

The Lonely Planet logo, featuring the words "lonely planet" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font inside a white circle, set against a dark blue rectangular background.

lonely planet

A large, intricate, white-on-grey pattern of swirling, floral, and scrollwork designs covers the entire background. The pattern is reminiscent of traditional damask or brocade fabric. In the top right corner, there is a small, colorful, triangular graphic element that looks like a corner of a page being peeled away, showing a rainbow spectrum of colors.

discover
BARCELONA

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DISCOVER BARCELONA



Barri Gòtic & La Rambla (p50) Walk La Rambla, penetrate sinuous side streets, and gawp at Gothic architectural masterpieces.



El Raval (p81) This once seedy quarter has shed *some* but not *all* its edge.



La Ribera (p103) Experience a culinary and nightlife renaissance in the Old City's trendiest neighbourhood.



La Barceloneta & the Beaches (p129) Fresh seafood meets blond beaches and cutting-edge modernism on the city's waterfront.



L'Eixample (p151) Modernisme rules in Barçá's 19th-century 'extension', crowned by Gaudí's La Sagrada Família



Park Güell & Around (p185) Gaudí's gardens fold into the lofty hills and green spaces of Tibidabo.



Montjuïc, Sants & El Poble Sec (p213) Parks and gardens still embellish the hill that hosted the Olympics.



Day Trips (p237) Taste wine, see Roman ruins and explore monastic shrines in Catalonia's hinterland.

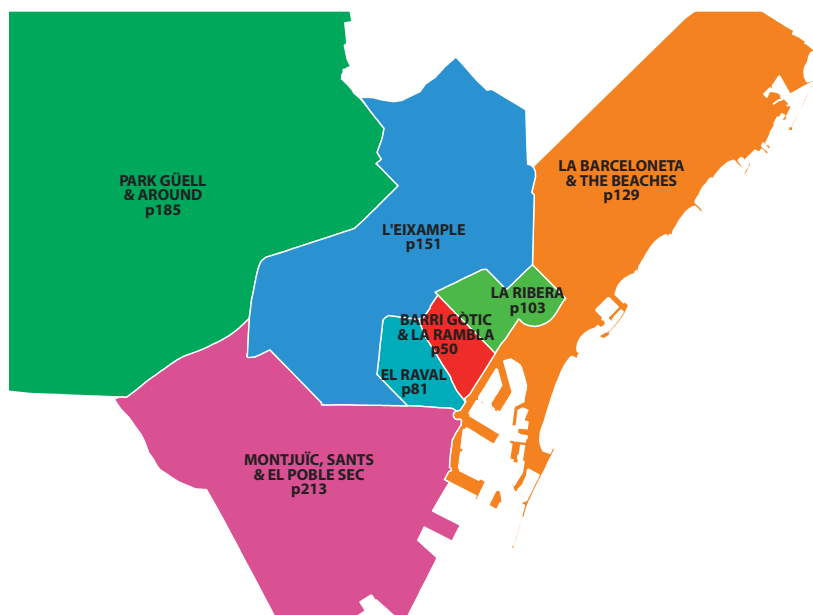
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LA SAGRADA FÀMILIA

p154

Gaudi's great religious building project is approaching the end of its century-long construction

LA CATEDRAL

p54

The glorious pinnacle of one of Europe's most complete medieval Gothic quarters

BEACHES

p138

Once an afterthought, these municipal beaches are now considered some of the world's finest

MUSEU PICASSO

p106

The works of a young master who plundered Barcelona for his early artistic inspiration

MUSEU MARÍTIM

p89

The collected mementoes of a once-great seafaring empire

TRANSBORDADOR AERI

p137

Suspended between Port Vell and Montjuïc, the views here are truly breathtaking



↘ THIS IS BARCELONA



Compact Barcelona is a bright, fiery star lapped by the Mediterranean, a magnet to everyone from art-loving beach bums to business execs with a weakness for sunny downtime. It's a city in motion, constantly reinventing itself.

Barcelona manages the trick of merging past with future into an effervescent present. At its core lies one of Europe's best-preserved Gothic-era medieval city centres. Centuries later, that priceless heritage lent Gaudí and co the historical foundation and inspiration for some of their zaniest architectural creations. Their adventurousness is in the city's DNA, and local and international architects continue to unleash their unfettered fantasies here. As a skyline symbol, Gaudí's La Sagrada Família has stiff competition in Jean Nouvel's shimmering Torre Agbar.

The heady mix of Gothic monuments and contemporary skyscrapers is accompanied by a bevy of world-class museums that take you from the wonders of giant Romanesque frescos to the playfulness of Joan Miró, from pre-Columbian South American gold to early Picasso.



MARTIN HUGHES

All that culture fuels the appetite and at times the entire city seems to be out to lunch (or dinner). Thousands of restaurants offer an incredible palette for the palate, from traditional Catalan cooking to the last word in 21st-century *nueva cocina española* kookiness. A plethora of tippling establishments and dance clubs also spreads in a hedonistic arc across the entire city – drop into century-old taverns or glam it up in bright new seaside bars.

Shoppers, meanwhile, may never make it to a museum. Phalanxes of one-off boutiques compete with armies of global-brand-name stores.

Barcelonins have a reputation for hard work, but everywhere you look people seem to be having fun. On the waterfront, rollerbladers glide past domino-playing pensioners, sun-seekers, windsurfers and sailors. Skateboarders practise their art in motion outside the Macba, temple to contemporary creation, and mountain-bikers blaze trails in the Collserola park.

Barcelona is an intoxicating ride. One visit is unlikely to be enough.

‘local and international architects continue to unleash their unfettered fantasies’
