



interasmundo  
*Be erasmus*



GUIDE OF CORDOBA FOR ERASMUS STUDENT

# DISCOVER CORDOBA



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# Contents

Everything you need to know about your Erasmus year in Cordoba

Find out everything you need to know about your Erasmus year in the City of the Caliphs: Where can you stay when you arrive? Where are the different faculties? What are the best areas for accommodation? Where is the best nightlife? How do you get there? Take a look at our [Erasmus Guide to Cordoba](#) and we'll answer all your questions!

## Cordoba

Why choose Cordoba? / How to get there / Where can I stay the first few days? / History of the City / What sights should I see? / Neighbourhoods and city map

## The University

The University of Cordoba is divided into faculties dotted around the different neighbourhoods of Cordoba. In this section you can find out how to get to each faculty, how to enrol and a few little tricks so you can get on better with the teachers!

## Transport

Public transport is the best way to get around in Cordoba. Look here for timetables, bus stops, apps and everything the city hall provides us with to make using public transport that much easier.

## The cost of living

Accommodation, electricity, water, the phone, Internet, bus passes, etc. We'll tell you how much it costs to live in the city of Cordoba

## May in Cordoba

May, the month of the flowers, takes centre stage in the City of the Caliphs. The "Patios", the Wine Tasting festival, the May Crosses, the Fair... It's a month in which every weekend is a fiesta, a month when you'll fall in love with Cordoba.

## Accommodation

Hotels where you can stay the first few nights, room rental companies, the best areas of town to live in (depending on what you expect from your Erasmus year), tips on how to save money ... and lots more.

## This is the story of Angela Vella, a Erasmus student that tell us her amazing experience in Cordoba.

*My alarm went off early in the morning and, immediately, I sprang out of my bed, filled with a mixture of excitement and nervousness. I couldn't close my eyes at night anyway, kept awake by this one single thought: Tomorrow I would start my Erasmus in Cordoba, the loveliest city in the heart of passionate Andalusia, the experience of my life which is so close at yet so far away... I would transform into a feisty flamenco dancer, but first, I will die of a heart attack...*

*After a more or less stressful and, in any case, emotionally laden journey, I stepped off the plane in Malaga. There I was, in the heat of the Andalusian beaming sun, shining directly onto my face. I didn't have the faintest idea of what I would have to expect, so the first thing that came to my mind was "jacket off and sunglasses on." Has the typical Erasmus-bon vivant-attitude already begun? Well, actually I can't answer this question, the only thing I know is that the vivacious environment, filled with the loud voices of the Andalusians, lifted the mood. When the most likeable taxi driver of the world, who took me to Malaga's central station, cheerfully blathering, then told me that I would certainly have the time of my life on my Erasmus in Cordoba, I was sure the day couldn't get much better. So, here we go, taking the train to Cordoba, bringing with me seven kilos of excess weight and at least a tonne of excited anticipation for my Erasmus. From the minute I stepped out of the train and saw the display board with "Cordoba" on it, I knew that this would be an experience I would never forget. ¡Olé! Thus, I had just overcome the first obstacle of the journey, now getting to know my homemates would be next. Oh dear, how wobbly were my legs! Of course, I had already conceived all nightmarish visions: What if the girls act like stuck-up drama queens who have nothing better to do than bitching about me? What if the boys are the grubbiest urchins I have ever seen in my whole life? If this happens, I will blow my brains out. This was sure, when precisely living together should be that important for the wellbeing. "Don't worry, among seven people (- yeah, you've heard me correctly, I'm living with seven (!!!) other persons-) there would be at least one (-thanks for the compliment-) who'd like you," my mom used to tell me. Finally, she was quite right and it was not only one... Soon, we turned out to be a real "piña." This is a term used by the Spanish to describe a living together that works out excellently and, well yeah, we are loving each other. Crazy nights of wild partying, limp hangover Sundays on the sofa, international diners, sightseeing with collective astonishment, cozy DVD evenings, but also disturbing noises at night, cleaning roster quarrels, occupied bath rooms and completely disappeared foodstuff... we went through thick and thin, experienced laughing and crying and, finally, we are game for anything, just a real "piña." This is what Erasmus is about, making friends across international borders.*

*Well, this brings me to another topic of interest since Erasmus means particularly one thing: Party, party, party! And this is especially true for Spain. "If the Spanish know how to do anything well, it's celebrating," a Spanish friend once told me and, oh, he was pretty right. True to Fergie's motto "A Little Party Never Killed Nobody," Spanish people always make time for those little things which make life worth living, and that includes "mucho fiesta." And so are doing the Erasmus students as, after all, an exchange should make you learn about and adopt foreign lifestyles (by the way, what a great apology ). So, if the answer of the frequently posed question "Ereh Erahmu?" (just imitating the Andalusian accent which sometimes took me back a few nerves) is "yes," you will become the best friend of any party animal. Flashing disco lights, Reggaeton beats or other Latin-American sounds, perfect hip swings or silently tapping feet... there is a wide offer to experience the greatest party excesses of your life. I fell in love with Cordoba and its nightlife, others also have found their love to a person: Getting off with somebody might be really easy here, it is not without reason that in a song, which is frequently played, it says: "La conocí bailando [...] así ella me enamoró."*

*Well, one might get the impression now that Erasmus is more an undercover-party than education and the development of intercultural competence. Naturally, this is not true at all, although Erasmus students do not rank among the most diligent ones (and in fact, once I fell asleep during class...it was at the teacher's fault, sorry). However, the breathtaking beauty of the faculty I visited, la Facultad Filosofía y Letras de Córdoba, motivated me to wake up every morning: I got amazed by its finest mosaics, its huge patios and its historic auditoriums every time I strolled along the building's hallways. As may happen in such circumstances, you might blunder into the flurry of camera flashes of Cordoba's numerous tourists. By the way, if you are doing English Studies just like me, you will usually be in the teacher's good books. In most cases, the English level of the Spanish students might be comparable to that of a ninth-grader at school, so that you'll soon turn out to be the teacher's favorite. On your Erasmus in Cordoba, therefore, it is also possible to excel at university and to rake in top grades. What a good life!*

*Finally, the last section of this post is particularly concerned with my love to Cordoba. Yes, it's true love, I'm convinced of it. I still remember how I strolled along "Puente Romano" for the first time, how the beaming September sun shone right onto my face, I saw the birds gliding through the air above the Guadalquivir, singing their most cheerful songs, and the "Mezquita" appeared in its entire beauty over the horizon. I took a deep breath as if I wanted to inhale this wonderful moment forever, wanting to make the world hold on. From then on I knew that my time in Cordoba will pass by too fast so that I needed to fully enjoy every single moment. And this would be pretty easy in such an amazing city. In fact, Cordoba is ideal for doing your Erasmus. It has exactly the right size to quickly settle in and, at the same time, to leave no room for boredom or monotony. Due to its rich historical past, sometimes, you may have the impression to be taken straight back to ancient Roman times or to find yourself rather in North Africa than in Andalusia. I will never forget the golden portals of the "Mezquita" shining impressfully in the Andalusian sun, the sea of colorful blossoms in the garden of "Alcazar" or the smell of those orange trees. There are so many ways to fall in love with Cordoba every day anew and, in any case, it will certainly win your heart, too.*

Angela Vella

# Córdoba

Cordoba is the third largest city in Andalusia in terms of population, after Seville and Malaga, and one of the most beautiful cities in Spain. Its old quarter contains all the historical remains of the city's past (especially from the Roman and Muslim periods) and when spring arrives, you'll never want to leave!

## 1. Why should I choose Cordoba as Erasmus Destination?

Spain is one of the countries which receives the most Erasmus students in the whole of Europe and if you are thinking of doing an Erasmus year while at university, the idea of choosing Spain as destination crosses your mind at least once. However, the big question is: which part of Spain should I go to? Depending on the geographical location, the climate in Spain varies widely, and the whole of Spain is famous for its gastronomy, although it differs a lot from region to region and nobody agrees on which part Spain has the best food. And finally, one thing definitely has to be taken into account when choosing a destination: the parties! Although there are good parties all over Spain, there is no doubt that in the South you can enjoy yourself the most because of the people, their happy, easy-going nature and, most of all, the weather.

Once you've decided to come to the South of Spain, why should you choose Cordoba?

- **Travelling** is one of the main reasons why people do Erasmus. Living away from home for a limited period of time makes you want to travel and get to know new countries without having to give explanations to anyone (you're doing an Erasmus year, so that explains everything and your parents won't criticise you ). The right attitude should be "enjoy your year abroad away from home as much as possible," and for this reason, Cordoba is a great place to be based.

Other cities in Andalusia are nearby and there is an excellent network of public transport, so you can travel around a lot. Taking the AVE, in a few hours you can get to the north of Spain, to Madrid, to Portugal or to the regions of Valencia, Murcia and Barcelona, and the whole of eastern Spain. If you're feeling adventurous and want to go even further south, you can even take a ferry and get to the African coast in no time at all!



The city of Malaga is just one hour away by AVE train, with one of the best connected airports in Spain, where you can get to any European city whenever you like.

