



Press Pack

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1. Introduction

Catalonia is a Mediterranean destination with a history spanning 1000 years, its own culture and language and a wealthy historical and natural heritage, an ideal destination for a multitude of travelers due to the variety of its offer. While the Pyrenees are an ideal place for snow, active and cultural tourism all year round, the Catalan coastline alternates high cliffs with hidden coves, long sandy beaches, protected natural areas by the sea and numerous possibilities for water sports. Inland, the wide strip between the Pyrenees and the sea brings many attractions, such as Romanesque churches and monasteries, the natural parks of Montseny, Montserrat and Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac, as well as towns with old quarters converted into pedestrian areas where you can discover the monumental heritage, traditional products and fashion and accessory stores.



Population

7.5 million.

Surface area

32,107 km².

Territory

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 dominating the northern area of the country, offer trips with characteristically high diversity from Cap de Creus on the Costa Brava to the Val d'Aran. 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, relaxation, 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, according to pre-covid data, more than half (63%) from abroad. At roughly 12% of GDP, tourism is one of Catalonia's main sources of wealth and hence one of its strategic priorities.

2. Transport Network



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 connections, 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. Catalonia is very well communicated with other cities in Europe, making it the true hub of a vast Mediterranean Euroregion.



Airports

BARCELONA

The Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat airport has consolidated its position as a strategic hub in the Euro-Mediterranean area. The most significant part has been the construction of terminal T1, located between runways and conceived as a large logistic and services operations centre. It can handle 33 million users a year. This major project was followed by the renewal of terminal T2, as well as the expansion and renewal of the shopping areas of both terminals. 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 T1 terminal and the city centre, with works well in progress. Also, the L9 underground line has been extended to both terminals, its fast link to the city being a considerable benefit for passengers.

GIRONA-COSTA BRAVA

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.

REUS-COSTA DAURADA

Located 110 kilometres from Barcelona and 13 from Tarragona, it is the closest airport to Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre.

LLEIDA-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. The inclusion of BAA

Training and the Barcelona Flight School, the training school of the Barcelona-Sabadell flying club, has turned 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 is now operating 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.

2. Transport Network

Ports

Catalonia has 52 ports and yacht clubs. The main seaports are:

BARCELONA

It is the largest cruising port in Europe. 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. There are also regular ferry lines to Rome, Livorno, Sardinia, Genoa, Tangier, Tunis and Algiers served from the three purpose-built terminals.

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. The port has an exclusive cruise berth at the East dock, plus Port Tarraco marina for smaller cruise boats.

PALAMÓS

Palamós has consolidated its position as a stopover port for cruise ships, making it only second to Barcelona in Catalonia. The introduction of a customs post allows the docking of ships from outside the Schengen area.

ROSES

Located at the end of Catalonia's most beautiful bay, Roses is making progress as a destination in the northern part of Costa Brava. 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.

LA RÀPITA

The site of La Ràpita, an incipient cruise port, has the port facilities, services and access to facilitate the arrival of small cruise ships on their route along the Mediterranean.

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 tourists to discover Catalonia's main landmarks, 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, a shopping day in La Roca Village or walking around Vall de Núria.

catalunyabusturistic.com



3. Catalonia, a Quality Destination

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 together the Tourist Quality System of Catalonia and are under the supervision of the quality and innovation commission of the Tourism Panel of Catalonia. The structure 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 ensures 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 to improve 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 EMAS, Ecolabel and the Environmental Quality Guarantee. The latter, created by the Government of Catalonia through its Department of Territory and Sustainability, encourages businesses to commercialise environmentally-friendly products and services.

The Gastronomic Hotel specialisation label has 30 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 around 270 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.

Since November 2015 Catalonia has been the first full large tourist destination to hold the Biosphere Responsible Tourism certification from the Institute of Responsible Tourism. This certification represents an international recognition of the work done by the both public and private Catalan tourist industry to continue promoting a sustainable tourism scheme ensuring that travellers enjoy a sustainable experience, contributing to the conservation of its natural heritage and culture as well as the improvement of the local economy while reducing the impact on the environment.

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

Together with the tourist industry, the Catalan Tourist Board is developing new products, resulting in distinctive high-end proposals aimed at satisfying the visitors' needs. An example is the specialisation of the family holiday programmes Family-friendly beach holidays and Family-friendly adventure, including businesses and municipalities both on the coast and inland, aimed at offering attractive proposals catering for those travelling with children.



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.

3. Catalonia, a Quality Destination

3.1 Catalonia, a Sustainable and Inclusive Destination

Catalonia is one of the most sustainable, accessible and inclusive tourist destinations in Europe. Tourism, sustainability and accessibility go hand in hand to achieve a touristic model of excellence based on engaging in the destination's environmental, sociocultural and economic sustainability.

The Directorate General of Tourism and the Catalan Tourist Board are carrying out an outstanding task in identifying, promoting and marketing tourist experiences in areas living up to the values of responsibility, inclusiveness, sustainable growth, coexistence with local communities and conservation of natural, sociocultural and economic resources.

Responsibility is the way to reach the goal of sustainability, so there can be no sustainable tourism without a responsible attitude on the part of travellers and professionals who develop the business model of the tourist industry.

With these values, the Catalan Government aims at positioning Catalonia as a landmark destination for sustainable, accessible and inclusive tourism through its wide range of tourist experiences that includes a great diversity of products from ecotourism, culture or gastronomy to sports or business tourism.

Tourism for All

All parties involved in the tourist industry are increasingly engaged and aware that architectural and communication barriers have to be removed and most sites adapted so that all people can enjoy quality holidays and free time, especially those with some disability or reduced mobility.

This awareness and commitment gave rise to the Tourism for All project that includes 27 proposals and accessible destinations identified as examples of good practice in accessible tourism, showing that tourism for all is a tangible reality in Catalonia.

The CTB has a specific website (www.turismeperatohom.catalunya.com/en/) with information on the accessibility of the Catalan tourist offer, not only of the 27 destinations and proposals selected as good practice, but also of other tourist facilities, resources and services catering for people with disability or reduced mobility. The website features the highest degree of accessibility and user-friendliness and provides information according to the type of disability (physical, auditory, visual or people with reduced mobility).



Proposals for all tastes

The selected proposals offer a comprehensive tourist experience with a whole set of services adapted to specific accessibility needs: accommodation, restaurants, museums, additional activities, beaches, etc. With this inclusive spirit, you will find countless activities and events to enjoy active tourism, culture, gastronomy, snow, etc. in Catalonia. There are more than 150 kilometres of rail trails and accessible paths in Catalonia. The adapted section of the Terra Alta Rail Trails is noteworthy, one of the few in Spain prepared for people with visual impairment.

The companies Camins de Vent, Vol de Coloms and Globus Kon-Tiki, specialised in hot air balloon flights and pioneers in Spain to offer adapted baskets for people with reduced mobility, are examples of good practice in this area. Some diving centres, as well as horse-riding and kayaking companies have adjusted their offer to facilitate accessibility. On another note, L'Escala Sailing School has become a benchmark for adapted sailing. La Molina ski resort is pioneering in adapted skiing, having started adapting and preparing the facilities to skiers with disabilities several years ago. Tavascan ski resort in the Pallars Sobirà has also created circuits with cross-country

skiing and snowshoe routes for people with intellectual disabilities, training instructors to accompany them.

The actions carried out by many museums and monuments of Catalonia to improve accessibility for people with some sensorial (auditive or visual) disability are especially noteworthy. The inclusion of braille and high relief diagrams, audio description and tactile models have made La Pedrera one of the most accessible cultural centres for blind and visually impaired people in Europe. The National Museum of Art of Catalonia (MNAC) has sign-guide devices and was the first in Spain to provide this service for deaf people in two sign languages (Catalan and Spanish) and the International Sign System (ISS). The Fundació Miró also has a programme of inclusive activities for a diverse audience. It should also be noted that many beaches on the Catalan coast are accessible and have equipment and facilities for people with disabilities or reduced mobility. It is also important to mention the continuous increase in the number of travel agencies specialising in products for this target audience.

3. Catalonia, a Quality Destination

3.2 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, creating sustainable tourist experiences, digitising the tourist industry and gastronomic and social tourism, among others.



CHARM

(Immersive experiences in European Charming Villages)

Led by the Catalan Tourist Board and co-funded by the COSME programme, this project has been designed to create a transnational route of ten charming villages at six different destinations, offering more than 70 activities based on the natural and cultural heritage of European rural areas, available on www.charmingvillages.eu. In Catalonia, Rupit and Taüll take part in the CHARM network of charming villages located in rural areas. The goal is to drive tourism to places that generally see few tourists, thus relieving areas and cities with large visitor crowds, as well as to preserve and promote the historical and traditional heritage of rural areas, together with their architecture and landscape, through innovative experiences.

Med Pearls

(The Mediterranean as an innovative, integral and unique destination for slow tourism initiatives)

Led by the Catalan Tourist Board and co-funded at 90% by the European Union through the ENI CBC MED Programme, Med Pearls aims at creating 26 tourist experiences, the “26 pearls of the Mediterranean”, after which the project is named. Its final goal is to position the Mediterranean as a destination known internationally for its quality and excellence for slow tourism through public-private partnerships. The project is aimed at Destination Management Companies (DCM) with a capacity to create slow tourism projects and local start-up companies and entrepreneurs able to create ICT solutions to integrate them into new Med Pearls products. L’Anoia, Les Garrigues and La Ribera d’Ebre are the counties in Catalonia chosen for this project, where the companies selected through a call for funding will develop the slow tourism products.

RESTART MED!

