



# Press Pack 2019



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# Introduction

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**Catalonia** is a **Mediterranean destination** with a **millenary history**, its **own culture** and **language** and a wealthy **historical and natural heritage**.

**POPULATION.** 7.5 million

**SURFACE AREA.** 32,107 km<sup>2</sup>

**TERRITORY.** Catalonia offers a great scenic variety:

**580 kilometres** of Mediterranean **coastline** cover Costa Brava, Costa Barcelona, Barcelona, Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre

The **Catalan Pyrenees** with their 3000 metre peaks dominate the northern area of the country. Especially interesting is Val d'Aran, a valley draining into the Atlantic Ocean that has preserved its own culture, language (Aranese) and government bodies.

Both the capital of Catalonia, **Barcelona**, and the three province seats, **Girona**, **Tarragona** and **Lleida**, feature a great variety of sights. In the rest of Catalonia, numerous towns with a distinct character boast some noteworthy heritage: handsome old quarters, buildings from Romanesque to Art Nouveau and a wide range of museums are worth a visit.

**CLIMATE.** Generally speaking, Catalonia enjoys a temperate and mild Mediterranean climate, characterised by dry, warm summers and moderately cool winters.

**CATALONIA, A TOURIST DESTINATION.** Catalonia is a prime tourist destination offering **many attractions** for all sorts of visitors: culture, relax, nature, families, sports, business, etc. Its great capacities and excellent facilities place it among Europe's top tourist areas, with approximately 30 million tourists a year, more than half from abroad. At roughly 12% of GDP, tourism is one of Catalonia's main sources of wealth and hence one of its strategic priorities.

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# Communications Network

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**ROADS.** Catalonia has a good road network that enables travel to any main European city in less than twelve hours. Its large commercial airports, Barcelona, Girona, Lleida and Reus, as well as the main cities in the country are well connected by motorway.

**RAIL.** The railway network offers good communications, both within Catalonia and abroad. There is a well-developed commuter train network in the Barcelona metropolitan area, with connections between the city and the tourist coastal areas in Maresme and Garraf joined under the Costa Barcelona brand. Apart from state-run Renfe, there is also Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat (FGC) operating in Catalonia, with a network extending from Barcelona to cities such as Igualada, Manresa, Terrassa and Rubí. The renewed Montserrat and Núria rack railways are also run by this company.

**HIGH SPEED TRAIN.** Andalusia in southern Spain can be reached in six hours from Barcelona thanks to a bypass around Madrid. Spain's capital is just two and a half hours away, Tarragona and Lleida being stops en route in Catalonia. After completion of the high speed line to France via Girona and Figueres, Paris can be reached within 6.15 hours, with further direct connections to Marseille, Lyon and Toulouse. Hence Catalonia is very well communicated with other cities in Europe, making it the true hub of a vast Mediterranean Euroregion.

**AIRPORTS.** Catalonia has five commercial airports:

**BARCELONA.** A record-breaking 40 million passengers used Catalonia's main airport in 2018, an ongoing increase year after year since the T-1 terminal started operating. Its maximum capacity is 55 million passengers a year. The old T-2 terminal is served by several low-cost airlines. Future plans for the airport include La City, a 150 hectare area with hotels, office buildings and all kind of facilities, plus the new rail link between the T-1 terminal and the city centre, with works well in progress. Also, the L9 underground line has been extended to the airport, its fast link to the city being a considerable progress for passengers.

**GIRONA-COSTA BRAVA (GIRONA).** Situated 100 kilometres from Barcelona and 15 from Girona, Girona-Costa Brava airport is strategically located for tourism (being the closest airport to Costa Brava), trade and business. It welcomes roughly 2 million passengers every year.

**REUS-COSTA DAURADA (REUS).** Located 110 kilometres from Barcelona and 13 from Tarragona, it is the closest airport to Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre. It welcomes almost a million passengers every year. Improvement works to enlarge the departure and arrival terminals are under way.

**LLEIDA-ALGUAIRE (ALGUAIRE).** Located 15 km from Lleida, it is the first airport planned, built and run by the Government of Catalonia. It allows promoting Catalonia as a top winter and mountain tourism destination. With a customs post, the airport can handle flights from countries outside the Schengen area, such as Russia and the United Kingdom. Some regular flights are also operated, while the premises are further used for testing, numerous sports events and prototype development. The inclusion of BAA Training, one of Europe's main pilot schools, shall turn the airport into a prime training centre for Southern Europe.

**ANDORRA-LA SEU D'URGELL.** The Government of Catalonia, the Government of Andorra and the Spanish Ministry of Public Works have developed the premises into a public infrastructure that has now handled its first regular flights. The airport was reopened in June 2010 following adaptation works on the premises and the runway. It is designed to become the main Pyrenees airport and the gate to Andorra. 2018 saw an increase of flight operations above 30% compared to the previous year. The installation of a customs post shall enable operating flights from non-Schengen countries.

**PORTS.** Catalonia has 52 ports and yacht clubs, which add to the big seaports in Barcelona and Tarragona.

**BARCELONA.** The largest cruising port in Europe, Barcelona welcomed almost 3 million cruise passengers in 2018. Thanks to its safety, service quality, the lure of the city and Catalonia and proximity to the airport, virtually all cruise ships sailing on the Western Mediterranean stop over in Barcelona. The port has ten terminals, seven of which are devoted solely to cruises. Given the high demand for berths, the port authority is modernising the existing terminals, building new ones and enlarging the port to the south. MSC Cruises has announced the construction of an exclusive terminal for its ships, a project that will be developed by architect Ricardo Bofill. There are also regular ferry lines to Rome, Livorno, Sardinia, Genoa, Tangier, Tunis and Algiers served from the three purpose-built terminals. Regarding goods transportation, all docks from Ponent to Sud have railway access.

**PALAMÓS.** Palamós has consolidated its position as a stopover port for cruise ships, making it only second to Barcelona in Catalonia. 15 companies (some of them with smaller luxury boats) operate at this port, where 46 cruise ships with around 46,000 passengers berthed in 2018, allowing visits to the main attractions on Costa Brava. The introduction of a customs post allows the docking of ships from outside the Schengen area.

**ROSES.** Having joined the cruise port network recently and located at the end of Catalonia's most beautiful bay, Roses is making progress as a destination on northern Costa Brava and finished 2018 with 8 arrivals and more than 5000 passengers. Together with Palamós, the port is marketed under the Costa Brava Cruise Ports brand, aimed

at promoting cruise passenger traffic and developing the related tourist offer in both this municipality in Alt Empordà county and all of Costa Brava. There are currently six cruising companies sailing to Roses.

**TARRAGONA.** Tarragona is very well positioned regarding goods traffic, being one of Southern Europe's main ports. Several institutions have joined under the Tarragona Cruise Port Costa Daurada brand to promote the port as a cruise destination. Featuring fine facilities and an attractive hinterland, over 50 cruise ships of varying size with more than 100,000 passengers called here in 2018. The port has an exclusive cruise berth at the East dock, plus Port Tarraco marina for smaller cruise boats. Tarragona aims at positioning itself as a home port as this will boost the economy and the whole territory.

**SANT CARLES DE LA RÀPITA.** Located in Terres de l'Ebre, this port welcomes the Star Flyer in summer, a luxury four-masted sailing ship that berths six times during the season with almost a thousand passengers in total.

**VILANOVA I LA GELTRÚ.** Centrally located along the Catalan coast 40 km from Barcelona, Vilanova i la Geltrú has suitable facilities, services and access for small cruise ships sailing through the Mediterranean.

Catalunya Bus Turístic is an initiative that allows discovering all secrets of Catalonia, with trips from Barcelona to enjoy Montserrat and Gaudí's Colònia Güell crypt; Dalí's art in Figueres and the city of Girona; some of the most renowned wineries to see how cava (sparkling wine) is produced and taste acknowledged wines; enjoying a shopping day in La Roca Village or a trip to the maritime town of Badalona.

[www.catalunyabusturistic.com](http://www.catalunyabusturistic.com)



# Catalonia, a Quality Destination

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Following **European rules on tourist quality**, Catalonia has developed a set of tools and regulations aimed at ensuring its **competitiveness** as a destination where quality in its widest sense is a **key value**. These tools make the **Tourist Quality System of Catalonia** and are under the supervision of the quality and innovation commission of the Tourism Panel of Catalonia.

The architecture of the Tourist Quality System of Catalonia is divided into three functional development areas: **categorisation**, **specialisation** and **excellence**. A tourist category identifies the distinctive characteristics of each business, while **tourist specialisation** determines the service features aimed at a specific user group. **Excellence** enables **ensuring** that customer **expectations** are fulfilled according to the characteristics of the business providing the service.

Membership to the Catalan tourist quality system is on a **voluntary basis**. There are increasingly more professional businesses every year striving for improving quality so customers may benefit from a top-notch offer. This excellence in service quality is proven by the increasing number of Catalan businesses holding renowned certificates every year such as **ISO 9001**, **ISO 14001**, **EMAS**, **Ecolabel** and the **Environmental Quality Guarantee**. The latter, created by the Government of Catalonia, shall encourage businesses to commercialise environmentally friendly products and services.

Together with the tourist industry, the Catalan Tourist Board is developing new products resulting in distinctive high-end proposals aimed at satisfying visitors' needs. An example is the specialisation of the Family Holidays, Family-friendly beach holidays and Family-friendly adventure holidays programmes including businesses and municipalities both on the coast and inland, aimed at offering attractive proposals catering for those travelling with children. Another proposal is the accessible tourism programme, in which Catalonia is pioneering. Being aware that tourism needs to be made available to everybody, Catalonia has identified more than 600 facilities at 27 destinations providing adapted offers and services to people with different disabilities, among which are over 150 km of Green Ways, accessible hiking trails and St. James' Way in Catalonia for Everybody.

The **Gastronomic Hotel** specialisation label has **48** certified member **businesses**. A very specific and widely accepted product, it identifies hotels spread all over Catalonia with a common denominator: a friendly, familiar atmosphere, 60 rooms maximum and top-quality Catalan cuisine based on local seasonal produce and served at any meal, including breakfast, lunch and dinner.

This label adds to the **wheat ear** scheme rating rural tourism houses (currently 321 businesses rated from 1 to 5 wheat ears based on their services, activities, premises and decoration) and the key rating system for tourist apartments and housing units for tourist use, the criteria of which are under joint review with the to allow better distinction.

## CATALONIA, A BIOSPHERE DESTINATION

Catalonia has been holding since November 2015 the **Biosphere Responsible Tourism certification** by the Institute of Responsible Tourism, a World Tourism Organisation member associated to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

Catalonia is the **first full large tourist destination** beyond specific cities or destinations to obtain this all-inclusive certification that ensures visitors a sustainable experience while protecting the natural and cultural heritage, improving the local economy and reducing the environmental footprint. This label is an international recognition to the work done by both public and private players in the Catalan tourist industry to foster a sustainable tourism scheme.

All three tourist brands under the Barcelona Provincial Council (**Costa Barcelona, Paisatges Barcelona and Pirineus Barcelona**) feature the Biosphere certificate. Other places such as **Val d'Aran**, the towns of **Sitges, Tossa de Mar** and **Vilafranca del Penedès**, the city of **Barcelona** as well as countless organisations, agencies and tourist businesses have also been certified.

The Biosphere certification not only sets **quality, accessibility** and **environmental** standards but also includes **sustainability** requirements such as social responsibility, conservation of the cultural heritage, satisfying tourist expectations and improving life quality of the local population.

## CATALONIA IN EUROPEAN PROJECTS AND NETWORKS

Through the **Directorate General of Tourism (DGT)** and the **Catalan Tourist Board (CTB)**, Catalonia participates, and in some cases leads, different **European** projects with a big relevance in protecting nature, cross-border routes and gastronomic and social tourism, among others.

## PROJECTS IN 2019

**LAND-SEA** aims at preserving the natural habitats and strategies in ecotourism through management policies by regional and local bodies to create a sustainable impact.

**EUROVELO 8 – MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE (EVo8)** is aimed at developing a transnational, sustainable and responsible tourist offer based on a European network of cycling routes.

## EUROPEAN NETWORKS

The DGT and the CTB take part in some European networks fostering **business cooperation** and **cross-regional coordination** in order to create a more **social** and **sustainable tourism**. Catalonia chairs **NECSTouR**, a non-profit organisation composed of European regions aiming at fostering cooperation to consolidate sustainable tourism and lobby before European tourism authorities. It is currently composed of 36 regions from 17 countries and 33 associate members, including companies, institutions, universities and associations from the European tourist industry. Having been recently reappointed to chair the organisation for a further 3 years, Catalonia will tackle the challenge to implement the five S for the sustainable tourism of tomorrow: Smart, Socio-Cultural, Skills, Safety and Statistics.

Catalonia is also a member of:

**UNWTO**. As an affiliate member, the CTB represents Catalonia at the World Tourism Organization, the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

**ISTO** – International Social Tourism Organisation, aimed at enabling access to holidays and tourism to the highest possible number of people—youth, families, senior adults and disabled.

**ENAT**, international non-profit organisation created to make tourism accessible and addressed at companies and organisations that wish to be pioneering in the research, promotion and practice of accessible tourism.

**EUROREGION** – Pyrenees-Mediterranean Euroregion. A project for political cooperation between Catalonia, the Balearic Islands and Occitania created in 2004 with the aim of forming a sustainable development cluster in the north-western Mediterranean, based on innovation and social and economic integration of the territory and contributing towards a united, solidary Europe close to the citizens.

**CPMR - Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions**. The CPMR Intermediterranean Commission was created in 1990 following the shared interest of the coastal regions around the Mediterranean basin. The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) includes 160 regions from 25 EU member states and third countries.

**ETOA** - European Tourism Association. Its main goal is to create a dynamic network for the European tourist industry at both source markets and destinations.

**“European Region of Gastronomy” Platform.** The European regions holding the “European Region of Gastronomy” title—Catalonia did so in 2016—have joined forces to raise the awareness for its cultural and gastronomic heritage.



# Tourist Attractions

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## UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE IN CATALONIA

The following sites in Catalonia have been declared World Heritage by the UNESCO:

**Palau de la Música Catalana and Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau.** Barcelona. Art Nouveau. Built by Lluís Domènech i Montaner in the early 20th century.

**Poblet monastery.** Poblet (Tarragona). Built in the 12th and 13th century, the largest Cistercian monastery in Europe.

**Roman Tarraco.** Tarragona. In the second half of the 1st century BC, Tarraco was given the status of a colony according to Roman law and became the capital of Hispania Citerior. Important remains from those times are preserved in the city and the neighbouring towns of Altafulla, Constantí and Roda de Barà. Tarragona is a member of the Spanish World Heritage Cities network.

**Mediterranean cave art in the Iberian Peninsula.** There are 27 sites in Catalonia with listed paintings found in caves, grottoes and shelters.

**Romanesque churches in Vall de Boí.** Some 140 kilometres from Lleida, in Alta Ribagorça county, eight churches and one chapel make one of the most significant sets of Catalan Romanesque art regarding both its architecture and paintings:

- Sant Climent de Taüll
- Santa Maria de Taüll
- Sant Joan de Boí
- Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall
- Sant Feliu de Barruera
- La Nativitat de Durro
- Sant Quirc de Durro
- Santa Maria de Cardet
- Assumpció de Còll

### The Work of Antoni Gaudí:

- Park Güell. Barcelona. First garden city experience.
- Palau Güell. Barcelona.
- La Pedrera (Casa Milà). Barcelona.
- Casa Batlló. Barcelona.
- Colònia Güell Crypt. Santa Coloma de Cervelló (Barcelona). Unique structure built in stone and brick.

- Casa Vicens. Barcelona.
- Sagrada Família Crypt. Barcelona. Built between 1884 and 1889, Gaudí's oldest religious work.
- Nativity Façade at the Sagrada Família. Barcelona.

**La Patum.** The UNESCO declared the ancestral La Patum festival in Berga (Pirineus), celebrated on the festivity of Corpus Christi, a Masterpiece of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

**Castellers.** A genuine piece of Catalan folk culture featuring up to ten-storey human towers, it was recognised by the UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010.

**Summer and winter solstice fire festival in the Pyrenees.** Declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, this festival brings together cultural and natural heritage and has a cross-border geographic scope, as it comprises 63 villages from France, Catalonia, Aragon and Andorra.

**The art of dry stone.** Included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage Goods, it is a construction type practised since prehistoric times and a typical feature of rural ethnological heritage. It is highly extended throughout all Mediterranean countries. The bid includes constructions in Croatia, Cyprus, Slovenia, Spain, France, Greece, Italy and Switzerland. In Catalonia, there are around 19,000 listed constructions, with an interpretive centre in Torrebesses in Segrià county (Lleida).

Thanks to Catalonia's both tangible and intangible heritage, applications are filed every year to have places or concepts included as World Heritage. This is the case of Turó de la Seu Vella in Lleida, an architectural site dating from the 13th-14th centuries that has become the city's landmark, the portal of Ripoll monastery, a biblical depiction carved in stone in the 12th century, as well as Seu d'Ègara in Terrassa with its pictorial decoration (5th-7th centuries). These applications are completed by Priorat-Montsant-Siurana as a cultural landscape, St. George's Day and Catalan rumba as intangible heritage as well as Catalan cuisine based on the scenic variety of its territory, the wide range of products, its degree of protection and the fact that Europe's oldest recipe book is written in Catalan.

## BEACHES

With its **580 kilometre coastline** and almost **350 coves and beaches**, Catalonia is still one of the best so-called sun & beach destinations. This sort of tourism can be completed with fine heritage and protected nature, which can be enjoyed along numerous signposted walking or cycling paths. **Nautical tourism, family holiday** destinations, gastronomy and **sports tourism** aimed at both professionals and amateurs are **suitable to complete** a seaside holiday in great style.

The Government of Catalonia is heavily working on **prevention, control and improvement** of coastal waters and beaches, while each municipality is in charge of **cleaning** its main beaches **every day** during the summer season. A proof of this are the beaches and marinas flying the **Blue Flag**. Moreover, the portal of the Meteorological Service of Catalonia started a new feature in 2015 providing the weather and sea forecast for beaches and water sports.

The **Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club (ADAC)**, with more than 17 million member families and a high reputation among the German public opinion as an unbiased organisation with tourism expertise, certifies year after year the quality of Catalan beaches, which are characterised by their water quality, large environmentally friendly leisure offer and countless tourist facilities, many of which are adapted to be accessible to any kind of users.

Beyond the blue flags and quality certificates at a vast number of Catalan beaches, the facilities provided in the coastal municipalities and the numerous marinas and water sports businesses, the best quality proof comes from the millions of tourists returning to Catalonia every year.

