

# How to survive

## in a **non**-English speaking country

### **In Spain almost nobody speaks English!**

Yes. It seems to be a joke, but it is true. In Spain is very difficult to find anybody who could speak English more or less correctly. Granada, however, hosts one of the largest universities in Spain. With a population of above 60000 university students, and being chosen as a permanent or transient residence by many foreigners, the “English-speaking” trouble is much softened.

In any case, we recommend you to be patient and try to communicate with the local people in the way you can. This survival guide is intended to give you some clues not to die in the attempt.

### **The arrival**

Granada is a medium-size town in the south of Spain, which has its own airport, Granada-Jaen, also named “Federico García Lorca”. So, the best way to get Granada from abroad is on an airplane. There are several daily Iberia flights to Granada from Madrid and Barcelona. Some low cost companies have occasionally connected the Granada-Jaén airport with some european cities. We however prefer not to mention them further, since this document should serve as survival manual once you arrive to Granada, not before that. Once at the airport, you can reach your hotel by taxi or bus. Buses leave for the city after every flight arrival (after time enough has passed to get your luggage, if any). The price is 3 euros, and they have several stops in the town, so that you can choose the closest one to your hotel. The bus drivers usually know little English, but more than enough to understand the name of your hotel, and give you advice of the best stop. If you prefer not to wait around half an hour after flight arrival, taxis are usually available. The price for the trip Airport-Granada (around 15 km) is of the order of 25 euros, and it will bring you directly to the hotel.

It is also possible to reach Granada from Madrid by bus, train or car. If your flight arrives to Barcelona, this would take too long to Granada and is not recommended. In general, if you plan to travel to Granada by car, these “survival” instructions are probably no longer necessary for you, and you can skip the rest of the manuscript, with the possible exception of a quick reading of the *Tapas* section. The same applies for the case that you plan a bus or train trip included in a longer stay in Spain. If you plan to fly to Madrid, and then travel by bus or train to Granada, the following paragraphs might be helpful to you. If not, you can go to the next section.

When arriving at Madrid, and once you have your baggage with you, you can proceed to the underground (metro) following the arrows and signals. It is easy. Once in the metro, you have to buy a ticket. Don't forget you have to pay an additional tax for being at the airport. This is especially important when you get back to this metro station when leaving Spain, because it is not advertised almost in any place. If you don't pay, you cannot exit and get into the airport, because the access machine simply will not open. But you don't know why! In such a case, go to the ticketing machine near you and buy another ticket with the supplementary tax. And remember, the machine will speak English, but the people dispatching tickets will not. Single ticket in metro is 2 € (15,10 € for ten trips) and the supplementary fare to the airport 1 €.

Let suppose **you want to take the train** to Granada. Then you must arrive to the railway station in *Atocha* (about 45 minutes). You must take the metro 8 line (pink), with direction to *Nuevos Ministerios* up to the the end of the line (5 stops from *T1-T2-T3 Barajas*). Then change the line to the 9 (dark blue) direction *Puerta del Sur* up to *Tribunal* stop (3 stops) and then change again to the line 1 (light blue) direction *Valdecarros* and count 6 stops to reach *Atocha Renfe* station. Once in the ticket office, be sure of taking a number in the corresponding machine, and look at the little screen with luminous, red numbers that changes accompanying a strange sound. When your turn, proceed to the corresponding desk. Be patience now, you are going to face with someone who does not speak English. Say “Granada” and try to explain you need to know the leaving time. In any case, you have a timetable next in this manual. Ticket costs 69.40 €, and twice as much, minus 20 percent discount, for the round-trip. Two trains depart daily on working days, at 9:05 and 17:05, and the trip lasts for four and a half hours. Once the ticket in your pocket, have a look at the timetable and proceed to the corresponding platform. It is possible that somebody requests your ticket to allow you access to the platforms. And now be careful. The same platform is used for different trains. At last you can relax inside the train, and enjoy a nice trip to Granada, the last station. Get down and take a taxi in the exit. Show the driver the name of your hotel and the adventure is reaching its end

However, **it is possible that you prefer the bus**. In such a case, you must take the metro 8 line (pink) direction *Nuevos Ministerios* to reach *Colombia* station (4 stops from *T1-T2-T3 Barajas*) and change to the 9 line (purple) direction *Arganda de Rey*. Count 3 stations up to *Avenida de América* and change to the 6 (gray) line. Take the branch which is followed by the *Diego de León* station and don't go out until reaching *Méndez Álvaro* (7 stops), where you can find the Bus station (*Estación Sur*) if you follow the white bus symbol over green background. All this must take about 40 minutes. Now you must be at the Madrid bus station *Estación Sur* in *Méndez Álvaro*. Just put yourself at the line and buy your ticket to Granada in the ALSA office. Timetable is visible on the wall behind the sellers, and we brought it to you in a forward paragraph. It will cost you 16.68 €, and 30.02 for the round-trip. Then proceed to the platform and wait. The bus will make an intermediate stop to get some food and go to the restroom. Four of the 13 daily services are the so-called *Supra* class (33.33 and 47.40 €). They are more comfortable, and take half hour less (4.5 hours) because they skip the intermediate stop. Finally you will finish at the Granada bus station, from where a taxi will bring you to your hotel.

