

## Buile Hill Academy Spanish Department

### Madrid 2019 by Sara Preda (year 9)

#### Day One:

##### The Journey:

It was day one of our trip to Madrid and I don't think I've ever gotten up so early! We all had to get to school by eight o'clock on Monday to check bags and make sure everything was ready. I had never been to Spain before, neither had a lot of us on the trip, some of us were first-time flyers and were very nervous but we were all extremely excited. Once everyone arrived and we got on the Coach and started our adventure.

The coach ride to Liverpool was peaceful, everyone was filled with anticipation. Once getting through security- which I might add was quite stressful- we wandered around in groups buying any last-minute necessities for our trip.

We boarded the plane and sat in our seats for a long two and a half hours. It was a bit boring but fun nonetheless: some of us played Uno; others slept and listened to music; the rest watched movies or played games on their phone. We all found different ways to entertain ourselves and pass the time.

Once the plane had landed and we collected our baggage we boarded the coach to our hostel: *Hostal Marlasca*. It was quaint and peaceful; we had a gorgeous view of the Madrid streets and the shops and businesses- it was a great glimpse into Spanish culture- but we had yet to see the city.

##### Exploration:

After unpacking and settling in our rooms we all went to eat out at *Restaurante La Catedral*: A Tapas restaurant. There were many different traditional dishes such as *tortilla de patatas*, *calamares*, *croquetas*, *jamón* and *ensalada*; It was all delicious!

After eating we began our adventure around Madrid. We visited *Puerta Del Sol* and had a great time eating *churros con chocolate* in *Plaza Mayor*. We visited a lot of *tiendas* and a *healdería* where we bought souvenirs and had delicious ice cream. We then walked to *La Catedral de Santa Maria la Real de la Almudena* (a mouthful I know) and *Palacio Real de Madrid*. We took a lot of photos and had a lot of fun enjoying the tremendous view. In the end, we all considered day one a massive success.

#### Day Two:

Breakfast was in *La Carmela* where we all had croissants and orange juice along with Spanish hot chocolate: *Cola Cao*. After we took the underground to the *Real Madrid stadium* where we took part in a self-guided tour. We saw the changing rooms and the press room; the trophies and medals won; the shoes and shirts of famous footballers- it was all surprisingly interesting and enjoyable considering I'm not a fan of football. After leaving the stadium's gift shop we made our way to a *supermercado* where we bought ourselves a picnic to eat in *Parque Retiro*.

After eating we left the picnic area and made our way to the pond *Estanque grande del Retiro* where we could sit down at a restaurant and eat ice cream or we could continue to wander around the park. I chose to sit down and have ice cream with my friends.

As soon as everyone returned we began waking to *Hard Rock Café* where we had an evening meal. The restaurant was full of pictures and items belonging to rock legends such as Elvis, the Beatles and Elton John. We ate our burgers and chips and enjoyed the music before we started making our way back to the hostel to freshen up. An hour later we were out the door and on our way to *Tablao Villa Rosa* where we watched a *Flamenco* show. I remember how much awe I was in when I saw the dancers' movements; they were synchronised and in time with one another, their feet were moving at an unbelievable speed. Once the show was over we walked back to the hostel and called it a night.

### **Day Three:**

Now I don't want to pick favourites but day three was by far my favourite day. We went to *Warner Brothers Theme Park* and spent the entire day going on rides and having fun. All of us split off into different groups depending on what kind of rides we wanted to go on; I was in the 'Big rides' group along with most of my friends. We started off by going on a smaller ride, which was more of a kid's ride, and then we made our way to the tallest and biggest ride we could see: *La Venganza del ENIGMA* and I couldn't wait to get on it. I wanted to be able to tell everyone I had been on it but once it was our turn to get on, I was petrified. I still went on nonetheless, facing my fears. Surprisingly, once we got up at the very top, it was calming; we could see the whole park and everyone was minuscule to us.

