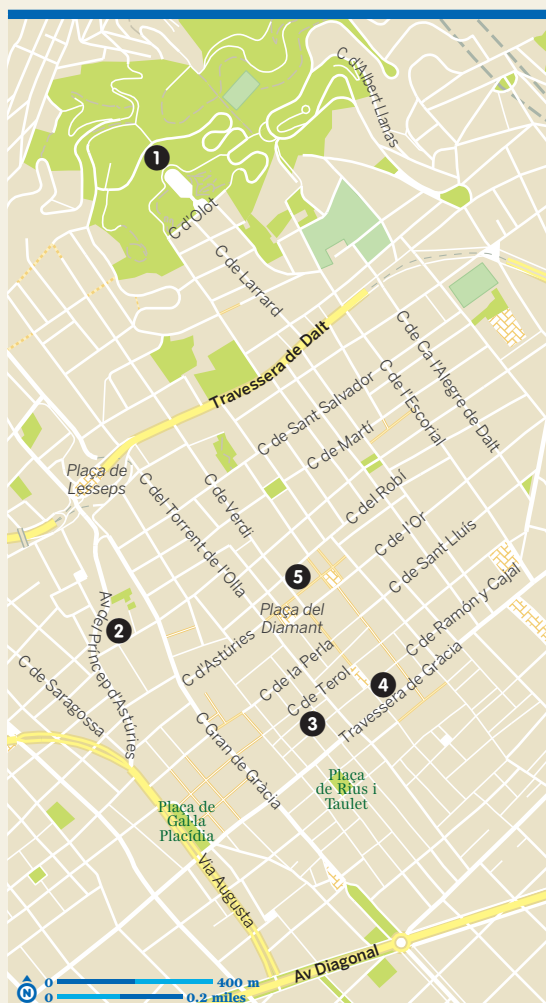


# Gràcia & Park Güell



## Neighbourhood Top Five

- ➊ Getting lost along the winding paths of **Park Güell** (p160) and exploring its more-natural-than-nature sculptures, mosaics and columns, then resurfacing on one of the park's sunny plazas.
- ➋ Checking out the swirling patterns of the facade of **Casa Vicens** (p162), Gaudí's first commission.
- ➌ Wandering around and taking in the sun on one of **Gràcia's many squares** (p163).
- ➍ Getting high on chocolate with the locals at **La Nena** (p164).
- ➎ Stocking up on Portuguese delicacies and wine in **A Casa Portuguesa** (p168).

## 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, local luminaries, young families and a fair number of tramps.

You know you are in Gràcia when you hit its maze of narrow streets and lanes. The heart of the neighbourhood is bounded by Carrer de Còrsega and Avinguda Diagonal in the south, Via Augusta and Avinguda del Príncep d'Astúries to the west, Carrer de Sardanya to the east and Travessera de Dalt to the north. The official district of Gràcia extends beyond, taking in the residential valley of Vallcarca, which nuzzles up alongside Park Güell.

Start the day by exploring Park Güell, moving down to the centre of Gràcia. 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 (formerly de Rius i Taulet), 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 youngsters enjoying a drink alfresco.

## Local Life

- ➔ **Markets** Locals get their fresh produce from Mercat de la Llibertat (p162), the neighbourhood's emblematic larder – queue up and sample some wonderful food.
- ➔ **Independent Stores** Wander up Carrer de Verdi for an insight into what Gràcia does best. Local boutiques and food shops abound on this tree-lined street.
- ➔ **Gourmet Tapas** Gràcia churns out great food in unremarkable local bars – Sureny (p164) is especially fine.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Underground Rail** Metro Línia 3 (Fontana stop) leaves you halfway up Carrer Gran de Gràcia and close to a network of busy squares.
- ➔ **On Foot** Strolling up Passeig de Gràcia from Plaça de Catalunya is a wonderful way to reach the neighbourhood, but it does take around 45 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

- ➔ Botafumeiro (p162)
- ➔ Sureny (p164)
- ➔ O'Gràcia! (p164)
- ➔ La Nena (p164)

For reviews, see p162 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ La Cigale (p166)
- ➔ Raïm (p166)
- ➔ Le Journal (p166)

For reviews, see p166 ➔

### Best Entertainment

- ➔ Heliogàbal (p167)
- ➔ Elèctric Bar (p167)
- ➔ Sala Beckett (p167)

For reviews, see p167 ➔