

TRANSPORT

Madrid is served by almost 100 airlines, excellent bus networks and trains that radiate into and out from the Spanish capital. The ongoing expansion of Spain's high-speed rail network has dramatically cut travel times and, with the link between Madrid and Barcelona, has brought Madrid that much closer to the rest of Europe.

Madrid's extensive, modern metro system is all you're likely to need for getting around the city. There's also an extensive bus network, as well as reasonably priced taxis.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR

Madrid's Barajas airport is Europe's fourth-busiest hub, trailing only London Heathrow, Paris Charles de Gaulle and Frankfurt.

For intercontinental flights, the best connections are through South America, but there are also direct flights from Asia, North America and the Middle East.

Within Europe, the cheapest way to fly to Madrid is with low-cost airlines such as easyJet, Air Berlin, German Wings, Ryanair and Vueling. The earlier you book a flight, the less you pay.

Iberia, Air Europa and Spanair once had a stranglehold over the domestic market, but now compete with international low-cost airlines on a number of domestic routes out of Madrid. Carriers and routes include easyJet (Ibiza), Ryanair (Alicante, Almería, Canary Islands, Fuerteventura, Girona, Granada, Jerez, Palma de Mallorca, Santander and Santiago de Compostela), Air Berlin (Barcelona, Seville, Valencia, Palma de Mallorca, Bilbao, Alicante, Jerez and Málaga) and Vueling (Barcelona, Canary Islands, Menorca, Ibiza and Seville). Andalus also flies from Madrid to Almería, San Sebastián and Gibraltar.

Airlines

A full list of airlines flying to Madrid is available on the Madrid-Barajas section of www.aena.es; click on 'Airlines'.

Aer Lingus (☎ 902 502 737; www.aerlingus.com) To Madrid from Dublin and Washington.

THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

Air Berlin (☎ 902 320 737; www.airberlin.com) German budget airline with flights to Madrid from around 15 cities across western Europe and domestic flights within Spain.

Air Europa (☎ 902 401 501; www.aireuropa.com) Connects Madrid with London, Paris, Milan, Venice, Rome and Lisbon, as well as destinations in Africa, the Caribbean, South America and dozens of Spanish airports.

Air France (☎ 902 207 090; www.airfrance.com)

Alitalia (☎ 902 100 323; www.alitalia.it)

American Airlines (☎ 902 887 300; www.aa.com) Madrid from New York, Miami and Dallas/Fort Worth.

Andalus (☎ 902 887 300; www.andalus.es) Flights to Almería, San Sebastián and Gibraltar.

Austrian Airlines (☎ 902 551 257; www.aua.com) Madrid direct from Frankfurt and from Vienna via Munich and Barcelona.

British Airways (☎ 902 111 333; www.britishairways.com) London Heathrow to Madrid.

Continental Airlines (☎ 900 961 266; www.continental.com) Daily flights to New York with connections to other US cities.

easyJet (☎ 807 260 026; www.easyjet.com) Madrid from 18 European and Moroccan cities, with some domestic Spanish routes.

Emirates (www.emirates.com) Due to begin Madrid–Dubai services some time in 2010, with connections throughout Asia, the Middle East and Australia.

German Wings (☎ 807 070 025; www.germanwings.com) Flies to Madrid from more than 20 European cities.

Iberia (☎ 902 400 500; www.iberia.es) Spain's national airline with flights throughout Spain, Europe, Asia and the Americas.

KLM (☎ 902 222 747; www.klm.com) Madrid to Amsterdam.

INTERNET AIR FARES

Most airlines, especially budget ones, encourage you to book on their websites. Other useful general sites to search for competitive fares include the following: www.atrapalo.com, in Spanish
www.cheaptickets.com
www.ebookers.com
www.expedia.com
www.lowestfare.com
www.opodo.com
www.orbitz.com
www.planesimple.co.uk
www.rumbo.es, in Spanish
www.sta.com
www.travel.com.au
www.travelocity.com

Lufthansa (☎ 902 883 882; www.lufthansa.com) Madrid from Hamburg, Frankfurt, Toulouse and Milan.

Malev Hungarian Airlines (☎ 902 104 786; www.malev.hu) Madrid to Budapest.

Qatar Airways (☎ 902 627 070; www.qatarairways.com) Madrid to Doha and connections across the Middle East and Australia.

Royal Air Maroc (☎ 902 210 010; www.royalairmaroc.com) Madrid to Moroccan cities with connections across Africa and the Middle East.

Ryanair (☎ 807 220 032; www.ryanair.com) Madrid from 15 European airports as well as domestic Spanish routes from Madrid.

Scandinavian SAS (☎ 802 112 117; www.flysas.es) Madrid to Copenhagen.

Spanair (☎ 902 131 415; www.spanair.com) Flights from dozens of destinations throughout Spain and Europe, as well as the US, Africa and Bangkok.

Swiss International Airlines (☎ 901 116 712; www.swiss.com) Madrid to Zurich.

TAP Air Portugal (☎ 901 116 718; www.flytap.com) Madrid from Lisbon and Porto.

Thai Airways (☎ 91 782 05 21; www.thaiairways.com) Madrid to Bangkok with connections in Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Turkish Airlines (☎ 902 124 440; www.turkishairlines.com) Madrid to Istanbul.

Vueling (☎ 807 200 200; www.vueling.com) Spanish low-cost company with flights between Madrid and European destinations, as well as domestic Spanish flights.

Airport

Madrid's **Barajas airport** (☎ 902 404 704; www.aena.es) lies 12km northeast of the city, and every year almost 50 million passengers pass through here.

Terminal 4 (T4) is the airport's architectural showpiece and deals mainly with flights of Iberia and its partners (eg British Airways, American Airlines and Vueling), while the remainder leave from the conjoined T1, T2 and (rarely) T3. Iberia's Puente Aereo (air shuttle) between Madrid and Barcelona, which operates like a bus service with no advance booking necessary, operates from T4 with 30 flights per day. To match your airline with a terminal, visit the Madrid-Barajas section of www.aena.es and click on 'Airlines'.

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motor transport generates carbon dioxide (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the greenhouse gases they are responsible for with contributions to energy-saving projects and other climate-friendly initiatives in the developing world – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.