



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Maych

Guide To Barcelona's Beaches

Barcelona, 4 Days

Table of contents:

- Guide Description 2
- Itinerary Overview 3
- Daily Itineraries 4
- My List 8
- Barcelona Snapshot 9

Guide Description

AUTHOR NOTE: If you feel like spending a few consecutive days at the beach, check out Barcelona's beaches-all within walking distance or at the most a 20 minute train ride away, but very well worth it. It's nice to venture outside of the main 'Barceloneta' area where it is often over saturated with tourists and can sometimes get to be a bit dirty, especially during peak summer months.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Barcelona

DAY NOTE: Walk along the boardwalk about 15 minutes from the main Barceloneta beach and hit up Mar Bella. Although known to be the 'nude' beach, you don't have to get naked in order to fit in. There's plenty of fun, young chiringuitos playing music and serving cocktails all summer long!



Platja de la Mar Bella

City's only nudist beach. Water sport lover's haven. Don't have to be naked to join the fun.



Private Costa Brava Day Trip

Private Day Trips

Day 2 - Barcelona

DAY NOTE: Right before Mar Bella beach is the 'new icaria' beach. Man made, yet fairly wide with lively chiringuitos that get going even more once the sun goes down.



Platja de la Nova Icària

Bustling Beach. Summer hot spot. Close to trendy clubs.

Day 3

DAY NOTE: A short 20 minute train ride from Arc de Triumfo, Ocata Beach is by far one of the best Barcelona beaches. Clean, lots of sandy space to chill out or play volleyball, rugby or any other sport that's being organized at the time. There's tons of beach huts to grab a bite or a few mojitos and the water is fresh with far less people than on the beaches closer to the city center.



Ocata Beach

Ocata Beach-clean, wide, not crowded and relaxing

Day 4 - Barcelona

DAY NOTE: Farther outside of the city, but worth a trek if you wake up early and don't mind coming back later, any one of the amazing beaches up the Costa Brava is worth a visit. Calella Parafugell, Begur and many more. Accessible via train from Sants Station.

Day 1 - Barcelona

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Walk along the boardwalk about 15 minutes from the main Barceloneta beach and hit up Mar Bella. Although known to be the 'nude' beach, you don't have to get naked in order to fit in. There's plenty of fun, young chiringuitos playing music and serving cocktails all summer long!

contact:

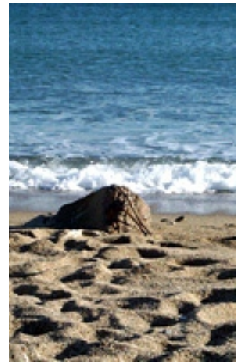
tel: +34 93 285 3834 (tourist information)

location:

passeig Marítim de la Mar Bella
Barcelona Barcelona 08005

1 Platja de la Mar Bella

DESCRIPTION: The city's only official nudist beach is also home to the water sports center Base Nàutica de la Mar Bella where you can hire equipment and take lessons in a wide range of activities on the sea. The other facilities include showers, toilets, garbage collection, children's play areas, parking, disabled access, lifeguards and safe drinking water fountains. You're advised not to swim near the breakwater, not to bring domestic pets and not to use soap in the sea. © wcities.com



wcities

Day 2 - Barcelona

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Right before Mar Bella beach is the 'new icaria' beach. Man made, yet fairly wide with lively chiringuitos that get going even more once the sun goes down.

contact:

tel: +34 93 285 3834 (tourist information)/ +34 807 117 222

location:

passeig Marítim
Sant Adrià de Besòs
Barcelona 08930



Platja de la Nova Icària

DESCRIPTION: One of the most popular city beaches because of all the nearby facilities. You've got all your entertainment and leisure needs taken care of in next door Port Olímpic. On the beach itself there are several facilities, such as parking, toilets, showers, lifeguards, safe drinking water, children's play areas and disabled access. You're advised not to swim near the breakwater, not to bring domestic pets or use soap in the sea. © wcities.com

Day 3

DAY NOTE: A short 20 minute train ride from Arc de Triumfo, Ocata Beach is by far one of the best Barcelona beaches. Clean, lots of sandy space to chill out or play volleyball, rugby or any other sport that's being organized at the time. There's tons of beach huts to grab a bite or a few mojitos and the water is fresh with far less people than on the beaches closer to the city center.

contact:

Ocata Beach

location:
Beach Barcelona

DESCRIPTION: Ocata Beach is a great escape from Barcelona. If you're looking for a relaxing day in the water, Ocata is clean with wide sandy beaches and delicious and fun chiringuitos to hit up at any time. There's often volleyball or rugby games you can watch as well. It's the perfect beach if you want to get away from the city but not have to travel too far.

