



Welcome to Catalonia





# Catalonia, a destination with quality and character

Welcome to Catalonia, a land at the leading edge which is eager to offer you hospitality and give you such an unforgettable stay that you will want to come again. Catalonia greets you with its beautiful scenery, its rich cultural heritage and, above all, its open-minded, enterprising people. The thriving Catalan economy has always made our country a pole of attraction, a land that looks outwards, beyond its borders, towards the horizon.

A land of progress, well-being and hospitality. Catalonia was a driving force behind the economic activity and industrialization of 19th and 20th century Spain and nowadays it plays the same role in the new economy of the 21st century. Today, as in the past, ours is a land of encounter, a hospitable land where cultures from all over the world live side by side, a land with an open outlook, which sees tourism as a great bridge towards mutual knowledge and understanding, contact and exchange.

Catalonia, the seal of quality. Catalonia has consolidated its position as a leading tourist destination by offering one key premium: quality. Entrepreneurs and government work as a team to provide a wide range of facilities giving top-rate service. Our efforts are focused on a model that is both competitive and environmentally sustainable. Every year we train thousands of professionals to offer the finest and most attentive service to all our guests.

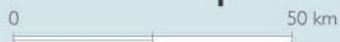
Catalunya, a diverse land. Besides the charms of its beaches and mountains, Catalonia offers other more up-to-date attractions: the worldwide prestige of its cuisine and wines, for instance, or Barcelona, which is now one of the most popular city tourism destinations, or the successful centenary celebrations of artists such as Antoni Gaudí or Salvador Dalí. All this is clear proof that Catalonia is a diverse and modern country offering an extensive selection of top-notch products.

Catalonia, several countries in one. We invite you to see it with your own eyes.





*Mediterranean Sea*





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# The strength of identity

Catalonia is a small country in terms of size. But its personality, shaped by over a thousand years of history, and its distinct culture and language, have made it both rich and great. Catalonia's origins as a geographical, territorial and linguistic unit date back to the high Middle Ages.

Catalonia's own language is Catalan. The origins of the Catalan language date back to the early Middle Ages.

## **Catalonia, a European country**

Catalonia lies in the north-east part of the Iberian peninsula. It has over seven million inhabitants and occupies an area of 31,980 km<sup>2</sup>, comparable to Belgium, the Netherlands or Switzerland. Over the centuries, the Catalan nation has enjoyed different degrees of sovereignty under the political institutions and forms of government proper to each era.

Nowadays the Generalitat, or autonomous government, is Catalonia's organ of government. It comprises a President, an Executive, and a Parliament, which is one of the most ancient in Europe. Its jurisdiction is defined by a Statute of Autonomy and it shares political power with the institutions of the Spanish state.



The Museu d'Història de Catalunya and the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (right).

## MUSEUMS

### **Museu Arqueològic de Catalunya (MAC)**

The MAC's mission is to conserve, study and disseminate archaeological remains illustrating historical evolution, from prehistoric times to the medieval period.

[www.mac.es](http://www.mac.es)

### **Museu d'Història de Catalunya**

The Museum's permanent collection is organised as a journey through Catalan history, from prehistoric times to the present day.

[www.mhcat.net](http://www.mhcat.net)

### **Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)**

The MNAC collections take visitors through 1,000 years of Catalan, Spanish and European art from the 11th to the 20th centuries.

[www.mnac.es](http://www.mnac.es)

## Catalonia's thousands of years of history

In the course of several millennia, Catalonia has witnessed the arrival of many different peoples including the Iberians, the Celts, the Greeks – who founded the colonies of Rhodes (Roses) and Empúries – the Romans – who set up one of their provincial capitals at Tarragona –, the Visigoths and the Arabs. In the 12th century, a dynastic marriage between the counts of Barcelona and the kings

of Aragon gave rise to the kingdom of Catalonia and Aragon, which built a medieval maritime and commercial empire in the Mediterranean. The crown of Catalonia and Aragon retained its distinct political and legal identity until Philip V became king of Spain in 1714.

Since then the Catalan people have been engaged in a peaceful struggle to win back their rights and freedoms. One of the most significant episodes was the recovery of self-government in 1979, when the Spanish parliament approved the current Statute of Autonomy, which was subsequently endorsed by the Catalan people in a referendum.

## The language, a sign of identity

Catalonia's own language is Catalan. This has been the case since the 12th century. When democracy was restored in 1979, Catalan and Spanish were both recognized as official languages in Catalonia. The origins of the Catalan language date back to the early Middle Ages. Despite periods of prohibition and repression, the majority of Catalans still use it today.



MUSEU D'ART CONTEMPORANI DE BARCELONA



# Catalonia,

## a universal heritage

There are clear parallels between Catalonia's periods of splendour and the proximity of Catalan art forms to those predominant elsewhere in Europe: classical art when Hispania Tarraconensis became one of the foremost provinces in the Roman empire; Romanesque art at the time of Catalonia's birth as a nation; Gothic art and the great medieval and pre-Renaissance literature when Catalonia dominated the Western Mediterranean; and Modernism – Catalan Art Nouveau – in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the time of Catalonia's national rebirth and the rise of its industrial bourgeoisie. Similarly, during the first three decades and the second half of the 20th century, the contributions of artists born or trained in Catalonia were decisive to the development of the European artistic avant-gardes.

Romanesque was the art form which coincided with Catalonia's birth and early development and the formation of the Catalan language.

### **When Catalonia was not yet Catalonia**

Catalonia's prehistoric heritage contains much that is of note: numerous Mediterranean Basin cave paintings which have been declared part of the UNESCO world heritage; the deep imprint left by the ancient Iberian culture, notably the settlement at Ullastret; and the vestiges of

the Greek and Roman cultures, at the Graeco-Roman site of Empúries and in the Roman city of Tarragona, another UNESCO world heritage site. Many finds are on show in the archeological museums, first and foremost the Museu Nacional Arqueològic in Tarragona. The less plentiful Visigothic legacy is concentrated in Terrassa, while traces of the presence of Muslims are most noticeable in Tortosa, the Terres de l'Ebre, and Lleida and its area of influence.

## THE BONS HOMES PATH

The Cathars –who referred to themselves as the “Good Men”, bons homes in Catalan– came to Catalonia in the 12th-14th centuries from Occitania (Languedoc), where they were persecuted by a Crusade against them and by the Inquisition. Here, however, they were welcomed by Catalan lords and nobles. A route signposted as GR-107 (long-distance footpath) links the Santuari de Queralt, near Berga, to legendary Castell de Montsegur in the French Ariège region, through the Parc Natural del Cadí-Moixeró, following the path the Cathars took into exile. The route, with some sections suitable for cars, others for walking, horse-riding and cycling, passes through such places as Bagà, Gósol and Bellver de Cerdanya

### Sites of interest along GR-107:

Queralt Sanctuary in Berga  
Gósol Castle  
Saldes  
Bagà  
Bellver de Cerdanya  
Church of Santa Maria de Talló  
(11th century) in Bellver  
Church of Sant Julià in Pedra  
Chapel of Sant Semi de Coborriu  
(12th century)

[www.camidelsbonshomes.com](http://www.camidelsbonshomes.com)

Most of the great medieval cathedrals were the emblematic seats of the powerful bishoprics which informed much of the Catalan territory in the feudal age.

### The beauty of Romanesque art

Romanesque was the art form which coincided with Catalonia's birth and early development and the formation of the Catalan language. It was strongly influenced by the Lombard style and spread from the Pyrenean valleys over much of the country. The churches of the Vall de Boí, the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes, and the cathedral of La Seu d'Urgell. But the most striking and memorable feature of our Romanesque legacy are the paintings and sculptures in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) in Barcelona.

### The splendour of Gothic art

Most of the great medieval cathedrals date from the Gothic period or slightly later. They were the emblematic seats of the powerful bishoprics which formed much of the Catalan territory in the feudal age. The most noteworthy are those of Barcelona, Tarragona, and Girona (the single nave of Girona cathedral is the widest in European Gothic architecture), along with those of Lleida and Tortosa. But the true paradigm of Catalan Gothic architecture, on account of the mathematical precision of its beautiful proportions, is the splendid church of Santa Maria del Mar in



Monestir de Santes Creus, which faithfully reproduces the Benedictine aesthetic.

## CISTERCIAN ROUTE

The Cistercian Order, which became established in Catalonia in the 12th century, emerged as part of a movement to renew monastic life in reaction to the wealth and refined conditions at many medieval monasteries. The kings of Catalonia and Aragon entrusted the Cistercians with the task of building large monasteries on lands recently conquered from the Moors in order to re-Christianise and cultivate them. Three Cistercian monasteries form a

route that also includes visits to the major towns nearby.

