

La Sagrada Família & L'Eixample

L'ESQUERRA DE L'EIXAMPLE | LA DRETA DE L'EIXAMPLE

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Seeing history being made at **La Sagrada Família** (p134).
- 2 Witnessing ground-breaking architecture at **La Pedrera** (p139).
- 3 Marvelling at the almost-alive, swirling interior of **Casa Batlló** (p140).
- 4 Deciphering contemporary art at the fascinating **Fundació Antoni Tàpies** (p141).
- 5 Tracing the timeline of Catalan Modernism at the **Museu del Modernisme Català** (p141).



For more detail of this area, see Maps p306 and p310 →

Explore: L'Eixample

In the 1820s, ranks of trees were planted on either side of the road linking Barcelona and the town of Gràcia. Thus was born the Passeig de Gràcia, a strollers' boulevard. L'Eixample's grid streets radiate from the Passeig de Gràcia and are home to the majority of the city's most expensive shops and hotels, a range of eateries and several nightspots. This is the area to head to for Modernista architecture, the best of which – apart from La Sagrada Família – are clustered on or near Passeig de Gràcia. Eating is at the high end (though set-lunch options are available for lower budgets), and the emphasis is on design-led outfits that cater to designer-shopping locals and tourists alike, though there are some notable exceptions.

La Dreta de L'Eixample (The Right Side of L'Eixample), stretching from Passeig de Gràcia to Passeig de Sant Joan and beyond, contains much-desired real estate, although it has a dowdy feel closer to La Sagrada Família. L'Esquerra de L'Eixample (The Left Side of L'Eixample), running southwest from Passeig de Gràcia, changes character several times. The area between Carrer d'Aribau, Passeig de Sant Joan, Avinguda Diagonal and Ronda de Sant Pere has been known since the early 20th century as the *Quadrat d'Or* (Golden Square) thanks to its high-end shops purveying everything from teak furniture to designer clothes, gourmet nibbles and shoes.

At night L'Esquerra de L'Eixample has its own flavour. From Thursday to Saturday, Carrer d'Aribau becomes a busy nightlife axis. Closer to the Universitat is the heart of the 'Gaixample', a cluster of gay and gay-friendly bars and clubs in an area bounded by Carrer de Balmes and Carrer de Muntaner.

Local Life

- ➔ **Markets** L'Eixample is all about wealth, but you can find some quirky bargains at the buzzing flea market of Els Encants Vells (p154).
- ➔ **Garden Concerts** Get a ticket for a local favourite – a summertime garden concert at the beautiful Palau Robert (p154).
- ➔ **Cava Supply** Try some of Barcelona's best *cava*, sold at Xampany (p155) to a loyal local clientele.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** Four Metro lines criss-cross L'Eixample, three stopping at Passeig de Gràcia for La Manzana de la Discòrdia. Línia 3 stops at Diagonal for La Pedrera, while Línies 2 and 5 stop at Sagrada Família.
- ➔ **Train** FGC lines from Plaça de Catalunya take you one stop to Provença, in the heart of L'Eixample.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

L'Eixample's restaurants can be quite pricey, but you can still sample their food at budget prices if you head over for the lunchtime *menú del dia* (set menu), which, although simpler in choice, is always good value.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tapaç 24 (p145)
- ➔ Can Kenji (p145)
- ➔ Alkímia (p145)
- ➔ Cata 1.81 (p147)
- ➔ Taktika Berri (p148)

For reviews, see p145 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Monvínic (p150)
- ➔ La Fira (p151)
- ➔ Les Gens Que J'Aime (p153)
- ➔ Dry Martini (p151)

For reviews, see p150 ➔

Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Vinçon (p154)
- ➔ Els Encants Vells (p154)
- ➔ El Bulevard dels Antiquaris (p154)
- ➔ Xampany (p155)

For reviews, see p154 ➔