Day 4 - Barcelona

DAY NOTE: Farther outside of the city, but worth a trek if you wake up early and don't mind coming back later, any one of the amazing beaches up the Costa Brava is worth a visit. Calella Parafugell, Begur and many more. Accessible via train from Sants Station.

contact:

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Barcelona/Private-Costa-Brava-Day-Trip/d562-2148SP004LF>

location:

Barcelona Catalonia and Barcelona

Private Costa Brava Day Trip

DESCRIPTION: Enjoy a private drive along the magnificent Costa Brava, renowned for its magnificent beaches and small coves. Admire wonderful seascapes as you pass through busy resort towns well as quaint fishing villages.

Your driver will be able to recommend the best places for you to stop and enjoy the beaches, the shops, and the restaurants. A wonderfully liberated way to experience the Costa Brava while escaping the crowds on a day trip from Barcelona. © Viator



viator

contact:

tel: +34 807 11 7222/ +34 93
285 3834 (tourist information)

location:

Passeig de Joan de Borbó 79
Barcelona Barcelona 08005



Platja de Sant Sebastià

DESCRIPTION: You might be surprised to know that there are lots of beaches in Barcelona (stretching over four kilometers' worth of coastline!), and most of them have been given a cleaned fine. The closest to the centre is near La Barceloneta neighborhood, and it offers a lifeguard service, palm trees for shade, disabled access, garbage collection and showers. In addition, there are special children's play areas. © wcities.com

Barcelona Snapshot

Local Info

Rich in history and design, renowned for its state of the art architecture, cutting edge cuisine, gorgeous landscapes and thriving night life, Barcelona is a place that will pull you in and make it hard to leave. Nestled between the Mediterranean and the Pyrenees, Barcelona is an ideal fusion between the 'old' and the 'new'. Just a twenty-minute walk and one can find themselves transported through the ages between the Gothic Quarter's medieval alleyways and Roman Ruins into the Eixample neighborhood full of Gaudi's magnificent art nouveau(modernism) masterpieces. It's a city laden with hidden streets, niche courtyards, quaint boutiques, rustic tapas bars, wide open patios and terraces and a never ending 'joie de vivre'. It's not hard to understand why Barcelona is the 16th most visited city and an artistic, architectural and culinary leader across the globe.

Spain's second largest city(behind Madrid) and the capital of Catalonia, Barcelona is home to some of the world's most intriguing and exceptional architectural structures, including Gaudi's Sagrada Familia, Casa Batllo, La Pedrera, Parc Guell and the Cathedral amongst many other breathtaking buildings. Thanks to the 1992 Olympics Barcelona was brought 'back to life' and resumed its place on the world stage as a top tourist destination. The '92 Olympics can take credit for the clean up of Barcelona's waterfront, the creation of Olympic village and the construction of the grade sports' stadiums atop Montjuic. Today Palau Sant Jordi and Camp Nou are used to host concerts, festivals and of course, FC Barcelona's football matches

When it comes to Barcelona's beaches, there is no shortage of options. Barcelona's beautiful coastline includes both natural and man-made beaches that stretch for miles. The Costa Brava is particularly serene and its where you'll be able to find some of the clearest water with the whitest sandy beaches, only an hour or less outside of the city. In Barcelona itself there are plenty

of great places to tan, swim, kite surf or just enjoy some sangria at one of the many chiringuitos(beach side huts) along the boardwalk.

With regards to bars and clubs, Barcelona is not lacking. It's a city with something for everyone, whether you're into funk, hip hop, electronic, house, pop, 80's rock or top 40, it's one of the easiest cities to stumble from place to place and enjoy an affordable, exciting and very eclectic night out.

Barcelona is rare in that it's one of those cities that truly has it all. Whether you're looking to relax by the water, hike in the mountains, explore art galleries, boutique shop, learn about architecture, savor delicious food or party until noon the following day, this is a city with infinite options one that will continuously keep you on your toes.

© NileGuide

History

The 1992 Olympic Games turned the world's eye to this age old city that has been, and continues to be, a modern presence in Spain. Barcelona has many districts, giving it the feel of a large, Roman city with an old, Gothic atmosphere. As a powerful Mediterranean port and the capital of Catalonia, this rich, historical past is the foundation on which the new city was based. Barcelona's residents are open-minded and cosmopolitan, bringing a Bohemian flavor to the city that lies between the mountains and sea.