Once we were off we went on water rides to cool off from the 36 degrees outside and had ice cream. Somehow I had managed to convince everyone to go into *el Pasaje del terror*: a haunted house. I love horror films, mainly because I enjoy watching how scared people get of everything so I assumed it wouldn't be that bad, oh how wrong I was. The show started with a video that explained the backstory of The Conjuring universe and ended with a jumpscare from 'The Nun'. I was so proud I hadn't jumped or screamed when everyone else did. We began walking in and I started to tense, anticipating one of the actors at every corner and door I saw. *Anabelle* was sat peacefully in a corner on a chair watching our every move. I quickly sprinted past her and carried on leading the group further into the mansion. Actors jumped out, scaring and following us; my friend Matthew always seemed to scream the loudest out of all of us. We carried on sneaking through the mansion before we got to a dark room and took a wrong turn. One of the actors had to break role and tell us to go the other way, it was a brief moment of normality before we carried on in *el Pasaje del terror*. At this point, a man in a red hat jumped out at us and started to chase us around a corner where we all thought he would leave us alone. No one else saw him as he crept up and stood behind Matthew. Poor Matthew believed the red hat man was one of us and leaned into him seeking some sort of comfort from the dark. Only when I screamed at him telling him to look behind him did he sprint ahead, screaming so loud it overpowered our collective panic, and the rest of us followed suit running further away.

Once at the end, *the Nun* came out and scared us as we were leaving through the exit, and as he said goodbye we all waved as if we hadn't just screamed so loud our voices became hoarse. As I came out I began to cry, not tears of sadness or panic but tears of happiness. I was having a laughing fit. I kept replaying the image of Matthew running for his life and tripping over in my head until I couldn't stop laughing! It took a while for me to calm down before we went on to the next ride: Coaster Express. It would be an understatement to say that the line was long; it was agonisingly endless. When we finally got on the ride it was fast, really fast. I sat next to my friend Heather, who had borrowed my hat for the day as hers was too small. She had it on as the ride started and as it began to move I started to wonder if the hat would survive the speed we were going to go at; it wouldn't. About halfway through the ride, the hat flew off of her head and onto the fields below us- or so we thought. The man behind us had caught the hat somehow despite the odds. We call him the *Hat Hero*.

For our evening meal, we ate at *Fresc Co Las Fuentes*, a buffet where we could eat whatever we liked. Luckily it also had vegetarian options for my friend Chima who happened to be a vegetarian; he was overjoyed.

#### **Day Four:**

It was our last official day in Madrid before we had to leave and were excited to go home but we still wished to stay longer. We had breakfast like we had done every other day at *La Carmela* and then took part in a 2 hour guided walk around Madrid. Our tour guide took us around the city, showing us places like *Plaza Mayor* and *Puerta del Sol*, which we had all seen before, but she explained the history behind everything. Did you know that it's called *Puerta del Sol* because there used to be a grand gate where the sun would rise in the east?

Once we finished the tour we went to the *San Miguel Market* and had our lunch. We could eat mini burgers and ice cream or *quesadillas* and *croquetas*.

Some of us then returned back to our rooms to pack and others stayed out to visit *el Corte Inglés* and do some shopping. I decided to say out and enjoy as much of Madrid as possible before we went out for our last evening meal at *Museo del Jamón*. The food was once again delicious, no surprise there but we were surprised to find out that the teachers had made us all certificates. There were categories like best smile and most likely to become a flamenco dancer; I won *Miss O'Leary's Spanish Señorita*.

We then went and had ice cream before spending some time in *Plaza de Santa Ana* before *nightfall*. Once we returned to the hostel we called it an early night and went to sleep.

#### **Day Five:**

It was our last day and we woke up extra early to have time for breakfast and the journey to the airport. Once we got past security and on the plane, it was smooth sailing. We landed at Liverpool John Lennon Airport at 11:50 and took a coach back to school where we arrived at 13:30. We collected our bags, said our goodbyes, and went off home.

Overall, the trip was amazing. We did so many things we wouldn't have been able to do at home and discovered so many more things about the beautiful Spanish culture. We gained so much more experience and responsibility and if I could, I'd do it all over again.





