

MADRID

The capital city Madrid, is a cosmopolitan metropolis with many theatres, cinemas and opera houses and over 50 museums and art galleries. A cultural as well as geographic center, Madrid is noted for the arts. The colorful capital was once a Moorish Fortress, but had become a relatively unknown village before Philip II formally established it as the seat of government in 1561.



TRANSPORTATION

The metro is the fastest way of getting around the city. Pre-purchased multi-journey tickets are sold. Metered taxis are available and a 2-3% tip is customary. The bus covers the entire city and single journey fares may be purchased directly on the bus.



MONEY

Currency: Euro. Coins in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 50 cents and 1 & 2 Euros. Bank notes of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 Euros are legal tender. A good number of hotels and travel agencies will change currency.



TELEPHONE

Public telephones are either coin-operated or can be used with telephone cards that are purchased at tobacconist shops.
Emergency medical tel. 061
Emergency fire tel. 080
Municipal police tel. 092



EATING

Eating out in Spain is often cheap and meals are substantial rather than gourmet. One of the best ways to sample Spanish food is to try *tapas* (appetizers which are served at any time of the day. Going out for tapas is a tradition. *Gazpacho*, a cold soup of tomato, seasoned with garlic, has become nationally celebrated. *Paella*, is a casserole of rice, saffron, peas and pimento, with seafood and chicken added. Fruit flavored *Sangría*, and other wines are commonly served.



PLACES TO VISIT

Prado Museum is considered one of the most important art galleries in the world. It housed masterpieces by Goya, El Greco, Rubens, Rembrandt among others. Lazaro Galdiano Museum includes a treasure of paintings, clocks, furniture, jewelry, gold, silver, ivory and enamel objects from a private collection. National Archeological Museum containing artifacts from excavations throughout Spain.



SHOPPING

Concentrated in and around the Plaza Mayor are an assortment of shops selling traditional articles such as espadrilles, fabrics, ropes, hats and religious articles. The Rastro, open-air market, is recommended. Half of the market takes place in the open and half in more permanent galleries.



NIGHTLIFE

Nightowls will find Madrid a paradise every night of the week. Visitors must keep in mind the late dining hours. In the summer months and especially at night, open-air terraces abound in the areas of the Paseo de la Castellana and the Parque del Oeste. Malasaña, in the vicinity of the Plaza de Dos de Mayo, has countless cafés and bars with lively music, in addition to moderately-priced restaurants.



PARKS & GARDENS

The Royal Botanical Garden boasts numerous varieties of trees and plants. Located on the right bank of the Manzanares River to the west of Madrid, the Casa de Campo is a large park with an area of about 4000 acres. Rowboats can be rented for a ride around the artificial lake. A park in the western part of the city bordering the Paseo del Pintor Rosales which has a lovely rose garden and various monuments.



POSTAGE

Postage stamps can be purchased at any post office or through shops known as estancos. In all towns and cities there are corner pillar boxes (yellow or red) where letters can be posted for collection.