

Spotlight on Barcelona

HISTORY

Spain, Portugal, the microstate of Andorra and the British possession of Gibraltar, all share the Iberian Peninsula, a vaguely square shaped realm at the far southwestern edge of Europe. Spain occupies most of the peninsula, claiming some 80% of the area.

Most of Spain's boundary is water. To the south and east from Gibraltar to the French border is the Mediterranean Sea, offering sun-drenched sandy beaches, resorts and "Mediterranean style" yachting communities. The Atlantic Ocean borders the northwest coast with the Bay of Biscay and the southwest coast with the Golfo de Cadiz. Spain also shares land boundaries with France and Andorra along with the Pyrenees in the northeast, Portugal on the west and with the small British possession of Gibraltar at the southern tip.

Early in the 20th century, Catalonia was proclaimed an autonomous republic. Spain, being a divided nation, suffered a civil war in 1936, and in 1939, Barcelona fell to the Nationalists and was absorbed into General Franco's realm. On Franco's death in 1975, King Juan Carlos I was crowned. With Juan Carlos on the throne, Spain made the transition from dictatorship to democracy and after years of repression, the language and culture of Catalonia once again flourished and regional autonomy was returned.

Today, Barcelona has taken its place on the list of the world's great cities. Catalonia's most modern architecture of the late 19th and 20th centuries – a unique melting pot of Art Nouveau, Gothic, Moorish and other styles – climaxes here in the inspiring creations of Antoni Gaudí. Among the works are the La Sagrada Familia church and Parc Guell. Barcelona also has world-class museums, including two devoted to Picasso and Miro, a fine old quarter (Barri Gotic) and nightlife as good as anywhere in the country.

Barcelona's best-known promenade, Las Ramblas, descends gradually but excitingly from Placa de Catalunya to the port, approximately one mile. Walking the full extent of La Rambla, from the top to the bottom where it ends at the port and the Columbus Monument, is an experience. You can buy a canary, a monkey, an orchid, "one" cigarette, a newspaper and much more.

DOCKING

The Port of Barcelona has a total of 7 terminals exclusively for use by cruise traffic. Your cruise ship will be docking in either Cruise Terminal A, B, C, or D.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

Please check your tour ticket for the correct meeting time and location for your tour. Your cruise line representative will direct you to your transportation.

TRANSPORTATION

Taxis are available at the port. Most taxi drivers will accept United States dollars. From the pier, fares should be metered, but many drivers will offer a flat rate of approximately €6 to get into town.

HOW TO GET TO TOWN

The cruise terminals are within short proximity to the city centre enabling tourists to walk to the Plaça Colom in just 25 minutes. The Port of Barcelona has direct connections with Genoa, Rome, Algiers-Oran, Majorca, Ibiza and Minorca.

SHOPPING HOURS

Stores on Paseo de Gracia, the main shopping street, are open from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm. However, it is customary for an afternoon siesta to be taken from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. The shops are closed on Sundays. However, most of the recommended stores are open throughout the day when the ship is in port.

BANK HOURS

Banks are open Monday through Friday with limited hours on Saturday.

POST OFFICE HOURS

Post offices are open Monday through Friday with limited hours on Saturday. The post office is located at the bottom of Via Laietana on Placa Antonio Lopez.

TELEPHONE

There is a local telephone office located at Las Ramblas 88. Public phones are also available, but it is recommended to use a phone card that can be purchased from most newsstands.

EMERGENCY

In case of emergency, dial 112.

VAT

Many stores participating in the Value Added Tax (VAT) refund program in which non-European citizens may be entitled to re-claim a portion or all of the tax paid (depending on the total purchase price). Each store's participating in the VAT refund program is discretionary. In addition regulations and conditions governing the refund of VAT are subject to change. It is the responsibility of each cruise ship guest making a purchase to inquire as to whether or not store participates in VAT refund program and if the purchase qualifies for a refund. For general questions regarding the participation of stores, please see your Port & Shopping Guide.



