



Catalonia

Experience and Discover Art and Culture

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WHAT DOES THIS PUBLICATION CONTAIN?

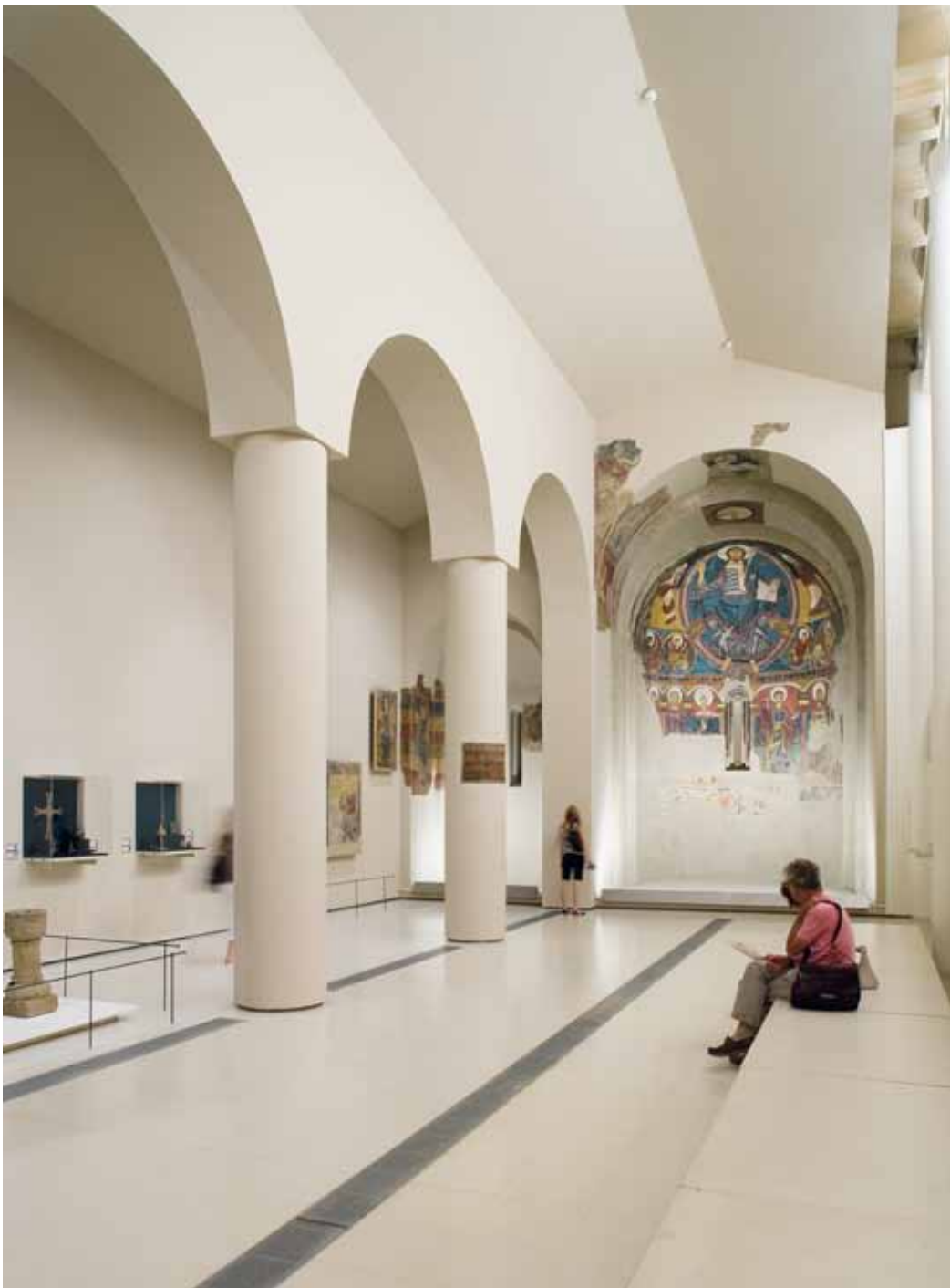
The first part of this publication provides information about the dolmens as well as the architects who have won the prestigious Pritzker prize. It also mentions monuments recognised as UNESCO World Heritage Sites and monasteries that are still in operation today. This publication provides notes on wineries that look like cathedrals and festivals in which dragons and devils are the main characters. Reference is made to world-renowned geniuses like Dalí, Miró, and Pau Casals and their immortal works. It provides the locations of concerts, festivals, and events in the fashion industry which attract millions of people. Film locations are described and the secrets of the most exciting literary works are told. And of course, reference is made to the rich gastronomy of these lands. The second part of this publication includes suggested routes that visitors can use to discover Catalonia through both its culture and its natural scenery.

CATALONIA, DESTINATION FOR CULTURAL TOURISM

Catalonia has a wide array of cultural activities which allow visitors to travel in the footsteps of mankind, from the Neanderthals to present day inhabitants, exploring the Iberian, Greek, or Roman periods and their respective architectural styles, up to the modern day, when architects have become symbols of the new Barcelona seeking a place in the world.

To all of this, we must add a series of routes consolidated as tourist attractions like the Catalan portion of the Way of St James, the Cistercian Route, and the various routes related to cultural, industrial, and religious heritage, as well as the Ignatian Way.

Furthermore, we cannot forget the infinite opportunities presented by the city of Barcelona or other unique cities like Tarragona, Girona, and Lleida (all connected by high-speed rail) or Reus, Terrassa, Tortosa, Vic, and Vilafranca del Penedès, which are ideal for urban tourism and combine attractions of cultural interest with various leisure activities. Don't forget to explore the area's world-renowned gastronomy and wine.



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2018: THE YEAR OF CULTURAL TOURISM



On 27 April 2016, the European Parliament took the decision to name 2018 the “European Year of Cultural Heritage”. The main purpose of this designation is to raise citizens’ awareness regarding the history and values of Europe and to strengthen their feeling of identity.

The Government of Catalonia takes on this European declaration as an opportunity to claim the role of culture and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, as a key factor that makes destinations in Catalonia different and unique.

Regarding tourism, the Catalan Tourist Board draws on this focus on culture in 2018 and has declared 2018 to be the “Year of Cultural Tourism”, in order to position culture as the main axis of distinction of the destination, and at the same time to help tourism give value to culture and contribute to its social and economic sustainability. This is a two-way challenge in which culture enhances the distinctiveness of the cultural tourist attractions, and tourism contributes to the promotion of culture.

This year, the objective is to place value on all cultural heritage, both the most internationally recognised heritage and the lesser known local heritage. In this way, the tourist board recognises that cultural heritage can be found throughout Catalonia, and there is an attempt to find balance between the different areas of Catalonia to ensure that the economic flows derived from cultural tourism reach all areas of the territory throughout the year.

All of this effort is invested so that visitors can get to know the cultural treasures of Catalonia more and more. The hope is that they will be able to experience and enjoy all of the sights and activities that Catalonia has to offer.

DISCOVER **CATALONIA**



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CATALONIA IN A FEW DATA

A general outline of the country, with some information for visitors to familiarise themselves with Catalonia at a glance.



© LLUÍS CARRO



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Catalonia is a small country on the Mediterranean basin, in the north-eastern part of the Iberian Peninsula. At a little over 32,000 square kilometres in size, it offers an impressive variety of tourist options. Are you ready to learn about some of its characteristics?

CLIMATE

Catalonia has a Mediterranean climate, with hot summers and mild winters. The region's varied geography gives the Catalan Pyrenees a cooler average temperature, whilst it is hotter in July and August in the inland districts of Lleida. Rain mainly falls between May and June.

POPULATION

7,516,254 inhabitants

SURFACE AREA

32,107 km²



GREEK AND ROMAN RUINS IN EMPÚRIES, COSTA BRAVA. ROOFTOP OF LA PEDRERA OR CASA MILÀ, BY ANTONI GAUDÍ, IN BARCELONA.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Catalan and Spanish. Occitan or Aranese is also an official language in the Val d'Aran.

ECONOMY

Catalonia is a country with a long industrial tradition dating back to the 19th century.

Today, industry, tourism, and services are the country's main economic sectors, as are agriculture and livestock.

A NOTE ON HISTORY

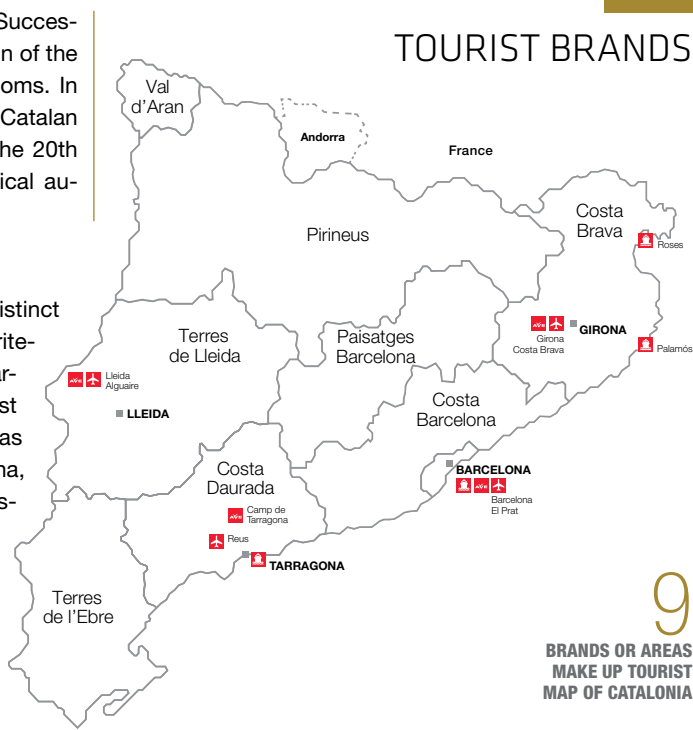
Catalonia is a historic country formed from the Marca Hispánica, the border between Franks and Saracens in the Middle Ages.

Early chronicles talk about the laborious process of joining Aragon and Catalonia under a single crown. Once achieved, between the 13th and 14th centuries it expanded over the Mediterranean. The Modern Ages are marked by the War of the Reapers, Catalonia's first attempt at se-

cession, and the Spanish War of Succession, which ended with the abolition of the Catalan institutions and civil freedoms. In the 19th century, the feeling of Catalan identity resurged to culminate in the 20th century with the recovery of political autonomy.

TOURIST BRANDS

Catalonia is divided into nine distinct tourist brands, depending on the criteria of the Catalan Tourist Board marketing department. These tourist brands, which are distributed as shown on this map, are Barcelona, Costa Barcelona, Costa Brava, Costa Daurada, Paisatges Barcelona, Pirineus, Terres de l'Ebre, Terres de Lleida, and Val d'Aran. 📍



TOURIST BRANDS

9
BRANDS OR AREAS
MAKE UP TOURIST
MAP OF CATALONIA

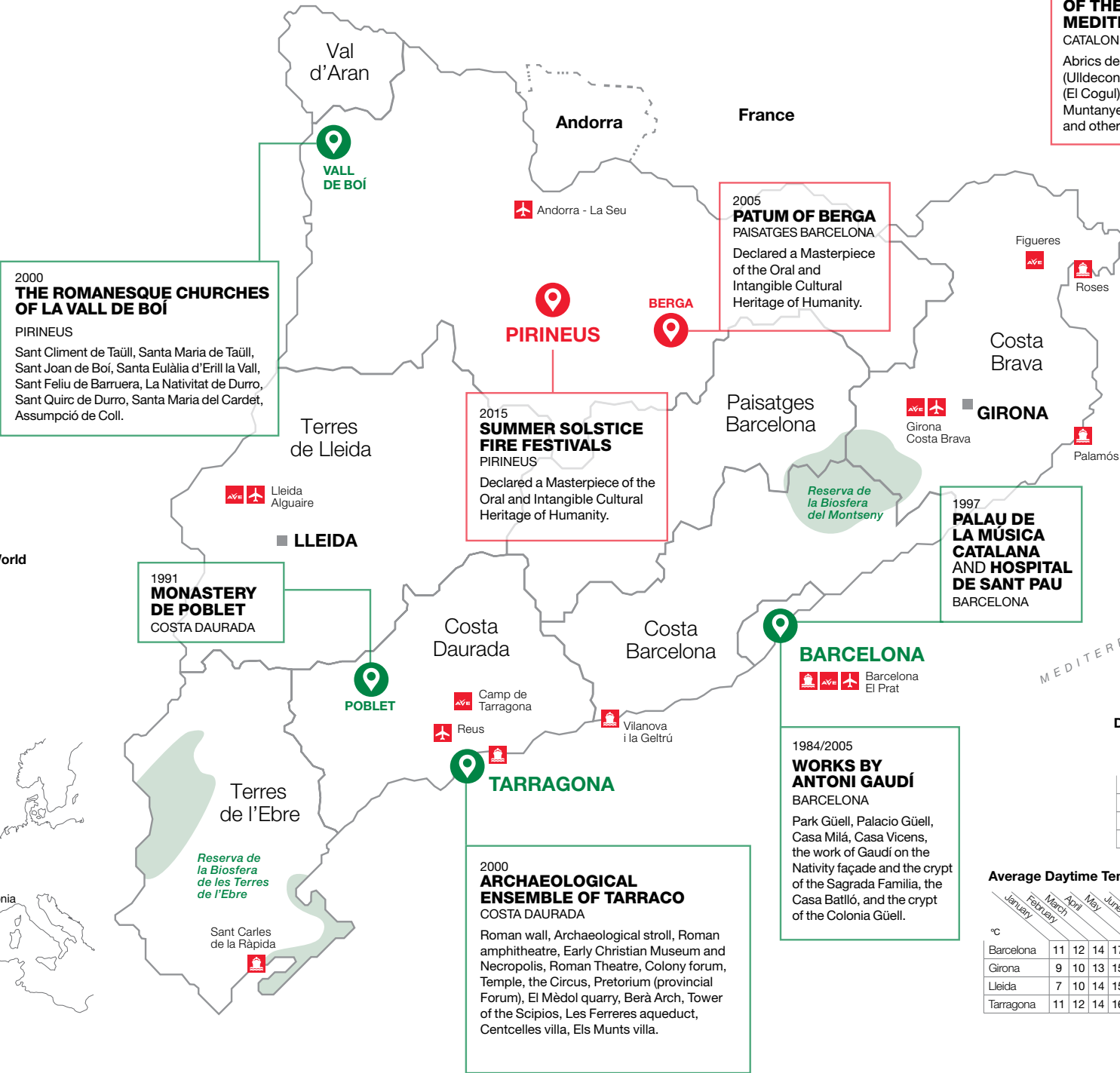
WORLD HERITAGE

UNESCO has recognised the exceptional cultural importance of several landmarks in Catalonia, which must be preserved and passed on to the future generations.

Given Catalonia's rich history and culture, evident through both its heritage sites and its intangible cultural heritage, there are always places and concepts to add to the World Heritage list. Such is the case of the Turó de la Seu Vella in Lleida, a 13th to 14th century monumental complex that has become the symbol of the city, and the interesting portico of the monastery of Ripoll, a Biblical tale carved in stone in the 12th century. These applications are accompanied by the Catalan rumba and the day of Sant Jordi as Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well as Catalan cuisine, which is influenced by the variety of landscapes in Catalonia, the wide range of products, their degree of protection, and the fact that the oldest recipe book in Europe is written in Catalan. Work is also under way on the candidacy of the Priorat-Montsant-Siurana and its high quality vineyards as UNESCO World Heritage site for its scenery.

-  UNESCO World Heritage
-  UNESCO Intangible World Heritage

-  Airport
-  Port
-  Train



2015
ROCK PAINTINGS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ARC
CATALONIA
Abrics de la Serra de Godall (Ulldecona), La Roca dels Moros (El Cogul), Art Rupestre de les Muntanyes de Prades (Montblanc) and other rock paintings.

2010
CASTELLERS
CATALONIA
Declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

2005
PATUM OF BERGA
PAISATGES BARCELONA
Declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

2015
SUMMER SOLSTICE FIRE FESTIVALS
PIRINEUS
Declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

1997
PALAU DE LA MÚSICA CATALANA AND HOSPITAL DE SANT PAU
BARCELONA

BARCELONA
Barcelona
El Prat
1984/2005
WORKS BY ANTONI GAUDÍ
BARCELONA
Park Güell, Palacio Güell, Casa Milà, Casa Vicens, the work of Gaudí on the Nativity façade and the crypt of the Sagrada Família, the Casa Batlló, and the crypt of the Colonia Güell.

2000
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ENSEMBLE OF TARRACO
COSTA DAURADA
Roman wall, Archaeological stroll, Roman amphitheatre, Early Christian Museum and Necropolis, Roman Theatre, Colony forum, Temple, the Circus, Pretorium (provincial Forum), El Mèdol quarry, Berà Arch, Tower of the Scipios, Les Ferreres aqueduct, Centcelles villa, Els Munts villa.

1991
MONASTERY DE POBLET
COSTA DAURADA

2000
THE ROMANESQUE CHURCHES OF LA VALL DE BOÍ
PIRINEUS
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 del Cardet, Assumpció de Coll.

Distance between Capitals

	Barcelona	Girona	Lleida	Tarragona
Km				
Barcelona		107	162	99
Girona			255	197
Lleida				101
Tarragona				

Average Daytime Temperatures

°C	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Barcelona	11	12	14	17	20	24	26	26	24	20	16	12
Girona	9	10	13	15	19	23	26	25	23	18	13	10
Lleida	7	10	14	15	21	24	27	27	23	18	11	8
Tarragona	11	12	14	16	19	22	25	26	23	20	15	12

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CATALAN CULTURE

It is through culture that we know history. What remains is a message from our predecessors, which reaches us in the form of literature, music, painting, sculpture, and more.



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Throughout the land we now know as Catalonia, there are various traces of human presence during the Neolithic period. It was the arrival of the Greeks (in the 8th century BC) and that of the Romans (218 BC) which began to configure a network of centres of population that were the origin of large cities (Barcino, Tarraco, etc.) and the bulk of the cultural inheritance.

With the advance of the Arabs (8th century), Charlemagne left the country's defence in the hands of the counts along the border. The conquest slowly strengthened



these counts, who took advantage of the relaxation of the French Empire to gain more effective control of the country and start a policy of alliances with the county of Barcelona and the kingdom of Aragon.

Ramon Berenguer I, Count of Barcelona, is considered the first noble who gave Catalonia a solid political structure through the *Corts* and the *usatges* (a primitive civil code), thus weakening the power of the French king. It was count Ramon Berenguer IV who, through marriage to Princess Petronila, created the alliance between the Catalan kingdoms and the kingdom of Aragon.

These were prosperous times from an economic standpoint, with an increase in internal and external commercial activity. And they were also splendid years from a cultural perspective, with Romanesque art (architecture, painting, and sculpture). This climate of bonanza sowed the seed for a new social class, the bourgeoisie, which began to question the power and old feudal structures, and consumed and promoted culture. The first texts written in Catalan also began to flourish. *Les Homilies d'Organyà*, a text written between the end of the 12th century and early 13th century,

JELLYFISH HEAD, ROMAN MOSAIC FROM THE 3RD CENTURY, FOUND IN TARRAGONA. GOTHIC GALLERY OF THE PALAU DE LA GENERALITAT, ONE OF THE BEST PRESERVED ORIGINAL PIECES.

compiles several sermons given by a parish priest in this village of the Pyrenees. In addition to the Mediterranean expansion of the Catalan-Aragonese Crown with figures like King Jaume I, the 13th century is marked by a great literary name, Ramon Llull, the author of great philosophical discourses and other literary works. His texts mix mystical questions with concepts of advanced logic.

In the mid-14th century, poor harvests, starvation, and epidemics hit Europe. Catalonia was no exception. From a literary perspective, this period of time was when some of the greatest Catalan authors ex-

2nd century BC

Aesculapius
Sculpture in marble found in the Greek ruins of Empúries.



© AGUSTÍ CARBONELL

785

Charlemagne The emperor of the Lombards and the Gauls who conquered and conceded Girona to the French counts.

S. IX

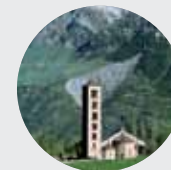
Sant Quirze de Pedret
Considered one of the first Romanesque paintings in Catalonia.



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11th and 12th

Romanesque in the Vall de Boí
A set of nine churches declared UNESCO world heritage. These are the ultimate expression of the Catalan Romanesque style.



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1400

Palau de la Generalitat
Construction begins on the Palau de la Generalitat in the Gothic style. This is the first headquarters of the General Court of Catalonia.

1527

Altar of the monastery of Poblet
Work in alabaster by the sculptor Damià Forment, considered to be one of the artists who introduced the Renaissance in the Iberian peninsula.

celled: the poet Ausiàs March or the novelist Joanot Martorell (author of *Tirant lo Blanc*, which Cervantes considered to be a great book of chivalry).

Social tension grew, especially in the countryside, where people were living under extreme conditions. From an artistic perspective, this was in the middle of the Gothic period. And everything results, in 1469, in the union between the Catalan-Aragonese Crown and the Kingdom of Castile, with the marriage between Fernando II of Aragon and Isabel I of Castile. They came to be known as the Catholic Kings, the Maecenas of Christopher Columbus's expedition to America. This was the great time for trade in the Mediterranean, as well as cultural exchange with other lands.

In 1640, the Reapers' War took place between Catalonia and the Spanish Monarch Phillip IV. In 1659, as a consequence of the Treaty of the Pyrenees between Spain and France, Catalonia lost the territories north of the Pyrenees, (under French jurisdiction ever since). When Phillip V came to the throne, Catalonia was stripped of all of its privileges. This is the time of the siege of Barcelona, the destruction of part of the Born district, and the construction of the Ciutadella military complex. Despite these circumstances, Catalonia experienced an increase in its commercial activity.



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SKYLIGHT
OF THE PALAU
DE LA MÚSICA
CATALANA.
A GREAT WORK
OF MODERNISME.

In the 18th century, Europe experienced a demand for national and cultural identity. Catalonia did not stay out of this conflict. This romantic spirit influenced the recovery of the Romanesque and Gothic heritage. One piece of poetry from this period stands out: *Oda a la Pàtria* (1833), by Bonaventura Carles Aribau, is considered an exaltation of the Catalan language and the beginning of the Catalan *Renaixença* after centuries of darkness.

19th-century Catalonia was modernised at the rate of the Industrial Revolution. The bourgeoisie became more powerful and suggested a change of social model that went against the rural model of the previous centuries. At the same time, a workers' movement was founded which called for the rights of the factory workers, the other new social class which came hand-in-hand with industrial growth.

