

STUDY ABROAD



MY EXCHANGE

For me the process of choosing a university abroad started with my preference for a Spanish speaking country. Subsequently, I started filtering the list of connected universities to the TPM faculty based on this criterion. I then started looking in to the available master courses in my area of interest. Which is the integration of renewable energy. This was not in line with the available courses at Santiago, Chile which I retrieved from their website. The courses at the connected faculty in Madrid was mainly focused on business courses while in Barcelona they were more from a technical perspective. Because I was looking for this technical perspective, Barcelona was the obvious choice. All the information that I needed was available on the websites of the universities searching for masters' curriculum that I thought would be interesting. I then made a selection of six courses from the available information and emailed the professors of the courses if I wanted more information.



EXCHANGE IN BARCELONA

LEISURE TIME IN BARCELONA

I spent most of my free time hiking, discovering the city, playing volleyball, reading, running and hanging out in bars around Barcelona. There were 2 weeks in the beginning where there were introduction games and events organized by the Erasmus student network. This is definitely a must to join when abroad. They get you into contact with all other Erasmus students at big events where it is really easy to meet likewise thinking people.

I think it is important, especially in the beginning, to invest a lot of time in discovering the city and to meet people and build a bit of a social network. I state this because the weather is better, in fall semester, but also because it might be a bit more difficult to meet people later on. Definitely go to Bosco café during the week to get a menu del dia. I would recommend also to join some sort of group sport to get into contact with a larger group of people.



TIPS & TRICKS

A huge tip to visiting Barcelona in general is that it is not only famous for its glorious Gaudi architecture but also for its pickpockets. I think nearly half of the persons that I have met have been pickpocketed at least once. Therefore, make sure that you are well insured and that all your devices and passes have good codes. If that is the case you shouldn't be in too much of problems.

If you use a real-estate agent to get an apartment keep in mind that there is often a really high fee for the agency. And last but not least enjoy walking in the city, the great architecture and weather especially in combination with a beer and some fuet.

THE EXPERIENCE

After meeting people and finding a group that is also enthusiastic to go on small adventures outside the city it is definitely a recommendation to rent a car for the weekend. You can go all over costa brava which is beautiful. But also, to Andorra and drive around the Pyrenes. Or as we did go all the way to Zaragoza and San Sebastian, Basque country, which will make you feel like you are in a completely different climate and surrounding. Although Barcelona definitely has more to offer than the spare time you can fill in the Erasmus period you are there, I definitely recommend to go hikes like Bellmunt and Montserrat to get away from the busy-ness of the city for a bit.

Spanish bureaucracy can be a bit of a problem and you should therefore always expect that it will take some time to get paperwork correct. I actually gave up on getting the NIE number and could therefore not use the local bikes. However, if you want to pay a bit more you are able to let a third-party company arrange the NIE for you. Keep in mind that even then it will be a little bit of a hassle.