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Discovering Malasaña

This Discovery Event was originally designed as part of the JSTE and later used as a multiplier event and repeated on several occasions.

Defining Borders and Cultural Audit

For the discovery of the Malasaña event, we took as perimeters C/ Fuencarral on the eastern side and C/San Bernardo to the west with C/Sagasta and Carranza to the north and Gran Vía to the south. The heart of the neighbourhood is the iconic Dos de Mayo Square. Defined geographically in this way our chosen neighbourhood borders with Chueca, Conde Duque, Arguelles and Gran Vía. Our cultural audit while taking account of churches, schools and public services focused more on artisan businesses and links to the music industry.

We were aware of the historical significance of the neighbourhood in the context of the liberation of the city and one of our objectives was to connect the spirit of resistance recent movements in the cultural heritage of the area and its meaning to the city. In particular we were interested in 'La Movida' and how this musical statement came to be associated with the wider transition from dictatorship to democracy in the late seventies and into the eighties, the legacy of these times remain strong and Malasaña is still important in the music and party scene.. Recently the area has been subject to property speculation, gentrification and the Airbnb effect noted in other downtown areas of European cities. We tried to capture this by directing our mind map to the diminishing number of artisan businesses in an area once famous as the place where you could have anything made or fixed.

Maps and Walking

We set out to explore our defined area, collecting street names, opening times of businesses and relevant institutions.

We set out on general reconnaissance with two teams of two for both morning and evening experiences and decided that the early evening was the best time for an event in this area (the night time was also attractive as it is 'going out' fun part of the city).

Walking and researching starting and finishing points fed into the general cultural audit and gave opportunities for our team to discover the area in a new and engaging way.

We began connecting places and events and creating narratives for the journeys to take place. We eventually chose multiple starting points to accommodate potentially large groups with a common finishing point at Camacho's bar on C/ San Andres where our participants can enjoy a traditional Madrid drink, Yayo.

Stakeholders

We sought dialogue with local historians, musicians, bars, restaurants and artisan businesses as part of our research into the stories of the streets. Where we planned interactions between our participants and the locals we requested consent and explained about the Borders in the Mind project and the purpose of Discovery. We made sure that local participants were happy to connect with visitors and tell their stories across potential language barriers. We created language support for participants where locals were unable to speak a language other than Spanish. Stakeholders were presented with a thank you document written in Spanish naming the project and Erasmus Plus.

Testing

The various starting points were tested for time and distance with the intention that the various beginnings would end at more or less the same time. We tested the morning and evening experiences, we made wet weather provisions even though this is not so relevant in Madrid. We conducted a risk assessment of interactions and routes, considering possible annoyance to locals if roads and pavements are blocked by the activities or our groups.

