



LEGENDS FROM LONG AGO

Barcelona was first settled over 2,000 years ago, so it's no wonder there are so many legends around town. Take the time trail to find some spots associated with tales from long ago.



CARRER GRAN DE GRÀCIA

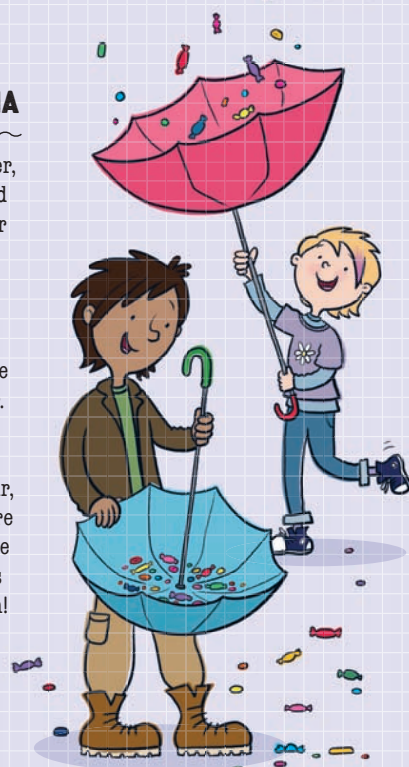


CASA DE LES PUNXES

SWEET STORY

CARRER GRAN DE GRÀCIA

In 1828, Josep Vidal i Granés, a baker, fell ill in a district of Barcelona called Gràcia. He vowed that if he got better he would make an annual trip to the St. Medir Hermitage. When he recovered, he set off, and on his return he threw broad beans to everyone in the street. Why? Because they figure in the legend of St. Medir. Over time the baker's pilgrimage has turned into a big springtime street parade called the Festival of St. Medir, and sweets instead of broad beans are thrown out to everyone on the parade route. There are so many sweets, it's called *pluja de caramels* – candy rain!



THE DRAGON DESTROYER

CASA DE LES PUNXES

This medieval-looking building gets its name, which means the House of Spikes, from its pointed rooftop. It was designed over a hundred years ago to look like the kind of castle where a knightly hero such as Sant Jordi (Saint George) would live. Inside there is an exhibition on Barcelona's favourite Saint, said to have been a brave knight who saved a princess by killing a dragon with his holy sword.

RED ROSES GREW WHERE THE DRAGON'S BLOOD WAS SPILT, AND GEORGE GAVE ONE TO THE PRINCESS. THAT'S WHY ON SAINT JORDI DAY (23 APRIL) BARCELONA'S ROMANTIC MEN GIVE RED ROSES TO THEIR SWEETHEARTS.



THE TREE CHUCKER

PLAÇA DEL PI

This city square takes its name from the pine tree that grows there. Legend has it that a giant once came to the city gates, using an uprooted pine tree as a staff to help him walk. The gatekeepers thought he was going to chop up the tree and sell the wood, so they demanded that he pay a tax. The angry giant lost his temper and threw the tree over the city walls. It landed in the square and began to grow.

PLAÇA DEL PI



KING AND QUEEN OF GIANTS

ALL OVER BARCELONA

Gegants (giants) play a part in most Barcelona festivals, parading through town and dancing for the crowds. They represent characters from the Bible, history and legend. The city has its own official *gegants*, King Jaume (James) and his wife Violant, who always take part in the big La Mercè Festival in September (see page 28). In the 1200s, King Jaume I saved Barcelona from French forces and earned his status as a hero of the city. The *gegant* king and queen live in the City Hall when they are not parading.



ALL OVER BARCELONA



GAUDÍ TOWN

Antoni Gaudí is one of Barcelona's great artistic heroes. He designed some famous Barcelona buildings, a park and an incredible cathedral that is still being finished. His work features dragons and sea monsters, magical forests and seaweed. Follow in his footsteps to discover some of his secrets.



GÜELL PAVILIONS



A DRAGON AT THE GATE

THE DRAGON GATE, GÜELL PAVILIONS

Gaudí loved using dragons in his work. This striking gateway he designed represents a mythical dragon guarding a magical garden – the Garden of the Hesperides – where golden apples grew. The dragon looks hungry, with his gaping mouth and forked tongue sticking out! In the Greek myth his name was Ladon.

MOSAIC CASTLE

TORRE BELLESGUARD, CARRER DE BELLESGUARD

The site of this medieval-looking building was once a real castle belonging to a Barcelona king called Martin the Humane. Gaudí was inspired by the old castle when he built the new version, but he added his own style, too. He liked to decorate his buildings with bright mosaic pieces, called *trencadis*, and there are lots around the home, some on the very top of the high tower.