Romans arrived in Tarragona, making it their first priority, and giving Barcelona subordinate status. Later in the Visigothic period, this Roman capital par excellence, also had a downward fall.

After a century of Muslim dominion, there was a period of intense commercial activity and religious coexistence between Jews, Christians and Muslims. With the arrival of the Christian governors to the city, the Muslim community was forced into a prisoner zone named The Call. In present day, The Call is located around the streets

Palla, Banys Nous, Bisbe and Plaça Sant Jaume. Already, the large city had been named the Condal City, acting as the mighty capital of Old Catalonia. Following the expansionist interests of Corona de Aragón, Barcelona developed a powerful naval base. Catalano-Aragonese's power extended as far as Sicily, Sardinia, Malta, Naples, Albania, Corsica and part of Greece. They pioneered, establishing social norms, marine rules and other customs that would later be imitated in other European cities. In the 15th century, the Maxima institution of self-government of Catalonia was given an admirable seat in the Palau de la Generalitat. The medieval growth of the city is represented in its Gothic architecture, with magnificent works like the cathedral, the churches of Sant Just, and Sant Jaume, and the basilicas of Santa Maria del Pi and Santa Maria del Mar

After the 15th-century reign of Castilla, Barcelona, Catalonia and the Kingdom of Aragón fell into a deep economic and political depression because of the marriage between Isabel and Fernando(the famous post-Muslim era Catholic monarchs). During these years, conquest and colonization in America damaged Mediterranean commerce during the height of Turkey's great marine power. The final blow came when Archduke Carlos of Austria, whom Barcelona supported, lost the War of Spanish Succession.

During the Industrial Revolution and the period of cultural renaissance, the city grew to its maximum splendor. With this came the literary rebirth of the Catalan language and the modernist movement, in which artists and architects alike created a city that would be admired worldwide. All these movements were led by the industrial bourgeoisie, and influenced by the nationalistic movements of the European countries that resisted the Castellanizadora force. The houses built in the Barcelonian Eixample display architecture from a diverse range of historical influences. Ildefons Cerdà, influenced by local folklore, designed rectangular buildings for the bourgeois. The most well-known and loved

Barcelona Snapshot continued

artist during this period was Antoni Gaudí, who designed remarkable, modernist works, such as the La Sagrada Família, Casa Milà (La Pedrera), the Casa Batlló, and the Parc Güell.

During the postwar period and Francisco Franco's dictatorship, a political and cultural repression occurred across Spain until Franco's death in 1975. Since then, democracy has reigned. Under the mandate of Pasqual Maragall, the city began the construction of infrastructures necessary for the 1992 Olympic Games. Some of these structures are the Olympic Vila, of accentuated modern design, the Anella Olímpica of Montjuïc and the Port Olímpic.

©

Hotel Insights

From cheap hostels to modern, luxurious five-star hotels, Barcelona offers its guests a variety of lodging choices in every neighborhood.

Gothic Quarter, Raval & La Ribera

Whether you wish to stay in a newly renovated hotel by the Plaça Reial, or pass the night with like-minded backpackers at a more economical accommodation like Kabul, you will not be at a loss for options. If you enjoy the relaxing atmosphere of a modernist building, Le Meridien on Rambla dels Estudis is a perfect choice. Many of the three-star hotels within the Barri Gòtic maintain the medieval architecture characteristic of the neighborhood inside and out. Hotel Gotico is just one of these beauties, located close to Plaça Sant Jaume. For a more high-end place in the same district, Hotel Colón, located in front of the Catedral La Seu, offers excellent views of the city.

Without leaving the heart of the city, there are numerous other cozy accommodations, such as the Hotel Rivoli Ramblas. Also nearby is the recently renovated yet wallet-friendly Hotel Husa International, which allows you to watch colorful tourists walk Las Ramblas from your room window.

Pedralbes

If you're looking for an upscale room in an elegant hotel, don't miss the Hotel Rey Juan Carlos I, located at the end of Diagonal. Another hotel that combines luxury and comfort seamlessly is the grand Gran Hotel Princess Sofia, suiting even the finickiest traveler. The top floor restaurant offers panoramic views and a menu as exquisite as that of the Hotel Rey Juan Carlos I.