(Revitalisation of sustainable tourism across regions in the Mediterranean)

A European capitalisation project co-funded by the ENI CBC MED Programme, partnered by the Catalan Tourist Board, it aims at gathering best practices, tools and useful information from sustainable tourism projects carried out in the Mediterranean basin for the benefit of SMEs and to make contributions towards sustainable tourism policies. The project plans to create a Mediterranean sustainable tourism network to strengthen the existing ones and become a meeting point for public and private stakeholders from all countries throughout the region. The initiative also aims at training companies from the Mediterranean tourist industry, providing them support for promoting sustainable tourist experiences in all their aspects, so as to increase their level of competitiveness and innovation.

EPiREMed

(Pyrenean Experiences, Mediterranean Emotions)

This cross-border cooperation project aims at further integrating the tourist industries on both sides of the border along the Eastern Pyrenees. Through cooperation between the main public and private tourist organisations, new cross-border tourist products have been created to attract international visitors through joint promotion actions. The project has launched the multilingual website www.epiremed.eu, making visible more than 30 new unique ecotourist experiences on either side of the Pyrenees. The platform provides also 17 theme routes to inspire visitors to plan their trip directly through more than 650 activities and services provided by the registered businesses. The partners involved have been the Directorate General of Tourism and the Catalan Tourist Board, with FGC leading this project co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Interreg V-A Spain-France-Andorra Programme (POCTEFA 2014-2020).

TOURBIT

(Fostering digitalisation of European tourist SMEs)

Led by the Catalan Tourist Board and co-funded by the COSME programme, this project aims at fostering digitalisation of tourist SMEs and contributing towards faster digital transformation of the European tourist industry. The project is aimed at tourist SMEs that wish to receive support to start their digital transformation journey as well as to foster the adoption of new technological solutions. They will have the opportunity of self-evaluating their digitalisation status, participating in different training programmes on ICT and innovative solutions with workshops and seminars, as well as cooperating and networking with technological experts and start-up companies through an online community on tourist innovation. TOURBIT will also provide financial support amounting up to 8,000 € to 62 tourist SMEs from the seven participating countries within a Digital Acceleration Programme.

Land-Sea

(Sustainability of the Land-Sea system for ecotourist strategies)

A European project within the Interreg Europe programme under the participation of the Directorate General of Tourism, it is aimed at encouraging more inclusive, efficient and effective regional governance processes to increase institutional competences and skills for developing a sustainable system of ecosystems able to preserve natural habitats and stimulate territorial ecotourist strategies.

3. Catalonia, a Quality Destination

3.2 Catalonia in European Projects and Networks

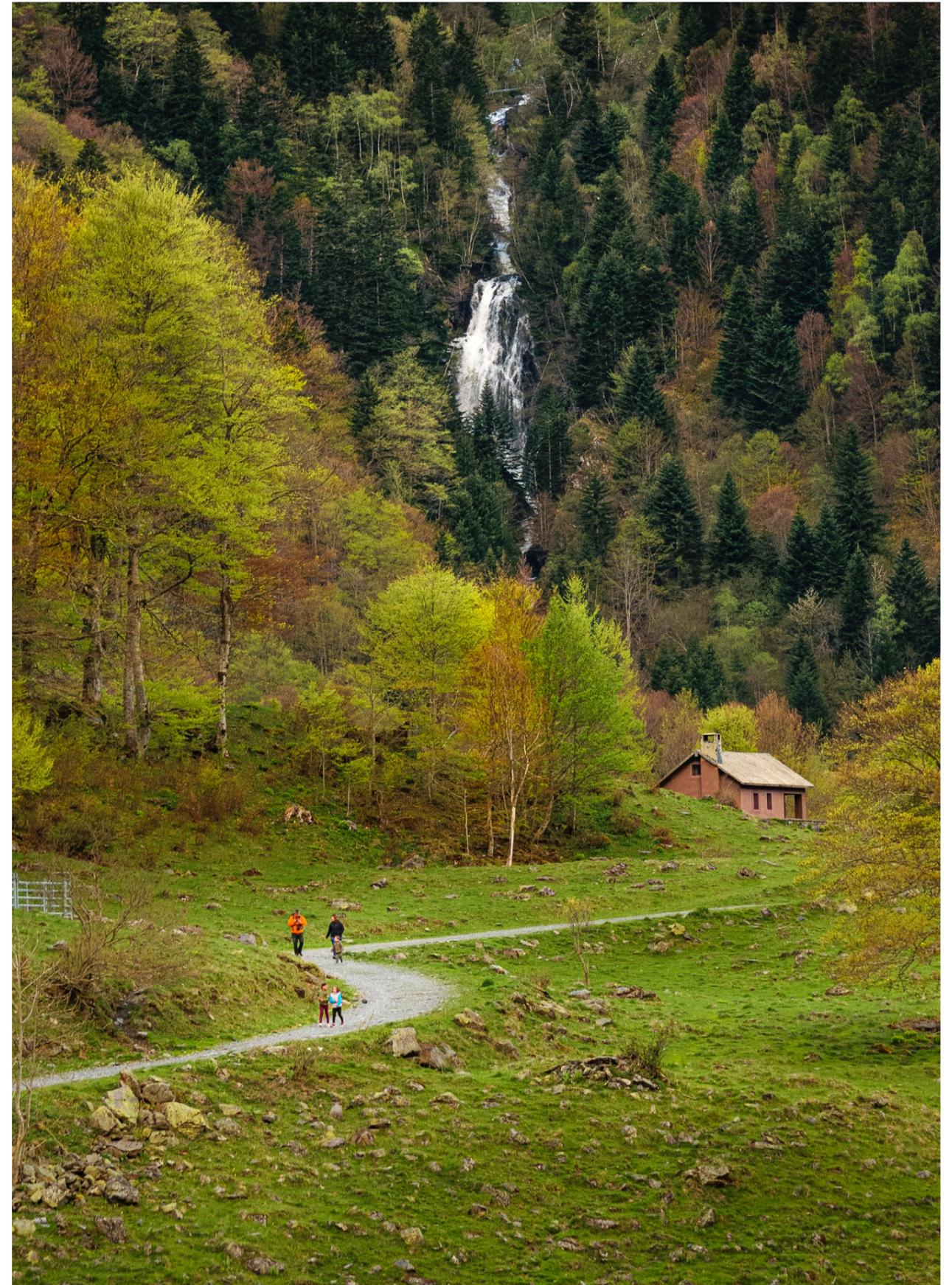


Medcycletour

It aims at promoting sustainable development policies allowing a more efficient use of natural resources and the cultural heritage of maritime and coastal areas. Tourism shall be promoted in the most sustainable and responsible way, allowing the development of the Mediterranean coastline.

ALTERECO +

This project is aimed at implementing a carrying capacity tool for tourist destinations. The World Tourism Organization defines carrying capacity as the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic and sociocultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors' satisfaction. The carrying capacity tool studied under this project is the result of the ALTER ECO (Alternative tourist strategies to enhance the local sustainable development of tourism by promoting Mediterranean identity) European project, which produced a tool to analyse the carrying capacity of a given tourist destination. The ALTERECO + project aims at further implementing this analytical tool by involving several European tourist destinations. On behalf of Catalonia, La Ràpita, Calella and Palamós are taking part.



3. Catalonia, a Quality Destination

3.2 Catalonia in European Projects and 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 is part of NECSTouR, a non-profit organisation made of European regions whose aim is to foster cooperation to consolidate sustainable tourism and have a direct influence on European tourist policies. It is currently composed of 40 regions from 15 countries and 30 associate members, including companies, institutions, universities and associations from the European tourist industry.

Catalonia is also a member of:

UNWTO – World Tourism Organization

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.

OITS – International Organization of Social Tourism

Its mission is to promote access to holidays and tourism for the greatest number of people: youth, families, adults, seniors and people with disabilities.

ENAT – European Network for Accessible Tourism

An 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.

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.

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 includes 160 regions from 24 EU member states and third countries.

ECM

An organisation representing the tourist and convention offices from more than a hundred cities in 38 countries.

IAGTO

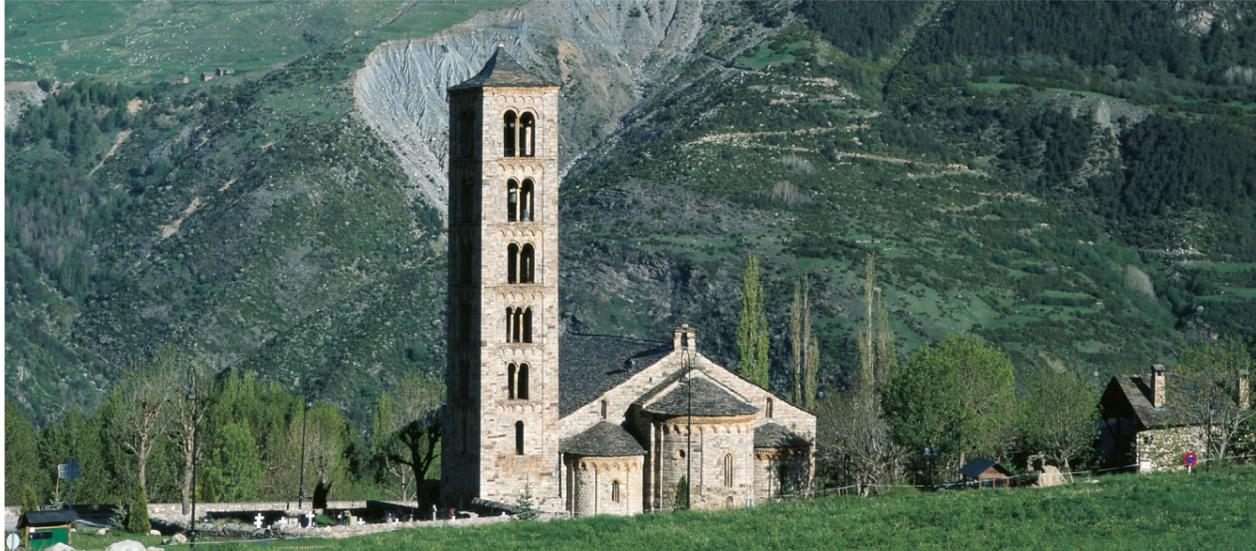
Founded in 1997, this is a global trade organisation for the golf tourism industry with more than 2,300 member companies in 88 countries, including 665 golf tour operators in 63 countries.

