

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The world is full of surprises. The world is diverse. The world is full of people who are differentiated by appearance, language, traditions, culture, habits, style of living and different customs. What seems completely natural in one country, is viewed as madness in another. Daily habits of one nationality, can appear extremely abstract to a different society. Wouldn't the world be boring if we were all the same? By travelling, we interact with entirely new cultures and encounter opportunities to adventure in ways that we wouldn't have experienced elsewhere. It pays off to be open-minded to new cultures. Let the euroMind team get you started by explaining some of the most important cultural differences you might come across in Spain :)

1 DESPACITO

Life in Spain goes at its own pace: free of hurrying and worrying! It's always a good time to take a break, and punctuality can be a very subjective term. Even the buses aren't obliged to stick to a timetable.. But keep in mind that a good trainee is a prompt one.



2 SIESTA

Taking a nap during the day? Sure thing! This is one of the most pleasant aspects of Spanish culture. The tradition of 'siesta', which simply refers to an afternoon, post-lunch rest, is a deep-rooted Spanish habit due to the high temperatures and the burning sun. The usual 'siesta' hours are between 2 - 4 p.m., it's a chance to put your feet up and relax. Many companies, offices and shops are closed for these hours, but they make up for it by staying open much later in the evening (after 'siesta'). Remember to keep quiet in the residence during siesta hours.



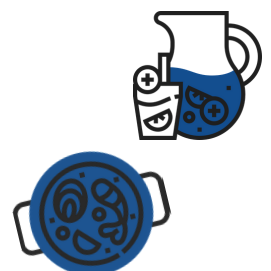
3 ALWAYS A MICROWAVE

Have you always thought that the only function of a microwave is to make popcorn? Well, it's not. The Spanish use their microwaves to boil potatoes, heat water, make tea, and even to cook meat! In Spain, kettles are not a very common thing to have in the house and some Spaniards may not even know the word!



4 FOOD AND DRINK

This one's a vast topic, so you should be prepared for many new and interesting cultural aspects. Let's start! When drinking water from the tap, sometimes you can taste the chlorine, but it is completely fine and safe to drink. Spanish people don't use butter. Coffee is usually drunk for breakfast and for dessert. Hot tea is only treated as a remedy for a cold. Water is drunk at lunch and dinner. Eating and drinking is forbidden on buses. And the typical Spanish breakfast? Toast with marmalade or something sweet.



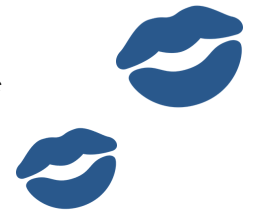
5 WEATHER

In the south of Spain, we cannot complain about a lack of sun. You must always remember to cover your head, stay hydrated and use sun cream. A fun fact is that in Andalusian houses there is no such thing as heating or radiators. So that's why when you come to Spain in winter, be prepared for low temperatures. Sometimes, it's even colder inside the house than outside :) Another interesting thing is that Spanish people don't use duvets. Instead, they usually cover themselves with blankets and sheets.



6 BESOS!

The Spanish are very open and friendly, so don't be surprised to receive two kisses on the cheeks while exchanging greetings.



7 IS THERE A DOCTOR IN HERE?

In almost every country the topic of public health services is very complex. In Spain, we have to expect the unexpected :) Often we will get better help and diagnosis in the nearest pharmacy than from a general practitioner in the hospital. We also have to be prepared for a doctor's appointment to potentially last up to 6 hours! First, with long wait in the casualty department, followed by anamnesis and back to the waiting room while you wait for a doctor to analyze the results. After that, another visit with the doctor and a referral to the physical examination. Once again, waiting for the results and medicine prescription. Being more exact - Ibuprofen. According to the Spanish, it is a medicine good for all, from the common cold to a twisted arm. It is also useful to know that there are no public dentists in Spain. So, in case of emergency, there is no other option than an appointment at a private specialist whose price list of services can cure your aching tooth instantly. A useful hint - don't be ill when in Spain :)



8 IT RAINS IN SPAIN, TOO

Yes, it's true. In a country as sunny as Spain it also rains, that's why it is advisable to take an umbrella with you. To be completely honest, we will use it more often to protect us from the sun than rain, but when it starts raining, it can last for days.



9 CUCARACHAS

Are you accustomed to mosquitoes, flies and other insects? It's time to meet cucarachas. High temperatures and a humid climate create a paradise for Spanish cockroaches. They are only waiting for you to invite them to your room by opening some snacks. To avoid the cockroaches, try not to consume food and sweet drinks in your rooms. And remember, that whilst they may not be as beautiful as butterflies - they don't bite. So don't be scared!



10 PEOPLE

Everyone knows the stereotypes about Spanish people - noisy, cheerful, emotive, smiling and very chatty. We hope that during your internship you will get a chance to see if they live up to their stereotypes or not :) But let's face it, who wouldn't be happy in a place where the sun shines 320 days a year? :)



11 LATE EVENING

High temperatures are one of the factors which generates the Spanish night lifestyle. So don't be surprised when you see children playing in the playground at 11 p.m. It is also very common to see babies in their strollers next to their parents who are chatting in pubs and restaurants until the late hours of the night.



12 MOST IMPORTANTLY

In this compact brochure we have included just a handful of the most important cultural differences. Remember that thanks to the internship in Spain you will get the chance to see for yourself, which of the Spanish habits is the biggest cultural shock for you, which customs you like, and which ones you can't get used to. This is the best thing about travelling and gaining new experiences :) Be open-minded and eager to get to know another culture, because it is what makes us citizens of the world. At the end of your stay in Spain, tell your coordinator about the most interesting experiences you had and the biggest cultural differences that you experienced. Good luck!