-**Cordoba University** is a relative modern university (founded in the 1970s), but that doesn't prevent it from being one of the most important universities in Spain and one of the best-equipped ones in Europe. At the Rabanales Campus, you can find the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (the most prestigious in Spain), as well as the Agronomy School, which together make up the most of the university's scientific departments. Over 600 foreign students a year choose Cordoba as their Erasmus destination. The atmosphere is therefore very cosmopolitan and the university is well prepared to receive these international students, with events and parties to help international students to integrate into student life. What's more, if your Spanish is not up to scratch, [there are free Spanish language classes](#) for international students.



- It's no secret that Erasmus grants are not very generous. So, when making up your mind where to go, it's important to know about the **standard of living** in the city you have chosen. Here, Cordoba is probably one of the best destinations in the whole of Spain. It's a small, reasonably-priced city, with around 300,000 inhabitants, and most of the time you can get around on foot. As there are no big hills, it's a flat city, so it's great for cycling, which can save you a lot of money, instead of spending it on public transport. What's more, accommodation, food, going out and –

everything in general here is definitely on the cheap side, and you can usually get by without any problem on around 400€ a month.

Being a small city in the south, with such great weather, it's very easy to make friends with local students since they are, in general, easy-going and open-minded. In the city centre, there are hundreds of outdoor bars where **local students** usually get together. Here, you can have a beer, try some of the traditional local food and get to know that special atmosphere of Cordoba. One of the favourite student haunts is the "Plaza de la Corredera" where, except during the exam period, the bars are full of students having a "caña" (glass of beer) or two.



If in the end you decide to choose Cordoba, you'll find an ancient but well-preserved city with a fascinating history. The old quarter is one of the biggest and most beautiful in the whole of Europe, and it was named a **World Heritage Site by the UNESCO** in 1948. The Mosque-Cathedral is the star attraction and is one of the most important buildings for Muslim architecture in Spain. The first time you stroll through the "city of the Caliphs", you'll never want to leave this amazing place again.

## 2. How to get to Cordoba?

With all the benefits that Cordoba offers, why not choose this city for your Erasmus experience? Well, once you've made that decision, the next problem is: how do you get to Cordoba?

It doesn't matter where you come from. The most convenient option is to get a flight to Spain. Nowadays, there are many airlines which fly to the Iberian Peninsula and if you book your flight in advance, you're sure to find some real bargains. The cheapest airlines are usually RyanAir or Vueling (if you're coming from Europe), although they sometimes don't let you take more than one item of luggage apart from your hand luggage, and the charges applied for every kilo of excess baggage weight are quite high.



### BY ROAD

Thanks to its strategic geographical position, Cordoba is very well connected not only with other cities in Andalusia, but also with the rest of Spain by the A-4 motorway. Getting to Cordoba from the cities with the best connections to European airports is easy:

- **From Madrid:** via the A-4 motorway "Autovía del Sur." Estimated journey time: 3½ hours
- **From Seville:** Also take the "Autovía del Sur A-4." Estimated journey time: 1 hour
- **From Málaga:** via the motorway "Autovía Córdoba-Málaga A-45." Estimated journey time: 1½ hours

The best way to make these journeys is by bus (for more information on buses see [here](#)). The most economical way, though, instead of renting a car, is to make the journey by [BlaBlaCar](#), a website which connects travellers with car drivers and which is highly recommended and comfortable to use. All you have to do is go to the website, look up the journey and travel dates and you can

With new technology at the touch of a button, it's really easy to find flights at the best prices. There are many apps designed for finding cheap flights, as well as the website [Skyscanner](#) that looks for the best flights and compares different airlines.

The best destination for your flight is Malaga, which is just one hour away by train from Cordoba. If you can't find a flight to Malaga, don't worry: we will show you the best ways to get to Cordoba from the other main airports in Spain.

immediately view all the car drivers who are going to make the same journey as you and who are offering a place in their car to travel with them. It's really important to read the travelling conditions carefully - for instance, if the car is big enough for your bags or if the driver can pick you up at the right time and place that suits you best.



### FROM THE AIRPORT

#### (MALAGA)

To [get to both stations \(bus and train\)](#) you can take the local train line "RENFE de Cercanías C1 Fuengirola-Malaga" which connects the airport with the "Maria Zambrano" train station. The "Cercanías", a local commuter train, runs every 20 minutes and you have to get off at the penultimate station, for both the bus station and the train station, as both stations are in the same street.

You can check the timetable and the prices of these trains by [clicking here](#). Select “Málaga María Zambrano” as the departure station and “Córdoba Central” as the destination.

The bus timetable from Malaga to Cordoba can be found [here](#).

### (SEVILLE)

To [get to Seville train station](#), you have to take the airport shuttle bus ([Linea EA](#)). A one-way ticket cost just 4€ and the bus runs all the year round. Once you get to “Santa Justa” (the main Seville train station), you can buy your train ticket to Cordoba. You can find the prices and the timetable [here](#): select “Sevilla-Santa Justa” as the departure point and “Córdoba” as the destination.

The airport shuttle bus ([Linea EA](#)) mentioned before can also take you to “Plaza de Armas” bus station, where you can take a bus to Cordoba. To check the bus timetable, click [here](#)

### 3. Where to stay at the first few days?



It is completely normal to feel a bit disoriented in the first few days, when you don't really know what to do or where to go, especially when you're looking for a place to sleep during the first days before you find a permanent room.



### BY TRAIN

The railway line connecting Madrid with Malaga, Seville, Cadiz and Huelva splits at Cordoba, and this is why Cordoba has such good rail connections. It's also really comfortable to travel to Cordoba from Seville, Malaga, Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona in the AVE high-speed train:

- Seville-Cordoba:** 40 minutes
- Malaga-Cordoba:** 1 hour
- Madrid-Cordoba:** 1 hour 40 minutes
- Barcelona-Cordoba:** 4 hours 35 minutes

If you take any of these combinations, it'll take you no time at all to get to Cordoba and you can start to enjoy your Erasmus year as soon as possible.

your country or simply get in contact with someone who can inform you about the options for accommodation in Cordoba before your arrival. This way, you can learn about the different areas of Cordoba, the approximate cost of renting a room, and even plan a guided tour around all the available rooms when you arrive in the city.



Interasmundo looks after the management of the rent, acting as mediators between the owner and the students and, most importantly, we don't charge the student any money for

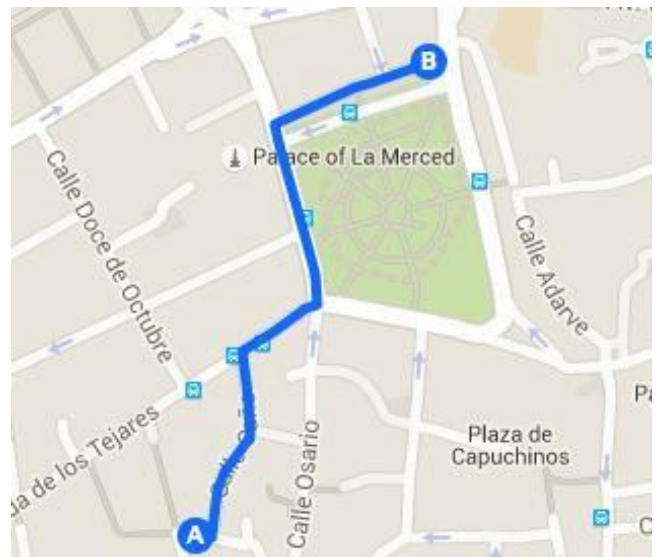
managing the flat, contrary to the standard practice carried out by real-estate companies. The owners are the ones who pay Interasmundo. We are also in charge of managing any problems that may come up, either in the apartment, with the owner, or with Erasmus students getting on (or not) with each other.

If you arrive in Cordoba without accommodation, don't despair! This city has a wide range of places to stay for these kinds of situations, like the popular *Bed & Breakfasts*, so typical in the UK, that have become fashionable in all European cities. The most popular one in Cordoba is Bed and Be, right in the city center, in one of the busiest commercial streets in Cordoba, Cruz Conde Street, where as well as booking a room, you can also reserve a bike that will make your life easier during the first few days and allow you to get around Cordoba looking for accommodation.

Bed & Breakfast places offer cheap and affordable accommodation including breakfast that is normally served in a dining room shared with the other people staying there. This is a great way to make new friends in the city as this place may well be

the first destination of many students who have just arrived in the city and haven't found fixed accommodation yet.