The 20th century brought with it the turmoil of the First World War (1914-1918) on a global scale, and the military dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1930). The Second Republic (1931-1936) created the expectation that democracy would take place, but this was truncated by the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

The Catalan language benefited from a process of the standardisation led by a very important figure: Pompeu Fabra, considered



© JORDI PARETO

the father of standardisation of modern Catalan. During this time, Catalan culture also experienced particularly sweet moments, such as the architectural 'Modernisme' of Antoni Gaudí, Josep Puig i Cadafalch and Lluís Domènech i Montaner, the literary period known as 'Noucentisme' with Josep Carner or Eugeni d'Ors, or the avant-garde paintings with Joan Miró and Salvador Dalí.

For Catalonia, General Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975) was particularly repressive on its distinct cultural traits. In any case, thanks to the untiring work of many anonymous individuals and public figures, the

WOMAN IN THE
NIGHT (1973),
BY JOAN MIRÓ.

flame of Catalan culture was never extinguished, as the people continued to stoke it in secret. The writers Mercè Rodoreda and Josep Pla, the musician Pau Casals, the editor and novelist Joan Sales, the poet Salvador Espriu are some examples of this culture in the shadows.

After the death of Franco (1975), Catalonia started to recover institutions and public cultural life. Publishing and media revived: TV3 in 1983 and the newspaper *Avui* in 1976. The literature, language, and design crossed borders and musical and theatrical events of international renown were established. ♡

1716

Demolition of the Born district
Work begins on the construction of the Ciutadella fortress. Today the remains can be seen at the Born Centre Cultural.



© GZ

1882

Sagrada Família
The first stone is laid of what will become the emblem of Antoni Gaudí's work.

1898

Publicity
The painter Ramón Casas wins the contest to illustrate the Codorniu sign. These are the beginnings of design.



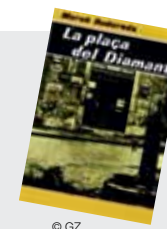
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1932

General dictionary
Pompeu Fabra publishes the first standard dictionary for the Catalan language.

1962

The Time of the Doves
Publication of the novel by Mercè Rodoreda, which has been translated into more than 30 languages.



© GZ

1994

Sónar Festival
First edition of the leading festival of advanced music, now repeated in different countries.



© LLUÍS CARRO

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HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

The men and women who lived in Catalonia for centuries left their mark on the territory. In other words, they made hundreds of thousands of small contributions that form the heritage that Catalonia has to offer its visitors today. Sharing this wealth of heritage is a reason for joy, as it means that there was awareness of its importance, work was done to maintain it and to recover it in some cases, and to preserve it for future generations. This little country and its cultural heritage have received 16 recognitions of tangible and intangible cultural World Heritage by UNESCO. Who wouldn't want to experience these cultural sites and events for themselves? 📍



© MIGUEL ANGEL ALVAREZ



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ARCHAEOLOGY IMAGES OF THE PAST

Stones talk and in Catalonia they tell a story that started 8,000 years ago, continued in the 6th century BCE in the Iberian enclaves and continued with the arrival of the Greeks and Romans.

A deer watches a hunter coming towards it with his bow pulled. Further along, another painting shows a hunt, and below, a figure of a wizard appears. These are some of the more than 400 **rock paintings** that can be seen in the Serra de Godall, in **Ulldesona** (Terres de l'Ebre), one of the many sites on the Mediterranean Basin declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1998.



ROCK PAINTINGS
SHELTERED
BY L'ERMITA
D'ULLDESONA.



© MIGUEL RAURICH

Thousands of years after the paintings were made, the native peoples established their capital at the Iberian site of **Ullastret** (Costa Brava). Thanks to dramatised visits, as you stroll through the site, you can hear the sound of the market or watch the Iberian farmers return to their fields just as they did many centuries ago.

NEW NEIGHBOURS

Nearby, the Greeks set up their first colony in Catalonia in the 6th century BCE. **Empúries** was a small community which soon became an active centre, a bustling port receiving boats full of wine, oil, jewels or fabrics, which left again loaded with the cereals, metals or leathers they sold. The **Iberians** must have watched those people who idolised the God Asclepius with curiosity. They did not know that the **Greeks** would open the door to the **Romans**, who would end up dominating the Iberian peninsula. 📍

THE NEW LIFE IN TARRACO

It was the capital of the Imperial province of Hispania Citerior. Each year, it continues to be an important Roman city when its evocative ruins are brought back to life.



© MONTSE RIERA. GZ

In the year 218 BCE, some soldiers set up a military camp, establishing Tarraco. Later, the Emperor Augustus lived there and turned it into a model of urban development. Today, the ancient city of **Tarraco** is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is visited in awe by thousands of classic ages lovers. The wall is one of the best preserved monuments, but others are even more impressive, such as the 2nd century amphitheatre by the sea. Not very far away, amongst the ruins of the circus (one of the best preserved in Europe), you can still hear echos of the citizens shouting at the chariot races.

GLADIATOR SHOW
AT THE TARRACO
VIVA FESTIVAL.

4,5
KILOMETRES:
THE LENGTH
OF THE WALL
OF TARRACO

The same sun that lit up Tarraco continues to rise over the Costa Daurada. Every May, a Roman festival is celebrated at the site. In the 21st century, men and women dressed in togas and sandals are still seen in the streets. Also many restaurants give off the aroma of the same dishes that were served in antiquity. This is the **Tarraco Viva International Cultural Festival**, which aims to bring Tarraco back to life for a few days. The company **Nemesis** offers historical recreations and guided tours (www.nemesisarch.com). You are welcome to revisit the most real ancient Rome. 📍

THE IBERIANS, LIVE

If you are between Barcelona and Tarragona at the end of July, you cannot miss the chance to visit the Iberian Citadel of Calafell. It offers *living history* activities for everyone in this singular Iron Age site rebuilt using the methodologies of experimental archaeology. You can admire the warriors, mint your own coin, test your skills with the slingshot, and learn games of the time from a Roman soldier, amongst other experiences. The activity can be done in Catalan, Spanish, and English (on request) in the second fortnight of July.

📍 For more information www.calafellhistoric.org



© CALLAFELL HISTÒRIC

ARCHITECTURE STONES THAT TALK

*Mysterious dolmens, arrogant castles, luminous cathedrals...
Visiting these sites is a thrilling way to discover the history of humanity.*

To remember loved ones, to defend oneself or to show one's own power ... Architecture has left its mark on Catalonia since Neolithic times and has changed the landscape with constructions that speak of other times. One million and a half visitors bear witness to this every year when they visit the **Dalinian Triangle** of Figueres, Portlligat, and Púbol (Costa Brava), the Vall de Boí (Pirineus) and **la Pedrera** (Barcelona), to mention just three great tourist landmarks.



CARDONA
CASTLE.



© LLUÍS CARRO

A WALK THROUGH TIME

Catalonia's 32,108 km² allows visitors to conduct a day trip through history, starting with a dolmen, such as the Creu d'en Cobertella Dolmen (Costa Brava), continuing on to visit and learn about the Cardona Castle (Paisatges Barcelona), experiencing the feeling of being in a mediaeval religious site through places such as the Sant Joan de les Abadesses Monastery (Pirineus), and learning about the progress Catalonia made during the Industrial Revolution through visits to locations such as the Colonia Vidal, in Puig-reig (Paisatges Barcelona).

In the great Catalan capital cities, the architecture of the late 19th century and early 20th Century has become a demonstration of power and refinery of the bourgeoisie, as in the case of the house of Navàs de Reus (Costa Daurada). Today, singular buildings appear that are important for their use or for the art, like Torre Glòries (Barcelona). 📍

FROM THE DOLMENS TO THE JEWISH GHETTOS

*Prehistoric monuments, synagogues,
maze-like districts... This is how we
see the legacy of the different cultures
that have inhabited Catalonia.*

One night, 5,000 years ago in the natural area of l'Albera (Costa Brava), a community was shaken by the death of its chief. And among the sadness and fear of forgetting the chief, someone had the idea of raising large slabs vertically and placing another horizontal stone on them. Today in Catalonia, we can still admire the **dolmens** that stand in memory of those men and women who left mark.

The Jewish community, which was very important in Catalonia between the 10th century and the time when they were expelled in the 15th century, left signs of their presence. Visitors can admire the **Jewish quarter** in Girona, where they can still explore its narrow and steep streets, go into the synagogues whose beautiful courtyards are filled with colourful floral decorations every May, visit the Jewish History Museum or the Bonestruc ça Porta Centre. Not very far away, in **Besalú**, visitors will find one of the three *miqvé* or Jewish baths remaining on the continent. In Tortosa, a 5th century synagogue can be admired as well.

Barcelona's Jewish Quarter also invites visitors to wander through its winding streets brim-

THE COURTYARD
OF THE
BONESTRUC
ÇA PORTA
CENTRE IN
GIRONA, AND THE
GENTILE STONE
DOLMEN ON THE
COSTA BRAVA.

ming with history and legends and located in a district occupied by bookbinders, goldsmiths, doctors, and lawyers. On more than one occasion, they all descended the stairs leading to the ancient synagogue in calle de Sant Domènec del Call, a construction which is believed to date from the 9th century and which is not only the oldest synagogue in the city, but is also the oldest synagogue in Europe. 📍



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CASTLES AND FORTRESSES

Castles and fortresses fill borderlands which in history were often subject to attacks and sieges.



© NANO CAÑAS

This is the night of the Castell de Peralada festival. It takes place in a wonderful location with hotels, casino and even a museum and a church. The building dates back to the 9th century and was occupied by real soldiers with shields and armour.

Peralada Castle is one of the remaining fortifications that was built in Catalonia on the borderlands that needed to be defended. This is also the case for of castles such as Miravet Castle (Terres de l'Ebre) and the many border castles in the Terres de Lleida. Some ended up as homes, others were turned into hotels and many can be visited, such as Montsonís Castle. The flag waves on the Tower of Homage to indicate that the castle is still inhabited and that some rooms cannot be visited. The family of Carles de Montoliu i Carrasco, present barron of Albí resides in the castle. 📍

PERALADA CASTLE.

MONUMENTA: WELCOME TO THE CASTLE

In Catalonia, visitors can stay in a mediaeval castle, visit a defence tower turned into an artist's studio, or organise an event in a Romanesque building. The owners of the remaining castles in Catalonia, such as the Riudabella Castle, belong to a group called Monumenta, which opens these historic places to the public and which has protected and disseminated information on Catalonia's architectural legacy for over 25 years.

THERE ARE
600
CASTLES AND
FORTIFICATIONS
IN CATALUNYA.

For more
information
www.monumenta.info



© RIUDABELLA

MONASTERIES, CHURCHES, SANCTUARIES

Religious buildings have always had a clear will of representation to show the great power of the Catholic Church.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

The Romanesque bell towers that seem to connect sky and land, are a symbol of identity of the Vall de Boí (Pirineus). A blue sky, high peaks, crystal-clear water, and ever present greenery are the backdrop to breathtaking architecture. Nine churches in the area were declared UNESCO World Heritage in 2000. The value is due to the stylistic unity of their functional and beautiful Lombard Romanesque buildings. With their characteristic half point arches and cannon domes inherited from Roman architecture, Romanesque architecture was the first clearly Christian style. It will be discovered by whoever visits the Romanesque Centre (www.centro-romanico.com), which in the valley itself, offers all information that visitors might need to discover this stone paradise. Essential too is a visit to the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC, Barcelona), where in the early 20th century the original paintings were transferred from the churches of Boí, as well as sculptures in stone and wood, to protect them from being sacked and sold.

SANT CLIMENT DE TAÜLL.

Created between the 11th and 13th centuries, when Catalonia was shaping its identity, the Romanesque constructions are spread around the whole country. The colossal monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes (Costa Brava) stands on the Rodes hill range with unbeatable views of the bay of Llançà. And the monastery of Santa Maria de Ripoll (Pirineus), with its overwhelming series of portals and which is a true stone Bible, is a masterpiece of 13th-century Romanesque sculpture. To the south, the Santa Tecla Cathedral in Tarragona (Costa Daurada), built between 1170 and 1331, rises at the highest point of the city, as the temple of Augustus once did.

Sober and austere, the monasteries of the Cistercian order also bear witness to the passing from the Romanesque period to the Gothic period. They stand between vineyards, almond, and olive groves on lands which were in Muslim hands until the 12th century. Among the best preserved is the monastery of Santes Creus, which contains the pantheons of the counts of Barcelona and the kings of Aragon and Valencia.

IN CATALUNYA
THERE ARE
1.900
ROMANESQUE
BUILDINGS



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

Not very far away, the **monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet**, which is still active and is also a pantheon of the kings of Aragon, is the most impressive stop on the **Cistercian Route**, so much so that it was declared UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991. With its Gothic domes, the intimate history of **Vallbona de les Monges**, which still houses a community of nuns, illustrates the role of women in mediaeval life.

DELIRIOUS MODERNISME

In 1883, Gaudí began to work on the **Sagrada Família**, a titanic project of which he completed the apse and the Birth facade. More than a hundred years later, the work, which is still under

THE MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DE VALLBONA, KNOWN AS VALLBONA DE LES MONGES, ON THE RUTA DEL CÍSTER.

construction, rises above the rooftops of Barcelona as a symbol of the Catalan capital. In the crypt of the **Colònia Güell**, in **Santa Coloma de Cervelló** (Barcelona), Gaudí tried out innovative architectural techniques that are worth admiring. The colourful interior stained glass windows show from dizzying inclined columns to amazing vaults. In the **Secuita** (Costa Daurada) the church of the **Sagrat Cor** in **Vistabella** is a small modernista gem created by Josep Maria Jujol, an architect who worked with Gaudí, with lavish decoration full of theological allusions.

THE ROUTE OF THE TEMPLE

The Order of the Knights Templar, founded in the 11th century to protect the pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, left castles and churches in Catalonia and Aragon that can be visited today on the **Domus Templi Route**, promoted by the councils of Monzón, Lleida, Miravet, Tortosa, and Peñíscola. One of the best specimens of the architecture of the Temple is the **Gardeny complex** (Terres de Lleida) from the mid-12th century which is located on a strategic hill. The route also includes stops in emblematic places such as **la Suda**, in **Tortosa**, which stands imposing over the profile of the Templar capital of the Ebro. 📍

ICONIC AND LORDLY HOUSES

A new social class came to the world of luxury and decided to install its own style to proclaim its rise throughout the country.



© MIGUEL RAURICH

The **Ensanche** connected ancient Barcelona with the surrounding villages. Industrialists and traders set up there and contracted the most innovative architects. In the **Casa Batlló**, Gaudí recreated the legend of Sant Jordi, but you have to see the **Pedrera** to get a real taste of Gaudinian genius. Puig i Cadafalch gave a neomedieval air to the **Casa de les Punxes**, although one of his best-known creations, which blends the Catalan Gothic and the Northern European Flemish styles, is the **Casa Ametller**, on **Passeig de Gràcia**.

CASA RULL, IN REUS, BY THE ARCHITECT DOMÈNECH I MONTANER.

In Reus, Terrassa, Tarragona, and Mataró, to name but a few cities, it is possible to admire the houses designed by no less illustrious modernista architects.

The 'indianos', the Catalans returning upon Cuban independence, had a lot to do with the appearance of luxurious houses which can still be seen in Catalonia, and which particularly abound in coastal places from Sitges (Costa Barcelona) to Blanes or Cadaqués (Costa Brava). 📍

IN THE ORDER OF THE TEMPLE

What was life like for the Knights Templar? What did they eat? How did they dress? How did they prepare for battle? The former **Gardeny Command**, an imposing 12th century fortress, invites you to tour its rooms and experience the daily life of a Templar knight. To achieve this, objects of the time have been recreated, such as a military uniform from the mid-13th century, which visitors must try on. The visit ends with a small tasting session and a glass of wine or cava from Catalonia. This family experience can be had on a summer evening or an autumn or spring day and is offered in Catalan and Spanish. *Accessible activity.*

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 ⓘ For more information www.turismedelleva.cat/viure-a-lleida/el-castell-de-gardeny



© TURISME DE LLEIDA

DISCOVER LA PEDRERA

The **Casa Milà**, popularly known as **la Pedrera**, is a building that excellently combines fantasy and functionality and which has become an essential visit for anyone coming to Barcelona. Gaudí culminated his career after completing this work. He built a modernista building adapted to the new social needs, without losing sight of nature as a source of inspiration. A self-guided visit goes through the most iconic areas of the building. Accessible activity available in more than 10 languages. Recommended for everyone, available at all times of year, except during the Christmas season.

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 ⓘ For more information www.lapedrera.com



© LA PEDRERA

THE CATHEDRALS OF WINE

It looks like a church, but it is a winery. The wine cooperatives took the architectural marvels of modernisme into the country.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

A majestic facade, large ogival arches, and a unique combination of stone, open brick work, and ceramic; the building which is now home to the winery of the Espluga de Francolí Agricultural Cooperative, (built in 1913 and now known as the Wine Museum), is just as impressive as a baroque temple. Therefore, when the poet and dramatist Àngel Guimerà visited the place, he defined it as a 'cathedral of wine'.

The expression caught on and was soon also applied to other wineries appearing in the early 20th century. To know why the **modernista buildings** devoted to transforming grapes into wine proliferated in this way, we have to put ourselves in the shoes of a Catalan wine producer of the late 19th century. A plague from America, phylloxera, had forced him to pull up all of his vines and replace them with immune varieties, which would begin to become productive after a few years. Realising that it would be impossible to survive such a large problem alone, he began to associate with others in the same situation. This gave rise to a multitude of

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF WINE IN PINELL DE BRAI.

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POINTS OF INTEREST FORM THE ROUTE OF THE MODERNISTA WINERIES.

cooperatives with sufficient resources to build new wineries with modern facilities and machinery.

Architects like Cèsar Martinell, a student of Gaudí, Josep Puig i Cadafalch, and Pere Domènech i Roura, son of Lluís Domènech i Montaner, built impressive buildings in Montblanc, Santes Creus, Falset, Gadesa, and Sant Sadurní d'Anoia, to name just a few Catalan wine areas.

THE FORCE OF BUBBLES

It was precisely in Sant Sadurní, the Mecca of the Catalan sparkling wine, where a modernista architect who had already created outstanding works in Barcelona, Josep Puig i Cadafalch, was commissioned to create a complex that would reflect the size of the company Codorníu. Here visitors can disappear in the labyrinth of underground galleries in which the Catalan cava slowly and silently rests. Sooner or later, they will see a series of buildings where the style of the architect is clearly recognisable. 📍

DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE INDUSTRY

Factories of all kinds open their doors to the public. Once inside, you can see how cava is made... or how a film is shot.



© ORIOL LLAURADÓ

Golden bunches ready to be picked hide amongst the leaves of the vine. They wait for visitors strolling amongst the vineyards to discover them. They will better appreciate the magical process of this sparkling wine. They are in Caves Vilarnau, in Sant Sadurní d'Anoia (Costa Barcelona). Others have preferred to enjoy the aroma of the cocoa bean on a visit to the Espai Xocolata - Simón Coll, also in Sant Sadurní d'Anoia, in which they will discover how chocolate in almost all of its forms is produced.

Many food companies in Catalonia encourage citizens not only to consume their products, but also to visit their factories to see how they are made.

Some, like Torrons Vicens in Agramunt (Terres de Lleida), use the latest technologies to describe the history of the master nougat makers. Visitors can also see biscuit factories, breweries, fish farms, and more. All open their doors to whoever wants to know where the products on their table come from.

THE FACTORY OF TORRONS VICENS, IN AGRAMUNT, AND SWEETS IN THE ESPAI XOCOLATA SIMÓN COLL, IN SANT SADURNÍ.

Popular culture is also accessible thanks to places such as the Toni Mual sculpture workshop for giants and festive figures, in Cardona (Paisatges Barcelona), where it is possible to see how a giant or a legendary dragon is born. It is even possible to visit the plateaus of the Catalonia Audiovisual Park in Terrassa (Barcelona), which are open to the public to have some of the most exciting experiences of the cultural industry. 📍



© MARC CASTELLET

CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

Towers of colours and a sea on a rooftop welcome visitors to an inhabited museum that includes masterpieces of the best contemporary architecture.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.



© JOAN PUIG. GZ

A giant cylinder emerges from the floor, like a rocket about to take off, and rises to 144 metres. At night, the glass surface covering it lights up, producing a show of colours that warns visitors. This is the **Torre Glòries** (formerly Torre Agbar), one of the new icons of the city of Barcelona, built in 2005 by Jean Nouvel. Very nearby, we have the **Disseney Hub Barcelona**. This innova-

THE INTERIOR OF THE MACBA IN BARCELONA AND THE COVERED SQUARE OF THE TEATRE LA LIRA IN RIPOLL, THE WORK OF THE RCR STUDIO.

tive centre devoted to design (designed by the MBM studio in 2014) looks out over the Plaça de les Glòries. Its avant-garde architecture finds continuity in the buildings of the district 22@, the area where several communication technology companies have their headquarters. Beyond this, on the new section of the Diagonal which was urbanised in 2004, the city is now filled with skyscrapers.

These are the last chapters of Barcelona's long love story with architecture, the same which in the 1980s made the council decide to rebuild the German pavilion for the International Exhibition of 1929. Montjuïc recovered a rationalist work by Mies van der Rohe, which with its austere and intimate beauty is still considered avant-garde, just as it was a hundred years ago.

The **Hotel Arts** (the work of Bruce Graham), communications towers built by Norman Foster on Collserola and Santiago Calatrava on Montjuïc, and large sports infrastructures such as the **Sant Jordi Pavilion** by Arata Isozaki, are

evidence of the city's transformation for the Olympic Games in 1992. At the heart of the old city, the modern dark glass interior façade of the **Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona** (Albert Vilaplana and Helio Piñón, 1993) reflects the 19th-century buildings. Alongside it, the North American Richard Meier applied his reinterpretation of rationalism to the **Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona**, a luminous building opened in 1995. More recently, the undulating ceramic rooftop of the **Santa Caterina Market** reminds us, like a multicoloured sea, that this is the city where the architect Enric Miralles was born.

However, not all of the signs of contemporary architecture are in Barcelona. In La Jonquera, by the border with France, the architects Rafael Cáceres and Philippe Pous designed the **Museum of Exile**. The aim of this centre is to preserve the memory surrounding the exile of Republicans caused by the Civil War. Opened in 2008, its façade with different bodies hides a series of light diaphanous spaces that induce

THE TORRE GLÒRIES LIT UP.

one to serenity, thus countering the drama of the contents on display.