## NATURAL PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

**More than 30% of the Catalan territory** enjoys some degree of **special protection**. Apart from one **national park**, there are **14 natural parks** spread all over Catalonia, as well as **marine and natural reserves, natural sites of national interest** and a dozen **natural protected areas** managed by the Barcelona Provincial Council.

**Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park**, belonging to the Spanish national park network, has 14,000 hectares covered by the park as such, plus a further 26,000 of peripheral area. The main gates to the park are at Espot (Pallars Sobirà) and Vall de Boí (Alta Ribagorça), with further access through Vall Fosca (Pallars Jussà) by cable car and Val d'Aran. Noteworthy are also natural areas such as Montseny Natural Park as well as Terres de l'Ebre, all declared a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO.

Also, **Montserrat and Montgrí, les Illes Medes i el Baix Ter Natural natural parks** as well as Foix, Olèrdola and Garraf **protected areas** feature the **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism**. The EUROPARC Federation has validated these areas and also renewed the certificate for **Montseny, Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac** and **Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa** natural parks, the latter being Spain's first in obtaining it. They are joined by **Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park**, which also features this

European label. Noteworthy is also **Alt Pirineu Natural Park**, which after its recent enlargement covers more than 79,000 hectares, making it Catalonia's largest protected area.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

A great number of visitors come to Catalonia to enjoy the treatments provided by its twenty **spas with medicinal mineral waters** declared of public utility. Catalonia's thermal tradition dates back to Roman times, yet spas have adapted their facilities to the new accommodation trends, offering quality standards comparable to modern hotels. Prominent spa towns include Benifallet, Caldes d'Estrac, Caldes de Malavella, Caldes de Montbui, El Vendrell, La Garriga, Sant Climent Sescebes, Sant Hilari Sacalm and Santa Coloma de Farners. Their great wealth in mineral waters can be enjoyed in baths, completed by a tourist offer that includes cultural heritage, nature, leisure, gastronomy, festivals and traditions. On top of that comes a good offer of **wellness, thermal leisure and thalassotherapy centres**.



# Tourist Accommodation

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## TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

The offer is subject to strict **regulations** enforced by the Government of Catalonia, which looks after hotel rating. According to these regulations, there are two groups of accommodation: **hotels** (H) and **boarding houses** or **hostelries** (P), plus another category within the hotel group, **hotel-apartments** (HA).

As regards **classes**, the range goes from Grand Luxe to 1 star in hotels, whereas boarding houses or hostelries have no specific rating. Some hotels are part of the world's most renowned chains, such as The Leading Hotels of the World or Relais & Châteaux, and many have some sort of quality certificate. Noteworthy are also initiatives such as **Gastronomic Hotels** with 48 certified businesses.

In Barcelona, a large number of hotels have been developed following to the increase of tourism experienced in recent years, especially along the coastline stretching from the Olympic Village to the Forum of Cultures area, where congress and convention facilities were built in 2004. The area around the Montjuïc-2 fairgrounds, very close to the airport, has also seen its top-range hotel offer increase considerably, as is the case of certain quarters in the old town and the Eixample, with historical buildings being refurbished into landmark hotels.

Catalonia has currently almost **2900 accommodation units** with approximately **300,000 beds**. Many of them are investing into renewal, upgrading and specialisation in segments such as golf, health and wellness tourism, winter sports, water sports and active tourism. Services provided by Catalan hotels usually include an excellent food offer, which definitely contributes to Catalonia's great gastronomic reputation.

## CAMPSITES

Catalonia has a network of roughly **350 campsites**, with an offer of 100,000 camping plots and a total accommodation capacity of around **270,000 places**. They are classified into **four categories**: luxury (L), 1st class, 2nd class and 3rd class. Although they tend to concentrate on the coastal areas and the Pyrenees, they can be found all over the territory, especially close to protected natural areas, so their offer extends to hiking, adventure sports or simply relaxing amidst nature.

Many campsites are true holiday parks and resorts, with a whole myriad of unique accommodation types, especially bungalows, as well as local cuisine, fun and professional entertainment for children and adults. The campsites have theme pools, WiFi and an airport shuttle service. The **lifestyle** at Catalan campsites is based on relaxing, calm and respect for the environment, and sets the trend in Europe with concepts such as **Glamping** (camping with glamour).

Thanks to the mild Mediterranean weather, the season at most Catalan campsites lasts throughout the year, with unique activities such as paddle yoga, oriental massage, spa & wellness, astronomic baptism or just enjoying the autumn for a weekend in the colourful forest or picking mushrooms as well as skiing in winter.

Also, members of renowned clubs like the **Automobile Touring Club of the Netherlands (ANWB)** with nearly 4 million associates or the German **ADAC** automobile club with 17 million member families honour Catalan camp sites year after year, rating them among the best in Europe for their high quality. To quote an example, the ANWB rated the **Camping & Resort Sangulí Salou** (Costa Daurada), a member of the Family Tourism scheme by the Catalan Tourist Board, as the best European campsite in 2018.

#### **Catalan Camping and Holiday Town Federation**

**Barcelona Camping Association:** [www.barcelonacampings.es/ca](http://www.barcelonacampings.es/ca)

**Lleida Camping Association:** [www.campingsdelleida.com](http://www.campingsdelleida.com)

**Tarragona Camping Association:** [www.campingstarragona.es/ca](http://www.campingstarragona.es/ca)

**Girona Camping Association:** [www.campingsingirona.com](http://www.campingsingirona.com)

**Mountain Camping Association:** [www.sompaisatge.com](http://www.sompaisatge.com)

## **RURAL TOURISM ACCOMMODATION**

The offer in rural tourism accommodation encompasses more than **2400 businesses** providing **over 18,000 beds**. It includes **different types**, from village houses to isolated country houses. There are different associations by geographic areas, commercialising their member rural tourism homes. A voluntary **rating** system by **wheat ears** is in place.

Accommodation is classified as follows:

**“Cases de pagès” or agro-tourism accommodation:** accommodation units where the owner, a professional farmer, has agricultural, stockbreeding or forestry earnings and guests can complete their experience by sharing the typical tasks and activities of the attached farming business.

**Rural accommodation:** accommodation units where the owner has no obligation of earning an income from farming but must actually live in the same county or dwelling, depending on the mode.

There are **four** modes for each of these two groups: “masia” (house shared with owners), “masoveria” (independent house rented out as a whole), shared village house and independent village house. Each group is identified with a specific sign.

#### **Catalan Confederation of Rural Tourism - Concatur**

[www.concatur.cat](http://www.concatur.cat)

## TOURIST APARTMENTS AND HOUSING UNITS FOR TOURIST USE

Tourist apartments and housing units for tourist use take an important share in Catalonia's accommodation offer. They are spread over almost all of the territory, yet concentrating rather on the coastal areas. There are apartments **for all tastes**: big or small, in cities, on the beach, in the mountains or for skiing. All tourist apartments and housing units in Catalonia need to feature the **identification number** of the Catalan Tourist Register, which **proves** that they are **legal**.

Hereunder are some tourist apartment associations:

**Costa Brava-Girona Tourist Apartment Association (ATA)**

[www.apartamentos-ata.com](http://www.apartamentos-ata.com)

**Costa Daurada Tourist Apartment Association (AT)**

[www.atcostadaurada.org](http://www.atcostadaurada.org)

**Barcelona Tourist Apartment Association (APARTUR)**

[www.apartur.com](http://www.apartur.com)

The directorate general of tourism at the catalan department of enterprise and knowledge edits an official online guide for each different sort of tourist accommodation (hotels, campsites, apartments and rural tourism), a guarantee for users as businesses listed are subject to catalan legislation.

# Tourist Brands

Catalonia is made up of nine tourist brands gathered under and promoted by tourism boards.





[www.costabrava.org](http://www.costabrava.org)

# Costa Brava

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Costa Brava is a prime Mediterranean destination, its climate, landscape, coastline, natural environment and culture being its main assets. It features many tourist products such as sun & beach, cultural, enogastronomic and active & nature tourism as well as other more specific ones such as golf, wellness and business tourism.

The distinctiveness of Costa Brava is made of its long **beaches** and little coves surrounded by vegetation and steep cliffs reaching from Portbou to Blanes along 220 km, many of them flying the **blue flag**.

It features a wide offer in **water sports** and "**Vies Braves**" (Wild Ways) that provide the opportunity of discovering this unique and varied area from a different perspective, namely public marine routes for sports, leisure and learning. Roses, Castelló d'Empúries, Sant Pere Pescador and L'Escala are located on the **Gulf of Roses**, the only bay in the Mediterranean that is a member of The World's Most Beautiful Bays after joined the club in 2012.

The Girona province features 15 restaurants with a total 19 **Michelin stars**, spearheaded by **El Cellar de Can Roca** in Girona by the

Roca brothers, currently one the world's best restaurants according to Restaurant Magazine, as well as **Miramar** in Llançà by Paco Pérez and **Les Cols** in Olot by Fina Puigdevall. The wines from the Empordà Denomination of Origin are also noteworthy. Their quality can be discovered along the **Empordà DO Wine Route**.

Costa Brava boasts a big natural diversity. It has started the **process** to become a UNESCO **Biosphere Reserve**. The region has four natural parks, of which **Montseny** was the first to be declared a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO. **Aiguamolls de l'Empordà** and **Montgrí, Illes Medes i Baix Ter** natural parks, the latter created recently, help preserve marine and ornithological wildlife, especially migratory birds. Also, **L'Albera** Natural Area of National Interest clearly showcases the

Costa Brava is an ideal destination for visitors looking for a territory with a strong identity. Visiting monuments built by past civilisations as well as contemporary architecture, theme routes or taking part in festivals and traditional festivities are the main motivations for cultural tourists coming to Girona province.

transition from a Pyrenean to a Mediterranean landscape.

**Adventurous and active visitors** will find a fine way of discovering the stunning landscape of Costa Brava by getting in contact with nature through hiking, road cycling, mountain biking, sailing, scuba diving, skydiving (at Skydive Empuriabrava, one of the world's leading skydiving centres), horse riding, climbing or golf, among others.

The regional capital **Girona** is a well communicated city, half-way between the coast and the Pyrenees. It is a popular **city break** all year round, thanks to its cultural offer—with the **Temps de Flors** and **Temporada Alta** festivals—, heritage and shopping.

The coast is dotted with charming villages such as Cadaqués, Begur, Calella de Palafrugell, Palamós and Tossa de Mar, besides tourist resorts like Roses, Platja d'Aro, Lloret de Mar and Blanes, while the **hinterland** boasts villages with medieval heritage such as Peralada, Castelló d'Empúries, Monells, Pals and Peratallada.

The offer in **cultural tourism** attracts millions of visitors. Iberians, Greeks and Romans discovered the wealth of this area centuries ago, as proves the **Empúries** site. Romanesque art has left true architectural gems like **Sant Pere de Rodes** monastery at the starting point of St James' Way through Catalonia. Castles and fortresses, medieval villages, the Jewish heritage, the great works of Art Nouveau and **Dalí's** surrealist footprint with the Dalí Museum-Theatre in Figueres, the Salvador Dalí Museum-House in Portlligat and the Gala Dalí Castle in Púbol have shaped the identity of this area and its people, completed by **craftsmanship, industrial heritage, music and performing arts festivals** and **traditional folk festivals** of national interest.

Costa Brava features all sorts of **accommodation**, from the classic hotel offer featuring prominently small and charming family-run businesses, holiday hotels and accommodation on the seafront to rural accommodation, tourist apartments and camp sites. In all, Costa Brava has an offer of roughly **360,000 beds**.



[www.barcelonaesmoltmes.cat/en](http://www.barcelonaesmoltmes.cat/en)

## Costa Barcelona

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This tourist brand encompasses six counties: Alt Penedès, Vallès Occidental and Oriental inland, the latter including the Montseny range, a natural park and Biosphere Reserve, as well as Maresme, Baix Llobregat and Garraf along the coast. This region has a clear commitment towards quality as all counties within Costa Barcelona feature the Biosphere certification as a sustainable tourist destination.

Costa Barcelona concentrates countless **services** and **leisure activities**. The **accommodation** offer amounts to **125,000 beds** at hotels, campsites and rural tourism. There are many attractions in Costa Barcelona extending over **more than a hundred kilometres of coast** in Maresme, Baix Llobregat and Garraf counties, with noteworthy towns like Sitges, Mataró and Castelldefels. Arenys de Mar features an important fishing port, Sant Pol de Mar still preserves its nice old town and places in Alt Maresme such as Calella, Pineda de Mar, Santa Susanna and Malgrat de Mar provide a large offer in activities adding to their clear orientation towards tourism.

The towns of Sitges and Vilanova i la Geltrú in Garraf county are perched on the sea. The former features **Es Baluard** in the old

quarter as its main cultural attraction, with former palaces now hosting museums. This is completed with fine beaches and a big offer in leisure and restaurants. Vilanova i la Geltrú in its turn has always been looking to the sea, with a large fishing and commercial port, besides maintaining some deeply rooted traditions. Inland, Vilafranca del Penedès and Sant Sadurní d'Anoia are the wine and cava (sparkling wine) capital respectively, featuring a great offer in **wine tourism** that is well present throughout Alt Penedès county.

Sant Cugat in Vallès Occidental is a modern town featuring also some of Catalonia's most relevant medieval monastic sites (9th century). In Vallès Oriental, the **Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya** racetrack hosts the Formula 1 and Motorcycling Grand Prix,

Among the rich cultural and monumental heritage in Costa Barcelona stand out Gaudí's Art Nouveau works in Baix Llobregat, featuring prominently the Colònia Güell crypt, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya racetrack is the place to be for motorsports lovers, with its Formula 1 and motorcycling Grand Prix. All this is completed with the rich and manifold cuisine and the agenda full of festivals and traditions in Costa Barcelona.

besides offering a large variety in activities for all audiences. Terrassa boasts **Seu Egara**, a unique heritage site in Europe, the **Museum of Science and Technology of Catalonia** and **Masia Freixa**, built in the early 20th century, plus an **Art Nouveau route** through the city.

Costa Barcelona offers a hundred kilometres of **urban beaches**, featuring all sorts of services and well linked with Barcelona. There are also the **nautical resorts** of Santa Susanna and Vilanova i la Geltrú, and it is an excellent golf destination. **Hot baths** can be enjoyed in towns like Caldes d'Estrac, Caldes de Montbui and La Garriga, known for the quality of their thermal waters, and

nature lovers can explore the vast natural park network, including **El Montnegre i el Corredor**, **Serralada Litoral** and **Serralada Marina** close to the shore as well as **Montserrat** with its unique, peculiar rounded shapes, **El Garraf**, **Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac** and **Montserrat** inland.

The balance between sea, plain and hills shapes a gentle landscape and an excellent climate that make the area a land wealthy in produce, together with a fine cuisine based on **fish** and **seafood**. These climate conditions have also allowed developing winegrowing, with three of Catalonia's twelve **Denominations of Origin: Penedès, Alella** and **internationally reputed Cava**.



[www.visitbarcelona.com](http://www.visitbarcelona.com)

# Barcelona

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The capital of Catalonia, Barcelona is an open, welcoming, diverse and sustainable city with more than 2000 years history. Cosmopolitan and authentic, it is a place where history and modernity live together in perfect harmony. A courageous city, it has been the cradle of pioneering movements for social, cultural and political change.

Perhaps its strategic position on the Mediterranean, having been an important seaport during the Middle Ages, has had an influence on the character of its people. Still today, the city enjoys the sea with kilometre-long beaches and a diverse offer in nautical activities, sailing (Barcelona World Race) and leisure.

The city is committed to sustainability and environmental protection. It was the first in the world to obtain the **Biosphere certification** for responsible tourism from the UNESCO. It is an innovative city with a long **industrial** tradition, **pioneering** in design, creativity, use of technologies and smart management of services for its citizens.

Between the old seaside quarters and the hills expands the **Eixample** in all its beauty. This urban planning model is unique in Europe, having been created in 1860 by Ildefons Cerdà,

one of the founders of modern urban planning. The Eixample boasts Europe's biggest and most impressive **gems** of **Art Nouveau** architecture.

**Picasso, Miró** and **Tàpies** are the painters who best reflect that utmost Catalan duality of "seny i rauxa" (common sense and passion). Barcelona is a **city of museums**, from Romanesque in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) to modern art in the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) and the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB) as well as the big Art Nouveau landmarks such as the **Sant Pau** site, **Casa de les Punxes** and **Casa Vicens**. It is also a **city of theatres** and a city open to **music**, with beautiful venues such as Art Nouveau Palau de la Música, Liceu, one of the big opera houses, and L'Auditori. The three are part of Barcelona Obertura, which promotes the programme of these institutions as well as a new classical music festival, the **Spring Festival** that is held during two weeks in March.

Turisme de Barcelona runs a network of 23 tourist information offices where both visitors and locals can obtain advice in 12 languages. It also features a wide online service offer that allows any visitor to organise their own trip through the website [tickets.visitbarcelona.com](https://tickets.visitbarcelona.com). Also in Barcelona visitors can approach the Tourist Office of Catalonia located in Palau Robert (Passeig de Gràcia 107). This tourist information centre also hosts different exhibitions and sells publications, transport tickets, tickets for events and sites and merchandising.

Barcelona unites **tradition and modernity**.

Tradition is conveyed by the five “colles castelleres” (human tower teams) from Sants, Gràcia, Poble Sec, Poble Nou and Sagrada Família, which make a fine example of multicultural and cross-generational integration. Modernity comes from countless **music festivals**, such as worldwide known Sónar and Primavera Sound, alongside **popular festivities** like La Mercè or those in Gràcia and Sants quarters.

Barcelona is a city of shops, with an urban layout inviting to stroll. **Barcelona Shopping City** extends throughout all quarters, mixing avant-gardist boutiques with traditional shops. **Barcelona Shopping Line** is a five-kilometre long axis joining different commercial and tourist areas from the sea to the hills. **Barcelona Unique Shops** is a label joining a large number of unique shops.

Barcelona has also an international reputation in hosting congresses and conventions.

**Professional tourism** is consolidated with events such as the **Mobile World Congress**

or IBTM World as well as a large number of relevant congresses in the areas of medicine and technology.

As regards gastronomy, Barcelona has it all, from traditional to the latest cuisine, making almost thirty Michelin stars. Its renewed markets are not only an ideal place for displaying local produce but also for tasting them.

Among the most relevant tourist activities to discover the city are the **Barcelona Bus Turístic** (three urban routes with stops at all sights), the **Barcelona Card** (a city ticket including public transport, free museums and over 85 discounts), the **Mirador de Colom** (with an area devoted to wine tourism and wine tasting), the **Barcelona Walking Tours** (four guided walking tours), the **Articket** (a pass to visit the city’s six main museums) and the **Barcelona Pass Modernista**. There is also a wide range of visits and services in connection with Barcelona and its surroundings featuring natural, cultural and wine sights. Only two hours from the city are the Pyrenees, a true mountain paradise offering all types of sports facilities.



