

Barcelona city guide: Where to eat, drink, shop and stay in the Catalan capital

With so much to see and do, Barcelona is a city you'll want to get right, says **Paul Stafford**

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The Gaudi-designed Sagrada Familia in spring
(Getty/iStock)



With so much to see and do, **Barcelona** is a city you'll want to get right, be it staying at a **centre-of-the-action hotel**, a memorable restaurant experience, or another tick on your world monument bucket list.

It's not presumptuous to label Barcelona (aka Barna, not Barca) one of the world's great cities. To witness the self-assured sense of identity, borne by an effortless style, debonair dining scene and embarrassment of cultural riches, is to know you're experiencing a special place. Shades of Spain are evident, but Barcelona is painted a Catalan red and yellow, the capital of a distinctive and individualistic region.

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It's wise to plan ahead to make the most of your time, particularly when narrowing down the exhaustive lists of modernista (Catalan modernism) masterpieces, characterful neighbourhoods, art-jammed museums and **scene-stealing restaurants** that are commonly booked up in advance. The payoff can be spectacular, a flurry of otherworldly buildings and urban spaces, theatre of food and drink experiences, and distinctive culture. You'll leave with Barna's vivaciousness etched into your memory, along with the wish you didn't have to waste time on sleep.

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Where to stay

El Palace



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Hotel El Palace Barcelona

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The doyenne of Barcelona's accommodation scene, El Palace sports lavish public spaces and an old-school approach to refined service. The hotel's six decadent art suites are a sumptuous humblebrag of the glamorous former clientele who made El Palace their home for weeks or even months at a time. Highlights are the painting suite, dedicated to Salvador Dali, while Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones helped design the music suite.

Rooms available from

£615 per night

CHECK AVAILABILITY

Rates provided by Booking.com

[Read our full review of Hotel El Palace Barcelona here](#)

Hotel Amenities 