RCR: FROM THE LOCAL TO THE UNIVERSAL

The avant-garde cuisine based on proximity products offered by the Les Cols restaurant in Olot found its perfect match in the architecture of the studio of **Ramon Vilalta, Carme Pigem and Rafael Aranda (RCR)**. RCR won the Pritzker award, the most prestigious architecture award on the planet, in 2017. It won it for works that play with glass, light, and water (Les Cols pavilions in Olot), that blend in with the natural landscape (Tossols-Basil athletics stadium in Olot), or which use glass and steel to renovate a dynamic urban complex in a street block (Sant Antoni - Joan Oliver Library in Barcelona). The team of architects also did the interior design for the Enigma restaurant, the latest adventure of Albert Adrià and his team. 📍



© HISAO SUZUKI. GZ

SPIRITUALITY DEVOTION TO DIVERSITY

Cathedrals, synagogues and sikh temples coexist in this welcoming land where prayers are said and mantras are recited.

The Plaça Reial in Barcelona is famous for its porches that shelter terraces. Before becoming a square, in the 18th century, the space was a large convent founded by the Capuchins. Today, in one of the many flats in this square, there is a **Hare Krishna** temple open to anyone who wants to visit. In the same district, we find spaces of worship for **Muslims**, **Sikhs**, and people of other religions.



DEMONSTRATION
BY THE HARE
KRISHNA GROUP
IN BARCELONA.



© MIGUEL PEPALES. GZ

SPIRITUAL LIFE

The multitude of religions is normal in a country where, according to the Autonomous University of Barcelona, one out of every four places of worship is not Catholic. All it takes is a stroll through in Barcelona, Tarragona, Lleida or Girona, or even towns such as Salt and Guissona, to realise that the people living in Catalonia today have enriched the spiritual life of the land by bringing a variety of beliefs that range from **Islam** and **Buddhism** to the **Baha'i** faith.

These religions live together in harmony, and in Catalonia you can visit a Hindu festival like the Ratha Yatra, see a Catholic procession go by, or visit a Buddhist monastery in the Garraf massif. Maybe Catalonia's status as a haven has to do with the history of these lands, which were crossed by the Muslims, inhabited by Jewish communities, given over to the Christian faith, and finally becoming a place that values diversity based upon respect. 📍

CHRISTIANITY. CENTRE OF ATTRACTION

At one time, the Christian faith had a large influence on Catalan culture and geography. Visitors can enjoy the experience of discovering the spiritual side of Catalonia.



© ORIOL LLAURADÓ

Is it theatre or religion? It is difficult to separate both things in the performances of **the Passion of the Christ** held in Olesa de Montserrat and Esparreguera. Every year between March, April, and May, theatres specifically chosen to receive the show fill with actors and extras (between 500 and 600), residents of these towns who, with the help of remarkable stage teams and the original soundtrack, put on an amateur production of this play that details the life of Jesus Christ. Tradition has a lot to do with the organi-

THE PASSION
OF OLESA.

sation of **living Nativity scenes**, with figures portrayed by real people, at Christmas time. The **Patum de Berga**, also has its roots in a mediaeval religious performance.

Catholicism left its mark on the holiday calendar of Catalonia, as well as its geography and customs. There has been an organised Christian church in Catalonia since the middle of the third century. The 7th-century Muslim domination marked a break in the practice, the end of which brought about the creation of national identity

THE CATHEDRAL: SECRETS AND LEGENDS

To be able to have this experience, pay attention to the guide and take note of the proportions: 25% alchemist, 18% witch, 11% inquisitor, 7% midwife, 5% soul, 2% mystery, and 1% legend. This is the formula to avoid missing a single detail of the night tour through the Old Town of Barcelona, around the cathedral. It is an activity for adults that is available all year round. The tour can be conducted in Catalan, Spanish, French, and English.

For more information www.barcelonacatedral.com



© BARCELONACATEDRAL



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and the emergence of the Romanesque period. Some time later, the first Cistercian monasteries appeared, such as Poblet and Santes Creus, which combined their role as spiritual centres with that of places for culture and centres for the colonisation of a territory in need of repopulation.

THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN

The choir raises its pure voices inside a basilica hanging off the mountain. This is one of the oldest children's choirs in Europe and one of the most characteristic images of the **Monastery of Montserrat**, a mythical spiritual centre that was built after the finding of a black virgin (called "la Moreneta") in a cave in the 9th century. It is located in a mountain range in central Catalonia formed by clusters of jagged rocks that point to the heavens. www.montserratvisita.com

A PASSION FOR GAUDI

In the central nave of the **Sagrada Familia**, the light filters in through the stained-glass windows and gives the space a breathtaking appearance. Outside, the spires rise marking the profile of the temple. When it is complete (in 2026) it will have twelve spires dedicated to the apostles, and four more to the evangelists, although the main spires will be that of the Virgin Mary, and the highest, at 172.5 metres, Jesus Christ. Construction of the

THE CHOIR
OF MONTSERRAT.

church began at the end of the 19th century and was the work to which the architect Antoni Gaudí applied all of his knowledge, and all of his religious passion, as he was a fervent Catholic. 📍

www.sagradafamilia.org

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS OF TARRACO

The route of the first Christians of Tarraco goes through places that were the scenes of the progressive introduction of Christianity in Hispanoromanic society of Roman Tarragona. The route includes eight milestones, between which we find museums and monuments. A visit is made to the chapel of Sant Pau, the Cathedral and the Diocesan Museum, the Tarragona Biblical Museum, the amphitheatre of Tarragona, the Forum of the Colony, the Early Christian basilica of the Central Park, the Early Christian Necropolis and the Centcelles archaeological complex. The activity is offered all year round in Catalan, Spanish and English, and the route is accessible.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

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BOYS
FORM THE
CHOIR OF
MONTSERRAT

CATALONIA SACRA: DISCOVER ITS RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

*Hermitages, cathedrals, and monasteries
safeguard a million fascinating secrets.
Why not let an expert tell you about them?*

Visitors who have been to the Cathedral of Sant Pere in Vic (Paisatges Barcelona), go on a unique journey. They are not satisfied with simply seeing the neoclassical building (1803). They will also go out onto the roof and see some extraordinary places located on top of the church. They have the privilege of walking across the cathedral's roof tiles and past the domes that cover it to see what nobody sees. Once inside the building, they can contemplate the paintings of Josep Maria Sert, one of the most outstanding muralists of the 20th century.

This is just one of the many experiences travellers are given by **Catalonia Sacra**, a tourist project in which the ten Catalan archbishops and a good number of experts in religious heritage participate, and which seeks to promote the **artistic and architectural treasures** of the churches. However, not all of the churches are large constructions. Sometimes it is the abandoned hermitages or the isolated monasteries which give visitors the most stimulating experiences.

www.cataloniasacra.cat

VIC CATHEDRAL
AND THE CAVE
OF SAINT
IGNATIUS,
IN MANRESA.

ROUTES OF PILGRIMAGE

Many travellers have crossed inland Catalonia along the routes of pilgrimage. Some follow the **Way of St James**, a series of different routes with various accessible sections going towards Galicia and passing through points such as the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes and Barcelona Cathedral.

Another route shares the same path but goes in the opposite direction: this is the **Ignatian Way**. Ignatius, the man who later became the founder of the Company of Jesus, spent a year in the cave in Manresa, where the saint had his most significant spiritual experiences.

www.camidesantjaumeperatothom.cat,
www.camidesantjaume.cat, caminoignaciano.org 📍



© JUAN JOSÉ PASQUAL

© GZ

MONASTERIES AND SANCTUARIES IN FULL ACTIVITY

Time seems to go more slowly in monasteries, but we mustn't be mistaken; they are full of activity and welcome visitors with open arms.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.



© GZ

Ora et labora. The maxim that was applied to the life of the first Benedictine monasteries also governs those of the 21st century. St Benedict founded his order in the 6th century and established a rule which gave as much importance to the exercise of spiritual life as to work. It is applied in the **monastery of Montserrat** (Paisatges Barcelona), which is home to a community made up of nearly seventy monks. For a thousand years, they have been following a guided life in which the clock is an essential companion. They also do the most diverse jobs, from handicraft to writing lyrics. In addition to being a spiritual focal point, Montserrat is also a centre of culture which has a famous children's choir and the oldest active music school in Europe. It also has a hostel to get away from the mundane city noise for a few days.

The same warm welcome is offered in other Catalan Benedictine monasteries with active communities, where it is possible to live like a monk for a few days. Such is the case of the

MONTSERRAT
MONASTERY
LIBRARY.

Sanctuary of the Miracle of Lleida, founded in 1899 and inhabited by a community of Benedictine monks. Or of the monasteries along the **Cistercian Route** which still maintain active communities, such as the impressive Poblet, one of the largest monasteries in Europe, where a community of monks resides, or the monastery of Santa Maria de Vallbona, where a community of nuns runs a guesthouse, works in the garden, and does handicraft activities. A visit to the website www.larutadelcister.info/es will show you the many possibilities of a route that allows you to see outstanding religious centres, but also to take part in numerous cultural, culinary, and adventure activities.

But monastery life is not exclusively Catholic. Since 1996, the **Sakya Tashi Ling** community of Buddhist monks has lived in the Garraf park (Barcelona), an isolated, rocky place with little vegetation. They live in the Plana Novella, a former property which was the house of 'indianos' and which, in majestic and eclectic style, today houses both the statues and figures that formed

part of the original decoration as well as the new Buddhist images.

LES AVELLANES OR THE ARCHIVES OF THE MARISTS

Amidst forests, mountains, and fields of crops in Os de Balaguer (Terres de Lleida), in 1166 a monastery was founded that would soon become the centre of power of the counts of Urgell, and an active focus of culture and thought. Its Romanesque cloister and its Gothic church welcomed different communities from the Premonstratensian monks who followed the rules of St Augustine, to the Trapensians and the Marists, who have lived in the building since 1910. The archives of the Marists in Catalonia are preserved at this monastery, but the complex also includes a house of spirituality and a study house as well as a hostel, the restaurant of which, El Claustre, is well worth a visit with its Catalan cuisine made with local products as well as its cutting-edge dishes.

www.monestirdelesavellanes.com

MONASTERY
OF BELLPUIG DE
LES AVELLANES.

POBLET FROM THE INSIDE

When they enter the largest Cistercian monastery in Europe, inhabited by a community of monks following Benedictine rule, visitors are submerged into a 'world of forms, traditions, and symbols' as Josep Pla described it. The architectural, artistic, and historical importance of this place overwhelms spectators and makes them wonder about the reason behind such severe magnificence. The guides try to answer the question on a tour of the Abbey complex, the royal residence, and the Pantheon. The experience can be completed with a meal at the hostel with organic produce, some of which comes from the community garden, or by trying the wines of the Abbey of Poblet.

For more
information
www.poblet.cat



© POBLET

POPULAR CULTURE OF EAGLES AND DRAGONS

The most fabulous beasts rapidly appear every time the Catalans have something to celebrate. We'll introduce them to you.

At the top of the stairs of Tarragona Cathedral, an enormous golden eagle appears with its wings extended. It will soar down, dancing the entire time. It is nighttime and it is surrounded by thousands of people cheering at each of its movements.

It will follow a route around the highest parts of the city, accompanied by beasts and giants, as well as a mass of people celebrating one of the most popular mo-



A FIRE BEAST
IN THE FORM
OF A DRAGON.



© CHAPO

ments of the festival of Santa Tecla, the patron saint of Tarragona. This is the so-called **Baixada de l'Àliga** (*Descent of the Eagle*).

In Barcelona, an eagle dances during the Mercè festival. It comes into the square with its wings open, a royal crown on its head, three metres high with a majestic profile. The square is full, but silence falls as the solemn dance takes place.

CELEBRATING FIRE

Dangerous basilisks, fierce bulls, horses, and a group of fire breathing dragons. Villages and cities around Catalonia have these and other figures which allude to mediaeval mythology, tied to the religious symbolism or portraying evil incarnate which, represented by fire, takes the form of popular devils, torch bearers, and gunpowder which are inseparable from the concept of a Mediterranean festival. You have to experience it to understand the authentic nature of Catalan culture. 📍

TOUCH THE SKY WITH YOUR HAND

A tower of people? With more than two centuries of history, the castellers are one of the best-known Catalan traditions in the world.



© LLUÍS CARRO

In the image above, we are at the *diada castellera*, and what we see is the *pinya* or the base that has to support the castle that will be raised.

The tower will only be successful if everyone works together. Many life lessons can be drawn from this tradition born in the 18th century in **Valls** (Costa Daurada), which is particularly deep-rooted today in towns of castle-building tradition such as **Terrassa, Vilafranca del Penedès** and **Tarragona**, and which in 2010 was

CASTLE
BUILDERS BEFORE
TARRAGONA
CATHEDRAL.

16,000
CASTLES
ARE RAISED
EVERY YEAR
IN CATALUNYA

declared UNESCO Intangible Cultural World Heritage. It has its own vocabulary that all *castellers* know. Even the youngest: the boy or girl, the *enxaneta*, who has to climb to the top of the tower. Rising above the *acotxador*, they will raise their hand as a sign that the castle is built. Now the tower has to be deconstructed. Sometimes, strength fails and there is an accident which causes it to collapse. Let there be no doubt: they will try again and again.

www.catalunya.com/que-fer/agenda 📍

MINYONS EXPERIENCE

It is possible to experience a *colla castellera* from the inside and to have the chance to discover how a real rehearsal works, and whoever wishes, can dress in the sash and *fer pinya*, in other words, help to build the base without which it is impossible to raise a tower. The experience takes place at Casa Jacint Bosch in Terrassa, built in 1912, and is completed with a guided tour of the modernist building. The activity takes place on rehearsal days from April to November, and must be booked in advance. It is particularly designed for adults and is conducted in Catalan, Spanish, French, and English.

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📍 For more information www.minyons.cat



© MINYONS

CELEBRATING FIRE

Sparks, fire, gunpowder... These are essential elements in Mediterranean festivals, always present in Catalonia's celebrations.



©JORDI PARETO

The drums beat to announce that the doors of the Averno are about to open. Yes, the gates of hell are in Barcelona, and although it sounds strange, the time when the devilish creatures who live there start climbing out is one of those most awaited by the people of Barcelona. The *correfoc* has begun. The Mercè, Barcelona's local festival, is being celebrated. Devils dressed in hoods and showing their horns dance to the sound of percussion and release a rain of fire. Some spectators run to get out of the way, but others want to see this event up-close. Among the demons, large dragons and all kinds of hellish beasts, fire and sparks are tossed up over the crowd. Are they thrilled or petrified by the show? Not even they are sure how they feel.

ANCIENT FIRE

Although it is inspired by dances from almost 10 centuries ago, the modern day *correfoc* started in Barcelona at the end of the 1970s. This tradition was soon made popular and is now a widespread tradition in the country. In its present

DEVIL DANCING THE FIRE DANCE.

form, it is much newer than other mediaeval fire festivals, such as the *Patum de Berga* (Pirineus), or pre-Christian winter traditions like the *Fia-Faia* (Pirineus), when bonfires and torches are lit.

Sant Joan is another of the times of year when fire is in the spotlight. The country is lit up by a thousand and one bonfires. However, the most spectacular traditions take place in the Pyrenees. These are the *falles*, also declared Intangible World Heritage by UNESCO. The festival begins when a trunk recently cut from a nearby mountain is set on fire in the middle of the night. Young people light long torches called *falles*, and start a frenetic zigzagging race down into the valley which is followed by excitement from the villages. When they arrive to the crowd's applause, they use their torches to light the bonfire in the square that will light the village people's party throughout the night. ♡

17 VILLAGES IN THE CATALAN PYRENEES CELEBRATE THE TRADITION OF THE FALLES

A COUNTRY OF GIANTS

They were created to explain stories from the bible, but they stopped in villages and cities and have become increasingly popular.



© GZ

The music starts in the square and suddenly, everyone is sitting on the ground. The giants are about to begin their dance. They have their own music and choreographies made especially for them. She wears a crown and rich mediaeval dress, and holds a bouquet of flowers. He wears a Roman helmet and carries a giant mace over his shoulder... A girl looks at them from ground where she is sitting and they seem as tall as a building, although in fact they are only a little over four metres high. These are the Giants of Olot. It is worth seeing them do the candle dance to the magic light of the candles held by everyone in the crowd in September, during the Tura Festival in Olot (Pirineus). These giants are a couple of the thousands that exist all around Catalonia. They appeared in Europe in the fifteenth century as part of religious theatrical performances to explain the Bible to those unable to read.

In Barcelona too, the city's giants can be seen dancing, this time representing king Jaume I, and queen Violant of Hungary. They per-

IN CATALUNYA THERE ARE SOME 4,000 GIANTS

THE GIANTS AND THEIR ENTOURAGE. GEGANTS D'OLOT.

form their dances at celebrations such as Santa Eulàlia and particularly during the Mercè festival. During Barcelona's local festival, they join forces with other giants from all around Catalonia in a celebration in which they dance and stroll through the streets of the city centre. The girls and boys watch them in awe, and try to find out, by looking under the giants' skirts, whether there is a real person inside of them. ♡



© GEMMA MIRALDA

AGE-OLD PERCUSSION

One of the most popular dances takes place as the dancers knock together the sticks they hold in their hands.



© ORIOL LLAURADÓ

It is Saturday and it's a beautiful day, but this isn't why the streets of Sant Cugat, a town very close to Barcelona, are full of people. They have come to celebrate the National Meeting of the *Bastoners* [Stick Dancers] of Catalonia. There are more than a thousand of them, all of whom perform the dance that make the stick dancers beat their sticks together. Are they dancing or fighting?

Men, women, adolescents, and children are involved. The youngest are hardly strong enough to hit the sticks with the expected strength, but they do their best. This dance is also tradition in

75
GROUPS
MAKING UP THE
COORDINATOR
OF STICK DANCE
OF CATALONIA

other European countries, such as Portugal, the United Kingdom, Italy, and France. These dances have their own characteristics depending on the origin of the dancers. The strength with which the sticks are beaten together and the wrist position are said to vary by location.

The base is always a group **choreography**. The dancers face each other and carry two wooden sticks which are around 40 centimetres long. They strike their sticks to the melody performed with traditional instruments like the *gralla*, a high-pitched wind instrument, or the *tabal*, a percussion instrument.

The Bastoners need to have admirable strength, skills, and agility to perform the dance. They wear long trousers, white shirts, a coloured sash and rope sandals. Some wear blue velvet trousers and others have bells on their ankles that bring joy to the rhythm of the percussion. They dance and create their own rhythm at the same time. This is all part of a dance that was popular in Europe in the 15th century, but which, according to the Catalan folklorist Joan Amades, might already have been danced in Catalonia as early as the 12th century. 📍

STICK DANCE
AND A BAND
OF GRALLES
AND TABALS.



© MAXIMO LENZO

BEYOND THE SARDANA

With ancient clothes, sticks, veils, and even flower garlands around their arms: this is how many of the folkloric dances are performed in Catalonia.



© ERIC MEDOUS

A group of boys and girls dressed in black perform a traditional Catalan which is still performed today in Òdena (Paisatges Barcelona). It is interesting how many others have been danced in the square all morning, at a meeting of the so-called "living dances", in other words those still performed on some occasion somewhere in Catalonia. The peculiarity of the dance of *crespelles* is that the girls have a *crespella*, or a flower garland, hanging from their arms while they perform the choreography. Eating is forbidden

500
LIVING DANCES
ARE STILL
DANCED IN
CATALONIA

until the party is over. This tradition dates back to the 18th century, when young bachelors gave the girls these sweets.

Another group of dancers, this time from Olot (Pirineus), dress in sheepskin and dance with shepherds poles in their hands. In the end, they will form a structure with their 'gayatas' and will lift one of the dancers from the floor, who will shout "Xai Be", referring to the sheep, an animal of great importance to the shepherds of the area. The Xai Be dance has been performed since the 15th century and celebrates the end of Lent.

Today there are hundreds of living dances like these in Catalonia. The variety of choreographies is infinite. However, the best-known dance in Catalonia is the sardana, which is danced in a circle with participants holding hands in a gesture symbolising brotherhood. It comes from northern of Catalonia, and is danced to the sound of the traditional instruments played by a group called a 'coblà'. It was considered symbol of identity at the end of the 19th century. 📍

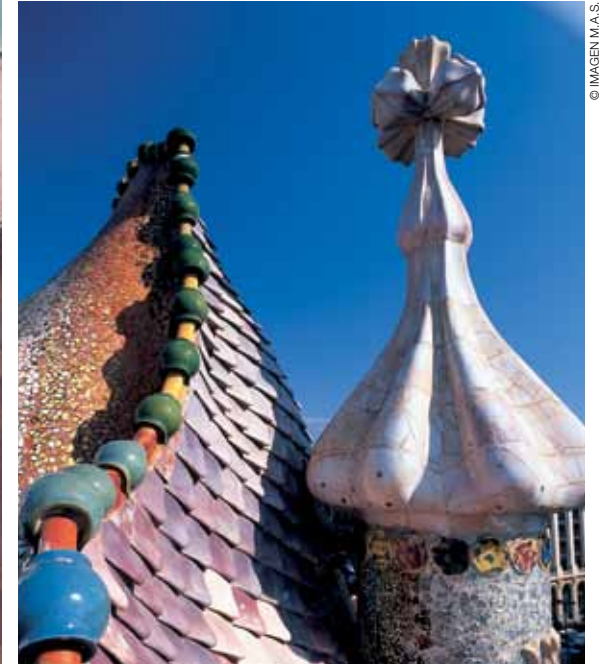


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ART AND CREATIVITY

From Romanesque paintings, and fashion accessories, to modernista architecture, Catalonia is a land of creativity. This is true for the arts, as well as literature and gastronomy, to give a few examples. Maybe it is the view of the sea, the pure mountain air, or the inland countryside, that makes Catalonia an inspiring place for both its local artists and for those who visit it. All options are possible. You have to come to Catalonia to express yourself creatively or to admire those who have already shared their talent with mankind. 📍



© JOSEP GARCIA. GZ



© MARTA PEREZ. GZ

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE FROM WALL TO CANVAS

What existed before and after Modernisme? Artistic creation has had a significant impact since prehistoric times and continues to produce marvels to share with the whole world.

Fire lit the first depiction of animals, drawn on a rock by a member of the clan. Without realising it, he had just become one of the **first artists** of these lands. This may have taken place in Abrics de l'Ermita (Terres de l'Ebre) or in another of the many caves and shelters in Catalonia. It is a good starting point for a journey through the history of art. The next stop on this journey might be the painted



JAEQUELINE
WITH CROSSED
HANDS, BY
PABLO PICASSO.



ceramic remains in the ancient Greek and Roman colony of Empúries (Costa Brava).