<https://costadaurada.info/es>

## Costa Daurada

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Eighty-one kilometres coastline with 60 fine golden sandy beaches make the seafront of Costa Daurada, a region encompassing the Baix Penedès, Tarragonès, Baix Camp, Alt Camp, Conca de Barberà and Priorat counties. Costa Daurada is an ideal destination for family enjoyment.

One of its main attractions being **PortAventura World** with its two parks, **PortAventura Park** and **PortAventura Caribe Aquatic Park**, recently joined by Ferrari Land, Europe's only theme park devoted to the *cavallino rampante*. The municipalities of Salou and Cambrils also feature the **Sports Tourism** label, a relevant specialised offer adapted to athletes of all levels and including most notably water sports, cycling and football. In the south of Costa Daurada, Mont-roig del Camp - Miami Platja is a gem for mountain bike lovers with 140 kilometres of routes and 12 kilometres of coastline along four beaches and nine coves.

Salou, Cambrils and Vila-seca-La Pineda Platja, which together with El Vendrell, Muntanyes de Prades and Calafell feature the **Family Tourism** label, are the main tourist hotspot at Costa Daurada, with a widespread

offer in **relaxing** and **fun**, **cuisine** and **natural heritage** attracting thousands of tourists year after year. Cambrils features a rich gastronomic offer, including **two restaurants** with **one Michelin star**. Torredembarra has a very special **natural reserve: Els Muntanyans**, shared with Creixell and Roda de Barà.

Another outstanding sight is **Roman Tarraco**, with its notable circus, amphitheatre, walls, provincial forum, aqueduct and Centelles, which make some of the monuments listed as **World Heritage** by the UNESCO. **Poblet** monastery, Europe's largest **Cistercian** monastic site, is also **World Heritage**. Located in Conca de Barberà county and the burial site of the former kings of Aragon, the monastery has been rebuilt and keeps all of the original elements from the Middle Ages, which are currently looked after by the community of Cistercian monks.

The *castells* (human towers), which came up in Valls in the early 19th century, are one of Catalonia's greatest cultural features. Many major festivals along Costa Daurada hold fine human tower events, from Valls through to Tarragona, L'Arboç, El Catllar, El Vendrell or Reus, but most notably the *castells* contest held in the Tarraco Arena Plaza in Tarragona every even year.

The **Montsant range** in Priorat county is the symbol of the natural park that has been awarded the **European Charter for Sustainable Tourism**. This county, which has applied for UNESCO recognition as a cultural landscape, includes the **Montsant DO** and the **Priorat DOQ**, where the Grenache red and Carignan varieties predominate, producing some of the world's most appreciated wines. There are also the wines and sparkling wines from the **Tarragona, Penedès, Conca de Barberà** and **Cava Denominations of Origin**.

The wealthy architectonic heritage of **Reus**, created between the late 19th and early

20th century, provides a route including 26 buildings, some of which were made under **Lluís Domènech i Montaner**. Reus also features the **Gaudí Centre**, an Art Nouveau interpretive centre.

Reus, El Vendrell, Mont-roig del Camp – Miami Platja and Horta de Sant Joan have gathered under the **Paisatge dels Genis** (Landscape of Geniuses) brand, a tourist offer featuring unique buildings like the Pau Casals Museum in El Vendrell, the farmhouse where Miró spent several summers in Mont-roig, the Picasso Centre in Horta de Sant Joan or the Gaudí Centre in Reus, among others.





[www.terresdelebre.travel](http://www.terresdelebre.travel)

## Terres de l'Ebre

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Terres de l'Ebre encompasses the four counties on the river Ebro on its nearly 130 kilometre stretch through Catalonia: Baix Ebre, Montsià, Terra Alta and Ribera d'Ebre. The landscape and gastronomy in these counties feature a great diversity. Cupped oyster and local mussel culture in the calm and warm waters of the Ebro Delta is completed with fish and seafood from the Mediterranean and the distinctive traditional cuisine from the hinterland.

**Citrus fruits**, especially clementines with Protected Geographical Indication, **quality wines** made in Terra Alta with a Denomination of Origin of their own, **rice from the Delta**, one of the area's most important crops, and **honey**, a quality product rounding up any sort of desserts, have all become distinctive gastronomic and tourist icons of Terres de l'Ebre.

The **Ebro** is the area's main artery, playing a key role in its history and economy. Along the coast from L'Ametlla de Mar to Les Cases d'Alcanar lies the fascinating world of the **Ebro Delta**, a wetland taking 320 square kilometres. Inland can be found **Els Ports Natural Park**, a paradise for wild goats with peaks towering up to almost 1500 metres and a destination with the Family Tourism label, whereas other natural areas like the **Montsià, Pàndols**,

**Cavalls** and **Cardó** mountain ranges provide a good opportunity to get in touch with nature. **Birdwatching** can be done in Terres de l'Ebre anytime during the year.

Terres de l'Ebre has a rich and varied tourist offer, with **nature**, **monuments** and **cultural heritage** found in many towns such as Tortosa with its interesting Jewish quarter, Horta de Sant Joan that fascinated young Picasso, Miravet's old town perched on top of a rock overlooking the Ebro, Tivissa with Castellet de Banyoles, one of Catalonia's most relevant Iberian sites, La Fatarella with its unique arcaded streets in the town centre and Ulldecona with some fine **cave paintings** classed as **World Heritage** by UNESCO.

The **Ebro Battle Studies Centre** in Gandesa and several interpretive centres in different

Most of Terres de l'Ebre was awarded the Biosphere Reserve status in 2013, thus acknowledging the value of the whole ecosystem of which the Ebro is the spine, a lively and partly navigable river playing a role of utmost importance. It has also been recognised as one of the world's top 100 sustainable destinations.

towns under the COMEBE (Consorti Memorial Espais de la Batalla de l'Ebre) association have been created to provide an insight into the strong impact caused on the area by the Ebro battle during the Spanish Civil War. Another option for cultural tourism is the Terres de l'Ebre **Green Route** leading along fifty kilometres from Tortosa to Arnes and extending a further 50 km to Val de Zafán-Alcañiz, along a route that can be done by bike, on foot or on horseback. With more than a thousand kilometres of paths and roads with low traffic, cycling tourism is another relevant offer in the area.

The Ebro Delta provides a landscape changing according to the season. It was formed by sediments brought by the river over millions of years. A part of it is covered by a natural park, one of the most significant and unique natural areas in the whole Mediterranean. Different **outdoor activities** can be done here, including birdwatching, river navigation, fishing "a la paupa", a revived mode of catching fish by hand, cycling and enjoying numerous unspoilt beaches. This combination of environmental protection and agricultural use has earned the Ebro Delta **international recognition**.





[www.visitpirineus.com](http://www.visitpirineus.com)

# Pirineus

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The Pirineus brand includes the tourist offer of eleven counties: Alt Empordà, Alta Ribagorça, Alt Urgell, Berguedà, Cerdanya, Garrotxa, Pallars Jussà, Pallars Sobirà, Ripollès, Solsonès and Val d’Aran, the latter of which forms a brand of its own due to its distinctiveness.

The Catalan Pyrenees offer visitors a splendid **range of attractions**: great scenery including Catalonia’s highest peak, **Pica d’Estats** (3143 metres), on the limit between Pallars Sobirà county and the French department of Ariège, **beautiful valleys** such as **Camprodon**, **Núria** and **Cardós**, villages with a wealth of **Romanesque art heritage**, numerous **mountain** and **adventure sports** as well as **active tourism** such as **hiking**, **cycling** and **whitewater sports** like rafting. Mountain bikers will find almost a hundred signposted routes, while road cyclers in Pirineus can follow different stages of the Tour of Catalonia as well as the Tour de France stage that led from Vielha to La Seu d’Urgell in 2016.

**Winter tourism** is particularly important in the area, with **ten alpine** and **six Nordic ski resorts**. A great economic driver of the mountain counties, winter tourism has

been the forerunner of the alternative offer provided by the ski resorts, with year-round proposals suitable for all target groups. In fact, seven of Catalonia’s 16 ski resorts have been certified as **Family-friendly Attractions** by the Catalan Tourist Board: Espot, Boí Taüll, Masella, Vall de Núria, Vallter 2000, Port Ainé and La Molina.

The tasteful **mountain cuisine**, completed with according wines such as those from **Empordà** and **Costers del Segre DO**, plus **health & wellness** tourism make another major attraction of the land, based on good service facilities that allow full enjoyment of the scenery both in winter and in summer. It is in the Pyrenees where Catalonia’s **only national park**, **Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici**, is located. Yet there are more protected areas in the Catalan Pyrenees: **Alt Pirineu Natural Park**, the largest in Catalonia with almost 70,000 hectares; **Zona Volcànica**

Within its Pirineus programme, the Catalan Tourist Board has edited a specific hiking guide covering 19 multi-stage treks as well as a specific publication on the two long-distance trails along the whole Catalan Pyrenees, GR1 and GR11. These publications are available in several languages from the [www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com) and [www.visitpirineus.com](http://www.visitpirineus.com) websites.

**de la Garrotxa Natural Park** featuring the biggest volcanic area in the Iberian Peninsula with around forty volcanic cones, providing a distinctive natural setting that is unique in Europe; **Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park** with **Pedraforca**, a Natural Area of National Interest, as its landmark; **Capçaleres del Ter i del Freser Natural Park**; **Aiguamolls de l'Empordà Natural Park**, a wetland that is a habitat for water birds and a stopover for migratory birds; and **L'Albera Natural Area of National Interest**, which links with Cap de Creus Natural Park, where the Pyrenees meet the Mediterranean. All in all, **protected areas** in the Pyrenees amount to 331,661 hectares, half of Catalonia's total.

From a cultural perspective, La Seu d'Urgell with the only Romanesque cathedral in the Catalan Pyrenees, Santa Maria monastery in Ripoll and churches like Sant Quirze de Pedret and Sant Jaume de Frontanyà in Berguedà county are some of the finest

examples of Catalan Romanesque art worth visiting in Pirineus.

Yet the most outstanding are the Romanesque churches in **Vall de Boí**, the architecture and mural paintings of which earned them recognition by the **UNESCO** as **World Heritage**. In Sant Climent de Taüll, a spectacular mapping reproduces the decoration of the apse and the church in all its colourfulness. Two **traditional festivals** have been declared **Masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity** in 2005 and 2015, respectively: **La Patum in Berga**, a spectacular celebration dating back to the second half of the 14th century, and the **Pyrenees Falles** (Fire Festival).

The **accommodation offer** concentrates on mountain resorts, towns and villages, mostly in the shape of small family businesses. They are completed with camp sites, rural tourism accommodation, tourist homes and apartments as well as hostels.



[www.aralleida.cat](http://www.aralleida.cat)

## Terres de Lleida

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This brand encompasses Noguera, Pla d'Urgell, Segarra, Urgell, Segrià and Garrigues counties, where a great variety in sports and active tourism, a unique culture, local gastronomy and top-range rural tourism can be enjoyed all year round, all of which surrounded by a generous agricultural setting that yields a wide range of products, especially sweet fruit, olive oil and wine, which feature their own denomination of origin and quality labels.

**Lleida**, the capital of Segrià county and the province bearing the city's name, is located in a unique natural setting overlooked by the impressive silhouette of the **Seu Vella**. It is the largest city and the economic hub of inland Catalonia, with an economy based on the agrofood industry and services of all kinds. The city's cultural life has experienced a significant boost thanks to new facilities and offers such as the **Knights Templars Interpretive Centre in Gardeny**, the **Castell del Rei** nearby the Seu Vella, the **Diocesan and County Museum** and **La Lleida Secreta** route tracing the old urban layout of the city through its archaeological remains.

The opening of **Lleida-Alguaire airport** together with the **high-speed railway** link and **La Llotja Congress Centre** place the Lleida area, its capital and by extension the Pyrenees

as **destinations** with large potentialities in tourism and conventions.

Other attractions in the area are the **Montsec Astronomy Park**; **Santa Maria de Vallbona** monastery, which forms the **Cistercian Route** together with Poblet and Santes Creus in Costa Daurada; the **Sió Castles Route**, a tourist circuit encompassing about twenty castles in Segarra, Urgell and Noguera counties, with its new interpretive centre in Concabella; recovered Ivars-Vila-sana lake in Pla d'Urgell county, Catalonia's largest inner lake and an ideal place for nature lovers, especially birdwatchers; the **Lleida – Costers del Segre Wine Route** and the **Olive Oil Route**; the **Vaulted Hut Route**, a guided circuit along different dry stone constructions in Les Garrigues county; and **Camí de Sant Jaume** (St James' Way in Catalonia), together

The Montsec range between Noguera and Pallars Jussà counties boasts one of Catalonia's skies with the lowest light pollution. For this reason, the Montsec Astronomy Park was created some years ago, a project combining astronomic research with dissemination programmes for a larger public. After several studies, Montsec was given the Starlight tourist destination status under the auspices of the UNESCO in early 2013.

with the **Camí Ignasià** (Ignatian Way) one of the latest big tourist initiatives covering most of Terres de Lleida. The Conca de Tremp-Montsec area has been declared a geopark under the name of **Geoparc Orígens-Pirineus Catalans**, thus highlighting its great geological and natural value.

The set of **cave art in the Mediterranean** area of the Iberian Peninsula was declared **World Heritage** in 1998. It encompasses a total 757 sites, 16 of which are located in the Lleida

area, with **Roca dels Moros** and **El Cogul caves** in Garrigues being the best known. The Lleida area boasts a **wide offer in festivals, sports and culture**. Many initiatives have also taken place to **deseasonalise** the tourist industry, such as the **Montsec Universe Observation Centre**, the **Lake Train** along a scenic route from Lleida to La Pobla de Segur, basically aimed at family tourism, or new exhibition areas and routes conveying the area's natural, cultural and heritage wealth.





[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

## Val d'Aran

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Located in the Western Pyrenees on an area covering 633.46 sq km, Val d'Aran provides a natural setting with a leisure offer as large as any mountain destination can feature throughout the whole year.

Its location and morphology have encouraged a varied **distinctive climate, fauna, flora and landscape** as well as a **unique history** that can be seen best in the region's own language, **Aranese**.

A **nature and active tourist destination** par excellence, over 30% of Val d'Aran lie above 2000 metres. Featuring the **Biosphere certification**, it provides some unique landscape and a wide range of ecosystems that make it one of the areas with the most varied fauna and flora in the Pyrenees. Guided walks and the **Aran Park** fauna park provide an insight into all this biodiversity changing with the seasons.

In winter it provides an awesome backdrop for snow lovers. **Baqueira Beret, to many the best ski resort in the Pyrenees**, features 156 km of slopes where skiing can be enjoyed in all its variations. For non-skiers or to complete a fine day out in the snow, the awesome

outdoors in Val d'Aran offers many more activities, such as **trips with snowmobile, snowshoes, dog sled or horsedrawn sled**. The leisure offer in Val d'Aran is endless!

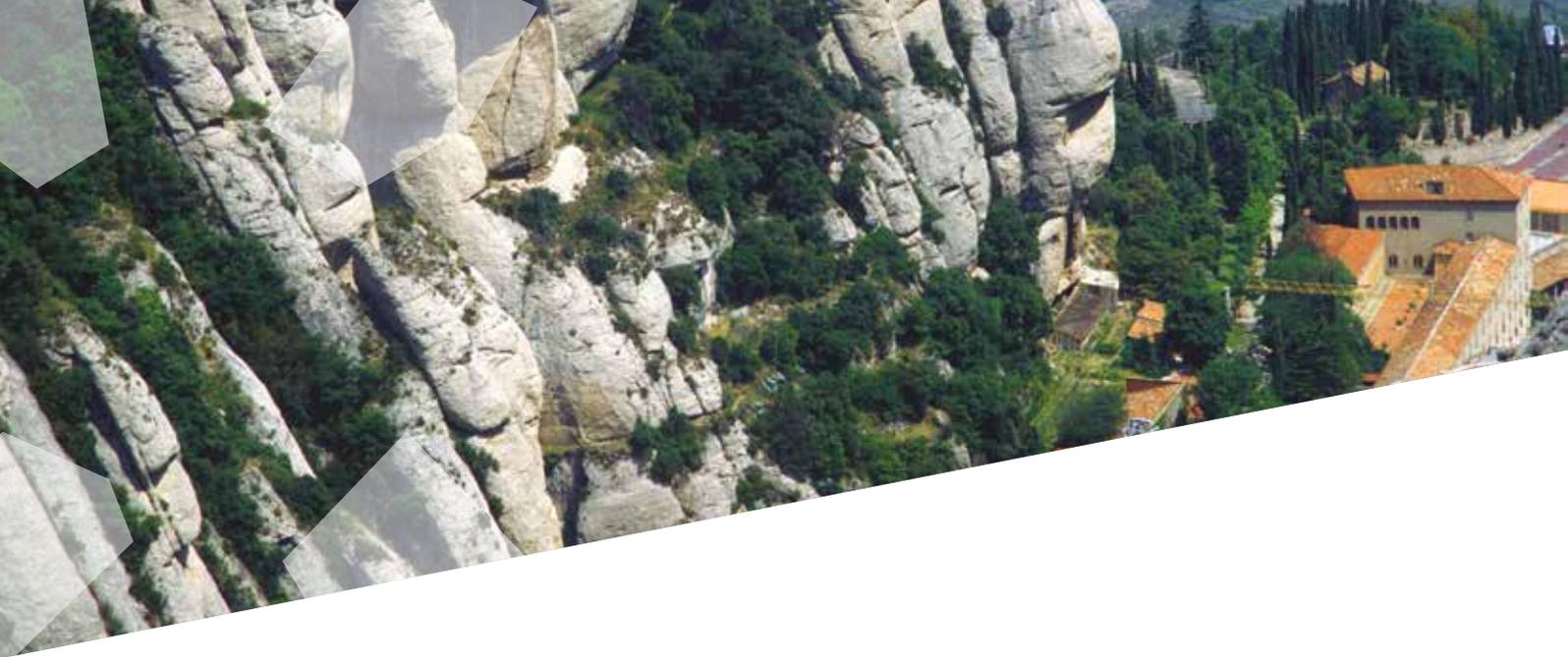
For the rest of the year, take **Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park**, peaks above 3000 metres, over **200 mountain lakes**, breathtaking **waterfalls**, signposted **hiking or cycling paths** suitable for all levels as well as a large variety of water and nature activities.

The **artistic wealth** of Val d'Aran is one of the best preserved treasures in the Pyrenees. Almost isolated over centuries, the valley has bequeathed to our days a wealthy, varied artistic heritage, featuring great stylistic pieces of all times with an output ranging across all disciplines (architecture, painting, stone and wood carving), sometimes carried out with great mastery, sometimes with endearing plainness.

