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## TRAVEL TO BARCELONA, CITY THAT STILL BELONGS TO SPAIN

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**Abstract** - For more than 20 years, « Turisme de Barcelona » has been compiling indicators about tourist activity in the city based on fieldwork carried out in house and already existing sources. The main results are obtained by conducting surveys of hotel managers and tourists visiting the city. The data generated has been gathered in reports and publications since 1989. The multiplier effect of tourism on the economy of the Barcelona city and the province is very significant: 25% of the impact affects sectors not directly considered as tourism. In terms of demand, the variety of profiles is very wide, which helps reduce seasonality in activity during the week and throughout the year. Tourism in Barcelona is characterised by a wide variety of departure origins and by its international market trends, which has not stopped growing: 80% of tourism demand comes from overseas markets. In doing so, we've concentrated on answering your most important questions on transport, accommodation, activities and attractions.

**Keywords:** grow, heritage, province, travel, tourism,

### INTRODUCTION

This Barcelona tourism and travel information is updated daily and includes money and time saving tips from people living in Barcelona city so check back frequently for valuable updates.

If you have any questions about your trip take a look at our *frequently asked questions section (FAQ)* with hundreds of popular questions already answered it can help you quickly find the answers you need.

In addition to essential Barcelona tourism information, you will also find dozens of time and money saving tips from local people - information hard to find anywhere else. These special tips will make your Barcelona city break that much more special.

Each year thousands of football fans from all over the world flock to Camp Nou - the home of Barcelona FC. With the stadium's capacity of almost 100,000 people, the grounds are a Mecca for football fans around the world. I visited the stadium on a normal Thursday afternoon in February to find out all about the now infamous Barcelona FC Stadium and Museum Tour. This tour is the most popular of all tours in Barcelona. There was no match taking place on the day that I visited, but still crowds of fans were at the stadium, paying their respects to the 'shrine to football' in Barcelona. It's true to say that Camp Nou is more than just a stadium, just as Barcelona FC is said to be 'more than just a club'.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

To help us find the answers as quickly as possible, Barcelona tourist information has been grouped into 2 main categories:

**1)** If you've **already made your decision** to come to Barcelona then I recommend you go to the top of the page and type in your question into the search bar. This search bar will search every page on our site (of which we have several thousand pages) and present you with the answers to your questions. This is the **single quickest and easiest way for you to find answers to your questions**. Alternatively you can search through our menu on the left hand side. Please be aware however that we have many more thousands of pages that we can't put links to on the left menu and you are more than likely going to miss what you are searching for this way.

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2) If you need **help in making your decision** whether Barcelona is the right destination for you we recommend you visit our photo Barcelona map that has over 500 photos of the top Barcelona tourism attractions linked directly to the map. Using the interactive map will show you first hand the most important landmarks and attractions - it's almost as if you were walking around the locations for yourself. I've also included guide notes to give you information on each of the sites and areas.

	2014	2013	% Var 14/13
Tourists in hotels	7,874,941	7,571,766	4.0%
1. Spain	1,618,007	1,517,378	6.6%
2. France	680,415	636,903	6.8%
3. United Kingdom	676,867	629,969	7.4%
4. United States	654,131	627,412	4.3%
5. Germany	486,416	453,102	7.4%

Source: *Turisme de Barcelona* based on data from Idescat and the INE

As with food in general on Barcelona, prices are quite high (dinner mains start at around €20.00). However, I went to try the restaurant's Menu del Dia - a three course set menu, costing €10.00. What the food lacked in quality, it made up for in quantity and nice touches - free olives at the start of the meal and a plate of cake and biscuits at the end were a welcome surprise at such affordable rates.

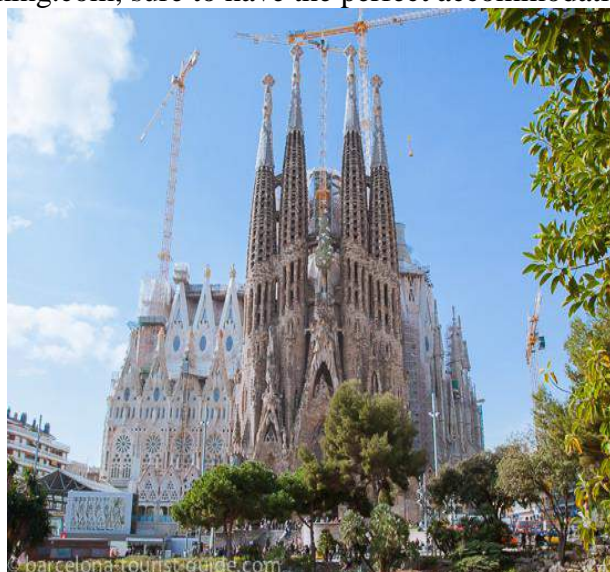
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Lively and colourful Barcelona faces the Mediterranean Sea and features the world's top city beaches, including Sant Sebastià, Barceloneta and Somorrostro beaches. There is plenty to see and experience in this city of great architecture: the historic Gothic Quarter, the amazing modernist design of Gaudi's creations and the popular Las Ramblas.

Barcelona is famous for its street performances, colourful markets and great Catalan dining. Easy to explore on foot or using the reliable metro, the city is full of things to do and views to see!

Discover the hidden squares and architectural pearls of Ciutat Vella and visit the locals' favourite meeting spot, La Plaça Catalunya. Wander the sunny beachfront or watch an FC Barcelona game at Camp Nou, the largest stadium in Europe.