CARRER DE BELLESGUARD



GAUDÍ COPIED NATURE ON HIS BUILDINGS, MAKING PARTS OF THEM LOOK LIKE NATURAL OBJECTS SUCH AS SHELLS, SEAWEED AND CORAL. HIS STYLE IS CALLED *MODERNISME*.

MEET THE MAN

THE GAUDÍ EXPERIENCE, CARRER DE LARRARD

Here you can put on a 4D headset and enter the virtual reality world of Gaudí, walking through the streets he knew and watching him work, or flying over the town like a bird to see his creations. Afterwards, you can even take a selfie next to his statue sitting on a bench.



CARRER DE LARRARD

PARK GÜELL

SIT ON A SERPENT

PARK GÜELL

Gaudí's park is like no other in the world. Visitors can walk through a forest of stone trees, and there's even a tiled bench shaped like a sea serpent, where people stop to get a great view over the town. There's also a fairytale caretaker's house and a giant lizard nicknamed *el drac* (the dragon) at the entrance.



400 VISITORS EVERY 30 MINUTES



THE BIG SERPENT-SHAPED PARK BENCH HAS DIPS ALONG IT FOR SITTING COMFORTABLY. THE STORY GOES THAT WHEN IT WAS FIRST MADE ONE OF THE PARK WORKMEN TOOK OFF HIS TROUSERS AND SAT IN THE WET PLASTER TO MAKE COMFY BOTTOM SHAPES.



BLESSED BUILDING SITE

SAGRADA FAMÍLIA, PLAÇA DE GAUDÍ

Gaudí's church, the Sagrada Família, is the most famous unfinished building in the world. It was begun in 1882, and architects are aiming to finish it in 2026, the 100th anniversary of Gaudí's death.

CHURCH OF CURVES

Gaudí wanted the basilica to celebrate the natural world, which he thought was created by God. There are no straight lines in the design because Gaudí said there were none in nature.



PRESENT HEIGHT
135M / 443FT

NATURE ALL AROUND

The nave of the church looks like a giant forest and the ceiling is covered with leaves. All around the building there are animals to spot, such as snakes, lizards, snails, birds and farm animals.



SAGRADA FAMÍLIA

FINAL HEIGHT
172.5M / 566FT

TOP BIRD SPOT

Gaudí used mountainsides as inspiration for the basilica walls, so he would probably be pleased that peregrine falcons, usually found nesting on high cliffs, build nests on the bell tower of the unfinished church every year. You can watch them and their chicks via a webcam.



AFTER COMPLETION
SAGRADA FAMÍLIA WILL HAVE:

18 TOWERS

13,000



PEOPLE CAPACITY



SAGRADA OBSESSION

GAUDÍ BEGAN THE BASILICA PLANS AGED 31. AND IN HIS LATER YEARS HE ENDED UP LIVING IN A SMALL HOUSE ON THE BUILDING SITE. HE EVENTUALLY GOT SO OBSESSED BY THE WORK THAT HE STOPPED LOOKING AFTER HIMSELF. HE HARDLY ATE AND HE DRESSED LIKE A HOMELESS PERSON, WEARING MOULDY SUITS AND SHOES MADE OF WOVEN PLANT ROOTS.

MAGIC MATHS

On one of the walls outside the church, there's a square of numbers. When you add up the numbers horizontally or vertically, they total 33 – the age at which Jesus is said to have died.

1	14	14	4
11	7	6	9
8	10	10	5
13	2	3	15





WATERY WAY

Barcelona sits by the sparkling Mediterranean Sea. Take a walk along the shoreline to discover the sights and sounds of the city's sea life.



START

BARCELONETA BEACH



DAYS OF SAND AND SUNSHINE

BARCELONETA BEACH

Barceloneta is Barcelona's beach neighbourhood. There's always lots of fun going on, from skateboarding and beach volleyball to paddle boarding. All the way along there are *chiringuitos* (beach bars), perfect for a cooling drink or an ice cream.



BARCELONETA WASN'T ALWAYS A POPULAR BEACHFRONT. IT WAS ONCE A POOR SHANTY TOWN RECLAIMED FROM BOGGY SMELLY MUFLATS. PIRATES USED TO LURK HERE, SPYING ON SHIPS AND PLOTTING ATTACKS.



56M (184 FT) LONG
35M (115 FT) HIGH

A FISHY GIANT

FISH, BARCELONETA BEACH

Barcelona has its own giant goldfish. It's a sculpture called *Peix* (Fish) by Frank Gehry and it sits looking out over the sea, as if it's about to jump in for a swim. It's made of golden-coloured stainless steel strips that look like scales when the sunlight reflects off them.

