



Barcelona





Barcelona Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	3
Orientation	4
Montjuic	5
Harbour	10
Waterfront	20
Central Barcelona	
Las Ramblas	30
Barri Gotic	34
Barcelona Cathedral	37
Palau Güell	42
Eixample	53
Casa Batlló	57
La Pedrera	62
Sagrada Familia	70
Park Güell	86
South-West	
Placa Espanya	90
Poble Espanyol	94
van der Rohe Pavilion	100
Parks	104
Montserrat	108
Impressions	122
Magic Fountains	128



Barcelona Introduction

I originally planned a three-week visit to Spain, but a minor injury cut my trip short and I only got to see Barcelona, the first of my planned stops.

Great planning.

Even though it was a shortened trip, it was great. The best of Spain, all in one place.

Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia, one of Spain's 17 autonomous communities.

Catalonia seems to have about as much in common with the rest of Spain as California has with the Thirteen Colonies.

Wiki says "Barcelona is today one of the world's leading tourist, economic, trade fair, and cultural-sports centers, and its influences in commerce, education, entertainment, media, fashion, science, and the arts all contribute to its status as one of the world's major global cities."

International surveys place Barcelona high in terms of livability, innovation, productivity, and cultural influence.

Even on a short visit it's easy to see why. I hope that comes across in my pictures.



Bruce McKay



Orientation

Welcome to Barcelona, Spain's Mediterranean jewel.
City population 1.6 million, metro area 4.5 million.



Montjuïc

First I'd like to find a vantage point to get the lay of the land.
There's a big hill in town, Montjuïc, that's just perfect.



Montjuïc

A combination of a funicular and a cable car take you up to the top.



Montjuïc

There's a 17th century fortress at the top of the hill that's been involved in more than its fair share of bloodshed.



Montjuïc

The town was shelled from here in 1842 and it was the site of numerous executions during and after the Spanish Civil War.



Montjuic

Today the castle provides great views of Barcelona.



Montjuic

Barcelona's container terminal and commercial harbour are immediately south of the castle.



Montjuic

**Many cruise ships make stops in Barcelona,
immediately below the castle.**



Montjuic

And there's incredible variety on the waterfront north of Montjuic. Checking that out is next.



Harbour

This is the spot where Columbus stepped ashore in 1493 after discovering America. He was accorded a state welcome by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.



Harbour

This 60 metre / 200 foot Columbus Monument honours the explorer. There's an elevator inside for even more great views of Barcelona.



Harbour

Columbus is pointing to the west.



Harbour

The great galleys that made Barcelona a major seafaring power were built in shipyards that now house the Maritime Museum.



Harbour

The Maritime Museum restored this ship to show how the crew lived and worked and to display the beauty of its construction.



Harbour

The Santa Eulàlia was built in 1918 to transport goods and saw duty in a variety of legal and other roles in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic for 80 years.



Harbour

The impressive Port of Barcelona Customs House flies both the Catalan and Spanish flags (left and centre).



Waterfront

In the 1980s a modern yacht basin replaced old wharves and warehouses which were no longer being used.



Waterfront

There's all sorts of new development ...



Waterfront

... and harbour cruise boats waiting to explore it.



Waterfront

The Maremàgnum in Port Vell is a shop, theatre, and restaurant complex.



Waterfront

Port Vell also boasts an IMAX theatre and the Barcelona Aquarium.



Waterfront

The harbour cruise goes well out into the Mediterranean, but that provides perspective on the scale of the redevelopment done for the 1992 Olympics.



Waterfront

These towers, now an office building and a hotel, originally housed the Olympic athletes.



Waterfront

Frank Gehry's steel, stone, and glass *Fish* was commissioned for the Olympics.



Waterfront

There are two beaches in the heart of Barcelona, on opposite sides of Port Olímpica.



Waterfront

Or you can go anywhere on the Mediterranean.



Las Ramblas

A wide pedestrian boulevard stretches north from the Columbus Monument.



Las Ramblas

Las Ramblas is a popular shopping and restaurant district, with newsstands, flower stalls, and street artists.



Las Ramblas

Placa Catalunya, at the north end of Las Ramblas, is the most central point of Barcelona.



Las Ramblas **Placa Catalunya**



Barri Gotic

The Gothic Quarter east of Las Ramblas is the heart of the old city.



Barri Gotic

Gothic Quarter



Barri Gòtic

Plaça Reial



**Barcelona
Cathedral**

Barcelona Cathedral was constructed
in phases beginning in 1298.



**Barcelona
Cathedral**

The Gothic cloister was completed about 1450.



**Barcelona
Cathedral**



Barcelona
Cathedral



Barcelona
Cathedral

Modernisme and Antoni Gaudi

Towards the end of the 19th century a new style of architecture was born in Barcelona.

Modernisme was a variant of Art Nouveau.

It became a means of expression for Catalan nationalism and attracted many now-famous exponents, most notably Antoni Gaudi.

Styles have changed but Modernisme created an awareness of style that characterizes Barcelona to this day.