- Monestir de Santes Creus (1158) in Aiguamúrcia. It was fortified in the 14th century.
- Monestir de Poblet (1150) in Vimbodí is the largest inhabited Cistercian site in Europe.
- Monestir de Santa Maria de Vallbona (1176) in Vallbona de les Monges.

[www.larutadelcister.info](http://www.larutadelcister.info)

Gothic was also the age of the great chroniclers (King Jaume I, Muntaner and Desclot), of great poets (such as Ausias March from Valencia), and of novels such as Curial e Güelfa and Tirant lo Blanch. Together they constitute the Golden Age of Catalan literature.

Barcelona. The spectacular Cistercian monasteries –Poblet, Santes Creus and Vallbona de les Monges– are also in Gothic style –or Gothic-Romanesque transition style–, as is the monastery of Sant Cugat del Vallès and that of Pedralbes in Barcelona. Catalan Gothic painting also flourished during the late Middle Ages, assimilating influences from Burgundy, Flanders and Italy. The most distinguished Gothic painters include Jaume Huguet, Lluís Borrassà, Ferrer

Bassa and the Serra brothers. This was also the age of the great chroniclers (King Jaume I, Muntaner and Desclot), of great poets influenced by Petrarch (such as Ausiàs Marc from Valencia), and of novels such as Curial i Güelfa and Tirant lo Blanc (The White Knight). Together they constitute the Golden Age of Catalan literature.



La Sagrada Família  
and the Palau  
de la Música Catalana.

## The gems of Modernism

Gaudí is undoubtedly the most famous architect of Catalonia's Modernist movement. Much of his work has been included in the UNESCO world heritage and year after year it draws millions of visitors who gaze in fascination at the bone-like structures of Casa Batlló, the stone waves of Casa Milà (La Pedrera), the Sagrada Família, rising like a vertical hymn, or the dream-like landscapes of Parc Güell. But Gaudí is only part of the Modernist heritage:

other leading names include Domènech i Montaner, the creator of the Palau de la Música Catalana and the Hospital de Sant Pau, and Puig i Cadafalch, who designed some highly characteristic buildings. Though Barcelona was the epicentre of Modernism, there are Modernist buildings in many other Catalan cities, such as Girona, Lleida, Reus, Tarragona, Canet de Mar and Olot. Industrial buildings were also built in Modernist style, even in the countryside, notably the cooperative wineries of Conca de Barberà, Priorat and Terra Alta. The painters Casas and Rusiñol,

who were also Modernists, sensitised the public to the artistic influence of Paris, while writers like Verdager, Maragall, Guimerà, Rusiñol himself, and many others rebuilt Catalan literature on the basis of the everyday language –still very much alive– and the memory of the great medieval literature.



## CATALAN ART NOUVEAU

### **La Pedrera (1905-1910)**

The visit to Casa Milà –La Pedrera– includes the roof and attic as well as an apartment furnished in early 20th century style, providing a glimpse of Gaudí's style in interior decoration.

[www.fundacioaixacatalunya.org](http://www.fundacioaixacatalunya.org)

### **Casa Batlló (1904-1906)**

Behind the Casa Batlló's extraordinary Catalan Art Nouveau façade is a whole world of surprises and refined architectural detail. All the different features of this remarkable building seem to move, as if transformed into natural elements.

[www.casabatllo.es](http://www.casabatllo.es)

### **Sagrada Família**

This is Gaudí's unfinished masterpiece. Outstanding elements include the Nativity Façade, the stylised towers and the surprising spires.

[www.sagradafamilia.org](http://www.sagradafamilia.org)

### **Palau de la Música Catalana**

This building, conceived by Lluís Domènech i Montaner, was inaugurated in 1908 and is a veritable jewel of Catalan Art Nouveau, known here as Modernisme. It is the seat of the Orfeó Català, the choir founded in 1891, and is one of the world's most outstanding concert halls and the venue for regular seasons of symphony concerts.

[www.palaumusica.org](http://www.palaumusica.org)

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## **Contemporary heritage**

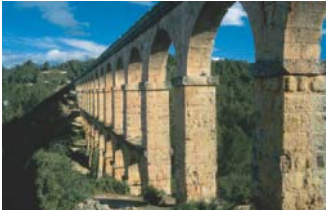
At the same time as the Noucentista movement –a classicist, learned, pro-European current of the first three decades of the 20th century–, an avant-garde reaction in tune with European trends got underway: Picasso and Cubism, Miró and Dalí and Surrealism. These artists spent much of their lives in Catalonia and many of their works are here. The same is true of other contemporary artists, notably Tàpies.

Catalan literature, which has produced poets such as Foix and Carner, narrators such as Josep Pla, and novelists such as Mercè Rodoreda, is part and

parcel of the great literary currents of recent times, though its development was abruptly cut short by the Spanish Civil War. Since the return of democracy, Catalonia's energy and creativity have been primarily reflected in the fields of city planning, design, drama and music, thanks to professionals of international renown and venues and institutions such as the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, L'Auditori, and Teatre Nacional de Catalunya.

## World Heritage

# WORLD HERITAGE SITES AND MONUMENTS IN CATALONIA



### Works by Antoni Gaudí

Casa Milà "La Pedrera"

[www.fundaciocaixacatalunya.org](http://www.fundaciocaixacatalunya.org)

Casa Batlló [www.casabatllo.cat](http://www.casabatllo.cat)

Sagrada Família: Nativity Façade and Crypt

[www.sagradafamilia.org](http://www.sagradafamilia.org)

Colònia Güell: Crypt

[www.rutadelmodernisme.com](http://www.rutadelmodernisme.com)

Park Güell

[www.rutadelmodernisme.com](http://www.rutadelmodernisme.com)

Palau Güell

[www.diba.es/palauguell/index.htm](http://www.diba.es/palauguell/index.htm)

Casa Vicens

[www.rutadelmodernisme.com](http://www.rutadelmodernisme.com)

### Works by Lluís Domènech i Montaner

Palau de la Música Catalana

[www.palaumusica.org](http://www.palaumusica.org)

Hospital de Sant Pau

[www.rutadelmodernisme.com](http://www.rutadelmodernisme.com)

### Poblet

Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Poblet

[www.larutadelcister.info](http://www.larutadelcister.info)

### Tarragona Archaeological Sites

Arc de Berà [www.mnat.es](http://www.mnat.es)

Torre dels Escipions [www.mnat.es](http://www.mnat.es)

Vil·la romana de Centelles

[www.constanti.altanet.org/centelles.htm](http://www.constanti.altanet.org/centelles.htm)

Museu Arqueològic [www.mnat.es](http://www.mnat.es)

Museu i Necròpolis Paleocristians [www.mnat.es](http://www.mnat.es)

Vil·la romana dels Munts [www.mnat.es](http://www.mnat.es)

Muralla romana. Passeig arqueològic

[www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Aqüeducte de "les Ferreres"

[www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Anfiteatre Romà

[www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Pretori (Forum provincial) [www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Pedrera del Mèdol [www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Fòrum de la Colònia [www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Circ romà [www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)

Temple [www.museutgn.org](http://www.museutgn.org)



### **Romanesque Churches in the Boí Valley**

Sant Climent and Santa Maria de Taüll  
[www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

Sant Joan de Boí [www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall  
[www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

Sant Feliu de Barruera [www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

Santa Maria de Cardet [www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

La Nativitat de la Mare de Déu de Durro and

Sant Quirze de Durro [www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

L'Assumpció del Còll [www.vallboi.com](http://www.vallboi.com)

### **Cave Paintings in the Mediterranean Zone**

Serra de Godall [www.ulldecona.org](http://www.ulldecona.org)  
[www.mac.es](http://www.mac.es)

Cave Paintings in the Prades Mountains  
[www.mccb.es](http://www.mccb.es) [www.mac.es](http://www.mac.es)

La Roca dels Moros [www.mac.es](http://www.mac.es)

### **INTANGIBLE HERITAGE**

Festival of the Patum of Berga  
[www.bergueda.com/lapatum](http://www.bergueda.com/lapatum)

### **BIOSPHERE RESERVE**

Parc Natural del Montseny  
[www.diba.cat/parcs/montseny.htm](http://www.diba.cat/parcs/montseny.htm)



# Catalan culture, identity and prestige

History and tradition have endowed Catalonia with a rich and attractive cultural fabric embracing the full gamut of the performing arts, from drama to the cinema, via all styles of musical creation. Catalonia also excels in artistic performance and interpretation and possesses second-to-none infrastructure in which the illustriousness of the past combines with state-of-the-art technology to create an ideal setting for performances by leading international stars.