ISTO – International Social Tourism Organisation

An organisation promoting the development of Tourism for All and staying in contact with different authorities to have this topic taken into account in the policies and programmes in the different countries.



4. Tourist Attractions



Thanks to Catalonia's 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). St. George's Day, sardana and Igualada Three Kings procession round off the applications as intangible heritage, together with Catalan cuisine.

4.1 UNESCO World Heritage in Catalonia

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

Poblet monastery. Vimbodí (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 with stone and brick.
- Casa Vicens. Barcelona.
- Sagrada Família Crypt. Barcelona. Built between 1884 and 1889, it is Gaudí's oldest religious work.
- Nativity Façade of 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).

4. Tourist Attractions



4.2 Beaches

With its 580-kilometre coastline and almost 350 coves and beaches, Catalonia is one of the best 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 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 provides 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.

4.3 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 gates to the park are at Espot (Pallars Sobirà), Vall de Boí (Alta Ribagorça), Vall Fosca (Pallars Jussà) by cable car and Val d'Aran. In 2018 it was certified as a Reserve and Starlight Tourist Destination.

This recognition is given to areas which adopt protection methods and have exceptional levels of quality as well as to regions that also have the infrastructure available to drive astronomical tourism.

4.4 Wellness

A large 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 towns with a long tradition of thermal activity include Benifallet, Caldes d'Estrac, Caldes de Malavella, Caldes de

Also, Montsant, Montgrí, les Illes Medes i el Baix Ter, Montseny, Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac, Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa and Delta de l'Ebre natural parks as well as Foix, Olèrdola and Garraf protected areas boast the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism from the EUROPARC Federation.

Among all the natural areas, Alt Pirineu Natural Park stands out, which, with its recent expansion, exceeds 79,000 hectares and has become the largest protected area in Catalonia. Also noteworthy are Montseny Natural Park and Terres de l'Ebre, declared a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO, as well as Serra de Boumort Protected Natural Area covering the Boumort National Hunting Reserve. A protected space since 1991 located in the western Catalan Pyrenees, it stands out for its large deer and vulture populations.

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 and spas, such as the Caldes de Boí Spa or the Termes Baronia de Les, and thalassotherapy centres.

5. Tourist Accommodation



5.1 Hotel 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 (P) or hostelries (HS), plus another category within the hotel group, hotel-apartments (HA).

Classes range 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. It is worth mentioning initiatives such as the Gastronomic Hotels brand, small family-run businesses that offer a gastronomic proposal with an outstanding representation of Catalan cuisine dishes prepared with local ingredients and products with protected designations of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indications (PGI) as well as Catalan wines.

In Barcelona, a large number of hotels have been developed following 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 2,900 accommodation units with approximately 300,000 beds. Many of them are investing in 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.



5.2 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 rated by stars (from two to five: 5* luxury, 4* 1st class, 3* 2nd class, 2* 3rd class). Although they tend to concentrate in 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 wide range of local cuisine, fun and professional entertainment for children and adults. The campsites have theme pools, wi-fi 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 padel, 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.

Hence Catalonia is an excellent destination for camping and caravanning lovers. 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 usually award Catalan camp sites with very positive ratings, placing them among the best in Europe for their high quality.

A total 13 5-star campsites in Catalonia have won international awards, such as the "Sustainability & Environmental Award 2022 ADAC" to Ballena Alegre in Sant Pere Pescador, the EuropaPreis Platinum DCC 2021 to the Internacional campsite in Calonge or "Best Accommodation in Europe 2022 ANWB" to Tamarit Beach Resort in Tarragona. These annual recognitions and awards guarantee the quest for quality and sustainability of services and facilities.

**Catalan Camping and Holiday
Town Federation**
www.campingsdecatalunya.org

**Barcelona Provincial Camping and
Holiday Town Association**
www.barcelonacampings.es

Lleida Camping Association
www.campingsdelleida.com

**Costa Daurada and Terres de
l'Ebre Camping Association**
www.campingstarragona.es

Girona Camping Association
www.campingsingirona.com

**Mountain and Catalan Pyrenees
Camping Association**
www.sompaisatge.com

5. Tourist Accommodation



5.3 Rural Tourism Accommodation

The offer in rural tourism accommodation encompasses more than 2,400 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.

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 type.

There are four types for each of these two groups: “masia” (house shared with owners, located outside the village or town), “masoveria” (independent house rented out as a whole, not shared with the owners), **shared village house and independent village house** (within the village or town). Each group is identified with a specific sign.

A voluntary rating system by wheat ears is in place, which is organized according to aspects such as architecture and decoration, environment and services, among others.

Catalan Confederation of Rural Tourism – Conccatur
conccatur.cat

Rural Tourism and Agro-Tourism Confederation of Catalonia – Turalcat
catalunyarural.cat/



5.4 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, through more numerous in coastal areas. There are apartments for all tastes: big or small, in cities, on the beach, in the mountains or for skiing.

In Catalonia, all tourist apartments and housing units, as the rest of the accommodations mentioned above, 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)
apartmentsandvillascostabrava.com

Costa Daurada Tourist Apartment Association (AT)
atcostadaurada.org/ca/apartaments-turisticis

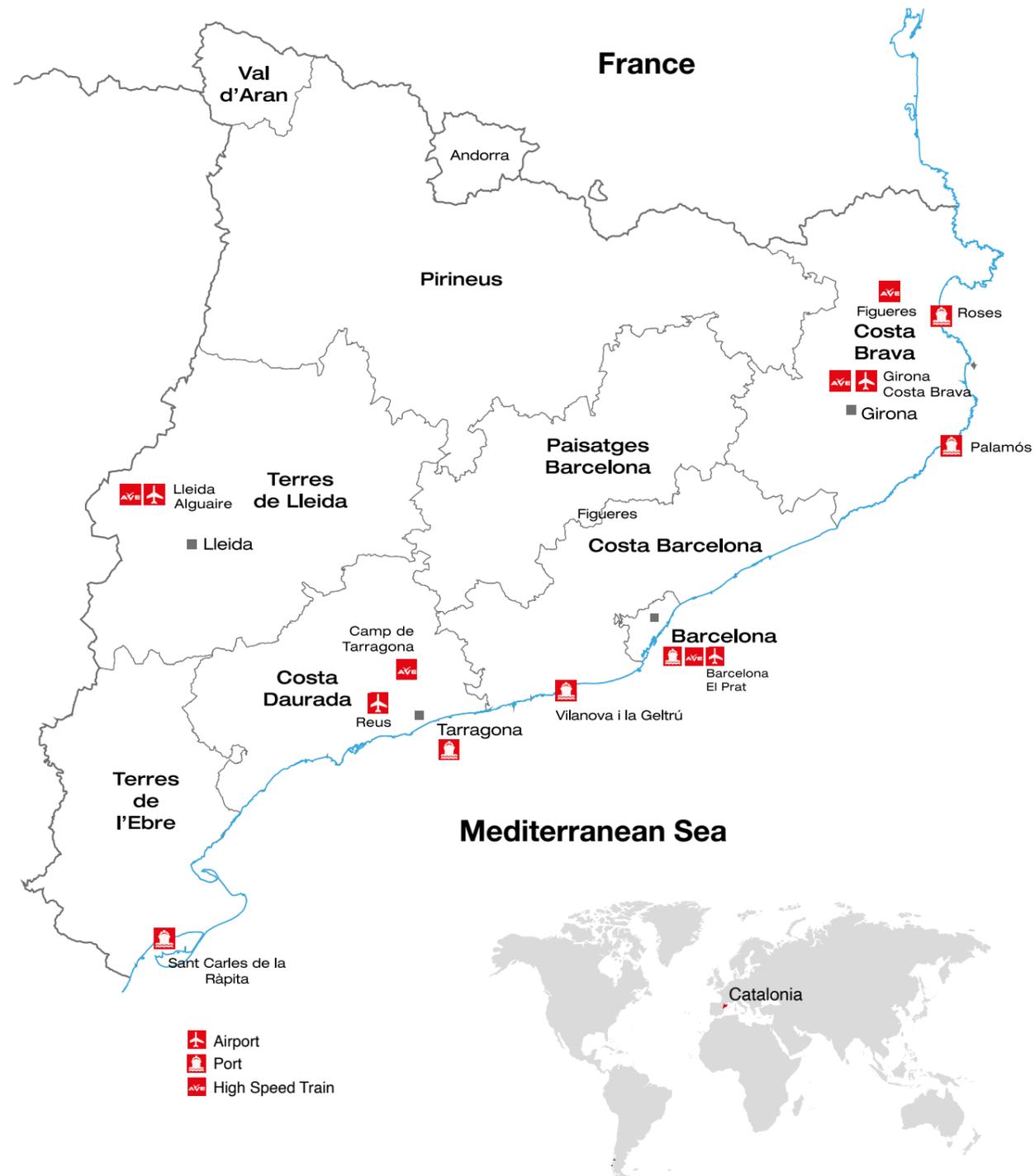
Barcelona Tourist Apartment Association (APARTUR)
apartur.com/en/



The Directorate General of Tourism at the Catalan Department of Enterprise and Knowledge edits an online official tourist accommodation guide for each different sort of tourist accommodation (hotels, campsites, apartments, housing units for tourist use and rural tourism), a guarantee for users as businesses listed are subject to Catalan legislation.

6. Tourist Brands

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



6. Tourist Brands

6.1 Costa Brava



Following the Costa Brava coastal path, pedalling along the rail trails in Girona province, tasting wines from Empordà DO, skydiving above the Gulf of Roses, having a go at local gastronomy in restaurants featuring Michelin stars, experiencing music festivals and undergoing a diving or astronomic baptism are some of the most authentic experiences Costa Brava has to offer for visitors looking for some unforgettable holidays.