More than 12,000 beds, 3000 of which in 4 and 5-star hotels, as well as a wide service offer in wellness, health and relaxing make Val d’Aran one of the mountain destinations with the largest variety and highest quality in Southern Europe.

**Cuisine** also plays an important role in the Val d’Aran tourist offer. Over **180 restaurants** invite to have a taste at both traditional dishes (e.g. “òlha aranesa”, pates or game stew) made with **local produce** and trend cuisine with ingredients like duck (made in 100 different ways), sturgeon or caviar, all of which spiced with Aranese knowledge and warm hospitality.





[www.barcelonaesmuchomas.es](http://www.barcelonaesmuchomas.es)

## Paisatges Barcelona

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The land in inner Catalonia, with its rich natural heritage, features the Biosphere certification acknowledging it as a sustainable tourist destination. Located close to the city of Barcelona, it covers Anoia, Bages, Moianès and Osona counties.

It is dominated by the **large plains** of the Central Depression surrounded by mountains, with **towns** like Vic, Manlleu, Manresa, Cardona and Igualada, **bearing a great history** and **monuments** as well as a long-standing market tradition. There are also **magnificent monasteries**, like Montserrat, L'Estany, Lluçà, Sant Benet de Bages and Sant Pere de Casserres. Likewise, there are **attractive mountain areas** like Montseny, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve bordering with Costa Barcelona, as well as Guillerics and Collsacabra around the Sau reservoir, a great spot for **water sports**. The monastery and mountain of **Montserrat** is much more than just a protected natural area; the natural park combines unique geological formations with numerous hiking trails and climbing routes. There is also **Castell de Montesquiu Park** with its famous castle surrounded by gardens, the origin of which dates back to the 10th century.

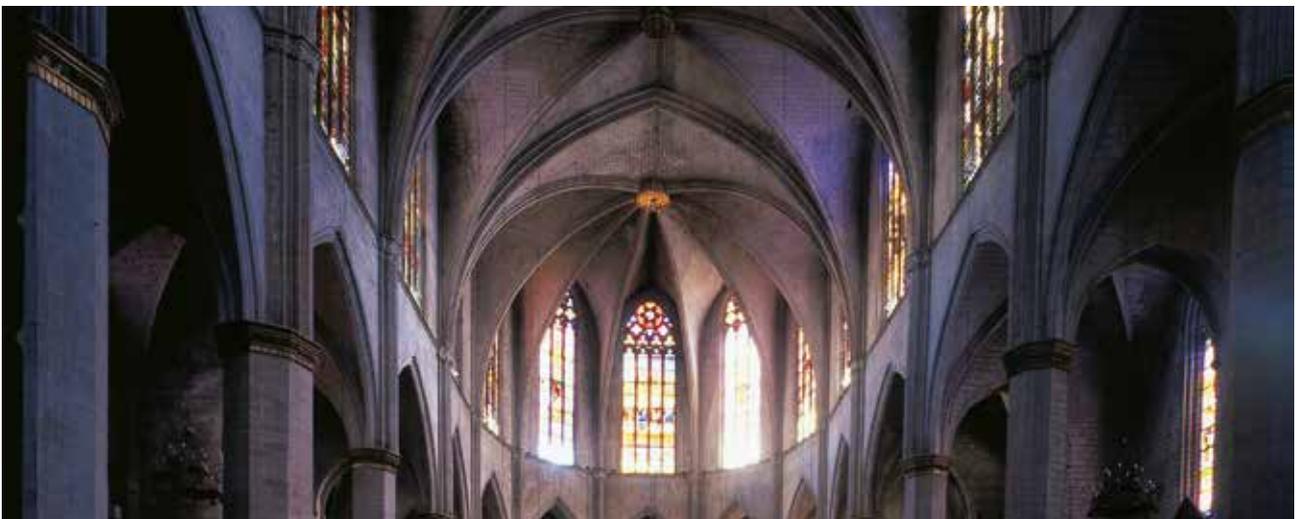
**Geotourism** is becoming an increasingly relevant tourist product. Over 36 million years ago, the geographical centre of Catalonia was underneath a sea that disappeared as the Pyrenees rose, a process that left spectacular rock formations and a wealth in natural resources that have shaped Catalonia's landscape and society. The **Geological and Mining Park of Central Catalonia** is a project that exploits the land's geological and mining assets as well as its tourist attractions, placing them under the umbrella of geotourism, thus providing an interesting first-rate tourist offer that blends culture, nature, geology, mining and gastronomy. Tourist attractions include **Toll caves** in Moià and Muntanya de Montserrat Natural Park. In Cardona, **Muntanya de Sal Cultural Park**, the castle, now a "Parador de Turismo" (state-run hotel), and the adjacent Romanesque Sant Vicenç collegiate church make one of the area's most relevant tourist assets.

The Sant Benet heritage site in Sant Fruitós de Bages nearby Manresa combines different singular projects: the Romanesque monastery, an architectural and cultural gem; the Fundació Alcía under the leadership of chef Ferran Adrià and cardiologist Valentí Fuster, devoted to popularising good food and health; four-star Món hotel with meeting rooms for congresses; and L'Ó restaurant featuring one Michelin star.

**Vic**, the capital of Osona county, features some important heritage expanding around arcaded Plaça Major or Plaça del Mercadal, famous for its weekly market. Remains of the old walls, a Roman temple and medieval, baroque and Art Nouveau buildings can be found in the town centre, yet its most notable landmarks are the cathedral with mural paintings by Josep Maria Sert inside and the Episcopal Museum boasting one of Europe's best medieval art collections. The charming villages of **Rupit and Pruitt**, placed amidst an utmost attractive ancestral environment, are also well worth a visit.

**Igualada**, the capital of Anoia county, has a long history related with the **leather industry**. One of its main attractions is the Leather

Museum featuring also the Anoia County Museum; it is located in two sites, Cal Bover factory and Cal Granotes, a former tannery. Another appealing option is the shopping route along high-end outlets. An interesting side trip leads to Capellades to visit the Paper Mill Museum and see how paper was made in former times. The county hosts the biggest international balloon meeting in the country, the European Balloon Festival in Igualada. Top **gastronomy** and especially **dry sausages** play a distinctive role in the whole region, together with **Pla de Bages DO** wines and a unique **wine tourism heritage** with the Vall del Flaquer Wine Vat Route and its dry stone vineyard huts featuring the extraordinary Tines de l'Escudelletta i d'en Ricardo vat collection.



# Tourist Experiences

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The **Catalan Tourist Board (CTB)** is the official body of the **Government of Catalonia** in charge of **promoting** and supporting **marketing** of Catalonia's **tourist resources**, both in the rest of Spain and abroad. Its purpose is to consolidate the image of the country as a **diverse top-range tourist destination**. A strategic goal of the CTB is to work out an **economically, socially and environmentally sustainable tourist model** for Catalonia. Sustainability has become a main decision-making criterion for customers when choosing a holiday or breakaway destination.

Based on this key requirement, the CTB is envisaging the promotion of the different tourist **products** by **categories of experience based on how visitors consume them**:

- Stays on the Catalan coast
- Routes and breakaways
- Stays inland and in the mountains
- Trips to cultivate specific interests (gastronomy, oil tourism, wine tourism, sports tourism, golf).
- Business tourism

In order to identify the best tourist experiences and focus their promotion efficiently, the CTB has divided the **offer into product lines**:

- Family Holidays
- Active and Nature Tourism
- Sports Tourism
- Enogastronomic Tourism
- Cultural Tourism
- Exclusive Tourism

## BRANDS, ENDORSED PRODUCTS AND RANKINGS

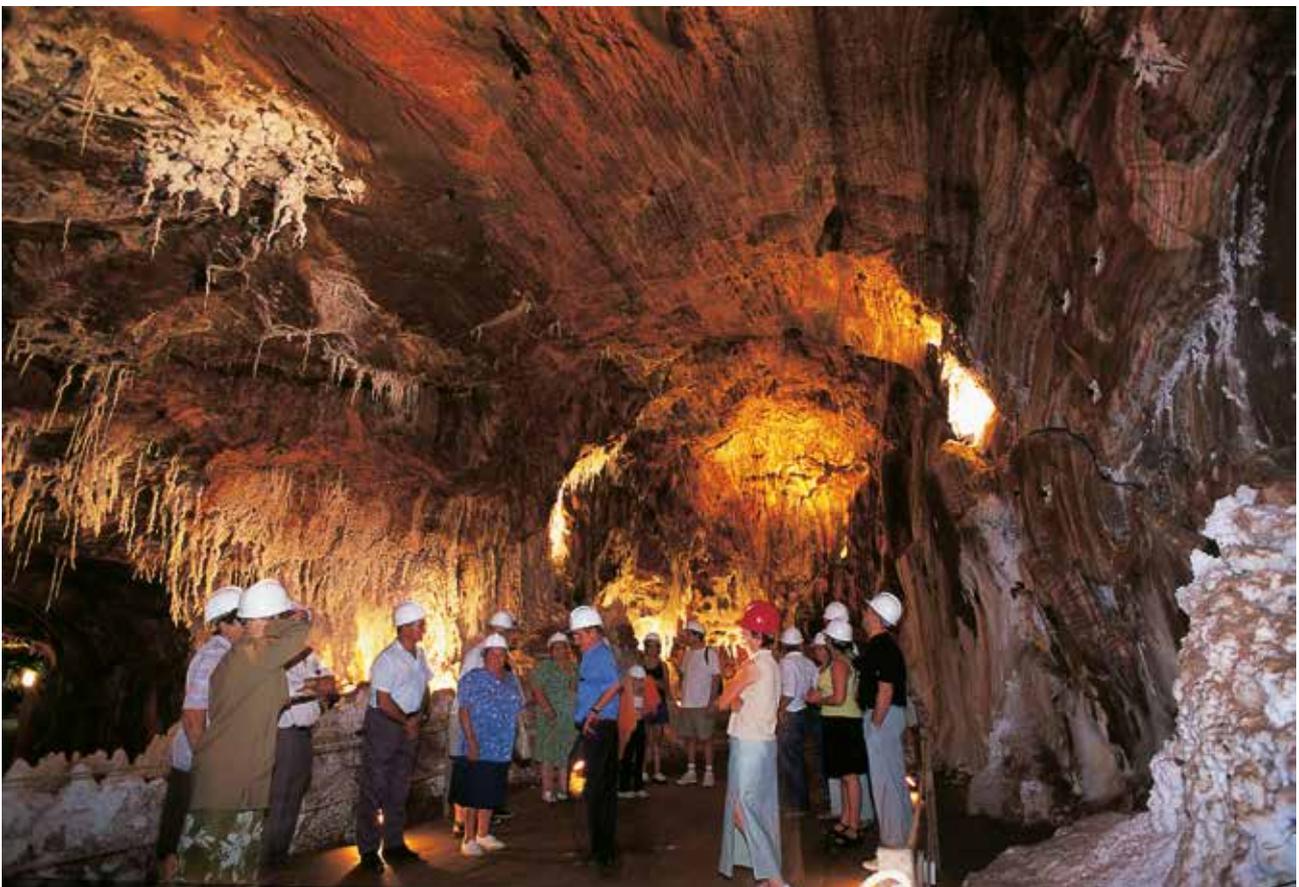
Following the **Tourist Marketing Plan** guidelines, the CTB is working in developing **new products and proposals** contributing to **adding value** and **differentiating** Catalonia's tourist offer through systematic cooperation with the Catalan tourist industry. The aim is to create a brand scheme generating **attractive segmented top-end proposals** based on specific standards.

**BRANDS:** Each brand created by the CTB designates a homogeneous marketable offer. Fulfilment of the requirements is supervised. The brands created so far are **Family-friendly beach holidays, Family-friendly adventure holidays, Family Attractions, Cycling in Catalonia, Active & Adventure, Sports Tourism, Golf in Catalonia, Wine Tourism, Gastronomic Experiences,**

**Gastronomic Hotels, Arts & Culture, Maritime Towns, Cities and Towns with Character, Charming Villages, Premium Catalonia, Barcelona Medical Destination** as well as **Catalunya Convention Bureau**.

Products with a higher recognition **endorsed by third parties** (Flower Towns of Catalonia, Slow Food, etc.) and **rankings** made by users, specialised media and bloggers will also be promoted.

Through its sales channel **[experience.catalunya.com](https://www.experience.catalunya.com)**, the Catalan Tourist Board offers the best tourist experiences provided throughout the country. It is available in five languages: Catalan, Spanish, English, French and German. Customers can choose from 14 product categories and check the blog with the best offers of the month.





# Activities in Natural and Rural Areas

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Catalonia boasts a wealthy natural heritage with natural parks and other protected natural areas, ideal for leisure, adventure activities and the enjoyment of nature. This allows visitors knowing the country's history as well as its natural and cultural heritage in an easy and pleasant way.

## ADVENTURE EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVE TOURISM

Catalonia's extraordinary biodiversity allows visitors doing **rafting** and **hydrospeed** on rivers like Noguera Pallaresa (Pirineus), a worldwide top destination, as well as river and sea **kayaking**, **canyoning**, **hang gliding**, **paragliding**, flying in a **balloon** or **light aircraft**, **parachuting**, **horse riding** and **rock climbing** in distinctive places such as Montserrat and Siurana (Costa Daurada). The coast boasts a great diversity in its seabed: to the north, the Costa Brava with over thirty **scuba diving centres** and two **marine**

**reserves** (Cap de Creus Natural Park and Illes Medes) plus Illes Formigues joining soon; further south are Costa Barcelona and Costa Daurada.

## HOLIDAYS IN A RURAL ENVIRONMENT

**Rural tourism** in Catalonia has consolidated as a **quality accommodation offer**, reaching a strong footprint across its territory and a high penetration in the Catalan market. **More than 2000 rural tourism businesses** registered with the Tourism Registry of Catalonia make Catalonia one of Spain's main destinations as regards the number of homes and beds.

With the aim of meeting the most recent challenges and requirements, rural tourism businesses follow a **5-class wheat ear** rating scheme based on the following parameters: house environment and building type, inner rooms, outdoor area, furniture and equipment, commercialisation conditions, services provided to guests (food, welcome, health, etc.) and cultural, nature, family and rural tourism activities offered to guests.

This rating scheme has been set out jointly by the Catalan rural tourism industry and the Government of Catalonia. It is a **pioneering scheme** in Europe aiming at becoming a key tool to consolidate and grow this tourist product in the future.

The **certification process** is **voluntary** and open to all rural tourism businesses in Catalonia. The five categories within the scheme are graphically identified by **wheat ears**, resulting in the following rating: **Basic - 1 wheat ear; Comfort - 2 wheat ears; Grand Comfort - 3 wheat ears; Superior - 4 wheat ears; Superior Premium - 5 wheat ears.**

## ECOTOURISM

Biosphere reserves, natural parks, unique landscapes—Catalonia boasts a land full of natural areas allowing for ecotourism. On a small territory than can be travelled from end to end in a single day, nature lovers will find endless ecotourist activities in one of its natural or protected areas, while complying with some basic principles such as a minimum environmental footprint, contributing to local development, awareness-raising, learning and helping save nature. Some of the most popular ecotourist activities of this kind in Catalonia are observation of fauna and flora, seabed exploration and hiking. However, there are many more proposals, such as listening to rutting deer in the Pyrenees, whale and dolphin watching in Cap de Creus Natural Park, doing scientific tourism in Catalonia's two biosphere reserves (Terres de l'Ebre and Montseny), watching free wild animals, diving in a marine reserve or gazing at the stars under a crystal-clear sky.



## BIRDWATCHING

Catalonia's strategic location and geographic diversity make it a **prime** birdwatching **destination**. On one single spring day, up to 200 bird species have been observed, as the short distance between the different ecosystems allows to start the day on the peaks of the Pyrenees and finish it on the Mediterranean coast. Besides the Ebro delta, Catalonia's birdwatching paradise par excellence, there are many other places of interest for this activity: Aiguamolls de l'Empordà, Llobregat delta, Ivars lake, Els Ports, Montserrat, Cap de Creus, Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, Cadí-Moixeró, Mont-rebei and Montsec. Many existing birdwatching **facilities** in Catalonia are **accessible** for persons with **reduced mobility**. The attraction of these areas and many more are introduced in the new birdwatching publication edited by the Catalan Tourist Board.

## NAUTICAL ACTIVITIES

Catalonia is a fine destination for **nautical tourism**, which can be done mainly at the sea, but also in rivers, lakes and reservoirs. There are a total **42 marinas** within the Catalan network comprising 50 harbours, all equipped with suitable facilities for sailors, plus **six nautical resorts**: Roses Cap de Creus and L'Estartit Illes Medes in Costa Brava; Santa Susanna and Vilanova i la Geltrú in Costa Barcelona; the Costa Daurada nautical resort including the municipalities of Salou, Cambrils, Mont-roig-Miami Platja, Vandellòs-L'Hospitalet de l'Infant, L'Ametlla de Mar, L'Ampolla and Deltebre-Riumar; and Sant Carles de la Ràpita-Delta de l'Ebre in Terres de l'Ebre.

Both marinas and nautical resorts provide a **great variety in activities** for both adults and children, such as snorkelling, kitesurfing, flyboard, standup paddle boarding, fly fish, sailing, rowing, jet skiing, kayaking, sailing a catamaran or other available boats and fishing.

## FUN IN THE SNOW

With such charming areas like Cerdanya, Núria Valley and Val d'Aran, the **Catalan Pyrenees** are an ideal destination to enjoy the snow. Catalonia has been pioneering in skiing as La Molina ski resort in Cerdanya opened in 1943, the first in all Spain and now featuring a high accessibility standard. Four years later Vall de Núria followed, also in the Eastern Pyrenees.

Skiing in Catalonia attracts over two million visitors every year. There are **16 ski resorts** in the Catalan Pyrenees, providing a varied offer, the largest in Spain. The overall skiing area encompasses 600 kilometres of slopes and a capacity to carry around 165,000 skiers per hour.

The 10 **alpine ski** resorts are Baqueira Beret, Boí Taüll Resort, Espot Esquí, La Molina, Masella, Port Ainé, Port del Comte, Tavascan, Vall de Núria and Vallter 2000. There are in addition 6 **Nordic ski** resorts with cross-country slopes and snow racket routes. These are Aransa, Guils Fontanera, Lles, Sant Joan de l'Erm, Tuixén-La Vansa and Virós-Vall Ferrera. Besides, resorts such as La Molina, Baqueira Beret and Tavascan also offer adapted activities and circuits. The Pyrenees also provide opportunities for other snow-related activities, such as snow **racket walks, snow bikes, surfing, Telemark skiing, dog sled riding, ice climbing, heliskiing, ice diving and igloo construction**.