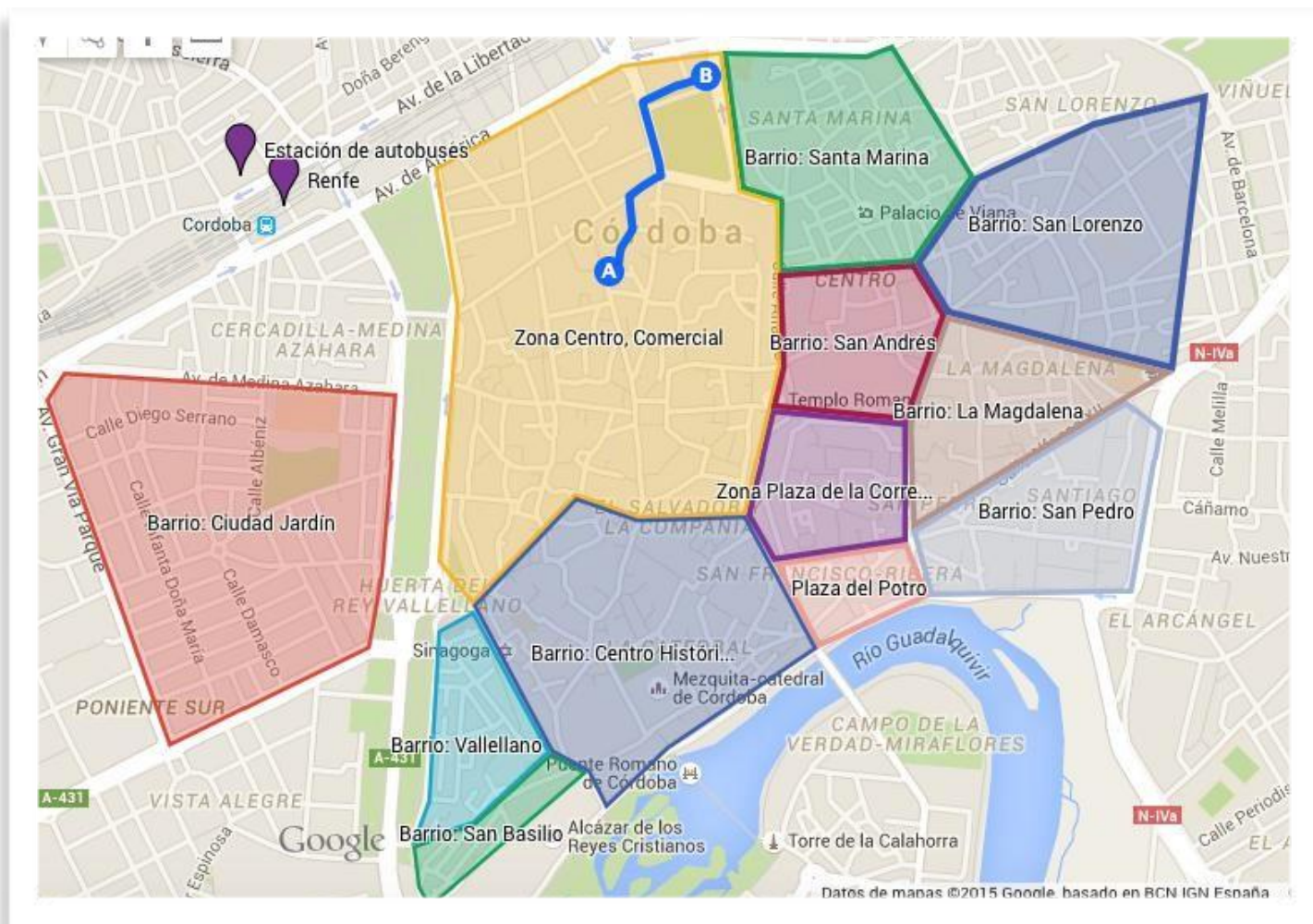
Once you get a place to stay for the first nights, you can contact us. We'll do our best to find a room for you without problems. You can find us very near Bed and Be, and if you want drop in, you can find our office just around the corner, or by sending an email to [info@interasmundo.com](mailto:info@interasmundo.com). We can answer your questions about the best areas to live in, depending on the needs and expectations you have for your year's stay in Cordoba. We have about 30 apartments located in different areas of the city, which you can visit without any obligation to rent.



A: Bed & Breakfast / B: Interasmundo

The first few days may be a bit chaotic, but once you've sorted out your accommodation, you'll find Cordoba is full of possibilities with the ideal atmosphere to enjoy your Erasmus year as only a Erasmus student deserves! ;)





[Neighbourhood's map Córdoba](#)

#### 4. Which is the best neighbourhood to live in?

Like any other city, Córdoba is divided into different neighbourhoods and districts, with different characteristics and communications. At first, most people think that the best option is to live in the area that is closest to your faculty, but as the expression goes, “there’s no accounting for tastes” (in Spanish it’s “pa gustos los colores”) and we all have our own personal reasons to live in one place or another. So, here are the most important characteristics of each area, so you can make an educated choice based on all the necessary information.

The student neighbourhood “par excellence” is [Ciudad Jardín](#) a very big, well-situated district in the west of the city. It is very near the city centre and really handy for the train and bus stations. It’s also one of

the favourite neighbourhoods among the students because the rent is affordable and nearly all the faculties are easy to get to.

Bus line number 7 takes you to the Faculty of Law and bus lines 2 and 5 take you to Loyola University, the Faculties of Medicine and Nursing, and the Faculty of Education Sciences. If you are studying a degree in science or engineering, you can take a commuter train at the train station to get to Rabanales Campus, and if you study at the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, you’re lucky, as it’s only five minutes away on foot. This neighbourhood also has the Rectory of the University of Córdoba in a magnificent building which was the former Faculty of Veterinary Sciences.

The next questions are obviously “What’s it like to live in this neighbourhood?” and “What is there to do in your free time?” – and for these aspects, Ciudad Jardín is great. The best known place here is without a doubt [Plaza Costa Sol](#), a roundabout situated right in the heart of the neighbourhood, an area surrounded by loads of local businesses, supermarkets, bars, restaurants, kebab shops, cheap stores and so on. There are two things which define the neighbourhood: its multicultural character and the students. So it’s easy to find shops where you can buy food from different countries and bars where you can get a free “tapa” with every drink. If you have three beers you’ll probably feel full thanks to the “tapas” without spending too much money. There are different pubs such as [Banagher](#) and La Fontana, which are right next to Plaza Costa Sol and has become one of the main haunts for Erasmus students.

Another emblematic place of the neighbourhood is the bullring, situated in Avenida Gran Vía Parque, one of the main avenues in the area, together with Avenida de Antonio Maura and Avenida de Medina Azahara.

We can already tell that this neighbourhood has impressed you a lot ;), but there are still a couple more areas to describe that might surprise you, so keep on reading and make your decision later.

Another area of town which is in high demand and popular among students is [Vallellano](#) especially for those studying at the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, which is situated right in the heart of the Jewish Quarter, only a 2 or 3 minute walk away. Many Medicine and Nursing students, and also those who study at Loyola University also choose this area because it is so close to the faculties and because it is very well connected by bus.

This area is very near Ciudad Jardín and the city centre and just a short walk from the old quarter. The Mosque, the Alcázar (Arab castle), the Roman Bridge or Plaza del Potro will become familiar to you as you pass by



them every day. For this reason, if you like to live in a place surrounded by art, history and culture, don’t look anywhere else in the city - this is your place!

We can also include in this area the San Basilio neighbourhood, made up entirely of houses with typical Andalusian architecture. Most of these houses have whitewashed façades, window bars and balconies and a central patio, adorned with pots of cascading flowers. It is a very quiet area, perfect for those looking for peace and quiet for studying ... until May starts, when the district becomes the centre of attention, with all its streets decorated with flowers (mainly geraniums), crowds of people and music ringing out. Many neighbours decorate their façades and balconies with flowers and open their doors for two weeks to anybody who want to visit their patios. This month will make you want to stay in Córdoba forever. An Erasmus student should never miss it!

In this area you can also find supermarkets and some local businesses to do your shopping. There are many restaurants and bars, and even a disco-bar on the river front (Ribera), known as [Sojo Ribera](#). It’s one of those places everyone ends up going to sooner or later, on the top floor of a three-storey building with amazing views over the Roman Bridge and the river Guadalquivir - a place to have a dance, chill out on their huge sofas, or simply enjoy the fresh breeze on small terrace. You’ll love this charming place!

The [city center](#) is also one of the best places to live if you are a student. With the exception



of the Faculty of Labour Sciences, near Plaza de Colón, there are no faculties in the centre, but it is very easy to get to them all from here, either on foot or by bus, unless you study at Rabanales, in which case you should get a train. However, the train station is very near the city centre – between 5 and 20 minutes on foot, depending on where you start walking from. The centre is very well-connected by public transport to all areas of the city, and nearly all the bus lines stop here.

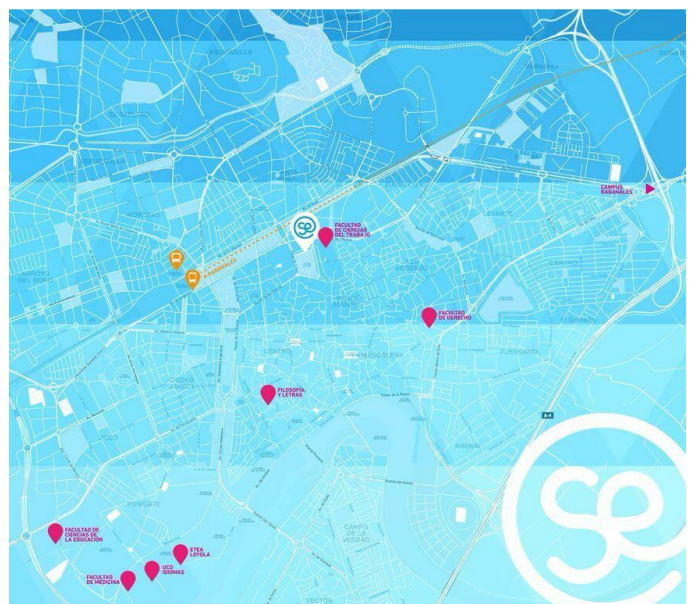
This area is full of shops, most of which are national or international franchises, like Zara or Mango. Of course, there are some supermarkets and the obligatory “El Corte Inglés”, the most famous department store in Spain, where you can find absolutely everything, with a wide range of prices and products. Anything you need, they can get it! ;) All Spanish cities have at least one.