Costa Brava is a year-round destination known for places such as Lloret de Mar, Roses, L'Escala, Platja d'Aro and Cadaqués. It features inclusive tourist infrastructures, facilities, products and services suitable for visitors looking for some unforgettable holidays together with their family, partner or friends. Sports and outdoor lovers, culture enthusiasts, businesspeople, persons looking for wellness, gourmets, cruise passengers, etc. will find in Costa Brava a wide variety of high-quality products and activities.

Regarding the specific offer in high-end exclusive tourist products, Costa Brava features small, charming familiar hotels, together with transport companies, activities and agencies specialising in luxury and tailor-made trips with exclusive programmes, customised services and distinct experiences for visitors who wish to discover the land in a different way.

Costa Brava stands out for its 245 golden sand beaches and its little coves surrounded by vegetation and steep cliffs, stretching along 220 km of coastline from Portbou to Blanes.

Small charming coastal villages such as Cadaqués, Calella de Palafrugell and Begur, together with tourist towns with a leisure offer like Roses, L'Escala, Platja d'Aro, Tossa de Mar, Lloret de Mar

and Blanes feature a myriad of proposals to cater for the expectations of any visitor attracted by the Mediterranean light and climate.

The main holiday resorts along the Costa Brava are Roses, Sant Pere Pescador, Torroella de Montgrí-l'Estartit, Calonge and Sant Antoni, Castell-Platja d'Aro, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Lloret de Mar and Blanes.

With more than 550 monumental items in the province of Girona listed as being of high interest, the offer in cultural tourism in Costa Brava attracts millions of visitors enticed by the land's deep and wealthy historical and artistic heritage. Culture also extends to the hundred festivals of various kind featured in the area.

Visitors must not miss the Dalí Triangle, made of the Dalí Theatre-Museum in Figueres, the Salvador Dalí Museum House in Portlligat and the Gala Dalí Castle in Púbol, which also hosts special temporary exhibitions.

This is a land of Michelin stars blessed with Empordà wine, with more than 2,000 restaurants featuring different cuisines: Catalan, market or signature. The great diversity, wealth and quality of the produce the territory yields is noteworthy. The destination is well-known for featuring thirteen restaurants with a total eighteen Michelin stars, plus wine tourism proposals managed under the DO Empordà Wine Route.

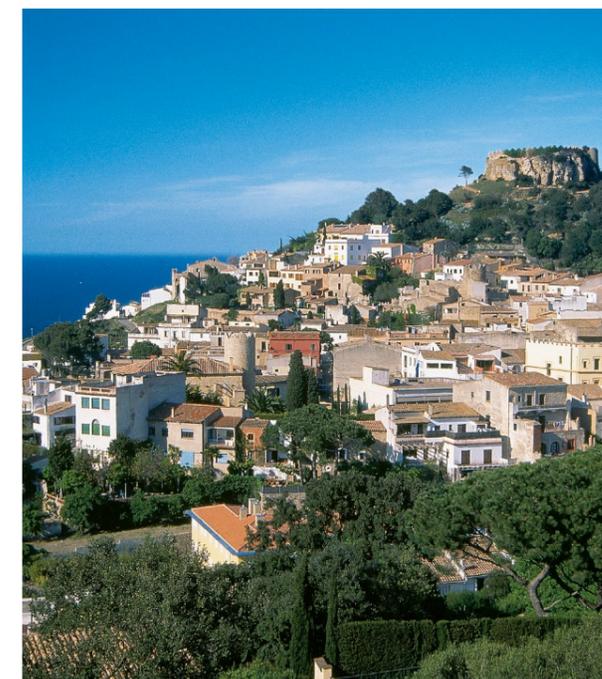
The Girona area features a great amount of accommodation options to enjoy Costa Brava as well as the Girona Pyrenees to the maximum. There are hotels in any category, tourist apartments, campsites and holiday resorts, as well as rural accommodation and hostels. Roughly 265,000 beds cater for the needs of visitors. Costa Brava doubtless provides for a large myriad of options for visitors coming to the area attracted by its climate, nature, culture, gastronomy, leisure, activities and the hospitality of the locals.

Protected natural areas are the most visible part of the Girona province open to visitors. This network encompasses eight natural parks, five of which are under the Costa Brava tourist brand, reaching from the mountains to the sea and making up for 31% of the total area of the destination.

Sustainable tourist activities are provided in protected areas, allowing visitors to discover the area in an active and environmentally respectful manner. A good way for more adventurous and active visitors to get in touch with Costa Brava is through activities such as hiking along local paths (over 2,000 km), long-distance paths or within the Itinerànnia network, besides the increasingly popular coastal paths, together with the observation of fauna and flora. Other options are road cycling, mountain biking, cycling tourism, horse riding, rock climbing and golf.

As to the seaside, Costa Brava features eighteen marinas plus an endless offer in nautical and water activities (sailing, catamaran, windsurfing in all its varieties, sea kayaking, scuba diving and snorkelling), allowing visitors to get in touch with the uniqueness of the destination from the sea.

Activities from the air include skydiving in one of the three world's best skydiving centres, Skydive Empuriabrava, and balloon flights.



costabrava.org

6. Tourist Brands

6.2 Costa Barcelona



Costa Barcelona encompasses six counties: Alt Penedès, Vallès Occidental and Vallès 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. Among its numerous attractions are more than 100 kilometres of coast in Maresme, Baix Llobregat and Garraf counties, with noteworthy towns like Mataró, Castelldefels and Sitges. Arenys de Mar features an important fishing port, Sant Pol de Mar, still preserving its cosy 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 looked to the sea, with a large fishing and commercial port, in addition to maintaining some deeply rooted traditions. Inland, Vilafranca del Penedès and Sant

Sadurní d'Anoia are the wine and cava (sparkling wine) capitals respectively, featuring a great offer in wine tourism that is well present throughout Alt Penedès county.

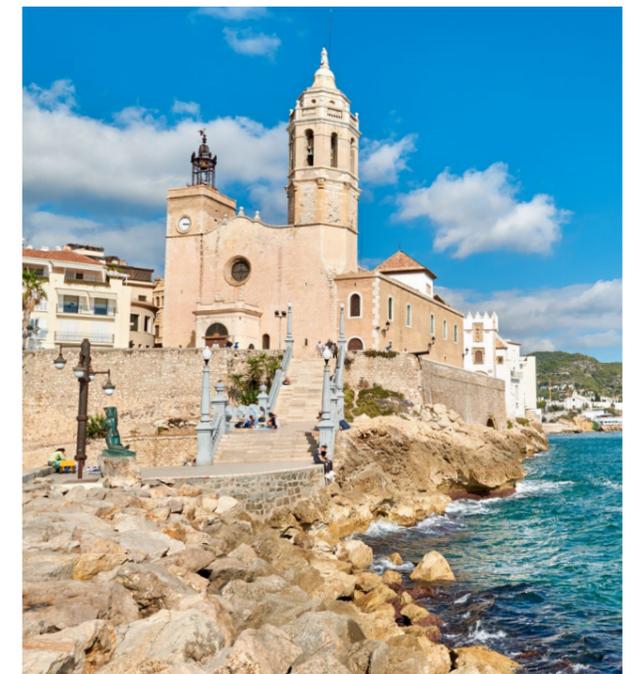
Sant Cugat in Vallès Occidental is a modern town featuring also some of Catalonia's most relevant medieval monastic sites (9th century). In Vallès Oriental, the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya racetrack hosts the Formula 1 and motorcycling Grand Prix, besides offering a large variety in activities for 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 100 kilometres of urban beaches, featuring all sorts of services and being 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.

Among the rich cultural and monumental heritage in Costa Barcelona, Gaudí's Art Nouveau works stand out 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.

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, while nature lovers can explore the vast natural park network, including El Montnegre i el Corredor, Serralada Litoral and Serralada de Marina close to the shore, as well as Montserrat with its unique, peculiar rounded shapes, Garraf, Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac and Montseny 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 internationally reputed Denominations of Origin out of Catalonia's twelve: Penedès, Alella and Cava.



barcelonaesmoltmes.cat

6. Tourist Brands

6.3 Barcelona



The capital of Catalonia, Barcelona is an open, welcoming, diverse and sustainable city with more than 2,000 years of history. 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. Even today, the city enjoys the sea with kilometre-long beaches and a diverse offer in nautical activities, which include sailing (America's Cup), leisure—a sunset from the sea with the city skyline as a backdrop—and watching the fishing boats arriving home before experiencing the fish auction. Barcelona still keeps this thousand-year-old tradition, providing the option of sharing a day with the fishermen.

Being committed to sustainability and environmental protection, Barcelona was the first city 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, such as the Check Barcelona app informing in real time on the visitor flow on the different sites throughout the city.

Between the old seaside quarters and the hills, the Eixample expands 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. With the Superblock programme, some of which have been awarded the European Prize for Urban Public Space, the city sets a step forward in becoming a role model for changing all its streets to recover for the citizens some of the space currently taken by private vehicles.

Picasso, Miró and Tàpies are the painters who best reflect that utmost Catalan duality of “seny i raixa” (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. The city is also passionate for classical music, being a European landmark thanks to its great offer and programmes at beautiful venues such as Art Nouveau Palau de la Música, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, one of the big opera houses with 175 years of history, and L'Auditori.

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.

Turisme de Barcelona runs a network of 14 tourist information offices where both visitors and locals can obtain advice in 13 languages, including sign language. It also features a wide online service offer that allows any visitor to organise their own trip through the website tickets.visitbarcelona.com. Visitors can also 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.

Modernity is provided by countless music festivals, such as internationally-renowned Sónar and Primavera Sound, alongside popular festivities like La Mercè or those in Gràcia and Sants quarters.