Port Olímpic (Olympic Port)

This neighborhood's most fascinating piece of architecture is surely the Hotel Arts Barcelona, which you should at least take a photo of, even if you can't afford to stay there.

Les Corts

The Hilton Barcelona offers comfort and relaxation, living up to its reputation. Here you will enjoy calm gardens, a central location by the shopping and business district, and panoramic views of the city and the sea.

L'Eixample

The sleek, marble entryway of Hotel Majestic sits on Passeig de Gràcia, one of the most elegant avenues to walk down in all of Barcelona. Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, where the Hotel Palace is located, is another one of the most emblematic areas in the city. The Regina is located within walking distance of the commercial district.

Arc de Triomf & Urquinaona

Hotel NH Pòdium on Bailén street is a four-star option with a beautiful neoclassical façade.

Sants

Comfortable, no-nonsense Hotel NH Numància is conveniently located near the Sants train station.

Montjuïc & Plaça Espanya

You will not have a hard time finding a hotel within easy reach of the Muntanya de Montjuïc, a popular hill that offers a pleasant view of the city. Located right on Plaça Espanya is the four-star AC

Diplomatic, and on Avinguda del Paral·lel you'll find the Barcelona Plaza (facing the Palau Nacional). The nearby Expo Hotel offers exceptional service in a modern ambiance. From here, you can enjoy a rejuvenating stroll to Plaça Espanya by crossing Tarragona Avenue and passing Miró's sculpture, Dona i l'Ocell ("Woman with Bird"), and la plaza de toros Arenas de Barcelona along the way, which has not been used since 1977.

©

Restaurants Insights

Barcelona's many restaurants and bars offer the best of Catalonia's diverse cuisine. Other Mediterranean countries, like France and Italy, have heavily influenced Catalan cooking, which features lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, seafood, pork and veal.

Catalans love cold meats or (embutidos) of all sorts, especially pork sausage (butifarra). The staple dish is butifarra amb mongetes, a stew of pork sausage and white beans. Escudella is a traditional stew made with sausage, chickpeas, pasta and a giant pork meatball. It's generally eaten at Christmas time and followed by crema catalana, a sweet egg custard topped with caramelized sugar that has become a popular dessert throughout Spain. Fish is also a major part of the Catalan diet. Zarzuela is a tasty seafood casserole that originated in Barcelona and spread to other parts of the country. Bacallà a la llauna is cod cooked in a tin dish. In summer, you can enjoy lighter dishes like escalibada (red peppers mixed with eggplant and onions) and andesqueixada (red peppers with cod and onions). Or head for one of the many farmhouse (masia) restaurants on the outskirts of the city and try some traditional dishes. If you're lucky, the restaurant will serve calçotada, a sauce (calçots) made from tender spring onions served on an oven-fired tile, followed by grilled meat. Catalan dishes are usually accompanied by pan con tomate, country-style bread smeared liberally with ripe tomato, olive oil and salt.

Barcelona Snapshot continued

There are eight different areas in Catalonia that produce good quality wines. The region is famous for its white wines from the Penedés area and cava, sparkling white wines. There are also quality red wines, particularly from the Priorato area.

Gothic Quarter, Raval & La Ribera

Basque cuisine is served in Irati and Zure Etxea. You'll find three famous traditional Catalan restaurants worth visiting in the area around Monumento a Colón (Columbus Monument): Ca l'Isidre, Botafumeiro and Casa Leopoldo. For bullfighting memorabilia and tapas, try Los Toreros on Calle Xuclà, close to Las Ramblas. There are also some seafood restaurants with great views in the Maremàgnum, an ultra-modern shopping center by the harbor, close to Las Ramblas.

This part of town is also great for drinks—you'll find traditional, old-fashioned bars and cafés as well as trendy, modern places with stylish interior decor, like Glaciari at the Plaça Reial. Nearby, check out Sidecar. There's a good selection of pubs on Calle Escudellers on your way into the well-known Plaça George Orwell. For pure modernist style inside and out, try El Ascensor. If you want to sit outside and enjoy an impressive view with your drinks, try the square that looks on to Santa Maria del Mar, Plaça del Pi or Sant Felip Neri.

L'Eixample

This part of town has quite a few Galician restaurants like the famous Beltxenea, which offers a variety of traditional dishes. Don't miss the finger foods at Tapa Tapa.

Barceloneta & The Born

There are plenty of reasonably-priced seafood restaurants down by the harbor that specialize in paella and the Catalan equivalent, fideuà, which is noodle-based rather than rice-based. Arròs negre is a kind of paella cooked in a stock of squid's ink. Can Ramonet and Set Portes are two of the best places for rice dishes in this district. Munch on great tapas at Moncho's.

