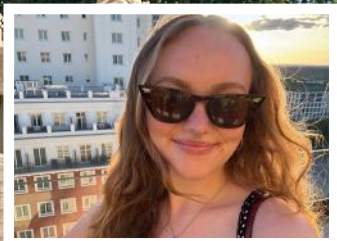


# Mag *aux* ine

No. 5, September 2025

## Move Abroad: How to Prepare

**conversaSpain**  
Auxiliares de conversación



**From Georgia to  
Spain, and everything  
in between. Meet  
Madison!**

**(Page 10-12)**



**Must-visit places in  
Spain  
(Page 5)**



**New school year, new  
teaching section... but  
same teacher!**  
**(Page 6-7)**



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# L

## et's be honest:

There's no 'right' way to prepare for a move abroad.

You can color-code your packing list, make 20 copies of every document, and still forget your toothbrush. Or your charger. Or the fact that Spaniards greet each other with two kisses.

This month, we're not here to give you another list of 'must-haves' (okay, maybe one or two). We're here to remind you that preparing to live in Spain is more than just logistics. It's a shift in mindset, in rhythm, in comfort zones.

So, breathe. You're doing it. You're moving to Spain, and you're going to be okay. Even if you forget your toothpaste.

And you know what? We are going to be by your side. To remind you that there's no 'right' way to do it, there is 'your' way.

And that's more than alright.

*Tomás*

*CEO, Multilingual Education Development & Support*



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Events *by Remy*

01-07



Sport.  
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05-07



Festivities. Medieval  
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05-07



Festivities. Medieval  
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Festivities.  
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Music.  
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23-30



Sport. European Sports  
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Sport. Mountain and  
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26-27



Music.  
Madrid Salvaje, Madrid

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Music. Love the Twenties  
Festival, Murcia

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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# Start and stay here



You're about to land in Spain, and suddenly everywhere feels so close: Paris, Rome, Prague, Berlin... You've got your suitcase ready, so you want to take it to Europe too. I get it. Spain is the perfect spot to explore the rest of the continent. And don't worry, you will. I promise. But here's my advice: wait. Because **Spain is not just a starting point. Spain is the destination.**



## Santiago de Compostela

When you arrive, everything will be new: language, food, streets, schedules... and you. So, take a breath. **Start from the beginning.** Explore what's directly around you. Every region in Spain feels like a different country. Different landscapes, accents, food, traditions... so much to discover.

Even if you're not doing the Camino, you have to visit. The cathedral is stunning, and of course, it's not only that. Bonus: visit Playa de las Catedrales while you're in the area. Galicia might feel far, but hey, it's still way closer than Paris.

So, before taking your suitcase across Europe, here are a few of my **favorite places to start preparing your adventure:**

## Córdoba and Granada

I'm obsessed with the South, and this combo is one of my all-time favorite trips. These cities are all about history, vibes, kind people, and the food? Incredible. The Mezquita and the Alhambra are a must. You'll literally step back through the centuries. Plan a long weekend!



## Tenerife

Okay, so you want to get on a plane? Go for it, but just fly to Tenerife. Hike up Teide, swim in volcanic pools, eat *papas arrugadas con mojo picón*, and enjoy the wild, relaxed energy of island life.

Yes, this section is supposed to be just one monthly recommendation. But this time, my recommendation is simple: start (and stay) here.

**Spain is literally around the corner and it's so worth it.**



# New year, new approach, but same teacher!

Let's start at the very beginning with some simple phrases to memorize for your first few days in Spain. Keep it going by using one of our recommended apps!



Hello

***Hola***

Please

***Por favor***

Thank you

***Gracias***

Excuse me

***Perdón/Disculpe***

I don't understand

***No entiendo***

Do you speak  
English?

***¿Habla inglés?***

Where is the  
bathroom/toilet?

***¿Dónde está el  
baño?***

How much is it?