IN OUR SIGHTS

While Catalan painting and sculpture has some of its own characteristics, it has historically followed European trends. This Catalan style is a blend of contributions from different peoples who, like the Arabs, left their mark on Catalan culture. The Middle Ages brought moments of splendour to a Catalonia that was creating its own identity, which was especially evident in the **Romanesque** and **Gothic** periods. In the 19th century, the economic rebirth produced a very fertile moment of creation: **Modernisme**, an enhanced version of the artistic tendency that spread throughout Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The history of Catalan art includes from Dalí and Miró to Jaume Plensa. All have placed Catalonia in the sights of art lovers the world around. 📍

ROCK, ROMANESQUE AND GOTHIC ART

What do fertility rites have to do with images of saints? They are orks of art inspired in religious beliefs.



© INFOTUR

Bare-breasted female figures dance in pairs around a man. He is smaller than them, but his sex shows exaggerated dimensions. This fertility ritual, was painted 6,500-5,000 BCE at Roca dels Moros, in El Cogul (Terres de Lleida). These slender figures are painted in ochre and black, characteristic of the **rock art of the Mediterranean Basin**. In Catalonia, there are more examples in the Cova dels Vilars (Terres de Lleida) and in the Abrics de l'Ermita (Terres de l'Ebre). They are part of the **Route of Rock Art** and in 1998 were declared UNESCO World Heritage.

PANTHOCRATOR, A 12TH CENTURY FRESCO IN SANT CLIMENT DE TAÜLL. BELOW, PAINTINGS ON THE ROCA DELS MOROS, EL COGUL.

60
PREHISTORIC
SITES HAVE BEEN
RECOGNISED
BY UNESCO

The same museum also displays work in the Catalan Gothic style, as well as pieces signed by master painters like Jaume Huguet or sculptors like Pere Sanglada. The art from this period reflects the expansion of Catalonia with the conquest of Valencia and Majorca. It was a time in which great temples were built, such as the Barcelona, Girona, Tarragona, Solsona, and Tortosa cathedrals, which were decorated with paintings and sculptures that can be admired in the Poblet Monastery (Costa Daurada), Pedralbes Monastery, or the Saló del Tinell (Barcelona). 📍

THE ARRIVAL OF THE ROMANESQUE

Thousands of years later, these ritual scenes gave way to an elaborate concept of divinity. The context? The birth of the Catalan nation from the 9th and 10th centuries, the repopulation of the lands and the appearance of new temples, churches and monasteries in Romanesque style.

In around 1123, an anonymous artist made the last touches to the majestic image of Christ painted in the apse of the church of **Sant Climent**, in the **Vall de Boí** (Pirineus). Its majesty can be seen today, along with many other examples, in the **Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya** (MNAC, www.museunacional.cat).



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GENIUSES: PICASSO, MIRÓ, DALÍ, TÀPIES

Extravagant moustaches, painted dreams, surreal scenery: Welcome to a land of geniuses.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

In Els Quatre Gats, the place where the 19th-century artists of Barcelona gathered, a youngster of 17 listens to them, spellbound. This young man is **Pablo Picasso**. Born in Málaga, he arrived in 1895 to study art in this bohemian Barcelona that left an indelible mark on him. The city had such an impact on him, that once he was a renowned painter, he wanted to create the Picasso Museum in the city.

In Paris, in 1926, Picasso met **Salvador Dalí**. The surrealist artist had been born in Figueres,

DALÍ THEATRE-MUSEUM, IN FIGUERES, AND SCULPTURE ON THE FACADE OF THE MUSEU TÀPIES, IN BARCELONA.



© LLUÍS CARRO

where his Theatre-Museum is today, not far from Cadaqués (Costa Brava). In 1949, he began building a house in this seaside village that was just as eccentric as his artwork. Visiting it helps one to understand this genius who has gone down in history as the author of *El gran masturbador*, and who also dabbled in sculpture, writing, and even cinema.

It was **Joan Miró** who, in Paris, put Dalí in contact with the Surrealists. In Mont-roig del Camp (Costa Daurada) Miró was inspired to create *La Masia*, and this town therefore has a Miró Centre. His main works can be seen at the Miró Foundation in Barcelona. They can also be seen on the streets of the Catalan capital: from ceramic paving on the Rambla (El Pla de l'Os) to his sculpture *Dona i Ocell* (Woman and Bird).

Miró maintained a relationship of mutual admiration with **Antoni Tàpies**, an artist with his own 20th century avant-garde style. His work can be seen at the Fundació Antoni Tàpies (Barcelona), a modernista building which is topped by a monumental work by Tàpies *Núvol i cadira* (Cloud and chair). 📍

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Art spaces have become new centres of pilgrimage. Who wants to see a masterpiece?



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

The more than 300 museums of Catalonia are places of identity, cohesion, and progress. They bring together roots and current reality. They are a good calling card for the country for the millions of tourists who visit it. They provide unique experiences and share an appreciation for remarkable creations, traditions, and collections which provide visitors with knowledge and enjoyment of the pieces they safeguard.

MUSEUMS ON THE MAP

An hour away from Barcelona, Vic (Paisatges Barcelona) hides a small marvel: the **Episcopal Museum** (www.museuepiscopalvic.com), which has outstanding samples of Romanesque sculpture and painting, as well as works ranging from ancient Egypt to the 18th century.

On the Costa Brava, the **Girona Art Museum** (museuart.com) maintains one of the best collections of Romanesque and Gothic art in Catalonia, with important pieces such as the portable altar from the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes.

The **Catalan Museum of Science and Technology**, (mnactec.cat) has a mission to promote

THE FUNDACIÓ MIRÓ, IN BARCELONA, BUILDING BY THE ARCHITECT JOSEP LLUÍS SERT.

MEETING 'CARMELA'

The Catalonia's artistic attractions are complemented by a multitude of private art foundations and centres devoted to contemporary creation: from the Fundació Sorigué in Lleida, which typically partners with the Sónar Festival, to the Fundació Vila Casas, the Fundació Suñol, and the Fundació Gaspar, in Barcelona. The Catalan capital is also full of galleries. It is worth strolling down calle de Consell de Cent or through the Born district to discover them. On the stone benches of the paseo del Born, pay attention to the sculptures of a renowned contemporary artist, Jaume Plensa. The sculptor also left the city a monumental bust 4.5 metres high called *Carmela*, by the Palau de la Música.

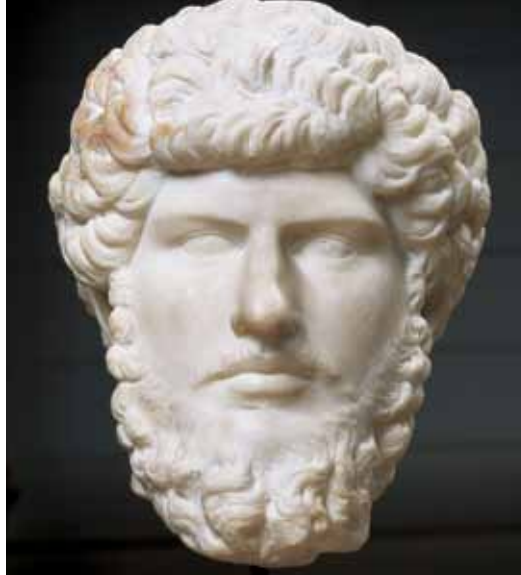
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WORKS BY PICASSO ARE PRESERVED IN THE PICASSO MUSEUM IN BARCELONA

For more information jaumeplensa.com



© GZ



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© GZ



© ROBERT RAMOS. GZ



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

the knowledge of scientific culture and to preserve, study, and show the evolution of scientific and technical developments in Catalonia, with special emphasis on their industrial application and social importance. It has three centres: Terrassa, Esparreguera (Paisatges Barcelona) and Castellar de n'Hug (Pirineus), and a network of 28 museums and heritage sites, so it is quite easy to visit one of its exhibitions.

The **National Archaeology Museum of Tarragona** (*mnat.cat*), located on the Costa Daurada, holds most of the Roman objects and furniture found in Tarragona. This is a journey to antiquity guided by the best specialists. It also runs the **Early Christian Museum and Necropolis** and the **Roman villas of Centelles and els Munts**.

In the town of Figueres, on the Costa Brava, a visit to the collection of the **Museu del Joguet (Toy Museum)** (*mjc.cat*) is a trip to one's own childhood and that of past generations.

The **Cinema Museum** (*museudelcinema.cat*) in Girona, is one of only a few museums in Europe to boast such a variety of pre-cinematographic and cinematographic material.

The **Diocesan and Regional Museum of Lleida** (*museudelleida.cat*), in the capital of the Terres de

A HEAD FROM ROMAN TIMES OF THE NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM AND THE FACADE OF THE MUSEUM OF LLEIDA.

Lleida, manages an important legacy of religious art, ranging from the Roman world to present day, covering Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque art.

Train lovers will find their ideal museum in Vilanova i la Geltrú. The **Museu del Ferrocarril de Catalunya** (*museudelferrocarril.org*) is right next to the railway station.

Vinseum (*vinseum.cat*), in Vilafranca del Penedès, presents a collection related to viticulture, displaying visual art, ceramics, and crystal pieces, all of which have wine as their central theme. This museum has a multi-sensory module devoted especially to people with special needs.

In conclusion, the 'Best Museum in Catalonia', as the network of local museums (*museuslocals.diba.cat*) is called, groups together museums from fifty-two municipalities of the Barcelona region and offers interesting information for visitors through its website.

AND WITHOUT LEAVING BARCELONA...

A long avenue and a staircase lead to the **Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)**, in Montjuïc park. It has a spectacular view of the city and one of the best collections of Roman-

esque art in Europe, which includes paintings and sculptures.

Also located on Montjuïc mountain, the **Fundació Joan Miró** holds fundamental pieces by the artist in a building designed by the architect Josep Lluís Sert. In the Born district, the **Museu Picasso** contains more than 4,000 original works that tell us about the formative years of the artist's life.

The **Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona** (MACBA, *www.macba.cat*) holds exhibitions of modern art, from 1950 to today, in a building designed by Richard Meier.

INSTALLATION IN THE CCCB AND A ROYAL GALLERY IN THE MARITIME MUSEUM OF BARCELONA.

The **Centre de Cultura Contemporànea de Barcelona**, (CCCB, *www.cccb.org*) holds events, festivals, and exhibitions, and is a point of reference for new artistic trends. The complex that holds it is a 17th-century settlement house refurbished by Piñón and Viaplana.

The **Museu Marítim de Barcelona** (*mmb.cat*) is an institution devoted to sea culture located in the Gothic building of the Drassanes Reials, on the Barcelona seafront. 📍

VISITMUSEUM: THE DEFINITIVE APP

Accessible from any device in its app or mobile web version, Visitmuseum allows users to enhance their visit with content in several languages, and enjoy a good selection of the main pieces of each museum. The app provides a brief presentation of the features of the museum, a tour around the main rooms, and a detailed view of the most outstanding objects. The app, which is available at the AppStore and on GooglePlay, offers links to learn more or share the experience on the social networks.

.....
 ⓘ For more information visitmuseum.gencat.cat



© VISITMUSEUM

MUSIC

A DIVERSE SOUNDTRACK

Batuta or synthesiser? There's no need to choose, as Catalonia's rich music scene satisfies the appetite of the most diverse and demanding ears.

The Barcelona Metro is full one night in June of elegantly dressed couples and others younger and more informal. They are all going out and music is what gets them out of their homes. Some go to the **Gran Teatre del Liceu** for an evening of opera and others to the latest edition of the **Sónar festival**, where the most avant-garde rhythms are played.



SÓNAR,
INTERNATIONAL
ADVANCED
MUSIC FESTIVAL.



© MARC CASTELLET

This image is an allegory for the varied soundtrack of a place that has given the world great geniuses, that delights in music, and listens to it in all of its forms. The main cities have great facilities, such as the Liceu, the Auditori, and the Palau de la Música in Barcelona, the auditoriums in Girona and Tarragona, and the Auditori Enric Granados in Lleida. They put on both classical and contemporary music.

À LA CARTE FESTIVALS

The activity is completed with fixed programmes. Classical music festivals, as well as festivals devoted to pop, rock, electronic, or jazz spring up all around Catalonia particularly in the summer months. Many of these festivals are well-established, like the **ArReus** festival, which brings musical groups from all over the world to the city of Reus and offers festivalgoers a chance to hear not only the music, but to see the culture of other peoples. There are also jazz fes-



© MARC CASTELLET

tivals in which the best artists in the world take to the stage, such as the **Girona Jazz Festival**, **Jazz Terrassa**, **Voll-Damm Festival Jazz Vic**, and the **JazzTardor**, in Lleida. The **Vijazz** takes place in Vilafranca del Penedès, and gives attendees the chance to pair wine and cava with jazz notes in the background. The **Mercat de Música Viva of Vic**, one of the largest musical showcases, has taken place every year for the past three decades and serves as a great meeting place for professionals in the music industry.

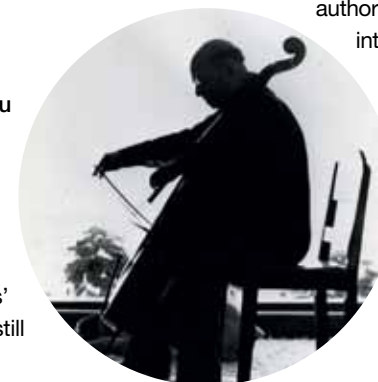
MERCAT DE
MÚSICA VIVA DE
VIC PROGRAMMES
INTERNATIONAL
ARTISTS.

recognised today as a musical message of peace and fraternity. In his Villa-Museum we can see his instruments, look at the rooms where he lived until his exile, and feel his artistic and humanistic legacy. The **Pau Casals International Music Festival** in el Vendrell remembers him every year.

There are many world-renowned Catalan composers. Among them are **Isaac Albéniz** and **Enric Granados**, who were both pianists and Romantic composers. Their contemporary, **Frederic Mompou**, and avant-garde authors like **Xavier Montsalvatge** are also internationally celebrated, as is composer and pianist **Albert Guinovart**, who has written music for operas, plays, and even films.9

PAU CASALS, THE SOUND OF PEACE

In 1971, an elderly but excited **Pau Casals** addressed the United Nations. He had just received the Medal of Peace in reward for his fight for justice and freedom. He went on to perform a popular Catalan song, 'El cant dels ocells' (The song of the birds), which is still



© GZ

MUSICAL SEASONS

Caruso, 'La Callas', and even Duke Ellington stood on these stages. In Catalonia, music plays all year round.



© JOAN PUIG. GZ



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

The concert is about to begin, but there is still time to see the 'linterna' of **L'Auditori (Barcelona)**, an open courtyard with glass walls that are 30 metres tall, decorated with drawings by the artist Pablo Palazuelo. L'Auditori plays music from various genres, from symphonic music to *world music*, through cycles exploring the relationship between music and technology.

The **Palau de la Música**, the jewel of modernista architecture and the work of the architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a temple for symphonic and choral music, although it also hosts performances in other genres ranging from jazz to ethnic music. Its stage has seen the likes of

THE THEATRE
FORTUNY EN
REUS, COSTA
DAURADA.

SCULPTURES
THAT REPRESENT
MUSES
STRUMMING
INSTRUMENTS
ON THE STAGE
OF THE PALAU
DE LA MÚSICA.

Yehudi Menuhin, Mstislav Rostropovich, Barbara Hendricks, Montserrat Caballé, Duke Ellington, and Ella Fitzgerald. At 170 years old, the **Gran Teatre del Liceu** is probably one of the most beautiful and traditional opera houses in the world.

Promoters like Promoconcert organise seasons of classical music and other genres at the Palau de la Música and the Liceu. Others like Ibercàmera promote classical music from the stages of the Palau de la Música and L'Auditori (Barcelona), as well as the **Auditori de Girona**. The Auditori de Girona hosts both classical concerts and pop and musical theatre along with the **Auditori Enric Granados in Lleida**.

MULTIPLE STYLES, MULTIPLE SPACES

Musical performances in every genre from symphony to jazz are held throughout the country in prestigious multidisciplinary spaces like the **Auditori de Tarragona**, **Granollers**, **Sant Cugat**, or the **Kursaal de Manresa** stage art space, founded in 1927, which after being closed for some

time, reopened its doors after a renovation in 2007, or the **Teatro Fortuny in Reus**, built in 1882 and which captivates visitors with its great Baroque structural elegance.

REBORN FROM THE ASHES

Opened in 1847, the Gran Teatre del Liceu is Barcelona's Opera house, which hosts the great voices of world opera (from Caruso to Maria Callas). Although it sometimes hosts concerts that

THE GRAN
THEATRE DEL
LICEU, IN
BARCELONA.

1.100
CONCERTS AND
OPERAS TAKE
PLACE EVERY
YEAR IN THE
LICEU, THE PALAU
DE LA MÚSICA
AND L'AUDITORI

are not very classical, its main programme combines a repertoire of operas, little-known works, and contemporary compositions. The main hall was rebuilt after a fire in 1994. Its Mirror Room, however, remained miraculously intact and reminds us how the epicentre of Barcelona bourgeoisie life appeared a century ago. 📍

BARCELONA OVERTURE

Congratulations! Lovers of classical music can enjoy a three-for-one offer with a single click. Just connect to the Barcelona Obertura Classic and Lyric website, a site created by the three main musical institutions in Barcelona: the Gran Teatre del Liceu, L'Auditori, and the Palau de la Música. They are determined to promote the hometown of Josep Carreras, Jaume Aragall, Montserrat Caballé, Victòria dels Àngels, and Jordi Savall, among others, as a great centre of musical tourism. They offer a joint calendar that contains a selection of the most outstanding events of the season.

For more information www.barcelonaobertura.com



©TONI BOFILL. GZ



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SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVALS

Not just one, but a thousand summer songs of various styles can be heard at a plethora of festivals.



© MARC CASTELLET



© MARC CASTELLET

For three days in June, the **Sónar festival** in Barcelona plays electronic and progressive musics from around the world. Thousands of visitors (52% foreign) come every year. It started in 1994 and today, Sónar is internationally recognised, offering additional festivals in Reykjavik, Hong Kong and Stockholm.

Its success brought forth the appearance of other musical performances. This is the case for the Barcelona Festival **Primavera Sound**, which

THE FESTIVAL CRUÏLLA IN BARCELONA. AN EVENING CONCERT IN CAP ROIG.

went for independent and alternative sounds and triumphed. Today, with headliners from the top of the pop and rock charts, this festival fills a giant complex in late May and early June on the outskirts of the city, in the Parc del Fòrum. More than 50,000 visitors a day have filled the complex in recent years. Over half came from other countries.

MUSIC IN SEA AND MOUNTAIN

The Barcelona calendar includes many other events, such as the **Cruïlla festival**, an eclectic **Mas i Mas Festival**, events that play electronic dance music, like the **Barcelona Beach Festival** or events dedicated to renowned artists, such as the **Festival de Pedralbes**.

The festival circuit in Catalonia grows with each year and covers all styles: from the very Mediterranean and ecological **Vida Festival**, in Vilanova i la Geltrú (Costa Barcelona), to **Canet Rock** in Canet de Mar (Costa Barcelona). The Costa Brava also hosts important events such as the **Festival Castell de Perelada**; the **Festival In-**

ternacional de Música de Cadaqués, which plays styles ranging from pop and rock to jazz; the **Festival de la Porta Ferrada** of Sant Feliu de Guíxols; or the **Festival de Cap Roig**, in Calella de Palafrugell, with top artists from the international pop, rock and jazz circuits. One of the most outstanding classical music festivals is the **Festival Internacional de Música Costa Daurada – Salou**, with stages in Torredembarra, Altafulla, Creixell, Roda de Berà, Cambrils and Salou.

The **'Schubertiada' (Schubert festival)** in Vilabertran (Girona), is another summer event. Though it is located far from the coast, the most curious music festival in Catalonia, the **Festival Gong**, is held in the summer in the caves of Colibató deep in the heart of Montserrat mountain.

At all of these attractions you can eat (either at a food stand or sitting at a high-scale restaurant), drink, or even shop. 📍

OPENING OF SÓNAR FESTIVAL IN 2011.

FESTIVAL OF ANCIENT PYRENEES MUSIC

A high quality, top-notch programme is the best way to describe the **Festival de Música Antiga dels Pirineus (FeMAP)**. This festival is the result of the work of several villages in the Catalan Pyrenees to bring ancient music and the area's rich architectural heritage together. Special emphasis is placed on buildings from the Romanesque period. FeMAP has drawn from the inheritance of the Joan Brudieu International Music Festival, which held its last edition in the Seu d'Urgell in 2010. FeMAP promotes the ensembles of Catalonia and restores and promotes the Catalan musical heritage by holding events in locations like the cloisters of Santa Maria d'Urgell.



© GZ

120.000 VISITORS CAME TO THE THREE-DAY SONAR FESTIVAL

For more information www.femap.cat

© MARC CASTELLET

NIGHTFALL EVENTS FOR EVERYONE

*To listen, see, dance, stroll...
Nighttime in Catalonia allows visitors
to partake in authentic activities
that won't leave anyone unsatisfied.*



© ALVARO MONGE. GZ



© FERRAN SENDRA. GZ

The Catalan night is varied and offers visitors a variety of possibilities. You can enjoy a pleasant conversation on a terrace, have a cocktail, or go to one of the many discotheques or dance halls. However, Catalonia has much more to offer beyond these more conventional options. During the year there is always some holiday or local festival in which to participate, such as Patum de Berga, which was declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, and the Aquarelle in Cervera, both of which attract many curious visitors. There are also popular festivals in districts such as the Sants or Gràcia Festivals in Barcelona.

Although many festivals are concentrated in the warmer months, the programme goes on all

NIGHT OF
CONCERT
AND DRINK AT
LA PEDRERA.

STREET SHOW
OF THE TÀRRAGA
THEATRE FAIR.

year. The **theatrical performances** do not stop either, and nor do other stage arts like **dancing**.

When the sun goes down, everything is cast in a different light, so it is interesting to make night visits to symbolic buildings, as you can with **la Pedrera** in Barcelona.

IN & OUT

Catalonia hosts a wide variety of shows in diverse, original spaces. These events can take place in markedly urban locations like the **Apolo** or **Razzmatazz** in Barcelona where live alternative, pop, folk, and rock music can be heard, or at open-air venues surrounded by beautiful scenery. In Catalonia, there are simple beach huts where music is played to the sound of the waves, or spectacular places such as **Perelada Castle**, which amplifies the quality of its musical notes simply through its location. But if you wish to take a stroll in the city and be carried away by destiny, you may be surprised on the way to a terrace in Barcelona by buildings like the **Torre Glòries**, with its chameleon spirit changing co-

lour, **Castell de Montjuïc** lit up, or the **plaça del Rei**. And the same thing happens in other Catalan cities, which give light and colour to buildings and squares where bars and terraces invite you to enjoy the evening.

