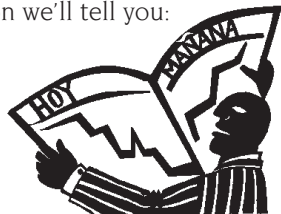


# practical info

**L**et's get the important stuff out of the way first. After all, should you head straight to our nightlife section, go on a bender, fall over drunkenly and break your leg, you'll need to have a mobile phone with the number of the ambulance service already programmed in there. To prepare for such eventualities, in this section we'll tell you:

- Where to pick up a mobile phone.
- How to avoid getting your money stolen.
- How to get medical aid should you need it.
- Where to find a place of worship.
- How the hell the Spanish banking system works.



So take careful note of what you find in here . . . and *then* you can hit the bars.

## Information about the residency card

Citizens of non-EU countries staying in Spain for more than three months must have a residency permit. As of March 2007 EU citizens are no longer be issued with a residency card but do still need to register at the Foreigner's office (c/General Pardiñas, 92) if they are staying in Spain for more then three months. European Union citizens are issued with a certificate stating their name, address in Spain, nationality, identity number and date of registration.

## PHONE HOME

**Beat that homesickness with economical ways to call the ones you love**



### Mobiles

With your residency card, you can sign up for a one- or two-year mobile contract. If you don't have residency yet, or don't want a contract, you can purchase a pay-as-you-go mobile. Top-up cards are available anywhere mobiles are sold, as well as at petrol stations, *estancos* (tobacconists) and supermarkets. You can also charge your phone directly at a cash point.

### Setting up a landline

Call Telefónica on 1004 to arrange a fixed line. You do not need to have a residency card to do this, your passport number will suffice. You will pay a service charge, and in some cases an installation fee.

If you have internet then make the most of programs such as Skype and VoipBuster. With Skype you buy call credit at very cheap rates. VoipBuster is a free download

that gives free calls to specified destinations. *See* [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com) and [www.voipbuster.com](http://www.voipbuster.com) for more information.

### Locutorios

*Locutorios* are call centres with private phone booths that offer a convenient way to call anywhere in the world at a relatively low rate (usually between five and 25 cents per minute). Many *locutorios* also offer internet access, and sell both top-up cards for your mobile phone and international calling cards.

### Calling cards

If you have access to a landline, this is your best bet. Phone cards are available in *locutorios*, some supermarkets and corner shops.

■ KRISTEN BERNARDI

# STOP! THIEF!

**City living can be tough. Here is a basic guide to keeping streetwise in the face of increasing petty crime**

## Be alert

When on public transport or walking through crowded central areas such as Sol, keep your bag closed and under your arm or your wallet deep in a front pocket. Don't take valuables to bars or open areas such as the Retiro park. In a restaurant, your bag should stay in your lap, not hooked on the back of your chair. Most thieves are opportunists, so don't give them an opportunity.

## Beware of doe-eyed children

Within two weeks of opening, a restaurant in Chueca was invaded by a group of scrappy little boys, yelling and making a ruckus. With diners fully distracted, a couple of the kids quickly scampered round all the tables, grabbing as many purses and wallets as they could. Another known ruse by child thieves is to distract your attention by showing you a newspaper clipping. While you are looking at the clipping, another child from the group will be removing your belongings from the table.



## ... and doe-eyed mothers

Another common scam is for a woman to go around a restaurant or plaza showing patrons a photo of her children, asking for money for food. While you're distracted by her plight, a partner in crime makes off with your wallet, shopping bags, gold teeth...

## Be aware of how and where you walk

Thieves are excellent at spotting human behaviour: they check you out and size you up. If you are walking alone at night, walk confidently and quickly, as



Illustrations: Knic

if you know exactly where you are going. If on a small street, walk in the middle of it, away from doorways. Be wary if you're in a large group of English-speakers: it screams "foreigner" and makes you all targets.

## If you do get robbed . . . Be prepared

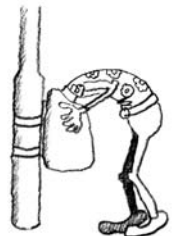
Have the emergency numbers for credit cards and your mobile-phone provider written in a separate place so you can call to cancel immediately. Make sure a friend has copies of your house keys and keep copies of your passport and credit cards in a safe place.

## After the fact

Take a look in rubbish bins and sewage drains near the scene of the crime. Often, the thieves hide hot goods in such places to avoid being caught in possession and return for them later. Failing that, you may at least recover your empty handbag.