Catalonia, open to all influences, is currently one of the laboratories in which the musical tastes of the new millennium are taking shape.

## **The Liceu: The phoenix**

The Gran Teatre del Liceu, overlooking the Rambla in Barcelona, has risen from its ashes after a devastating fire. Its audience of passionate opera-lovers, its cutting-edge equipment, and its opera and ballet programme —a tasteful blend of classical bel canto and Italian Romanticism, Wagner (a long-standing tradition in Barcelona), and 20th and 21st century forms of musical expression which delight the younger generations— make the

Liceu one of Europe's great opera houses.

The Liceu's own productions alternate sagaciously with coproductions with other European theatres, making it possible for the great opera and ballet companies of our times to appear there alongside a wide selection of top-flight singers who uphold the tradition of Montserrat Caballé, Jaume Aragall, Josep Pons and Josep Carreras.



### **El Palau de la Música Catalana**

With one hundred years of history, the Palau de la Música Catalana (1908) is one of the main focal points of Catalana musical life. [www.palaumusica.org](http://www.palaumusica.org)

### **El Gran Teatre del Liceu**

Founded in 1847 on Barcelona's la Rambla, the Gran Teatre del Liceu is an opera house that has retained its role as a culture and arts centre throughout its history and one that represents one of the symbols of the city. [www.liceubarcelona.com](http://www.liceubarcelona.com)

### **L'Auditori**

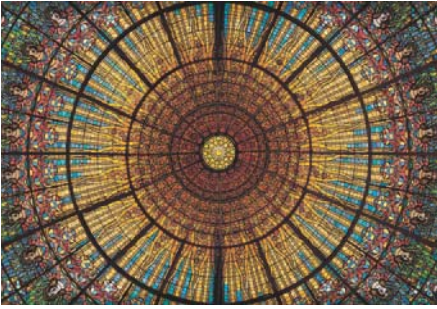
L'Auditori is the seat of the Barcelona Symphony and National Orchestra of Catalonia, the country's first permanent ensemble of its kind, and the venue for concerts every weekend from September to May. [www.auditori.org](http://www.auditori.org) [www.obc.es](http://www.obc.es)

## **Theatrical events**

The Catalan theatrical tradition dates back to the Middle Ages. Great Catalan-speaking playwrights and actors have earned prestige for both drama and theatrical venues all over the country. Catalonia has also played a pioneering role in experimentation and renovation.

Companies like Comediants, Els Joglars, Dagoll Dagom or the innovative Fura dels Baus are applauded far beyond our frontiers. Every summer sees a new edition of the open-air Teatre Grec festival on Montjuïc and the Fira del Teatre al Carrer (street drama festival) in Tàrraga. Plays by young writers have regained popularity, enabling new playwrights to emerge. Some, such as Sergi Belbel, have gained an international reputation.

Catalonia has also played a pioneering role in experimentation and renovation.



The Gran Teatre del Liceu, the central skylight of Barcelona's Palau de la Música Catalan, and L'Auditori.



## The musical tradition

Catalonia, with Barcelona at its forefront, has an established musical tradition. Its symbol is the Palau de la Música Catalana, a UNESCO world heritage building designed by the great Modernist architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner and recently enlarged by another famous architect, Òscar Tusquets. In latter years the supply of "serious" music has been extended by the opening of the Auditori, a building by Rafael Moneo which is the home of the Orquestra Ciutat de Barcelona i Nacional de Catalunya and the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya.

Catalonia has produced classical composers such as Enric Granados, Isaac Albéniz, Xavier Montsalvatge and Robert Gerhard and classical musicians including the cellist Pau Casals and the singer Victoria de los Ángeles. However, it also has a strong Flamenco tradition, embodied first and foremost by the *bailaora* Carmen Amaya and the singers Miguel Poveda and Ginesa Ortega, as well as a jazz tradition featuring such sensational performers as pianists Tete Montoliu and Agustí Fernández and percussionist Jordi Rossy.

## International festivals

Catalonia hosts film festivals, such as the Festival Internacional de Cinema de Sitges, and music festivals which take place in historic buildings and other places of special artistic interest (examples are the festival held in Peralada Castle or Barcelona's Festival Grec). Catalonia also opens its doors to fusion music, jazz, electronic music, and the so-called world music. All this, along with other key musical events such as Sònar—a festival of advanced music and multimedia art—has made it a landmark on the European music scene.

## INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVALS

### **Festival Internacional de Música Castell de Peralada**

The programme for this festival, which takes place in the castle grounds in July and August every year, includes around 25 performances: opera, ballet, concerts, recitals and chamber music. This is a truly festive festival, a veritable midsummer night's dream, every summer night.

[www.festivalperalada.com](http://www.festivalperalada.com)

### **Festival Internacional de Música Torroella de Montgrí**

This annual festival features a programme of around 30 concerts by outstanding solo artists, choirs and orchestras performing Baroque, Classical and Romantic music. The concerts take place in Sant Genís Church and in Plaça de la Vila (the main town square), both Gothic-Renaissance sites of outstanding architectural interest.

[www.festivaldetorroella.org](http://www.festivaldetorroella.org)

### **Festival Internacional de Música Cantonigròs**

This festival features competitions and exhibitions of mixed, women's and children's choirs as well as popular dance. Choirs and dance groups from all over the world enter for the different categories at this four-day event, which takes place in July every year.

[www.fimc.es](http://www.fimc.es)

### **Sónar**

Sónar is a festival celebrated in June where the public can enjoy the most current trends and most outstanding artists of the national and international electronic music scene.

[www.sonar.es](http://www.sonar.es)

## Music to suit the tastes of the new millennium

But Catalonia's greatest impact on present-day popular music stems from phenomena such as the Nova Cançó movement which is of great importance in Romance-language countries and Latin America, thanks primarily to singers such as Joan Manuel Serrat—who is idolized in the Southern Cone countries—, Lluís Llach and Raimon—who make frequent appearances in France and

Italy—, and Maria del Mar Bonet—one of the "divas" of Mediterranean song. Other significant factors are the vitality of the Barcelona music scene in the early 21st century—featuring the group Ojos de Brujo (flamenco-hip-hop-Catalan rumba-funk), Macaco, Dusminguet, and others—and recording experiments such as the Barcelona Raval Sessions (2003), a splendid reflection of the city's multiracial, multicultural pulse.

One last crucial factor is the fact that many internationally famous musicians have chosen Barcelona as their long-term, or even permanent, home: Manu

Chao, a former member of Mano Negra, the Brazilian Walter Pa, the American singer and composer Jackson Brown, the pianist Brad Meldhau (who was accompanied for many years by the Catalan percussionist Jordi Rossy), the jazz organist Lou Bennett, and the Cuban singer Lucrecia.

Catalonia, right on the border between north and south, open to all influences and capable of integrating them into a cultural discourse of its own, is currently one of the laboratories in which the musical tastes of the new millennium are taking shape.







# The Catalan coast,

## a window onto the Mediterranean

With some 580 kilometres of coastline, Catalonia is a fundamentally Mediterranean country.

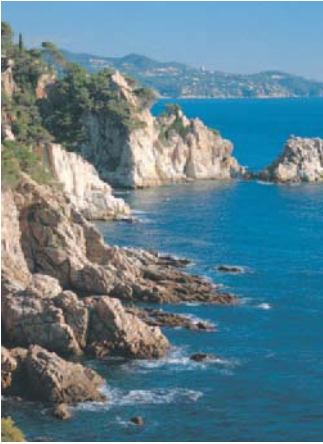
It has a wide variety of seascapes, ranging from the secluded coves of the Costa Brava in the north to the Costa Daurada with its long beaches of fine sand in the south. There are over 200 beaches and 43 marinas.

