

**EUROMED GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**  
**By and SDSU student who participate in the program in F'06**

1. Professors do not speak English as their first language.
2. Take only four classes, five if you don't plan on traveling much.
3. There are no textbooks, everything is online.
4. Your class will not always be in the same room.
5. The campus is 45 minutes from downtown Marseille.
6. Hair dryers and flat irons should be purchased in France. Hair dryers are around 35 Euros. Flat irons are hard to find and are around 80 Euros.
  - a. To run a US electrical device you will need a voltage convert AND a plug converter. European plugs are two round pegs, instead of two flat ones like in the US.
7. Europe runs on 220 voltage, the US on 110.
8. If you plan on bringing your digital camera, laptop, etc. you should not need a voltage converter, just a plug converter. Check your power cord/AC adapter for voltage compatibility.
9. Housing recommendations are recommended in the following order:
  - a. Estudines (on campus) cost is roughly 400E/month, 2 floors, no lift/elevator. Most convenient.
  - b. Alotra (4 bus-stops from campus/10 minutes) 350E/month, but not truly "on campus", 2 floors, no lift/elevator.
  - c. Cite U—around 320E/month, dorms for the public university across the road. 15 minutes on foot to campus. Very, very few Euromed students live there, so you might feel a little isolated.
  - d. An apartment in town. Be prepared to spend around 100E/month for utilities and internet in addition to your rent. I have completed around 30 units of French, and still struggle to communicate. If you don't speak French, I strongly advise against this option.
10. Wifi on campus is very unpredictable. When it is working, maximum speed is 54 Mbps, most days it is 11 Mbps. (My cable connection at my apartment runs about 110 Mbps.) Be prepared for slow downloads.
11. Get an internet connection in your room. Not sure about the details on this, as internet was already hooked up in my place. I think you have to get a landline telephone as well, so figure installation costs and a monthly fee of around 50E.
12. Register with the US Consulate when you arrive in Marseille. Metro stop Estrangin-Prefecture.
13. Bring a laptop.
14. Get a monthly transit card, called a Carte Personelle for 35E/month. Believe me, you will use it.
15. Nothing is open on Sundays. No supermarkets, very few cafes, etc.
  - a. Virgin Megastore on Rue St. Ferreol is open from 3pm to 8pm
  - b. Movie theatres are open
16. Get a "Lonely Planet: Provence & the Cote d'Azur" book. You will not regret it.
  - a. Also recommended: "Lonely Planet: France" & "Let's Go: France"

17. Bring around 500E cash with you.
18. Setting up a bank account takes an hour, and you won't get your atm/bank card for a month. You can get more info about this during Int'l Student Orientation at Euromed.
19. International Student Orientation at Euromed is largely a waste of time, but provides some valuable information. It will also give you a chance to get meet other international students.
  - a. I encourage you to socialize with other international students and French students. You will not has a true study abroad experience if you just hang out with American students.
20. Bring 10 passport photos with you. Everything requires a passport photo here.
21. Make 2 copies your credit cards, passport, driver's license, school id, etc.
  - a. Leave one with your family/friends
  - b. Bring one with you, and leave it in your room.
22. Get an ISIC card from STA Travel.
23. Get a Eurail Pass if you plan on traveling.
24. Your US cell phone will not work here. You can get a phone for around 40E, and get a "recharge card" which allows you to "pay as you go", no contract.
  - a. I use Orange from France Telecom, and have had no problems.
25. When you get your housing arranged, find out the size of your bed. Bring one set of sheets with you. Buy your pillows in France.
  - a. An American "full size" bed is 140cm x 190cm
26. There are no Target stores in France. Retailers are listed below.
  - a. Carrefour-\$-French answer to mass retailers
  - b. Geant-\$\$-close to campus, not as much selection as Carrefour, but not bad.
  - c. Monoprix-\$\$\$-usually located in the city, selection is limited, prices are high.
27. Go to [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current USD to EUR exchange rates.
28. Get a webcam before you leave the US, and have your family get webcams too.
  - a. You can call from your computer to their computer for free using Skype.
  - b. Skype also has cheap computer to regular phone rates. Much easier than the calling card route.
29. Ladies, the sidewalks here are uneven and most pedestrian areas are cobblestone.
  - a. One pair of black heels
  - b. One pair of boot with heels
  - c. All other shoes should be flat
  - d. Trust me on this
30. The French take their dogs everywhere. Most of them do not carry them, but you will see dogs:
  - a. In the supermarket
  - b. In boutiques and shops
  - c. On the bus/metro
  - d. In cafes
  - e. Always watch for poop!
31. Get your passport... NOW
32. Get your visa paperwork ready, and make 3 complete sets. You will need them.
  - a. The French Consulate in LA was very pleasant when I got my visa. I was in and out in under an hour.