Once in your hotel you can ask at the reception desk **the best way to reach the Congress Center**, where the Conference will take place.

Most hotels are located at walking distance from the Congress Center, which is easy to find with the help of the given map. Because of the weather (improbable) or some other causes you may wish to use public transport. Two bus lines have stops directly at the Congress Center (No. 3, end stop *Palacio de Congresos*), or very close to it (No. 7, direction *Villa Argaz*). Both lines have several stops along *Gran Vía* street and in *Fuente de la Batallas* square. If you prefer to take a taxi, you can dial the local 958280654.



*Granada is the  
world capital of tapas.  
Taste them!*



*Do you speak English?*

## **Please, do feed the astronomers. Bares, tapas...**

Having lunch is one of the most important activities of the day, as you may agree. At walking distance of the Congress Center you find several bars and restaurants, where a nice meal at reasonable price can be obtained. To have dinner, and generally at any time close to the hours of the main meals, you can go to have some tapas. The "tapas" in Spain are little dishes served in bars, (bares in Spanish) and taverns. Many of them are concentrated in the San Matías-Realejo quarter (see map). There are as many variations of tapas as you can imagine. What are they? Just small portions of food which are served as part of the social scene. Spaniards go to their crowded bares to converse, join friends, argue, joke and flirt, always in loud voice, of course. Tapas are provided to keep them going, and are rarely eaten in lieu of a main meal. If you want so, it is better to ask for *raciones*, which are much more abundant. In Granada, the tapa is frequently free of charge when you order some drink, but raciones are not. Bars are spread across the city, but some zones of special concentration are marked in the map. *Tapa* is from *tapar*, which means "to cover", because the first tapa in the history was a slice of ham served on top of a sherry glass, reportedly to keep out the flies. Barkeepers discovered the saltiness of the ham spurred beverage sales, and a tradition was born. Today, every region has its own specialty tapas. In Granada you can taste *aceitunas* (olives), *queso* (cheese), *jamón* (ham, the best one being the *ibérico*), *ensaladillas* (salads), *chorizo*, *morcilla* (two kinds of pork sausages), *lomo* (pork), *croquetas* (small fried food roll containing usually as main ingredients minced meat or cod, cooked onions, and soaked egg, milk and flour often encased in breadcrumbs and deep fried), *albóndigas* (meatballs), *carne en salsa* (meat with sauce), *bacalao* (cod), *calamares* (squid), *boquerones* (anchovies served in vinegar, *boquerones en vinagre* or deep fried), *gambas* (prawns), *pincho moruno* (spicy kebab-like stick, made of pork or chicken), *patatas bravas* (fried potato dices served with *salsa brava*, a spicy tomato sauce, or the less spicy alioli), *tortilla de patatas* (omelette containing fried chunks of potatoes and sometimes onion), *papas a lo pobre* (slow cooked sliced potatoes) and many others. When you get inside a bar, it is customary to stand and move about while eating tapas. Just line up at the bar, call your orders to the bartender, giving great voices: ¡camarero! (approximated: come-are-r-oh!). In a few minutes, the crowd can be so large it will spill out into the streets, carrying their wine glasses and tapas with them, if the weather is good. You elbow your way in and are immediately seduced by the aromas of garlic, olive oil, shellfish, ham, cheese, saffron... coming from a spread of hand-made pottery bowls brimming with tapas. The bar usually has a list of tapas on the wall, but here, patrons just take what they want as the evening drives on, keeping

their own track of these treats and paying up before they go. You eyeball the bowls and start to take your first round of tapas. Just enjoy!

For those young (or young- in-spirit) astronomers, you can find many places at late night to take something while trying to disguise you are a boring scientist. In the *Pedro Antonio* street area, close to the *Faculty of Sciences* and neighborhood (see map) you can find many pubs and so on. Have fun, but remember the sessions begin early in the morning...