### The natural parks along the coast

Delta de l'Ebre, Cap de Creus, Aiguamolls de l'Empordà and Illes Medes are the main natural parks and protected areas on the Catalan seaboard. The Ebro Delta's great alluvial plain, covering approximately 320 km<sup>2</sup>, is one of the western Mediterranean's largest aquatic habitats. Part of it has been declared a natural park. The

characteristic vegetation —reed and rush beds and riverside woods— and the wide expanses of rice paddies and market gardens are home to an extraordinarily rich and varied fauna —notably waterfowl and seabirds— which has made it a favourite haunt for birdwatchers. The Cap de Creus, in Alt Empordà, is a protected area comprising both land and seashore and unusual geological formations. One of its prime attractions is the monastery of

Sant Pere de Rodes, built in the 10th-12th centuries. Alt Empordà also has another natural park: the Empordà Marshes, the second of Catalonia's great wetlands, which is inhabited by numerous marshland plant and animal species and also draws many birdwatchers. Farther south, opposite the coast at L'Estartit, lie the Medes Islands. The seabed surrounding them is of enormous interest to diving enthusiasts.



The Costa Brava stretches from the Cap de Creus to Blanes. Interior of the Teatre Museu-Dalí in Figueres. Catalonia, land of golf.

## The Catalan coast, from north to south

The most striking features of the Costa Brava, which stretches from the Cap de Creus to Blanes, are sheer cliffs plunging straight into the sea, coves nestling amid rocks and islets, and vegetation down to the waterline. On the Costa Brava, the mountains seem to tumble into the sea and it is this that makes the coastline so rugged. At the foot of the many rocky crags, the coves and beaches lie hidden and protected by the pine groves

that grow right down to the sea. Many of today's major tourist and cultural resorts, such as Cadaqués, L'Escalà, Calella de Palafrugell, Palamós, Begur, Tossa de Mar and Lloret de Mar, are former fishing villages. Further south, on the Costa del Maresme, Costa de Garraf and Costa Daurada, long, sandy, sun-drenched beaches predominate. Most of the towns on the Costa del Maresme, such as Mataró, Arenys de Mar and Premià, have marinas. Castelldefels and Gavà on the Costa del Garraf have long beaches of fine sand but beyond here, all the way to Sitges, the towering Garraf massif gives rise to small coves. Sitges played a pioneering role in the development of tourism and now hosts interesting film and drama festivals. The Costa Daurada also offers extensive

beaches with soft sand and shallow waters, and other attractions as well: resorts such as Salou, Torredembarra, Altafulla and Cambrils, and the city of Tarragona, with its Roman remains. The coastline of the Terres de l'Ebre includes the important Ebro Delta natural park. The chief coastal towns –L'Ampolla, L'Ametlla de Mar, Sant Carles de la Ràpita and Les Cases d'Alcanar– are former fishing villages which have successfully incorporated tourism and nautical sports into their natural charms.

## THE DALÍ TRIANGLE

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) was a leading figure in the Surrealist movement, to which he contributed the critical-paranoiac method, and one of the first artists to turn his life and work into a marketing exercise. In Catalonia, the main repositories of works by Dalí are:

**The Teatre-Museu Dalí** in Figueres. Conceived by the artist as the “biggest surreal object in the world”, the site features virtual games and such impressive set pieces as the Mae West Room. The works on show here include some of Dalí’s best known pieces, as well as a collection of jewellery he designed between 1941 and 1970.

**Castell de Púbol**. This, the castle that Dalí gave to his wife Gala as a gift, is adorned with mural paintings, unusual furniture and many other decorative objects, as well as a collection of Gala’s haute couture dresses. Outside, the garden is filled with many sculptures.

**The Casa-Museu Salvador Dalí** in Portlligat Bay in Cadaqués. Dalí’s home and studio near this beautiful Costa Brava town is an essential visit for anyone seeking to understand the artist’s peculiar universe.

[www.salvador-dali.org](http://www.salvador-dali.org)

Many of today’s major tourist and cultural resorts are former fishing villages.

### Enjoying the sea

The sea affords numerous opportunities for enjoying nature thanks to the many leisure activities –sailing, windsurfing, diving, cruising and others– which are catered for at the nautical sports resorts located on different stretches of the coast. There are currently five such resorts in operation: L’Estartit-Illes Medes, Palamós-Sant Antoni de Calonge, Santa Susanna, Salou-Cambrils-Montroig/Miami Platja and Vilanova i la Geltrú. Nautical sports enthusiasts can also enjoy the 43 marinas dotted along the Catalan seafront.

### 36 golf courses

Catalonia has a long golfing tradition and is now one of the prime European destinations for golfers, offering 36 golf links and 33 pitch and putt courses. Most are located along the coast, or a short distance inland, but there are also some in the hinterland and even at the foot of the Pyrenees.



# A land of internal contrasts

Because of its varied landforms, Catalonia offers a wide diversity of landscapes for a relatively small country: it is only a short trip from the high Pyrenees, with peaks rising to over 3,000 m, to other convoluted chains of hills with a strictly Mediterranean climate and vegetation, or the cornfields, vineyards, olive groves and scrub of the most arid regions. This broad range of habitats is matched by a rich and varied plant life and characteristic animal and bird species, many of which enjoy protection (the lammergeier in the photo is one example).

## The enchantment of Montserrat

One of Catalonia's most unusual landscapes belongs to the mountain of Montserrat, a natural park lying at the very heart of the country. Its unique contours, resembling a sea of boulders, spikes and fantastic shapes, were created by water and wind which eroded the dense, conglomerate rocks. Montserrat has been a sacred mountain since time

immemorial. The Benedictine monastery of Santa Maria was founded there in the 11th century and remains to this day a focus of spirituality and culture. A Romanesque statue of the Verge de Montserrat — Catalonia's patroness— is venerated there. The madonna's dark face and hands have earned her the nickname "La Moreneta" (Little Dark Lady).  
[www.montserratvisita.com](http://www.montserratvisita.com)

## THE HINTERLAND

### The beautiful landscapes of the hinterland

Man's imprint is clear on the countryside of the Catalan interior, an area boasting a rich natural heritage and ancient cities with historic buildings, a rich cultural tradition, and long-established markets. The sharp contrasts between the different parts of the hinterland are reflected in the names of tourist regions such as Terres de l'Ebre, Val d'Aran,



Catalonia,  
a land of reserves  
and natural parks.

Terres de Lleida and Catalunya Central. The scenery of the hinterland has been shaped by the work of generations of farmers and a property structure revolving round the traditional unit of agricultural production: the masia, or manor farmhouse.

## The diversity of the natural heritage

The natural parks and protected areas of Catalonia's hinterland are the clearest illustration of the country's extraordinary range of landscapes. The full gamut of Mediterranean scenery is reflected in the parks located in the coastal and pre-coastal ranges, the lowlands that separate them, and along the Ebro basin: Parc Natural del

Montseny (a Biosphere Reserve with a wide array of habitats ranging from strictly Mediterranean to pre-Alpine); Parc Natural del Montnegre i el Corredor; Parc de la Muntanya de Montserrat; Parc Natural de Sant Llorenç i la Serra de l'Obac; Parc Natural del Garraf; Paratge Natural de Poblet; Paratge Natural del Montsant; and the rugged Parc Natural dels Ports.

## A land of thermal waters

The tradition of thermal waters has been a feature of Catalan culture since it was brought here by the Greeks, Romans and Arabs. Present-day Catalonia offers a wide selection of hydros, thalassotherapy centres and spas. Most of these natural, energy-rich waters are found in privileged areas of the country with good transportation and an attractive

selection of complementary and leisure facilities. All this makes it possible to consider Catalonia a quality destination in the health and beauty sector.

## Activity tourism

The Mediterranean climate, with its mild winters and not-too-hot summers, is especially suitable for activities like hiking—a network of footpaths over 5,000 km long— or cycle tourism—120 routes— and over 2,300 km of signposted itineraries. One can also go horse-trekking, practise adventure sports such as rafting and kayaking on white water rivers, take boat trips along the Ebro, go diving to discover the amazing seabed round the Medes Islands, or enjoy hang-gliding, canoeing, ballooning and ultralighting.



## NATURAL PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

### National Parks

Parc Natural d'Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici

### Natural Parks

Parc Natural de l'Alt Pirineu  
Parc Natural dels Aiguamolls de l'Empordà  
Parc Natural del Cadí-Moixeró  
Parc Natural de Cap de Creus  
Parc Natural del Delta de l'Ebre  
Parc Natural dels Ports  
Parc Natural del Montseny  
Parc Natural de Montserrat  
Parc Natural de Sant Llorenç de Munt i l'Obac  
Parc Natural de la Serra del Montsant  
Parc Natural de la Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa

Parc Natural del Montnegre i el Corredor [www.diba.es/parcs](http://www.diba.es/parcs)  
Parc Natural del Garraf [www.diba.es/parcs](http://www.diba.es/parcs)

### Natural Sites of National Interest

Paratge Natural d'Interès Nacional de l'Albera  
Paratge Natural d'Interès Nacional de Poblet  
Paratge Natural d'Interès Nacional del Massís del Pedraforca

### Nature Reserves

Reserva Natural del Delta del Llobregat

### Marine Reserves

Àrea Protegida de les Illes Medes

[www.parcscatalunya.net](http://www.parcscatalunya.net)

## Rural tourism

Catalonia has more than 1,300 rural tourism establishments with a total of over 10,000 beds. This form of accommodation, which offers relaxation in close contact with nature and life on the farm, has spread fast and gained widespread popularity in recent years. It is usually associated with new forms of activity tourism and provides a deeper insight into the country.