- b. If you don't have all your paperwork, they will not issue your visa. Period.
- 33. Get any and all vaccines, etc. you will need at Student Health Services.
  - a. I highly recommend Hep A & B
  - b. Keep in mind where you might be traveling as well. Morocco, Greece, Russia? Student Health Services can tell you what shots you will need.
- 34. Bring a raincoat that you can stash in your backpack and compact umbrella.
- 35. Do not bring your disposable razors, toothpaste, shampoo, hair products, etc. They are heavy in your suitcase, and you can get great stuff here.
- 36. If you use solid/stick deodorant, bring it from the US.
  - a. The selection here is limited aerosol or roll-on.
  - b. The few sticks available are not very effective.
  - c. Three sticks should cover you for a semester.
  - d. You have been warned.
- 37. All cold medicines, condoms, whitening toothpaste, mouthwash, antibiotic gel (Neosporin), allergy medicines, pain relievers, **MUST** be purchased at a pharmacy.
  - a. Lots of over the counter medicines like Aleve and Claritin cannot be purchased without a prescription in France.
  - b. Condoms are expensive and can be hard to find, if the pharmacies are not open (after 6pm or Sunday).
    - i. Bring them with you—Marseille is not only the second largest city in France, but the second in HIV positive inhabitants as well. Please be safe.
- 38. Bring enough of any prescription drugs with you when you come into the country.
  - a. Have your doctor write you a letter indicating the actual name of the drug (not the commercial name), the dosage, and why you take it.
  - b. Make 2 copies; keep them until you return to the US.
- 39. People smoke here. Yes, they know the health risks. No, they don't care.
  - a. Marlboros are around 8E (\$10) per pack.
- 40. The French students at Euromed are nice, but don't expect lasting friendships if you are there for only a semester.
- 41. Bring a 1 GB USB stick with you.
- 42. Bring 1 package of lined notebook paper with you.
  - a. The French write on graph paper for everything.
  - b. No, I am not kidding.
- 43. Clothing
  - a. Can be expensive due to the exchange rate. Currently \$1 is worth only 0.7E, so effectively everything here is the price shown, plus 30%. It adds up quickly.
  - b. Bring layers
    - i. Think long johns/long underwear. Tights, ladies, to wear under your jeans.
  - c. Bring a hat and gloves
  - d. Gentlemen, if you wear a size 40 Jacket or XL t-shirt, you may have trouble finding clothing in France.
  - e. Ladies, clothing above a US size 12 is difficult to find.
- 44. What not to wear (unless you want to be marked as a tourist)
  - a. Baseball hats
  - b. Sweatshirts
  - c. Running shoes, unless you are in fact running

- d. Anything with a city/state/flag/sports team/university on it
  - e. Socks with sandals
  - f. A camera around your neck
45. Get your health insurance for your study abroad program.
- a. The SDSU International Student Center can assist you.
46. The library at Euromed is open from 9am-8pm, Mon-Sat.
47. Euromed has between 2500-3000 students. The campus is modern, but very small.
48. Really good champagne will run about \$130 in the US, in France it's around 30E.
49. Everyone drinks bottled water here, much like in the US. The tap water is safe to drink.
50. Going grocery shopping is an adventure.
- a. Try something new/unfamiliar. You might really like it. If you don't, give it to your neighbors!
  - b. Familiar brands like Tide, Kraft, and Arm & Hammer do not exist in France. It is not the end of the world.
51. Laundry
- a. If you live in Estudines or Alotra, you will have washers and dryers available to you. Cost around 3E to wash and 3E to dry.
  - b. If you live in the city, laundry facilities can be hard to find. Ask your neighbors or the Office of Tourism. Costs vary by facility.
52. Weather
- a. Check [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) for monthly averages
  - b. The "Mistral" is a very cold, dry wind that blows through Southern France from the Alps. It can blow up to 65 miles per hour. It usually blows for three days.
    - i. I have only experienced the Mistral twice since I arrived in August, but it is not fun.
53. Crime in Marseille
- a. I personally have not had any trouble. I know a couple students who have had pockets picked, and a couple of laptops have been stolen.
    - i. If you have been to Chicago or New York, you should be fine.
    - ii. Leave your passport at home unless you are in fact traveling.
      - 1. Your driver's license and student id are fine for daily activities.
    - iii. Keep your wallet in your front pocket, not in your purse, backpack, or back pocket.
54. The "15 minute rule" does not apply at Euromed. If your class begins at 1pm and its 1:30pm and your professor is not in class, you are expected to notify someone at the front desk or your liason (Veronique Spanu) in the International Partnerships Office.
55. Transportation
- a. There is one bus line that runs from the city to school and vice versa. It is the #21.
    - i. If you take this bus, you will then have to hike up a 200 yard steep, rocky path to reach the school. There are no stairs.
  - b. The 21S bus which runs only a few times a day will drop you right in front of the school.
  - c. The Marseille bus/metro website is [www.rtm.fr](http://www.rtm.fr) (only in French)