UNDERGROUND ATMOSPHERE

In Barcelona, in the **plaça Reial**, by the **Rambla**, we find two great places to watch live music: the intimate **Sidecar Factory Club**, with a quality programme placing the accent on *underground*, and **Jamboree**, a jazz club and wine cellar founded in the sixties that brings in the greats. Its programme breathes life into the rich local jazz scene and also explores the new trends of international jazz.

Near the **Sala Apolo**, on the **Paral·lel**, the modern **Barts** is the stage of top-class performances and concerts of the **International Jazz Festival** or **Guitar Bcn**. ♡

SALA APOLO IN
BARCELONA.

BEYOND BARCELONA

Spaces such as **sala Salamandra** (el Prat de Llobregat) or **Depósito Legal** (l'Hospitalet del Llobregat) offer lovers of alternative sounds good opportunities. Outside the Catalan capital and its area of influence, two locations stand out. To the south, in Tarragona, **Sala Zero** (Costa Daurada) has a quality programme that includes the main artists and bands of Catalonia. To the north, **sala La Mirona**, very near Girona (Costa Brava), also functions as a centre of attraction and a large concert hall. What's more, in the summer evenings, an infinite number of stationary and *pop-up* locations hold performances for even greater enjoyment of the Mediterranean climate.



© GZ

5.000
LIVE CONCERTS
A YEAR
ARE HELD AT
BARCELONA'S
MUSIC
VENUES



© MARC CASTELLET

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE CULTURE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Which play by a Catalan author inspired operas and films in Germany? And which Spanish novel took post-war Barcelona to the bookshops of half the world?

The dramatist and poet Àngel Guimerà (1845-1924), who was very popular in Barcelona in his day, wrote in Catalan. And despite this, he achieved international projection. One of his best-known works is *Terra Baixa* (Lowlands), which in 1903 inspired a German opera by Eugen D'Albert.

A century later, in 2001, **Carlos Ruiz Zafón** published *The Shadow of the Wind*, a novel set in Barcelona in the 1940s. He wrote it in Spanish, but it was translated into more than 30 languages.

With a strong career as a scriptwriter, the writer **Jaume Cabré**, considered one of the



JOSEP PLA.

best European authors, published his last novel, *Confessions*, a monumental work of more than 1,000 pages, in 2011.

WHEN GABO MET PLA

These are examples that show that Catalonia's literary culture moves between Catalan and Spanish, and that both languages have given it international recognition. In 2015, Barcelona was declared the UNESCO City of Literature. Don Quixote de la Mancha had his last adventure in this city. And between 1967 and 1974, **Gabriel García Márquez** resided in Barcelona, among other authors of the Latin American boom who came to Barcelona to work with the literary agent Carmen Balcells. During her stay, Gabo met **Josep Pla** (1897-1981). The author from the Costa Brava spent his entire life going back and forth between both languages using them to cover of his favourite subjects: gastronomy. 📍

TWO LANGUAGES FOR ONE LITERATURE

Spanish and Catalan, the two languages heard in the street, enjoy great health in the literary panorama.

Catalonia has had its own language for many years, **Catalan**, although it is not the only official language. It shares this status with **Spanish**, a language with which it coexists perfectly on a daily basis and which the whole population knows. Both are Romance languages, which means they are very similar. Both are studied at school and many international residents learn them too.

Statistically speaking, the preferred language for reading is Spanish, although more and more readers are now choosing Catalan as the first option.

Literary production in Catalonia is never-ending; the Catalan authors write in either language depending on their preferences and even alternate publications in Spanish and Catalan, as is the case of Eduardo Mendoza, the author of *The Truth about the Salvata Case*. In Spanish, particularly outstanding works are Javier Pérez Andújar's, *Los príncipes Valientes*; or Juan Marsé's, *Últimas tardes con Teresa*, and in Catalan, Jaume Cabré's, *Confessions*; Jordi Puntí's, *The House of Silence*; Blanca Busquets's, *The House of Silence*; or Imma Monsó's, *L'aniversari*.



© DANNY CAMINAL. GZ

A BOOKSHOP
IN BARCELONA
ON THE DAY
OF SANT JORDI.

Sant Jordi is undoubtedly the day on which the most books are given. When the weather cooperates, the day is a glorious one. The streets fill with stands of **books** and **roses**. Books, because we commemorate the death of Cervantes, and roses because St. George killed the dragon, according to legend, roses blossomed from its blood. Be aware: this is **Lover's day** in Catalonia. 📍



20

LITERATURE IN INSPIRING CATALONIA

Famous knights, well-known detectives, and even a world-renowned wizard fill the pages of books written in or inspired by Catalonia.



© GZ



© ORIOL LLARADÓ

In 1904, Joaquim Miret, a historian specialised in the study of **mediaeval Catalan**, went into the archives of the rectory of a small village in the Pyrenees called Organyà. While examining the documents kept there, he discovered a parchment book. It was a text written in Catalan from the 12th century, which made it the oldest known document written in this language. It was the religious *Homilies de Organyà*.

PAGE OF ARS MAGNA BY RAMON LLULL. THE HOMILIES OF ORGANYÀ.

Those three pages started a long literary history which includes authors born in Catalonia, as well as in Valencia and the Balearic Islands. Therefore, the **poems** of the Valencian Ausiàs March or **chivalric romances** like *Tirant lo Blanc*, by the Valencian Joanot Martorell, are considered treasures of universal literature, just like the creations of the Majorcan Ramon Llull who, from 12th-century Majorca, would become famous for his philosophical and religious reflections.

And in the 19th and 20th centuries, numerous authors wrote in Catalan, including **novelists, dramatists, and poets** like Jacint Verdaguer, Àngel Guimerà, Mercè Rodoreda, Carles Riba, Salvador Espriu, Josep Vicenç Foix, and Joan Salvat-Papasseit, whose works are considered canonical literature. The Majorcan author Llorenç Villalonga published the novel known as *Bearn* or *The Dolls' Room* in 1956. Joan Sales, the author of *Uncertain Glory*, a highly applauded novel set during the Civil War, is one of the writers whose work has recently been recov-

ered. The works of contemporary authors such as Quim Monzó, Albert Sánchez Piñol, and Marta Rojals attest to the literary vitality of modern Catalonia.

NARRATIVE IN SPANISH

Other great **literary creations** written in Catalonia are in Spanish, but remain fundamental elements of Catalan culture. The post-war novel by Carmen Laforet (*Nada*), the bourgeois and marginal city portrayed by Juan Marsé (*Últimas tardes con Teresa*) or the story of Barcelona between the 19th and 20th centuries, described by Eduardo Mendoza in *The City of Marvels* are evidence of a tradition which Carlos Ruiz Zafón (*The Shadow of the Wind* and *Ildefonso Falcones Cathedral of the Sea*, about the construction of the Gothic Temple of Santa Maria del Mar) have used to achieve success. A separate chapter should be devoted to Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, the author who renovated the European detective novel with his special character, the detective Pepe Carvalho. ♡

THE BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA DEL MAR INSPIRED THE NOVEL LA CATEDRAL DEL MAR.

CATALONIA INSPIRES

The Catalan history and countryside have inspired authors of different backgrounds, such as *Benito Pérez Galdós*, author of *Gerona*, and Chilean writer *Roberto Bolaño*, author of *The Third Reich*, who lived and worked in Catalonia for many years. We must not forget *Homage to Catalonia*, with which the Briton George Orwell told the story of the Civil War in the first person. Still better known, *Gabriel García Márquez* includes a Catalan sage among the myriad of characters in his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. And in the 21st century, it has inspired several best-selling authors, such as Noah Gordon, who fell in love with the Catalan wine lands in *The Winemaker*; Dan Brown, who explores locations like the monastery of Montserrat, la Pedrera and the Sagrada Família in *Origin*; or the Welsh Ken Follett.

© MARIA ROSA FERRÉ



CINEMA AND THEATRE FROM LUMIÈRE TO BROADWAY

The cinema came at the hand of babies at war and knights playing cards. And up to now has coexisted with the very rich theatre life.

In 1896, the Lumière brothers projected *Babies Quarrel* and *Une partie d'écarté* in the Napoleón photography studio in Barcelona. The spectators were astounded. One of them was **Fructuós Gelabert**, the author of the first Catalan film with a plot: *Riña en un café* (1897). In the early 20th century, Barcelona was already Spain's cinema capital thanks to directors like **Segundo de Chomón**, who surprised audiences with his visual



PROJECTION
OF SEGUNDO
DE CHOMÓN
WITH PIANO
ACCOMPANIMENT.



20 ©

tricks in the 1905 film *The Electric Hotel*.

In the 1970s, the Barcelona School was born, which like the English *Free cinema* or the French *Nouvelle vague*, waged on the rebellion of the new languages. Its flame is kindled by directors such as **Isabel Coixet**, **Juan Antonio Bayona**, **Jaume Balagueró** or **Jaume Collet-Serra** from the United States.

THE BARCELONA BROADWAY

Despite the constant production of films, Catalonia is a land of theatre. In the 17th century it was a centre for European opera. In the early 20th century, the Barcelona Paral·lel, with its theatres and cabarets, was compared to Broadway of New York. With this background, Catalan companies and directors travel the world. From **Comediants** and **La Fura dels Baus**, to opera and theatre directors like **Lluís Pasqual** and **Calixto Bieito**. Let's not forget avant-garde companies like **Agrupación Señor Serrano**. Raise the curtain! 📍

HIGH SEASON AND THE GREC FESTIVAL IN BARCELONA

The times changed and a famous stage art festival was born. It has been around for half a century and is no longer the only one of its kind.

Victims of the years of dictatorship, in 1976, the Catalan actors and directors set up in an open-air theatre, the **Teatro Grec**. Here they organised a self-managed summer season that combined music and theatre. Soon the City Hall would take over the initiative and put on the **Grec Festival** in Barcelona. Today the festival is nearly half a century old, and has become a reference on the calendar of European festivals, with international productions of theatre, dance, circus, and music, while offering support and visibility to local companies.

In 1992, **Temporada Alta** (High Season) appeared, a theatre event shared between the stages of Girona and Salt (Costa Brava).

The health of theatre in Catalonia could not be better; it is constantly active, so much so that many cities now hold theatre exhibitions. The Catalan people's great love of theatre has guaranteed the success of established festivals such as **FiraTàrraga**, one of the most important international stage art markets in Europe, and the **Fira de titelles de Lleida**, now approaching its 30th anniversary. 📍

THE FESTIVAL
GREC IN
BARCELONA.

50.000
ATTEND
SHOWS IN
GIRONA DURING
THE HIGH
SEASON
EACH YEAR



© ORIOL LLAUDADÓ

THE MOST MODERN CIRCUS IN THE WORLD

Clowns, acrobats, jugglers, and a great show! Reus's **Festival Trapezi** is an event lasting several days with performances by circus companies from all around the world. Travelling shows can be seen in the outdoors in the small city squares and others in some of the theatres in Reus. The circus has modernised in recent decades and now perfectly blends in other stage arts. In the same way, Catalan dance has evolved constantly since the nineteen eighties. Have you seen that artist dance blindfolded on a floor covered in cactuses? It was **Sol Picó**. Now it is not surprising to see shows that mix dance and circus, *performance* and urban dances, such as the **Brodas Bros** company.



© GZ

SITGES FILM FESTIVAL

Monsters, zombies, vampires, serial killers, and UFOs... Why has everyone come to Sitges?



© ORIOL LLAURADO

Blood comes out of the split in his lips and he leaves a trail on the tarmac. He stumbles forward with stiff limbs. He is one of the dozens of zombies which, in spectacular make up, take part in a parade of the living dead through the streets of the centre of Sitges (Costa Barcelona).

This town of white houses by the sea, which used to be one of the epicentres of Modernisme, is now a fearful sight to behold. At least in early October, when the **Sitges Film Festival** is held, which started in 1968 and has become the most popular event on the Catalan cinema calendar. It has an intentionally *freakish about it* and parallel

PROJECTION
AT THE SITGES
FESTIVAL.

MORE THAN
170
FILMS ARE
PROJECTED
EVERY YEAR AT
THE FESTIVAL
DE SITGES

activities like its Sitges Zombie Walk, it is an opportunity to see the fantastic and terror films that everyone is waiting for. It also includes flashbacks and short films, and gives fans the best opportunities to meet their idols. Here we have seen 'monsters' of cinema ranging from Roger Corman to George A. Romero, from David Cronenberg to Joe Dante, and from Jodie Foster to Sir Anthony Hopkins or Vanessa Redgrave. Take your hat off to them, or pull of your head, if you prefer... 📍

RAIN OF FESTIVALS

Short films with wine as the theme, films of women, those devoted to children... There is a cinema festival for every spectator. This is what it seems, given the extensive calendar of cinema festivals in Catalonia. They are not to be missed: the Festival de Cine de Girona, devoted to cartoons, videogames, documentaries and television (September); the Animac de Lleida, a meeting with the best international cartoon films (February); the REC Festival Internacional de Cinema de Tarragona (December); In-Edit, devoted to musical documentary cinema (between October and November) and L'Alternativa, focused on the more experimental forms of creation (November), both in Barcelona.



© ERIC MEDOUS

A FILM-LIKE COUNTRY

What do 'Mr. Arkadin' and 'Pandora and the Flying Dutchman' have in common? Does anyone know where 'In Cold Blood' was written? The answers, in Catalonia.



© JAVIER GARCÍA-DÍEZ (CHOPO)

In 1896, the Lumière brothers put a camera on a boat, and leaving the pier at the end of the Rambla, they filmed the port of Barcelona from the water. It was considered the first film made in Catalonia, although the first cinema projection would not come until a few months later. Since then, many have used the Catalan capital as a stage. **Pedro Almodóvar** did just that in his film *All About My Mother*, where the Palau de la Música and Montjuïc appear. **Woody Allen** filmed here as well. The main characters of his film walk by the rationalist building of the Fundació Joan Miró, the streets and cafes of old town Barcelona, and the traditional correfoc festival with its fire and gunpowder.

Less hellish but more terrifying was *Rec*, the international success that **Jaume Balagueró** filmed in a building on the Rambla de Catalunya, one of Barcelona's stately avenues. The films with the most widely-recognised locations in the Catalan countryside are those that were shot on the Costa Brava, whose abrupt geography and deep blue sea were discovered by the rest of the world in the nineteen fifties. The Costa Brava was put on the map in 1951 with the film *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*, with Ava Gard-

THE LIGHT-
HOUSE OF
SANT SEBASTIÀ,
ON THE COSTA
BRAVA.

SIGN OF
THE FILM BY
THE DIRECTOR
WOODY ALLEN.

ner. The Costa Brava was also used to film scenes for the film *Mr. Arkadin* (1955), by **Orson Welles**, or *Suddenly Last Summer*, a film from 1959 by **Joseph L. Mankiewicz**, starring **Elisabeth Taylor**.

LITERARY SCENARIOS

Catalonia can also be explored with a book in your hand. Barcelona has been mentioned in thousands of literary works. It is portrayed in *The Time Of The Doves* by **Mercè Rodoreda**; towers and the wonderful views from Vallvidrera are

Javier Bardem Patricia Clarkson Penélope Cruz
Kevin Dunn Rebecca Hall Scarlett Johansson Chris Messina

Vicky Cristina Barcelona



20 ©



© SERVICIOS EDITORIALES GEORAMA

where the main character of the detective novels by **Manuel Vázquez Montalbán** lived. The peaceful bourgeois Sarrià district is where the poet **Josep Vicenç Foix** resided. **Joan Marsé** lived in the Guinardó neighbourhood. The poet **Jacint Verdaguer** died in one of the five country homes in the Collserola natural park. The novel *Laura a la ciutat dels sants* is set in inland Catalonia and portrays the early 20th-century puritani-

GIRONA CATHEDRAL

cal city of Vic (Paisatges Barcelona). And on the Costa Brava, visitors have to see the place where the writer and journalist **Josep Pla** (1897-1981) lived in Palafrugell. Very nearby is Palamós, where the North American **Truman Capote** locked himself in to write *In Cold Blood* between the end of the fifties and early seventies.

IN THE CAPITAL OF THE SEVEN KINGDOMS

Anyone strolling around Girona who has seen the sixth season of *Game of Thrones* will feel like they are Arya Stark or some other character from this famous fantasy drama series.

The show's directors chose Girona to recreate not one, but three different cities: King's Landing, capital of the Seven Kingdoms; Braavos, the oldest and most powerful of the Free Cities; and Oldtown, where the Citadel, headquarters of the order of the Maesters, is located. Any fans of the show will be thrilled to recognise the late 17th century staircase of Girona Cathedral, the Romanesque Monastery of Sant Pere de Galligants, or the steep staircase at Pujada de Sant Domènec. You have to explore the city for yourself and immerse yourself in the mediaeval sites that television has made world-famous. 📍

CATALUNYA FILM COMMISSION

From spectacular landscapes to intimate interiors. It is all here, in a country from which you can travel to the past or house a terrifying fiction.

There is nearly a whole world in Catalonia, a small territory just 33,000 square kilometres in size. The fact is that on a trip around the Catalan urban and rural landscapes, an audiovisual professional could recreate almost any fiction: from a scene in a cosmopolitan city to a film based on mediaeval times or the early 20th century. On top of that, this area is sunny approximately three hundred days a year, making Catalonia the ideal set for locations in films, television productions, and publicity films.

4.000
PRODUCTIONS
WERE FILMED
IN CATALUNYA
IN 2016 ALONE

FILMING OF
SUMMER
1993 AND
BARCELONA,
WINTER NIGHT.



© CATALUNYA FILM COMMISSION

The **Catalunya Film Commission** is the organisation responsible for simplifying the steps needed to get the appropriate filming licence. This commission also offers exhaustive information on the rules and regulations that teams working in Catalonia need to keep in mind. The office works as an intermediary between the teams in the pertinent authorities.

A large transparent and futuristic industrial warehouse, a splendid castle on a riverbank, a mysterious mountain landscape: These are just some of the locations mentioned in the catalogue of the **Catalunya Film Commission**. The same office provides information on the Catalan companies willing to offer their services to the production teams: from stuntmen in special effects to catering companies, in addition to communication agencies, distributors, and companies for the rental of all kinds of vehicles. 📍



© GZ

GAME OF THRONES TOUR

The fans of *Game of Thrones* have the chance to make a segway tour of some of the filming locations from the sixth season of the famous HBO series. The company Gironaway offers a tour of the streets of the old quarter on this two-wheeled vehicle so that you can see locations such as the walk of shame first-hand. You will be able to imagine Queen Margaery coming down the stairs of the Great Sept of Baelor (Girona Cathedral), the place where Arya appears as a blind beggar, or the library in Oldtown, the centre of knowledge for the Grand Maesters of Westeros where Sam has gone to study.

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📍 For more information www.gironaway.com



© GIRONAWAY

DESIGN, FASHION AND CRAFTS PRODUCTS WITH IDENTITY

Turning on a lamp, using an ashtray, wearing a T-shirt: people around the world are unwittingly in contact with Catalan products on a day-to-day basis.

Original handicrafts, books on the Catalan culture, and local food and wine: A family of tourists that has just gone into the Palau Moja 'The Catalan Heritage House' (palaumoja.com) wants to buy many good gifts that reflect the talent of those who have created them.

This talent is evident in the area's **handicrafts, design, and fashion**. In the late 19th century, organisations and associations of professionals devoted to promoting ap-



THE MUSEU
DEL DISSENY
IN BARCELONA.



© JOAN CORTADELLS. GZ

plied arts appeared in Catalonia. Today the ADI-FAD (Association of Industrial Designers-Promotion of Decorative Arts) is the direct descendant of these associations, and is an active agent in Catalan cultural life.

DESIGN IN CUISINE

With this legacy, Catalonia has given birth to, and welcomed great designers in the field of industrial or graphic design, such as André Ricard (Copenhaguen ashtray), Miquel Milà with his TMC lamp, as well as Oscar Tusquets, Javier Mariscal, Peret, Enric Satué and Curro Claret. Catalan companies are well aware of the importance of design. One of these companies is Lekué, which has revolutionised the world's kitchens with its colourful silicone designs.

The importance of design in Catalonia is addressed by the avant-garde **Disseny Hub Barcelona**, a building devoted to promoting this discipline, which houses the Museu del Disseny. 9

EXPLOSION OF DESIGN IN CATALONIA

Design was already there, but it spread throughout the territory after entering a bar that would change everything. Today, we wear it to weddings or in the kitchen.



© FERRAN SENDRA. GZ

Yes, it is a stool, but nobody had ever seen anything like it before. Called Frenesí, it was a creation of the Grup Transatlàntic. The design boom had reached the bars and shops of Catalonia. These were different times, but in the land of Gaudí, Miró, and Tàpies, visual creation is tradition. Following in the footsteps of these **design** greats are designers like Javier Mariscal, Nani Marquina, Antoni Arola, and more recently Martín Azúa and the Lagranja Design studio, among others. Without forget-

THE WORLD
NUPTIAL
DESIGNER
ROSA CLARÀ.

DISPLAY
OF LEKUÉ
PRODUCTS.



© GZ

ting the company Lekué, a world benchmark in kitchen silicone utensils.

Creativity in design has its counterpart in **fashion**. Catalonia has produced big-name fashion designers like Antonio Miró, Josep Abril, Sita Murt, and the highly regarded Custo Dalmau. For years, the designs of Txell Miras have been catching our attention. There are many more. They meet twice a year at the **080 Barcelona Fashion**, a catwalk for the promotion of Catalan fashion, including great companies like Punto Blanco.

Catalonia is also the epicentre of **bridal fashion**. Pronovias was a small shop in 1922 and is now a world leader. And names like Rosa Clarà, Teresa Helbig, and Ailanto also participate in **Barcelona Bridal Week**, one of the outstanding events of bridal fashion.

Both fashion footwear and sport footwear are represented by firms like Mates, founded in 1947, or Munich, created in 1939, which sells in Europe and also Japan. Catalan **jewellery design** is also **internationally recognised**. The company Tous, founded in the 1920s, sells its 'bears' (among other things) in more than 40 countries. 9

THE GREAT MARKET

Catalonia has a long commercial history: it is a melting pot of shops with tempting markets.



© DANNY CAMINAL. GZ

In Barcelona, strolling down the Passeig de Gràcia is like visiting a catalogue of **luxury stores**, with everything from Prada to Stella McCartney and Louis Vuitton (*barcelonapaseodegracia.com*). Equally full of all kinds of products, from fashion to kitchen utensils, is the Avinguda Diagonal, which crosses the top of the Passeig de Gràcia. And near the sea, below Plaça de Catalunya, in the old quarter and Born district, there are **small charming shops** run by independent designers, and stores like Artesania Catalana on Banys Nous street, a showcase of artisanal handicrafts.

A STORE ON PASSEIG DE GRÀCIA.