## THE PYRENEES

The Pyrenees dominate the whole of northern Catalonia, extending for more than 230 km from the peaks of Val d'Aran to the Cap de Creus, where they sink into the Mediterranean. For hiking and climbing buffs there are summits rising to approximately 3,000 m, valleys carved out by mountain rivers, glaciers with eternal snows, natural parks and protected areas. In winter the Pyrenees are the ideal spot for skiing.

### Catalonia's great natural parks

Catalonia's great natural parks are located in the Pyrenees and their foothills. They include the following: Parc Nacional d'Aigüestortes i Llac Sant Maurici; Parc Natural de l'Alt Pirineu; Parc Natural del Cadí-

Moixeró; Parc Natural de la Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa; Paratge Natural de l'Albera; and Parc Natural del Cap de Creus. From the loftiest peaks (3,000 metres at the westernmost end) to the cliff tops overlooking the Mediterranean, they offer an infinity of beautiful landscapes.

### A land of snow

Catalonia, with its 17 ski resorts, has more winter sports facilities than any other autonomous community in Spain. Of these 17 resorts, 11 offer downhill skiing and 6 cross-country skiing. Together they possess 129 ski lifts capable of carrying over 150,000 skiers an hour, and 639 kilometres of slopes. Artificial snowmaking equipment guarantees snow coverage between 82% and 100% on 160 km of slopes.



# Catalonia,

## a constellation of cities

Catalonia's cities bustle with vitality. Barcelona, the capital, is one of the great cities of the Mediterranean. Along with its metropolitan area, it accounts for practically half the Catalan population. However, the inhabitants of Catalonia are not merely concentrated in Barcelona, but live all along the coast. Many other cities, steeped in history and with a fine architectural heritage, have experienced remarkable economic and demographic growth in recent decades. They include Girona, Tarragona, Lleida, Tortosa, Vic, Manresa, Reus, Figueres, Sabadell, Terrassa and Igualada.

### **Catalonia, an active, enterprising country**

Catalonia has a long history as an industrially active and enterprising land. Moreover its experience in tourism makes it a perfect destination for business and professional gatherings. It has good trade fair complexes and convention centres and a wide selection of other tourist facilities for the intervals of relaxation between one deal and the next.

Every year Catalonia hosts over 400 trade fairs at the international, domestic and local level. This figure is hardly surprising for a country with over twenty venues, including the Fira de Barcelona or the new Forum Zone Convention Centre which can accommodate up to 15,000 people. Barcelona also hosts international events such as the Barcelona Fashion Week, the Passarel·la Gaudí, Bread & Butter, Alimentaria, Construmat and 3GSM.

New facilities, such as Girona's

Auditori-Palau de Congressos, have recently been set up, enabling this type of tourism to spread to other Catalan cities, which are gradually earning a reputation as venues for medium-sized conventions. Catalonia's good transport and communications infrastructure has played a vital role in its economic development. Its modern motorway network



Fundació Antoni Tàpies.  
and a view of the city  
of Girona.

can move a large volume of goods and passenger traffic. There are 1,600 km of railway lines which link major towns and cities and connect the Spanish network to that of France. The largest ports are Barcelona—which handles more goods and passengers than any other in Catalonia—and Tarragona, located near the petrochemical zone. Besides Barcelona international airport, there are two airports that are mainly used by tourist charter companies and low-cost airlines: Girona-Costa Brava and Reus.

### **Barcelona, the capital**

### **of Catalonia**

Barcelona, Catalonia's capital, is one of the foremost cities on the western Mediterranean. Founded in Roman times, it experienced periods of great economic and cultural brilliance in the Middle Ages and in the wake of the Industrial Revolution (19th century). It has preserved an outstanding architectural heritage, notably in Gothic, Modernist (Gaudí) and avant-garde styles.

Barcelona has a unique, bustling, tree-lined promenade where its citizens gather in all their diversity. It is called the Rambla and stretches from Plaça de Catalunya to near the monument to Columbus. On it stand the Liceu, one of Europe's most prestigious opera houses, and the market of La Boqueria. It is also

lined with popular newspaper kiosks and stalls selling flowers and pets. Two of Barcelona's most important religious buildings are located in the districts of Ciutat Vella and La Ribera: the Cathedral, built in Gothic times, and the basilica of Santa Maria del Mar, one of the most outstanding examples of Catalan Gothic style. Barcelona is the undisputed capital of Modernist architecture and one whole district—the Eixample—was built according to Modernist tenets. Passeig de Gràcia is the street with the largest concentration of major Modernist buildings: Casa Batlló and La Pedrera by Gaudí, Casa Amatller by Puig i Cadafalch, and Casa Lleó Morera by Domènech i Montaner. The hill of Montjuïc, where

## MAIN ART MUSEUMS IN BARCELONA

### **Fundació Antoni Tàpies**

Established in 1984 by the artist Antoni Tàpies to promote study and understanding of modern and contemporary art. [www.fundaciotapies.org](http://www.fundaciotapies.org)

### **Fundació Joan Miró**

The foundation is housed in an outstanding building designed by the architect Josep Lluís Sert. Opened in 1975, it contains the most important collection of works by Joan Miró in the world. [www.bcn.fjmiro.es](http://www.bcn.fjmiro.es)

### **Museu Picasso de Barcelona**

The museum occupies five Gothic palaces in noble Carrer de Montcada. The collection includes works from Picasso's formative years and his Blue, Cubist and Classical periods, amongst others. [www.museupicasso.bcn.es](http://www.museupicasso.bcn.es)

### **Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA)**

MACBA is an essential reference point in the city's artistic and cultural life. The centre's collections, focusing basically on art over the last 50 years, feature works by Catalan, Spanish and international artists and give visitors an insight into various key aspects of contemporary artistic creation. [www.macba.es](http://www.macba.es)

### **Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)**

The MNAC collections take visitors through 1,000 years of Catalan, Spanish and European art from the 11th to the 20th centuries. [www.mnac.es](http://www.mnac.es)

the Olympic Ring was built in 1992, is also the site of three Barcelona museums which are a must for any visitor: the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC), housing the world's finest collection of Romanesque paintings; the Fundació Joan Miró, where the artist's paintings, sculptures and tapestries are on show; and CaixaForum, a Modernist-style building by Puig i Cadafalch containing a remarkable modern art collection. Barcelona's most recent urban development projects were carried out in connection with the Forum 2004, organised by the city.

## Cities with personality

In the northeast there are established tourist resorts (Palamós, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Lloret, Roses, Begur), seafaring towns which have long been the haunt of world-famous artists (Cadaqués, Tossa, El Port de la Selva), quaint medieval villages (Pals, Peratallada), and cities with important museums and historic buildings (Girona and Figueres). In southern Catalonia we find major tourist destinations such as Sitges, Tarragona, Reus or Salou, the area along the Ebro river, handsome old cities such as Tortosa and Montblanc, and venerable old monasteries like Poblet and Santes Creus. The hinterland is dotted with still more centuries-old cities with historic buildings and long-established markets, such as Vic, Manresa, Cardona,

Igualada, Terrassa, Sabadell, and Granollers. There are scenic mountain areas too, including Montseny, Les Guilleries and Montserrat. Lleida is the capital of western Catalonia, a region of great cultural, architectural and commercial importance, with a flourishing agriculture –notably fruit orchards–, and a prestigious cuisine. The Pyrenees stretch along Catalonia's northern border. Many of the country's finest Romanesque buildings are located here, as well as winter sports facilities and natural parks. At the far western tip of the Pyrenees is the Val d'Aran, a region of Occitanian language and culture. The chief town, Vielha, is a prominent winter sports centre.