There are also lots of bars in the city centre. For the best-priced beer, try the Mercado Provenzal, near Tendillas Square and if you are hungry and looking for a restaurant, try Taberna San Miguel or Taberna Góngora. For low-cost restaurants, 100 Montaditos is a good choice. In the centre, you can find most of pubs and bars in the city, like Góngora Café, the dance venue Long Rock or O’Donoghue’s Irish Pub with its cosy atmosphere for a chat and a drink with friends. “Plaza de la Corredera” square is one of the favourite haunts for students, and there’s also [Mercado Victoria](#), the perfect place to try food from different

parts of the world and taste the best wines. Round the back, there’s a bar for dancing and drinking, which has an outdoor terrace in summer.

The main points in the centre are Tendillas Square, Corredera Square and Ronda de los Tejares - an avenue dotted with many banks - and Avenida del Gran Capitán. The latter is a huge pedestrian area with flocks of pigeons everywhere. It’s surrounded by stately buildings, such as the Gran Teatro, San Hipólito Church and San Nicolás Church, and right behind the churches there are lots of bars which are perfect places for a beer and a “tapa”.

So, with all this information you can start thinking about the best areas to live, although it’s always a bit difficult to choose. Peace and quiet, a good atmosphere, the shops, the parties...? Maybe the best way is to make a list with all the pros and cons - or just toss a coin :) But don’t think it over too much - whatever you decide will be fine. Anyway, if you have any questions, don’t hesitate to contact [Interasmundo](#) we will be more than happy to help you.

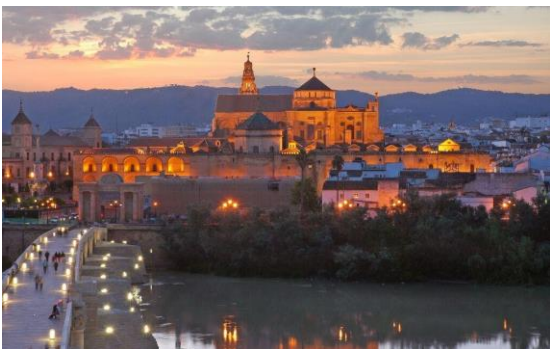


## 5. What to visit: The top 8 must-see places in Cordoba

So, you've already chosen Córdoba for your year abroad and we're sure it's a decision you won't regret :) The city has a lot to offer you in every sense and it's sure to be an unforgettable experience.

There is a stereotype going round that Erasmus students are only there for the parties and that all they do is go out at night and sleep all day, but we know that this is not true - or at least it's not the whole truth! Erasmus students look for something more than just partying: they want to enjoy their experience abroad, get to know new people, travel, discover new cities and grow as a person, as well as learning to solve all kinds of problems on their own...

So the environment, the city, its charm and the atmosphere are all very important. You might say this is a very romantic perspective on Erasmus, but if you have ever imagined



### Mosque - Cathedral

The [Mosque of Cordoba](#) is situated in the old quarter of the city, and is one of the 5 most commonly visited monuments in Spain. It's obvious why: the Patio de los Naranjos (Orange Tree Courtyard), the beauty of its Umayyad Arab remains, and the peace of mind you get from wandering through its 1000 or more columns, which will take you back to another era.

What makes this monument really unique, apart from its style, is the fact that it consists of a cathedral built inside a mosque. Building began in 786 AD but it wasn't until

yourself having a walk with a few friends, coming back from a party, having a beer at an outdoor bar or just walking to university... it's so much better to imagine yourself walking through the ancient quarter with its narrow, cobbled streets and surrounded by history. It's so much more attractive, and really makes you want to come here, doesn't it? Córdoba is the ideal city to make your stay in Spain all that more special, thanks to the charm that only a city with a past so rich in history can offer.

Our idea is not to write a 1000-page guidebook, so we can't include every monument, spot or street in the city. However, we can show you a small sample of the most important best-known monuments and sites, and as for the rest, you have to promise to discover them on your own during the year, OK?

1984 that it was declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. At one time, it was the second biggest mosque in the world, after the one in Mecca, although it lost this status when the Santa Sofía Mosque was built in Istanbul.

The best time to visit the monument is in the morning, to avoid the crowds, the perfect time to wander round Córdoba's most important monument and probably the second most important in the whole of Andalusia.

If you are an early riser and follow our advice to visit early in the morning, you can get in free, if you do so in silence, because individuals are allowed in without having to book or buy a ticket from 8:30 to 9:30am (Monday to Saturday). But if you can't make it before that time, the visit costs only 8€, which is not that much really [Símbolo].

For some years now, it has been possible to visit the Mosque by night, which is a little bit more expensive than a day visit, but really worth it. The visit starts in the "Patio de los Naranjos" (Orange Tree Courtyard) with a projection about the history of the Mosque

and the city and how both have grown since the Mosque was built. Once you start the tour, which comes with an audio-guide, the experience is very different to a morning visit because of the light effects and the accompanying music. You have to book your visit on [their website](#) or at the ticket-office.

Since building started on the Mosque in 786 AD, it has been reformed six times, with different extensions and transformations, until in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after years of Christian domination, the Mosque was converted into a cathedral. Now, in its present state, it is a monument where Catholic masses are held in a place which for centuries was the symbol of the Islamic Andalusia (also known as Al-Andalus) during the era of the Arab dominance.

We don't want to say much more about how amazing this monument is because, as we well know, the best way to see it is to visit it with no preconceived ideas, and your experience will be so much better.



### Puente Romano (Roman Bridge)

For those who are skeptical and who don't understand why a bridge should be included as one of the must-see sights of Cordoba, just think: this bridge was built by the Romans in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and since then, it has connected the two banks of the River Guadalquivir, which flows through Cordoba. It's also known as the "[old bridge](#)", and it was in fact the only bridge in the city for over 20 centuries until the construction of the San Rafael bridge in the 50's – I bet you didn't know that!

At the end closest to the Cathedral there's the "Puerta del Puente" (Gateway to the Bridge), which gave access to the city and at the other end, the Torre de la Calahorra (Calahorra Tower), which was a lookout post over the bridge.

This is one of the most amazing things about walking around Cordoba, that you can find, so close together, the remains of two civilisations so different to each other: the Mosque, one of the most stunning monuments of the Arab-Andalusian architecture, and just a few steps away, the Roman bridge, with 20 centuries of history, built by one of the most powerful civilisations of all time.

It is very pleasant to walk along the river front on a spring afternoon -or in any other season of the year- and get to the bridge just before sunset. If you cross the bridge in the direction of the city centre, just at the moment when evening falls, the views will make you fall in love with this city.



### Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos

You shouldn't leave Cordoba after your Erasmus stay without visiting the [Alcazar Fortress](#). It would be crazy to go back without having visited this emblematic fortress that was the home of the Catholic Monarchs for eight years. From the top of its walls and towers, there are also great views of Cordoba.

Situated very close to the Mosque, this 14<sup>th</sup> century fortress also saw the first meeting between Christopher Columbus and the Catholic Monarchs. It was here where the

explorer requested funding for his famous voyage, which changed the history of Spain and the rest of the world. And that's just a little taste of the history hidden behind these walls.

As well as walking along the top of the walls and climbing the towers that surround the fortress to contemplate the panoramic view of the city, walking around the gardens will make you forget that you are in a city with more than 300,000 inhabitants. Peace and tranquility pervades the place and takes your mind off the cares of everyday life.



## Medina Azahara

The ruins of Medina Azahara, also known in Arabic as “[The Brilliant City](#)”, are situated 8 km from Cordoba and, although you can't get there on foot, they are well worth a visit. To get there, you only have to catch the [daily bus](#) that drops you off at the entrance. It costs about 8€ and takes about 20 minutes.

The city was built by order of caliph Abderraman III in the 10th century AD to show his superiority over his enemies, although according to another legend, he built this magnificent city as a sign of love for his favourite slave, Azahara, who he had sent to redeem some Christian prisoners, and as none were found, the money was used to build the city.

The city was built on three levels and surrounded by a wall. The Royal Fortress (Alcazar) was situated in the upper part, while

the lower area was reserved for houses and the mosque that was built on the other side of the walls. The caliph spared no expense in the building materials to achieve the effect he was looking for, with purple and red marble, gold, precious stones used liberally. He also contracted the artisanal work of stonemasons and Byzantine artists to create the palace building, which became the symbol of the powerful empire that he was governing.

Although archeological excavations are still under way and only a third of the whole site has been discovered, it is really well worth a visit.



