

# El Raval



## Neighbourhood Top Five

- ❶ Shopping and browsing at the buzzing and beautiful **Mercat de la Boqueria** (p81), and eating at one of the lively market bars.
- ❷ Exploring the **Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu** (p84) and relaxing with a coffee in its courtyard cafe.
- ❸ Getting to know the art collection at the **MACBA** (p82) and watching the skaters in the front.
- ❹ Having a glass of cloudy absinthe in one of the Raval's **historical bars** (p89).
- ❺ Walking around the artfully restored **Palau Güell** (p83).

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

For a spot of sun away from the noisy El Raval streets, head for the garden cafe at the Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu (p84).



### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Bar Pinotxo (p87)
- ➔ Caravelle (p85)
- ➔ Mam i Teca (p85)
- ➔ Succulent (p87)
- ➔ Elisabets (p84)

For reviews, see p84 ➔



### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Bar La Concha (p88)
- ➔ Casa Almirall (p88)
- ➔ La Confiteria (p88)
- ➔ Negroni (p89)

For reviews, see p88 ➔



### Best Gift Shops

- ➔ Les Topettes (p90)
- ➔ Fantastik (p91)
- ➔ Teranyina (p91)

For reviews, see p90 ➔

## Explore: El Raval

Long one of the most rough-and-tumble parts of Barcelona, El Raval is now so hip in a grungy, inner-city way that *barcelonins* have even invented a verb for rambling around El Raval: *ravalejar*.

The northern half of El Raval has an almost respectable air about it. Spend a morning wandering around the art shops on the streets around Carrer del Pintor Fortuny, lunching in the colourful Mercat de la Boqueria, and dedicate a few hours to the fascinating Macba. Join the set of people-watchers on the terraces along Rambla del Raval and check out the strip's assortment of bars and the striking cylindrical designer hotel Barceló Raval and its fashionable restaurant.

Night-time is El Raval's forte, and not only because of all the illicit activities taking place under the shroud of darkness. This is where you'll find some of the more eccentric, trendy and ancient bars and clubs. The better part of Universitat de Barcelona's faculties is nearby and fills the bars and clubs along Carrer de Valldonzella and Carrer de Joaquín Costa.

The area between Carrer de l'Hospital and the waterfront – also known as Barri Xino – retains its dodgy flavour of yore. The area around Carrer de Sant Pau remains a haunt of junkies and dealers, and Carrer de Sant Ramon is particularly busy with prostitutes. The national cinema, Filmoteca de Catalunya, has been relocated to the area bounded by the Carrer de Sant Pau and the Carrer de Sant Rafael in an attempt to change the face of this part of town. Despite its slight edginess, you shouldn't miss this part of El Raval – several fine old bars have stood the test of time in these streets.

## Local Life

➔ **Market Lunch** Don't miss La Boqueria's food – either queue up and buy some fresh produce and cook it yourself, or sit down at a stall and let the local chefs shower you with Catalan delicacies.

➔ **Vintage Shops** El Raval is the epicentre of Barcelona's fascination with all things vintage – in particular, you'll find plenty of second-hand shops along the pedestrian Carrer de la Riera Baixa.

➔ **Sugar Rush** Locals swear that the best chocolate in town is to be had at Granja M Viader.

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Underground Rail** El Raval is encircled by three metro lines. Lines 1, 2 and 3 stop at strategic points around the district, so nothing is far from a metro stop. The Line 3 stop at Liceu is a convenient exit point.