

Neighbourhood Top Five

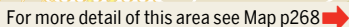
Admiring the simplicity and beauty of this Gothic church.

Being introduced to the origins of Picasso's genius at this fascinating museum.

Catalana (p93) Enjoying a show or just the Modernista interior of this beautiful concert hall.

(p94) Taking a stroll or having a picnic.

5 Bormuth (p97) Tucking into old-school tapas.



Explore La Ribera

La Ribera is widely used to refer to the area covered by the city council's rather long-winded appellation of Sant Pere, Santa Caterina i la Ribera. Carrer de la Princesa, ramrod straight between the traffic-choked Via Laietana and Parc de la Ciutadella, cuts La Ribera in half. The gentrified southern half is generally known as El Born, after Passeig del Born, Barcelona's main drag from the 13th to the 18th centuries, now lined with bars and cafes. Capped at one end by the magnificent Gothic Basílica de Santa Maria del Mar, it runs along to the Born Centre de Cultura i Memòria, in what used to be the neighbourhood's market building. This area should be your first port of call, specifically a stroll down the Carrer de Montcada, a street rich in Gothic and baroque mansions as well as the location of one of the city's major museums, the Museu Picasso.

Northwest of Carrer de la Princesa, a mess of narrow streets wiggles northwards around the striking modern reincarnation of the Mercat de Santa Caterina and on towards the Modernista Palau de la Música Catalana. Some good eating and drinking options have opened up in these narrow streets.

Via Laietana marks the southwest side of La Ribera, while the Parc de la Ciutadella closes off its northeastern flank. The park is a rare green space in central Barcelona, where you can lounge on its stretches of grass, sit by the water at the grand fountain, visit the zoo and, if accompanied by tots, take advantage of its playgrounds.

Local Life

➔ **Market secrets** Locals get their eggs at the Mercat de Santa Caterina (p95), where, in season, stand holders 'flavour' their eggs by stacking them up and placing truffles among them. Soft-boiled, they are divine.

➔ **Catching the rays** Local favourite strip Passeig del Born is perfect for lazy Sunday morning sunbathing on the cafe terraces, as you enjoy a leisurely brunch.

➔ **A slice of culture** Join the largely local clientele for a weekend lunchtime classical concert at the Palau de la Música Catalana (p93) and take advantage of the natural daylight to see the beautiful interior of the main auditorium.

➔ **Barcelona style** Join the *barcelonins* and shop in some of the city's quirkiest fashion boutiques.

Getting There & Away

Metro Línia 4 coasts down the southwest flank of La Ribera, stopping at Urquinaona, Jaume I and Barceloneta. Línia 1 also stops nearby, at Urquinaona and Arc de Triomf (the nearest stop for the Parc de la Ciutadella).

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Getting around all of Barcelona's museums can be anything but cheap, so take advantage of free Sunday afternoons, when entry into many of the city's museum will cost you zilch!

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Casa Delfín (p98)
- ➔ El Atril (p98)
- ➔ Nakashita (p99)
- ➔ Bormuth (p97)
- ➔ En Aparté (p97)

For reviews, see p97 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Mudanzas (p100)
- ➔ La Vinya del Senyor (p100)
- ➔ Juanra Falces (p100)
- ➔ Rubí (p100)
- ➔ Miramelindo (p100)

For reviews, see p100 ➔

Best for Architecture

- ➔ Basílica de Santa Maria del Mar (p92)
- ➔ Palau de la Música Catalana (p93)
- ➔ Carrer de Montcada (p96)