## File a report

Although the police can do little about petty theft, it's still essential to report the crime. Your bank or insurance agencies — if you involve them — will require a police report. It's also good for local authorities to have an accurate picture of crime rates. Most central police offices, called *comisarias*, will have an English-speaking officer on duty. If your passport is stolen, contact your embassy (see p8 for contact information). ■ CLAYTON MAXWELL & KRISTEN BERNARDI



## Resources

**Twenty-four-hour cerrajero (locksmith), tel: 91 380 10 93/91 303 41 38. (If you call them during regular working hours, they won't charge for the visit, just the fees for changing the locks.)**

### Central police stations

**C/Luna, 29**, tel: 91 541 71 60  
(Metro: Callao).

**C/Huertas, 76**, tel: 91 322 10 27  
(Metro: Antón Martín).

**C/Rafael Calvo, 33**, tel: 91 322 32 66  
(Metro: Rubén Darío).

**Sol Metro, c/Carretas exit**,  
tel: 91 521 09 11.

**Thefts** can be reported on this number:  
**900 100 333.**

**Lost property:** Pl Legazpi, 7.

## Embassies

### American Embassy

C/Serrano, 75, tel: 91 587 22 40 (Metro: Rubén Darío).  
www.embusa.es

### Australian Embassy

Pl del Descubridor Diego de Ordás, 3, tel: 91 353 66 00  
(Metro: Ríos Rosas). www.spain.embassy.gov.au

### British Embassy

C/Fernando el Santo, 16, tel: 91 700 82 00 (Metro:  
Alonso Martínez). www.ukinspain.com

### Canadian Embassy

C/Núñez de Balboa, 35, tel: 91 423 32 50 (Metro:  
Velázquez). www.canada-es.org

### Irish Embassy

Paseo de la Castellana, 46, tel: 91 436 40 93 (Metro:  
Rubén Darío). Email: embajadairlanda@terra.es

### New Zealand Embassy

C/Pinar, 7, tel: 91 (Metro: Gregorio Marañón). www.nzem-  
bassy.com/home.cfm?c=27 Email: nzembassy.com

### South African Embassy

C/Claudio Coello, 91, tel: 91 436 37 80 (Metro: Núñez  
de Balboa). www.sudafrica.com



**Mountainview**  
where faith and friendships  
make a difference

**weekly services @ 10:30 am**  
**friendly small groups**  
**social events & community**  
**projects helping the poor**  
**artistic expression**  
**informative website**

91-630-5137 (office)  
**mountainview-church.com**

**Your key  
to life in the city**

art music inter-  
views into the  
flows events  
dance at night  
cinema classic  
from the city  
and self con-  
fession food con-  
tributing ex-  
hibitions & more

**InMadrid**

*InMadrid, the English monthly hits the streets on the 1st of every month. Be sure to get yours. It's FREE. For a full list of distribution points see page 50 of this guide or visit [www.in-madrid.com](http://www.in-madrid.com) for the latest.*

# MEDICAL CARE



**E**U citizens are entitled to free medical care. You should come to Spain with a European Health Insurance card (EHIC). For British citizens, the previous E111 form is now invalid. If you don't have an EHIC already, you can apply for it online at [www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do](http://www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do) or by calling +44 845 606 20 30. Be prepared to give your name, date of birth and NHS or national insurance number.

If you need to see a doctor, call any *centro de salud* (see the yellow pages for telephone numbers), provide your address and they will tell you where your nearest centre is. You will not be given a specific appointment, but a period of time within which you will be seen, so be prepared for a wait. At the reception desk you'll be given a form to fill out, your doctor's name and be told to go to a certain *sala*. Ask

who the last in the queue is: "¿Quién es el último?" or listen for your name. Note that your doctor may not speak English, so be prepared to translate your symptoms.

After the consultation, you'll be given a prescription (*receta*) and may need to return to the reception desk if the doctor has referred you to a specialist. Take the prescription to a chemist (anywhere you see the green cross sign).

Non-EU students must have health insurance from their country. Universities advise students to go to the Unidad Médica Angloamericana, c/Conde de Aranda, 1, tel: 91 435 18 23 (Metro: Serrano/Retiro). This centre has English-speaking doctors and is familiar with giving out the recibo that must be sent to your social security/insurance company back home. Dental treatment is also available here.