Barcelona boasts a shopping offer with fine added value, making it a unique experience thanks to a blend of climate, architecture, culture and cuisine. The shopping axes making Barcelona Shopping City extend throughout all quarters, combining avant-gardist boutiques with traditional shops. At five kilometres long, Barcelona Shopping Line is the axis par excellence joining different commercial and tourist areas from the sea to the hills, featuring national and international centennial unique brands, alongside shopping malls and flagship stores. Barcelona Unique Shops brings together several distinct shops offering a unique shopping experience, featuring local craftspeople, designers and brands, centennial shops, delicatessen and even sustainable fashion.

Barcelona has also an international reputation as a world-wide prime destination in hosting a large number of international congresses, with events such as the Mobile World Congress, IBTM World or ISE Barcelona.

In terms of gastronomy, Barcelona has it all to be a leading destination, from traditional to modern cuisine, boasting 29 Michelin stars. There are few cities in the

world featuring a network of markets like Barcelona, with 39 food markets that make a unique heritage in any respect: architecture, design, history and their varied offer, which make them a landmark.

Among the most relevant tourist activities to discover the city are Barcelona Bus Turístic and Barcelona City Tour (routes with stops at all sights and places of interest), Barcelona Card (a city ticket including public transport, free museums and over 85 discounts), Barcelona Walking Tours (four guided walking tours), Articket (a pass to visit the city's six main museums) and 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. Barcelona is the gate to winegrowing areas, offering different ways of approaching this astonishing world: wine tasting or sipping a glass together with the best cuisine, the city can be enjoyed eating and drinking.

Only two hours from the city are the Catalan Pyrenees, a true paradise for mountain lovers offering either a one-day trip thanks to its good communications or a stay for several days at a hotel or a rural home.

visitbarcelona.com

6. Tourist Brands

6.4 Costa Daurada



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

Salou, Cambrils and Vila-seca-La Pineda Platja, which together with El Vendrell, Muntanyes de Prades and Calafell feature the Family Tourism label by the Government of Catalonia, make 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.

One of its main attractions being PortAventura World, which includes PortAventura Park and PortAventura Caribe Aquatic Park, together with Ferrari Land, Europe's only theme park devoted to the *cavallino rampante*.

The municipalities of Salou and Cambrils also feature the Sports Tourism label by the Government of Catalonia, a relevant specialised offer adapted to athletes of all levels. They notably include water sports, cycling and football. In the south of Costa Daurada, Mont-roig-Miami Platja is an ideal

destination for mountain bike lovers with 140 kilometres of routes and 12 kilometres of coastline along four beaches and nine coves.

Cambrils features a rich gastronomic offer, including two restaurants with one Michelin star. The other two one-star restaurants in Costa Daurada are Deliranto in Salou and Quatre Molins in Cornudella de Montsant. Torredembarra has a very special natural reserve: Els Muntanyans, shared with the municipality of Creixell.

Another outstanding sight is Roman Tarraco. Its most outstanding features are the circus, the amphitheatre, the walls, the provincial forum, Les Ferreres aqueduct and Centcelles, which are part of the monuments listed as UNESCO World Heritage.

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 castells (human towers), an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity that started 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 Tarraco Arena Plaza in Tarragona every even year.

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 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-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.

costadaurada.info

6. Tourist Brands

6.5 Terres de l'Ebre



Terres de l'Ebre encompasses the four counties along 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 mussels bred in the calm and warm waters of the Ebro Delta are 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, fruit from Ribera d'Ebre and honey, a quality product rounding out 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 lies Els Ports Natural Park, a paradise for wild goats with peaks towering almost 1500 metres and a destination featuring the Family Tourism label. 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 Ulldesona with some fine cave paintings classed as UNESCO World Heritage.

The Ebro Battle Studies Centre in Gandesa and several interpretive centres in different towns under the COMEBE (Memorial Consortium for the Sites of the Ebro Battle) have been created to provide an insight into the strong impact caused on the area by the Ebro battle during the Spanish Civil

This combination of environmental protection and agricultural use has earned the Ebro Delta international recognition. Most of Terres de l'Ebre was awarded the Biosphere Reserve status in 2013, which acknowledges the value of the whole ecosystem of which the Ebro is the spine, a lively and partially navigable river playing a role of utmost importance. It has also been recognised as one of the world's top 100 sustainable destinations.

War. Another option for cultural tourism is the Terres de l'Ebre Rail Trail 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 covered by bike, on foot or on horseback. With more than a thousand kilometres of paths and low-traffic roads, cycling tourism is another relevant offer in the area, especially the road to Mount Caro, a distinctive sporting cycling tourism feature.

The Ebro Delta provides a landscape changing according to the season. It was formed by sediments brought by the river over millions of years. Part of it is protected 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 with traditional gear, cycling and enjoying numerous unspoilt beaches.



terresdelebre.travel

6. Tourist Brands

6.6 Pirineus



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 tourism 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 border between Pallars Sobirà county and the French department of Ariège, and a myriad of beautiful valleys that give the land a character of its own with plenty of diversity, such as Val d’Aran, Cardós, Lord, Cerdanya, Camprodon and Núria, amongst many others. The villages keep a relevant Romanesque heritage as well as a great wealth in traditions and festivals deeply rooted among the local population. There is also an option for ecotourism in the natural parks and protected areas scattered all across the Catalan Pyrenees, as well as numerous mountain and adventure sports plus the different proposals in active tourism such as hiking, cycling and whitewater sports like rafting. Mountain bikers will find almost 100 signposted routes, while road cyclers can either follow the Pyrenees along the trans-Pyrenean route or pedal through specific areas such as signposted mountain passes and different stages of the Tour of Catalonia or 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, such as bike parks in summer or many other

activities designed for all audiences (zip lines, slides, etc.). In fact, seven of Catalonia’s sixteen 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. Winter activities go beyond snowboarding and skiing in all its different modes (Alpine, Nordic, mountain, etc.) to provide experiences such as heliskiing, mushing, igloo building and even ice diving.

The tasteful and traditional mountain cuisine, completed with according wines, such as those from Empordà and Costers del Segre DO, and craft beers from a wide range of local brewers, plus health & wellness tourism, including spas and thermal baths, make another major attraction of the land, based on good service facilities that allow full enjoyment of throughout the year.

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 de la Garrotxa Natural Park featuring the largest 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

Within its Pirineus programme, the Catalan Tourist Board edits specific publications such as the overall catalogue as well as those devoted to hiking, culture and heritage, plus leaflets related e.g. to the GR1 and GR11 long-distance trails. The Pirineus de Catalunya brand has a press pack of its own as well as a destination sales guide distributed through the local agencies scattered all over the area. These publications are available in several languages from the catalunya.com and visitpirineus.com websites.

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 fine examples of Catalan Romanesque art.

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).

Accommodation is mostly in the form of small, family-run businesses, spread throughout the country, ranging from hotels, rural homes, campsites, tourist apartments and hostels, to high mountain refuges.



visitpirineus.com

6. Tourist Brands

6.7 Terres de Lleida



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 agrifood 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.

Lleida-Alguaire airport, 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 great tourist initiatives in Terres de Lleida 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 with the Camí Ignasià (Ignatian Way).

The set of cave art in the Mediterranean area of the Iberian Peninsula was declared World Heritage in 1998. It encompasses a total 757

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

sites, 16 of which are located in the Lleida area, with Roca dels Moros and El Cogul caves in Garrigues county being the best known.

Located in the southern part of the Lleida Pyrenees is a vast area of great geological interest, declared a geopark under the name of Geoparc Orígens als Pirineus Catalans. At more than 2000 square kilometres, it extends over 19 municipalities in Pallars Jussà, Pallars Sobirà, Noguera and Alt Urgell counties. The UNESCO grants this recognition to territories that, in addition to interesting natural features, also have set up a sustainable heritage management model involving local communities on a permanent basis. Epicentre in Tremp is the visitor centre providing all information.

The Lleida area further boasts a wide offer in festivals, sports and culture. Many initiatives have 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.

The fruit tree blossom and olive oil tourism have been recently included into the tourist offer. Most of Terres de Lleida is covered in white and pink tones in spring, when pear, nectarine and peach trees blossom. The quality and diversity of olive oil made in the Lleida plain has created an offer in oil tasting to appreciate flavours and textures so far unknown to the general public.

aralleida.cat

6. Tourist Brands

6.8 Val d'Aran



Located in the Western Pyrenees on an area covering 633.46 square kilometres, 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, the resort with the largest skiing area in Spain, features 167 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 horse-drawn 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 3,000 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.

Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park can be enjoyed throughout the year, with peaks above 3000 metres, over 200 mountain lakes, spectacular waterfalls, signposted hiking paths for all levels, walks and cycling routes plus a great variety in activities related to water and nature.

The artistic wealth of Val d'Aran is one of the best preserved treasures in the Pyrenees. Almost completely isolated for centuries, the valley now offers a wealthy,

Val d'Aran invites to enjoy a well-deserved rest with its more than 14,000 beds across four and five-star hotels, small hotels and aparthotels, tourist apartments, two Paradores de Turismo, campsites, rural homes, high and mid mountain shelters and youth hostels.

The thermal waters that spring from different points of the Val d'Aran where spas are located are an additional point to enjoy relaxing in a warm and friendly environment.



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.

Cuisine also plays an important role in the Val d'Aran tourist offer. Over 260 restaurants and bars invite to have a taste at both traditional dishes (e.g. "òlha aranesa", patès 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.

visitvaldaran.com

6. Tourist Brands

6.9 Paisatges Barcelona



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, with an offer that includes castles, chapels and historical remains from past times staying in harmony with nature.