# Catalonia:

## a spectacular setting

With its beautiful and varied scenery, its sunlit, colourful cities, the distinctive styles of artists such as Gaudí, Dalí or Miró, and its unrivalled location –straddling the border between North and South–, Catalonia has everything it takes to develop a strong cultural identity but one that is fully immersed in our increasingly interdependent world. The taste for beauty, the love of poetry, a long tradition of cultural creativity, and the solid aesthetic and technical background of the musicians, writers and other workers of the Catalan audiovisual industry have made our country one of the most attractive and sought-after settings for 20th century artists.

### Catalonia as a film set

After the Second World War, Hollywood disembarked on the Costa Brava in the person of director Albert Lewin who filmed *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman* (starring Ava Gardner, James Mason and the Catalan actor and bullfighter Màrius Cabré) there in 1951. In 1959 much of *Suddenly, Last Summer*, directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz and starring Elizabeth Taylor and Montgomery Clift, was shot at Begur and Pals.

Episodes from more recent history and the Civil War are portrayed in settings that include *Gelida* in Jaime Camino's *Las largas vacaciones del 36* (The Long Holidays of 1936 - 1976). The period when Barcelona was known as the “Rose of Fire” is evoked in films such as *La ciutat cremada* (The Burnt City, 1976), by Antoni Ribas, and *Un hombre llamado Flor de Otoño* (A Man Called Autumn Flower, 1978), by Pedro Olea.

Nowadays — notably from the 1992 Olympics onwards —

Barcelona and many other Catalan localities have become much sought-after settings for film and television productions and suitable locations for a wide range of advertising spots. Evidence of this is provided by films such as Ken Loach's *Land and Freedom* (1995), Pedro Almodóvar's *Todo sobre mi madre* (All About My Mother, 1999), the urban comedies of Ventura Pons, or the documentary *En construcción* (2001) by José Luis Guerin.





# A country of craftsmen and women

Traditional and popular culture is kept alive in all its different forms in Catalonia. Certain towns and counties here are veritable centres of renown for high-quality craft production closely linked to the natural environment. These are activities that, in some cases, go back to the Middle Ages.

## Pottery and ceramics

Catalonia is home to rich traditions in clay working, with working studios in many towns: Breda, La Bisbal d'Empordà, Quart, Miravet, Verdú, Esparraguera...

## Woodworking

Woodworking and cabinet-making are trades with deep roots in such places as La Cellera de Ter, Sant Hilari Sacalm and La Vall de Ges.

## Furniture-making

Hand-made furniture is an important economic activity in La Garriga. In La Sénia, industrial development has revolved around wood (sawyers, carpenters) since the 1960s.

## Religious Imagery

The "sants" made in Olot are famed the world over. Art Cristià, the first company devoted to producing and selling religious figures, was established in the 19th century.

## Alabaster

The alabaster quarries in Sarral date back to Roman times. The Alabaster Museum illustrates the whole process, from extraction of the stone to the finished object.

## Lace-making

Lace made from linen and cotton thread, not silk, arose in the 18th century. Also known as ret fi català, it is characteristic of Arenys de Mar and Arenys de Munt.

Artesania Catalunya  
[www.artesania-catalunya.com](http://www.artesania-catalunya.com)



# A land of rejoicing

No feature of a country tells you more about its identity than its traditional popular festivals. Catalonia's festive calendar is packed with events all year round. It also has an established tradition of civic festivities. The most famous is the feast of Sant Jordi, held on 23 April, when the streets fill up with book and flower stalls. This festival has won recognition from UNESCO, which declared it International Book Day. The other great civic festival is 11 September, the Catalan national holiday. The Patum of Berga festival was also included in the UNESCO World Heritage Humanity list in 2005.

In summer many localities celebrate their festa major. Several items invariably appear on the agenda: *sardana*-dancing or *jotes*; "giants" and dwarves.

## Human towers

Since the 19th century, teams of Catalans of all ages and classes have gathered to build spectacular human towers, or "castells". Their motto is "strength, balance, courage and sense". Today this tradition remains very much alive. Human towers are strongly identified with the Camp de Tarragona and Penedès regions, though in recent years they have gained widespread popularity in many other parts of Catalonia.

## Folklore and traditions

In summer many localities celebrate their festa major, or local festival. Several items invariably appear on the agenda: *sardana*-dancing –the *sardana* is Catalonia's most popular dance– or *jotes* –a dance proper to the Terres de l'Ebre– ; "giants" –figures over three metres tall with a wooden structure inside that enables people to carry them– and dwarves; firework displays and all-night dancing to the sound of the latest music.

## A LAND OF REJOICING

### Farm and Traditional Craft Shows

**Carter's Festival.** Balsareny, the Sunday before Carnival.

**Tree Festival and Ball Cornut.** Cornellà de Terri, Easter Monday.

**Wool Festival.** Ripoll, mid-May.

**Sea Week.** Vilanova i la Geltrú, last week in July.

**Raftsmen's Festival.** La Pobla de Segur, first weekend in July.

**International Sheepdog Trials.** Castellar de N'Hug, last Sunday in August.

**Pine Tree Festival.**

Centelles, December 30 December.

### Fairs and Markets

**La Candelera Fair.** Molins de Rei, late January/early February.

**Flower Market.** Vic, Easter.

### Food and Drink Shows

**Rice Festival.** Sant Fruitós del Bages, January.

**Snail Gathering.** Lleida, mid-May.

**Mushroom Picking Contest.** Berga, October.

### Traditional Festivities

**Carnival.** Vilanova i la Geltrú. Solsona.

**St George's Day.** All over Catalonia, 23 April.

**Sardana Dances.** Calella, June.

**Catalan National Day.** All over Catalonia, September 11th.

### Festivals of Fire

**La Patum.** Berga, Corpus Christi week. UNESCO World Heritage Humanity.

**Falles d'Isil,** 23 June.

**Night of St John.** All over Catalonia, 23 June.

### Popular Theatre

**Esparreguera Passion,** March and April.

**Mystery of the Passion.** Cervera, March and April.

**Olesa de Montserrat Passion,** March-April.

**Sacred Drama of the Passion.** Ulldecona, March-April.

**Ball del Sant Crist.** Salomó, May.

### Medieval Festivals

**Medieval Week with the Legend of St George.**

Montblanc, last two weeks in April.

**Renaissance Festival.** Tortosa, last week in July.

The great spring festival is Sant Jordi. On this day both friends and lovers give each other gifts of books and roses.

### Festivals with an identity

Catalonia's national day, on 11 September, commemorates the date on which the siege of Barcelona by the troops of Spanish king Philip V came to a tragic end in 1714. This was the last episode in the War of the Spanish Succession, which led to the loss of Catalonia's national freedoms.

The great spring festival is Sant Jordi, dedicated to Saint George, Catalonia's patron saint. On this day both friends and lovers give each other gifts of books and roses.

### Festivals of fire

Fire is probably one of Catalonia's most ancient and important signs of identity. One example is the eve of the feast of Saint John (24 June), when great bonfires are lit in the squares and streets of villages, towns and cities and Catalans celebrate the summer solstice all night long to the sound of music, rockets and fireworks.



Human towers  
(castellers).

Fire is probably one of Catalonia's most ancient and important signs of identity.

Fire and gunpowder are part of many other Catalan festivals too and numerous local festivals include a *correfoc*, a parade featuring fantastic fire-spitting beasts and bangers and led by "devils".

The Patum of Berga is one of the festivals most associated with fire, celebrated on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

### Religious Festivals

**Cavalcade of the Three Kings.** All over Catalonia, January 5th.  
**Decennial Festival for Our Lady of the Candle.** Valls, early February.  
**Procession and Dance of Death.** Verges, Easter Thursday.  
**Living Via Crucis.** Sacalm, Good Friday.  
**Holy Burial Procession.** Tarragona, Good Friday.  
**Les Enramades Festival in Sallent,** Corpus Christi week.  
**Corpus Christi.** Sitges, Corpus Christi week.  
**Living Nativity Scene.** Sant Guim de la Plana, Christmas.

**More information see schedule of Turisme de Catalunya:**  
[www.catalunyaturisme.com](http://www.catalunyaturisme.com)

### Port Aventura Park

It is a unique spot in the head of the Costa Daurada. A theme park full of action-packed adventures from all corners of the globe: imperial China, the wild Far West, exotic Polynesia, Aztec México and the mellow Mediterrània.

[www.portaventura.co.uk](http://www.portaventura.co.uk)

### Catalans export merrymaking

Catalonia's great festive tradition is constantly evolving and in recent years many of the leading drama groups that perform in our streets and squares have designed festive events for major international gatherings. Comediants and La Fura dels Baus are currently the foremost creators of new forms of collective merrymaking.



