

Spain is Different!

Study There and Understand Why

Where else could you ski down a snowy mountain in the morning and swim in a warm sea in the afternoon? Where else can you witness spontaneous singing in the streets? Where else can you visit four or five regions in one day and experience different scenery, food, wine, art and customs in each one? There are seventeen regions in Spain and each has a distinct flavor – not only in its food, but in its music and art, its history and language, its traditional costumes and fiestas and its character.

I had a wonderful trip to Spain in September/October. For the third year in a row I was invited to a Spanish Language School Fair (Fedele Conference) that showcases accredited Spanish language schools throughout Spain. The first year it was in A Coruña and we visited the northwest region of Galicia. Last year it was in Valladolid and we visited the east central region of Castilla y León, which included Salamanca. I went a few days early and spent time in Madrid, where I visited a wonderful school and observed classes, ate with the students and toured the residential facilities. Besides giving me a chance to rest up before the fair, which is jam-packed with activities and school visits (3 schools in Valladolid and 7 in Salamanca), I got to reacquaint myself with the city where I spent my junior year of the university many years ago.

This year the fair was held in Granada. The magnificent Alhambra rises over this lively city and provides a stunning nighttime backdrop to many of the lovely restaurants. I took a post tour to Verjer de la Frontera, Cádiz, Puerto Santa María and Seville, visiting schools in each place.

Spain is like second nature to me. I lived in Barcelona for nine years and I usually visit at least once a year. In May of 2005 I visited three schools that I had come in contact with at the previous year's fair. When I lived in Spain I taught English. I wasn't that familiar with Spanish schools. Now I am!

I have had extensive conversations with teachers and representatives from schools all over Spain. My first concern is about methodology. We also talk about the "feel" of the school. I see pictures and learn about the extra activities that are integrated into the program. I have chosen schools that I feel would best meet the needs of the students who study at the International Language Institute and by extension, anyone who is interested in studying in Spain. (Some of the schools have partners in Latin America and I have that information as well.)

Since there are so many schools to choose from, it's important to ask yourself some of the following questions.

Are you interested in Spanish for Special Purposes? Medical Spanish, Legal Spanish, Business Spanish? Do you want to learn how to be an effective translator? Do you want to take the Cervantes DELE exam?

Besides Spanish language, do you want to surf? Sail? Dance? Golf? Cook?

Do you want historic trips? Art excursions? Wine tours?

Do you have at least a high intermediate level of Spanish and want to go on La Ruta de la Lengua Castellana? Are you interested in El Camino de Santiago?

Do you want to bring the family and have classes for children and teens? Do you want a program for your teens where you know they'll be safe?

Do you want to live with a host family? In a studio apartment? In shared apartments?

Do you want big city, town, sea or mountains?

I am putting a three-week trip together to study in Madrid, Granada and Cádiz. It will be offered in January and mid-May. This is geared to university students but is open to anyone. I also have some specific dates for 50+ groups, for Christmas courses and lots more. We will be updating our website with dates and pictures.

As you can see, there is something for everyone and I am happy to talk with you about finding the school and the location that best meet your needs. Call me at 413 586 7569 Ext. 104 or email me at alexis@languageschoolusa.org if you have any interest in studying in Spain now or in the future. Hasta Pronto!