## Calleja de las Flores

The Jewish Quarter, as the name implies, is the quarter where the Jews lived from the 10th to the 15th century and was declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO in 1994, along with the historic centre. Here, right next to the mosque, stands this [beautiful alley](#), which is one of the most picturesque sites in the city. A narrow, cobblestone alley leads to a little square with a spectacular view of the Cathedral tower, and it's a favourite spot for taking one of those pictures which sums up the essence of Cordoba and which is sure to be a hit when you post it in your Facebook page [Símbolo].

It gets its name, Alley of the Flowers, from the balconies overflowing with flowers and the scent of jasmine which overwhelms visitors with its lovely perfume.



## Cuesta del Bailío y Plaza de Capuchinos

These are two of the most famous, emblematic spots in Cordoba, situated just a few meters away from each other and characterized by their simplicity and calm, especially in the case of the Plaza de Capuchinos, which is a paved rectangular “plaza”, surrounded by buildings like the Church of los Dolores, the San Jacinto Hospital and the Capuchinos Convent, which gives the square its name. The statue of Christ surrounded by lanterns, “Cristo de los Faroles”, dominates the end nearest the city centre.

The “[Cuesta del Bailío](#)” (Steps of Bailio) are just around the corner from the Plaza, and originally formed a street that connected the upper part of the Medieval city – known as the “Medina”- with the lower - known as the “Axequia”. If you stand at the lowest part of the slope, looking towards the top of the steps, you can see one of the most impressive houses in the city, which gives the street its name: la Casa del Bailío. This stately home, owned by the Fernández de Córdoba family - a very influential family since the era of the Catholic Monarchs - is a fine example of 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century Cordoban architecture.



## Plaza de La Corredera

This [square](#) has been mentioned a bit earlier, but it is definitely worth mentioning several times because of its atmosphere, the bars surrounding it and because it’s one of the most popular student haunts. As it’s not all about

walking and visiting monuments [:) this is a great place to take a break while you’re seeing the sights. It’ll definitely not be the last time that you sit down at one of its outdoor bars!

This rectangular “plaza” has a long portico with arches all round the lower part, which is quite unusual for Andalusian architecture and in fact, it is the only “plaza” of this type in Andalusia. In the past, it was used as a bullfighting arena, a very different activity from the ones that can be found there today. Nowadays, it is a place to have a morning coffee or an evening drink and some “tapas”.



## Plaza del Potro

This [square](#), right in the heart of the “Axequia” quarter, gets its name from the statue of a colt (“potro” in Spanish) on the top of the Renaissance fountain bang in the middle of the square. Traditionally, it was a place when crafts were made and cattle bought and sold.

One very interesting fact about the square is that it was mentioned in one of the most important books of Spanish and world literature: El Quijote. Miguel de Cervantes spent part of his childhood near the square and actually lived at the Posada del Potro (a popular guesthouse at the square), and he didn’t forget to mention it in its famous work.

As you’re sure to find out a few days after arriving in Cordoba, the City of the Caliphs has so much more to offer in terms of places and monuments to visit. But we don’t want to go into too much detail - come and discover for yourself what the city holds, although we hope you enjoy this short tour we have shown you here as much as we do.

# USEFUL PHONE

## Emergency

Emergencies	112
Ambulances	61
Andalusian Health Service	61
Firefighters	80
Local Police	92
National Police	91
Toxicological Information	915620420

## Organismos oficiales

City Hall	957499900
Post and Telegram	900506070
Foreign Office	957988228

## Transportes

Airport	957214100
Buses	957764676
Traffic Department	900123505
Bus Station	957404040
RENFE	902240202
Taxi	957764444

## Hospitales

Cruz Roja hospital	957420666
Reina Sofía hospital	957010000
San Juan de Dios hospital	957274600

## Turismo y cultura

Central Library	957764132
Youth House	957764707
Gran Teatro	957480237
Tourist Office	957201774
Teatro Góngora	957481888

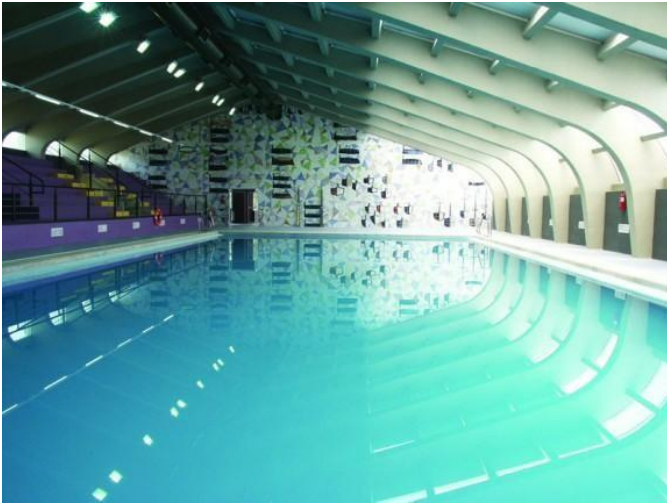


interasmundo  
*Be erasmus*





## 6. Practice sports in Cordoba



Yes, you are an Erasmus student and you like to party, we know that. But we also know that you are young, healthy people who like to look after yourselves and that you probably do some kind of sport in your home country. As you know, on Erasmus programmes, everyone puts on a few extra kilos, so it's probably a good idea to know where you can keep fit in Cordoba and keep in good shape during your Erasmus year.

In Cordoba, there are public sports centres called "Polideportivos Municipales" which usually have a fitness room where you can do aerobics, zumba, Pilates, dance classes and much more. These local fitness centres are a good bet, because they usually only cost 20-30€ a month and some even have an indoor swimming pool or a sauna.

If you live in Ciudad Jardín, you can go to the [Polideportivo Vista Alegre](#) (the most expensive one because it's the biggest and has a lot of activities to offer) or to Polideportivo [Ciudad Jardin](#). There are many more: just take a look at the home page and find the one that best suits you.

There is also [Go fit](#), a reasonably-priced fitness centre (starting at 33€/month), which is the best option if you live in the city centre.

Don't forget that the University also has some [sports facilities](#) on its different campuses.

If you prefer playing football, paddle tennis, tennis, basketball, ping pong or volleyball, the

university facilities are the best: they're good quality and really close to where you study!

If you prefer martial arts, there's [Centro Wutan](#), where you can do Yoga, Kung-Fu, Aikido, Chi-Kung, Pilates, oriental dance, Tai-Chi, and so on.

If dancing is your thing, the best place is [Azúcar Negra](#) (funk, Sevillanas, belly dancing, bachata, tango, zumba, etc.)



If you like jogging, the city has a lot of wide avenues with plenty of space to run, like Avenida de República Argentina, Avenida de Conde Valledano, Avenida de la Libertad or Avenida Al-Nasir (known as "Vial Norte"). You can also go to Parque Cruz Conde, a park which has a special jogging circuit designed for runners. Sometimes you can find people practising martial arts there, too.

If you like roller skating, why not [join this group](#) or just turn up at the square near Calle José María Martorell and Avenida Manolete, the Ribera or the Vial Norte (near the train station)?

This is just a small sample of what Cordoba has to offer for sports. Of course, there is so much more, so if sports are your thing, start looking now!

## 7. Information about Medical Insurance

If you come to Cordoba with the Erasmus programme, you will have no problems with medical care in any part of Spain. All European citizens can have a **European Health Card** which gives you access to the national health care system, just like all Spanish citizens.

This card is only valid for European citizens, so if you are on the “Science without Borders” or “Erasmus Mundus” programmes, and you come from a country that does not belong to the European Economic Area, you’ll have to check if there are agreements between your country and Spain as regards Social Security and health care.

Currently, such agreements exist with Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Ecuador and Peru.

If your country is not among those mentioned above, you will have to contract private medical insurance that covers accidents, medical attention, hospital visits and repatriation, and also check the conditions and requirements for its use in Spain. Having medical insurance is an obligatory requirement in applying for and obtaining a student visa. It does not matter if the insurance company is Spanish or foreign, but it has to be in force during your whole stay in Spain.

It is also common for foreign Universities to offer insurance to students taking part in mobility programmes.

Normally, every University offers its own insurance policy that covers the student in some medical areas, but each University has its own criteria and they don’t all cover the same things. That’s why it’s important to find out from your home University exactly what kind of insurance they offer and exactly what it covers.

With this type of insurance, your basic needs for medical attention will be covered – let’s

hope you don’t need it, of course [Símbolo]. You can also contract travel insurance which covers other more complicated situations, like missing your flight or connection, family emergencies, unexpected events that mean you have to go back earlier than planned, theft, damage or loss of baggage and much more. This kind of insurance is optional, but it could make your parents feel less anxious ;)

With suitable health insurance, you will have no problems when you come to Cordoba. If you have any questions about getting insured, the best thing is to contact the health service in your home country, which is a good way to avoid problems of paperwork or misunderstandings.



## 8. Where and how to get a bank account

Money in general and what to do with it during your Erasmus is always a cause for concern. Is it best to open an account when I come to Cordoba or should I keep the one I have in my country? Is there a charge when I take out money from Spanish cash machines? How can I transfer money from another country?