If it's drinks you seek, Passeig del Born is lined with trendy bars and the adjacent

streets are full of well-preserved medieval houses and mansions. This area attracts couples and groups in their 30s and 40s looking for sophisticated, relaxing and intimate bars like the Miramelindo, Salero and Gimlet.

Port Olímpic

The seafood restaurants at Port Olímpic display their fresh fish in cases by the door and many offer sea views.

Horta, Guinardó & Alfons X

Lots of informal tapas restaurants are located along Passeig de Gràcia and Rambla Catalunya. Traditional tapas are small portions of things like pescaïto frito (mixture of deep-fried Mediterranean fish), patatas bravas (chunks of potato, deep-fried and served with spicy garlic sauce), calamars a la romana (squid rings fried in batter) and boquerones en vinagre (marinated anchovies). For the best tapas in the whole city, try La Esquinica. However, make sure you come early because there is a line every night.

Plaça Catalunya

It's tapas central at Ciudad Condal, but this bustling square knows no bounds in terms of culinary diversity.

©

Nightlife Insights

Barcelona has become a fashionable tourist destination. Television coverage of the 1992 Olympic Games stimulated lots of interest in the city around the world. Visitors are attracted by the mild climate, Mediterranean waterfront, sunshine, art, culture, friendly people and unique Catalan features, like Antoni Gaudí's modernist architecture. It's easy to have fun in Barcelona. There are colorful local fiestas (holidays and festivals) throughout the year along with a wide variety of national and international cinema, theater, music and dance festivals and performances. The city's nightclubs offer great music and atmosphere every night of the week, and are especially busy from Thursday to Sunday.

Museums & Galleries

Art lovers should head straight for MNAC (Catalonia's National Art Museum), with its exhibits of Catalan Romanesque art, and MACBA (Barcelona's Museum of Contemporary Art). Nearby, you'll find galleries devoted to individual artists, including Museu Picasso, Fundació Miró and Antoni Tàpies.

Architecture

To see the best examples of Catalonia's unique Gothic architecture, you should check out Basílica de Santa Maria del Mar and Basílica de Santa Maria del Pi. For the best in modernist architecture, head for Pedrera, Casa Batlló, Sagrada Família, and Parc Güell.

Nightlife

The most popular nightclubs are within walking distance of each other down by the harbor area, in Port Olímpic and Maremàgnum. The variety is endless. You'll find places playing techno, salsa, rock, Spanish pop music and more. Karma is a popular club in this area.

Live Music

L'Eixample district has many live music venues, including the famous Luz de Gas. Bikini, a popular nightclub, also hosts concerts during the evenings. To enjoy alternative and Spanish local bands, take the metro to Razzmatazz, Sidecar or BeCool. You'll also find live shows in the Gòtic district.

Discos & Clubs

In the Maremàgnum and Port Olímpic you'll find a number of discos with plenty of atmosphere and different kinds of music. These two districts have a very cosmopolitan feel, given that they are mostly frequented by tourists from all over the world. To merge with the locals, take public transportation to L'Eixample, Barri Gòtic or Poble Nou.

©

Things to Do Insights

Barcelona is a stunning city that is full of historic and entertaining sites. If you simply

Barcelona Snapshot continued

walk down any street in Barcelona you'll stumble upon hidden gems and wonders. Whether you have a guided tour or a self-guided tour, you'll be sure to be amazed.

Las Ramblas

The best way to get a feel for Barcelona is to take a walk along Les Rambles (Las Ramblas in Spanish). Start from Plaça Catalunya and head down Rambla de Canaletes, which gets its name from its 19th-century iron fountain. Carry on into Rambla dels Estudis, named after the university that was here until the early 18th century. Locals call it Rambla dels Ocells (Street of the Birds) because the caged birds for sale keep up a noisy chatter all day long. Across the Rambla, on the corner of Calle Portaferrissa, you'll see the late 18th-century Palau Moja. This former palace, now headquarters of the regional government's contemporary history and culture department, has an excellent bookshop. When you come to the third street, Rambla de Sant Josep, you'll suddenly be hit by a wave of color. Flower sellers have been a feature of this pedestrian area for over 200 years, hence the popular name for it, Rambla de les Flors (Street of Flowers). Carry on through Plaça de la Boqueria, past Joan Miró's huge mosaic in the middle of the pavement, and into the fourth street, Rambla dels Caputxins, where you'll find Gran Teatre del Liceu. At the top of the fifth and final street, Rambla de Santa Mònica, you'll come to Teatre Principal. You'll also find the Museu de Cera (Wax Museum) to the left and hordes of pavement artists, performers and musicians in the center of the pedestrian area. Finish your walk by going to the top of Monumento a Colón (Columbus Monument) for aerial views of the city. Or carry on into the harbor area of Port Vell and Maremàgnum, a modern shopping center.