All-year sports and leisure facilities have turned ski resorts into tourist destinations beyond the winter season, featuring now a significant year-round offer. Thanks to their top facilities, the Catalan Pyrenees are the venue of numerous national and international competitions every season.

In addition to most ski resorts, different companies provide this sort of services. All this is completed **with a wide accommodation offer** with all imaginable comfort, traditional mountain cuisine that stays up-to-date and numerous personal wellness centres.





# Accessible Catalonia

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Catalonia is one of Europe's most accessible tourist destinations. The Catalan tourist industry is increasingly aware of the need to remove architectural and communication barriers and adapt most places to allow everybody, especially the disabled and persons with reduced mobility, enjoy top-quality holidays and leisure.

This is proven by its **27 proposals and destinations** identified as examples of best practice in accessible tourism, showing that tourism for everybody has actually come true in Catalonia. These tourist proposals chosen for their high degree of accessibility provide a complete tourist experience with a whole set of services and facilities adapted to the visitors' needs: accommodation, restaurants, museums, side activities, beaches, etc. The areas and proposals identified are:

- Vall de Boí- Val d'Aran
- Pallars Sobirà
- La Seu d'Urgell
- La Molina-La Cerdanya
- La Garrotxa
- Costa Brava-Alt Empordà
- Costa Brava-Baix Empordà
- Lleida
- Vic-Osona
- Maresme
- Barcelona
- Ebro Delta
- Garraf-Sitges
- Costa Daurada
- Penedès-Accessible Wine Tourism
- Dalí Route
- Cistercian Route
- Route of the Monasteries along St. James' Way in Catalonia
- Industrial Tourism
- St. James' Way for Everybody
- Terra Alta and Sebes Natural Reserve
- Tarragona-World Heritage
- Montseny and Sant Llorenç del Munt Natural Parks
- Lloret de Mar
- El Montsec-Starlight
- Terrassa

According to its promotion plan, the Catalan Tourist Board has a specific website, [www.turismeperatohom.catalunya.com/en](http://www.turismeperatohom.catalunya.com/en), providing information on the offer in accessible tourism in Catalonia not only in the 27 accessible tourist destinations and proposals singled out as best practice, but also those facilities, resources and services elsewhere also catering for persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility. The website complies with the highest accessibility and usability standards. It provides information on accessibility according to the type of disability (physical, auditory or visual impairment or persons with reduced mobility). The website is available in Catalan, Spanish, English, Italian, German and French and contains videos with contents in two sign languages (Catalan-LSC and Spanish-LSE) plus International Sign (IS).

## PROPOSALS FOR ALL TASTES

Catalonia offers **over 150 km of accessible Green Ways and paths**. The accessible Green Way stretch in Terra Alta is one of the few Green Ways in all Spain adapted to visually impaired people.

Some examples of best practices in this area are found in **Camins de Vent, Vol de Coloms** and **Globus Kon-Tiki**, companies specialising in balloon flights, which were pioneering in Spain in providing gondolas adapted to persons with reduced mobility. Some **scuba diving centres, riding schools** and **kayaking businesses** have adapted their offer to become accessible. L'Escala sailing school has become a reference in adapted sailing, and **La Molina ski resort** is pioneering in adapted skiing as it arranged its facilities for the disabled several years



The Catalan Tourist Board engages in making Catalonia an accessible destination for everybody. It considers that the concept of accessible tourism has to be based on the principle that tourism is a fundamental social right for all human beings. For the disabled and persons with reduced mobility as well as the rest, anything under the leisure and tourism label is crucial for the quality of life.

ago, allowing them access to winter sports. **Tavascan ski resort** in Pallars Sobirà has also adapted some routes with cross-country ski slopes and snow racket paths for persons with some sort of intellectual impairment, training guides to accompany them.

Especially remarkable is the action taken by many **museums and monuments in Catalonia** to improve accessibility for persons with sensorial disabilities (deaf, hearing impaired, blind and visually impaired). Plans in Braille and high relief, audio descriptions and tactile scale models have positioned **La Pedrera** among Europe's most accessible museums for the blind and visually impaired. With the inclusion of sign guide devices, the **National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC)** became the first in all Spain providing this service to the deaf in two sign languages (Catalan and Spanish) plus International Sign (IS). There are also **numerous accessible beaches** along Catalonia's coast with facilities for persons with disabilities or reduced mobility.

Apart from promoting this entire offer, the CTB is working in its marketing. To do so, there are increasingly more **travel agents specialising** in this sort of products.

Within this area, the Catalan Tourist Board has obtained numerous acknowledgements and awards ever since it started the Accessible Tourism – Tourism for Everybody project, featuring prominently the **Intermedia-Globe Silver Award** from the World Media Festival in Hamburg for the "T'espero" tourist promotion campaign in sign language and with subtitles, the **Solidary Award of the Spanish National Blind Organisation (ONCE)** in the Public Administration category and the first European **CHARTS 2014** award for promoting cultural and sustainable tourism.

Within the World Travel Market 2017 held in London, the promoters of the "Responsible Tourism Day" initiative gave the **WRTD (World Responsible Tourism Day) award** to the Catalan Tourist Board (CTB) for a sixth consecutive year as a recognition of Catalonia's work in implementing and promoting accessible tourism.

Accessible Tourism – Tourism for Everybody was one of the main aspects that earned Catalonia the first **Biosphere Label** certification as a fully responsible tourist destination in 2015, which is awarded by the Institute of Responsible Tourism, a body

related to the UNESCO and a partner to the World Tourism Organization and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

The commitment and effort to implement a true tourism for everybody has led Catalonia to join the **European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)** and the **International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO)** as well as to chair again the **Network of European Regions**

**for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (NECSTouR)** for the 2018-2021 period.

Within this network, several destinations, among which Catalonia, have engaged in developing accessible tourism in Europe and are bringing forward best practices in this area, with different recommendations to be implemented by all EU countries as a part of their tourism policies.





# Sports and Golf Tourism

Catalonia has a great sporting tradition, with internationally renowned top facilities such as the Olympic Ring, where the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games took place, the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Montmeló or the Camp Nou, home to FC Barcelona. It also boasts an excellent climate for outdoor sports throughout the year, as well as a geographic situation allowing for doing any sort of sports from the sea to the high mountains.

## SPORTS TOURISM LABEL

This **specialisation label** awarded by the Catalan Tourist Board recognises destinations and specialised businesses characterised by offering top-range resources and services aimed at sports-loving visitors. The CTB has developed this programme according to priority segments as to demand: top-level athletes, professional athletes, amateurs and tourists wishing to do sports or watch competitions in Catalonia.

Apart from the certified municipalities, the label also encompasses sports facilities,

specialised travel agencies, specialised accommodation and other specific service providers. The Sports Tourism label includes the following sports: track & field, football, tennis, team sports, rowing, kayaking, sailing, swimming, road cycling, running and triathlon. The number of Catalan municipalities featuring the label has constantly grown since its creation in 2003. They are currently 11:

- **Amposta** (rowing, flatwater kayaking) [www.amposta.cat](http://www.amposta.cat)
- **Calella** (swimming, running, cycling, triathlon) [www.calellabarcelona.com](http://www.calellabarcelona.com)
- **Cambrils** (football, sailing, cycling) [www.cambrils-turisme.com](http://www.cambrils-turisme.com)

The Catalan Tourist Board features two new publications on sports tourism, one on the certified swimming offer and another on road cycling routes. Both list the certified municipalities, facilities, services and accommodation in Catalonia, which are available on the [www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com) website.

- **Castelldefels** (rowing, flatwater kayaking)  
[www.castelldefels.org](http://www.castelldefels.org)
- **Girona** (cycling, swimming, running, tennis) [www.girona.cat/turisme](http://www.girona.cat/turisme)
- **L'Ametlla de Mar** (sailing)  
[www.visitametllademar.com](http://www.visitametllademar.com)
- **L'Hospitalet de Llobregat** (track & field, football, team sports, swimming)  
[www.l-h.cat](http://www.l-h.cat)
- **Lloret de Mar** (track & field, football, team sports, cycling, swimming)  
[www.lloretdemar.org](http://www.lloretdemar.org)
- **Salou** (football, sailing)  
[www.visitsalou.eu](http://www.visitsalou.eu)
- **Santa Susanna** (football, team sports, sailing, cycling) [www.santasusanna.org](http://www.santasusanna.org)
- **Sort** (whitewater kayaking)  
[www.sortturisme.com](http://www.sortturisme.com)

## GOLF TOURISM

The mild Mediterranean climate and a natural environment combining the beauty of the mountains with beaches make Catalonia a perfect place for golf lovers and one of Europe's main golf destinations, where this sport can be done all year round. Looking back to a long-standing, century-long **golf tradition**, Catalonia's offer is widespread and varied, featuring **37 golf, 5 par 3 and over 40 pitch & putt courses**. Created in some cases by renowned architects, they are all part of resorts or lie close to facilities specifically designed for golf players and amateurs as well as accompanying persons, providing a great side offer generally related to health and wellness, gastronomy, culture and leisure.





# Wine Tourism

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Catalonia boasts a winemaking heritage dating back 2000 years in history, since the Greeks and Romans arrived in Empúries. At over 65,000 hectares of vineyards and an annual output above 380 millions of bottles of wine and cava (sparkling wine), Catalonia is a wine tourist destination with a major potential.

Wine tourism can be enjoyed in any of **Catalonia's twelve denominations of origin**, which give an insight into a diverse, attractive landscape, from breeze-swept vineyards by the seaside to those extending over the large inland plains or climbing up the slopes. Year-round proposals include visits to over **300 wine cellars**, strolls through vineyards, rich heritage to enjoy as well as wine and food pairing.

## CATALONIA: ONE LAND, TWELVE DENOMINATIONS OF ORIGIN

Twelve denominations of origin certify the quality of Catalan wines. These are: Alella DO, Conca de Barberà DO, Costers del Segre DO,

Empordà DO, Montsant DO, Penedès DO, Pla de Bages DO, Priorat DOQ, Tarragona DO and Terra Alta DO, plus Cava DO and Catalunya DO. There are well-structured **wine tourist routes** throughout Catalonia, such as Priorat, Lleida-Costers del Segre and Empordà DO wine routes as well as Penedès and Alella DO Wine Tourism.

**Large** world-famous **wineries**, **traditional** family-run wine **cellars** with **organic** and **biodynamic production**, **Art Nouveau** buildings known as "wine cathedrals", **modest huts** amidst vineyards, **centennial manor houses**, **avant-gardist architecture**—all of them provide a glimpse into the world of Catalan wine. They are also usually located close to unique heritages sites, such as Poblet monastery, Sant Pere de Rodes, Escala Dei or Empúries.

The Catalan Tourist Board has created the wine tourism brand to develop, foster and consolidate a specific offer in high-value experiences and activities aimed at knowing and enjoying the Catalan wine heritage and culture.

Catalonia's wine-making history can also be discovered by visiting the different **museums and interpretive centres devoted to wine and cava**. The most prominent examples include Castell del Vi (Falset), Vallmora Wine Tourist and Archaeological Centre, Fassina CIC-Cava Interpretive Centre (Sant Sadurní d'Anoia) and Vinseum (Vilafranca del Penedès).

Wine tourism in Catalonia can also be combined with some of the **more than 180 wine gastronomic events** held along the year and all sorts of active proposals to discover

the vineyards in a different way: walking, by e-bike, Segway, mountain bike, 4WD, on horseback or even by helicopter or sailing boat. A wine therapy session is a great way of closing a day in style.

There are **forty travel** agents in Catalonia specialising in organising complete high-end wine tourist experiences.

Many **wine tourist experiences** in Catalonia are designed to be enjoyed in family, in couples or with friends and are also prepared to welcome handicapped people and persons with reduced mobility.





# Gastronomy

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Discovering a country's gastronomy, strolling along market stalls, buying, savouring and chatting with its cuisine makers, travelling along wine routes—all this and much more makes enogastronomic tourism.

Gastronomy is a part of a nation's cultural heritage. The Catalan cuisine dates back to times immemorial, with a long tradition of recipes gathered in ancient handbooks. An example for it is the *Llibre de Sent Soví*, a Catalan recipe book from the 14th century, considered one of Europe's oldest and a landmark in early Catalan cuisine.

Catalonia is playing an **international leading role** in gastronomy, as its recognition as European Region of Gastronomy 2016 shows. Ferran Adrià, Carme Ruscalleda, Joan Roca, Carles Gaig and Sergi Arola, among others, have become ambassadors of our culture. Catalonia features **65 stars** in the **2019 Michelin Guide**. In addition to the great names of Catalan cuisine, the gastronomic landscape also features the **Cuisine Associations of Catalonia**, groups of restaurants and other food establishments whose offer is based on local produce, the

cuisine and the territory they represent. They are the following:

## In Costa Brava:

- Cuina de l'Empordanet
- Cuina del Vent
- Girona Bons Fogons
- Grup Gastronòmic del Pla de l'Estany
- Girona Territori d'Estrelles

## In Costa Barcelona:

- Club de Tast del Gremi d'Hostaleria de Sitges
- Corbera Sabors
- Col·lectiu Cubat
- Cuina Vallès
- Cuina VO
- Vilafranca Ve de Gust

## In Barcelona:

- Barceloneta Cuina

## In Terres de Lleida:

- Noguera Cuina

Catalonia's gastronomic offer provides a great wealth of options to experience the Catalan cuisine in multiple ways. Strolling between market stalls, enjoying a day out with professional fishermen, cooking typical dishes, visiting artisan cheesemakers, sausage makers or oil mills, having an insight into wine cellars, visiting specialised museums and exhibition and research centres... A unique offer is a stay at one of the 48 gastronomic hotels. This small family-like accommodation label provides a gastronomic offer largely composed of Catalan dishes made with local produce with Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographic Indication (PGI) as well as Catalan wines.

#### In Costa Daurada:

El Gust és Nostre  
Tarragona Gastronòmica  
Terra i Taula

#### In Pirineus:

Cuina Pirinenca de Cerdanya  
Cuina Volcànica  
Cuines de la Vall de Camprodon  
Fogons de la Vall de Ribes  
La Xicoia  
El Club dels Sabors del Berguedà

#### In Terres de l'Ebre:

Cuina La Ràpita-Delta de l'Ebre  
Club de Gastronomia de l'Ametlla de Mar  
L'Essència de l'Arròs d'Amposta

#### In Paisatges Barcelona:

Osona Cuina  
Els Fogons del Bages  
Cardona Sabors

Catalonia cultivates and produces a large **basket of quality products**. Some of them have different origin and food quality labels such as the denominations of origin and protected geographic indications. **Organic products** take a relevant position in the Catalan agrofood offer and are audited and certified by the Catalan Organic Agricultural

Production Council (CCPAE). The **Slow Food** movement in its turn is gaining support year after year. This international association intends to safeguard food, raw materials and growing and processing techniques passed on by local tradition consolidated over time. A total **44 restaurants** from all over Catalonia have been awarded the **km 0 label** by the Slow Food association.

The role of **crafts** at the table is also important. The ties between cuisine, produce and the land shall point out the role of craftspeople manufacturing products related with gastronomy, for either the kitchen or the table, like basketry, wooden spoons and forks, blown glasses and earthenware pots.

In Catalonia there are numerous **gastronomic meetings and routes** that allow discovering the land this way. **More than 300 enogastronomic events and shows** take place during the year. Biannual events such as the Gastronomic Forum held in Barcelona from 10 to 12 November 2019, Alimentaria Barcelona, the Catalan Wine and Cava Show and Mercat de Mercats, also in Barcelona, as well as the Health and Slow Food Fair in Lleida are noteworthy.



# Great Cultural Icons and Great Routes

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Culture is Catalonia's hallmark, a land of artists and entrepreneurs drawing its innovation spirit and cosmopolitanism from its past. Being a millenary country, Catalonia boasts a unique artistic and monumental heritage in Europe, making it a preferred destination for cultural tourism. As a result of this historical and cultural legacy, the UNESCO has declared a total eleven World Heritage sites, three masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage and two Biosphere Reserves in Catalonia (cf. Tourist Attractions).

Catalonia's cultural potential is manifold and follows the track of history from the Neanderthal man to the present, including Iberians, Greeks and Romans, as well as **different architectural styles**, from Romanesque, Gothic and Art Nouveau to the present day, in which renowned architects like Jean Nouvel, Norman Foster, Richard Meier, Enric Miralles, Benedetta Tagliabue, Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron and the RCR studio from Olot, 2017 Pritzker Prize winners, have left their imprint to create the symbols of the new Barcelona that is looking for a prominent place in the world. **Art Nouveau architects** like Gaudí, Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Josep Puig i Cadafalch and Josep M. Jujol left their

works scattered all over the country. Apart from **renowned writers**, Catalonia also boasts the creations of great geniuses of art, like the members of the so-called Catalan painting school (Joaquim Vayreda, Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Ramon Casas, Isidre Nonell, Joaquim Torres-Garcia, Albert Ràfols Casamada, etc.) or contemporary **artists** such as Dalí, Picasso, Miró and Tàpies. Their work can be admired in museums.

This is added by **routes** that have become **consolidated** as prime tourist attractions, like Camí de Sant Jaume (the Catalan stretch of St. James' Way), Camí dels Bons Homes (Good Men's Way), Catalunya Jueva (Jewish Catalonia), Ruta dels Íbers (Iberian Route),

There are also several pilgrimage routes in Catalonia. One of them is the Cistercian Route between three monasteries of that religious order in Conca de Barberà, Alt Camp and Urgell counties, featuring World Heritage site Poblet. The Camí de Sant Jaume (Catalan stretch of St. James' Way links Catalonia with Santiago de Compostela, while the Camí Ignasià (Ignatian Way) crosses the country in seven stages to Manresa. In a nearby cave on the river Llobregat, Ignatius of Loyola wrote his Spiritual Exercises.

Ruta del Císter (Cistercian Route), Ruta del Romànic (Romanesque Route) or the various routes associated to cultural, industrial and religious heritage, including the Ignatian Way.

There is further an endless offer in cosmopolitan **Barcelona** and other cities such as **Tarragona**, Girona and Lleida (**all of which are connected by high-speed train**), ideal places for urban tourism combining their cultural lure with a wide range of leisure options. In this respect, the offer in musical tourism is large, with unique venues like the Girona Auditorium, La Llotja in Lleida as well as the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Auditori and the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona.

Several towns also organise summer **music festivals** in heritage sites and areas of special artistic interest, such as the Castell de Peralada International Festival, the International Music Festival in Torroella de Montgrí, the Santa Florentina Music Festival, the habanera singing in Calella de Palafrugell and the International Music Festival in

Cantonigròs. In this respect, great cellist **Pau Casals** is also noteworthy. His birthplace **El Vendrell** (Costa Daurada) features the Vil·la Casals museum house and the Pau Casals Auditorium with a fine music programme.