AROUND
200
STORES,
MANY
LUXURY, ARE
LOCATED ON
THE PASSEIG
DE GRÀCIA

There are structured **commercial hubs** in other Catalan cities too. In Lleida, for example, shops are grouped together on eight streets in the city centre, which together can meet all of your needs. The same strategy is followed by the retailers in the centre of **Reus**, who are gathered on the so-called Eix Comercial Prim-Sunyer, which is formed by two long avenues full of interesting stores and just a ten-minute walk from very interesting modernista buildings. The town of **Igualada** is another commercial benchmark, particularly in the textile sector. 📍

PALO ALTO AND OTHER MARKETS

Shopping in a market is a global experience. These combine music, gastronomy and trade. Who can resist?



© CARLOS MONTANYES. GZ

Poblenou, a district full of old factories, many turned into new projects, in the first weekend of each month houses the **Palo Alto Market**, with 3,500 square metres to shop, eat and listen to music.

The **Slow Food** group offers a market with quality seasonal products respectful of the environment. On Saturdays, they open in the Parc de les Tres Xemeneies in Barcelona, and on the first Saturday of each month in the Retiro gardens in Sitges.

In Barcelona, some proposals focus on the sale and exchange of second-hand products. In the Raval district, once a month there is the **Flea Market**. And on the Moll de la Fusta and at Estació de França, **Lost&Found**.

On the Costa Brava, an ancient country house in August is the venue of **White Summer**, a market festival.

Especially successful is the experience of **REC** in Igualada (Paisatges Barcelona), which twice a year for four days transforms an old industrial district into a series of ephemeral stores. It has a gastronomic offer, as well as live music and DJs. 📍

THE
LOST&FOUND
MARKET AT THE
ESTACIÓ DE
FRANÇA.

TRADES WITH HISTORY

Reus, as well as a modernist city, also stands out for its quality and proximity commercial activity. How many historic stores can a city have? The answer is given on guided tours of Reus's centenary trades, which preserve historic items as well as many memories and anecdotes. This is a trip in time and to the interior of these stores, where the owners themselves will explain their experiences, and also those of the earlier generations behind the counter. The experience includes a tasting of vermouth and hazelnuts from Reus. Available all year, except for the summer, with bookings. The tour is offered in Catalan, Spanish and English.

EVERYTHING IN THE SAME PLACE

Catalonia also has large stores and shopping centres, which are occasionally located in large cities, as well as in areas close to urban centres. Located just a few kilometres from the city of Barcelona and providing their own bus service, outlets have appeared like La Roca Village and Viladecans The Style Outlets, with stores of leading brands with sales all year round, providing a different shopping experience.



© GZ

.....
i For more information www.larocavillage.com

6.000
VISITORS A DAY
ARE RECEIVED
BY THE PALO
ALTO MARKET

.....
i For more
information
www.latevaruta.com



© MIGUEL RAURICH

CREATIVE TOURISM: DO IT YOURSELF

Learn the secrets of wine, make pottery, cook like a local chef and even build human towers! The best way to get to know a place is to experience it.



© MARC CASTELLET



© CPTAP

In his studio in Vulpellac, next to la Bisbal d'Empordà (Costa Brava), the **master craftsman** spins his wheel. This time some tourists have come to visit, including foreigners. They are seeking to understand and explore the lands they are visiting, and are particularly eager to make direct contact with an inhabitant of the area. Someone who can tell them how a product is made. Like this jug taking shape in the potter's hands.

A CERAMIC
WORKSHOP.

DIRECT EXPERIENCE

This is just one example of what is known as **creative tourism**, a trend that aims to get visitors involved in the territory and, rather than being a mere spectator, become immersed in the culture.

After the tangible heritage of an area has been discovered, that is, its monuments and scenery, its intangible heritage can be too.

And this trend has certainly arrived in Catalonia. On the ground floors of a building hidden in

the Barcelona Gothic quarter, a window shows a kitchen where people work in their still pristine white aprons. Is it a restaurant kitchen? No. There isn't a chef in sight, which means it's obviously not a restaurant kitchen. These people are preparing a typically Catalan recipe. They might even have gone with a guide to buy the ingredients at the market. They will return home knowing how to make a *trinxat* of cabbage and potato, or maybe a stew, two of the typical dishes of the local cuisine (bcnkitchen.com).

In the north of Catalonia, in the Empordà, visitors take part in the activities of the **Vívid festival**. This takes place in April and invites participants to partake in a **wine experience**. They will tell them about the territory and the nature of the wines, take them to the vineyards, and explain how the wines are made. Then they can try the wines and learn to distinguish each one's delicate notes. ♡

TREADING
GRAPES TO
GET MUST.

VISIT EMPORDANET

Time seems to stand still halfway between the city of Girona and the coastal towns of the Costa Brava. This is the Empordà in all of its glory, where visitors can come to partake in traditional, artisanal, and creative activities, like visiting the 11th-century Can Solivera olive grove and country home, and tasting their olive oil, or participating in a pottery workshop in Figueras i Fells, which specialises in large pots. Visitors can also tour Recuits Nuri to see the production of cloth *recuit* and sample this soft and fresh cheese which is a traditional food from the Empordà region and which is an ingredient in many recipes that pair well with the fantastic wines of the Empordà Denomination of Origin.

PAINT NITES AT THE PALAU MOJA

An evening actively combining creativity and good conversation. Have a glass of wine and create in painting. You will return home with a product from your hands, which is sure to surprise you. Meet your friends and enjoy this fantastic event on the last Thursday of each month. You don't have to be an artist to be creative, it doesn't matter whether you have ever held a brush: to do this activity you don't need any experience, just a desire to have a good time. There must be a reason why the social networks are flooded with photos of the Paint Nites. Accessible activity, available all year in Catalan and Spanish.

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i For more information www.palaumoja.com



© PALAU MOJA



© RUBEN GARCÍA

GASTRONOMY AND OENOLOGY

A COUNTRY TO BE SAVOURED

The place where the simple and delicious tomato-rubbed bread was born is also the cradle of the most sophisticated and innovative cuisines. To explore its geography is to discover a world of flavours.

Catalan cuisine is influenced by its lands, history, and culture. Trying and enjoying the products of a country brings us closer to its traditions and customs. Experiencing Catalonia means diving in the sea, discovering the villages and countryside, interacting with nature, and more. From north to south and from east to west, Catalonia is a country to be savoured.

The diversity of Catalonia's landscapes results in the availability of a wide variety of ingredients: excellent fish and shellfish,



INGREDIENTS
FOR MAKING
TOMATO-RUBBED
BREAD.

fruit, exquisite vegetables, top-quality meats, and drinking water that deserve international recognition. In addition to all of these products, there is a real **tradition of Catalan cuisine**, with remarkable leading products already famous in mediaeval times. In the final years of the 20th century, the **Catalan chefs** gave added value to the raw ingredients and achieved recognition around the planet. The Roca brothers, Ferran Adrià, and Carme Ruscalleda are highly-regarded names in the universe of **haute cuisine**.

The wines deserve their own chapter, as Catalonia started out as an international supplier of wines in Roman times. Today, Priorat wine is served in the best glasses on the planet and following the example of the pioneers, the Catalan producers have wagered on the quality and promotion of their products. ♡



© PIERRE PONS

FOOD AND DRINK IN CATALONIA

The objective: a Catalan cuisine that respects its roots and is innovative. Restaurants with Michelin stars, hotels, and collectives watch over it.



© ALBERT BELTRAN. GZ

From the Pyrenees to the Delta de l'Ebre, and from the Costa Brava and Barcelona to the western lands, Catalan cuisine is cared for and highly valued. The **Marca Cuina Catalana (MCC)** project arose to guarantee the continuity of the cuisine and in 2006 published the *Corpus de la Cuina Catalana*, which includes more than 1,000 recipes, many made with local and seasonal goods. The establishments of the Cuina Catalana Brand incorporate products regulated by specific distinctions (Designation of Origin, Protected Geographic Indication, Guaranteed Gastronomic Speciality, etc.).

The different **Catalan cuisine groups** also act as protectors of the roots of their gastronomy, thanks to the constant work of the restaurateurs, who are active agents of this heritage. There are now around twenty groups that represent the variety of culinary styles around the whole country. They organise events to promote local ingredients, with rice from the Delta de l'Ebre, truffles, beans from Collsacabra, and pork as the main bases, and wager on the recovery and protection

CARME
RUSCALLEDA,
CHEF OF THE
SANT PAU
RESTAURANT,
AND HER SON,
ALSO CHEF,
RAÚL BALAM.

of the local product and innovation.

The **Slow Food** group, which was founded to find a remedy for the problems derived from 'fast food', aims to promote the philosophy of eating seasonal and local products.

Over 45 gastronomic hotels in Catalonia also promote an authentic, traditional, and creative Catalan gastronomy.

Fifty-five restaurants in Catalonia have a total of 65 Michelin stars, a good sign of the course Catalan cuisine has taken in recent decades. ♡

RICE PADDIES
ON THE DELTA
DE L'EBRE.



© ORIOL LLUJÓ

TAKING PART. MUCH MORE THAN JUST EATING!

*Harvest the grapes, pick olives,
or even go fishing with the fishermen.
These are some ways to actively
learn about Catalan cuisine.*

These are just some of the activities you can do in order to discover Catalan cuisine in a way that is much more active than simply dining at a good restaurant or visiting a market. Seek adventure.

HAVE FUN COOKING

If you are in Barcelona, take a course with bcnKitchen, where you will learn to cook in good company while enjoying a glass of wine. You will learn the secrets of shellfish paella, visit a market to learn to shop better, enjoy the prepared dishes, and take home recipes to make them whenever you want.

For more information www.bcnkitchen.com

TOMATO-RUBBED BREAD

This is a traditional Catalan dish that the world associates with Catalan gastronomy. It is eaten all the time, is cheap and easy to make. You just need rustic bread, ripe tomatoes, extra virgin olive oil, and salt. Rub the tomato on a slice of bread, sprinkle the bread with a touch of salt and a dash of olive oil. By itself or with toppings, it's delicious!

A COOKING
CLASS IS A
MEMORABLE
EXPERIENCE.



© LLUIS CATALA

OLIVE OIL EXPERIENCE

This tour will show you the different phases of production for Ventalló olive oil, in the Alt Empordà. You can also try two extra virgin olive oils and choose between a menu of km 0 products or dine at the La Bassa restaurant.

For more information www.oliventallo.com

GASTRONOMIC GETAWAYS

Catalonia is a small country, but all of its landscapes conceal flavours, and all of its recipes hold traditions. Get away from Barcelona for a few hours with Aborigens, and enjoy a trip to the roots of Catalan. All food artisans work honestly, and stay faithful to a rural tradition that refuses to disappear.

For more information www.aborigensbarcelona.com



© GEMMA MIRALDA

A FOOD AND WINE TASTING TOUR

The Montblanc Tourist Office organises tours of this mediaeval town and the route takes us to establishments to try the typical local products of the region's gastronomy, accompanied by a DO Conca de Barberà wine tasting.

For more information www.montblancmedieval.cat

WINE TASTING
IN EL PENEDÈS.

TRYING WINES AND MAKING FRIENDS

A degustation dinner in the historic centre of Barcelona and a group Catalan DO wine tasting. The sommelier of the Hotel Barcelona Catedral runs this activity that encourages dialogue and interaction.

For more information www.barcelonacatedral.com



© MARC RIPOL

BARCELONA BEER FESTIVAL

This festival has more than 350 draught beers to try. There are both local craft brewers and a large selection of international beers. Special mention is made of other beer festivals around the world. The last edition of this festival in March 2017 was an overwhelming success. **For more information** www.barcelonabeerfestival.com

WELCOME TO MY FARM

Welcome to the countryside! This is what is proclaimed by farmers and stock breeders around Catalonia, who open their doors for a few days every June to visitors who want to discover the secrets of life in the country, and meet those who ensure that our fridges are stocked with tasty products.

For more information benvingutsapages.cat

FISHING TOURISM

Fish tastes better if you catch it yourself. In Cambrils, different packages are offered, allowing you to feel the sensations that make fishing such a tough but exciting profession. During this activity, you will experience what it's like to go out to sea with a crew, and will have a first-hand experience fishing on the high seas.

For more information www.pescaturismecambrils.com

GASTRONOMIC MUSEUMS

A universe for discovering the products, the preparations, and the history of Catalan cuisine.

BARCELONA

BARCELONA
MUSEU DE LA XOCOLATA
www.museuxocolata.cat
Product: chocolate.

COSTA BARCELONA

SANT SADURNÍ D'ANOIA
CIC FASSINA CENTRE D'INTERPRETACIÓ DEL CAVA
www.turismesantsadumi.com
Product: cava.

VILAFRANCA DEL PENEDÈS
VINSEUM
www.vinseum.cat
Product: wine.

COSTA BRAVA

L'ESCALA
MUSEU DE L'ANXOVA I DE LA SAL
www.visitlescala.com
Product: anchovy.

TORRENT
MUSEU DE LA CONFITURA
www.museuconfitura.com
Product: jam.

PALAMÓS
MUSEU DE LA PESCA
www.museudelapesca.org
Product: fish.

COSTA DAURADA

RIUDECANYES
CENTRE D'INTERPRETACIÓ DELS FRUITS DEL PAISATGE
www.cooperativariudecanyes.com
Products: hazelnuts and olives.

VANDELLÒS
CENTRE D'INTERPRETACIÓ DE L'OLI DE LA VALL DE LLORS
www.hospitalet-valldellors.cat
Product: oil.

CALAFELL
LA CONFRARIA. CENTRE D'INTERPRETACIÓ DEL PESCADOR
www.turisme.calafell.cat
Product: seafood.

REUS
EL MUSEU DEL VERMUT
www.museudelvermut.com
Product: vermouth.



PAISATGES BARCELONA

SANT FRUITÓS DE BAGES
MÓN SANT BENET-FUNDACIÓ ALÍCIA
www.alicia.cat
Product: catalan cuisine.

CARDONA
PARC CULTURAL DE LA MUNTANYA DE LA SAL
www.cardonaturisme.cat
Product: salt.

PIRINEUS

TUIXENT
MUSEU DE LES TREMENTINAIRES
www.trementinaires.org
Products: traditional remedies.

TERRES DE L'EBRE
EL PERELLÓ
CENTRE D'INTERPRETACIÓ APÍCOLA MÚRIA
www.melmuria.com
Product: honey.

DELTEBRE
MUSEU DE L'ARRÒS MOLÍ DE RAFALET
www.moliderafelet.com
Product: rice.

TERRES DE LLEIDA
AGRAMUNT
MUSEU DEL TORRÓ I LA XOCOLATA
www.vicens.com
Product: nougat. 📍

© CHOPO
MUSEU DE LA PESCA IN
PALAMÓS,
COSTA BRAVA.

MARKETS

Fresh products from the markets are a sign of the gastronomic wealth of Catalonia. A meeting place to stroll, shop, and chat.



© NANO CAÑAS
THE BOQUERIA MARKET,
ON THE RAMBLA.

BOQUERIA MARKET

From Mondays to Saturdays
Located on the Rambla, this was the first municipal market (1840). With thousands of visitors each year, it is one of the most famous markets in the world, where you can try *plattillos*.

SANTA CATERINA MARKET

From Mondays to Saturdays
This market reopened in 2005 after being renovated by the architects Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue. Its spectacular colourful roof is a sign of what we will find inside.

COSTA BARCELONA

VILANOVA I LA GELTRÚ

CENTRAL MARKET

From Mondays to Saturdays
A good place to buy high quality fish and shellfish.

COSTA BRAVA

TORROELLA DE MONTGRÍ MARKET

Mondays
This market has a large variety of stands, especially in the summer months.

COSTA DAURADA

TARRAGONA

BONAVISTA MARKET

Sundays
The largest market in the region. It is located in the district that gives it its name and serves fresh food and all kinds of products.

PAISATGES BARCELONA

VIC MARKET

Tuesdays and Saturdays
This is one of the prettiest markets in Catalonia. Since the 11th century it has maintained its location in the great market square. With stands with products of the land, flowers, craftwork, and poultry.

PIRINEUS

PUIGCERDÀ MARKET

Sundays
Local products and a meeting place for the inhabitants of La Cerdanya.

MERCAT D'OLOT

Mondays
More than 170 stands in the town centre.

TERRES DE L'EBRE

TORTOSA MARKET

From Mondays to Saturdays
The building was constructed by Joan Torras, the 'Catalan Eiffel', by the Ebre river.

SANT CARLES DE LA RÀPITA

FISH AUCTION
From Mondays to Fridays.
First thing in the afternoon, we can watch the fish auction from an overlooking gallery.

TERRES DE LLEIDA

BALAGUER MARKET

Saturdays
This market has more than 130 stalls and 800 years of history. 📍

EXPERIENCE **CATALONIA**





TEN WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE CULTURE OF CATALONIA

Touch the sky with your hand, experience a rain of fire, listen to the soundtrack of modernity... These are some ways to discover Catalonia.

Catalonia provides visitors with limitless possibilities that cater to all five senses. The diversity and wealth of Catalonia allows you to try curds and honey recently made in the mountains, spend a day in a Cistercian monastery, take part in a festival of fire and fireworks in a street parade, or to discover the works of world-famous artists like Gaudi, Dalí, Jujol, and Guinovart. Visiting their creations will take you back to another time.

Catalonia is home to various buildings that are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.



These sites combine elements of the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque styles, scenes of great beauty, traditional festivals that are a clear sign of identity and a gastronomy that captivates diners with its local products and that it pairs perfectly with wines and cavas of great tradition.

At <http://experience.catalunya.com>, you will find a thousand experiences to add to the ten we propose here.

- 1 MAKE A HUMAN TOWER.**
Watching the *colles castelleres* build their human towers is quite a spectacle. The boldest visitors can even take part.
- 2 DANCE A SARDANA**
A symbol of brotherhood, this dance requires participants to hold hands and dance in a circle. Shall we dance?
- 3 PARTICIPATE IN A CORREFOC**
Gunpowder is essential in 'fire parades', a rain of sparks for full enjoyment.

CASTLE DISPLAY OF THE 'COLLA' ELS XIQUETS DE VALLS.

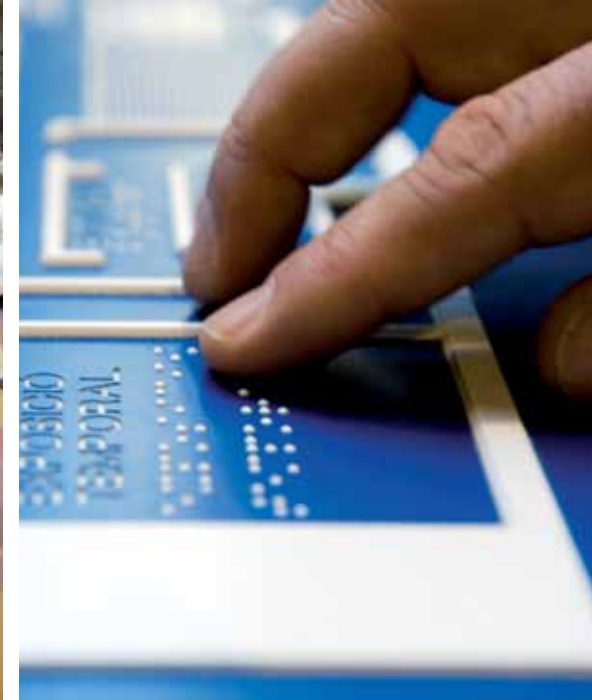
- 4 VISIT A CHARMING VILLAGE**
Lose yourself on a stroll through a charming village in the mountains or near the sea. Discover magical places that can only be seen on foot.
- 5 DISCOVER BRILLIANCE**
Embrace the spirit of Gaudí, Dalí, Guinovart, Tàpies, or Miró by following their steps through the territory or visit Romanesque churches that have been declared World Heritage Sites.
- 6 LET YOUR CREATIVITY FLY**
Get your hands dirty by participating in a creative activity that allows you to experience all that the local towns have to offer.
- 7 EXPERIENCE THE DAY OF SANT JORDI**
The festival of Sant Jordi invites everyone to go out into the street to stroll and enjoy the atmosphere. Books and roses are given and received on this day.
- 8 GO TO A FESTIVAL**
Listen to music as it fills the air at a summer festival. Catalonia hosts various musical programmes with star performers.
- 9 TRY WINES AND CAVAS**
Make a toast at a modernist cooperative in the vineyards, or at the table of a good restaurant. Catalonia is a country of great wines, with 12 Denominations of Origin.
- 10 'PANTOMATEAR'**
Cheese and cured meats taste even better on a slice of bread with tomato, oil, and salt. This combination is truly delicious. ♡

ACCESSIBLE CULTURE REACH EVERYONE

Catalonia is one of the most accessible tourist destinations in Europe, with top-level cultural resources being consistently improved every day.



© INFOTUR



© GEMMA MIRALDA

Culture plays a key role in tourism. In Catalonia, culture has become the main attraction for many visitors. Catalonia therefore works to make Cultural Tourism Accessible to one and all. We are more and more aware that architectural and communicative barriers have to be eliminated so that everyone can enjoy quality holidays and free time.



ACCESSIBLE WORLD HERITAGE SITES

A large number of the locations classified as World Heritage Sites in Catalonia have made a concerted effort to become more accessible to people with disabilities or people who have impaired mobility. This includes the buildings of the modernista architect Antoni Gaudí.

ENJOY THE OPERA AND THEATRE

At the **Gran Teatre del Liceu**, some opera performances are provided with an audio

description service. All of the seats have a screen in front of them so that concertgoers may follow the storyline using subtitles in Catalan, Spanish, and English. On the stage, there is a large LED screen on which the subtitles are projected.

At the **Teatre Nacional de Catalunya** some performances are programmed with audio descriptions for people with visual impairments. A list of performances with this feature is updated each season on the website www.tnc.cat/ca/accessibilitat.

THE WAY OF SAINT JAMES: CATALONIA FOR ALL

This is a project which has been developed by the Catalan Tourist Board and has become an international standard for the successful implementation of accessibility solutions for people on cultural routes, including those with reduced mobility. At www.caminodesantiagoparatodos.com, all users

are offered information on accessible support, sign language for the hearing impaired, and is one of the first websites signed in three sign languages: Catalan Sign Language (LSC), Spanish Sign Language (LSE), and International Sign Language (SIS). The different stages of the Way of St James can also be downloaded to give information to all people on its cul-

ACCESSIBILITY
IN THE SAGRADA
FAMILIA AND
INFORMATION
IN BRAILLE
AT BARCELONA
MARITIME
MUSEUM.

tural and natural resources, on its history, traditions, interesting facts, etc. through Audio-Sign-Guides containing audio description for people with visual impairments in Catalan, Spanish, and English, sign language interpretation in Catalan, Spanish, and International Sign Languages and subtitles in Catalan, Spanish, and English. ♣

THE WORK OF ANTONI GAUDÍ

La Pedrera offers visitors a programme called La Pedrera Accesible, which has introduced sensorial resources in the museum itself and in the programme of cultural activities. Amongst other things, guided tours are offered in sign language, with audioguide transcription, induction loops for hearing aids, and tactile maps in high relief and Braille in the visitable areas of the floor of La Pedrera and models of the building. The visit is also accessible for wheelchair users.