***¿Cuánto cuesta?***

I'm sorry

***Lo siento***

I'm the language  
assistant

***Soy el/la auxiliar de  
conversación***

I come from

***Vengo de...***

I don't speak  
Spanish very well

***No hablo muy bien  
español***

What does... mean?

***¿Qué significa...?***

How do you say... in  
Spanish?

***¿Cómo se dice... en  
español?***

Could you repeat  
that, please?

***¿Puede repetirlo,  
por favor?***

## Recommended Apps:



**Duolingo**

Good for casual  
learners



**LingoPie**

Ideal for video  
learners



**Mondly**

Best budget  
app



**Babbel**

Focus on grammar  
and drills



**Pimsleur**

Great for conversation  
practice and fluency building

# How can you prepare for your arrival?

Write to your school, introduce yourself, ask about your classes, schedule, and their expectations

Sign up for a TEFL course or get cracking with the course you're already taking

Get a game ready to break the ice and learn your students' names

Create a presentation about yourself

Prepare a folder/ USB with fallback printouts/activities

Gather authentic realia from your home country

Speak to your school's previous *auxi*

## Tips for Your Presentation:

- Use Google Maps, show your students where you live, how far it is from Spain
- Take a paper map of the world, your home country or your region
- Anticipate questions that curious students might ask you
- Family photos (real or fictitious: give yourself that dog you always wanted!)
- Home in on your hobbies, national sports or nature in your region: photos will spark your students' imagination and their questions, encouraging them to share similar information about themselves, their town or region







Recipe by Nûpelda

# *Tortilla de Patata:*

An egg-cellent way to start your Spanish adventure.

Moving abroad can feel like a lot; new country, new language, new everything. But one of the best ways to ease into your Spanish adventure is cooking something local!

Let's start with a humble classic you'll spot everywhere from school cafeterias to bars: *tortilla de patatas*.

Not to be confused with the Mexican version, a Spanish *tortilla* is a thick potato omelet, golden on the outside, creamy on the inside. It's cheap, filling, and makes great leftovers.

There's even a famous onion debate that divides Spain: some swear by onions for sweetness, while others insist they don't belong there. Either way, the *tortilla* is your blank canvas. Once you've mastered the basics, feel free to eggs-periment with your own tasty twists!

## What You'll Need (Basic Version)

- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 small onion
- 5-6 eggs
- Olive oil (don't be shy!)
- Salt to taste



## How To Work Your Magic:

- 01** Peel and slice potatoes and onions into thin half-moons.
- 02** Slow-fry potatoes and onions in plenty of olive oil on low heat.
- 03** Cook gently for 15–20 minutes until soft, not crispy.
- 04** Drain the mix, let it cool and season with salt.
- 05** Beat the eggs, mix with potatoes and onions and let sit briefly.
- 06** Pour mixture into a hot, lightly-oiled pan and cook on low heat.
- 07** Flip using a plate. Don't be scared, this is a rite of passage.
- 08** Cook the other side for a few minutes, then serve.



## No Kitchen? No Problem

### Supermarkets Have Your Back

If you're not a big fan of cooking (yet) or don't have kitchen access right away, don't worry! *Tortilla* is sold everywhere in Spain: bars, bakeries, even vending machines (yes, really).

Supermarket fridges are stocked with big, small, onion/no-onion, chorizo, spinach and even vegan-friendly *tortillas*.

Look out for ready-made *tortillas* at supermarkets like Mercadona, Carrefour, Alcampo, and Lidl (Mercadona's *tortilla* game is quite strong)!

**Want to start a conversation with a local? Ask: “¿Con cebolla o sin cebolla?” and watch the passion unfold.**

### A Way to Socialize With Friends

Hit up different supermarkets, buy as many *tortilla* varieties as you dare, and head to a park. Bring napkins, drinks, and your most judgmental taste buds.

Rate them by flavor, fluffiness, and overall *tortilla* vibes. Then crown the Egg-cellent Tortilla Champion.

Because what better way to bond than with a full-blown *tortilla* egg-travaganza? That's the last egg pun, promise.