L'Eixample

Start this tour of grid-shaped Eixample, the city's commercial and business district, at Plaça Catalunya. Go up Passeig de Gràcia and look out for Gaudí's hexagonal pavement designs on the way. After

crossing Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes and Consell de Cent, you'll arrive at the so-called Manzana de Discòrdia or, "Block of Discord." This name arose because three different architects, with widely differing styles, built the three Modernist buildings grouped here. On the left is Lluís Domènech i Montaner's Casa Lleó Morera, dating from 1906, with its elaborately decorated entrance hall and staircase. A few doors up, at no. 41, you'll come to the striking facade of Josep Puig i Cadafalch's Casa Amatller, dating from 1900. Next door is Gaudí's spectacular Casa Batlló. Turn left on to the wide Calle Aragó, cross over Rambla de Catalunya and you'll see another of Lluís Domènech i Montaner's works that has been converted into Fundació Tàpies. Go back to Passeig de Gràcia, continue north one block and on the right you'll find an extraordinary Modernist apartment building, Gaudí's Casa Milà, also known as La Pedrera, whose upper floors and rooftop are open to the public. You can spend all day exploring Eixample and its many other Modernist architectural gems, like Les Punxes or the Conservatory.

Olympic Barcelona

If you want to tour the facilities used in the 1992 Olympic Games head to Muntanya de Montjuïc (Montjuïc hill). The Montjuïc hill, or "hill of the Jews," got its name from the Jewish community that once settled on its steep slopes. One of the best ways to get to the top is by walking from Plaça Espanya, with its luminous fountains, up to the Palau Nacional (National Palace). This building now houses Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC), which displays one of the world's finest collections of Romanesque art. Carry on a little further to Poble Espanyol (Spanish Village), where Spain's regional styles of architecture have been reproduced. The walk to Castell de Montjuïc (Montjuïc castle), on the far eastern corner of the hill, is worthwhile for the panoramic views. This 17th-century castle is home to the Museu Militar (Military Museum). In between the Spanish Village and the castle, you might want to stop at the so-called Olympic Ring or Anella

Olímpica (Anillo Olímpico). This is where you'll see the famous sports facilities built for the 1992 games. These include the 55,000-seat Olympic stadium, Estadi Olímpic, and Palau Sant Jordi, a sports and concert hall. On the way along Avenida de l'Estadi towards the cable car, you'll pass a large white building, Fundació Miró. This museum is dedicated to well-known Catalan artist, Joan Miró.

The Gothic Quarter

The medieval Barri Gòtic (Gothic Quarter) is officially confined to the area between Avenida de la Catedral, Via Laietana, Calle Jaume I, Plaça Sant Jaume and Calle Bisbe. However, there are points of interest in the streets and squares nearby. Start your walk in the cathedral square (Plaça de la Catedral), opposite the Catalan Gothic cathedral. Take a little alleyway, Montjuïc del Bisbe, along to the peaceful square, Plaça Sant Felip Neri. Many of the buildings in this area were built on the old Roman wall, including the Palau Episcopal (Episcopal Palace) in Plaça Nova and 16th-century Casa de l'Ardiaca off Calle Santa Llúcia. The 14th-century Casa del Degà and Casa de la Canonja are also located in Plaça de la Seu. From behind the cathedral, go down Baixada de Santa Clara to Plaça del Rei. From here, head for the large Plaça Sant Jaume, one of the most popular squares in the city, where popular demonstrations and gatherings take place. The Catalan regional government headquarters are located here in the 14th-century palace Palau de la Generalitat, alongside the Casa de la Ciutat (Ajuntament) (Town Hall).

Barcelona is a beautiful and breathtaking city and you can easily enjoy the sites on your own; however, professional tours have a lot to offer. These tours can provide you with more historical information and can take you to locations you might not have known about. If you choose to go on a guided tour there are a lot of options.