© IMAGEN M.A.S

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i For more information lapedrera.com/es/un-espacio-accesible

WITH YOUR FAMILY UNLIMITED ADVENTURES

*Who has a better time, adults or children?
It's impossible to know. On the beach, in the city or in the forest,
they can all go on an endless number of adventures.*

Is it a giant mushroom? That's what it looks like, and the children are fascinated by the view that appears before them while strolling in the **Poblet Forest** (Costa Daurada). In fact, mushrooms are painted on different trees. When you look at the trees from a certain angle, you can see them. Walking through this forest is one way, but by no means the only way, to explore natural scenery and the main cultural attractions in Catalonia with your children. Further to the north, in the area of **Sant Pere Pescador** (Costa Brava), adventure awaits in the water. You can kayak down part of the Fluvià river to watch the birds in the area. The marine vi-llage of **Es-tartit** (Costa Brava) for a few days, looks to the Illes Medes, waiting for the arrival of pirates and corsairs. The vi-llage transforms, there are shows in the street and lots of activities for families.



A WORKSHOP
AT THE MUSEU
DE XOCOLATA,
PIRATES AND
PRIVATEERS AT
THE ILLES
MEDES, AND A
STROLL AROUND
CAP DE CREUS.

At **Mon Natura Pirineus** (Pirineus), located at an altitude of 1,393 metres, you can see foxes and lynxes, discover the bears' habitat, watch vultures flying over our heads, or enjoy the galaxy from the astronomical observatory.

There are many family-friendly ways to visit, such as relaxing on the beach in the sun or playing water sports, exploring nature in the mountains, visiting an amusement park like Port Aventura, or participating in cultural experiences. Consider visiting the mines in **Cercs** or **Cardona** or immerse yourselves in the marine life of the **L'Aquàrium** of Barcelona. There is always a cultural activity nearby to complete the experience. In Catalonia, we have 25 certified family tourism destinations covering the most diverse and beautiful landscapes.

It is obvious that Catalonia is particularly well prepared for family experiences.

© ORIOL CLAVERA



© GZ



© GZ

PARC SAMÀ ROMANTIC GARDEN

Enjoy an ideal outing for the whole family. Visit the historic and romantic Parc Samà garden in Cambrils and travel back in history to the time of the indianos, the Catalans who made their fortune in Cuba, and learn about their trips there and back, which are addressed in a single space in which the cultures of the old and new worlds combine. Visiting Parc Samà with your family is a game in which you stroll, play, eat an afternoon snack, run, and learn in a labyrinth of animals, trees, water, bridges, and towers with a treasure map in your hand. The activity is offered throughout the year and is available in Catalan, Spanish, English, French, and Russian.

For more
information
parquesama.com

© PARC SAMÀ





© TONI VILCHES. GZ



© FRANCESC CASALS. GZ



© AGENCIA CATALANA DEL PATRIMONI CULTURAL

In addition to the activities already mentioned, the website catalunya.com offers a wide range of activities that can be filtered by territory, theme, and other criteria. You can even book activities on the page itself.

For example, you can discover the town of Valls, on the Costa Daurada, the cradle of the human towers and birthplace of the famous photographer Francesc Català Roca. You can do this in a way the whole family will enjoy by playing a game provided by aurigasc.com.

THEATRALISED TOURS FOR FAMILIES IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM OF EMPÚRIES THE CATALONIA HISTORY MUSEUM.

If the *trencadís* technique that Antoni Gaudí used in many of his works seems fascinating to you, go to Esplugues de Llobregat to watch the technique being implemented first-hand. This is an activity provided by the La Rajoleta Ceramic Museum (museus.esplugues.cat) to teach the general public about this special decorative discipline.

A safari in a museum? This is exactly the activity proposed by the Museum of Lleida. A game for all ages, in which the

animal “hunters” will have to use their memory to locate the beasts represented in the museum’s works of art. More information at museudelleida.cat/es.

DISCOVER THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF CATALONIA

The Catalan Agency of Cultural Heritage works specifically on family visits in order to make the message accessible to young children so that they can appreciate Catalonia’s cultural treasures from an

FAMILY ACTIVITY AT THE MHCAT IN VILABERTRAN, COSTA BRAVA.

early age. Among other activities, they suggest meetings with Mr Stone at different monuments of the Catalan geography. Mr. Stone travels around the world in search of mysterious and extraordinary places, accompanied by his notebook and suitcase. You can meet with him at the Monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes or Santes Creus or wherever his investigations take him.

Catalonia History Museum offers activities like ‘Pulling on the Thread of History’ (mhcat.cat/activitats2). And the Archaeology Museum of Empúries (Costa Brava), organises saturnian parties to celebrate winter, among other events. (mac.cat/Seus/Empuries/Activitats/). ♡

GAUDÍ EXHIBITION CENTRE

Located in the Pia Almoina, a mediaeval building adjoining the Roman wall and next to Barcelona Cathedral, the Gaudí Exhibition Centre is a museum dedicated to the modernista architect that cannot be missed by art lovers if they want to truly understand his work. There is a virtual reality activity in which the architect himself ‘comes back to life’ and interacts with visitors. The Centre also has a collection of pieces and models presented with holograms, audiovisual installations, and special scenographies.

The museum organises guided tours for groups on request.

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i For more information gaudiexhibitioncenter.com



© GZ

MÓN SANT BENET

An invitation for a journey to the past, on which to discover the history of the monastery of Sant Benet del Bages. By means of a museum assembly visitors will go into the life of the monastery, where the voices, the sounds of the daily activity and the images of the past appear between the thousand-year-old walls and turn this visit into a singular experience. This is a tour through the most emblematic spaces of the monastery, such as the cells of the Montserrat gallery. Activity accessible for the general public, offered all year round in Catalan, Spanish, French, and English.

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i For more information www.monstbenet.com



© MONT SANT BENET

TOURING TOWNS AND VILLAGES

ONE COUNTRY, A THOUSAND POSSIBILITIES

Boisterous and modern, tranquil and traditional: There is a side for every visitor, but it's best to enjoy them all.



© AJUNTAMENT DE TORTOSA

Labyrinthine streets with stone houses to the right and left, a castle that seems taken from a fairytale, a 13th century church, ivy climbing over walls and windows: Yes, the streets of **Peratallada** (Costa Brava) speak of a medieval Catalonia steeped in tradition. Are we really only a little over 100 kilometres from the **Torre Glòries**, the icon of the busy Barcelona of the 21st century? The essence of Catalonia is found in the little villages that preserve the legacy of thousands of years of rural life as well as the most modern cities. These are cities with an incredibly rich cultural life and provide the same comforts and services that can be found in any great metropolis today. These cities are connected to the rest of the world and wager on technology,



sustainability, and modern infrastructures, but continue to practice centuries-old traditions in the form of vibrant popular festivals. This occurs in Barcelona, but also in cities like **Tarragona**, **Lleida**, and **Girona**, where history and future are felt at the same time.

Bustling cities contrast with **peaceful villages** located a few kilometres away where cava is made and the wine is left to rest, where olives are picked to produce the culinary treasure of oil, and where pottery is produced with traditional techniques. These are the two sides of Catalonia, a diverse place that is constantly surprising its visitors. ♡

THE INHERITANCE OF HISTORY

Romans, Muslims, Jews... Visiting the cities with most character of Catalonia allows its multicultural history to be reviewed.

The scenery, the architecture, the local cuisine: A route through the cities and villages of Catalonia will show us that there are no boring locations here. However, some places stand above the rest.

This is the case of **Barcelona**. As the capital of Catalonia, it accumulates attractions. Not only is it an open and cosmopolitan city, but it also has a large network of museums and its streets are a catalogue of open-air architecture. **Girona** too, is a modern city, although behind its colourful

TORTOSA, ON
THE BANKS OF
THE RIVER EBRO.

houses overlooking the Onyar River is a history spanning centuries. This history is evident in the buildings of its 12th century Jewish quarter that is the best preserved in Europe.

Inland in **Lleida**, the city's Arab roots are visible. One of the buildings that defines the city is the castle of La Suda, which was historically the ancient Muslim Larida until the 12th century. The character of **Tarragona**, on the Costa Daurada, has different origins. Roman Tarraco, which was



an urban model for the Empire, is still visible. Its well preserved ruins receive more than 700,000 visits a year.

Other places have had an outstanding impact on the history of Catalonia, which has marked their character. **Reus**, the city where Gaudí was born, is synonymous with trade. During the 18th and 19th centuries, it was the second most important city in Catalonia.

Vic is one of the most important cities of the central area. It is famous for the portals of its Plaça Major, its Roman temple, and the Cathedral of Sant Pere, but also for the Living Music Market Festival, where the soundtrack of modernity plays each September. In central Catalonia, **Cardona** is home to an impressive mediaeval castle that speaks to us of wars, stages, and invasions, but also of geology, because it has famous salt mines that can be visited to a depth of 86 metres.

Who hasn't heard of Catalan cava? A large part is produced in the Penedès region, with its capital **Vilafranca**. Here, both cava and high-quality wine are produced. It is also an outstanding square in which to create a human tower.

And further to the south, by the river Ebre, **Tortosa** experienced prosperous times in the Renaissance. The town, which visitors pass on the way to the Delta de l'Ebre, has a rich architectural heritage that is worth exploring.

MODERNISTA
FESTIVAL IN
TERRASSA.

Terrassa is a living story of the Industrial Revolution in Catalonia, which can be seen in its modernista heritage. Visitors to the city in May will find the Modernista Fair. In March and April, visitors enjoy the internationally renowned Terrassa Jazz Festival. ♡

CONNECTED CITIES

The high-speed railway lines have brought the main Catalan capitals together so that today you can travel from Barcelona to Girona in 38 minutes (by motorway it takes around 80 minutes) and from Barcelona to Figueres, very close to the French frontier, in just 53. Similarly, from Barcelona you can get to the Camp de Tarragona station (between Tarragona and Reus) in just 33 minutes, and from here to Lleida in 26 minutes more. The high-speed railway now allows many people to move around Catalonia for work and leisure. These are just some examples of the ease with which travellers can get around Catalonia.

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 ⓘ For more
 information
www.avexperience.es



ENJOYING NATURE BEYOND THE COUNTRYSIDE

*Thick forests, high mountain lakes, towering peaks, sub-aquatic scenery...
What artistic and architectural gems stand out in the countryside?*

The seasons of the year look different on the Delta de l'Ebre. Fields full of water act as a mirror to reflect the flight of the birds. However, there are also fields of mud or fields with the early shoots of rice standing out from squares of land bathed by the waters of the Ebre. In the summer, rice shoots grow and change from a radiant green to another more toasted colour between July and September. Any time of year is good for



AIGÜESTORTES
I ESTANY DE
SANT MAURICI
NATIONAL
PARK WITH THE
ENCANTATS
PEAK IN THE
BACKGROUND.

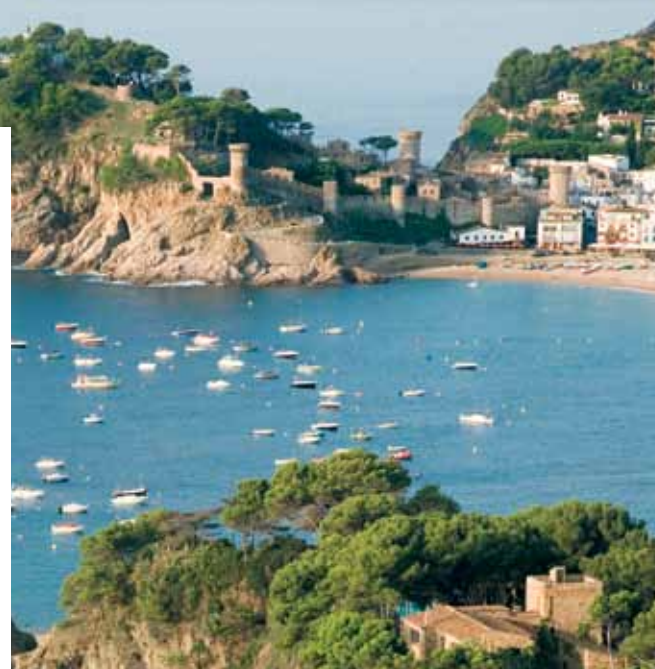


discovering the **Delta de l'Ebre, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve**. Beside the La Tanca-da lagoon, that favoured by the flamingos, is **Món Natura Delta**, an interpretation centre, and beside the L'Encanyissada lagoon, the Casa de Fusta, an ornithological museum next to an ancient hut of cane and mud. Beside the early rice fields, from **Sant Carles de la Ràpita**, las Casotes, a 17th-century building, is now a **Museu del Mar**.

Some of the most spectacular mountain scenery can be seen in the **Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park**, where the eight Romanesque churches and one hermitage declared UNESCO World Heritage stand over the Vall de Boí. And in the centre of the country is the **Montseny Biosphere Reserve**, another idyllic place for naturalists. ♡

SOURCES OF WISDOM

On foot, on wheels, or on horseback, the trails and paths of Catalonia travel through breathtakingly beautiful scenery and allow visitors to learn more about the country's cultural heritage.



© SERVICIOS EDITORIALES GEORAMA



© GEMMA MIRALDA

There is a large network of marked paths, either on Gran Recorrido (GR) routes, Pequeño Recorrido (PR) routes, or local paths (SL). A good example is the Patrol Route, or **Camí de Ronda**, which follows the coastline of the Costa Brava from Blanes to Portbou. Along the section of trail from Torroella de Montgrí to Palamós, which passes through Begur and Calella de Palafrugell, two Iberian treasures remain: el Castelletot, on a beach in Palamós, and the castle of Sant Sebastià de Guarda in Palafrugell. **For more information** www.camideronda.com

VIEW OF TOSSA FROM THE CAMÍ DE RONDA AND GREENWAY IN LES TERRES DE L'EBRE.

Another of the many possible options is to follow the so-called **Route of the Cathars** (Ruta dels Càtars) or the Path of Good Men (Camí dels Bons Homes) which refer to the members of this 13th century Catholic sect who were severely repressed by the church. The GR 107 retraces the route that the Cathar exiles followed from the castle of Montségur, in France, to the sanctuary of Queralt, overlooking the town of Berga (Pirineus). **For more information** www.camidelsbonshomes.com

Some cycling routes are difficult, but others are totally accessible. One of these is the **Via Verda del Baix Ebre** (Costa Daurada). If you are looking for an easy descent, a good starting point is Horta de Sant Joan, a fantastic village near the mountain of Santa Bàrbara and the convent of Sant Salvador. Picasso chose to spend a season living in this village. Horta de Sant Joan has a museum on the artist. Next, you will arrive in Pinell de Brai, which is known for having one of the 'wine cathedrals'. In the northern part of Catalonia, visitors can travel along the **Ruta del Carrilet**, which goes from

Olot to Girona and from Girona to Sant Feliu de Guíxols. **For more information** www.viasverdes.com

In the Alt Camp, Conca de Barberà, and Urgell local regions, the **Cistercian Route** leads hikers to three monumental cistercian monasteries: Santes Creus Monastery, Poblet Monastery, and Vallbona de les Monges Monastery. **For more information** www.larutadelcister.info

The **Way of Saint James**, known in Catalan as the Camí de Sant Jaume, crosses part of Catalonia and shares its path with the **Ignatian Way**, which goes in the opposite direction. In 1522, the recently converted Ignatius of Loyola started a pilgrimage. His goal was to reach Barcelona to embark for Jerusalem. The path goes through Lleida, Verdú, Igualada and Montserrat, before reaching Manresa and the cave where he lived for eight months.

For more information www.camidesantjaume.cat and caminoignaciano.org

THE IGNATIAN WAY SHARES ITS PATH WITH THE WAY OF SAINT JAMES. THIS TRAIL PASSES THROUGH MONTSERRAT.

THE MOST ACCESSIBLE WAY OF SAINT JAMES

The Way of Saint James in Catalonia starts at Sant Pere de Rodes, and follows a route that passes through Montserrat and reaches Alcarràs, where it goes into Aragon. The purpose of the 'Way of Saint James for everyone' project is to make the route accessible to all, regardless of their age, background, or level of fitness. Not all of the barriers could be eliminated in one fell swoop, but visitors can get a compass to avoid them and words can be used as a brush to paint scenes for those who cannot see them. Visitors can ensure that these words don't interrupt the peace and quiet of the walkers, who follow in the footsteps of those who came before them as they travel to Santiago de Compostela.

i For more information camidesantjaume-peratothom.cat/



© MARC CASTELLET



© MARIANO CEBOLLA

CULTURAL GETAWAYS SECRETS TO DISCOVER

By train, car, motorcycle or motor home, Catalonia's infrastructure bring us comfortably to our destination. All we have to do is to choose a route.



© INFOTUR



© INFOTUR

The sun is about to set behind the Montsià hills (Terres de l'Ebre). You feel a light breeze and see dozens of kitesurfing kites that blend into the red sunset tones of the evening sky. The motorhome is parked on the Barra del Trabucador, a six-kilometre strip of sandy beach connecting the Delta de l'Ebre to the Punta de la Banya. You cannot miss the chance to stop to cool



FLAMINGOS
IN THE DELTA
DE L'EBRE.



© MARIANO CEBOLLA

your feet in the temperate waters of the Badia dels Alfacs after visiting the Món Natura Delta interpretation centre just a few minutes away. It is a privilege to have reached the beach with the motorhome. Tomorrow, the journey continues, as you visit the Gandesa wine cooperative, the work of the modernist architect Cèsar Martinell and later, take a stroll through the old village of Corbera d'Ebre, which suffered the bloody consequences of the Spanish Civil War.

During a week-long trip through the territory, you will cross the Ebro river on the Pas d'en Barca, a manual ferry that disembarks from the foot of the Templar Castle of Miravet. There will be few days to discover all of the beauty that Catalonia has to offer. New routes will have to be planned, because there are so many stops worth making!

SIX ROUTES TO EXPERIENCE CATALONIA

Driving around Catalonia is easy. The network of roads takes you everywhere. What's more, the journey in and of itself can be as beautiful as the destination, with impressive natural scenery to enjoy, impressive monuments to visit, culinary and viticultural experiences to broaden your understanding of the environment, and

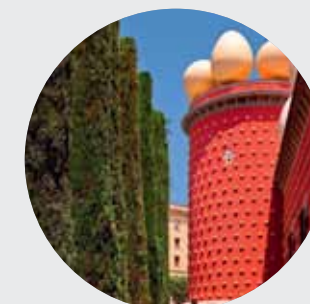
SANTA EULÀLIA
D'ERILL LA VALL
AND A ROAD
WITH THE
PEDRAFORCA
MOUNTAIN IN THE
BACKGROUND.

popular festivals that allow you to participate in Catalan traditions. Travelling by car gives you the chance to stop a moment for a photo, stretch your legs and, as if by chance, discover a mediaeval village, a craft fair, or a concert in the hills. 📍

CATALUNYA BUS TURÍSTIC

If you are in Barcelona and want to stop at various sites in Catalonia but don't have a vehicle, hop on a tourist bus. They are extremely comfortable, and your trip will include explanations provided by professional guides. There are different routes: to the monastery of Montserrat, to Figueres to take a look at the work of Dalí, to Girona, or a tour of the Pyrenees. Service available for private à la carte tours.

For more information www.catalunyabusturistic.com



© LLUIS CARRO

SIX ROUTES TO EXPERIENCE CATALONIA

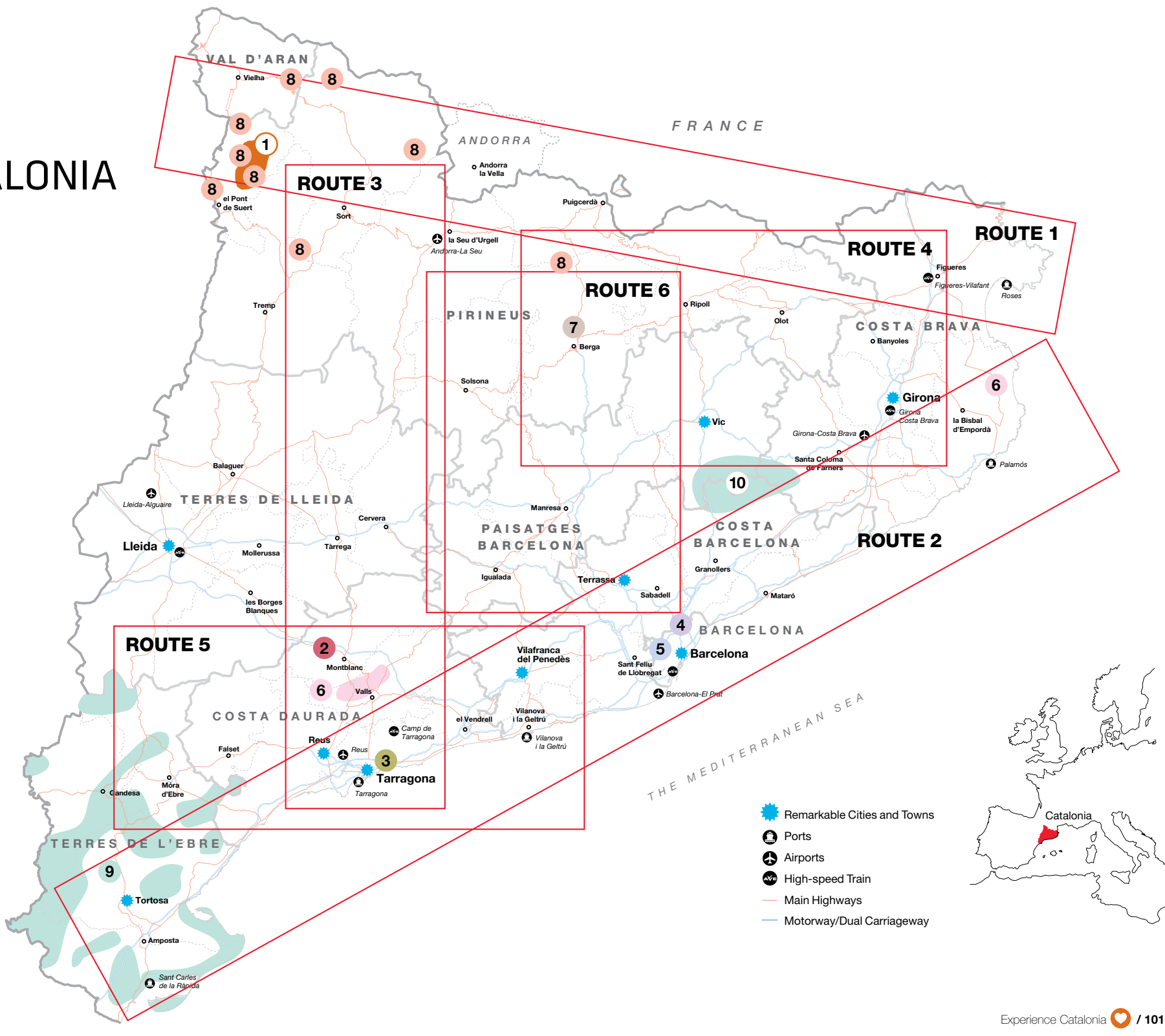
Follow six routes to the cultural icons of Catalonia and enjoy everything the journey has to offer. Discover Catalonia's rich heritage.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- 1 Romanesque churches of the Vall de Boi
- 2 Poblet Monastery
- 3 Archaeological Ensemble of Tàrraco
- 4 Works of Antoni Gaudí
- 5 Palau de la Música Catalana and Hospital de Sant Pau
- 6 Rock Art of the Mediterranean Basin
- 7 Patum of Berga
- 8 Summer Solstice Fire Festivals in the Pyrenees
- 9 Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve
- 10 Montseny Biosphere Reserve

Cultural Experiences En Route

- ROUTE 1 The Pyrenees, from the Peaks to the Sea
- ROUTE 2 Following the Mediterranean Coast
- ROUTE 3 Inland Secrets
- ROUTE 4 Eastward from the Coast
- ROUTE 5 Following the footprints of culture
- ROUTE 6 From Barcelona to the Pyrenees





ROUTE 1

THE PYRENEES, FROM THE PEAKS TO THE SEA

The Pyrenees are a universe in themselves. This trip from the Val d'Aran to the sea will prove it to travellers.