# Interview by Ainhoa

## MADISON MANNING

Age: 24 years old

From: United States

Region: Madrid

Role:

Auxiliar from 2024–2025 in a primary school



“

**I will probably spend every day for the rest of my life thinking about my time in Madrid.”**

Madison didn't come to Spain because everything was easy, she came because she knew “being uncomfortable is always an opportunity to grow.” From having lived in Georgia her whole life to suddenly calling Madrid home, Madison's story is the kind of change you only get when you decide to take the leap.

She thought she was coming to Spain to teach, but her students ended up teaching her just as much. It's not an exaggeration: moving to Spain shifted the way Madison sees the world and herself. And she probably changed the way her students see it as well. *¡Gracias, Madison!*

**F**irst things first. Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

My name is Madison. I love football, yoga, art, shopping, going to concerts, and trying new coffee shops! I have lived in the lovely state of Georgia (USA) my whole life, and I graduated from Georgia State University in 2023. I became a Registered Nurse, working in the Emergency Department at a trauma center.

A nurse who trained me mentioned how she lived in Madrid. Everything she described sounded beyond perfect, and she connected me with ConversaSpain! I completed each step (and a ton of bureaucratic paperwork). Next thing I knew, I had my visa and a one-way plane ticket!



**What were you most nervous about before moving here?**

I have always been very independent, but this was the ultimate test. I wasn't afraid to be away from home, but it was very intimidating to be SO far away. Thinking about not being able to quickly get back if someone needed me was nerve-wracking. I was worried that life would go on without me back home. Plus, moving also meant having to do long-distance with my boyfriend.

**Was that fear justified?**

The fear was justified, but worth it in every way! Being uncomfortable is always an opportunity to grow. I only went home once in 9 months to be in a wedding, so I missed every holiday at home. But change didn't mean things were worse, just that things would be different. For example, I missed not being home for Christmas with everyone, but it allowed my dad to visit Madrid during Christmas time! My dad loved it so much, he said he wanted to buy a *Cervecería* and live in Spain forever. Additionally, most of my friends and boyfriend were able to visit me throughout the school year!

## What's one thing you wish you had known before getting on the plane?

While you may not necessarily need to be fluent in Spanish, you need to at least be conversational. Before moving, I thought my Spanish was better than the average American, but I was quickly humbled. That level wasn't going to be sufficient. I wish I had brushed up more on my Spanish to make the first few weeks easier. Now, I'm grateful for the level of Spanish I have achieved.

## Everyone's got a "packing regret" story. Did you overpack, underpack, or forget something essential?

I underpacked for clothes, especially for the winter. I did not expect to need a winter coat and waterproof boots in Spain! It worked out well though because I had an excuse to do a ton of shopping at the best thrift store ever: Humana! Shopping in Madrid is unbeatable. I came back with one more suitcase than I moved to Madrid with... oops!

## What would you recommend future *auxis* bring with them?

If you have any specific products that you're not positive you'll be able to get in Spain, bring them! For example, I have products that work for my curly hair that I left at home, and it took some time to try new things in Madrid. I would also suggest bringing long charging cords because sometimes the outlets in your room may be far from your bed/desk. I also brought printed copies of every document I may need and kept them in a folder the whole year.



## What was your first impression of Madrid?

I was in awe. As I walked around my first day, I kept thinking, "I can't believe I live here now." The sunset lighting always hits the buildings so beautifully. I was also intimidated; I wasn't expecting it to be so populated!

## Did anything shock you about life in Spain?

The transportation system is incredible! I loved learning to navigate the *metro* and buses. Back home in Georgia, nothing compares. I still can't comprehend how affordable it is. It also felt so safe! One thing that was different to me was the ingredients available in stores. I couldn't make every recipe the same way in Spain. However, this led me to fall in love with the grocery store Mercadona because it has the best products.

## Is there anything you would have done differently during those first weeks?

No! I would advise others not to put anything off and try to get things done during your first weeks, even though it will be busy (banking, phone...).