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, it boasts attractive mountain areas such as Montseny, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve bordering with Costa Barcelona, as well as Guillerics and Collsacabra around the Sau reservoir. The monastery and mountain of Montserrat are much more than just a protected natural area; the natural park combines unique geological formations with numerous hiking trails and climbing routes. Not too far away lies 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 heart 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 near Manresa has become a tourist destination combining different singular projects: the Romanesque monastery, an architectural and cultural gem; the Fundació Alícia 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 surrounding the 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 Pruit, placed amidst an utmost attractive ancestral environment, are also well worth a visit.

Igualada, the capital of Anoia county, has a long history related to 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'Escudelleteta i del Ricard vat collection.

barcelonaesmoltmes.cat

7. Tourist Experiences



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 promote 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 to identify the best tourist experiences and envisage their promotion in the most effective way,

the CTB has structured the tourist offer in Catalonia by brands, each of which features a homogeneous marketable offer overlooking the fulfilment of the set requirements.

The brands created so far are Family-friendly beach holidays, Family-friendly adventure holidays, Family Attractions, Cycling in Catalonia, Ecotourism, Hiking in Catalonia, Active & Adventure, Sports Tourism, Golf in Catalonia, Wine Tourism, Gastronomic Experiences, Gastronomic Hotels, Arts & Culture, Maritime Towns and Quarters, Cities and Towns with Character, Charming Villages, Premium Catalonia, Barcelona Medical Destination and Catalunya Convention Bureau.

Through its sales channel experience.catalunya.com, the CTB 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 around twenty product categories and check the blog with the best offers of the month.

7.1. Activities in Natural and Rural Areas

All-year sports and leisure facilities have turned mountain and 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. 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 to get to know the land’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 to raft 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 offering a great wealth of options for water sports lovers.



Agritourism

Catalonia features a specialised offer in agritourism allowing for unique experiences on the countryside, with sustainable, top-notch, unique proposals related to the very essence of the land.

Owners of more than 700 farmhouses open their homes, fields, farms and workrooms, providing a tailor-made experience to their guests, sharing and exchanging first-hand working experiences in agriculture, stockbreeding and forestry.

Families, couples, groups of friends as well as companies on a team building seminar can stay at rural homes and do activities such as collecting eggs, knowing new varieties and properties of local products, the life around organic veal breeding, picking fruit and vegetables, grape harvesting, making cheese or even enjoying an astronomical observation together with local spirit tasting, thus discovering the tangible and intangible heritage related to the origin of the food we eat.

In addition to experiencing such activities at rural homes, the offer in agritourism is completed with visits and activities in museums, cultural centres, workshops or theme routes related to agrifood products. Good examples for this are the Welcome to the Countryside Festival (an open weekend once a year at farming, stockbreeding and forestry businesses throughout Catalonia) and the Welcome to the Countryside Routes, available all year-long.

To summarise, agritourism allows visitors to go beyond rural tourism to know and experience first-hand the countryside life through the locals, featuring their most genuine side.

7. Tourist Experiences



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 a pioneer 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.

There are 16 ski resorts in the Catalan Pyrenees providing a varied offer, the largest in Spain, with more than 600 km of skiing area. The ten 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 six 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 (mushing), ice climbing, heliskiing, ice diving and igloo construction.

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.

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:

- **Living Roses**
livingroses.cat
- **Estartit Illes Medes Estació Nàutica**
enestartit.com
- **Santa Susanna**
stasusanna-barcelona.com
- **Visit Vilanova**
visitvilanova.cat
- **Nàutic Parc Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre**
nauticparc.com

ENLaRapita! enlarapita.com

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 boats and fishing.

All-year sports and leisure facilities have turned mountain and 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.

Ecotourism

Biosphere reserves, natural parks, unique landscapes—Catalonia boasts a land full of natural areas allowing for ecotourism. In 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 complying with some basic principles such as a minimum environmental footprint, contributing to local development, awareness-raising, learning and helping save nature.

A good ecotourist experience requires a good local guide who knows the area and helps understand the landscape and fauna, raise the awareness for respecting and preserving the natural heritage, interpret what visitors are seeing in a pleasant and respectful way and deepen their knowledge on the local area and its natural and cultural attractions. Thus the ecotourist experience will become complete and unforgettable.

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. Catalonia also plays a prominent role in Wildsea Europe, an international platform commercialising marine ecotourism experiences along the European coast.

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, Aiguestortes 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.



7. Tourist Experiences

7.2 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 any sort of sports from the sea to the high mountains.

Sports Tourism brand

This recognition awarded by the Catalan Tourist Board acknowledges 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 by demand: top-level athletes, professional athletes, amateurs and tourists wishing to do sports or watch competitions in Catalonia.

Apart from the certified municipalities, the brand also encompasses sports facilities, specialised travel agencies, specialised accommodation and other specific service providers. The Sports Tourism brand includes the following sports: track & field, football, tennis, team sports, rowing, kayaking, sailing, swimming, parachuting and triathlon.

The brand was created in 2003 and has currently eleven certified municipalities in Catalonia:

- **Amposta (rowing, flatwater kayaking)**
amposta.cat
- **Calella (swimming, triathlon)**
calellabarcelona.com
- **Cambrils (football, sailing)**
cambrils-turisme.com
- **Castelldefels (rowing, flatwater kayaking)**
castelldefels.org
- **Girona (cycling, tennis)**
girona.cat/turisme
- **L'Ametlla de Mar (sailing)**
visitametllademar.com
- **L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (track & field, football, team sports, swimming)**
l-h.cat
- **Lloret de Mar (track & field, football, team sports, swimming)**
lloretdemar.org
- **Salou (football, triathlon, sailing)**
visitsalou.eu
- **Santa Susanna (football, team sports, sailing, cycling)**
stasusanna-barcelona.com
- **Sort (whitewater kayaking)**
turisme.sort.cat

Sports tourism is a strategic 4D product (deseasonalisation, deconcentration, diversification and expenditure, “despesa” in Catalan). Deseasonalisation allows extending the tourist season at many Catalan businesses and destinations, deconcentrating the most touristy areas, diversifying the economy and creating expenditure all over the territory. Beyond sports events (marathons, triathlons, cycling races, football games, etc.), many international clubs, teams and sports associations come to train outside the tourist season, taking advantage of the good climate conditions in different places in Catalonia and allowing for additional business activity.

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 enjoyed all year round.

Looking back to a long-standing, century-long golf tradition, Catalonia's offer is widespread and varied, featuring 36 golf,

4 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.



7. Tourist Experiences

7.3 Wine Tourism

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 million bottles of wine and cava (sparkling wine), Catalonia is a wine tourist destination with a great 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.

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 Wine Tourism (Priorat DOQ & Montsant DO), Lleida-Costers del Segre Wine Route, Empordà DO Wine Route, Bages DO Wine Route, Penedès Wine Tourism, Alella DO Wine Tourism, Terra Alta DO Wine Route, Trepat-Conca de Barberà DO Wine Route and Tarragona DO Wine Route.

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 generally located close to unique heritages sites, such as Poblet monastery, Sant Pere de Rodes, Escala Dei or Empúries.

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 sail boat. A wine therapy session is a great way of closing a day in style.

There are around forty travel agents and companies 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.

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.



7. Tourist Experiences

7.4 Gastronomy

Discovering a country's gastronomy, strolling along market stalls, buying, savouring and chatting with its cuisine makers, travelling along wine routes: wine and gastronomic tourism consists of all this and more.



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 cookbooks. A magnificent example for it is the *Llibre de Sent Soví*, a Catalan cookbook from the 14th century, considered one of Europe's oldest and a landmark in early Catalan cuisine.

Catalonia plays 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 50 restaurants with a total 65 stars in the 2022 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:

Costa Brava:

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

Costa Barcelona:

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

Barcelona:

- Barceloneta Cuina

Terres de Lleida:

- Noguera Cuina

Costa Daurada:

- El Gust és Nostre
- Tarragona Gastronòmica
- Terra i Taula

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

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

Paisatges Barcelona:

- Osona Cuina
- Els Fogons del Bages
- Cardona Sabors

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 or oil mills, having an insight into wine cellars, visiting specialised museums... A unique offer is a stay at one of the gastronomic hotels, cosy small accommodation units providing 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.

Catalonia grows 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 gastronomic offer and are audited and certified by the Catalan Organic Agricultural Production Council (CCPAE). The Slow Food movement in turn intends to safeguard food, raw materials and growing and processing techniques passed on by local tradition consolidated over time. About fifty restaurants from all over Catalonia have the km 0 label awarded by the Slow Food association.

The role of crafts at the table is also important. The ties between cuisine, produce and the land point out the role of craftspeople manufacturing products related with gastronomy, such as wooden spoons and forks or earthenware pots.

More than 300 wine and gastronomic events and shows take place during the year. Biannual events such as the Gastronomic Forum, Alimentaria Barcelona, the Catalan Wine and Cava Show, the Barcelona Beer Festival and Mercat de Mercats (Market of Markets) in Barcelona as well as the Health and Slow Food Fair in Lleida are noteworthy.

7. Tourist Experiences

7.5 Great Cultural Icons and Great Routes

Culture is Catalonia's hallmark, a land of artists and entrepreneurs drawing its innovation spirit and cosmopolitanism from its past. Catalonia boasts a unique artistic and monumental heritage in Europe, making it a preferred destination for cultural tourism. The UNESCO has declared a total eleven World Heritage features in Catalonia, including three masterpieces of Intangible Cultural Heritage and two Biosphere Reserves (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 notable works. Apart from renowned writers, Catalonia also boasts the creations of great geniuses, like the members of the Catalan painting school (Joaquim Vayreda, Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Ramon Casas, Isidre Nonell, Joaquim Torres-Garcia, Albert Ràfols Casamada, etc.) or unique artists such as Dalí, Picasso, Miró and Tàpies, whose 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), 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.

Several pilgrimage routes cross Catalonia. One of them is the Cistercian Route between three monasteries of the religious order in Conca de Barberà, Alt Camp and Urgell counties, featuring World Heritage site Poblet. The Camí de Sant Jaume (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.