The city's most popular food quarter is Barceloneta with plenty of popular restaurants serving seafood and tapas. If it's shopping you're after, visit the Gràcia and return to the Ciutat Vella for small shops full genuine souvenirs, designer fashion and fresh produce. Getting to Barcelona is an easy trip from El Prat International, Girona or Reus Airports. Find modern hotels, fancy apartments and cheap hostels on Booking.com, sure to have the perfect accommodation for your holiday!



*Sagrada Familia Basilica*

## La Sagrada Familia

Its multicolored towers piercing the blue sky, La Sagrada Familia is no doubt the most iconic structure in Barcelona. The church, located in L'Eixample, has been a fixture in Barcelona since construction commenced in 1882 and as building continues on today the structure's fame only grows.

Though still a work in progress, the church already is an amazingly intricate structure. Antoni Gaudí spent 43 years on this project and, since his death in 1926, the duty to finish it has been passed on to several architects. Though the responsibility continues to change hands over the years, the architects have all respected Gaudí's vision and have made additions with his design in mind.

While most of the work has been done to the exterior, there is still much to see inside the church. Impressive stained glass windows line the main room and a lift takes visitors up one of the towers to enjoy the view. Smaller rooms hold exhibits detailing the history and future of the structure. La Sagrada Familia is projected to be completed in 2026, the 100th anniversary of Gaudí.

The finished product will have 18 towers: 12 for the apostles, 4 for the evangelists, 1 for the Virgin Mary and 1 for Jesus Christ. The tallest, saved for Jesus Christ, will stand more than 1.5 times higher than the existing tallest tower. Already the tallest building in the area, La Sagrada Familia will surely not be hard to find! Some edits to Gaudí's original plan have been made though, as his models were lost in a fire that destroyed his workshop during the Spanish Civil War.

Explore the beauty of Barcelona on this Best of Barcelona Tour, which offers a comprehensive view of this exquisite Catalan city, including a visit to La Sagrada Familia. Perfect for first-time visitors, the tour will show you the city's most iconic sights and allow you to discover some of Barcelona's best-kept secrets. You'll enjoy skip-the-line access at La Sagrada Familia, so you can avoid the long queues at this popular attraction. You'll also visit the hill of Montjuïc and the Gothic Quarter. On this small-group tour, you'll receive personalized attention from your guide.

### Highlights

- Full-day or half-day sightseeing tour of Barcelona
- Skip-the-line access to La Sagrada Familia
- Panoramic view of Barcelona from Montjuïc hill
- Drive through the Eixample, Barcelona's modernist centre
- Walking tour of Barcelona's Gothic Quarter, including the 2,000-year-old Roman temple
- Why our insiders chose this tour.

Look no further if you want a superb highlights tour! Whether you have a full day or just a morning, this small-group experience shows you Barcelona's most distinctive neighbourhoods and allows you to bypass the long lines at La Sagrada Familia.

Start with a drive to Barcelona's famous hill of Montjuïc, the site of the 1992 Olympic Games, which offers excellent views over the city. After a brief stop at the Catalunya National Art Museum, continue down to Plaça Espanya and on past the modernist buildings of the Eixample area.

On your way to the Sagrada Familia, you'll go through Passeig de Gracia, home to designer stores and two of Barcelona's most renowned Antonio Gaudí buildings – La Pedrera and Casa Batlló.

Skip the line at La Sagrada Familia and avoid the very long queues. Your guide will give you a comprehensive tour of the exterior before taking you straight past the long lines and into the magnificent interior of this famous structure, where you will have some free time to explore on your own.

You'll then head to the oldest part of Barcelona, the Gothic Quarter, where you'll leave the bus and enjoy a stroll through the narrow streets of medieval Barcelona. From there, travel back to the early Middle Ages, visiting the Jewish Quarter, the Royal Palace, the original 2,000-year-old Roman temple and part of the Cathedral.

Continue to the *Born* district, where you'll have free time for a quick lunch before heading to the magnificent Santa Maria del Mar church, one of the most beautiful in Barcelona, where your tour ends at approximately 1pm.

## CONCLUSIONS

Barcelona is one of the main urban tourist destinations in the world. Its ability to attract tourism is a driver for a much larger area and this contributes to its development. Barcelona has to carry out the role of capital of Catalonia and the Mediterranean.

For visitors, Barcelona represents a variety of tourist attractions and sites that can be visited from wherever the tourist is staying. Barcelona's area of influence has a rich collection of tourism elements that make it a powerful international leader with excellent infrastructure that also provides services to a wider area. But Barcelona is much more than the city. The province of Barcelona offers a world of possibilities to enjoy leisure activities, culture and nature. Barcelona Coast, Barcelona Countryside and Barcelona Pyrenees are the three tourism brands used in the wider province of Barcelona which has eighteen tourism areas including sea and beaches, inland countryside, art and cultural heritage, and *enotourism*, as well as the rich history of an important industrial past, of traditions, commercial activities, and more. Barcelona is a valuable asset in terms of tourism and for this reason there is a lot of effort being put into mutual collaboration between the city and the wider area it influences, based on a win-win approach that can be beneficial for both parties. From a customer-orientated perspective, which is understood well by tourism business owners in the city, further efforts are being made to develop the competitiveness of Barcelona's tourism.

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