## What's your #1 "do this before you leave" tip?

The biggest thing that made the transition easiest for me was finding my roommates before arriving in Madrid. I didn't know anyone, so I reached out to Thea and Olivia through the ConversaSpain group chat. We messaged for months before moving and got to know each other so well.

Looking back, I can't believe they were once strangers because they became the most vital piece of moving abroad. Having each other's support and being able to create lifelong friendships was one of the most rewarding aspects. I couldn't have done it without them. We were able to combine friends and ended up with the best group of friends ever! It is so cool having friends from all around the world!

### **And your #1 “don’t stress about this” piece of advice?**

There is no need to stress about going to school, even if you feel unprepared or you don’t know what to expect/ do. Everyone was so unbelievably warm, welcoming, and generous! I was seriously excited to go to school every day and everyone was patient with me as I adjusted to this new job, new country, and new life. The students will love you no matter what and find you interesting!

### **What’s been the absolute highlight of your year in Madrid?**

Apart from all the fond memories I have with my students, I feel the most fortunate to have been able to travel as much as I did. In 10 months, I was able to go to 15 countries and explore many regions in Spain!



### **What’s the one “thing” you take home with you?**

Now that I am back home, it’s crazy to me how much Madrid became home as well. I’m missing it and there is a hole in my heart. I have so much pride in having lived there and it feels like it’s a part of me now. I will probably spend every day for the rest of my life thinking about my time in Madrid. Already planning my next trip back!

### **How has living here changed you?**

It has changed everything for me, especially being from the U.S. It has reinforced the true meaning of life to me, and I will forever admire the outlook people in Spain have on it. In the U.S., life is designed to revolve around work. In Madrid, I was able to enjoy each day, spend time with friends daily after work, and still feel rested. Living in another country only further opened my eyes to the major, undesirable social and political flaws of my home country.



It was interesting to see how the rest of the world views the U.S.

### **What memory do you hope will never fade?**

I have so much love for my students and my school. I never want to forget their sweet faces and intelligent minds. They made a huge impact on my heart. Every single day was the best day with the students and teachers. Seeing students who knew little to no English at the beginning, have inside jokes and sing songs with me by the end of the year, was the most heartwarming experience. I will also never forget “El Apagón”, the day the major power blackout happened!

### **Spain will always leave a light on for you, though!**







## Did you know...

There are over **280 million international migrants** around the world today



That means nearly 1 in every 30 people are living in a country they weren't born in.

Whether it's for work, study, love, or adventure, millions of people pack their lives into suitcases and move abroad every year.

So, if you're about to take the leap... you're not alone. You're joining a pretty big club, even if it doesn't always feel like it.

**\*Source:** United Nations, International Organization for Migration (IOM) World Migration Report 2024. <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/msite/wmr-2024-interactive/>

## Moving Abroad Mindfully: Preparing for a New Chapter

Moving to a new country is more than a logistical challenge. It's a leap of personal growth. What if we prepared not just our suitcases, but our minds and hearts, too? Here are four tips, each paired with a reflective question, an anchor practice, and a mindful action, to help you get ready for your move to Spain.

### *Cultivate Curiosity Over Control*

Rather than needing to know or plan everything, try shifting your mindset toward openness and exploration: not everything will go as planned, and that's okay.

**Question:** What would it feel like to be more curious than cautious?

**Practice:** Each morning, write down one thing you're curious to discover in Spain.

**Action:** Take three deep breaths when something frustrates you and gently ask, "What can I learn here?"

### *Ground Yourself Before You Go*

As you get ready to step into the unknown, take time to connect with what you're bringing with you (your values, your strengths, your 'why').

**Question:** What parts of myself do I want to carry with me into this new chapter?

**Practice:** Create a small ritual (lighting a candle, playing a song, journaling) that you can repeat in Spain when you feel unmoored.

**Action:** Write a letter to yourself explaining why you chose to do this. Read it again during your first few weeks abroad.