*Houses of the Albaicín*



*Santo Domingo Monastery.  
Realejo*

## Living the congress

We will try to make your stay as comfortable as possible. The organization has designed a program with time enough for oral sessions and discussions. There will be a guided visit to the world renowned Alhambra, (World Heritage Site) and a special gala dinner at the *Hotel Palacio Santa Paula*, located in the renovated 16<sup>th</sup> century Santa Paula convent. You will have some time to make tourism around the city. Many worth-visiting places in Spain are catholic churches, as it belongs to a country with a leading role in the Counter Reformation movement. The Cathedral and adjacent Royal Chapel, the Cartuja monastery, and some other churches like San Jerónimo monastery really deserve a visit. In addition to it, or prior to it, centuries of arab occupation gave rise to a unique quarter as the Albaicín. Today, the arab and catholic pasts are history, and you will mainly meet granadinians. At night, you can find bares, pubs almost everywhere (Spanish like nightlife!). If you want to extend your stay you can visit the surroundings of Granada, and some nearby cities, like Úbeda, Baeza, or Córdoba.

## In any case...

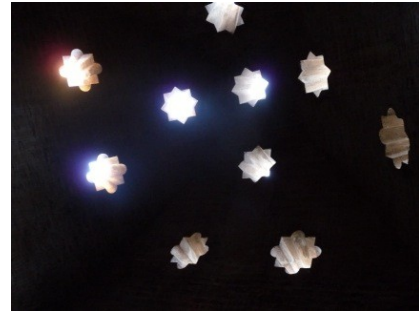
Granada is a very safe city. But If you were in trouble, you could find these telephone numbers useful. Police (091), Sanitary emergency (061), Guardia Civil (062), Firemen (080). We are not sure they understand you speaking English, but in an emergency you have to try. Some other useful telephones are the Recruitment Center (958800500) and the Water Management Department (958242200). Being serious, you can contact with the LOC members if you need help.

If, in any case, you cannot find help in this manual and you need to communicate with Spanish people, you will very probably experience the kindness of the granadinians, certainly peculiar, but unmistakable. In Spain, people rarely speak English, but in general they try to understand you. If you manage to cross the survival line, Granada can be a very enjoyable place at the other side.