We will encounter many Modernist buildings later in the Exiample section of Barcelona, both residences and Gaudi's famous Sagrada Familia church.



Palau Güell

(up next) is where we will first encounter Modernism and Antoni Gaudi's work, almost hidden downtown on a side street just west of Las Ramblas.



Palau Güell

Palau Güell was built in the late 1880's as a showcase townhouse for Anton Gaudi's most consistent patron, Count Eusebi Güell.



Palau Güell

The entrances were designed to allow carriages to enter and exit, leaving guests at the foot of the steps leading into the house.



Palau Güell

Horses and carriages could be taken down a spiral ramp to the stables below.



Palau Güell

Güell's guests would be immediately impressed.
Gaudi used only the finest materials.



Palau Güell

The central salon, complete with pipe organ,
rises through three floors ...



Palau Güell

... and is capped with a dome perforated to let sun or lantern light shine through.



Palau Güell

Palau Güell re-opened in April 2011 after a seven-year, €9 million / \$ 12.5 million restoration project.



Palau Güell

The interior is the most elegant of Gaudi's residences. This building established his international reputation for outstandingly original architecture.



Palau Güell

The most frequently noted features of Palau Güell are the bizarrely decorated chimneys and vents.



Palau Güell

These *trencadis mosaics*, created using small pieces of broken tile, became one of the trademarks of Gaudi's later work.



Eixample

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries Barcelona expanded to the north-east, into the well-planned Eixample district [eye-SHAM-pla, Catalan for *extension*].



Eixample

The district featured wide boulevards, lots of trees, and carefully planned mixed uses. It attracted a lot of upscale Modernist architecture.



Eixample

Casa Terrades, also known as 'needle house', was commissioned in 1905 as a residence for the three sisters of the Terrades family.



Eixample

The Antoni Tàpies art foundation now occupies the 1885 red brick and iron building at the centre. The *Cloud and Chair* roof sculpture is by the artist.



Casa Batlló

Casa Batlló was designed as the Batlló family residence by Antoni Gaudí. It was built in the heart of the Eixample district between 1904 and 1906.



Casa Batlló

The modernist façade is decorated in Gaudí's innovative *trencadis* mosaic, made of broken ceramic tiles.



Casa Batlló

It seems that the design goal was to avoid straight lines completely.



Casa Batlló

The central light well is lined with ceramic tiles, darker at the top to give the impression of uniform colour.



Casa Batlló

But, again, the most striking feature is the arched roof, likened to the back of a dragon or dinosaur, with bizarrely decorated chimneys.



La Pedrera

Casa Milà, built between 1906 and 1910, was Antoni Gaudí's last and most famous residential design. It's more commonly known as La Pedrera ("the stone quarry").



La Pedrera

The building relies on a structure of pillars that allows for an open floor structure with large openings in the façade, rather than traditional weight-bearing walls.



La Pedrera

The façade features intricate iron-work balconies that are like seaweed against the wave-like walls of white undressed stone.



La Pedrera

The apartments are arranged around two interlinked patios. La Pedrera was restored between 1986 and 1996.



La Pedrera

Light wells ensure that all units have daylight.
There are no straight walls in the building.



La Pedrera

The attic, which now houses the Gaudi Museum, consists of 270 catenary arches which support the roof-terrace.



La Pedrera

The roofscape of chimneys and vents is considered to resemble abstract sculpture.



La Pedrera

But there's no place for a barbeque.



**Sagrada
Família**

The Nativity Façade of the Sagrada Família, Europe's most unconventional church, faces north-east to catch the light of the rising sun.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Antoni Gaudí, architect of the Sagrada Família, finished the Nativity Facade first to set an artistic and architectural example for others to follow.



**Sagrada
Familia**

The Nativity Façade was completed in 1930. It is decorated with scenes reminiscent of elements of life and images from nature.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Gaudi's design calls for a total of eighteen spires.
Eight have been built to date.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Elevators take visitors up two of the completed spires – to see out across Barcelona and get close-up views of construction details.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Construction began in 1892, is now more than half complete.
Work is expected to be finished by 2028.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Gaudi's tile mosaics are incorporated into the design.



Sagrada Familia

The Passion Façade was constructed between 1954 and 1976, and its more modern sculptures were added between 1986 and 2000.



**Sagrada
Familia**

The Passion Façade, dedicated to the suffering of Jesus during his crucifixion, is austere, plain and simple, and is carved with harsh straight lines.



Sagrada Familia

The completion of the spires will make Sagrada Familia the tallest church building in the world.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Portions of the interior were completed
for consecration by the Pope in 2010.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Unlike most cathedrals and large gothic churches, the interior of Sagrada Família is remarkably bright – by design.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Above the main altar



**Sagrada
Familia**

The branching structural design, like much of Gaudí's work, was inspired by nature.



**Sagrada
Família**

Skylights let in natural light.



**Sagrada
Familia**

Four contemporary stained glass windows.



