursion was our trip to Lanzarote, which is one of the Canary Islands off the coast of Morocco. These islands are part of Spain, but have a very distinctive culture that presents a nice alternative to the traditional Spanish experience. We spent the mornings touring cultural sites and the afternoons on the beach.

The travel is always painless on the excursions and every hour is planned, so it's a nice break from independent travel. I highly recommend speaking in Spanish during the excursions to gain the most out of the cultural experience.



Independent Travel

Independent travel is one of the best ways to spend your free time while abroad. While studying in Salamanca, I traveled to such places as France, Morocco, the Netherlands and Croatia to name a few. Though I recommend traveling during your time abroad, make sure you also spend ample time in Salamanca exploring. I highly encourage planning in advance, but not before you get to the country where you are studying. I travelled with my friends from the Salamanca program, friends from home and Emory that were studying abroad in other locations, my parents, and by myself.

I would recommend using trains and buses when possible, because they often have stations within the big cities. Now, with airline options such as EasyJet and Ryanair, plane tickets are often the same price or cheaper than train tickets. I used Kayak, Expedia and Rome2Rio to help with trip planning. I also had great experiences using AirBnB to find cheaper places to stay. Renting an apartment was a nice alternative to staying in a hostel or a cheaper hotel.

To get from Salamanca to the Madrid airport, you must take the 2.5 hour bus ride from the Salamanca bus station straight to the Madrid Airport. There is a bus that does this route every hour or so which is helpful for planning flights. I would make sure that when you book a flight that there is a bus that corresponds to your schedule of getting to and from Salamanca. The last bus leaves the airport around 9pm, so plan accordingly. There's also the possibility of staying in an airport hotel in Madrid for very cheap, which we did when we had early morning flights.

Helpful websites:

- Kayak
- Expedia
- AirBnB
- Ryanair/EasyJet
- Skyscanner



Top 10 Things to do in SALAMANCA

The first time I saw Salamanca, I was impressed by how the bell tower of cathedral seems to tower over the whole landscape of the city and the surrounding countryside. The city of 220,000 people is built on a hill that begins down at the banks of the River Tormes. It is located in the region of Castilla y León, which borders Portugal to the left. The culture of the town is dominated by the liveliness of the student population and the medieval history of the city. The University of Salamanca is the third oldest university in Europe and attracts students from all over the country and world. Below are the 10 things that I would recommend seeing and doing in Salamanca if you ever visit or study abroad there.

1. See the Plaza Mayor during the day and at night. Stop and have a coffee on the square at on one of the terrazas (terraces) and watch all the Spaniards walk by with their families on their daily paseos (strolls).
2. Walk over the Puente Romano (the Roman Bridge) to see the other side of the river and the cathedral from a new vantage point. Run around the track right by the bridge or bring a picnic.
3. Explore el Barrio Oeste. This neighborhood has recently been reinvented due to a local neighborhood organization that brings local artists to paint murals. There are some cafes that look like the perfect places to get that last minute culture essay done.
4. Walk up to the top of the cathedral and admire the view of Salamanca and the surrounding countryside. Make sure you stop at each of the lookouts to see different vantage points.
5. Go tapas hopping from Mesón Cevantes to Bambú to Taberna Dionisos. Or if you want some very cool, innovative tapas head to Tapas 2.0. Calle Van Dyck (where a lot of the students go) is also a good place find cheap tapas and Mexican food. Usually three tapas bars is the optimum number.
6. Take a tour of the university, see the cloisters, and spot the frog. One of the reasons you tend to see large amounts of frog related souvenirs in Salamanca is because of the frog that has been carved out of part of the historical door of the university. Within the ornate door that features various royalty of Spain, there is a little frog that is said to provide the University of Salamanca students with good luck if they spot it before a big exam.
7. Walk down Calle Toro all the way to Corte Inglés (a large Spanish department store) during the sales season to see the craziness and the flurry of activity that happens when Spanish families go shopping together.
8. See a microtheater show at La Malhablada and spend some time pre and/or post show at the rooftop bar. The tickets are cheap and the atmosphere is fun for an activity before the inevitable tapas bar hop.
9. Go to the garden of Calixto and Melibea to see a beautiful view of the river.
10. Explore the small plazas and parks around the city. Plaza de Colón, Parque de los Jesuitos, Plaza de la Libertad and Campo San Francisco are some good places to start. There are so many that you stumble upon that are also beautiful and worth exploring.

Resources

Below are some suggested books and movies to watch before studying abroad. I have also included helpful websites to refer to when abroad.

Movies:

- *Pan's Labyrinth*
- *Volver*
- *I'm So Excited*
- *Talk to Her*
- *Biutiful*
- *Broken Embraces*
- *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*
- *Man of La Mancha*
- *Juana La Loca*
- *El Cid*
- *Open Your Eyes*
- *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*

Fiction Books:

- *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes
- *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway
- *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway
- *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón

Non-Fiction Books:

- *The Basque History of the World* by Mark Kurlansky
- *The Battle for Spain* by Antony Beevor
- *Homage to Barcelona* by Colm Toibin

Helpful Websites:

- <http://www.magrama.gob.es/es/red-parques-nacionales/>
- <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/669>
- <http://www.espavino.com/>
- <http://www.spain.info/>
- <http://www.renfe.com/>
- <https://www.alsa.es/>

