



Catalonia

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COSTA DAURADA & AROUND	349
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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ El Cellar de Can Roca (p316)
- ➔ Cal Ton (p355)
- ➔ La Cuina de Can Simon (p303)
- ➔ El Jardinet (p344)
- ➔ Can Ventura (p335)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Mil Estrelles (p315)
- ➔ Parador Ducs de Cardona (p347)
- ➔ Hotel Durán (p324)
- ➔ Hotel Els Caçadors (p333)
- ➔ Villa Paulita (p334)

Why Go?

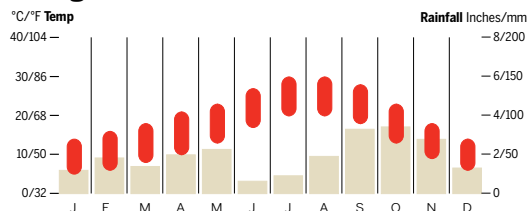
Catalonia feels distinct from the rest of Spain, and its four provinces enclose an impressive wealth of natural splendour. Pyrenean peaks loom above meadows and fertile vineyards, plains are pock-marked with volcanic cones, and rocky coves punctuate sandy beaches.

The Costa Brava's shores are its biggest lure, though travellers will also discover medieval architecture and Jewish history in Girona and Besalú, and Salvador Dalí's gloriously surreal 'theatre-museum' in Figueres.

For adventure, head north where the Pyrenees rise to 3000m peaks. Here, hiking trails weave among valleys and lonely villages are crowned with Romanesque churches and monasteries. Stepping even further back in time, the Roman and Greek ruins of Tarragona and Empúries are among Spain's most impressive. And an entirely different landscape awaits in the Delta de l'Ebre's shimmering wetlands, home to flocks of pirouetting flamingos.

When to Go

Tarragona



May The Costa Brava's beaches are free from crowds, though the water is a little chilly.

Sep The Catalan Pyrenees are aflame in autumnal colours, and the hiking is perfect.

Oct–Nov The museums and galleries of the Dalí circuit are at their quiet best.



Catalonia Highlights

- 1 Begur** (p310)
Discovering secret coves.
- 2 Teatre-Museu Dalí**
(p322) Contemplating Dalí's theatre of the absurd in Figueres.
- 3 Parc Nacional d'Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici** (p339)
Conquering the trails in Catalonia's sole national park.
- 4 Cistercian Route** (p348)
Admiring stately monasteries along this hilly driving route.
- 5 Sitges** (p349) Partying hard in this upbeat, gay-friendly seaside town.
- 6 Girona** (p312) Exploring medieval laneways and thrilling museums.
- 7 Delta de l'Ebre** (p359)

Watching flocks of flamingos turn the skies pink.

8 Olot (p326) Feeling a rumble beneath your feet in volcano-carved hills.

9 Illes Medes (p317) Diving into a marine wonderland.

10 Tarragona (p355)
Gawking at Roman ruins right in the centre of a lively city.