© FRANCESC TUR

The starting point of this route is the **Val d'Aran**, where 30% of the land is above 2,000 metres and where picture postcard villages with impressive slate roofs are nestled in the countryside at the foot of snowcapped mountains. From this point, we have to make our way towards the **Vall de Boí**, where there is a high concentration of unique and exceptional architectural heritage.

THE VILLAGE OF UNHA IN THE VAL D'ARAN AND A VIEW OF THE PORTALS OF THE MONASTERY OF RIPOLL.



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

The journey continues through the Pallars Sobirà region, following the wild waters of the Noguera Pallaresa River, famous for its adventure sports. From here the route heads toward **Seu d'Urgell**, the location of the Santa Maria d'Urgell bishopric and Cathedral, the only Romanesque cathedral in Catalonia. The next stop is Ripoll, with one of the country's architectural icons, the Romanesque portals of the monastery of **Santa Maria de Ripoll**, dating back to the 12th century. La Garrotxa, with access via the Capsacosta tunnels, gives way to the **La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park**, a protected area with more than forty craters surrounded by vegetation. The final destination of this route, which leads us to the sharp coastline of the **Costa Brava**, is the **Empordà**, the place that inspired the surrealist artist **Salvador Dalí**. In the town of Figueres, you can visit the Dalí Theatre-Museum, where part of his work is displayed. ♡



ROUTE 2

FOLLOWING THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST

More than 500 kilometres of Mediterranean coast await to delight visitors.



© MIGUEL ÁNGEL ÁLVAREZ

The trip starts in southern Catalonia, in **Ulldecona**, a town a few kilometres from the coast with the **Abrics de l'Ermida** rock art, a set of thirteen paintings which have been declared UNESCO World Heritage. From this point, the route goes on to the **Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park**, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

The next stop offers visitors a cultural route: the **Genius Route** (elpaisatgedelsgenis.cat), a journey that tours the places from which Antoni Gaudí, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso and Pau Casals drew inspiration in producing their own timeless pieces. A little under fifteen minutes away is the former capital of the Roman Empire in Hispania, **Tarraco**, which today is the city of Tarragona. Worthy of special attention are the amphitheatre, the circus, and the walls along with other ruins that form the ensemble declared UNESCO World Heritage. From here the route goes on to **Tamarit**, which is crowned by a castle. We con-

TAMARIT CASTLE ON THE BEACH.

tinue to the Garraf hills and **Sitges**, another emblematic town, a cradle of Modernisme and of great cultural effervescence. Long beaches stretch northwards to past the Delta del Llobregat, the city of Barcelona and the Maresme region with its pretty seaside villages. After Tordera we come to the **Costa Brava**, where the mountains and the sea share the coastline and small coves begin to appear. Palamós, Begur, and Sant Martí d'Empúries are very beautiful enclaves that are worth a visit. The inland Pals and Peratallada are too. The route returns to the coast, leaving the **Aiguamolls de l'Empordà** on one side, and continuing on to Llançà and Portbou, the last village on the Costa Brava before France. ♡



© PCTAR. GZ

ROUTE 3 INLAND SECRETS

Catalonia is home to many must-see sites that all tourists should mention in their travel journals.

There are places that are special, unforgettable, of great beauty and cultural value, places recognised worldwide. The church of **Sant Climent de Taüll** is one such place. It shines with the splendour it had in the 12th century and inside, every hour, a spectacular mapping is projected to recreate the original Pantocrator that decorated the place. The next stop on this route is Pont de

MAPPING IN
SANT CLIMENT
DE TAÜLL
AND THE SEU
VELLA IN LLEIDA.

Suert, where you can visit the **Museu d'Art Sacre de la Ribagorça**. In la Pobla de Segur, there is an activity that will force you to get out of the car and into another vehicle. The Tren dels Llacs is a train with a restored locomotive engine that travels along a panoramic route, giving visitors beautiful views of Montsec.

The next stop on this route is Lleida, where visitors can explore the Seu Vella, a religious building that was built in the twelfth century on the grounds of an ancient mosque. The route gives travellers the opportunity to relax of the **DOQ Priorat**, **DO Montsant**, and **DO Conca de Barberà**. This last location is the site of the mediaeval town of **Montblanc** with its fourteenth century walled complex. From here the route leads to **Reus**, a sanctuary for modernista architecture of the **Costa Daurada**, for a taste along its traditional vermouth. The journey ends in **Tarragona** with its Roman ruins. ♡



© RAMON GABRIEL



© SERVICIOS EDITORIALES GEORAMA

ROUTE 4 EASTWARD FROM THE COAST

Following the sun, we will delve into Catalonia's secrets.

This route starts in the **Gavarres** hills. A point where it is possible to enjoy prehistoric remains with various **dolmens** and megalithic funeral constructions. The roads now lead to **Sant Hilari Sacalm**, a town renowned for its waters with medicinal mineral properties and its **spas**. The trip goes on to **Espinelves**, a village which each year holds a monumental fir tree fair. Now on the way to the **Vall d'en Bas**, the scenery is broken by country houses and churches, like those of a Christmas scene, until we reach **Rupit i Pruit**, a very charming mediaeval village with a Romanesque artistic complex.

Much more populated and with a weekly market known all around, the city of **Vic** holds jewels of architecture and gastronomy: its dried sausage has been awarded the **Protected Geographic Indication**. The journey continues to **Cardona**, where a former salt mine operation can be visited. A different Romanesque church,

VIC SQUARE
AND FAÇADES
IN RUPIT.

for another stop on the route, is that of **Sant Martí de Mura**, which stands in impressive natural surroundings overlooked by the **Sant Llorenç de Munt i Obac Natural Park**. The route takes us to the foot of the geologically unique mountain of **Montserrat**, and from there to the river Corb, which will lead us to the mediaeval village of **Guimerà**. ♡



© KIM CASTELLS



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

ROUTE 5 FOLLOWING THE FOOTPRINTS OF CULTURE

The Cistercian Route, the route of wine and cava and Els Ports Natural Park are different ways to visit southern Catalonia.

By car we can explore the famous Cistercian Route, which connects three spectacular monasteries created under the Benedictine order. These monasteries, **Santes Creus**, **Vallbona de les Monges**, and **Poblet**, are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We can also enjoy towns with great wine and sparkling wine-making tradition such as **Vilafranca del Penedès** and **Sant Sa-**

THE SANTES CREUS MONASTERY AND A WINE-GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE IN THE PENEDÈS.

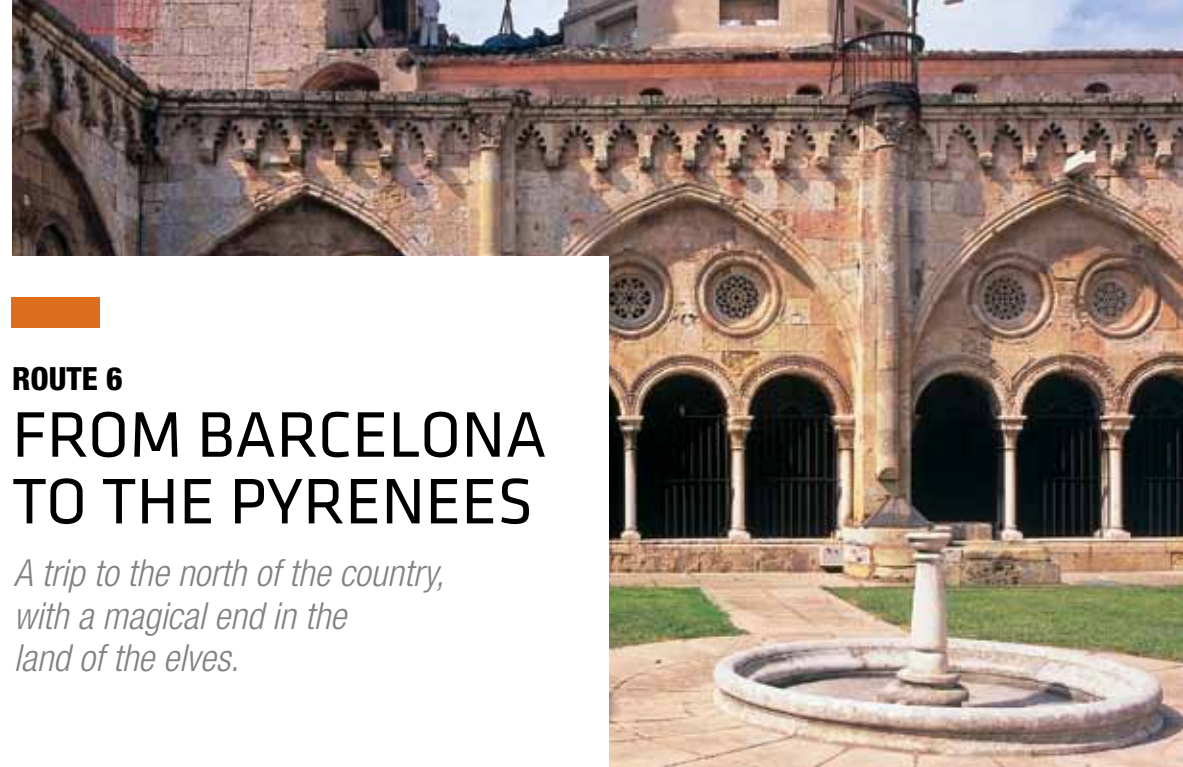
durní d'Anoia, in the Penedès region, or cultural gems like the **Cartoixa d'Escaladei** Charterhouse, surrounded by the renowned **DOQ Priorat** vineyards, or approach villages like **Pinell de Brai** and **Gandesa**, with wineries, some of which are modernista monuments.

The beautiful **Els Ports Natural Park** is located a few kilometres to the south. The town of **Horta de Sant Joan** has stunning views which inspired **Picasso** on his stays there. Following the Ebro River to its mouth, we come to **Tortosa**, a town with a very interesting artistic legacy that has been shaped by Arab, Jewish, Mediaeval, and Renaissance art.

Overlooking the sea and facing the **Badia dels Alfacs**, the coastal village of **Sant Carles de la Ràpita** has one of the most important weekly fish markets in Catalonia. ♡



© MARC CASTELLET



© IMAGEN M.A.S.

ROUTE 6 FROM BARCELONA TO THE PYRENEES

A trip to the north of the country, with a magical end in the land of the elves.

Cities such as **Sant Cugat del Vallès**, with its Romanesque monastery, and **Terrassa**, a city with a great industrial past, were sites that promoted Modernisme and Noucentisme. The route leads to a place with more natural scenery, the **Sant Llorenç de Munt i l'Obac Natural Park**, which is home to the 12th century Romanesque monastery of **Sant Llorenç de Munt**. The route goes on to **Navarcles**, where the symbolic **Món Sant Benet** is located. This unique project focused on culture, tourism, and leisure brings together the mediaeval monastery and

CLOISTER OF THE MONASTERY OF SANT CUGAT DEL VALLÈS AND MÓN SANT BENET.

the **Fundación Alícia**, an innovative cuisine research centre created by **Ferran Adrià**. From here, the route heads into the Pyrenees, where three historic churches appear one after the other: **Santa Maria de Merlès**, **Sant Pau de Pinós**, and **Sant Miquel de Terradelles**. The trip continues through the **Coll del Port** pass near the **Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park** and takes us to **Seu d'Urgell**. The trip ends in a magical way, 30 km from the municipal area of **Valls d'Aguilar**, in the land of the *minairons*, tiny fantastic beings that appear in Pyrenean mythology. ♡

© CHOPO, GARKIN, GZ



TRADITIONAL CATALAN CULTURE

A list of some of Catalonia's traditional celebrations.

Catalonia has one foot in the future and the other in the past. The area builds upon its solid base and strong sense of identity as it continues to grow in the age of modernity. This section takes you on a tour of some of the most widely celebrated traditions throughout the year.

WINTER

SANTA LLÚCIA

In the days before and after **Santa Llúcia** (13 December), Christmas fairs are set up along the central streets of the towns of Catalonia. Vendors sell decorations, fir trees, boxwood, mistletoe, coloured lights, and figures for the Nativity

© SERGIO LANZ. GZ
CHRISTMAS
DECORATIONS,
FIR TREES AND
BOXWOOD.



ROASTING
CALÇOTS.



© GEMMA MIRALDA
TIÓ OF ALL
SIZES AT A
CHRISTMAS FAIR.

scene. Among these other holiday items, the *caganer* stands out. This is usually a shepherd crouching down and defecating. Figures of sportspeople, politicians and other current figures can also be found in the same position.

BOXING DAY AND THE 'TIÓ'

In Catalonia, **Christmas** is celebrated on 25 December. The special thing is that on the next day there is another festival that holds the same level of importance: **Sant Esteve**, or Boxing Day. If on the 25th tradition calls for *escudella* and *carn d'olla* (a Catalan stew) as the main meal, cannelloni are typically eaten on the 26th. After dinner, the children use a stick to hit a log covered with a blanket to the rhythm of a song, until it craps gifts. This process is repeated until the **Tiό** craps coal, a sign that it is over until next year. The **Tiό** generally comes down from the mountains and reaches the homes of Catalonia a few days before the holidays. It has to be offered hospitality, looked after and 'fed' until the day when children beat it to get

the presents. It is considered an allegory that nature has to be looked after for spring to be reborn.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

On New Year's Eve, the dinner is typically a gala dinner shared with relatives and friends. What is really essential is to have **12 grapes** to eat on each chime of the bells at midnight. This guarantees that the new year will be a good one.

THE THREE KINGS

In the afternoon of 5 January, everyone has to go to the **Three Kings Day parade**. Otherwise known as the three wise men, these

© ORIOL LLAUARADÓ



A COOK BURNING THE
SUGAR ON THE CREAM.

magical kings are able to parade through all of the towns and villages at the same time. The parade in Barcelona is particularly spectacular. Since 26 December, the royal postmen have been collecting the children's wish lists, but last-minute requests can be given to the pages in the parade.

FESTIVAL OF SANT ANTONI ABAT

The festival of **Sant Antoni Abat** is held on 17 January. On this day, or at the weekend closest to it, horses and other animals are at the forefront of these festive parades that take place in many Catalan towns. This celebration dates back to when animals were not only used for labour, but were also considered raw materials and the forces of nature had to be called upon to protect them.

CALÇOTADA

Calçots are tender, white, and sweet spring onions. They belong to a specific class of onion. The **Calçots** from Valls have the IGP (Protective Geographic Indication) seal of quality. They are roasted over the remains of trimmings from



© TINA BAGUÉ

vines and are garnished with a sauce made from spicy red peppers, roast tomato, toasted almonds, garlic, and oil. The **calçotada**, is eaten by hand and the mess made while eating it is directly proportional to the enjoyment felt. It is celebrated in large groups and is fairly easy to get a spot.

CREMA DE SANT JOSEP

19 March is Saint Joseph's Day in Catalonia, as well as the Fathers' Day. To celebrate, Catalans eat *crema cremada* (burnt cream). This is a very old and traditional dessert made with eggs, milk, sugar, cinnamon, and lemon peel. Traditionally, this dish is cooked at home, but nearly all of the restaurants have it on their menu on this day and throughout the year, as it is an exquisite dish. Outside Catalonia, it is known as *Catalan cream* or *crème brûlée*.

© MIQUEL MONFORT
EGG SAUSAGE.

DIJOURS GRAS

On the day of **Dijous gras** (Fat Thursday), when Carnival begins, egg sausage is eaten in Catalonia. This is the last day before Lent, and many Catalans have to get ready for the days of abstinence. Fortunately, egg sausage is delicious. During that week, the Carnival and the Burial of the Sardine are celebrated.

SPRING

EASTER

The expression "parecer una mona de pascua" (to be like an Easter cake) means that you don't have good taste and wear gaudy clothes and makeup. The **mona** is a cake that Catalan godparents give their





© JOAN PUIG

TWO WOMEN
CELEBRATING
SANT JORDI.

godchildren on Easter Monday. It is decorated with chocolate eggs and toy figures. Days before, Catalan cake shops fill their shop windows with edible sculptures which are certainly not very discreet, in the best sense of the expression.

SANT JORDI

Every 23 April, we celebrate the anniversaries of the deaths of Shakespeare and Cervantes. To remember both literary geniuses, people in Catalonia give each other

books. It is also a day on which lovers' day is celebrated, as the legend of the knight Saint George (Sant Jordi in Catalan) says that he slayed the dragon when it was about to devour a princess. From the Dragon's blood, a rose bush grew and Saint George offered the princess one of the flowers. The streets of Catalonia fill with stands selling books and roses. It's worth seeing. It is the festival of literature and love.

SANT PONÇ

Every 11 May, calle Hospital, in the Barcelona Raval district, becomes an open-air herbal market. Since the sixteenth century, a market dedicated to natural health and healthy food, such as honey, has taken place. The day this market is held coincides with the time when the medicinal herbs are in full bloom. It is held in Barcelona and other Catalan towns.



© ORIOL LLAUARADO
MAKING CARPETS
WITH FLOWER
PETALS.

A BONFIRE
ON THE NIGHT
OF SANT JOAN,
IN THE PYRENEES.

FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Corpus Christi is a Catholic feast celebrating to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. This holiday usually falls in June. In Catalonia, it is associated with several traditions, including the carpet of flowers in Sitges and la Garriga as well as of Arbúcies and Sallent (called *enramades*); the 'Patum de Berga' and the *ou com balla* (the dance of the egg). In the towns of Barcelona and the Costa Daurada, an egg is placed in the spring of water coming out of a fountain, which is decorated with flowers and seasonal fruit.

SUMMER

REVETLLA DE SANT JOAN

The longest night of the year is celebrated on 23 June. It coincides with the arrival of summer and the end of the school year. It is a festival that celebrates youth and abundance, in which fire is the main feature. Both old furniture gathered by neighbours (in the cities) and

trees cut expressly for the celebration are burnt (fire festivals in the Pyrenees, considered Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity). The festival takes place on the street, in the squares, on the beach, etc. The classic sponge cake with candied fruit, cream, or crackling is eaten as onlookers toast with cava. It is a magical night and is well worth not missing.

MARE DE DÉU DEL CARME

The virgin of Carmen is the patron saint of seafarers. In Catalan fishing villages, the processions typically involve decorated boats, floral offerings, songs, and fireworks.

LA DIADA (CATALAN NATIONAL DAY)

11 September is Catalonia's national day. It is a holiday that is generally celebrated with large gatherings in the streets. It commemorates the fall of Barcelona on 11 September 1714, at the end of the War of Succession between the Bourbons and Austria after a tough 14-month siege.



© ORIOL LLAUARADO



POLE DANCERS
CELEBRATING
THE LOCAL FESTIVAL
IN REUS.

© ORIOL LLAUARADO

ALL YEAR ROUND

FESTES MAJORS

These are the large festivals celebrated by towns and cities. Among these, are the celebration of Mercè (24 September), in Barcelona, Santa Tecla (23 September) in Tarragona, Sant Narcís (29 October) in Girona and Sant Anastasi (11 May) in Lleida. In Vic the festa major is held in honour of Sant Miquel dels Sants (5 July), in Terrassa the patron saint is Sant Pere (29 June). Reus also honors Sant Pere in a celebration that takes place on the same day. Vilafranca del Penedès celebrates in honour of Sant Fèlix (31 August) and Tortosa honours the Mare de Déu de la Cinta (25 March).

In general, most festivals are held in the summer, and for enthusiasts, it is possible to go from festival to festival for weeks. The dances of giants, *correfoc* with devils, concerts, and popular meals, are always featured at these events.

MORE INFORMATION

Tourist Promotion Organisations

Patronat de Turisme de la Diputació de Tarragona

www.costadaurada.info, www.terresdelebre.travel

Patronat de Turisme Costa Brava Girona

www.costabrava.org

Patronat de Turisme de la Diputació de Lleida

www.aralleida.cat

Oficina de Promoció Turística de la Diputació de Barcelona

www.barcelonaesmolmes.cat

Turisme de Barcelona

www.barcelonaturisme.com

For More Information on Catalonia

www.catalunya.com



[@catexperience](https://www.facebook.com/catalunyaexperience)



[@catalunyaexperience](https://www.twitter.com/catexperience)



www.instagram.com/catalunyaexperience



www.youtube.com/user/CatalunyaExperience



<https://plus.google.com/+Catalunyaexperience1>

For More Information on Heritage

Departament de Cultura de la Generalitat de Catalunya

patrimoni.gencat.cat/es

Ask the Office

www.facebook.com/catalunyaexperience/

app_431056236953440

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Sundays and public holidays from 10 am to 2:30 pm.

Tourist Information

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Tarragona Cathedral. © Infotur.

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