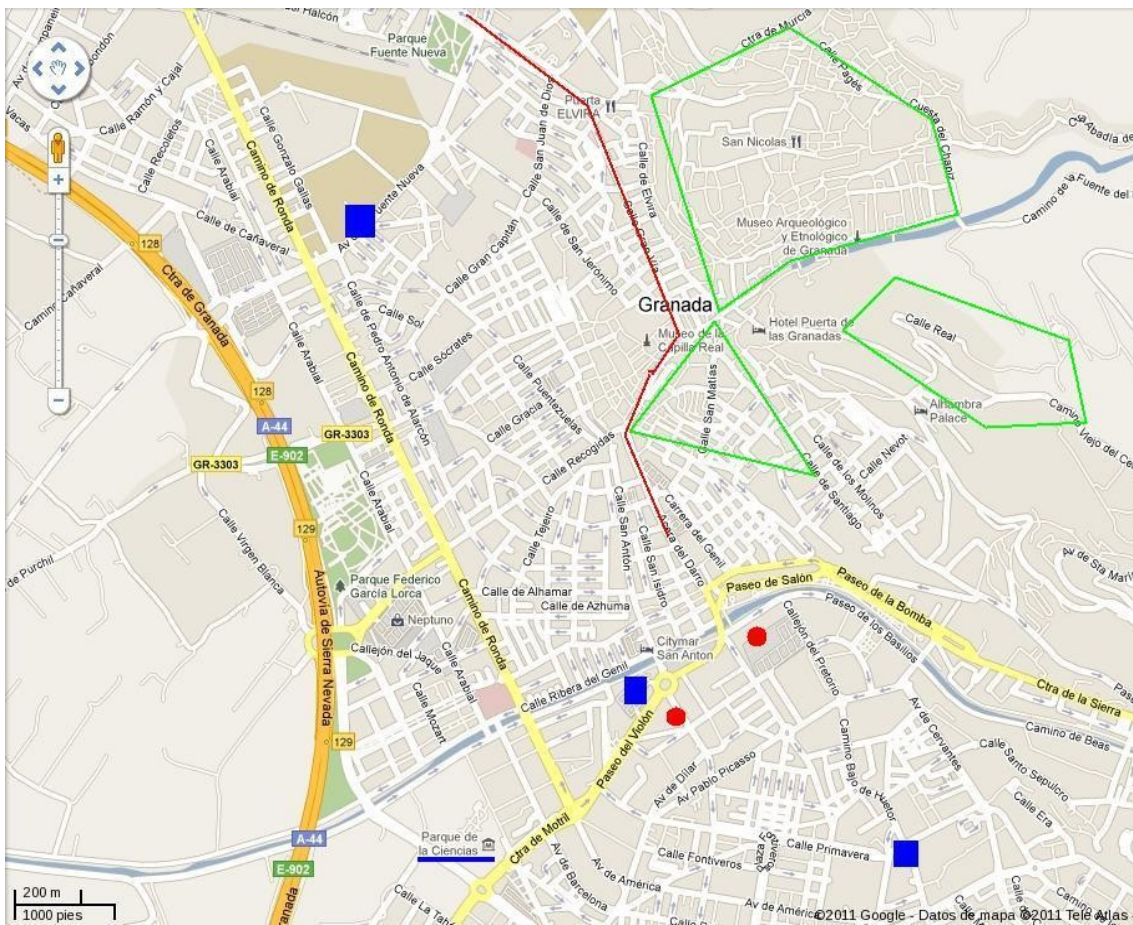




Bar terraza



Baños árabes



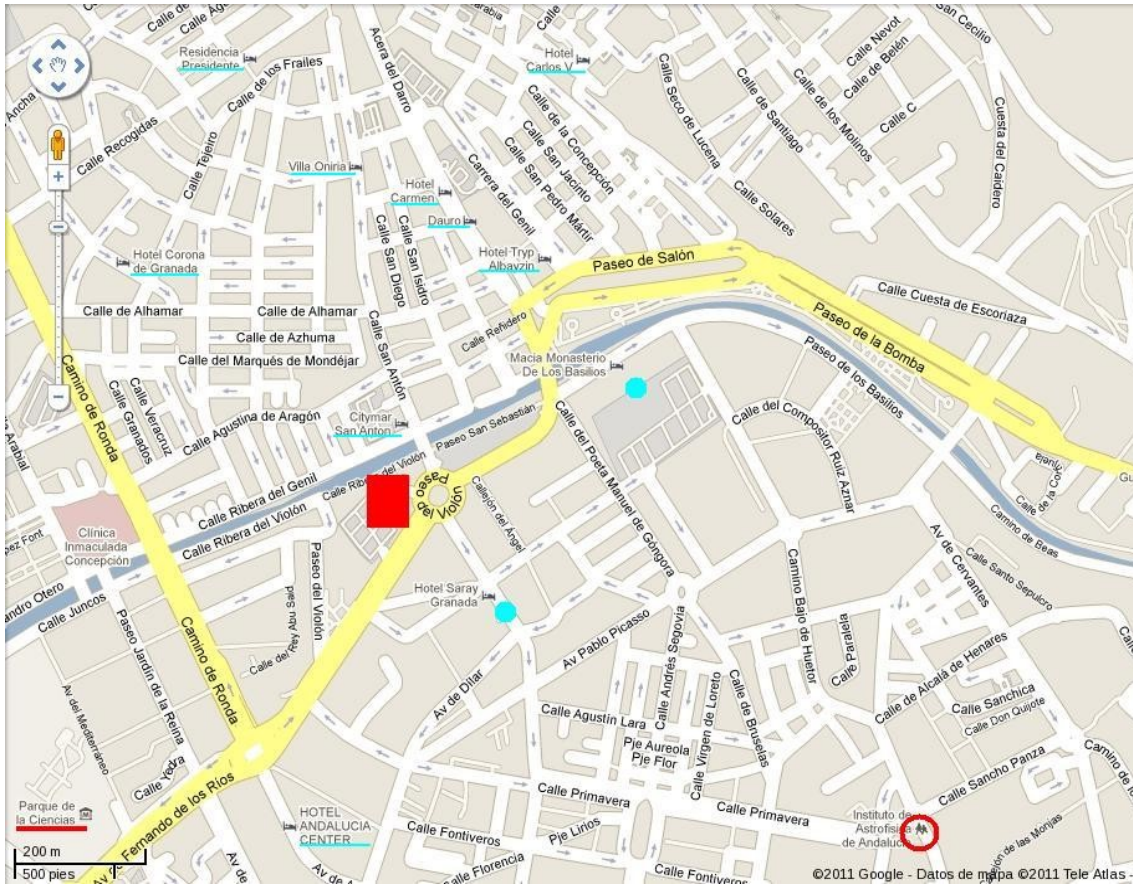
Blue: Science centres: Underlined, parque de las ciencias. Squares, Faculty of Sciences, Congress Center

IAA, from top to bottom

Red: Line: axis Gran Vía, Reyes, Acera del Darro, where most bus lines circulate (3 and 7 among them)

Circles: selected hotels: Saray (left) and Meliá-Basilios.

Green: Hexagon: Albaicín .Triangle: SanMatías-Realejo. Pentagon: Alhambra



Close up of map above, with IAA, Congress Center and Parque de la Ciencias marked in red, hotels Saray and Meliá-Basilios with Cyan circles. Other hotels are underlined in Cyan..