Catalonia has **more than 400 museums and arts centres** devoted to all periods and styles, completed by a vast exhibition programme. Three of its finest examples are the National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC), housing one of the world's largest collections of Romanesque art and an Art Nouveau collection, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA) and the Museum of Science and Technology of Catalonia (mNACTEC), located in the Art Nouveau Vapor Aymerich, Amat i Jover building in Terrassa, with branches scattered throughout Catalonia.

**Sanctuaries and monasteries** can be found all over Catalonia, most of them devoted to the Virgin Mary. The most noticeable shrines are in Montserrat, Catalonia's main spiritual centre located in an astonishingly shaped mountain, and Núria in a Pyrenean valley.



# Hiking and Cycling

The Catalan footpath network is linked to the European and Peninsular networks thanks to its almost 9000 kilometres of signposted ways, more than half of which are part of the long distance footpaths (GR), the rest being short distance (PR) and local ones (SL).

Some **routes** are noteworthy for their **uniqueness**: Camí dels Bons Homes (Good Men's Way) follows the ancient routes of the Cathar exiles; Carros de Foc (Fire Chariots) connects different huts in Aigüestortes National Park; Porta del Cel (Gate to Heaven) links four huts in Alt Pirineu Natural Park; Cavalls del Vent (Wind Horses) leads through Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park; and Estels del Sud (Southern Stars) is a trek through Els Ports Natural Park.

**Other interesting routes** are Camí de Sant Jaume (St. James' Way), the pilgrimage way between Sant Pere de Rodes and Alcarràs, accessible and featuring downloadable information on all its stages; the Cistercian Route; the Ignatian Way through half Catalonia; Els Tres Monts (The Three Mountains) linking three significant natural areas, Montseny, Sant Llorenç del Munt i

l'Obac and Montserrat; Ruta dels Refugis (Hut Route) through Montsant Natural Park and the Prades range; Ruta del Ter (Ter Route) along the course of that river; El Cinquè Llac (The Fifth Lake), a responsible and sustainable circular hiking route in five stages through the Lleida counties in the Catalan Pyrenees; Camins del Bisbe i Abat Oliba (Bishop and Abbot Oliba Ways) through Paisatges Barcelona; Picasso Way in the Pyrenees; as well as the Itinerànnia footpath network and the patrol ways in the Girona counties.

In this respect, Catalonia is leading the **Hiking Europe** project created to foster rural development by creating a tourist product focusing on **hiking routes**.

There is also a wide offer to discover and enjoy Catalonia by **bike**. The **Green Ways**

Catalonia is prepared for welcoming hikers and cycling tourists, providing facilities and services in many municipalities as well as cycling routes, bike rental companies and accommodation addressed at this tourist segment, able to cater for all its specific needs: safe storage rooms, washing facilities, repair tools, etc.

(Vies Verdes), accessible paths along abandoned railway lines, the Pedals de Foc route to discover the surroundings of Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park and some **cycling route** networks like that in Baix Empordà are most notable.

For **mountain bikers**, Catalonia has a complete network of **mountain biking centres** spread all over the country, a pioneering project in Spain set up seventeen years ago. The **Transcatalunya** mountain bike route covering more than 1200 kilometres allows exploring the land by stages, linking the Catalan mountain biking

centres. Mountain biking centres in Catalonia are freely accessible areas with a minimum 100 kilometres of signposted ways starting from a visitor centre with tourist information and cycling services. The 18 mountain biking centres composing the network offer **more than 300 routes with over 6400 kilometres of signposted ways** and different degrees of difficulty.

Catalonia also boasts a wide network of roads and sealed rural paths for **road cycling**, as well as fine weather, varied landscape and services catering for cyclists. The CTB has edited a map with some routes, available at [www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com).



# Medical Tourism

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Barcelona and Catalonia provide top-quality medical care that attracts numerous foreign visitors, completed by a prime tourist offer with great services and facilities.

Thanks to the high level of medical research and hospital care, thousands of patients come each year to Catalan clinics and hospitals from abroad, attracted by the excellent facilities and specialists in the different branches of medicine and healthcare to follow some treatment or undergo surgery.

Ophthalmology, obstetrics and foetal medicine, gynaecology and reproductive medicine, cosmetic and restorative surgery, oncology and haematology, neurorehabilitation, traumatology and orthopaedics, cardiology and transplantations are some areas in which Catalan medicine takes a leading position.

The World Health Organisation and independent experts acknowledge **the Catalan health system as one of the world's best**. Medical tourism is precisely a main factor in retaining medical talent in Catalonia and keeping this excellent level of Catalan healthcare.

The institutions associated to Barcelona Medical Destination are:

- BarnaClínic+ (Hospital Clínic Group)
- Barraquer (Barraquer Ophthalmologic Centre)
- Clínica ServiDigest (Medical-Surgical Centre)
- Dexeus (Dexeus University Hospital)
- ICO (Institut Comtal d'Oftalmologia)
- IMO (Institute of Ocular Microsurgery)
- IMOR (Medical Institute for Radiation Oncology)
- Guttman Institute
- Quirón (Hospital QuironSalud Barcelona)
- Sant Joan de Déu (Mother & Child Hospital)
- Teknon (Teknon Medical Centre)

**Barcelona Medical Destination is the promotion brand for medical tourism created by the Catalan Tourist Board. It is partnered by Barcelona Centre Mèdic and Barcelona Medical Agency associations and gathers relevant healthcare centres with the aim of positioning Catalonia, and more specifically Barcelona, as an international top medical tourist destination.**

# Premium

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Catalonia is a small yet extraordinarily diverse territory. Its flavours have been inherited from a millenary history, but are also founded on the avant-garde of arts and cuisine. Roman and medieval remains come together with unparalleled architecture by the great masters from Antoni Gaudí to Norman Foster, while centennial shops and craft workshops share the same neighbourhoods with boutiques featuring the latest trends and luxury hotels.

This is a land rich in wines and fresh produce from the sea, the orchard and the mountains. Together with a long-standing culinary tradition, this has placed the Catalan cuisine among the most reputed in the world. Numerous chefs in Catalonia feature Michelin stars, their restaurants being scattered across the whole territory. Besides haute cuisine, Catalans have been able to preserve their most traditional recipes carrying us back to the origins of this fascinating Mediterranean culture.

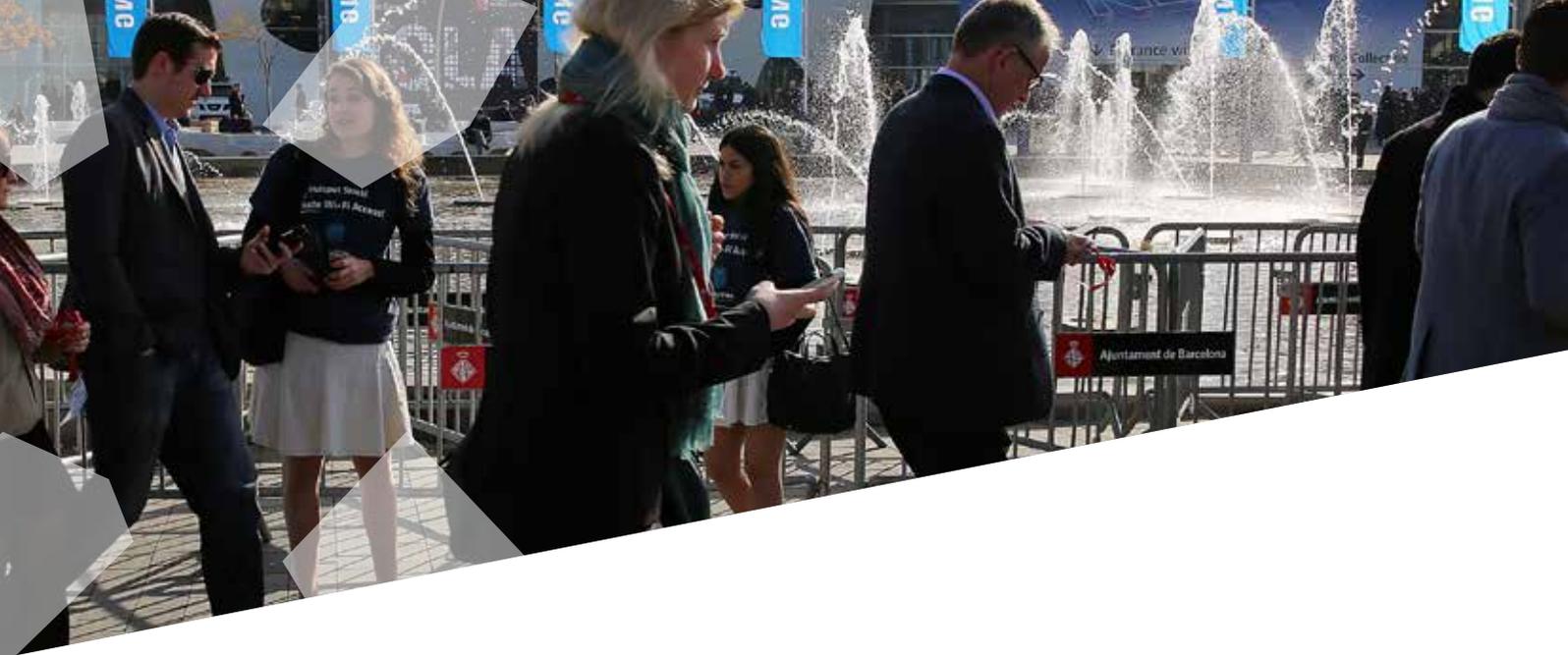
The city of **Barcelona is the gate** to the whole **universe of feelings** conveyed by this fascinating territory. It is just a short way from the capital to the Pyrenees, the medieval villages in Lleida or the numerous beaches—wide in Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre, secluded between cliffs in Costa Brava. All this is completed by a climate that allows enjoying the snow in winter and the sun and the sea during many months of the year, especially in summer. Add to this a well-

preserved legacy declared World Heritage: Art Nouveau architecture, Roman Tarraco, Poblet monastery and the Romanesque churches in Vall de Boí, together with the Immaterial Heritage of La Patum, the *Castellers* and the Pyrenees *Falles*.

Catalonia boasts a **wide range of top-level** facilities, hotels and restaurants. On top of that, there are also experts ready to take care of any detail to allow you enjoy some exquisite experiences you will never forget. Catalonia has always a select proposal to offer, suiting everybody, no matter their age, lifestyle or origin.



The Catalan Tourist Board has created the Premium Catalonia brand aimed at companies and organisations within the luxury segment providing premium offers to excite visitors to Catalonia who are looking for some true, exclusive and customised experience.



# Business Tourism

Catalonia is one of Europe's most dynamic destinations and Spain's leading economic, industrial and business region. Its strategic position, the mild Mediterranean climate and one of Europe's highest living standards make it an ideal place to live and do business.

Organisers of meetings will find good facilities, a big variety of locations, unique settings and highly qualified specialist services in Catalonia, which add to a long-standing tourist expertise. There are many reasons to choose Catalonia as the venue of an event, like great organisational skills, a wide side offer and the status of its capital Barcelona as an international landmark in business tourism.

## CATALUNYA CONVENTION BUREAU

The **Catalunya Convention Bureau (CCB)** is a brand of the Catalan Tourist Board aimed at positioning Catalonia as a fully-fledged business tourism destination. After several years of functioning, the CCB has reformulated its relations with institutions and companies working in bringing meetings

to Catalonia. The goal of this new model of relations is to implement new working patterns between the existing Convention Bureaux, thus providing more marketing services and support actions to companies while optimising resources and bundling efforts to make Catalonia a more competitive destination.

Based in Barcelona, the Catalunya Convention Bureau welcomes professionals of the meeting industry at any of the twelve offices held by the Catalan Tourist Board in Spain, France, the UK, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, the US, Russia, China, the Benelux, Southeast Asia and South America.

- Exhaustive knowledge of Catalonia
- Free and unbiased professional advice
- Contact and intermediation with companies

The Ambassadors programme by the CCB has currently around 150 members throughout Catalonia. It intends to single out and provide support to Catalan professionals from different branches able to attract congresses and events and thus create new business and knowledge opportunities for the country.

- Support to nominations to capture congresses
- Prospection trips and actions to communicate the offer

The CCB has a website, <http://www.catalunya.com/es/catalunya-convention-bureau-ccb>, featuring the whole offer in Catalonia related to the brand. The different supports created to promote Catalonia as a complete destination for events, congresses and incentives are published there:

**CATALONIA CONGRESSES AND EVENTS** featuring nine destinations with capacity to host congresses as they provide modern facilities and a big organisational expertise in this area. These are Barcelona, Sitges, Castelldefels, Girona, Lloret de Mar, Tarragona, Reus, PortAventura and Lleida.

**107 EXPERIENCES TO ENJOY CATALONIA TOGETHER.** It includes more than a hundred activities for business tourism and event groups (incentives, teambuilding, outdoors...). The publication is divided into four blocks: Adventure – Sports – Nature; Gastronomy – Culinary – Oenology; Tours & Activities – Teambuilding; Tradition – Culture – Arts – Design.

**MEETING PLANNER GUIDE** containing all the necessary information to organise any kind of meeting in Catalonia. This publication includes the offer of over 170 CCB member companies and organisations. It is distributed to agencies specialising in the organisation of congresses, conventions and incentive trips as well as associations and companies looking for a destination and facilities to hold their events and meetings.

**PROMOTIONAL VIDEO** on Catalonia as an ideal destination to host all sorts of business meetings.



# Family Holidays

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A high number of tourists visiting Catalonia are families. Hence, Catalonia has been therefore pioneering in Europe in looking for a certified brand for family-friendly destinations. The Family Tourism programme by the Catalan Tourist Board encompasses over 50 municipalities and more than 400 businesses.

The Catalan Tourist Board features three **specialisation labels** ensuring that a destination has an offer in accommodation, restaurants and leisure adapted to the needs of families: miniclubs with wardens, children playgrounds, water and theme parks, children seats and menus in restaurants, children swimming pools, identification wristbands, safety at all destinations, a wide children animation programme at the accommodation and in the street, connected rooms, available cots and pushchairs, socket protectors, etc. There are currently 25 **family-friendly destinations** in Catalonia, of which 19 feature the **Family-friendly beach holidays** label and 6 the **Family-friendly adventure holidays** label:

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY BEACH HOLIDAYS

In **COSTA BRAVA**:

- Blanes / [www.visitblanes.net](http://www.visitblanes.net)
- Calonge-Sant Antoni / [www.calonge-santantoni.com](http://www.calonge-santantoni.com)
- Castell-Platja d'Aro / [www.platjadaro.com](http://www.platjadaro.com)
- Lloret de Mar / [www.lloretdemar.org](http://www.lloretdemar.org)
- Roses / [www.visit.roses.cat](http://www.visit.roses.cat)
- Sant Feliu de Guíxols / [www.visitguixols.com](http://www.visitguixols.com)
- Torroella de Montgrí - l'Estartit / [www.visitestartit.com](http://www.visitestartit.com)
- Sant Pere Pescador / [www.visitsantpere.com](http://www.visitsantpere.com)

The certified family-friendly offer is provided by partner businesses having made an effort to adapt and improve their service, thus providing optimum quality to families. The range goes from accommodation to leisure including water parks, museums, nautical businesses and resorts and restaurants with an offer adapted to cater for children.

In **COSTA BARCELONA:**

- Calella / [www.calellabarcelona.com](http://www.calellabarcelona.com)
- Malgrat de Mar / [www.turismemalgrat.com](http://www.turismemalgrat.com)
- Pineda de Mar / [www.pinedademarturisme.cat](http://www.pinedademarturisme.cat)
- Santa Susanna / [www.stasusanna-barcelona.es](http://www.stasusanna-barcelona.es)
- Castelldefels / [www.castelldefelsturisme.com](http://www.castelldefelsturisme.com)
- Vilanova i la Geltrú / [www.vilanovaturisme.cat](http://www.vilanovaturisme.cat)

In **COSTA DAURADA:**

- Calafell / [www.turisme.calafell.cat](http://www.turisme.calafell.cat)
- Cambrils / [www.cambrils.cat/turisme](http://www.cambrils.cat/turisme)
- Salou / [www.visitsalou.eu](http://www.visitsalou.eu)
- Vila-seca la Pineda Platja / [www.lapinedaplatja.info](http://www.lapinedaplatja.info)
- El Vendrell / [www.elvendrellturistic.com](http://www.elvendrellturistic.com)

- Valls d'Àneu / [www.vallsdaneu.org](http://www.vallsdaneu.org)
- Vall de Boí / [www.vallboi.cat](http://www.vallboi.cat)
- Vall d'en Bas - les Preses / [www.vallbas.cat](http://www.vallbas.cat)

In **COSTA DAURADA:**

- Muntanyes de Prades / [www.muntanyescostadaurada.cat](http://www.muntanyescostadaurada.cat)

In **TERRES DE L'EBRE:**

- Els Ports / [www.terresdelebre.travel](http://www.terresdelebre.travel)

In addition to these 25 certified destinations, there are further **four in the process of certification or enlargement:** Pirineus-Noguera Pallaresa including the municipalities of Sort, Rialp, Llavorsí Soriguera and Baix Pallars, Vall de Camprodon, Vall de Núria-Vall de Ribes and Alp-La Molina-Masella.

Finally, the Catalan Tourist Board awards the **Family-friendly Attractions** label to those specific tourist facilities (water parks, ski resorts, nautical resorts, amusement parks, etc.) that wish to become certified in family tourism and are located outside destinations that already feature one of the two aforementioned labels. There are currently **15 facilities certified** as Family-friendly Attractions.

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY BEACH HOLIDAYS

In **PIRINEUS:**

- Berga / [www.turismeberga.cat](http://www.turismeberga.cat)

# What's New 2019

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## Six routes to discover Catalonia's cultural gems

Catalonia is a destination with a large geographic variety, featuring relevant heritage sites of additional high gastronomic interest. As the Year of Cultural Tourism is celebrated in Catalonia, six big routes have been created to discover the whole of the territory according to the traveller's choice. The Pyrenees from the Peaks to the Sea; Along the Mediterranean; World Heritage from the Mountains to the Sea; What Catalonia Hides: from the Coast to the West; Culture Shows the Way and From Barcelona to the Catalan Pyrenees are the names of the car routes that allow an end-to-end experience of the land.

[www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com)

## Legends of Catalonia, the virtual reality videogame to experience Catalonia

This interactive virtual reality experience takes players on an exceptional hands-on journey. You can become the main character of Catalonia's history and legends, where your power and instinct will be equally demanded to overcome all challenges and fight the millenary dragon. This time journey will take players to 1st century AD Tarraco, the summit of Montserrat, the submarine magic of Cadaqués and the secrets of the city of Barcelona. Former FC Barcelona captain Carles Puyol, climber Eburne Pasaban and the Roca chef brothers will take you through this videogame to discover Catalonia and have it come true.

