



MEDITERRANEAN AGRIBUSINESS SCHOOL (MABS) Summer Program

“Spanish food culture: the Mediterranean diet & the agro-food industry”

Zaragoza (Spain), 5 June - 28 July 2017

“A unique opportunity to enjoy a summer in Spain, studying the European agro-food sector, learning Spanish and embracing the Mediterranean diet and culture”

Presentation

This summer program is organized by the Mediterranean AgriBusiness School (MABS), an initiative run by IAMZ, one of the four Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes of the CIHEAM (International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies). The CIHEAM is an international intergovernmental organization – founded in 1962 at the joint initiative of the OECD and the Council of Europe– aiming to develop cooperation between Mediterranean countries through postgraduate training and promotion of cooperative research in the field of agriculture, food and sustainable rural development.

Course description

The program will introduce students to the Mediterranean agribusiness environment focusing on the European Union (EU) as well as the culinary and cultural riches of Spain and will include Spanish lessons too. It is a varied co-curricular program with study trips to different cities in Spain, as well as visits to successful agro-food companies and activities in and around Zaragoza. The program will last 4 weeks with the possibility of staying an extra month to do an internship in a Spanish company. Classes will be in English and Spanish (with simultaneous interpreting into English).

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Introductory Spanish language course



Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world, the third most used in the media and increasingly used in business. As part of the MABS program, international students will attend a Spanish language course (30 hours) taught and supervised by the University of Zaragoza. The course aims, from a communicative perspective, to develop the fundamental linguistic skills but will also provide specialized vocabulary within the field of agribusiness and gastronomy which will be developed in many practical contexts. Students will experience Spanish culture and local customs through the cultural and technical visits and have many opportunities to practice their language skills during their stay.

Creative Thinking



Creative thinking sessions are included in the program so that students can learn about the theory and steps of design thinking and the most effective creative thinking tools. They will work in teams to solve problems creatively, generate new and original ideas or solutions for the agro-food sector, or reimagine businesses. The results will be presented at the end of the program.

Lectures



The Mediterranean diet (Intangible cultural heritage of humanity)

Students address the concept, historical background and main characteristics of the Mediterranean Diet. They learn what attributes make Mediterranean products so attractive and what impact they have on health and nutrition, and discuss their role in the conservation of biodiversity, natural resources, and in social and environmental responsibility.

Consumption of Mediterranean products

Students are offered a global vision of the consumption of Mediterranean products, and discuss shifts in consumption patterns and new lifestyles, healthier eating and fresh approaches to food and gastronomy, which involve new shopping patterns, perception of value and willingness to pay for healthier and more nutritional foods. Students also analyze issues of product diversification and market segmentation, and explore the gastronomic features of different geographical areas and diverse lifestyles.

Mediterranean agro-food systems in the European Union (EU)

Students learn how the agro-food sector works in the European Union, including EU policies related to food safety and quality. They address EU consumer demands and international trade flows of agro-food Mediterranean products.

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Lectures

Spanish agro-food system

This section provides insights into the developments and trends of the Spanish agro-food system. It addresses the role of Mediterranean agro-food products in international trade and explains different requirements for trade in domestic and foreign markets.

Food quality and safety

This part describes the main elements in the EU quality assurance systems and food quality and safety programs. Students learn about Protected Designations of Origin and other quality labels used in Europe. They gain insight into consumers' attitudes towards food quality and safety and learn how the traceability and information systems operate.

Value chain for Mediterranean products in Spain: Case studies of wine, fresh fruit and vegetables, seafood products and extra virgin olive oil

Students look into all aspects of the value chain focusing on typical Mediterranean products and their characteristics. The case studies include quality attributes, consumer behavior, domestic and international trade. The technical visits offer first-hand knowledge of how the production and marketing systems operate throughout the value chain.

The miracle and magic positioning of Spanish gastronomy

This case study reveals the secrets behind the image of modern Spanish cuisine worldwide as well as the fundamentals of traditional cooking. It includes a section on modern tapas including show-cooking. Linking the Mediterranean diet and Spanish food culture, students retrace the history of Spanish gastronomy, from traditional times to the modern day, learning why there are so many cultural and regional differences.