## Emergency Numbers

**112** — Ambulance/fire/police/civil protection  
**061** — Medical emergencies **080** — Fire



## Hospitals

### Public

- Hospital General Universitario Gregorio Marañón**, c/Doctor Esquerdo, 46, tel: 91 586 80 00 (Retiro district).
- Hospital Universitario La Paz**, Pº Castellana, 261, tel: 91 727 70 00 (Fuencarral/El Pardo district).
- Hospital Ramón y Cajal**, Ctra Colmenar Viejo, km 9,100, tel: 91 336 80 00 (Fuencarral/El Pardo district).
- Hospital Clínico San Carlos**, c/Profesor Martín Lagos, s/n, tel: 91 330 30 00 (Moncloa district).
- Hospital Universitario 12 de Octubre**, Avda Córdoba, tel: 91 390 80 00 (Carabanchel/Latina/Usera district).

### Private

**British American Medical Unit**, c/Conde de Aranda, 1, tel: 91 435 18 23 (Metro: Retiro).



## Dentists

(ENGLISH-SPEAKING)

- Clínica Dental CIsne** (Dr Ian Daniel BDS), c/Magallanes, 18, 1º, tel: 91 446 32 21 (Metro: Quevedo).  
Emergency no: 661 85 71 70.
- AAR**, c/Santa Juliana, 46, bajo-dcha, tel: 91 411 39 83 (Metro: Estrecho).

# A CRASH COURSE IN SPANISH CULTURE

If you want to avoid making the Spanish version of a faux-pas (*meter la pata* in Spanish, literally “stick your paw in”), then read our essential guide to Spanish etiquette

## Time off

Ah, the famed *siesta*. From 2-5pm, you'll find that most stores, banks and government buildings close their doors, allowing their workers to head home or to the local café for lunch. As with most things in a major city, this can be viewed as an inconvenience or as a pleasure. Take the time to stroll through the empty streets or the park, hit the empty shops (if they're open, that is) or grab a *menú del día* for lunch. As for Sunday opening, most shops are firmly shut on the day of our Lord, but do open the first Sunday of every month. There are plenty of national holidays in Madrid too: for a list of these *días festivos*, see [www.fiestas-de-madrid.com](http://www.fiestas-de-madrid.com).

## Getting tongue-tied

Learning a language is a humbling experience; the best way to learn is to chat with everyone you see, learning from your mistakes along the way. Talk to your *portero* about the weather, your neighbours about football, or your lecturers about current affairs. Go to *intercambios* (language exchanges) at a local pub or invest in a proper grammar course. Spaniards on the whole are marathon talkers — find one to teach you some basic slang, such as *qué va* (nonsense), *pijo* (snob) and *coño* (best to ask a native friend about this one).

## Mind your p's and queues

When waiting in the queue at the grocery store or El Corte Inglés, it's best to look at the assembled crowd and ask, “¿Quién es el último?” to find the end of the queue. When exiting a crowded bus or Metro car, politely ask, “¿Vas a salir/bajar?” as an alternative to knocking people over on your way out. It's also customary to say hello and goodbye to folks in the elevator, and just as your mother taught you, to give up your Metro seat to older passengers.



The siesta: still a big part of Madrileño life

Madrileños rarely use the polite *usted* form, but it is still best to bring it out with folks old enough to be your grandparents — plus it's good grammar practice.

## On the road

Many of Madrid's ancient winding streets are pedestrian dominated. But if you have to share your wandering space with cars, be sure to pay attention. Drivers in the city enjoy making large cars fit down tiny alleyways, and when they do, it's every man for himself. If you have a car in the city, don't double park — you'll be greeted by at least one steady note of blaring car-horn until you hang your head and move your car.

## To tip or not to tip

Now you may have read in guide books that it's not customary to tip in Spain. This is somewhat of a fallacy. It is true that in *cafeterías* and “old-man bars” you should only leave a few coins behind after a coffee, but in restaurants you should leave at least 10 percent. The moral of the story? Don't believe everything you read in guide books (except this one of course).

■ KRISTEN BERNARDI



# RELIGIONS & FAITHS 無

## Anglican and Protestant

British Embassy Church (St George's), c/Núñez de Balboa, 43, tel: 91 576 51 09 (Metro: Serrano). See [www.stgeorgesmadrid.com](http://www.stgeorgesmadrid.com) for more information.

The Community Church of Madrid, c/de la Viña, 3, tel: 655 031 857 (Metro: Metropolitano). Sundays at 11am. See [www.communitychurch-madrid.org](http://www.communitychurch-madrid.org) for more information.

Mountainview International Church, tel: 91 630 51 37. See [www.mountainview-church.com](http://www.mountainview-church.com) or email: [info@mountainview-church.com](mailto:info@mountainview-church.com) for more information.

Oasis Madrid, Avenida del Valle, 28, tel: 91 519 47 11 (Metro: Guzman el Bueno). See [www.oasismadrid.org](http://www.oasismadrid.org) for more information.