# The value of gastronomy

Besides preparing nourishing and tasty traditional Mediterranean dishes, many Catalan chefs have excelled in recent years as veritable researchers into the country's raw materials and the creators of a successful blend of traditional and innovative cookery. Their recipes have won the highest international prestige.

## The Catalan label of origin

Catalonia's most famous and characteristic culinary speciality is *pa amb tomàquet* (bread rubbed with tomato and olive oil), which is often served with excellent home-produced pork sausages. Other dishes include: *escudella i carn d'olla*, a hearty winter stew; *xató*, a salad typical of southern Catalonia; *calçots*, tender onion shoots dipped in *salvitxada* sauce; *cargols a la llauna* (roast snails), *escalivada* (char-broiled vegetables), and *coca de recapte* (reminiscent of pizza).

## Cookery and innovation

Guides and critics all over the world consider that Catalan cuisine is currently experiencing a veritable "golden age". Catalan restaurateurs include some of the world's most prestigious names, such as Ferran Adrià, Joan Roca, Carme Ruscalleda, Santi Santamaria and Carles Gaig, all veritable geniuses of avant-garde cuisine.

Catalonia also has schools of gastronomy –the one at the Mercat de la Boqueria in Barcelona, and the Aula Gastronòmica de l'Empordà– and research organisations such as the Laboratori de Cuina, the Alicia centre (Nutrition and Science) at Sant Benet de Bages, or the Sent Soví chair at the University of Barcelona. Every other year the Fira de Barcelona is the venue for Alimentaria, one of the leading European salons for the food and agriculture industry and the catering trade.



*Crema catalana*, and traditional products cooked with a modern touch.



## Traditional cookery

Catalan gastronomy, like so many aspects of our country, arose out of popular wisdom and tradition. Geographically speaking one can distinguish two main styles of cookery: that of the mountains and hinterland, predominated by meat and sausages, produce of the dairy, market garden and farmyard, game, and mushrooms; and that of the coast, featuring fish and seafood, often accompanied by rice and vegetables.

Catalonia also has countless mouth-watering sweets and deserts. One of the most popular is *crema catalana*, with burnt sugar and caramel. Each town and village has its own specialities and many sweetstuffs are prepared for particular liturgical feastdays: *torró* –such as that made in Agramunt– for Christmas, *mones* for Easter, *coques de Sant Joan* at midsummer, and *panellets* and chestnuts for All Saints.

## Wine and cava

Wine is another key feature of any Catalan meal. Vines have been grown all over the country for countless centuries and wine is produced under ten regional labels of origin. *Cava* sparkling wine has its own label of origin. Prepared by the traditional method in the Penedès, Terra Alta and Conca de Barberà regions, it is one of the country's leading exports. The introduction of leading-edge enological techniques has raised certain Catalan wines –notably Priorat and Montsant– to the viticultural forefront.



## MICHELIN STARS (2007)

### 1 Star (\*)

Ca l'Enric	Jordi Juncà i Isabel Juncà	<a href="http://www.calenric.net">www.calenric.net</a>
Can Bosch	Joan Bosch	<a href="http://www.canbosch.com">www.canbosch.com</a>
Can Jubany	Nando Jubany	<a href="http://www.canjubany.com">www.canjubany.com</a>
Carballeira	Joan Aparicio	<a href="http://www.carballeira.net">www.carballeira.net</a>
Drolma	Fermí Puig	(00 34) 93 496 77 10
El Castell	Vicenç Tónico	<a href="http://www.hotelcastell.com">www.hotelcastell.com</a>
El Racó d'en Freixa	Ramon Freixa	<a href="http://www.elracodenfreixa.com">www.elracodenfreixa.com</a>
Gaig	Carles Gaig	<a href="http://www.restaurantgaig.com">www.restaurantgaig.com</a>
Jean Luc Figueras	J.Luc Figueras	<a href="http://www.jeanlucfigueras.com">www.jeanlucfigueras.com</a>
L'Esguard	Miguel Sánchez	<a href="http://www.miguelsanchezromera.com">www.miguelsanchezromera.com</a>
Cuina de Can Pipes	Ramon Casabayó	<a href="http://www.canpipes.com">www.canpipes.com</a>
La Llar	Joan Viñas	<a href="http://www.crae.com/restaurantlallar">www.crae.com/restaurantlallar</a>
Lluçanès	Àngel Pascual	<a href="http://www.restaurantllucares.com">www.restaurantllucares.com</a>
Mas Pau	Xavier Sacristà	<a href="http://www.maspau.com">www.maspau.com</a>
Sala	Toni Sala	<a href="http://www.fondasala.com">www.fondasala.com</a>
Via Veneto	José Muniesa	<a href="http://www.viavenetorestaurant.com">www.viavenetorestaurant.com</a>
Neichel	J. Louis Neichel	<a href="http://www.neichel.es">www.neichel.es</a>
Àbac	Xavier Pellicer	(00 34) 93 319 66 00
La Cuina de Can Simón	Xavier Lores	<a href="http://www.lacuinadecansimon.com">www.lacuinadecansimon.com</a>
L'Estany Clar	Jordi Cruz	<a href="http://www.estanyclar.com">www.estanyclar.com</a>
Mas Les Cols	Fina Puigdevall	<a href="http://www.lescols.com">www.lescols.com</a>
El Cingle	Montse Estruch	<a href="http://www.elcingle.com">www.elcingle.com</a>
Hispania	Paquita i Lolita Reixach	<a href="http://www.restauranthispania.com">www.restauranthispania.com</a>
Alkimia	Jordi Vila	(00 34) 93 207 61 15
Hofmann	Mey Hofmann	<a href="http://www.hofmann-bcn.com">www.hofmann-bcn.com</a>
Caelis	Romain Fornell	<a href="http://www.caelis.com">www.caelis.com</a>
Moo	Felip Llofriu	<a href="http://www.hotelomm.es">www.hotelomm.es</a>
El Rincón de Diego	Diego Campos	<a href="http://www.rincondediego.com">www.rincondediego.com</a>
El Fogony	Zaraida Cotonat	<a href="http://www.fogony.com">www.fogony.com</a>
Hostal de Sant Salvador	Joan Borràs	<a href="http://www.restaurantsantsalvador.com">www.restaurantsantsalvador.com</a>
El Rebot d'en Pere	Pere Arpa	<a href="http://www.elrebotdenpere.com">www.elrebotdenpere.com</a>
Lasarte	Àlex Garés	<a href="http://www.condesdebarcelona.com">www.condesdebarcelona.com</a>
Sauç	Xavier Franco	<a href="http://www.saucrestaurant.com">www.saucrestaurant.com</a>
Miramar	Paco Pérez	<a href="http://www.hotelmiramarllanca.com">www.hotelmiramarllanca.com</a>
Evo	Santi Santamaria	<a href="http://www.restauranteevo.com">www.restauranteevo.com</a>

### 2 Stars (\*\*)

Celler de Can Roca	Joan Roca	<a href="http://www.cellercanroca.com">www.cellercanroca.com</a>
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### 3 Stars (\*\*\*)

El Bulli	Ferran Adrià	<a href="http://www.elbulli.com">www.elbulli.com</a>
Racó de Can Fabes	Santi Santamaria	<a href="http://www.canfabes.com">www.canfabes.com</a>
Sant Pau	Carme Ruscaldà	<a href="http://www.ruscaldà.com">www.ruscaldà.com</a>

### 2 Stars (\*\*)

Catalan restaurants outside Catalonia

La Broche	Sergi Arola	<a href="http://www.labroche.com">www.labroche.com</a>
Sant Celoni	Santi Santamaria	<a href="http://www.restaurantesantceloni.com">www.restaurantesantceloni.com</a>
Hacienda Benazuza	Rafael Morales	<a href="http://www.elbullihotel.com">www.elbullihotel.com</a>



# Catalan literature:

## Catalan literature: toward the vanguard of the 21st century

As a cultural phenomenon, Catalan literature is part of a broader context marked indelibly by history. The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) unquestionably caused a radical break with the cultural and political programme launched by the government of the Republic. Today, the Catalan literary scene is largely dominated by the novel.