[www.legendsofcatalonia.com](http://www.legendsofcatalonia.com)

## Pirineus-Noguera Pallaresa, a new destination certified under the Family Holidays label by the Catalan Tourist Board

The Catalan Tourist Board will certify a new Family-friendly adventure holiday destination, Pirineus-Noguera Pallaresa, this year. With an area covering 472.60 km<sup>2</sup>, it includes the municipalities of Llavorsí, Rialp, Sort, Soriguera and Baix Pallars (from North to South), located on both sides of the Noguera Pallaresa river, with 65 hamlets, villages and towns in the different valleys: Baiasca, Romadriu, Àssua, Siarb and Ancs, among others.

Besides the landmark Noguera Pallaresa river and Port Ainé ski and mountain resort featuring a fun park, fine slopes for families and 360° views from Pic de l'Orri, this family holiday destination offers visitors a great range of activities in both quantity and quality, distributed over all its valleys. The offer includes Alt Pirineu Natural Park, Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park (access through Àssua Valley), Boumort reserve; the literary routes through Àssua and Batlliu valleys, the places where the film "Les veus del Pamano" was shot, the Sort and Àssua Valley natural path,

Montcortès lake, natural grass football pitches, signposted mountain bike routes, museums and cultural sites. There is also a wide offer in wildlife routes, artisan cheesemakers, fishing, kayaking courses, abseiling, adventure sports, horse riding and endless kilometres of signposted hiking trails, most of them under 1500 m, stretching between the different villages, which makes them accessible throughout the year.

Apart from the Family Holidays label, the area also boasts the Sports Tourism label by the Catalan Tourist Board as a whitewater kayaking excellence cluster (Sort), the UNESCO World Geopark distinction (Baix Pallars) and a Starlight tourist destination (Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park in Sort).

Set amidst Alt Pirineu, the Pirineus-Noguera Pallaresa family tourist destination is starting with 45 members, by which the villages and towns of Altron, Baro, Bressui, Caregue, Escàs, Gerri de la Sal, Llagunes, Llavorsí, Llessui, Montardit de Baix, Peramea, Rialp, Roní, Sort and Tornafort are from now on part of the family holiday destinations certified by the Catalan Tourist Board.

With this recent certification, Catalonia has now 26 destinations certified as Family Holidays (19 under the Family-friendly beach holidays and 6 under the Family-friendly adventure holidays label).

[www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com)

## Cities and Towns with Character & Charming Villages

The Cities and Towns with Character brand aims at showcasing Catalonia's urban heritage and promoting those towns and villages combining different features (culture, arts, gastronomy, architecture, innovation, etc.) to provide visitors with a full experience. Calella de Palafrugell and Montsonís are the first Charming Villages, while Manresa and Montblanc are the most recent Cities and Towns with Character, adding to the already certified Lleida, Tarragona, Girona, Terrassa, Vic, Reus, Vilafranca del Penedès and Tortosa.

[www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com)

## 2018-2019 winter sport season in Catalonia

Catalonia has 16 ski and mountain resorts with almost 700 km slopes in total. The sun and nice temperatures throughout the Pirineus territory, together with a good gastronomic offer, also away from the ski fields, make a key feature for winter tourism in Catalonia. The Catalan ski resorts also host different national and international winter sport competitions, including downhill, super-G, slalom and combined (downhill & slalom). The Catalan Tourist Board has certified several ski and mountain resorts with the Family Holidays label: Espot, Port Ainé, Vallter 2000, La Molina, Vall de Núria, Boí-Taüll and Masella. They have facilities and services such as skiing schools, snow gardens for the youngest kids who still do not ski or playgrounds with tubes. Other activities beyond alpine and Nordic ski or snowboard include routes with snowshoes, Segway, dog sleds, horse-drawn sleigh, ice diving, guided snowmobile trips or igloo building.

10 alpine ski resorts: Baqueira Beret, Boí Taüll, Espot Esquí, La Molina, Masella, Port Ainé, Port del Comte, Tavascan, Vall de Núria, Vallter 2000. 6 Nordic ski resorts: Aransa, Guils Fontanera, Lles, Sant Joan de l'Erm, Tuixent-La Vansa, Virós Vallferrera.

[www.visitpirineus.com/ca](http://www.visitpirineus.com/ca)

## Maritime Towns

The Catalan Tourist Board is launching this new tourist brand to promote and market municipalities up to 70,000 inhabitants with a strong maritime personality. Eligible towns need to comply with specific requirements, such as a harbour, activity related with the sea or fishing (fishermen's guild and/or fish market), obvious traces of their relationship with the sea (e.g. towns of emigrants returned from America) or sea-based tourist activity. Around twenty municipalities have shown their interest in this project aiming at positioning them as tourist destinations at both national and international level.

[www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com)

## COSTA BRAVA

### Lloret de Mar, a role model for upgrading a leading destination

Both public authorities and businesses at Catalan coast destinations with a long-standing tourist tradition, like Lloret de Mar on the Costa Brava, have been working for a long time in renewing and updating their accommodation offer and other fields of the tourist industry.

The public and private sector have partnered to fulfil our tourists' expectations, considering the increased requirements in demand and raising quality standards imposed by the market. The aim is to generate new experiences that satisfy visitors, with value-added proposals to attract and retain them.

Lloret de Mar has launched a specific operative plan for renewal. The need to upgrade part of its current offer has been identified, in order to create new, sophisticated tourist products focused on specialisation in segments, excellence of the facilities and high value. This is why both public authorities and businesspeople have been promoting the integral plan to modernise the tourist offer since 2015.

In this respect, Lloret de Mar has invested over 54 million euros between 2018 and early 2019. The funds are devoted to:

Complete renewal and upgrade of obsolete hotels, e.g. the HTOP Casino Royal, which will become the 4\* Azure, and the Hotel Athene, which will become the 4\* Boutique GHT Sa Miratge.

Segmentation and specialisation.

New splashing facilities at family resorts, e.g. Selvamar and Fenals Garden.

Specialisation of the 4\* Hotel Alegria Santa Cristina as a gastronomic hotel and private hotel school.

Profile segmentation of new adults-only urban hotels, such as the new Rosamar Es Blau.

<http://lloretdemar.org/es/>

## The Gold Museum: jewellery and craftspeople

The Dor Museum – Jewellery Museum and Arts Centre has opened in the old castle in Sant Julià de Ramis, very close to Girona. It is devoted to the world of jewellery and the craftspeople making such pieces as an expression of a feeling. The first floor displays exhibits related with 20th-century jewellery, while the second floor hosts temporary art exhibitions with works by Josep Maria Subirachs and Apel·les Fenosa. The Quim Hereu Centre shows the artist's creative process.

This site, called La Fortalesa de Sant Julià de Ramis, includes facilities for meetings and events, a five-star hotel and a restaurant by the award-winning chef Jordi Cruz.

[www.dormuseum.com/es/](http://www.dormuseum.com/es/) [www.lafortalesa.com/es/](http://www.lafortalesa.com/es/)

## AQUAE Centre

Camp dels Ninots archaeological site just outside Caldes de Malavella features unique remains dating back 3.1 million years. Full skeletons of tapirs, bovids and rhinoceros, together with fish, tortoises, amphibians and vegetal fossils make the embryo of the future AQUAE, an interpretive centre opening in the first quarter of 2019, where research will be combined with the dissemination of water-related historical heritage.

[www.caldesdemalavella.cat](http://www.caldesdemalavella.cat)

## Astronomic observatory

In Albanyà, on the limit between Alt Empordà and Garrotxa counties, an astronomic observatory has been built, where visitors can watch the sky under the guidance of scientific experts.

An open-air heated stand seating 124 people takes visitors to a journey of senses through space and time, with purpose-written music by Catalan composer Pep Sala. The aim is unveiling the secrets of the crystal-clear sky—Spain's only International Dark Sky Park—over different seasons. The experience combines live pictures captured by the telescope of the observatory with audiovisual content on astronomy.

[www.observatorialbanya.com/es/observatorio-astronomico-albanya](http://www.observatorialbanya.com/es/observatorio-astronomico-albanya)

## Virtual Empúries

Virtual Empúries, a new way of visiting the forum of the ancient Roman city with 3D recreations, has been launched. This application allows visitors to interact between the past and the present with the aid of specific glasses, thus enjoying a unique experience along a tour through the ancient Greek and Roman site that finishes with a visit to the Roman forum of Empúries.

<http://patrimoni.gencat.cat/es/coleccion/empuries>

## Cúpula de les Arts, a new cultural centre in Girona

Girona features a new multi-purpose centre to hold shows, corporate events and different activities. This is Cúpula de les Arts, an igloo tent with stands allowing for different set-ups and various stages, with a capacity for over 800 people.

<https://cupuladelesarts.com/>

## COSTA DAURADA

### More than 140 million euros to upgrade the tourist offer in Salou, Cambrils and La Pineda

Costa Daurada sets out to upgrade its tourist offer. Hotel owners in Salou, Cambrils and La Pineda have invested 142 million euros into improving and creating new products in the 2015-2018 period.

Thus, some refurbished hotels have been upgraded from 3 to 4 stars, such as Oasis Park from the Best Hotels chain. Other renewed hotels include Playa de Oro and Villa Dorada from the Oh!tels chain. The Los Ángeles, San Francisco, Playa Margarita, Salou Park, Acqua Hotel Salou, Oasis Park, Mediterráneo, Playa de Oro, Villa Dorada, Calypso, H10 Delfín and Best Negresco hotels in the Carles Buïgas area in Salou have modernised their facilities. The H10 Vintage Salou and Salou Suite have undergone complete refurbishment, the latter having changed its name for Pierre & Vacances Salou Beach\*\*\*\*, with 106 new rooms focusing on families.

Golden is also investing in a new hotel in the Cap Salou area, whereas PortAventura is preparing to open a new 150-room hotel in the Far West area.

<https://www.costadoradahoteles.org>

<https://www.portaventuraworld.com>

## Tourist wristband to discover the five most relevant sites in Reus

The "Visit Reus" tourist wristband is the city's first multi-ticket providing access to five of the most relevant sites in Reus: Gaudí Centre, Pavelló dels Distingits at the Institut Pere Mata (by Lluís Domènech i Montaner), the bell tower of Sant Pere priory church, the Museum of Art and History and the Archaeological Museum.

The reduced price and the six-month validity of the wristband aim at increasing customer satisfaction, extending the stay at the city and retaining visitors as this scheme shall facilitate their return to Reus.

[www.reus.cat/turisme](http://www.reus.cat/turisme)

## Vies Braves in Salou

These are maritime ways signposted by means of buoys and beacons to allow swimming in unique, safe areas.

Of the two first ways opened, one leads from Cala Font to Platja Llarga along 970 metres, taking an estimated 15 to 22 minutes, allowing for both swimming and snorkelling. It provides opportunities to watch the seabed of sand, rocks and seagrass and is recommended from May to November. The second way is the Via Brava Salou from Platja Llarga to Platja Capellans along 962 metres, with a similar seabed and taking roughly the same time as the former.

[www.visitsalou.eu](http://www.visitsalou.eu)

## First dark ride in PortAventura

PortAventura Park will have a great new attraction in 2019. It is the park's first dark ride, located in the SésamoAventura area for the youngest kids. This new attraction is for all family members and will feature prominently the famous characters from Sesame Street.

Another project under way at PortAventura World is the enlargement of its accommodation offer. The 2019 season will feature a new four-star superior hotel at the resort, located in the Far West area. The new hotel is planned to open in June 2019.

<https://www.portaventuraworld.com>

## "Iglús dels estels" at Xalet de Prades rural resort

Xalet de Prades, a rural resort made of several wooden eco-houses located amidst Muntanyes de Prades Natural Park, inaugurates a new room concept named "star igloos". These are charming, romantic igloos with a wooden geodesic structure to enjoy and sleep under the stars. Accommodating 2 people, they have a fully-equipped bathroom and air conditioning.

<http://www.xaletdeprades.com>

# COSTA BARCELONA

## Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, much more than just motorsports

The Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya places Catalonia in the worldwide focus, making it a motorsports hotspot as it hosts the best of car and motorbike racing. As usual, its agenda features prominently Formula 1 and MotoGP. The F1 Grand Prix of Spain will be held on 10-12 May and the MotoGP Grand Prix of Catalonia on 14-16 June.

However, the two Grand Prix are not only about motorsports, they also come along with different gastronomic and leisure offers for individuals, groups and families. Fans can also approach their heroes, some of the world's best drivers, at the autograph session in the pit lane of the track. Excitement, speed and adrenaline have been combining for over two decades to provide the greatest show in motorsport.

[www.circuitcat.com](http://www.circuitcat.com)

## Visit Torres Vista! in Santa Susanna

Santa Susanna features the remains of constant pirate attacks on the Catalan coast between the 15th and 18th centuries. The inhabitants of Santa Susanna built large towers and fortified their houses to protect themselves from this danger. The towers served for watching the sea and alerting of pirates. Some of them are still standing and can be visited, allowing a glimpse into the world of pirates. The Santa Susanna Tourist Office offers guided tours to different towers, alongside the paintings of the church and Masia de Can Ratés. To finish this unique experience, a tasting of local products is offered.

<http://stasusanna-barcelona.uk/santa-susanna-news/visit-torres-vista-and-local-souvenirs/>

## New B&B in Sant Pol

Bed and Breakfast Sant Pol de Mar is nestled in one of the most quiet and charming villages on the Maresme coast. 45 minutes north of Barcelona, Sant Pol B&B offers a cosy and relaxing place to enjoy a pleasant stay. Its beautiful surroundings offer many different options for leisure: the best of Mediterranean beaches, natural parks such as Montnegre and Montseny, and of course the excellent local cuisine.

[www.bandbsantpol.cat](http://www.bandbsantpol.cat)

## Barcelona Pass Modernisme

Barcelona and its hinterland position themselves as an Art Nouveau destination with a pass aimed at taking visitors not only to the specific heritage located in the city of Barcelona but also a whole set of Art Nouveau markets and festivals held along the year in the Barcelona province. Apart from the extraordinary heritage bequeathed by Antoni Gaudí and Lluís Domènech i Montaner in Barcelona, Catalan Art Nouveau would not be the same without Gaudí's works located outside, such as the Colònia Güell Crypt in Santa Coloma de Cervelló and the Artigas gardens in La Pobla de Lillet in Berguedà county. Likewise, Domènech i Muntaner's work would be incomplete without his private home in Canet de Mar. Jujol's buildings in Sant Joan Despí are also worth a visit. The pass is valid for 7 days and allows access to 15 Art Nouveau buildings in Barcelona, Sitges, Terrassa, Mataró and Canet de Mar plus a mini-guide for 90 €.

<https://bcnshop.barcelonaturisme.com/shopv3/es/product/25163/barcelona-pass-modernista.html>

## PAISATGES BARCELONA

### Stone huts in Valls del Montcau

Thirteen groups of vaults and dry-stone huts located in Talamanca, Mura and El Pont de Vilomara i Rocafort have been declared Sites of Cultural Interest. Many of these stone constructions are scattered in Valls del Montcau in Bages county, a land with a long wine-growing tradition, where the huts were used to store fieldwork tools, the grape harvest and pressed wine. This helped avoid long journeys through rugged territory.

Many of these sites of great architectural and ethnographic interest have been restored by the Barcelona Provincial Council and are part of the hiking and wine routes created to foster local tourism.

[www.manresaturisme.cat/esp/article/6623-les-valls-del-montcau](http://www.manresaturisme.cat/esp/article/6623-les-valls-del-montcau)

## PIRINEUS

### Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, a Starlight Reserve

Catalonia's only national park has been distinguished as a Starlight Reserve thanks to the quality of its night sky and the noise emission levels inside the park and its peripheral zone. This certificate will help enlarge the amount of activities in the area and is expected to create more business through astrotourism. There are currently 10 Starlight Reserves in the world, one of which is Montsec in Catalonia.

<http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/aiguestortes>

## Alt Pirineu Natural Park is extended

With the enlargement of almost 9,500 hectares of protected area, this natural park in the Lleida Pyrenees extending over Pallars Sobirà and Alt Urgell counties becomes consolidated as Catalonia's largest protected area. The Jardí de les Roques has been opened in Rubió, the highest inhabited village in Catalonia. It is the first open-air museum aimed at disseminating the local geological heritage and display the geological diversity in the park along 265 million years, especially the unique "terres roies" from Siarb valley. The Mollera d'Escalarre path taking from La Guingueta d'Àneu to Esterri d'Àneu has been adapted for persons with reduced mobility, having it widened, the ground levelled and safety railings placed.

<http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/alt-pirineu>

## The Noguera Pallaresa, one of the finest rivers for rafting

The Noguera Pallaresa has an uninterrupted 50-km stretch for rafting, kayaking and other water sports between Llavorsí in Pallars Sobirà county and La Figuereta area in La Pobla de Segur in Pallars Jussà. Further works this year shall add another 6 km down to the Sant Antoni reservoir in Tremp, Pallars Jussà. This initiative places the two Pallars counties amidst the world's best whitewater areas, creating great perspectives for tourism in general, and more specifically for adventure sports and active tourism, as the new activity offer extends the navigable stretch for boats from currently 15 km to 56 km between Escaló and the Sant Antoni reservoir.

<http://www.visitpirineus.com/es>

## Romanesque Interpretive Centre in Pallars Sobirà

The Pallars Sobirà Romanesque Interpretive Centre located in Son del Pi has opened. It is the first such site in the county and aims at contributing to the recovery of the local heritage.

Interactive technologies, static and dynamic panels, films, soundtracks and projected sensations, a virtual journey through Romanesque architecture, painting and sculpture in Pallars Sobirà, a guided tour to the Romanesque church in Son—all this makes a place where the abundant local Romanesque heritage can be experienced.

[www.pyrenea.com](http://www.pyrenea.com)

## The Cement Museum features a new space

The Asland Cement Museum in Castellar de n'Hug opens a new space with a new trial cement kiln. This semi-industrial kiln, made at the Asland factory in 1967, has now been restored. Visitors can operate the kiln and see how cement rotary kilns worked as they processed the rawmix (such as limestone and clay) to clinker in a heating process at temperatures between 1500°C and 1800°C.

<http://museuciment.cat/es/inicio/>

## Horrorland Park

The facilities close to the former Cercs coal-fired power plant, now out of service, host Horrorland Park, a horror theme park with different programmes adapted to every season and festivity of the year. The scenes shown are so mind-blowing that they have earned an unprecedented success just a few months after the park opened.