Interactive Sessions

Lectures are combined with interactive sessions where an expert presents the topic followed by discussion and a tasting experience. These are some of the interactive sessions:

- Tasting session of local products with PDO
- The Gastronomic Society
- A Taste of Spain: pepper experience
- A Taste of Spain: Spanish cured ham experience
- Cured sausage products
- Goya and Gastronomy
- A taste of Spain: gazpacho, tomato and Tomatina
- Exploring roots, herbs and truffles
- Tasting Omega-3: tuna and anchovies
- Lamb and shepherds' traditions: migas and ternasco
- Olive oil tasting session

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Hands-on Experience



Students will enjoy first-hand experience of Spanish life, food and culinary traditions:

- Spanish coffee break, tasting a wide assortment of typical pastries and savory snacks
- Get-together and tapas tour in Zaragoza
- Practical experience: Show-cooking at “Los Sitios” Gastronomic Society
- Practical experience carving ham at “La Jamonería”
- Full moon kayaking on the Ebro River

Field trips



Field trips are part of the academic program and focus very specifically on connecting the trip to the curriculum content that students are taking. Visits and learning experiences are all organized around a particular theme. The program includes the following field trips:

Short trips:

- Somontano county (links between culture, tourism and food) visit to an olive oil mill, visitor center, livestock farm and artisanal cheese factory
- Various fruit and vegetable farms and processing companies
- “Ecomonegros” organic mill and bakery
- “La Zaragozana” traditional brewery

Longer trips:

- Ordesa National Park (Pyrenees), visiting Jaca and historic sites along the Way of St James
- La Rioja to visit a renowned winery, and San Sebastian to enjoy pintxos and tapas and visit the Basque Culinary Center.
- The Ebro Delta, visiting harbor, fish market, mussel farm and rice paddies.



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Internship (Weeks 5-8)

A 4-week internship in a Spanish agro-food company (requested upon application). Students that opt for the internship will gain work experience in an agro-food company from the wine, fruit and vegetable, seafood, meat, and olive oil sectors.

Teaching methods

- Lectures
- Class discussions
- Guest speakers
- Interactive sessions
- Hands-on experience
- Field trips and visits to relevant companies

Learning goals and objectives

Upon completion of the program students will:

- Be acquainted with the differences and similarities of the European and US agro-food models in the context of a possible TTIP agreement
- Understand the workings of the main value chains for Mediterranean food products
- Be familiar with the most relevant food consumption patterns and trends in Spain
- Be aware of the importance of Spanish Food Culture and the Mediterranean Diet within the framework of a healthy lifestyle
- Be able to understand local development strategies which integrate typical and traditional food products and culture legacy.



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Guest speakers

Instructors are experts in teaching and research and have longstanding international experience. They are professionals from universities, international institutions, government agencies, regulatory bodies, ministries, and the food industry.

Assessment

Ongoing assessments and individual tutoring sessions will be provided throughout the course and a final presentation from students on a topic related to the course will be delivered on the last day.

Admission requirements

This program is targeted to undergraduates, recent graduates or young professionals who are interested in learning about the agro-food sector in Spain and Europe and about Spanish food culture and the Mediterranean diet.

Additional information

The organizing institution

The program is organized by IAMZ, an international intergovernmental organization with more than 40 years of solid experience in post-graduate training, scientific research and international cooperation in the Agro-Food sector. Training is a core activity at IAMZ where each year over 400 participants and 250 guest lecturers are welcomed from around 80 countries. IAMZ's approach is international and multidisciplinary and is recognized worldwide as a partner of excellence in training; collaborating with universities, companies and other international organizations (EEAP, EFSA, EU, FAO, ICARDA, IOC, OECD, UN, WTO, etc.) through projects and networks to design and tailor courses and training activities according to the needs and objectives of our partners, and also to help them disseminate the outcome of their projects and network activities.