Shop where you see the Global Refund TAX FREE SHOPPING SIGN and simply ask for your tax refund cheque. Not all stores have a visible TaxFree Shopping logo so do remember to ask for Tax Free Shopping. To qualify you must spend min. EUR 90,16 (approx. USD 135) in one shop in one day. Show your purchases, receipts and passport to customs officials when leaving EU and have your Global Refund cheques stamped. Now you can collect your refund in cash at the nearby Global Refund Cash Refund Office or mail the check to Global Refund for direct crediting of your credit card.

It feels even better when you shop Tax Free.



GLOBAL REFUND

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Please send a letter and include the name of the ship, cruise date, store name and merchandise problem. Also enclose a copy of the sales receipt and any relevant documents relating to the sale. Onboard Media will contact the recommended store on your behalf for repair or replacement, and you will be notified accordingly.

Look for this banner in all recommended and guaranteed stores.



BARCELONA

PORT & SHOPPING MAP



CAPITAL

Madrid is the capital of Spain and is located 309 miles west of Barcelona, which is the largest city on the Mediterranean coast.

LOCATION

Barcelona sits on the Mediterranean coast in northeastern Spain, just south of the Costa Brava and less than 100 miles from the French border.

SIZE

Barcelona measures 188 sq miles in area.

POPULATION

There are about 39,134,000 people living in Spain, with approximately 1,593,000 living in Barcelona.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Spain is Castilian Spanish, but it co-exists with other regional languages including Catalan, Basque and Galician.

CURRENCY

The Euro is the national currency in Spain. Recommended stores accept credit cards and traveler's checks.

TIME ZONE

Barcelona is on GMT/UTC +1 (Central European Time). The ship may not always follow local time. Please adhere to ship's time while in port.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The main tourist office in Barcelona is located in Placa Catalunya Square.

SIGHTS TO VISIT WHILE SHOPPING

A. MIRADOR DE COLON

This statue of Christopher Columbus is the perfect place for a wonderful view of the entire city and the perfect place to begin your shopping on Las Ramblas which is the main shopping street.

B. LAS RAMBLAS

This tree-lined boulevard is home to a variety of shops and restaurants and is the center of activity in Barcelona. It is on and around this street that most recommended and guaranteed stores are located.

C. GOTHIC QUARTER

This area is the oldest part of the city, with buildings dating back to the 13th century. Several of the recommended shops are located in this area, along with many restaurants that feature Catalan cuisine.

D. CATHEDRAL OF SANTA EULALIA

This structure is located in the Gothic Quarter, or Barri Gotic, and was built between 1298 and 1454. It was built in Catalan gothic style with colorful stained glass windows.

E. PICASSO GALLERY

This museum is the home to more than 2,000 of Picasso's early works as well as paintings done later in his life. It is located on Carrer de Montcada.

F. PLACA DE CATALUNYA

This area is Barcelona's banking, transport and tourist information nexus and is located at the top of Las Ramblas.


G. LA SAGRADA FAMILIA

This beautiful structure is Barcelona's most prominent landmark. It was built in 1882 by architect Antoni Gaudí, who died in 1926, and is still under construction today. The giant central dome raises up to 500 feet high. There are also four towers that represent the 12 apostles. For those who would like to visit the interior, an elevator can take you to the top of the east towers for a spectacular view, or you can take the stairway, which is narrow and steep, for a better feeling of the building.

H. L'AQUARIUM DE BARCELONA

L'Aquàrium de Barcelona is a recreational and educational marine center regarded as one of the largest in Europe. L'Aquàrium will take you to a different unknown, surprise-packed world. The beauty of the seabed, myriad colors, forms, organisms and ecosystems on show make a visit to L'Aquàrium an organic and marvelous event. When you come to see us, you will be surrounded by over 6 million liters of water and will have the chance to observe 11,000 specimens of sea life from 450 different species. All in all, L'Aquàrium de Barcelona is a different kettle of fish! Located on Moll d'Espanya del Port Vell.

Locations found on inside map

LOEWE 

Paseo De Gracia, 35

Business Hours: Monday to Saturday
from 10:00 am to 8:30 pm



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