

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** (p124).
- 2 Witnessing ground-breaking architecture at **La Pedrera** (p131).
- 3 Marvelling at the almost-alive, swirling interior of the **Casa Batlló** (p130).
- 4 Deciphering contemporary art at the fascinating **Fundació Antoni Tàpies** (p129).
- 5 Admiring a lesser-known masterpiece of Modernisme at the **Recinte Modernista de Sant Pau** (p133).



For more detail of this area see maps on p290 and p294 ➔

Explore: L'Eixample

L'Eixample's grid of streets is home to most of the city's most expensive shops and hotels, and range of restaurants and bars. This is where you'll find most Modernista architecture, most spectacularly along Passeig de Gràcia, where you'll find Gaudí's La Pedrera and the Manzana de la Discordia, which comprises three Modernista gems by the three top architects of the period.

Eating is at the high end, while drinking and nightlife are student- and gay-oriented. The obvious streets to start on are Passeig de Gràcia (with a line-up of international names) and the appealing, parallel, tree-lined Rambla de Catalunya. La Dreta (the Right) de L'Eixample, stretching from Passeig de Gràcia to Passeig de Sant Joan and beyond, contains much sought-after real estate. Beyond, it takes on a dowdy feel, even around La Sagrada Família. L'Esquerra (the Left) de L'Eixample, running southwest from Passeig de Gràcia, changes character several times. The whole area between Carrer d'Aribau, Passeig de Sant Joan, Avinguda Diagonal and the Ronda de Sant Pere has been known since the early 20th century as the Quadrat d'Or (Golden Square) thanks to its extravagant architecture and grand houses. The area is now home to high-end shops selling a wide range, 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, with a range of bars north of Carrer de Mallorca (and spilling north over Avinguda Diagonal). 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 Balma and Carrer de Muntaner.

Local Life

- ➔ **Student life** The presence of the Universitat de Barcelona (p131) makes for a line of unpretentious hang-outs nearby on the Carrer d'Enric Granados.
- ➔ **Coffee with a view** Take a lift to the very top of El Corte Inglés (p144) for a cafe with a great view.
- ➔ **Say it with flowers** Walking round the Flores Navarro (p142), a cathedral to colourful plant life, is quite a trip at 4am.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** Four metro lines criss-cross L'Eixample, three stopping at Passeig de Gràcia for the Manzana de la Discordia. 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 *menú del día* (daily set menu), which, although simpler in choice, is always good value.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Tapas 24 (p137)
- ➔ Can Kenji (p137)
- ➔ Cinc Sentits (p136)
- ➔ Cata 1.81 (p136)
- ➔ Cerveseria Catalana (p134)

For reviews, see p134 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Dry Martini (p138)
- ➔ Monvínic (p138)
- ➔ Milano (p138)
- ➔ Les Gens Que J'Aime (p140)

For reviews, see p138 ➔

Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Vinçon (p141)
- ➔ Flores Navarro (p142)
- ➔ El Boulevard dels Antiquaris (p142)
- ➔ Joan Múrria (p142)

For reviews, see p141 ➔