

Universidad de Granada, España

Grado en Ciencias Ambientales – WiSe20/21 & SoSe21

“Spain offers an incredible life quality, between food, weather, landscapes, the culture, and its people, there are no plausible reasons to pass up. Go or miss out!”

As part of my programme at the Technical University of Brandenburg, a semester abroad had to be undertaken. I chose the University of Granada. Such enchantment there made me prolong for a second semester. This occurred during the academic year of 2020/2021, the Covid 19 pandemic year and its consequential restrictions. I therefore had all my classes and most examinations online. Thanks to the efficient coordination teams in both home- and host universities, the organization was simple, fast and without obstacles.

My first impression of the University of Granada was that the staff was incredibly well organized thanks to a personal UGR account, to the Prado tool used as a learning platform (very similar to Moodle) and a personal UGR Google account to follow lectures and seminars. All my professors were well prepared as were the administrative employees. The university itself is clean, easy to orient itself in, has all amenities expected and the staff there is very friendly. Classes were held in Spanish but after a couple months of struggles, you will be able to follow without doubts and even take part in discussions and debates. Not one professor has left me sceptic. Both content and format were deeply interesting and as expectations are quite high, you will really dive in your respective subjects. Professors were always reachable and helpful. A perfect environment for personal growth.

Accommodations are rather easy to find. I arrived in Granada without an address and found a room the following day (thanks to a blue thumbs up social media) in a beautiful apartment with two Spanish roommates. The flat was overlooking the red roofs of the city centre and had a view on the mountains, all this for the astronomic amount of 240 euros per month. Living with a *Madrileña* and a *Barcelonés* was an incredible experience for me, as you will soon find out that Spain offers many rich and diverse regional cultures. My Spanish improved exponentially as we were daily spending time together – studying, cooking, dancing, laughing, crying – and therefore built solid friendships. I am of course still in contact with them. Furthermore, during my first semester, I took part in events organized by student groups call *Best Life* and *Emycet*. It was very nice to build relationships with fellow foreign students. I do however recommend, if learning Spanish is one of your goals, to avoid befriending too many people of your home countries or you will end up using your mother language (or English) more than you wished to. Find Spanish roommates!

Granada itself is marvellous with the iconic Alhambra overlooking the city – several visits are required – and the Sierra Nevada in the background. Wherever you look, you will gaze in awe. The landscapes are wonderful. Mountains, countryside and coasts, Andalucía offers very diverse natural habitats. As for urban life, apart from Granada, you will be able to visit Malaga, Córdoba, Sevilla, Ronda, Guadix and many more very attractive and historical cities and villages all in the same region. World cities (Madrid and Barcelona), islands (Balearic,

Canary, Madeira), and countries (Gibraltar, Portugal, Morocco) – are just a few hours away. Have a decent internet connection and travelling is easy, also thanks to proper bus connections and cheap flights. Renting a car is also affordable and comfortable – Andalusian roadways are brilliant! – to do day trips to incredible beaches either on the Mediterranean or Atlantic coasts. Anecdotal: in March, I went skiing in the mountains on the Saturday and at the beach in Nerja on the Sunday, this on a budget of course! As for Granada, you will discover the joys of eating outside as often as you possibly can thanks to the true concept of *Tapas*. Between 1 euro 80 and 2 euros 60 you will receive a drink accompanied by a small plate of food. Furthermore, go and watch Flamenco shows, they are bewildering. Night life, in a student city like Granada, is hyper present. Between restaurants, bars, and clubs, you won't know what to do first. Just don't forget to study a bit. Last thing: 600 euros will suffice to live decently, 800 will offer you the time of your life.

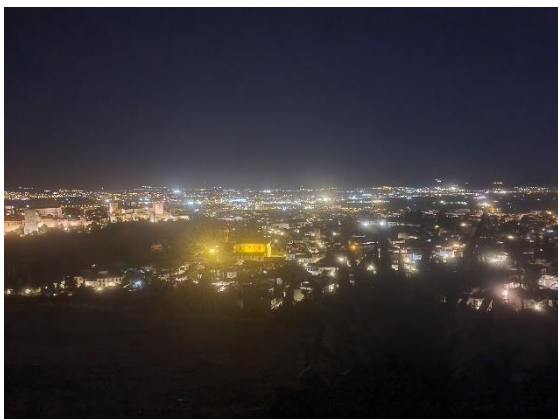
“University is also about life experiences, seize opportunities to broaden your horizons.”



Cathedral of Granada



Alhambra viewed from the Albaycín



Granada by night viewed from San Miguel



Forest behind San Miguel



Sierra Nevada



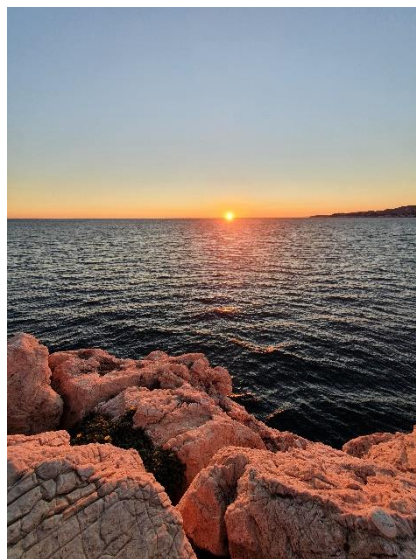
Playa de la Rijana



Canyons of Guadix



Morocco view from the Iberian Peninsula



Sunset in Salobreña