## Catholic Mass in English

Our Lady of Mercy, c/Dracena, 23, tel: 91 350 34 49. (Metro: Pío XII). See [www.ourladyofmercy.info](http://www.ourladyofmercy.info) for more information.

## Jewish

Sinagoga de Madrid (Beth Yaacov), c/Balmes, 3, tel: 91 591 31 31 (Metro: Iglesia).

## Muslim

Centro Cultural Islámico de Madrid, c/Salvador de Madariaga, 4, tel: 91 326 26 10 (Metro: Barrio de la Concepción).

## Buddhism

Diamond Way Buddhism, c/de San Marcelo, 13 local 2 posterior, tel: 660 308 574 (Metro: El Carmen).

OASIS MADRID

an English language church  
services are at 6 pm every 1st  
and 3rd Saturday of the month

also: Weekday home groups  
[www.oasismadrid.org](http://www.oasismadrid.org)  
[info@oasismadrid.org](mailto:info@oasismadrid.org)  
tel: 91 519 4711

## Our Lady of Mercy Parish

The English-speaking Catholic Church of Madrid

Metro  
line 9

Pío XII  
exit  
centro comercial



Calle Drácena, 23 - 28016 Madrid

check map in our website

91-350-34-49

[www.ourladyofmercy.info](http://www.ourladyofmercy.info)

Young vibrant community  
Full choir, fellowship  
Sunday Mass 11:00 h

# SPANISH BANKS

You'll soon know your *caja* from your *cuenta* with our guide to the Spanish banking system

## Opening an account

In most cases, you will need ID and a NIF number to open a bank account. However, Bankinter offers an excellent online bank account which can be viewed in English and which you can open with your passport number. See [www.ebankinter.com](http://www.ebankinter.com) for more information.

## Bancos y cajas

A *caja de ahorros* is a savings bank, a *banco* is a privately owned bank. Both offer similar services, but a *caja* uses its profit for social projects. Most banks only open during the morning, and are closed on Sundays and holidays.

## Cheques

Cheques are rarely used in Spain. Most daily transactions are done with cash (*efectivo* or *metálico*) or by card. To cash a cheque (*talón*), take it to the bank it was issued from — exactly the same branch (*sucursal*), not any office in the chain — to get the cash on the spot. Or take it to your bank and deposit it in your account.

## How to open a bank account

To open a current account (*cuenta corriente*), take your passport to the bank, and provide your name, address and telephone number. If you are a non-resident without a work permit, you will need a certificate of non-residency, which is important for tax reasons. Pick this up at Brigada Provincial de Extranjería y Documentación, currently located at c/Moratín, 43, near Metro Antón Martín.

## Foreign-currency exchange

Banks and money-transfer companies all charge fees for international transfers, and the cheapest, most convenient way depends on your circumstances; although for transfers within the EU, your best option is your own bank. To change foreign paper money into euros, your bank will also offer you the best rates.

■ SUE BURKE



## ad directory

### Mountainview International Church

We are a community of faith and friendships that makes a difference. We have weekly services (including an exciting kid's programme) at 10 am, in Colegio Balder, Las Rozas de Madrid. We offer friendly small groups and service projects to help us grow in faith, deepen friendships, and care for the needy and the world around us.

**Mountainview International Church. For more details visit: [www.mountainview-church.com](http://www.mountainview-church.com) or call Richard Wallace on 91 630 51 37. (See ad p8)**

### Oasis

Oasis Madrid is a Christ-centred community that helps people follow Jesus. They hold services every first and third Saturday of the month at 6pm on the St Louis University campus. In addition they have several community groups that meet on a weekly basis at various places throughout the city.

**Oasis Madrid, Avenida del Valle, 28, tel: 91 522 68 60 (Metro: Guzman el Bueno). See [www.oasis-madrid.org](http://www.oasis-madrid.org) for more information. (See ad p11)**

### Our Lady of Mercy

Our Lady of Mercy has been serving the spiritual needs of English-speaking people in Madrid for over 30 years. They have a vibrant and loving community with members from over 20 countries who have at least two things in common: Christianity and the English language. They are a people-centred church that tries its best to praise God by responding loudly and wholeheartedly during the Eucharist, which includes their singing. They invite all people, Catholic or not, to come and worship with them.

**Our Lady of Mercy, c/Drácena, 23, tel: 91 230 53 36 (Metro: Pio XII). Sunday Mass in English at 11am. See [www.ourladyofmercy.info](http://www.ourladyofmercy.info) for more information. (See ad p8)**