BIMGO task and Reenactments

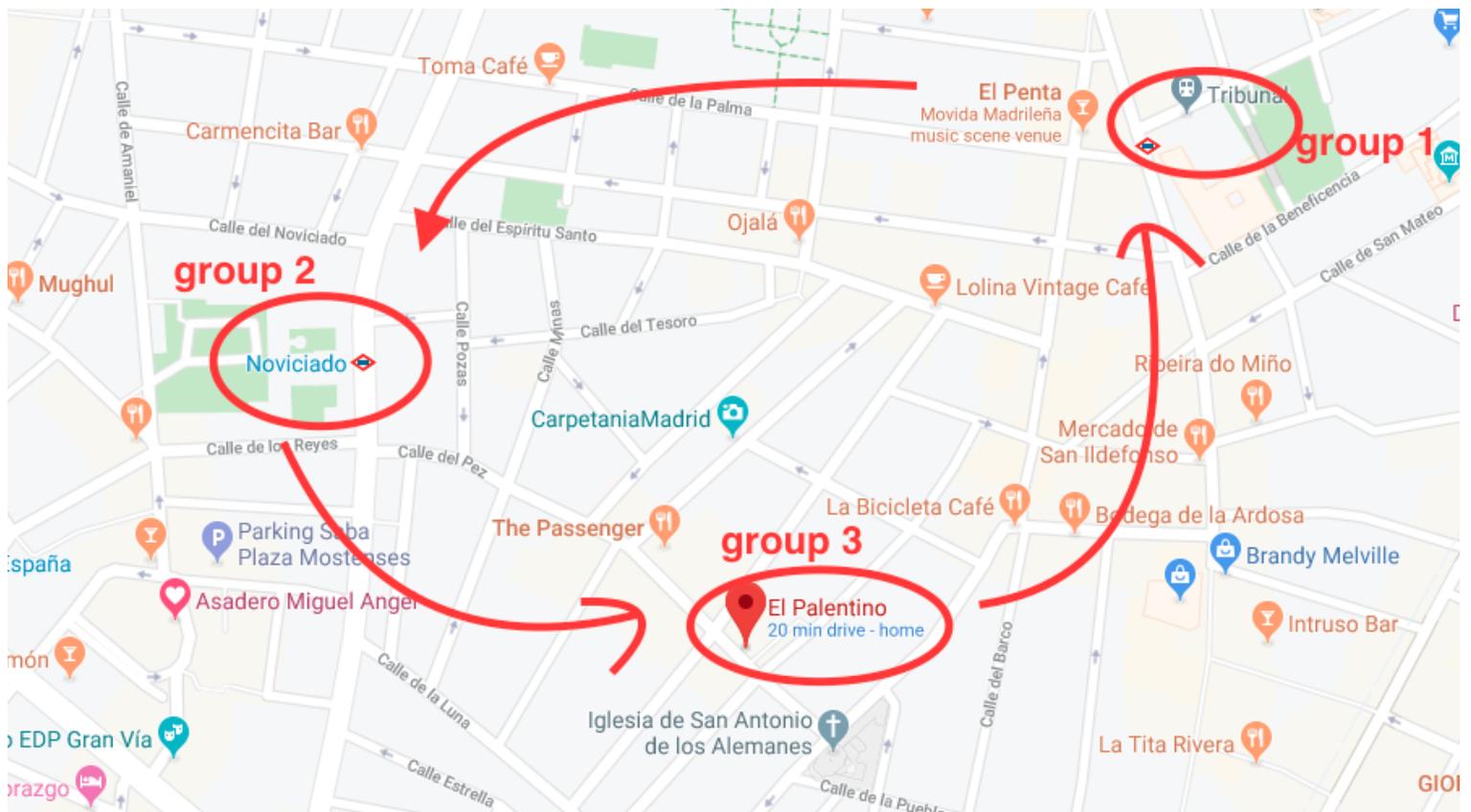
We identified three points of interest as mandatory parts of the Discovery, the Alpargateria where the group will learn of the history of these traditional sandals and the family business selling them for generations, the specialist plumber (the last of his kind in the inner city) and the Chopper Monster rock and roll shop. Between these points, participants as a group, were set tasks to complete by actors playing the part of residents in the neighbourhood, a punk rocker, a couple of language teachers and an apprentice plumber. The actors with their tasks also gave guidance on the next part of the journey. Participants had to interact with locals and random members of the public to find information about the neighbourhood such as what was the original name of the neighbourhood, when and why did it change. They had to record their journey with photos and videos (always asking permission if members of the public were to be included and explaining that they were on a Discovery event as part of an Erasmus Plus project).

Instructions

Welcome to Malasaña, a neighbourhood that since the 80's has always been vibrant and full of life. Although now it is mainly home to students, in the 80's it was at the epicentre of 'La Movida'....but what is La Movida? It's up to you to find out!

In each location, you will find a character that relates to 'La Movida', they each have a problem and it's your task to help them find a solution by interacting with local people and visiting places of cultural interest around each spot.

After you have helped one character, you will have to move to the next location as shown on the map:



Whilst on your tour, imagine it's the 80s and you are considering moving to the area of Malasaña, you're looking around to get a feel for the local people, businesses and atmosphere...

When you've visited all the characters and solved their problems, make a vlog amongst your group to document whether you would or wouldn't move to this area, and why?

Send to: edcousins@interacting.info !

Technology

Characters played by actor helped the Discoverers on their way and technology was used principally as a way of recording the experience. As evidenced on the video of Discovering Malasaña.