[www.horrorlandpark.com](http://www.horrorlandpark.com)

## Dinosaurs in Fumanya

The opening of the Dinosaur Interpretive Centre in Fumanya in Fígols, Berguedà county, has completed the last stage of the process in the course of which an impressive paleontological site has been laid free, featuring over 3500 dinosaur footprints dating back more than 65 million years. There is a direct relation between dinosaurs and coal: the former disappeared 65 million years ago, towards the end of the Cretaceous, when lignite was formed and the geomorphological formation of the Pyrenees raised on a former river plain. This is the extraordinary relation between geology, mining and paleontology—the Pyrenees, dinosaurs and coal.

The site, located close to the Cercs mining area, which is open for visitors, was declared a Cultural Site of National Interest (BCIN) in 2014 and is part of the UNESCO Natural World Heritage bid together with other ichnite sites on the Iberian Peninsula.

[www.dinosauresfumanya.com](http://www.dinosauresfumanya.com)

## VAL D'ARAN

### Val d'Aran Walking Festival

Hiking and nature lovers have the opportunity to meet in Val d'Aran from 1 to 7 July 2019 to get in touch, share and enjoy the local mountains, gastronomy, culture and heritage. Professional certified guides will lead the routes through idyllic places in several languages. Three different trips with various difficulty levels (high, medium, low) along scenic places have been designed, combined with tastings and cultural visits for everybody to enjoy and discover Val d'Aran.

[www.camins.net](http://www.camins.net)

### Trail running and mountain bike races

Many mountain competitions take place in Val d'Aran every year, when the county's trails and routes become an ideal backdrop for trail running and mountain bike race lovers for some days. The sports events with the highest media coverage and participation include:

**Trail Vielha-Molières 3010.** This marathon climbs five summits above 2000 metres in

Val d'Aran, including Molières, which at 3010 metres is the area's highest peak. More than 1200 participants took part in its second edition held in 2018.

**Pedals de Foc Non Stop MTB Ultramarathon** will hold its 14th edition this year, being once again the **European MTB Ultramarathon Championship**, at which around 800 cyclers will race along the mythical Pedals de Foc route.

Other competitions taking place in Val d'Aran include Trail Carlac, Ultra Trail Naut Aran, Corsa e Caminada des 15 Pòbles, Era Nocturna de Vielha and La Vertical d'Aran.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

## FIS Snowboard Cross World Cup

Being held in Beret on 1 and 2 March 2019, Val d'Aran will host the world tour of this spectacular discipline for the second time. The competition will feature the world's best snowboard crossers, among which Spain's two biggest stars, Olympic bronze medal winner Regino Hernández from Andalusia and world runner-up Lucas Eguibar from the Basque Country. Starting this season, the Aranese ski resort offers up to a total 165 km of slopes (160 km marked, 5 km trails) with the creation of the new Baciver area for experts, including five new red slopes. Cap de Baciver thus becomes the new highest peak in the resort at 2610 m, thus allowing descents of more than 1100 metres down to the Baqueira 1500 base. With this enlargement, the skiable area in Baqueira Beret grows to 2273 ha. The new FunPark slope for the youngest has opened in the Beret area.

[www.baqueira.es](http://www.baqueira.es)

## New mountain hut in Era Artiga de Lin

This project adds to the offer of Era Artiga de Lin natural area for the thousands of people coming year after year to Val d'Aran to discover its spectacular "Uelhs deth Joèu" as well as the local Nature Interpretive Centre opened last summer. The Era Artiga de Lin hut brings visitors closer to any of the beautiful summits framing this landscape, the most notable being the Aranese Aneto route. It leads through Còl de Toro (2236 m) to Pla d'Aigualluts in the Aragonese Pyrenees, from where it takes to the Aneto summit (3404 m) after crossing the glacier.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

## Val d'Aran enlarges its offer in climbing and via ferratas

Val d'Aran will soon have a new climbing area in the surroundings of Bagergue, with different difficulty levels and several equipped stretches amidst a spectacular scenery. In Arties, there is also the 330-metre long Taro d'Arties via ferrata with a 100-metre vertical drop. This offer adds to the already existing via ferratas in Les, with 450 m length and 150 m vertical drop, and Torre de Cledes, with 125 m length and 180 m vertical drop, in Baish Aran. In Naut Aran, lovers of this

sport have been enjoying for several years the Poi d'Unha via ferrata, with 775 metres length and 500 metres vertical drop.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

## Interpretive Centre of the Fire Festivals in Les and Arties

Val d'Aran will feature the Hèstes deth Huèc (Fire Festival) Interpretive Centre from 2019 with year-round information on the Haro and Taro Festival in Les and Arties, respectively. These festivals featuring ancestral traditions take place on the night of 23 June, when the summer solstice used to be celebrated by burning a fir log, asking for purification of the land. Despite the course of time, this tradition has remained almost intact. These festivals were declared Immaterial Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO in 2015.

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

## TERRES DE L'EBRE

### Forest bathing in Els Ports Natural Park

Forest bathing is an ancestral technique developed in all ancient cultures. Here we will visit Els Ports Natural Park for three days and enjoy its great environmental quality and get in contact with the particles of its trees and plants that are able to strengthen our body's defences to fight against all sorts of diseases and make our immune system stronger.

[www.portsexperience.com/banos-de-bosque/](http://www.portsexperience.com/banos-de-bosque/)

### Hiking and cycling in La Sénia

La Sénia is one of Catalonia's southernmost municipalities, located in Montsià county in Tarragona province. It boasts an excellent trail network encouraging the practice of sports such as hiking, running and cycling. Its inclusion into The Trail Zone brand shall foster all these sports on short, medium and long-distance trails, mountain bike routes with big vertical drops and cycling paths with 1441-metre Mont Caro as their highest peak.

[www.thetrailzone.com/la-senia/](http://www.thetrailzone.com/la-senia/)

## TERRES DE LLEIDA

### Enlargement of "Espais Naturals de Ponent"

This project to disseminate the natural areas located in the western part of Terres de Lleida will

increase the number of municipalities and activities involved. It encompasses twenty natural areas distributed in Noguera, Segarra, Les Garrigues, Segrià Nord, Segrià Sud, Urgell and Pla d'Urgell counties, all of them being part of the Natura 2000 network. A total 46 different activities will take place between March and September, attracting families and a professional audience to inform on the flora, the fauna and especially birds, which are very important to regional tourism.

[www.espaisnaturalsdeponent.cat](http://www.espaisnaturalsdeponent.cat)

## Conca de Tremp has been declared a Geopark

Geoparc Orígens-Pirineus Catalans is the name chosen for the Conca de Tremp-Montsec area, Catalonia's second geopark recognised by the UNESCO, which emphasises the importance of the area to understand the evolution of life through the geological heritage. This geopark encompasses 19 municipalities in 4 counties—Pallars Jussà, Noguera, Pallars Sobirà and Alt Urgell—on more than 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The area is of high geological and natural value, allowing to explain how ranges like the Pyrenees were formed. There are other aspects that help explain the evolution of life, such as fossil remains of the last dinosaurs that inhabited Europe. This new geopark adds to the Geological and Mining Park of Central Catalonia, which became a member of the European geopark network in September 2012.

<http://www.projectegeoparctrempmontsec.com/>

<http://www.geoparc.cat/es>

## The pharmacy in Vallbona de les Monges is open to the public

The old pharmacy of Santa Maria de Vallbona de les Monges monastery, one of the three pillars of the Cistercian Route together with Poblet and Santes Creus, has been opened to visitors. Considered one of the monastery's gems, it has become a museum and contains all sorts of pharmaceutical items, products and utensils, mostly dating from the 18th century. Located in a large gothic hall, the pharmacy displays china pots, mortars, scales, medicinal plants, green glass bottles with curious shapes to distil ointments, and there are even glass flaskets that still contain some medicinal product. The pharmacy can be visited as part of the daily guided tours offered at the site.

<http://www.monestirvallbona.cat>

## The Lleida Jewry, a new tourist attraction of the city

After more than 500 years in oblivion, Lleida has recovered the area of the new La Cuirassa gardens, where the old medieval Jewish quarter, one of Catalonia's largest, once stood. Between Christian conquest of the city in the mid-12th century and the final expulsion of the Jews in the late 15th century, La Cuirassa was home to one of the biggest Jewish communities in the old Kingdom of Aragon. After three years of work by archaeologists, historians and architects, the

old Jewry has been laid free and different pathways have been placed to provide a view of the remains of a part of the city's medieval layout, including walls, houses, streets, deposits of an old parchment workshop and the sewage system, as well as the remains of the home of a rich Jew, with household items unique on the Iberian Peninsula, such as a large jar of Andalusian origin, remains of folded cloth, tableware, a spade, a copper cauldron and part of a stone door jamb with three Stars of David engraved. Information panels have been placed along the signposted path to provide interaction with the different areas of the site.

[www.turismedelleida.cat](http://www.turismedelleida.cat)

## BARCELONA

### The Year of Cultural Tourism 2019 continues with a top programme of activities

UNESCO World Heritage human towers ("Castells") will of course be present at the city's many traditional festivals. As a UNESCO City of Literature, Barcelona will host different festivals and activities such as Sant Jordi and the 10 literature itineraries through Barcelona.

As regards exhibitions, "Velázquez & the Golden Century" from the Prado Museum and a retrospective dedicated to Max Beckmann will be shown at CaixaForum. Meanwhile, MACBA will host a Plensa exhibition with several works of the Catalan artist. The Mapfre Foundation plans two photography exhibitions dedicated to Berenice Abbott and Richard Learoyd. Furthermore, the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya will be featuring an exhibition dedicated to Bartolomé Bermejo. Music, design, art, cinema—Barcelona will host more than 180 festivals from different disciplines like the Sonar advanced music festival, which will be held in July this year, and Primavera Sound. Moreover, classical music lovers must not miss the Barcelona Obertura Spring Festival in March.

#### Barcelona Obertura Classic & Lyric. Spring Festival

Three stunning venues, Palau de la Música, Liceu and L'Auditori, will welcome the most renowned artists and orchestras from all over the world, making Barcelona the place to meet for all classical music lovers. The festival, which will be held from 4 to 17 March 2019, also includes free concerts throughout the city.

#### Barcelona Pass Modernisme

Tourists looking to visit Art Nouveau-style Modernisme buildings now have a new all-inclusive product: the Barcelona Pass Modernisme. The idea is a pass offering 7 days of free access to Art Nouveau buildings in Barcelona and surrounding towns like Sitges, Mataró, Canet or Terrassa, including top cultural sites like Casa Amatller, Casa

de les Punxes, Palau Baró de Quadras, Palau de la Música, Casa Vicens or the Sant Pau heritage site as well as other places off the beaten track.

<https://www.barcelonaturisme.com>

## Casa Batlló opens restoration works to visitors for the first time

At Casa Batlló, Antoni Gaudí's architectural gem, the original overlay of the walls and ceilings in the first floor have been laid free. This is the first milestone of the "Explore Restoration" campaign inviting visitors to experience first-hand the great findings and the scientific and historical work of restoration experts. During the coming months, visitors can take a direct look at the artisan and artistic restoration works while having specialised staff available for deepening into the subject.

<https://www.casabatllo.es/restauracion>

## FC Barcelona presents the Players Experience Tour, its most exclusive offer

FC Barcelona is launching the Players Experience Tour, a new experience taking fans on a guided tour to the most private areas only accessible to players. This tour, Barça's most exclusive, is done in small groups and visitors will enjoy highlights such as entering the FC Barcelona changing room and a walk on the pitch.

The experience also provides visitors with the Barça Virtual Experience, an innovative way of approaching the facilities and remembering the team's best goals from a virtual reality perspective. The tour finishes with an aperitif in one of the VIP rooms at the Camp Nou. Those who wish can close the experience by visiting the museum and taking the regular tour with the official multimedia guide.

This new proposal adds to the already existing Basic Tour, Flexible Tour, Camp Nou Guided Tour and Camp Nou Tour Plus.

<https://www.fcbarcelona.cat/tour/comprar-entrades>

# Useful Addresses

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## TOURIST BODIES

### CATALAN TOURIST BOARD

Tel. 934 849 900

[www.catalunya.com](http://www.catalunya.com) - [act.gencat.cat](http://act.gencat.cat)

### Costa Brava Girona Tourism Board

Tel. 972 208 401

[www.costabrava.org](http://www.costabrava.org)

### Tarragona Provincial Council Tourism Board Costa

#### Costa Daurada

Tel. 977 230 312

[www.costadaurada.info/es](http://www.costadaurada.info/es)

#### Terres de l'Ebre

Tel. 977 444 447

[www.terresdelebre.travel](http://www.terresdelebre.travel)

### Turisme de Barcelona

Tel. 933 689 700

[www.barcelonaturisme.cat](http://www.barcelonaturisme.cat)

### Barcelona Provincial Council Tourism Delegation

Tel. 934 022 966

[www.barcelonaesmuchomas.es](http://www.barcelonaesmuchomas.es)

### Lleida Provincial Council Tourism Board

Tel. 973 245 408

[www.aralleida.cat/en/](http://www.aralleida.cat/en/)

### Turisme Val d'Aran

Tel. 973 640 688

[www.visitvaldaran.com](http://www.visitvaldaran.com)

# TOURIST PROMOTION OFFICES OF CATALONIA

## **Benelux**

Tel. (+32) 26 406 151

[info.act.bnl@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.bnl@gencat.cat)

## **France**

Tel. (+33) 1 40 46 98 92

[media.act.fr@gencat.cat](mailto:media.act.fr@gencat.cat)

## **Italy**

Tel. (+39) 02 873 935 73

[info.act.it@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.it@gencat.cat)

## **Central Europe**

Tel. (+49) 69 7422 4873

[info.act.de@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.de@gencat.cat)

## **Nordic Countries**

Tel. (+358) 407 17 72 95

[info.act.nordic@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.nordic@gencat.cat)

## **UK & Ireland**

Tel. (+44) 207 583 88 55

[info.act.uk@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.uk@gencat.cat)

## **Eastern Europe**

Tel. (+7) 495 567 18 71

[info.act.ru@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.ru@gencat.cat)

## **USA**

Tel. (+1) 212 78 23 332

[info.act.usa@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.usa@gencat.cat)

## **Asia Pacific**

Tel. (+65) 622 040 22

[info.act.sea@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.sea@gencat.cat)

## **South America**

Tel. (+55) 11 305 304 77

[info.act.latam@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.latam@gencat.cat)

## **China**

Tel. (+8610) 848 682 84

[promotion.act.cn@gencat.cat](mailto:promotion.act.cn@gencat.cat)

## **Blanquerna Cultural Centre (Madrid)**

Tel. 915 241 000

[info.act.esp@gencat.cat](mailto:info.act.esp@gencat.cat)

# TOURIST OFFICES OF CATALONIA

## **Tourist Office of Catalonia in Barcelona – Palau Robert**

Passeig de Gràcia, 105

08008 Barcelona

## **Tourist Office of Catalonia in Girona**

Rambla Llibertat, 1

17004 Girona

## **Tourist Office of Catalonia in Tarragona**

Fortuny, 4

43001 Tarragona

**Tourist Office of Catalonia in Lleida-Pirineus**

Edil Saturnino, 1  
25007 Lleida

**Tourist Office of Catalonia in Lleida-Seu Vella**

Turó de la Seu Vella-Edifici Canonja  
25001 Lleida

**Tourist Office of Catalonia in Terres de l'Ebre**

Rambla Felip Pedrell, 3  
43500 Tortosa

**Tourist Office of Catalonia at Reus Airport**

Autovia Tarragona-Reus, s/n  
43204 Reus (Tarragona)

**Tourist Office of Catalonia at Barcelona Airport**

Terminal 1 & 2, arrivals  
08820 El Prat de Llobregat

## OTHER RELEVANT TOURIST WEB SITES

### ACTIVITIES IN NATURAL AND RURAL AREAS

**Pirineus**

[www.visitpirineus.com](http://www.visitpirineus.com)

**Catalan Ski Resort and Mountain Activity Association – ACEM**

[www.catneu.cat](http://www.catneu.cat)

**Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya**

[www.fgc.cat](http://www.fgc.cat)

**Catalan Confederation of Rural Tourism - Concatur**

[www.concatur.cat](http://www.concatur.cat)

**Rural Tourism and Agro-Tourism Confederation of Catalonia – Turalcat**

[www.turalcat.com](http://www.turalcat.com)

## ACCESSIBLE CATALONIA

Accessible Catalonia

[www.turismeperatothom.com/es](http://www.turismeperatothom.com/es)

St James' Way for Everybody

[www.camidesantjaumeperatothom.cat](http://www.camidesantjaumeperatothom.cat)

## SPORTS

Marinas

[www.acpet.es](http://www.acpet.es)

Nautical Resorts of Catalonia

[www.encatalunya.info](http://www.encatalunya.info)

Secretariat General of Sports (Government of Catalonia)

[www.esport.gencat.cat](http://www.esport.gencat.cat)

Catalan Golf Federation

[www.catgolf.com](http://www.catgolf.com)

Costa Brava Golf

<https://ca.costabrava.org/que-fer/golf>

Costa Daurada Golf Association

[www.costadauradagolf.com](http://www.costadauradagolf.com)

## WINE TOURISM

Incavi – Catalan Vineyard and Wine Institute

[www.incavi.cat](http://www.incavi.cat)

Priorat Wine Route

[www.turismepriorat.org](http://www.turismepriorat.org) / [www.prioratenoturisme.com](http://www.prioratenoturisme.com)

Lleida-Costers del Segre Wine Route (Wine Route of Spain)

[www.rutadelvidelleida.com](http://www.rutadelvidelleida.com)

**DO Empordà Wine Route (Wine Route of Spain)**

[www.rutadelvidoemporda.org](http://www.rutadelvidoemporda.org)

**Penedès Wine Tourism (Wine Route of Spain)**

[www.enoturismepenedes.cat](http://www.enoturismepenedes.cat)

**DO Alella Wine Tourism**

[www.doalella.cat](http://www.doalella.cat)

## **GASTRONOMY**

**Som Gastronomia**

[www.somgastronomia.cat](http://www.somgastronomia.cat)

## **HIKING AND CYCLING**

**Hiking Europe**

[www.hikingeurope.net](http://www.hikingeurope.net)

## **BUSINESS TOURISM**

**Catalunya Convention Bureau**

[www.catalunya.com/mice](http://www.catalunya.com/mice)

## **HEALTH & WELLNESS TOURISM**

**Spa Association**

[www.balneario.org](http://www.balneario.org)

**Consortium of Catalan Thermal Towns**

[www.catalunyatermal.cat](http://www.catalunyatermal.cat)

## **MEDICAL TOURISM**

**Barcelona Medical Destination**

[www.barcelonamedicaldestination.com/es](http://www.barcelonamedicaldestination.com/es)



**PARTNERS:**