Normally, your Erasmus grant is transferred to a current account in your name in your home country, so the decision is really whether to open an account in Cordoba and transfer money from the account in your country or keep the account open in your country and take out money from the cash machines in Cordoba. It's not an easy decision, since both have their advantages and disadvantages.



If you choose the second option, the best thing is to find a bank in your country that offers you the best possible conditions when you take out money from cash machines in other countries, because otherwise, the Spanish bank is sure to charge you a high commission every time you take money out.

If you choose to open a new bank account when you come to Cordoba, you also have to check that your bank (in your home country) does not charge you for transferring money, so the grant money can be transferred to your new bank account free of charge. When you open a new bank account, here are some factors to bear in mind:

1. There's a difference between a **current account** (cuenta corriente) and a **savings account** (cuenta de ahorro).

With a savings account you get some interest, while with a current account, you don't.

2. Spanish legislation distinguishes between Spanish/foreign residents (you fall into this category) and foreign non-residents. **You will have to show the bank your NIE number** (foreign residents' identification number) to be able to start the process.
3. Within the common framework of the law, **different banks can have different requirements for opening an account**, although in practice it doesn't vary a lot: you have to pay in some money, supply a photo, have your fingerprint taken etc.

In Spain there are also online banks where you can open an account on Internet, although you should check the conditions of the account very carefully. They are quite likely to charge you for taking out money from banks that do not belong to the same group.

An EVO bank account ([www.evobanco.com](http://www.evobanco.com)) allows you to take out money at any cash machine in the world without commission - as long as you are under 30 - which is a good, convenient option.

In the end, it is up to you which bank you choose, and our role is just to give you advice. In a nutshell, don't let anyone trick you, read the small print and look for the bank account that best suits your needs.



# University

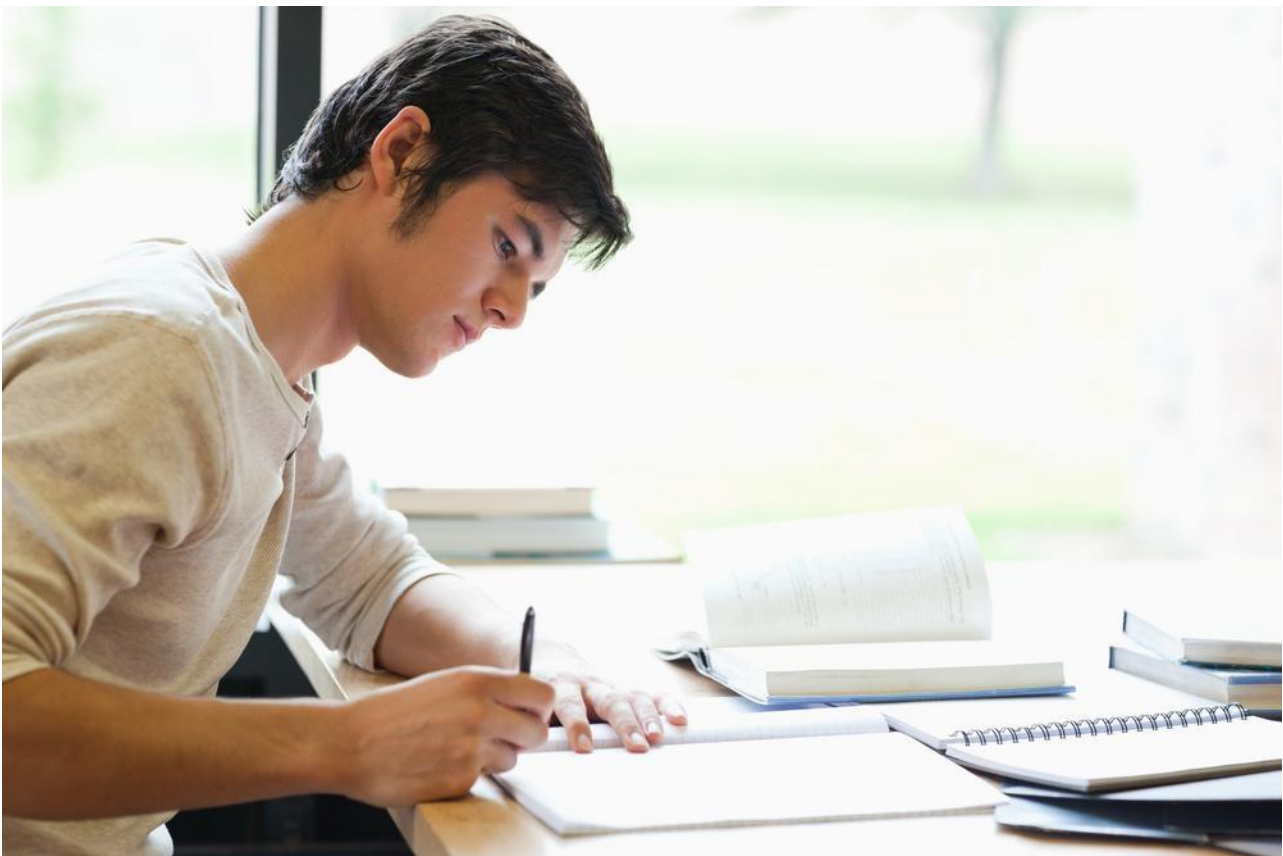
The University of Cordoba is not as old as some of the other Spanish universities. It was founded in 1972, although it is the successor of the “Universidad Libre de Córdoba”, which was established at the end of the 19th century. It can therefore boast centuries of history in teaching Veterinary Science, which is now one of the most prestigious faculties in Spain and the only one for this degree in Andalusia.

Since its beginnings, it has specialized in natural science and agronomy and forestry engineering, which to a large degree has won it the reputation it enjoys today. Being such a recently established, middle-sized university, it has been easier to adapt to the new educational requirements, with large areas dedicated to research studies, which have produced tried and tested results.

## 1. University Courses

Once your home Universities have already informed you that your application for an Erasmus grant has been successful, the following step is filling in the Learning Agreement forms with the courses you are going to take during your year in Cordoba. For that purpose, it will be very useful for you to know about the study programmes for the different degrees the University of Cordoba (UCO) offers.

If you click on this [link](#), you can find the list that the University offers. Once you have clicked on the Degree that interests you most, you need to go to “Planificación de las enseñanzas” to see more information about the courses that suit you best.



## 2. Faculties



The different faculties of the University of Cordoba are distributed all over the city, so we can't talk about one specific area. Depending on the faculty or the courses you choose, you will have to go from one area of Cordoba to another, but don't worry, once you've finished reading this part of the guide, it will be very clear to you how to get there and what is studied in each area.

**Campus de Rabanales:** This university campus is situated on the outskirts of Cordoba, but don't worry if your faculty is situated in the Campus. This area has a fast connection by train or by bus. It's up to you which you choose.

This Campus is reminiscent of the North American ones where all the faculties are distributed on the same site, with a few gardens in between, where you can always see students with their books open, sitting in the sun or relaxing between classes.

Most of the science degrees (Veterinary Medicine, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Sciences and Biology) and also some engineering degrees (Degree in Forestry Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Degree in Computer

Sciences) are housed at the Rabanales Campus. The faculties of Veterinary Medicine and Forestry Engineering are among the best in Europe, so that if you are doing one of these degrees and haven't chosen your Erasmus destination yet, here is yet another good reason to choose Cordoba. [More information here.](#)

**Faculty of Philosophy and Arts:** This faculty is situated in a grand 18th century building, which was once a medieval hospital, in the historic Jewish Quarter, a stone's throw from the Mosque of Cordoba. The best way to get to the faculty is by bike or on foot if you live in Ciudad Jardín. It's a short, pleasant walk, and public transport is definitely limited as it's right in the historic quarter where the buses can't circulate. However, if you live quite far away, there are a few bus lines you can take to get you nearer which drop you off just outside the old quarter.

In this faculty you can find degrees like English Studies, Spanish Philology, Translation and Interpretation, History, History of Art and Cultural Management. More [information here.](#)

**Faculty of Law and Business Administration and Management:** this faculty is also situated in an historic building, in this case, the ancient convent in the “La Magdalena” district. You can get there easily by bus. If you live in Ciudad Jardín, the best one to choose is Line 7.

Here, you can do a Degree in Law and Business Administration and Management. More [Information here.](#)

where Erasmus students usually live). You can do degrees in Infant Education, Primary Education and Social Education there. More [Information here.](#)

**Faculty of Work Sciences:** This faculty is situated right in the centre of Cordoba, next to Plaza Colón (next to the Torre de la Malmuerta). You can take a Degree in Tourism or a Degree in Labour Relations and



**Faculty of Medicine and Nursing:** The Faculty of Medicine is housed in a building right next to the University Hospital Reina Sofia, one of the most advanced hospitals in the country. The faculty has an excellent reputation, and many Erasmus students choose the University of Cordoba to study Medicine.