Bus Tours Barcelona Bus Turístic (http://www.tmb.net/en_US/turistes/busturistic/busturistic.jsp)

Barcelona Snapshot continued

Bike Tours Fat Tire Bike
Tours(+34 93 301 3612<http://www.fattirebiketoursbarcelona.com/>)

Boat Tours Las Golondrinas(+34 93 442 3106<http://www.lasgolondrinas.com/>)
Sailing day trip along the Costa Dourada from Barcelona to Sitges(+34 93 285 3834<http://www.euroadventures.net/ViewProduct.asp?ProductID=1128&AF=51>)

Wine Tours Barcelona Tour Guides(<http://barcelonatourguides.com/eng/winerytour.htm>) Cava Winery Tour from Barcelona(+34 93 285 3834<http://www.euroadventures.net/ViewProduct.asp?ProductID=1082&AF=51>) Parés Baltà(+34 93 890 1399<http://www.paresbalta.com/>)

Architecture Tours Barcelona Tour Guides(<http://barcelonatourguides.com/eng/allbarcelonaguidedtour.htm>) Contrasts of Barcelona's Gothic& Modernist(+34 986 22 1399<http://www.euroadventures.net/ViewProduct.asp?ProductID=1165&AF=51>) Gaudi's Barcelona and Panoramic City Tour(+34 93 285 3834<http://www.euroadventures.net/ViewProduct.asp?ProductID=1081>)
©

Travel Tips

Getting There

By Air

The Barcelona Airport is located 6.2 miles southwest of the city and has over 32 airlines transporting visitors both domestically and internationally.

Barcelona International Airport(BCN)+34 932 983 838<http://www.barcelona-airport.com>

Aer Lingus(+34 902 502 737/ <http://www.aerlingus.com/>) Air Berlin(+34 902 320 737/ <http://www.airberlin.com/>) Air Europa(+34 93 298 3328/ <http://www.air-europa.com/>) Air France(+ 34 901 112 266/ <http://www.airfrance.com/>) British Airways(+34 902 111 333/ <http://www.britishairways.com/>) Delta Airlines(+34 934 782 300/ <http://www.delta.com/>) EasyJet(+34 902 299 992/ <http://www.easyjet.com/>)

www.easyjet.com/) Lufthansa(+34 93 379 3766/ <http://www.lufthansa.com/>) Spanair(+34 902 131 415/ <http://www.spanair.com/>) Swiss(+34 901 116 712/ <http://www.swiss.com/>) TAP Air Portugal(+351 707 205 700/ <http://www.flytap.com/>) Virgin Express(+34 93 226 6671/ <http://www.virgin-express.com/>)

From the Airport

Bus: Several bus lines leave Barcelona Airport for Barcelona's city center(mostly from Terminal B if not indicated otherwise):

The Airbus(A1)(+34 934 156 020/ <http://www.emt-amb.com/>) and **Line N17**(+34 933 187 074/ <http://www.emt-amb.com/>) takes passengers from terminals A, B, C, and the Cargo terminal to the center of Barcelona, the Plaza de Catalunya. The Airbus leaves the airport every 7 to 15 minutes from 6a to 1a. bus fare: EUR4. Line N17 buses leave for the city center every 20 minutes from 10:05a to 5:05a. Departures from Plaza de Catalunya, from 11p to 5a every 20 minutes.

Directbus(+34 902 109 276/ <http://www.autocarsnadal.com/>) leaves the airport seven times a day between 7:45a and 10:45p for Sants Station, Barcelona.

Line 46 takes passengers to Plaza de Espana every half hour from 5:30a to 12:45a. A single ticket costs EUR1.30

Mon-Bus(+34 938 937 060/ <http://www.monbus.org/>) links Barcelona and several other cities. Buses run every hour between 7:40a and 11:40p. Check website for details.

Novatel Autocars takes passengers to Andorra bus station five times a day On-way ticket: EUR31; return: EUR52.

The Ràpid Aeroport(Alsa) leaves the airport for Figueres, Girona, Lleida, Reus, Port Aventura and Tarragona several times a day. Prices range between EUR12-30.

Taxi: Taxi ranks are located in front of Terminals A, B and C. For fares to various locations check:+34 932 235 151/ <http://www.taxibarcelona.cat/>. Per baggage item an extra fee of EUR1 is expected.

Train: Renfe Line 10 suburban train(+34 902 240 202) leaves the airport from 6a to 10:30p every half hour. The ride takes about 30 minutes and drops passengers off at Barcelona Sants, among various other stops. A single ticket costs EUR2.50.