Grand Tour of Catalonia

The Grand Tour of Catalonia is a trip created throughout the land, based on the sustainable tourist scheme promoted by the Catalan Tourist Board: tourism evenly distributed throughout the territory, on a diverse and quality basis, allowing visitors to discover the destination all year round.

The route is designed to facilitate the knowledge of less known products, areas and routes, visualising local genuine experiences that allow diversification of the offer in services and tourist experiences and hence deseasonalise it.

Inspired in the great journeys that started in the mid-17th century, the Grand Tour of Catalonia is more than 2,000 km long, designed to be covered by motor vehicle in two alternative ways: either on one single 13-day route or in 5 stretches of 5 to 7 stages each.

The first option, the Iconic Grand Tour of Catalonia, is a route that captivates visitors at each kilometre.

This route, one of Catalonia's most relevant new features, allows to discover, experience, taste and enjoy the destination by car. It is one trip and many trips at the same time, so every visitor can organise it they please, travel at their own pace, at any time of the year, and choose from a wide range of diverse experiences to discover heritage, natural, gastronomic and wine attractions, as well as meet the people, their customs and traditions.

Following a 13-day circular trip, its diversity of proposals and landscapes making it seem longer, visitors will know Catalonia's great cultural and natural icons.

Stretch 1: Barcelona to Tarragona. The starting point of the Grand Tour of Catalonia is the city of Barcelona and its Art Nouveau heritage. From there, it leads to Roman Tarragona, the land of calçots, cava and xató. On the way, visitors will discover the mountain of Montserrat, Cardona with its castle and the historical and artistic heritage of Solsona. On the way, the trip passes along the Penedès vineyards and wineries, charming Sitges and Pau Casals' musical legacy in El Vendrell, following the beaches of Garraf and northern Costa Daurada.

Stretch 2: Tarragona to Lleida. This stretch departs from Roman Tarraco, following Costa Daurada amidst thousand-year-old olive trees and vineyards. On the way, fish and seafood can be enjoyed in Cambrils and the Ebro Delta explored by boat or bike. The route leads then inland, leaving the coast behind to follow the course of the river Ebro and discover the rugged beauty of Els Ports, the art of Picasso, the wine cathedrals in Terra Alta and Priorat as well as the impressive monasteries along the Cistercian Route, notably Poblet, before reaching Lleida.

Stretch 3: Lleida to La Seu d'Urgell. Starting from Lleida and its iconic Seu Vella, this stretch leaves the plain behind to approach the Catalan Pyrenees. Val d'Aran, medieval hamlets, the starlit sky in Montsec

and the Romanesque churches in Vall de Boí become the travel companions. The route includes a visit to Aiguestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park as well as adventure sports on the river Noguera Pallaresa, before reaching La Seu d'Urgell.

Stretch 4: La Seu d'Urgell to Figueres. Departing from La Seu d'Urgell, the trip leads eastwards following the Catalan Pyrenees along Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park. The route then passes by Ripoll monastery with its façade full of biblical scenes, Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa Natural Park with its forty volcanoes and iconic towns like Santa Pau, Besalú and Banyoles. It finishes in Figueres, the gate to the world of genius Dalí.

Stretch 5: Figueres to Barcelona. Starting from Figueres, this stretch deepens further into Dalí's surrealist world, visiting Cadaqués and Cap de Creus. It then follows along Costa Brava and its seaside towns, coastal paths and fishing harbours such as Palamós. Medieval villages like Peratallada offer a rest en route before crossing the Montseny range and stop on the beaches and in the fishing towns of Costa Barcelona. The journey finally ends in Barcelona.

For further information, refer to grandtour.catalunya.com, the *Commercialisation Guide* or the *Communication Guide*. A complete guide with more than 350 pages including maps of each stage has also been published.

7. Tourist Experiences

7.5 Great Cultural Icons and Great Routes



Other cultural proposals

Additionally, there is 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.

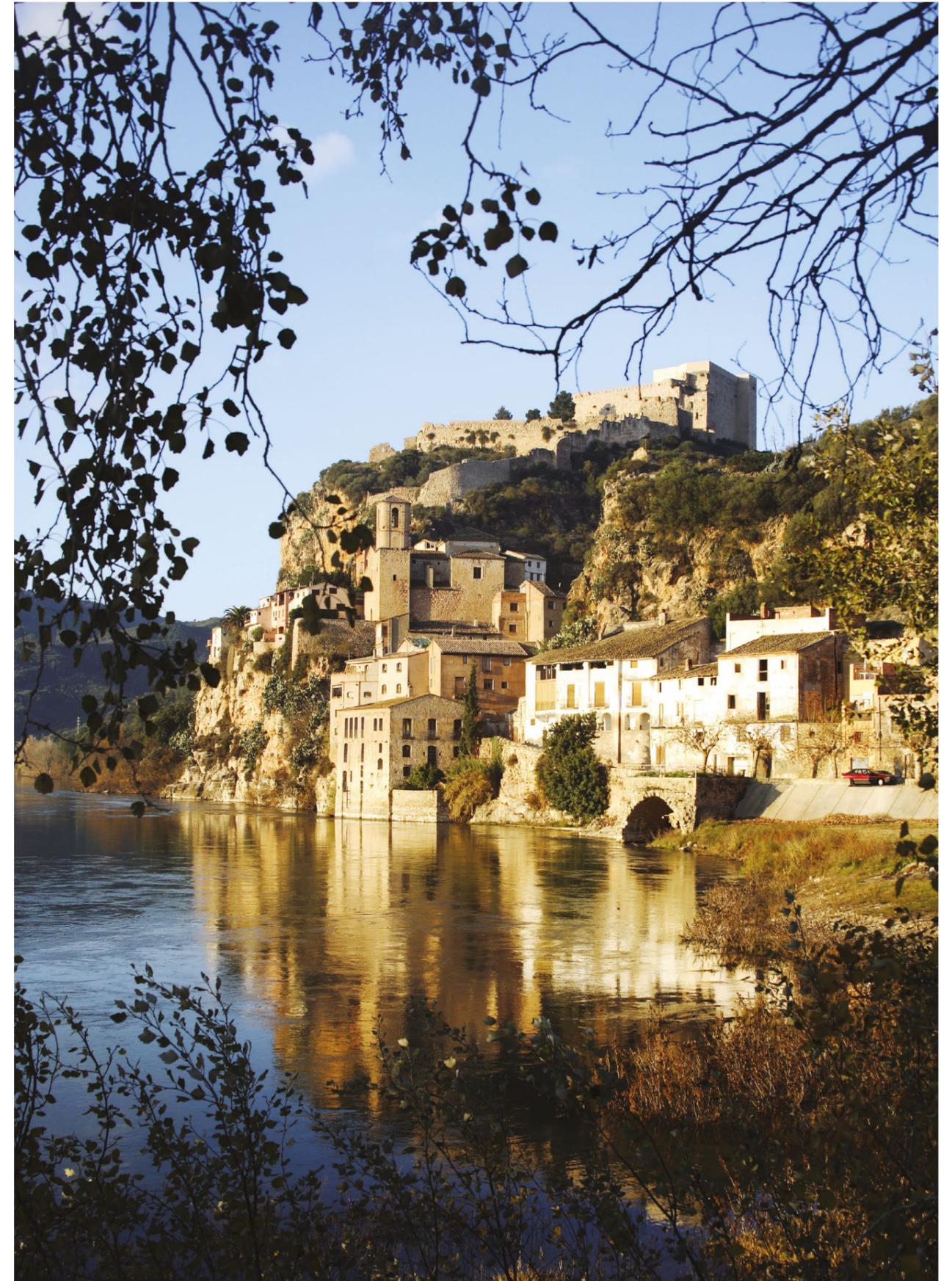
In this respect, the offer in musical tourism is large, with unique venues like the Auditori de Girona, La Llotja in Lleida as well as the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Auditori and the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona. Several towns also organise summer music festivals in heritage sites and areas 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 a key character in Catalan music. 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.

The Catalan Tourist Board brands Maritime Towns and Quarters, Cities and Towns with Character and Charming Villages aim to segment the tourist promotion of Catalan municipalities, with culture as one of its main ingredients. Meet the certified cities, towns and villages:

- Cities and Towns with Character
- Charming Villages
- Maritime Towns and Quarters



7. Tourist Experiences

7.6 Hiking and Cycling

Catalonia offers hiking from the Pyrenees to the Mediterranean, amidst a large variety of fine scenery. 30% of the territory is under some kind of protection, including 12 natural and one national park. The land offers routes and paths for all target groups, and hiking can be combined with excellent cultural, wine and dining proposals.

The Catalan footpath network is linked to the European and Iberian networks thanks to its almost 9,000 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, from Berga to France, 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; Camí de Picasso (Picasso Way) in the Pyrenees; as well as the Itinerànnia

footpath network and the coastal ways in the Girona counties. In this respect, Catalonia led 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 Vies Verdes (rail trails), accessible paths along abandoned railway lines; the Transpirinenca, an extraordinary route of almost 800 km in length between the Mediterranean and the Bay of Biscay along the southern flank of the Pyrenees; the Pedals de Foc (Fire Pedals) route through Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park and some cycling route networks like that in Baix Empordà are most notable.

Catalonia also boasts a wide network of mountain biking centres with more than 300 routes and over 6,000 kilometres of signposted ways. Each centre offers information on trips, accommodation and sites of interest. The large network of roads and paved rural tracks for road cycling is to be highlighted, perfectly topped with a good climate, a varied landscape and biking services. The site catalunya.com features specific maps for mountain biking and road cycling routes.

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.



7. Tourist Experiences

7.7 Medical Tourism

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



Barcelona Medical Destination is the promotion brand for medical tourism created by the Catalan Tourist Board. It partners with the Barcelona Centre Mèdic and Barcelona Medical Agency associations.