### From its origins to the 20th century

Pre-20th century Catalan literature has a distinct and definitive canon of authors and movements. The 13th century produced the visionary philosopher Ramon Llull. Historical chronicles written by venturesome kings were the highlight of the 14th century. The poet of grief, Ausiàs March, and the knight-novelist Joanot Martorell, who wrote the great novel of chivalry, *Tirant lo Blanc*, were the towering figures of the 15th century. Literary

output plummeted in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The predominance of Castilian drove Catalan literature into decadence, but then the advent of Romanticism in 19th century Europe triggered an ethical and aesthetic reaction. In Catalonia this was the age of the *Renaixença* (the cultural rebirth), complete with its ideological and religious limitations. As Jacint Verdaguer's epic and lyrical works burgeoned, European Romantic poetry finally reached Catalonia.

### Artistic styles up to 1959

The Modernist movement - Catalan Art Nouveau - arose around 1892 and was a spiritual reaction to the past. The Symbolist plays of Santiago Rusiñol, the Modernist Festivals in Sitges, Joan Maragall's articles and his vigorous poetic idiom all signalled the arrival of a movement that aimed at renewing Catalan cultural life and permeated all forms of artistic expression. The Modernists were determined to turn Catalan into a modern



Catalan writers and the great novel of chivalry *Tirant lo Blanc*.

language, fit for normal use. In this respect, Víctor Català's symbolic novel constitutes the essence of Modernist prose. An individualistic restlessness, a yearning for sincerity, and a visionary imagination were the hallmarks of a major social phenomenon: the bourgeoisie was producing its first generation of artists, who were to rebel against their own class. Being an artist, however, meant being a professional, not in the sense of making a living from art but of living for it. From 1906 onwards, the failure of Modernist idealism led to the upsurge of the Noucentist movement. The Noucentists dignified the Catalan language

with their greater intellectual rigour and their more efficient tools. Implicit in this regenerative process was the celebration of the city and civism, and the exaltation of "good workmanship". Noucentist literature is accomplished and idealistic, with an aloofly ironical bent. It establishes a hierarchy between genres. Its prime feature was the poetry of Josep Carner, as the novel had entered a crisis. The 1930s were a time of renovation and diversification, a time of post-symbolist poetry (Carles Riba, J.V. Foix and Marià Manent) and the resurgence of the novel, which became psychological (Miquel Llor and J.M. Sagarra) or journalistic (Josep Pla). After the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), Catalan literature symbolised a resolute

break with the Franco regime, and a slow cultural revival was set in motion. In the field of poetry, the avant-garde tradition (Joan Brossa and Josep Palau i Fabre) mingled with realism and demystification (Pere Quart, Estellés and Martí i Pol). Narrative literature bore the imprint of exile and was suffused with existentialism and technical innovation (Maria Aurèlia Capmany) or with fantasy (Joan Perucho). Dramatists experimented with poetry (Joan Brossa). The most significant theatrical works of the era were by Salvador Espriu. From the historical realism of the 1960s to the present day In the 1960s writers gradually abandoned existentialism and psychologism to explore a new

## CATALAN LITERATURE

### **Institut Ramon Llull**

The Institut Ramon Llull's mission is to promote Catalan language and culture internationally, in all of its variations and methods of expression

[www.llull.cat](http://www.llull.cat)

### **Institució de les Lletres Catalanes**

The institution is an autonomous organization of the Generalitat de Catalunya whose fundamental objective is the promotion of the Catalan literary heritage.

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ilc>

### **Espais escrits**

This Network is an association that aims to bring together all those different bodies that are devoted to perpetuating the memory of the works and landscapes of Catalan language writers.

[www.espaisescrits.org](http://www.espaisescrits.org)

committed form of literature. Poetry adopted Anglo-Saxon models, which were evolving towards the experience of self (Gabriel Ferrater, the master of several generations) or the experience of language (Pere Gimferrer). Narrative works revealed diverse facets of realism, from historical ideology (Llorenç Villalonga and Mercè Rodoreda), to myth (Terenci Moix) and radicalism (Quim Monzó). The renewal of drama was fuelled by J. M. Benet i Jornet and his theatre of text. Joan Fuster voiced contemporary preoccupations in his ferociously critical essays, imbued with a corrosive sense of humour. For Catalan literature

the 1970s were a period of combat and awareness. Women's literature - and feminist literature too - arose midway between lyricism and ambiguity, alongside homosexual literature and "textualism". Narrators (Montserrat Roig and Baltasar Porcel) and poets (Pere Gimferrer and Maria Mercè Marçal) became explorers of new techniques. Groups and trends took shape and quite a few poetical anthologies were published. The literature of the 1980s was concerned with socio-political criticism and reflected on the phenomenon of generations. Fiction split into genres: the historical novel (Jaume Cabré, Lluís-Anton Baulenas and Carme Riera) and the roman noir (Ferran Torrent and Jaume Fuster), among others. In the quest for beauty,

the debate between rural and urban literature was launched (Maria Barbal). Narrators developed a taste for post-modernism, a way of life marked, ethically and aesthetically, by a systematic rift (Sergi Pàmies and Màrius Serra). The experimental fiction of the 1990s features a plethora of names. And there are the poets of the 1970s (Joan Margarit and Feliu Formosa) and rediscovered poets who have won deserved renown (Enric Casasses and Víctor Sunyol). The present-day Catalan literary scene is dominated by the novel, first and foremost the historical novel and investigative fiction (Carles Porta, Albert Sánchez Piñol and Emili Rosales).

# USEFUL INFORMATION

## Direct international air links to Catalonia

The Barcelona, Girona and Reus airports have direct flights to and from all the main capitals and major cities in Western Europe. Catalonia also has direct air links with the following places:

### The Americas and Asia

Amman  
Atlanta  
Buenos Aires  
Bogotá  
Damascus  
Dubai  
Philadelphia  
Montreal  
Newark

New York  
Singapore  
Tel Aviv

### Africa/Mediterranean

Algiers  
Banjul  
Casablanca  
Cairo  
Luxor  
Marrakesh  
Nador  
Tangier  
Tunis

### Europa Extracommunity Europe

Dubrovnik  
Istanbul  
Kaliningrad  
Kiev  
Lvov  
Moscow

## Tourist information:

Turisme de Catalunya, Passeig de Gràcia 105, 3p 08008 Barcelona, tel. +34 93 484 99 00, fax. +34 93 484 98 88, email: [catalunya.turisme@gencat.net](mailto:catalunya.turisme@gencat.net), [www.catalunyaturisme.com](http://www.catalunyaturisme.com)

## Turisme de Catalunya's Tourism Promotion Centres abroad:

Centre Cultural Blanquerna - Madrid  
Tel.: (00-34) 915 241 892  
[turisme.blanquerna@gencat.net](mailto:turisme.blanquerna@gencat.net)

CPT Benelux - Tel.: (00-32) 026 406 151  
[info@catalunya-turisme.org](mailto:info@catalunya-turisme.org)

CPT Francia - Tel.: (00-33) 014 046 9892  
[media@tourismedelacatalogne.fr](mailto:media@tourismedelacatalogne.fr)

CPT Reino Unido - Irlanda  
Tel.: (00-44) 207 583 8855  
[Catalonia@catalantouristboard.co.uk](mailto:Catalonia@catalantouristboard.co.uk)

CPT Alemania - Tel.: (00-49) 69 74 22 48 73  
[info@katalonien-tourismus.de](mailto:info@katalonien-tourismus.de)

CPT Italia - Tel.: (00-39) 229 004 641  
[info@catalogna-turismo.it](mailto:info@catalogna-turismo.it)

CPT Países Nórdicos  
Tel.: (00-358) 969 692 169  
[ctb@wtc.fi](mailto:ctb@wtc.fi)

CPT Países del Este - Tel.: (00-7495) 135 30 20  
[jose@rosmail.ru](mailto:jose@rosmail.ru)

CPT China - Tel.: (00-8610) 848 682 84  
[info@hispatchina.com](mailto:info@hispatchina.com)

## Institutions of Touristic Promotion:

Patronat de Turisme Costa Brava  
– Pirineu de Girona  
[www.costabrava.org](http://www.costabrava.org)

Patronat de Turisme Costa Daurada  
[www.costadaurada.org](http://www.costadaurada.org)

Terres de l'Ebre  
[www.terresdelebre.org](http://www.terresdelebre.org)

Turisme de Barcelona  
[www.barcelonaturisme.com](http://www.barcelonaturisme.com)

Diputació de Barcelona – Turisme Total  
[www.turismetotal.org](http://www.turismetotal.org)

Patronat de Turisme de Lleida  
[www.lleidatur.com](http://www.lleidatur.com)

Torisme Val d'Aran  
[www.aran.org](http://www.aran.org)



