

1. OUR TOWN: BAEZA.

Baeza is a medium-sized town (16,000 inhabitants) in the very centre of the province of Jaén. Jaén is one of the provinces that make up the region called ANDALUSIA, a region full of history and artistic heritage due to the existence of several civilisations here in the past: the Iberians, the Romans, the Muslims... It will be a very interesting idea to travel round Andalusia and know the oldest cities: Seville, Granada, Córdoba, Málaga, and Jaén itself.

Jaén is quite well known all over Spain due to the production of olive oil. It is estimated we have around 60 millions olive trees in our area, so the landscape is quite peculiar, and the greatest benefit from it is the fact that we are the first producers of olive oil in the world. As it may be expected, the quality of our product and our gastronomy is first class.

Baeza is only 40 kilometres away from the capital city of JAÉN, and there are frequent buses connecting both. In Jaén you can find most shopping centres, cinemas, museums, etc. Near Baeza we also have two towns where you can also go shopping or walk around: their names are UBEDA (only 10 kilometres from Baeza) and LINARES (only 25 kms from Baeza).

Baeza is a very old town, included in the UNESCO HERITAGE list of historical cities. You will see its impressive religious buildings and palaces from the 16th century in the fashion of the so called Renaissance style. Some spots are even older, from previous ages, like the Muslim city walls and towers. It can honestly be said that Baeza is one of the most beautiful towns in Spain. You can search for photos or videos on the internet.

16,000 people live in Baeza, and it has everything you need to live: shops, supermarkets, a daily open market which sells groceries and fresh food from the area, many bars and restaurants, cafés, doctor's clinics, a health center, sport facilities, open areas for walk or cycling, parks... Life in here is nice and shows much of the Spanish slow-paced way of life. Not much traffic, a calm atmosphere and, most important, you can walk anywhere. You don't need a car at all. Everything is at a walking distance, including our school.

2. OUR SCHOOL

In Baeza we have 4 primary schools and 3 secondary schools. Our school is ANDRÉS DE VANDELVIRA SCHOOL, for secondary students aged between 12 and 18. We also have some adult education for vocational training.

Your job as an assistant will be focused on students between 12 and 16 years old, divided in 4 levels: 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Our school is medium-sized (around 700 students and 70 teachers). Our students are not difficult teenagers. The level of discipline in our classrooms is still quite as expected, though they are teenagers and sometimes they want to have fun.

As a language assistant, you will be working for 14 hours a week in different classrooms and subjects, though you are also supposed to collaborate with the preparation of materials for teachers.

You will be helping colleagues in different subjects (the so called Bilingual Subjects): Maths, Art, Physical education, Music, Technology, Geography, History and maybe some English too... There is a great variety. Don't worry if you don't have a great knowledge of all those subjects. You will be given easy tasks, mainly helping with the students' English, which is their main foreign language. Teachers are used to working with language assistants, so they know what they can expect from you. It will be very easy, don't panic.

You will be working only 4 days per week. So it means you usually have a long weekend, during which you can travel or just take it easy and rest.

Bring to school any of the materials you may consider interesting from your country: musical instruments, cooking recipes, postcards, etc.

At school you will be considered as a member of the teaching staff in all cases. It means you are always welcome to join social events, staff meals, daily outings or excursions...

You can wear anything to school. We never use school uniforms. You don't have to wear a tie or formal clothes. Just feel comfortable and wear as you like.

As for holidays, we have a long holiday for Christmas (about 2 weeks), another holiday week for Easter and also some other shorter holidays in the middle. You will start working as an assistant in October and finish by the end of May.

3. DOCUMENTS

Of course, bring your Passport with you, and your Visa if required.

When you come to Baeza, you will need to get a foreigner number at a police station, and a health insurance card in case you need medical assistance. Your coordinator at school will help you with that. You will need to go to a bank and open a bank account so that you can get your salary on that account. If you are a student, please bring your student card. It may help with discounts in museums, transport, etc.

Remember our currency is the EURO. Most places take credit card nowadays.

4.

5. ACCOMMODATION

We recommend you to live in Baeza because in this area public transport is very poor. Moreover, renting a flat in here is quite cheap compared to bigger places. There are always some flats available. If you want to live alone, it can be around 300 euros for a small flat. If you want a big flat, it is around 400 euros and you can share with other assistants. Remember your salary is 800 euros per month. Usually when you contact your coordinator before arriving in Spain, he or she will send you a list with the names and numbers or mail addresses of the other assistants coming to Baeza. This way you can get in touch and decide together whether you would like to share accommodation.

If you want to have a look at different flats during your first week here before deciding which one to rent, you can meanwhile stay at a hotel or hostel (around 35 euros per person per night). They are nice hotels located in the city centre.

We have many restaurants in here. An average meal with two dishes, a drink and a dessert costs 12 euros.

6. HOW TO ARRIVE IN BAEZA

It is likely that you will be arriving at Barajas Adolfo Suárez Airport in Madrid. Once you get your luggage, you need to go to the city centre in Madrid. The best option is for you to go to the bus station called ESTACIÓN SUR DE AUTOBUSES MÉNDEZ ÁLVARO. You can easily reach that station from the airport by metro or train. Just ask the staff at the airport for directions.

Once at the bus station, you must go to the ticket office called SAMAR, and there you can get your ticket (no need of reservation; it costs around 25 euros). You pay there for your ticket and wait for the bus. The platforms are one floor below the ticket offices. There is a bus coming to Baeza around 9:00 in the morning, and one bus around 15:30 in the afternoon. The journey takes 4.5 hours and then Baeza is the last stop. Usually your coordinator will be there for you to make you feel welcomed.

If you prefer to come by train, from the airport take the metro or the train to the train station called ATOCHA in the centre of Madrid. There you must go to the tickets office and buy a ticket to the station called LINARES BAEZA. Remember this name well. The journey takes 3 hours (instead of 4.5 by bus) but it is a bit more expensive (around 35 euros). Once you are in LINARES BAEZA Station, usually your coordinator will be waiting for you and give you a lift because there is no public transport from that station to Baeza. It is only 20 minutes drive!