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Barcelona: Europe And Affordable Unite

By Omri Amir

The best things in life are free - at least, in Barcelona. A vibrant city famous for its architecture and geographical splendors, Barcelona is also the perfect destination for the frugal traveler looking for a fun trip that won't force you to remortgage your home.

After the obvious expenses (plane ticket and Barcelona hotel) you can experience this European city without barely cracking open your wallet. That's because some of the best activities and tourist attractions don't cost a thing. Visit the parks of Montjuic and La Ciutadella, or stroll the Passeig de Gracia Boulevard and take in the architectural marvels created by the genius Gaudi, without paying a cent. La Rambla, the city's popular tree-lined boulevard teeming with artists of all kinds, is another wonderful place to enjoy for free. Or, if soaking up the rays is more your inclination, you can enjoy the many beautiful beaches of Barcelona for free as well.

Cheap eats

Delicious food is everywhere in Barcelona. And it doesn't have to cost a lot, either. Tapas is always a good choice if you want to stretch a buck - the best places are in the Raval area located behind the Boqueria Market. Two can eat here for less than 10 euros. During the day, lunch is the biggest bargain you can find. Restaurants have low-priced lunch menus that don't skimp on quality or quantity. You'll get 2 or 3 courses, usually for less than 2 euros, with a glass of wine and coffee or dessert. Most places won't bother you with the cheque until you ask for it, so you can sit back, relax, and enjoy the food and the view.

What to do

In addition to the street festivals, balladeers, and other cultural events, there are other inexpensive ways to take in a concert and enjoy some good music. Visit the Liceu (the city's famous opera house) to take in a show. Because they have recently added a cast of new, not-so-famous performers, it's possible to watch a show for less money than you'd have to spend to see the veterans. Called the "popular cast," this group of talented artists takes over on the main cast's night off. Other than the cast - and the price - the show is identical. You can save at least 50% off the regular ticket price for these

performances.

An amazing sight every visitor must see is the Sagrada Familia temple. This piece of architectural brilliance is yet another incarnation of the famed Gaudi, but it's a particularly unique attraction because it's still under construction. Started in 1882, this building was only partly done when Gaudi died in 1926. Although there has been some controversy over the years as to whether it should be completed, it is expected to be finished by 2020. This is a rare sight you cannot miss.

The best things in life really are free

The best way to enjoy all that Barcelona has to offer is to look around and take in the beauty of the surroundings. The city is indeed very charming and beats to its own drum. There is so much history to explore, architecture to appreciate, and warm people to meet that your biggest problem will be deciding where to begin, and how to end your day. The city, for instance, boasts several medieval palaces, one

of which now holds a Picasso museum on Calle Montcada.

When in Barcelona, you'll notice that the city seems to be constantly rejuvenating itself. Once dilapidated harbors are now gorgeous hotspots off the Riviera. Even the Park Guell (yet another creation sprung from the artistry of Gaudi) contains leftover tiles that were used to create an immense expanse of mosaics. You'll find new places such as these all over the city - if you're willing to explore. And you won't have to pay for the privilege of enjoying your discoveries.

Another way to save money is by using the Barcelona Card, which can be purchased for 2–5 days and costs 23 to 34 euros - and you can buy it online at

<http://barcelonaturisme.com>

to receive an additional

10% discount. The card saves you a lot of money because, once purchased, it grants you free or discounted access to a wide range of museums and other attractions. But the best thing about the card is the fact that it allows you to travel for free around the city on almost all the available public transit (including the airport train) for an unlimited period of time.

For lodging, be sure to book your room in advance as this will no doubt save you a ton of euro.

Barcelona is a treasure trove of culture, art, food, history, and architecture, but it doesn't have to cost you a pretty penny to soak it all in. This wonderful city has much to offer the traveler who wants to experience Europe minus the usual price tag - so why not plan your next trip to Barcelona?

By Omri Amir for

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A Culture-Fest In Barcelona

By Rent City Apartments

Barcelona is one of those cities you can visit again and again. Its fantastic location, within reach of some of Spain's most beautiful coastline, together with its history, architecture and huge cultural programme is what makes it one of Europe's most popular city destinations.

So, how can you max-out on culture when you visit Barcelona? Here are just a few suggestions:

1. The Picasso Museum

Barcelona is awash with museum, both public and private, and the Picasso Museum is a must-see on any tourist's itinerary. Picasso trained in Barcelona, and so the museum displays a comprehensive selection of the work he created whilst studying in the city. It is an important collection that shows his technical skills and his growth as an artist. In addition, there is a collection of over 40 ceramic pieces, which were donated to the museum by Jacqueline Picasso in the 1980s. Housed in magnificent medieval palaces, and with classical music concerts as well as the art collection, the Picasso Museum is not to be missed.

2. The Architecture

Costing you nothing but tired feet at the end of the day, you can view the history of Barcelona through its buildings. From its Roman Walls, visit the Gothic quarter, where the Cathedral, public and private buildings all take you back in time to the city's Medieval period. See Modernisme buildings that are also World Heritage Sites and modern buildings such as those built for the 1992 Olympic Games, and you'll have walked through thousands of years of Barcelonian history in just one day.

3. Festivals

Like any major city, Barcelona hosts a number of festivals each year. One of the most popular and best-known is the Barcelona Grec Summer Festival, which encompasses a wide range of productions and performers. In addition, festivals such as the Ciutat Vella Flamenco Festival and the Barcelona Guitar Festival give visitors a true taste of Spanish art and culture.

There's a whole lot of other cultural activities and events to keep you busy on your visit to this amazing city - and you'll want to come back for more

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