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The host city

IAMZ is located in Spain (the 14th largest economy by nominal GDP and the 7th largest exporter of agro-food products in the world –the 4th largest in the European Union), in the warm and inviting city of Zaragoza, strategically located between Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Valencia, and Toulouse in France. It is the fifth biggest city in Spain with around 700,000 inhabitants, and fourth when it comes to economy. Its more than 2000 years of history make the city one of the greatest historic and artistic legacies in Spain. Zaragoza is capital of Aragon, one of Spain’s leading industrial regions. Because of its strategic location, Aragon is especially competitive in logistics, hosting the biggest logistics park in Europe (13 million m²), and ranks among the world’s leading logistics clusters together with areas such as Singapore, the Netherlands, Dubai, Sao Paulo or Chicago (2012 World Economic Forum). Besides, according to the European Commission, Aragón belongs to the group of Europe’s most innovative regions together with northern Italy and most of France, Germany and the UK. This is a great place to work and live with very diverse landscapes particularly for skiing in winter with almost 400 kilometres of slopes, a rich cultural heritage (including language: Spanish is the second language most spoken in the world -500 million people) and great food (Mediterranean Diet); but above all the Aragonese are famous for their firm character and determination and for being the friendliest people you can ever find. This is one of the reasons why year after year Zaragoza is becoming one of the favorite European destinations for international and Erasmus students, as its prestigious University, dating from the 16th century, welcomes thousands of visiting students, mainly from Italy, China, France, Germany, or the UK.

Moving around

Zaragoza is a pleasant city and it is easy to get around on foot, by bike, on roller-skates, by car or by bus. The city has a network of buses with 31 regular lines (two of them circle lines), two scheduled routes, six shuttle buses (one free), and seven night buses operating on Fridays, Saturdays and festivities. A tram line crosses the city from North to South, connecting the center and the Old City. A card can be purchased and topped up in ticket machines at tram stops, newsagents, shopping centres, etc. and is valid on the Zaragoza tram and all bus lines.

Zaragoza boasts an ever-expanding bicycle lane network which connects the various neighbourhoods and makes it possible to explore the city and be more eco-friendly. Besides, the public transport service Zaragoza en Bizi offers a hire network of bicycles and stations which works through an annual or temporary subscription scheme.

The city is connected by motorway with the main cities in central and northern Spain, including Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and Bilbao, all of which are located about 300 kilometres (200 miles) from Zaragoza. The railway and coach station is called “Intermodal Zaragoza Delicias”. The high-speed train AVE connects Madrid (75 minutes) and Barcelona (90 minutes). The coach services to all over Spain and various European destinations are efficient and economical. Zaragoza Airport is located 10 kilometers from the city center and offers flights to European destinations (Brussels, Bucarest, London, Milan and Paris) as well as domestic flights (Ibiza, Lanzarote, Tenerife, Menorca and Palma de Mallorca).



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Accommodation

There are several accommodation options in Zaragoza:

- **Hall of Residence:** The Residence is in the city beside the Plaza San Francisco campus of the Universidad de Zaragoza. Students are accommodated in individual rooms with WiFi and breakfast is included. Lunches on weekdays will be served at the Aula Dei Campus canteen and students will be free to have dinner wherever they choose. There are many bars, coffee shops, restaurants etc. near the residence.
- **Shared Apartment:** Most apartments are 1-bedroom apartments to be shared by two students. Apartments have a bathroom, living room and kitchen. They are equipped with WiFi, air conditioning and are fully furnished. Lunches on weekdays will be served at the Aula Dei Campus canteen. However, students must make their own arrangements for breakfast and dinner. There are many bars, coffee shops, restaurants, etc. near the apartments, which are located near Zaragoza’s historical center.
- **Host family.** This is probably one of the most attractive options. It can help you to learn Spanish, get to know Spanish culture and customs and enjoy home-made local cuisine. If you like this option, the MABS team can help you to find a host family in Zaragoza, and will try to find a family with similar interests with a warm and supportive environment. In Zaragoza, most families live in apartments. Host families vary but all provide students with half board accommodation (a room plus 2 meals a day - breakfast and dinner).

Health and safety

Besides their own International Insurance policy, participants to the MABS Summer School will benefit from medical insurance with the company Adeslas SegurCaixa. This insurance does not include medicines, except in cases of hospitalization. As beneficiary of a medical insurance with the Adeslas SegurCaixa company, you must always go to their medical centers or other centers that have agreements with this company. If you go to another center, either public or private, your medical care will not be refunded and you will have to bear these costs.

Emergency numbers

Once you are registered you will receive a complete list of contacts. Bilingual staff will provide 24/7 assistance for emergencies.