In this faculty, you can also do a Degree in Physiotherapy. The University School of Nursing is not situated in the same building, but in the area where you can find all the hospitals, and is linked to the Provincial Hospital. More [information here.](#)

**Faculty of Educational Science:** This faculty is housed in a building on the outskirts of the city, but is easily accessible by bus if you take [Lines 2 or 5](#) (the bus stops are right next to the areas

Human Resources at this faculty. More [information here.](#)

**Loyola Andalusia University:** This is a private [University](#) which is based both in Seville and Cordoba. It also receives a lot of Erasmus and international students, most of all from South Korea. At this university you can follow Degrees in Business Administration and Management, International Relations, Law, Communication and Psychology. Like the Faculty of Educational Sciences, you can get there by bus - Lines 2 or 5.

In August, the International Relations office is closed, but you can contact us if you have any questions and we will try to answer them!

ACCOMMODATION

ERASMUS? LOOKING FOR A ROOM?  
CONTACT US!

FIND OUT MORE



# Getting Around

Cordoba is a relatively small city, so it's easy to get from A to B. The Spanish used to call it "Cordoba la llana" (Cordoba, the flat city), because there are no hills in Cordoba except on the roads leading up to the mountainous area known as the Sierra. The most comfortable ways to get around are by bike or bus.

## 1. Taking the Bus

The bus company that runs the city buses in Cordoba is called [AUCORSA](#) and there are a large number of buses running in Cordoba with an efficient system of bus lines. All in all, there are 14 urban lines, as well as one circular one, that connect each district regularly throughout the day.



We have already told you which lines you have to take to get to the different faculties (see the information in the "University" section), but in this chapter we want to explain in a detailed way how to use the buses and the best way to pay.

The quickest way to find out about the bus stops, the different lines and the time it takes for a bus to get to the different bus stops, is to download the free app [WUL4bus](#), available for iPhone and Android. With this app, you can see where the bus stops are, which routes there are and how long you'll have to wait at the bus stops in Cordoba. It's an interactive app which shows you a map of the bus stops, the buses that are operating at that moment, the time it takes to get to a certain bus stop and all the information you need to get around by bus with no problems.

The easiest, most economical way to pay for your bus tickets on a regular basis is to buy a rechargeable card. With this pass, you can save on every journey...and you really notice it in the long run. A single ticket costs 1.20€, but with the pass you only pay 0.71€ for each journey...so it works out much cheaper. Normally, the card is on sale in tobacconists' shops but you can also buy it on the AUCORSA website. To see places where you can buy a pass, check [here](#). The card is rechargeable and you can recharge as much money as you want at any of the establishments shown in the link, as long as it's over 5€. The card and the money you recharge don't have an expiry date.

If you're going out at night, don't expect to find buses running after 11.30pm. There have been no night buses for some years now, but it's not usually necessary because you can easily walk from your flat to the party area. However, if you're tired, in a hurry or a bit lost on your way back, the taxis run a good all-night service in Cordoba and it works out much cheaper if you share a taxi between 4 of you.

Download the App



Android



iPhone



## 2. Going by Bike



To reserve your bike, you have to fill in the “Solicitud de préstamo” (application to loan a bike) which is available during the months in which the loan system will be in place (September to October), but because there are only 40 bikes available, it’s a case of “first come first served”. So don’t delay too much, because the bikes will run out quickly.

If you don’t get there quickly enough and the 40 bikes have already been loaned, don’t worry. If you’re sure you’d like to use the bike as your preferred means of transport, there

Despite the fact that bike lanes are few and far between, Cordoba is a very flat city and it’s easy to get around by bike. In Spain it’s not obligatory to wear a helmet if you’re riding a bike in the city, but it’s always a good idea to wear one as you’re sharing the road with cars and there are much fewer bike lanes than there should be in the city.

When you arrive in Cordoba, a friend who has finished their Erasmus stay might be able to leave you their bike, but this doesn’t happen very often. For this reason and to promote environmentally-friendly transport, the University of Cordoba has launched the programme “A la UCO en Bici” (Get to the UCO by bike) with around 40 bikes available to lend to students and workers to use during the academic year. They are free to loan, although you have to pay a deposit of 80€ as a guarantee and there are a few requirements which are explained on the [website](#).

are different second-hand bike shops in Cordoba, like [Re-cycling](#) or [Cash converter](#). At these shops you can buy a bike at a reasonable price, and also sell it before leaving Cordoba. They won’t buy it back at the same price, but you’re sure to get most of your money back.

Although it sounds a bit mad, you already know where the Rabanales Campus is... and you can get there by bike, too. Although at first it seems too far for most people, we’re sure that if you make the trip a few times, you’ll get used to it and you can even use the special [bike lane to the campus](#) which has been built to encourage this means of transport.

# COST OF LIVING

One thing everybody has to think about before moving to a new city is how much it will cost to live there. In fact, it depends on a lot of factors, most of all, on the kind of lifestyle you are likely to lead there. In the same city, there are prices for all tastes. In your case, as an Erasmus student, you'll probably be a bit short of money. The good thing about Cordoba is that you can live here for a year perfectly well on a limited budget, although, to tell the truth, it's not a year when you're likely to save a lot of money :)

Some months will be better than others, but [Cordoba is not an expensive city](#), so let's get a pen and paper and calculate how much you'll need to get by each month, including the basic expenses.



However, there are sure to be other expenses, such as food and going out, which will make it a bit more expensive, but it is still very close to the average amount for any European city and as we said before, Cordoba is a cheap city to live in. Let's now go into a bit more detail about the expenses, to show you what you need in your Erasmus year.

## Renting a Flat

We assume that you'll be living in a shared flat, which enables you to really live the Erasmus experience and, anyway, it's much more convenient. The cost of the apartment can depend on the area, what the flat's like and its facilities, the size and number of people you'll be sharing with, but it shouldn't be more than around 315€, which would be the highest price you should expect to pay. Normally, rent adds up to about 180-235€ per month.

## Transport

Have a look at the chapter on "Transport" where we explain the best way of getting around in Cordoba and how to pay – however, most of the time, you'll be getting around on foot. Cordoba is not a very big city and the distances are quite short. What's more, if you live in areas like Ciudad Jardin or Vallellano, you'll be living quite near the centre ... and it doesn't hurt to walk a little, does it?

(For one person in a shared flat)

1. Renting a room: 170€ - 315€ a month.
2. Monthly electricity bill (per person, in a shared flat): 20€ - 40€ per month (depending on the month and the weather)
3. Internet: about 10€ a month
4. Gas bottle: 15€ (lasts two weeks)
5. Mobile phone: from 11€ per month
6. Bus tickets: 1.30€ each (or 0.70€ each with a rechargeable card)
7. Beer: 1.20€
8. Coffee: 1.20€

TOTAL= 354.60€

So that's the initial calculation – nothing to get alarmed about, is it?

Anyway, it's normal to buy a bus pass for the times you use public transport, which isn't too expensive either. When you buy the card the first time, you have to pay 1€ for the card (as a deposit) and charge the card with 5€. In an average month, you'll not spend more than 30€ in total on transport (every journey with the card costs 0.70€).

## Food

The cost of food is quite difficult to estimate. We don't all eat the same stuff and of course it depends on what you buy and where you buy it. In Cordoba, the supermarket "Lidl", like in the rest of Spain, is probably the cheapest, but it's on the outskirts of the city and in your case (without a car), not very accessible.

The best option is to shop in the supermarkets "Dia" or "Mercadona", where you can find quality products at very reasonable prices. On average, you might spend about 85 - 100€ per month... but it depends on whether you're a good cook or not or if you like cooking, since pre-packaged supermarket food is always much more expensive than the food you cook at home.

## Mobile phones

Unfortunately, Spanish mobile phone companies are among the most expensive in Europe. Although there are a lot of [different companies](#) the prices don't usually vary much. The cheapest company is probably Yoigo, which offers good conditions and a good service. The cheapest option is a prepaid SIM-card and depending on what you want, you can get one for 8€ per month, plus the amount you spend on the phone.

## Going out

This really depends on you. How often do you go out a month? How much do you want to spend each time? Which places do you want to go to? Normally, clubs and pubs in

Cordoba don't charge an entrance fee, although there'll always be places where you'll have to pay for a drink at the entrance to get in. This happens normally at clubs late at night. Spirits in a tall glass ("cubatas") cost about 7€ in a club and about 5€ in the bars, which is not much compared to other big cities. Beer is probably the cheapest option, and a bottle costs about 1.20€.

So as you can see, Cordoba is not expensive at all. Everything depends on the lifestyle you lead during your year abroad, but our recommendation is to plan the month ahead, calculate the fixed costs, and put some money away in a drawer for later, so that you're not tempted to spend it all at once. If you plan it well, there could be months in which you can actually save a bit for a trip.



# MAY INCORDOBA

As we've already said a few times in this guide (and you're sure to have heard it already) Cordoba in May means fiesta time ... the Wine Tasting, the May Crosses, the Patios, the Cordoba Fair are all about tapas, wine, beer, *trajes de gitana* (flamenco dresses), flowers, a great atmosphere, music, dancing and so on. It's a month that will make you never want to leave the city :)

## 1. The Montilla Moriles Wine Tasting



The first of the festivities in Cordoba in May is the Catas del Vino Montilla Moriles (Wine Tasting). They get their name from area in the south of the province where the wine is made and make the perfect start to a breathtaking month.