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 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)
- Puigvert Foundation
- Sanitas CIMA Hospital
- ICO (Institut Comtal d'Oftalmologia)
- IMO (Institute of Ocular Microsurgery)
- IMOR (Medical Institute for Radiation Oncology)
- Institut Guttmann
- Quirón (Hospital QuironSalud Barcelona)
- Sant Joan de Déu (Mother & Child Hospital)
- Teknon (Teknon Medical Centre)

7.8 Premium

Catalonia is a small yet extraordinarily diverse territory, the legacy of a thousand-year-old history, yet 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.



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 looking for some true, exclusive and customised experience.

This is a land blessed with 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.

The city of Barcelona is the gateway 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 hamlets in Lleida or the numerous beaches—numerous on the Costa Daurada

and Terres de l'Ebre, secluded between cliffs in Costa Brava. All this is completed with a climate that allows enjoying the snow in winter and the sun and the sea during many months of the year, especially in summer. All this is topped with a well-preserved legacy declared World Heritage.

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 visitors to enjoy exquisite experiences they will hardly forget.

Catalonia has always a select proposal to offer, suiting everybody, no matter their age, lifestyle or origin.

7. Tourist Experiences

7.9 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 large 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.

Main services offered to organisers:

- Exhaustive knowledge of Catalonia
- Free, unbiased, customised advice
- Contact and intermediation with companies
- Support for nominations to capture congresses
- Prospective trips and actions to communicate the offer

The Ambassadors programme by the CCB has currently around 160 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.

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. The current CCB relation scheme with institutions and companies working to bring meetings to Catalonia is designed at implementing 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 CCB 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.

The CCB has a website, www.catalunya.com/en/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

It features nine destinations with capacity to host congresses as they provide modern facilities and 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 100 activities for business tourism and event groups (incentives, teambuilding, outdoors, etc.). The publication is divided into four blocks: Adventure – Sports – Nature; Gastronomy – Culinary – Oenology; Tours & Activities – Teambuilding; Tradition – Culture – Arts – Design.

MEETING PLANNER GUIDE

It contains 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

It features Catalonia as an ideal destination to host all sorts of business meetings.

7. Tourist Experiences

7.10 Family Holidays

A large number of tourists visiting Catalonia are families. Therefore, Catalonia has been pioneering in Europe in looking for a certified brand for family-friendly destinations. The Family Tourism programme from the Catalan Tourist Board has been growing since its creation in 2003 to encompass currently over 60 municipalities and more than 450 businesses.



The Catalan Tourist Board features two specialisation brands ensuring that a destination has an offer in accommodation and leisure catering for the needs of families: miniclubs with wardens, children playgrounds, water and theme parks, children seats and menus in restaurants at the accommodation, children swimming pools, safety at all destinations, a wide children's activity programme at the

accommodation and in the street, connected rooms, available cots and pushchairs, socket protectors, etc.

There are currently 27 family-friendly destinations in Catalonia, of which 19 feature the Family-friendly beach holidays brand and 8 the Family-friendly adventure holidays brand:

The certified family-friendly offer is provided by affiliated businesses and destinations having made an ongoing effort to adapt and improve, thus providing optimum products and services 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.

Family-friendly beach holidays

COSTA BRAVA:

- Blanes
blanescostabrava.cat
- Calonge - Sant Antoni
calonge-santantoni.com
- Castell - Platja d'Aro
platjadaro.com
- Lloret de Mar
lloretdemar.org
- Roses
visit.roses.cat
- Sant Feliu de Guíxols
visitguixols.com
- Torroella de Montgrí - l'Estartit
visitestartit.com
- Sant Pere Pescador
visitsantpere.com

COSTA BARCELONA:

- Calella
calellabarcelona.com
- Malgrat de Mar
turismemalgrat.com
- Pineda de Mar
visitpineda.com
- Santa Susanna
stasusanna-barcelona.es
- Castelldefels
castelldefelsturisme.com/
ca/castelldefels-turisme/
- Vilanova i la Geltrú
vilanovaturisme.cat

COSTA DAURADA:

- Calafell
turisme.calafell.cat
- Cambrils
cambrils-turisme.com
- Salou
visitsalou.eu
- Vila-seca - la Pineda Platja
lapinedaplatja.info
- El Vendrell
elvendrellturistic.com

Family-friendly adventure holidays

PIRINEUS:

- Berga
(Berga, Avià, Capolat, Castellar del Riu & Cercs)
turismeberga.cat
- Valls d'Àneu
(Esterrí d'Àneu, Guingueta d'Àneu, Alt Àneu & Espot)
vallsdaneu.org
- Vall de Boí
vallboi.cat
- Vall d'en Bas - les Preses
vallbas.cat
- Pirineus - Noguera Pallaresa
(Sort, Rialp, Llavorsí, Soriguera & Baix Pallars)
turisme.pallarssobira.cat

COSTA DAURADA:

- Muntanyes de Prades
(La Febró, Prades, Arbolí, Capafonts, Mont-ral, Vilanova de Prades, Alcover, La Febró, Vilaverd, l'Espluga de Francolí, Vimbodí, Poblet & Vallclara)
muntanyescostadaurada.cat
- concadebarbera.info

TERRES DE L'EBRE:

- Els Ports
(Tortosa, Roquetes, Alfara de Carles, Paüls, Prat de Comte, La Sénia, Arnes, Horta de Sant Joan & Mas de Barberans)
terresdelebre.travel

Finally, the Catalan Tourist Board awards a family holiday brand to those specific family-friendly sites and agencies with outstanding tourist facilities (water parks, ski resorts, nautical resorts, amusement parks, etc.) located outside destinations that already feature one of the aforementioned labels. There are currently 17 facilities certified as Family-friendly Attractions and 3 travel agencies.

8. Useful Addresses

Tourist bodies

Catalan Tourist Board

Tel. 934 849 900
catalunya.com
act.gencat.cat

Costa Brava Girona Tourism Board

Tel. 972 208 401
costabrava.org

Tarragona Provincial Council Tourism Board

Tel. 977 230 312
costadaurada.info

Terres de l'Ebre

Tel. 977 444 447
terresdelebre.travel

Turisme de Barcelona

Tel. 933 689 700
barcelonaturisme.cat

Barcelona Provincial Council Tourism Delegation

Tel. 934 022 966
barcelonaesmoltmes.cat

Lleida Provincial Council Tourism Board

Tel. 973 245 408
aralleida.cat

Torisme Val d'Aran

Tel. 973 640 688
visitaldaran.com

Tourist promotion offices of Catalonia

Benelux

Tel. (+32) 26 406 151
info.act.bnl@gencat.cat

France

Tel. (+33) 1 40 46 98 92
media.act.fr@gencat.cat

Italy

Tel. (+39) 02 873 935 73
info.act.it@gencat.cat

Central Europe

Tel. (+49) 69 7422 4873
info.act.de@gencat.cat

Nordic Countries

Tel. (+358) 407 17 72 95
info.act.nordic@gencat.cat

UK & Ireland

Tel. (+44) 207 583 88 55
info.act.uk@gencat.cat

Eastern Europe

Tel. (+7) 495 567 18 71
info.act.ru@gencat.cat

USA

Tel. (+1) 212 78 23 332
info.act.usa@gencat.cat

Asia-Pacific

Tel. (+65) 622 040 22
info.act.sea@gencat.cat

South America

Tel. (+55) 11 305 304 77
info.act.latam@gencat.cat

China

Tel. (+8610) 848 682 84
promotion.act.cn@gencat.cat

Centre Cultural Blanquerna (Madrid)

Tel. 915 241 000
turisme.blanquerna@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

Tourist Office of Catalonia at Barcelona airport

Terminal 1 & 2 (arrivals)
08820 El Prat de Llobregat

8. Useful Addresses

Other relevant tourist web sites

Activities in natural and rural areas

Pirineus
visitpirineus.com

Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya
fgc.cat

Catalan Confederation of Rural Tourism – ConcaTur
concaTur.cat

Rural Tourism and Agro-Tourism Confederation of Catalonia – Turalcat
catalunyarural.cat

Accessible Catalonia

Accessible Catalonia
turismoparatodos.catalunya.com

St James' Way for Everybody
turismoparatodos.catalunya.com

Sports

Marinas
acpet.es

Nautical Resorts of Catalonia
encatalunya.info

Secretariat-General of Sports (Government of Catalonia)
esport.gencat.cat

Catalan Golf Federation
catgolf.com

Costa Brava Golf
ca.costabrava.org/que-fer/golf

Costa Daurada Golf Association
costadauradagolf.com

Wine tourism

INCAVI
Institut Català de la Vinya i el Vi
incavi.gencat.cat

Priorat Wine Route
turismepriorat.org
prioratenoturisme.com

Lleida-Costers del Segre Wine Route (Wine Route of Spain)
rutadelvidelleida.com

DO Empordà Wine Route (Wine Route of Spain)
rutadelvidoemporda.org

Penedès Wine Tourism (Wine Route of Spain)
enoturismepenedes.cat

DO Alella Wine Tourism
doalella.cat

Gastronomy

Som Gastronomia
somastronomia.cat

Great cultural icons and great routes

Grand Tour of Catalonia
grandtour.catalunya.com/en/

Cities and Towns with Character
catalunya.com/que-fer/descobreix/ciutats-i-viles-amb-caracter-decatalunya

Charming Villages
catalunya.com/que-fer/descobreix/pobles-amb-encant

Maritime Towns and Quarters
catalunya.com/que-fer/descobreix/barris-i-viles-marineres-decatalunya

Hiking and cycling

Hiking Europe
hikingeurope.net

Medical tourism

Barcelona Medical Destination
barcelonamedicaldestination.com

Business tourism

Catalunya Convention Bureau
catalunya.com/mice

Catalan Tourist Board Associates/Members



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www.catalunya.com



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board