



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Tourism
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	01/09/2023 until 26/01/2024
Exchange destination: University	University of Alicante
Faculty	Tourism
Country	Spain
City	Alicante

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I went because I felt that it was the perfect opportunity in my study period to go abroad, and I had always wanted to live in another country for a while. Doing a minor abroad gave me the ability to really go outside my comfort zone, while still having some sort of 'strings attached' to school.

What is the reason you chose for this country/university?

My preference was largely based on the location, as Alicante has an amazing climate and is right by the Mediterranean, which I love.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

I think the easiest way is to go by plane, directly to Alicante airport. There, you either take a bus or a taxi and in about 30 minutes you will be in the city centre. By car is possible too, but it is a long trip of over 20 hours.

4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	Types of tourist areas	6	Looked further at different fields that exist in tourism. The course was split into a theoretical and practical part, which included a field trip.	3	In my opinion this course was very easy, almost to a point where I felt that there was not enough challenge. The teachers were very nice though.
2	Sociology of consumption	6	This course consisted of one part sociology and one part consumption, both taught by a different teacher.	4	This course was very doable as well, but gave interesting insights.
3	Sociology of Law	6	Similar to the above but with a law perspective.	3	The first teacher had a burn-out unfortunately, which is unrelated to the course but caused the lessons to be remote and we only had to write a paper. The second teacher was able to teach and made sure we were actively participating, which made the course a lot better.
4	Tourism market research	6	This course dove into research methods and statistics, which was a good refresher.	4	This is probably the hardest course I followed, because there was quite a lot of information given each lecture. All in all it was doable.
5	Advertising and public relations in tourism	6	For this course I had lectures explaining the marketing world of tourism, and we were able to put this into practice with assignments	5	I really liked this course, partly due to the teacher but also due to the assignments. We worked together with other internationals, which created new friendships and cool outcomes.
6	Spanish A2	6	This was a language course I followed, it was only 50 euros to join.	5	I had a lovely teacher who patiently taught us more Spanish, I really feel like I can communicate a lot better now.

What is it like to study there?

E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.

The academic level is lower than what I was used to at WUR, there is a lot less expected of you. This is okay during the exchange, but if it would be my entire bachelor I would

feel unchallenged. There are quite a bit of contact hours, which was fine for me to see other students, and caused that there wasn't a lot of homework.

What is the culture of the university?

E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with the WUR?

The lecturers are pretty approachable, most speak English well. Sadly there was not a lot of interaction with Spanish students, as they often do not select English-spoken courses. If there were Spanish students in my class, the groups did not mix and the teacher did not try to achieve this either.

What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

The campus is very nice, I compared it to a luxury resort sometimes ;) It is very spacious and there are many buildings, which is confusing at first but you'll know the way soon enough. There are several social clubs (cafeteria) at which you can buy really cheap lunch, and there is a sports centre as well.

5.Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?

Housing was not obstacle for me, as it is easy to just look online on idealista or spotahome to find a room. If that does not work, you can send a message in the ESN whatsapp group and there is usually someone who has a free room. On campus is possible, but I would recommend to find a room in the centre as that is where the fun happens! I lived close to the MARQ museum, which was fine, but I would advise to get even closer to the centre if possible. A lot of students live in the Mercado area.

What is the culture of the country like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

Spain has a great culture, as due to the climate many people live outside of their houses during the day. This caused me to feel more connected with the people, even though many did not speak English that well. The local cuisine is great, with arroz (which is paella but do not tell the Alicantinos this), tapas and of course sangria.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?

The public transport is good in the city, as there are a lot of buses going and there is a tram/metro. During my exchange, all this was free for everyone under 35 years old, so that saved a lot of money. One tram line went all the way up to Denia, so you can see a lot for free. There is a direct line from the centre to the University as well. At the bus station you can travel to other parts of the country, and the prices are not too bad as well.

6. Expenses

Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands.

Ticket there: 150

Visa if applicable:

Vaccinations if applicable:

Insurances (extra, if applicable):

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: 270 (I paid 500 in NL)

Groceries: a lot cheaper!

Public transport: 20 a month approx

Restaurant/going out for dinner: Also cheaper if you do not sit directly at the boulevard.

A breakfast of a cappuchino and a tostada cost me only 3 euros while that would not even cover the cappuchino at home

Daytrips/sight-seeing: depending where you go, within Alicante you can climb up the santa barbara for free, and renting a car to hike elsewhere is also very cheap off season.

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

I advise to join the Sevilla trip hosted by ESN, it was really great. Also, there is a high-speed line going from Alicante to Madrid. If you look for the right day, the prices are cheap and you are there in 2 hours! The coastline near Alicante is very pretty, and towns like Vilajoyosa and Altea are a must-visit.

What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth a visit?

I rented an airbnb close to Busot, and I realised that the area in-land is beautiful, but it doesn't get much attention due to all the beach-tourists. Renting a car is convenient, and very much worth it!

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

For authentic arroz – casa domingo at San Juan Playa

For really good tapas and nice atmosphere – chico calla, d'tablas

Amazing pizza – in bocca al lupo

for very cheap but delicious lunch with locals - saona

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

At times it is hard to be far away from home, but it is good to realise that all internationals experience this and to reach out. Also, make sure to locate a doctor upon arrival, as I got sick and did not know what to do, which made the situation harder than it had to be.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

All the good times with my new friends, spontaneous dinners and fun trips.

9. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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