Car Rentals: Traveling by car is generally a good idea if you are looking to do some out-of-city sightseeing. The province has beautiful views to offer, and rental cars are a sure-fire way to get where you want for a fixed price. Avis(+34 932 983 600/ <http://www.avis.es/>) Europcar(+34 093 7276851/ <http://www.europcar.com/>) Hertz(+34 932 983 637/ <http://www.hertz.es/>) National ATESA(+34 932 983 433/ <http://www.atesa.es/>) Sol-Mar(+34 934 788 795/ <http://www.solmar.es/>)

By Train

Both domestic and international trains come and go to Barcelona. The main train station is Estació Sants(+34 902 1575 07), 1.6 miles west of Las Ramblas. Direct overnight trains also connect from Paris, Geneva, Lisbon and Milan, as well as services from various French cities and across Spain. To find out about short and long distance train trips, check the Spanish National Railway Network(RENFE)(<http://www.renfe.es/>) website.

By Bus

Buses are a cheaper alternative to trains, though not so comfortable. Estació del Nord, the main inter-city bus station, is one mile northeast of Las Ramblas, close to Arc de Triomf metro. Check the Barcelona Local Transport Train, Metro, and Bus operator(TMB),(<http://www.tmb.net/>) for specific information on all ground transportation.

By Boat

You can get to Barcelona by ferry via the Balearic Islands(<http://www.balearia.ferries.org/>) and Italy. From the Balearics there are standard boats, on which you can get beds in cabins of up to four people and high-speed boats on which sleepers are not necessary.

Getting Around

Barcelona Snapshot continued

Public Transport

Barcelona's extensive public transportation system makes it possible to visit without a car. The TMB system(local transport, bus, train, tram and metro<http://www.tmb.net/>) is the city's major public transportation source. For train, metro and tram times, bus schedules, and tourist travel passes, this site is most helpful in planning that trip to the museum or movie. The Spanish National Railway Network(RENFE)(<http://www.renfe.es/>) website also contains information about alternative local train routes that connect the most visited places of Barcelona.

©

Fun Facts

1: Fun Fact: On average, everyday, seven days a week, 150,000 people walk along La Rambla.

2: FC Barcelona is the biggest privately owned stadium in the world(seating 100,000 people) and is also one of Barcelona's most visited tourist attractions.

3: Interesting Fact: Barcelona and Spanish drivers in general, are some of the worst in the world. According to recent statistics, an accident occurs on average, every nineteen

seconds during weekdays between Monday to Thursday and rises to one accident every sixteen seconds, on Fridays. It's safer to walk or take public transport.

4: Weird Fact: When Gaudí was creating the sculptures of the Nativity Facade on the Sagrada Familia, he used corpses of dead babies, only 2-3 days old, in order to prepare the scene of the soldier and the innocents. The soldier in the scene has six toes on one of his feet and this is because the man who was modelling for Gaudi, also had six toes.

5: Random Fact: The most walked on street in Spain, is Portal de L'Angel. Approximately 3,500 people walk down this shopping street every hour.

6: Interesting Fact: There are two Spanish legends concerning the founding of Barcelona. One legend says that it was founded by Hercules, 400 years before the building of Rome. According to the other legend, the city was founded by the Carthaginian Hamilcar Barca, father of Hannibal, in the 3rd century BC and that it got its name from the great Barca family of Carthage.

7: Antoni Gaudi was not the first architect to work on the Sagrada Familia. Architect, Francesc del Villar, was actually the first one who was commissioned to design

the church on that site. A year into the project he resigned and Gaudi took over and completely revamped the design.

8: Fun Fact: Barcelona is to thank for World Book Day. La Diada de San Jordi is one of the biggest, most widely celebrated festival days in Barcelona which takes place on April 23rd and is a celebration of love and literacy.

9: Random Fact: Flamenco is not traditional or well known in Barcelona or Catalunya. Catalans prefer rock and roll and the 'rock catala' scene has become famous during the last 20 years.

10: Weird Fact: When Gaudí graduated in 1878 from Barcelona's School of Architecture, the director said:"Gentlemen, we are here today in the presence of either a genius or a madman."

11: It is said that Catalans are not very generous and they are always counting money, so much so, that their traditional dance, Sardana, also involves counting the steps.

12: Fun Fact: If 'spanglish' is the mix of english and spanish, 'catanyol' is the mix of catalan and spanish and is often widely used in Barcelona.

© NileGuide