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Barcelona Spain – So Much Fun In One Day

By Rob Carlton

The city of Barcelona, Spain, as all the Iberian Peninsula, has been clearly marked by its long

history which dates to the Roman times. But what really left a deep impression and can still be fully appreciated today is what the Arabs left behind. Not only can you awe at the lovely cathedrals, temples and other buildings but you can feel it in the powerful, brave character of the people in Catalunya. The cities of Lleida, Girona, Tarragona and Barcelona make up the region called Catalunya and with it an extensive shore line which starts at the French border and goes mid-way down the Mediterranean until the Community of Valencia.

Having so much coast, Barcelona has not only been able to captivate tourism in the summer with excellent beach resorts, hotels and water sports, but also thanks to its cultural and architectural activities. One of the most outstanding sights that everyone wants to see when traveling to Barcelona is the Sacred Family or as many people know it even though they do not speak Spanish is the famous Sagrada Familia at the Placa de la Sagrada Square. Antonio Gaudi, a renowned architect started to build a church for the needy in 1883. He, together with other architects, worked on this project which was supported by donations from those who cared. In 1898 he decided that he wanted his masterpiece to one of the most original known up until then and changed the typical bell towers which were always square to be rounded off. He also added the Swiss cheese appearance to them. By around 1923, the chapel called Saint Joseph, the east facing and the crypt had been completed. It had been worked on vigorously up until Gaudi died in 1926 and therefore buried in the crypt designed by him. Since then all the bell towers and other parts have been completed but it still has not been finished. But all around the city you can find gaudi's works: La Pedrera, Mila House, and the park Guell. But The Sagrada Familia is still one of the most impressive pieces of architecture ever seen.

A city full of Museums and Attractions

But if you are looking for more strong emotions, then head over to the Picasso Museum. This museum is shared between five medieval palaces which contain a nice overall view of his different fazes. Therefore, it lets you travel from Malaga which was his home town to Paris, so well reflected in his paintings, to Russia and his captivating detailed ballet paintings and finally to Barcelona where he settled. This is an absolute must and even more interesting is that it costs so little, has long visiting

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hours to let you roam about, great public transport combinations and is found in the Cuitat Vella Parc. The Ciutat Vella (the beautiful city), was once the entire city of Barcelona until the end of the 14th century and was the principal and only surviving zones made up of four areas: The Gothic Neighbourhood, La Ribera, Las Ramblas (flowered promenade) and the Raval. It is so easy to find and get there because there are four distinctive landmarks that lead us by the hand as if it were a famous framed picture. Using the Catalunya Square as its left frontier, you go straight down Las Ramblas Street until you see the impressive Christopher Columbus Monument towering over you as soon as you reach the edge of the port. Leisurely strolling towards the north in the direction of the Olympic Port you come across the Cuitadella Park. At this point turn left to feast your eyes on the emotive Arch of Triumph some blocks away. Within this enclosed circle of narrow cobblestone streets and typically set up shops, you are wrapped up in living history.

It does not matter if you are an avid Barcelona Football (Soccer) fan and know that this team is usually called 'Barça', or just a visitor who wants to enjoy a good match, do not forget to pass by the

Nou Camp football stadium to reserve or buy your tickets. Football season is usually between September and May. This year Fran Rikard has led the Barca to win the Spanish Football League so there will be a lot of celebrations and neat souvenirs to buy. The Costa Brava and Costa Dorada, as this area is referred to, has clean cared for beaches and caters to the tourist both inside the city as well as on the outskirts with a wide selection of accomodations. There chalets, semi-detached homes and apartments for rent or all kinds of hotels starting from a simple youth hostel, passing through a bed and breakfast type lodging to three, four and five star hotels. Whether you are going to be in Barcelona for a romantic honeymoon, just a quick weekend get away, family holidays or a business trip, you can enjoy yourself in one way or another.

You will never be bored because the information available on Barcelona can be easily found on the net, through travel agencies, or going directly to a tourist information booth when you arrive at the airport. This information is offered to you in many different languages and is usually free. It provides the traveler with precise information about museums and other monuments (their prices and hours), temporary exhibitions, banks, entertainment, restaurants and shopping areas, the sorts of hotels and where they are all located on very simple maps.

Rob Carlton wrote many contributions to

<http://www.barcelona-information.com>

a web site full of travel

tips on Barcelona. Within his publications he is gives practical tips on the Barcelona Airport

<http://www.barcelona-information.com/barcelona-airport.html>

and the biggest sightseeing attractions.

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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