## *Create a Mindful Packing List*

Packing isn't only about clothes and documents. It's also about what emotional resources you'll carry with you.

**Question:** What habits or practices help me feel safe, grounded, or joyful?

**Practice:** Pack a few items that offer emotional comfort, like a journal, a small object from home, a favorite book, or tea you love.

**Action:** Make a short 'well-being list' of go-to practices (like walking, or calling a friend) to refer to when you feel overwhelmed.

## *Accept the Ups and Downs*

Adjustment isn't linear. Some days will feel magical; others might feel lonely or confusing. Just accept those feelings.

**Question:** Can I allow difficult feelings without labeling them as failures?

**Practice:** When you feel homesick or out of place, place your hand on your heart and say, "This is all part of the process."

**Action:** Instead of pushing away hard moments, observe them gently, and remind yourself: "This too shall pass."

## *Moving as a Mindful Becoming*

There will be moments that challenge you and moments that delight you. Mindfulness won't make every step smooth, but it will help you move through each experience with greater presence, self-compassion, and awareness.

This journey isn't about becoming someone new. It's about becoming more you by seeing what holds steady even as everything shifts. So, pack your bags (yes!), but also pack your patience, your curiosity, your kindness. Spain awaits you. Not just as a country, but as a canvas for mindful discovery.





02

**What do many shops in Spain do at lunchtime?**

- A) Stay open all day
- B) Close for several hours (siesta time)
- C) Offer discounts

03

**What's one of the first things you should do after arriving in Spain?**

- A) Get a local phone number or SIM card
- B) Get a gym membership
- C) Go sightseeing in your new town

01

**What's a common surprise for foreigners renting flats in Spain?**

- A) That apartments come fully furnished
- B) That rent is paid weekly
- C) That many flats don't have air conditioning

04

**How do people get around in Spain?**

- A) Owning a car is essential in every town
- B) Air travel is the most used type of transport
- C) Walking and public transport, the ultimate transportation methods

06

**What's something helpful to bring in your hand luggage?**

- A) A travel pillow
- B) Printed copies of important documents
- C) A beach towel

**What's a helpful sign of a reliable flat offer?**

- A) It looks fancy and is very cheap
- B) The owner agrees with everything, no questions
- C) The listing includes photos, location, a viewing or a video call

05

**Answers**

Cultural trivia  
1) C 2) B 3) A 4) C 5) C 6) B  
Matching Game  
Adaptador de enchufe - Plug adapter / Auriculares - Headphones / Zapatos cómodos - Comfortable shoes / Documentos  
importantes - Important documents / Gafas de sol - Sunglasses / Cargador portátil - Power bank / Utensilios de cocina - Basic  
kitchenware / Toallas y ropa de cama - Towels and bedding / Silla de playa - Beach chair / Mantas  
- Blankets / Paraguas - Umbrella / Productos de higiene personal - Toiletries



# Matching Game

Moving abroad means packing smart. Some essentials are worth the suitcase space — others are easier to get once you're here.

Whether you bring them with you or not, knowing how to say these items in Spanish is a must! Can you match the English words with their Spanish translations?

## Things you should bring with you:

Adaptador de enchufe

Important documents

Auriculares

Comfortable shoes

Zapatos cómodos

Headphones

Documentos importantes

Power bank

Gafas de sol

Sunglasses

Cargador portátil

Plug adapter

## Things we recommend you buy in Spain:

Utensilios de cocina

Beach chair

Toallas y ropa de cama

Umbrella

Silla de playa

Towels and bedding

Mantas

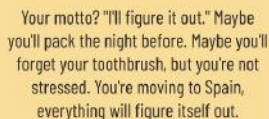
Toiletries

Paraguas

Basic kitchenware

Productos de higiene personal

Blankets



You've visualized the move. The playlists are curated, the outfits are prepped, and you have pinned 34 tapas recipes you will never cook. You'll arrive with 3 moodboards and a suitcase full of aesthetic... and no plug adapter.

# Partners

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SCRIBBLE SEAL

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