During the days of the "Catas", which normally last 7 days, [the courtyard of the Municipal Government in Cordoba](#) fills up

with stands from the different [wineries and restaurants in Cordoba](#) which offer the public their best wine products and traditional dishes. Flamenquines, croquetas de rabo de toro, salmorejo and arroz are some of the typical tapas that you can try during the Catas, accompanied by the best regional wines, known as fino, which are white, sherry-type wines with an intense flavour and bouquet. They're sure to be very different from all the wines you've tried up until now.

The "Catas" are not open all day long, and you have to decide whether you want to eat lunch or dinner (or both). The atmosphere is amazing all week, although at weekdays it's not too crowded at night. During the day, entrance is free from 1pm to 5pm, but you have to buy a ticket to get in at night (open from 9pm to 1am). You can buy either a ticket for around 8€ which includes 5 drinks or one bottle, with a catavino (the traditional

wineglass in which you normally drink these kind of wines) or a ticket for 10€ with the same number of drinks but two catavinos. You can buy the tickets directly at the entrance or on [this website](#).

During this week you can really get to know all the variations of Cordoban wines and cuisine (if you haven't already) and all in the same courtyard!



## 2. The May Crosses

The associations of neighbours, groups of friends and clubs which help to organize this festival set up [large crosses in different squares and patios](#) around Cordoba, adorn them with flowers and set up bars where you can have a few drinks and some tapas. At all the May Crosses, there is music ringing

Since the first contest was held in 1924, all the groups vie to win the first prize (currently about 700€) and most crosses are decorated with pots of geraniums on a background of Manila shawls, which give the crosses a more striking, Flamenco touch.



out, and performances with dance and song, mostly Flamenco, take place. This could be the perfect occasion to learn to dance Sevillanas ;), and there are plenty of opportunities to put it into practice during the month.

May in Cordoba officially opens with the traditional “Battle of the Flowers”, in which dozens of floats decorated with flowers drive along the [Paseo de la Victoria](#) throwing flowers to the spectators, who in turn throw them back to the floats or at each other, and it all degenerates into a huge “flower fight”.

The tradition of the Crosses of Cordoba goes back to the days of Ancient Rome and although the tradition has been broken (some years it has not been held) they have never lost their charm, although the solemn atmosphere has largely disappeared now. 28

Normally there are about 60 crosses in the competition and although it might be in your interest to visit them all, you should at least get to the [most popular ones](#).

The Crosses close at 2:00 am to control the level of noise late at night, although the parties continue in lots of different clubs around the city.

After the Crosses, things are only just starting, so save your energy for the weeks to come, because in the month of May, the important thing is to not miss anything!

### 3. The “Pacios”



More info in our website

Although there are two festivals close to each other, May in Cordoba has only just begun! First the Catas and then the May Crosses are followed by the Patios, which probably the most beautiful of all the celebrations of the month of May in Cordoba.

The streets of Cordoba overflow with flowers, pots and colours everywhere. Due to the climate of Cordoba, houses were traditionally built around a central courtyard (known as a *patio*), with plants everywhere to keep it cool. The *patios* that the neighbours open up to the public also participate in the competition. They make an effort to make them as beautiful as possible to try and win the prize money the

### 4. The Cordoba Fair

The final event in May in Cordoba is the Cordoba Fair. The Fair is considered one of the best in Andalusia and lasts a whole week, including two weekends!

The opening day, normally at midnight on the Saturday, the light bulbs on the big ornamental gateway to the Fair are all lit up, and there is a magnificent firework display (By the way, don't get confused: when we say Saturday at midnight we mean the night between Friday and Saturday!)

From this moment on, the Fair is officially open, and about 10 days of music, dances, live

council has awarded since 1921 to the most beautiful *patio* in the competition.

The most traditional areas for *patios* which simply cannot be missed are the Alcazar Viejo (between the Alcazar and the parish of San Basilio) and of course, the area around the Mosque of Cordoba, the Jewish Quarter, and the district of Santa Marina. All the neighbours open their *patios* to the public so that visitors can walk round free of charge, although there are opening times, from 11am to 2pm and from 6pm to 10pm from Monday to Sunday. One important fact to keep in mind is that in the last few years, because of the large number of tourists, the council have introduced a system of obligatory booking for Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings. It is still free, but this is a way to organize the visits so that everyone can get to see the *patios* more comfortably.

The Patios are of course accompanied by bars where you can have a glass of wine or beer, try the local tapas (if you haven't done so already :D) and enjoy the music and dance performances, etc.

gigs, drinks, Flamenco costumes and all that jazz lie ahead of us. Unlike other fairs in Andalusia, nearly all the enclosures (known as *casetas*) in the Cordoba Fair are open to the public...and there are a lot of them! So, choose your kind of place and off you go. Some *casetas* are like restaurants, where you can sit down to order *tortilla*, *salmorejo*, *pinchitos* or *pimientos fritos*, which is the typical fare here (don't worry - if you want hot dogs and hamburgers, you can find them too).

There are also *casetas* which are more like clubs in which young people get together and have a dance and a drink.



sombrero. Over the last few years, a new craze has started among university students (mostly on the Wednesday of the Fair), which is to all wear the same T-shirt with jokes about their degree printed on it (you can start thinking of your slogan now!).

As all good things come to an end, the Fair also finishes, the Saturday after it started, and everyone says goodbye for another year to the unforgettable month of May in Córdoba, which we're sure you'll have enjoyed a lot.

The Fair is situated between the river and the football stadium. It's a very big fairground area, and handy maps are published so you can find your way around it easily. The most recommendable way to get there is by bus - Aucorsa, the bus company, puts on [special bus services](#).

One official recommendation is to try the drink called *rebujito*, which is a mixture of white wine and Seven Up. It is usually served in jugs to share between a group of friends and costs about 5 or 6€. You're sure to order more than one jug...

As you can see, a lot of women at the Fair wear flamenco dresses with lots of frills and the inevitable polka dots. Others wear the Cordoban dress, a tight black suit with a



# ACCOMMODATION

So, you've already decided that your destination's going to be Cordoba. We've already talked about the best areas to live, the weather, the parties, the cost of living .. I bet you're convinced now that this is the city where you're going to do your Erasmus year .. just as we're convinced you're going to have a whale of a time!

Have you chosen which area you want to live in? And the type of flat? As we said before, here at "[Interasmundo](#)" we can help you with all these things, even looking for flatmates – we'll organize everything for you! If you haven't looked at rooms yet, have a look on our website at the flats available, so you can sort that out and feel more relaxed – and your parents too, of course.

If you've been reading the guide, you'll know now what each area of Cordoba is like, and you'll have had a look at the flats to rent - in this section, we offer you a few really useful tips. If you follow them, it'll spare you a few anxious moments with certain items of household equipment and stop you cursing and kicking them and running to the neighbours for help :)

## 1. How to change a gas bottle?



Changing the gas bottle ("*bombona*") can be one of the biggest challenges that an Erasmus student faces in Cordoba (and anywhere in Spain)!! Most flats use butane gas to heat water and for cooking – gas cookers are much more common than vitro-ceramic hobs - but don't worry, you only have to make the effort once every two or three weeks.

If you've never changed a gas bottle before, it's a bit tricky at first, but you can learn how to do it straight away and once you've got the hang of it, there's nothing to it. It's probably easier to see how it is done than read about it, so have a look at this video tutorial on how to change a gas bottle, and when the time comes to "*cambiar la bombona*", play the video and do it like the lad in the video.

Video Tutorial: [How to change a gas bottle](#)

To order a new bottle, you have to phone 957-324-191. It's best to call two or three days before, because that's about how long it takes for them to deliver it to your flat. If you're not sure you're going to be in on the day they deliver it, people usually put the old bottle outside the front door and leave the money under it, so when the gas men come round, they can take the old bottle away and leave you a new one.



## 2. Tips for saving on electricity bills



Here in Spain, electricity bills are a bit on the expensive side compared with the European average. The electricity bill isn't usually more than about 90€ a month on average for each flat, but it really depends on the month of the year, how cold or hot it is, the hours of daylight, etc. All this makes the bill fluctuate a bit, but if you follow a few of our tips every day, it'll make sure your bill doesn't skyrocket.

Avoid leaving appliances on standby. Even if you think you've turned off the appliance correctly, if you leave the little standby light on, it will consume electricity. To avoid this, get yourself a couple of extension cables/adapters, with switches so you can turn off the electricity before it reaches the appliances.

Use short cold-wash programs for the washing machine and wait till you've got a full load of dirty laundry, so you don't wash with the washing machine half-full.

Always turn lights off every time you leave a room. A lot of people leave the lights on in nearby rooms – maybe it makes them feel less lonely! But think about it – it's only a light, and it costs a lot of money :)

Just like the washing machine, fill the dishwasher up completely before using it. If you only have a few dishes, why not wash them up by hand rather than putting them in the dishwasher – it'll save you money!

When it starts to get hotter, air conditioning is your best bet ... but remember that the air con can use up an enormous amount of electricity, so use it sparingly and remember to turn it off when you go out – also, setting the thermostat to 25°C will make it run more economically.

If you follow these tips, you'll notice the difference... you'll get to save a bit of the cash you were saving up to pay your bills... and have a bit more left over for beer :)