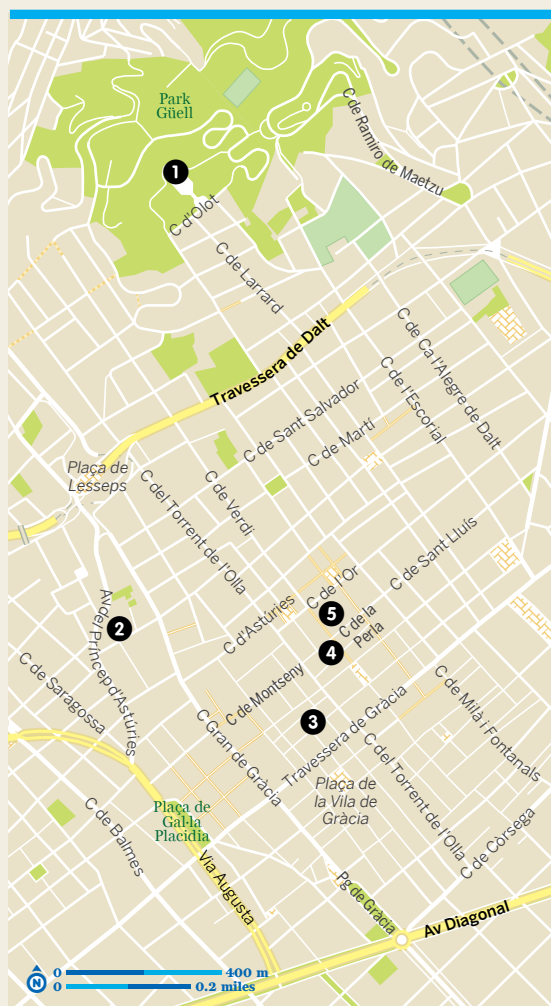


# Gràcia & Park Güell



## Neighbourhood Top Five


**1 Park Güell** (p152) Getting lost along the winding paths and exploring the wild sculptures, mosaics and columns of Gaudí's verdant wonderland.

**2 Casa Vicens** (p154) Admiring the strange interplay of brick, chequer-board patterns and Moorish elements on this castle mansion, Gaudí's first commission.

**3 La Nena** (p155) Getting high on chocolate while playing a few board games and nibbling on crêpes.

**4 Soda Acústic** (p159) Hearing Balkan gypsy beats, experimental jazz and other eclectic sounds in one of Gràcia's most innovative performance spaces.

**5 Verdi** (p159) Watching an indie film at this neighbourhood icon, followed by tapas on the restaurant-lined lane out the front.

For more detail of this area see Map p280 

## Explore Gràcia & Park Güell

Once a separate village north of L'Eixample, and an industrial district famous for its republican and liberal ideas, Gràcia was incorporated into the city of Barcelona in 1897, much to the disgust of the locals. The neighbourhood retains its distinct character today, with a boho feel that varies between chic and downtrodden – it's home to artists, young families and a fair number of tramps.

Start the day in Gràcia by exploring Park Güell and move down to the centre of the neighbourhood. If you walk from the park, cut across the traffic-choked Traversera de Dalt and go down Carrer de Verdi, into the heart of Gràcia – it's around 1km. Otherwise, Metro Línia 3 (Fontana stop) leaves you halfway up Carrer Gran de Gràcia and close to a network of busy squares.

Plunge into the atmosphere of its narrow streets and small plazas, and the bars and restaurants on and around them. The liveliest are Carrer de Verdi, where you will find wonderful cafes, bars and shops; Plaça del Sol, a raucous square populated by cool bars and (often loud) drunks; Plaça de la Vila de Gràcia, dotted with cafes and restaurants; Plaça de la Revolució de Setembre de 1868, a family-friendly square with a playground and ice-cream parlour; and the tree-lined Plaça de la Virreina, a particularly lovely square with cafes, shops and a chilled-out feel. Gràcia is great during the day or at night – the squares are sunny and relaxed for breakfast or lunch, and lively at night with scenesters enjoying a drink al fresco.

## Local Life

- ➔ **Markets** Locals get their fresh produce from Mercat de la Llibertat (p154), the neighbourhood's emblematic larder – queue up and sample some wonderful food.
- ➔ **Independent stores** Wander up Carrer de Verdi and along Traversera de Gràcia for an insight into what Gràcia does best. Independent boutiques and food shops abound on these people-filled streets.
- ➔ **Old-time bars** Gràcia still has plenty of tapas bars that have been around forever – El Roure (p155) is a fine example.
- ➔ **Sunsets** Though it's a challenge to get here, your efforts will be well rewarded at little-known Bunkers del Carmel (p154), which offers magical views over the city.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** Línia 3 (Fontana stop) leaves you halfway up Carrer Gran de Gràcia and close to a network of busy squares. To enter Gràcia from the other side, take Línia 4 to Joanic.
- ➔ **Foot** Strolling up Passeig de Gràcia from Plaça de Catalunya is a wonderful way to reach the neighbourhood, but it does take around 40 minutes.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

A wonderful way to take in Gràcia's atmosphere is from a cafe or restaurant on one of its many squares. Arrive after dusk and watch as the place comes to life in the post-work hours.

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ TimeLine (p155)
- ➔ La Panxa del Bisbe (p155)
- ➔ Con Gracia (p156)
- ➔ Botafumeiro (p157)
- ➔ Sol i Lluna (p156)
- ➔ Chivuo's (p154)

For reviews, see p154 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Elephanta (p157)
- ➔ Chatelet (p157)
- ➔ Rabipelao (p157)
- ➔ Viblioteca (p157)
- ➔ Raim (p159)

For reviews, see p157 ➔

### Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Magnesia (p160)
- ➔ Amapola Vegan Shop (p159)
- ➔ Be (p161)
- ➔ Lady Loquita (p160)
- ➔ La Festival (p160)
- ➔ Doctor Paper Barcelona (p160)

For reviews, see p159 ➔