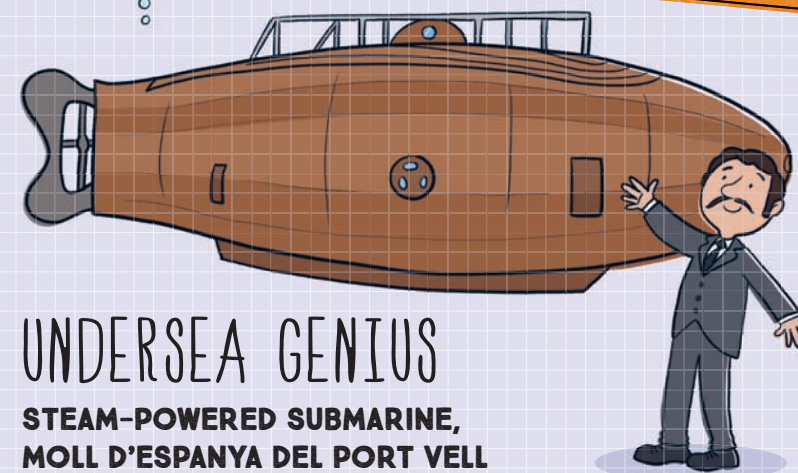
BARCELONETA BEACH



BARCELONETA HAS ITS OWN FLAG, WHICH YOU CAN SPOT FLYING AROUND THE AREA. IT HAS A SHIP AND A Lighthouse ON IT.



MOLL D'ESPANYA DEL PORT VELL



UNDERSEA GENIUS

STEAM-POWERED SUBMARINE, MOLL D'ESPANYA DEL PORT VELL

In 1862, a Barcelona inventor called Narcís Monturiol i Estarriol began experimenting in the harbour with the world's first engine-powered submarine. It was called *Ictíneo II*, and because Monturiol couldn't afford to build it with metal he used olive wood. He made many successful dives around the harbour but he eventually ran out of money and his sub was sold for scrap. There's a replica of it down by the sea.

SWEETS AND SINGING

FESTA MAJOR DE BARCELONETA, PLAÇA DE LA BARCELONETA

Barceloneta has its own festival at the end of September. There is a parade with fiery devils, *gegants* and a big sweetie cannon that shoots sweets at the crowd, fired by someone dressed as a historical general. Barceloneta's *gegants* are Pep Barceló, a giant fisherman, and Maria la Neta, who carries a basket of fish on her head.

PLAÇA DE LA BARCELONETA





WINNING CITY

Barcelona has one of the world's best-known football teams, but did you know that it also has some of the world's best competitive human-castle builders? On your marks for the sports trail. Get set. Go!



99,354
CROWD CAPACITY



Barcelona won a world-record six major football trophies in the 2008-9 season.

CAMP NOU

SPOT THE SHIRTS

Barcelona play in claret and blue. Its supporters call the colours the *blaugrana*. The club's motto is *Més que un club*. It means 'more than a club'. The club badge shows the Catalan flag, the cross of Saint George, the team colours and a football.



SOCCER CITY

CAMP NOU

FC Barcelona is one of the world's best football clubs, so it's not surprising that the city is soccer-mad. The team is nicknamed *Barça*, and it's based in the famous Camp Nou, the biggest stadium in Europe.

THE NAME CAMP NOU MEANS 'NEW STADIUM' BUT IT WAS FIRST OPENED IN 1957. THE CLUB ITSELF WAS FOUNDED IN 1899 BY A SWISS FOOTBALL FAN.

SING FOR BARÇA

The club anthem is usually sung at matches. Here's an English translation of some of the words:

"We all agree! We all agree!
One flag seals our brotherhood:
Blue and claret in the wind.
Our cry is bold. We have a name
That everybody knows.
Barça! Barça! Barça!"

THE BIG MATCH

Every year Barcelona play their big rivals, Real Madrid. The game is called *El Clásico*, and it's watched all over the world. It's one of the most watched football games in the world, along with the Champion's League Final.



TOP TRAINING

LA MASIA IS THE CLUB'S SOCCER ACADEMY, WHERE YOUNG FOOTBALLERS TRAIN TO PLAY BARCELONA-STYLE. WORLD-BEATING FOOTBALLERS SUCH AS LIONEL MESSI LEARNED THE GAME HERE. HE HAS WON THE WORLD FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR AWARD A RECORD FIVE TIMES - THE SAME AS REAL MADRID'S CRISTIANO RONALDO.