Park Güell

Park Güell is Antoni Gaudí's most colourful creation, a salvage job on land intended for a housing development that didn't pan out.



Park Güell

Unmistakably Gaudi.



Park Güell

The main terrace is surrounded by a long, mosaic-covered bench in the form of a sea serpent.



Park Güell

The main terrace offers great views of Barcelona and the Mediterranean.



**Placa
Espanya**

Plaça Espanya was developed in preparation
for Barcelona's 1929 International Exhibition.



**Placa
Espanya**

Las Arenas, which saw its last bullfight in 1977, has been converted into a shopping, restaurant, and entertainment complex. Bullfights are now banned in Catalonia.



**Placa
Espanya**

**The avenue leading to the Palau Nacional is flanked
by one of the world's busiest trade fair complexes.**



**Placa
Espanya**

**The Palau Nacional (of Catalonia, not Spain), built for the 1929
Exhibition, now houses the National Art Museum of Catalonia.**



Poble Espanyol

The Poble Espanyol (Spanish Village) was created to display the range of Spanish architectural styles and crafts for the 1929 Exhibition.



**Poble
Espanyol**

Its creators visited 1600 towns throughout Spain to choose the buildings to be reproduced.



**Poble
Espanyol**

The village is kept active by more than 40 artisans' workshops, including one of the two traditional glassblowing furnaces left in Spain.



**Poble
Espanyol**

The Romanesque Monastery of San Miguel is composed of elements originating from different monasteries in Catalonia.



**Poble
Espanyol**

The bell tower combines elements of
Aragonese Mudejar and Gothic style.



**Poble
Espanyol**

The village was supposed to be demolished at the end of the exhibition, but it was saved because it was the most popular part of the fair.



**van der Rohe
Pavilion**

The German Pavilion for the 1929 International Exhibition, designed by Mies van der Rohe, didn't fare as well. It was demolished in 1930.



**van der Rohe
Pavilion**

Nevertheless the open design, featuring simple lines of glass and polished stone, was recognized as a major milestone in the development of modern architecture.



**van der Rohe
Pavilion**

**Slightly embarrassed but newly enlightened, Barcelona City Council
reconstructed the Pavilion on its original site between 1983 and 1986.**



**van der Rohe
Pavilion**

Naturally, the interior features the famous Barcelona Chair, designed by van der Rohe for the 1929 German Pavilion.



Parks

Art, architecture, and style abound in Barcelona. This tile mosaic sculpture by Joan Miró enlivens a park just behind Las Arenas.



Parks

What's this monstrosity, lurking just around the corner from my hotel?



Parks

Well, it's a slide for kids
and some of their parents ...



Parks

... and the entrance to a delightful park created in 1985 – with trees, a large plaza, an artificial lake, fountains, play areas, modern sculptures, and sports areas.



Montserrat

The Catalan Pre-Coastal Range of mountains runs parallel to the coast about 48 km / 30 miles inland from Barcelona.



Montserrat

Sanata Maria de Montserrat, a Benedictine abbey located on the mountain of Montserrat, is Catalonia's most important religious retreat.



Montserrat

A funicular railway runs from the abbey to the top of the mountain at 1,236 metres / 4,055 feet.



Montserrat

On a clear day almost all of Catalonia
can be seen from the mountain.



Montserrat

Montserrat means "jagged (serrated) mountain" in Catalan.



Montserrat

The mountain was created by uplift 50 million years ago and has been eroded by wind, rain, and freezing temperatures since then.



Montserrat

The Santa Cova Chapel, in the mountain opposite the monastery, marks the site where an image of the Virgin Mary was found in a cave in 880.



Montserrat

The holy image, known as the Black Madonna, is now enshrined in the Basilica in the monastery complex.



Montserrat

Monks have been on Montserrat Mountain since the ninth century. A monastery was officially founded in 1025.



Montserrat

The monastery was destroyed by Napoleon's army in 1811.
Reconstruction began in 1858.



Montserrat

Montserrat Basilica



Montserrat

Pilgrims can touch the hand of the Black Madonna in the Virgin's Throne area above the altar.



Montserrat

The monastery complex now includes a museum and art gallery, apartments, shops, restaurants, and a hotel.



Montserrat

Time to head down the mountain
and back to Barcelona.



Impressions

Barcelona is a special treat.
Its highly developed sense of style is a constant delight.



Impressions

The wide boulevards are a visual treat, but they are also practical. There's lots of space for traffic, which moves smoothly.



Impressions

The pace of life is relaxed, but things get done, and on time, just not in a mad rush.



Impressions

The 11 Metro subway lines reach everywhere, and they provide fast, frequent, and reliable service at bargain rates.



Impressions

Even the bus shelters tell you when the next coaches will arrive – to the minute.



Impressions

Catalonia is proud of its distinctive identity, and it's easy to see why.



**Magic
Fountains**

One final treat. Magic Fountains were installed in front of the Palau Nacional for the 1929 International Exhibition.



**Magic
Fountains**



**Magic
Fountains**

Good night.

< End >

 **Barcelona**