

BARCELONA

Cosmopolitan **Barcelona** is the gateway to Spain's Mediterranean coast. You'll find world-class museums, including the Museu Picasso, with some of this artist's most interesting works. Or perhaps you'd prefer to wander the narrow streets of the Barri Gòtic (Gothic Quarter) filled with medieval buildings. Barcelona also has some of the most interesting architecture in Europe, especially those structures designed by Antoni Gaudí. Don't miss the indescribable and uncompleted La Sagrada Familia (Church of the Holy Family), Barcelona's most recognizable landmark. And get ready to stay up late in Spain's second largest city, because Barcelona is known for its pulsating nightlife.

La Sagrada Familia

Plaça de la Sagrada Familia/401

Carrer de Mallorca

Tel. 93/2073031

Open daily Apr-Sep 9am-8pm;

Oct-Mar 9am-6pm

Admission: €8 (€2 for the tower elevator)

Metro: Sagrada Familia

www.sagradafamilia.org



The foundation stone of Barcelona's most recognizable landmark was laid in 1882. Antoni Gaudí, the famous Catalan architect, was tragically killed in an accident before he could complete this architectural masterpiece. The roofless Church of the Holy Family looks like some huge melting sand castle. Gaudí is buried in the crypt (where there's a museum showing how he intended the building to look upon its completion). The elevator trip (or steps) to the top of the towers is not for those afraid of heights. You just can't come to Barcelona and not visit this indescribable building: Weird, majestic, eclectic and awe-inspiring, all at the same time!

Museu Picasso

(Picasso Museum)

15-23 Carrer Montcada

Tel. 93/3196310

Open Tue-Sat 10am-8pm, Sun 10am-3pm

Admission: €5

Metro: Jaume I

www.museupicasso.bcn.es

The largest collection of art by Pablo Picasso (all 3,600 of them) is at this museum housed in adjoining Gothic palaces. The museum focuses on his early years (he lived in Barcelona from the age of 14 to 21). Especially interesting is room 11 containing the depressing and bleak works from his “Blue Period.” A must for those interested in this fascinating artist.

Park Güell

Carrer d'Olot

Tel. 93/2193811

Open daily 9am-8pm (until 6pm in winter)

Admission: Free (Museum: €4)

Metro: Lesseps (then a steep uphill walk) or take bus #24 from Plaça de Catalunya or the red tourist bus

The two gatehouses to this park look like gingerbread houses from a book of fairy tales. From the ceramic decorated entrance to the wrought-iron lampposts to the park benches, this incredible place allows you to experience Gaudí's

Restaurant Tips

EL XAMPANYET

22 Carrer Montcada

93/3197003

Closed Mon, Tue and Sun (dinner)

Metro: Jaume I

A *Xampanyeria* is a bar found in and around Barcelona serving *cava* (sparkling wine). This popular, blue-tiled bar is a great place for a quick bite while visiting the Picasso Museum. Inexpensive.

TÈXTEL CAFÉ

12-14 Carrer Montcada

(near the Picasso Museum)

Tel. 93/2682598

Open daily 10am-midnight

Metro: Jaume I

Have lunch (pasta dishes, salads and sandwiches) on the terrace of the gorgeous palace that houses the Textile Museum. Moderate.

brilliance as a landscape designer. There are excellent views from the pavilion. You can visit **Casa Museu Gaudí**, the home where Gaudí lived from 1906 to 1926, containing some of his



drawings and personal belongings. Today, the park is the place to come to enjoy the quirkiness of Gaudí and Barcelona; it's unlike any other in Europe. Visit the gift shop for some fun stuff.

La Barceloneta/Port Olímpic

Along the shore, south of Parc de la Ciutadella

Metro: Barceloneta or Ciutadella

La Barceloneta (Little Barcelona) is a quaint neighborhood of narrow streets with hanging laundry and palm tree-lined promenades along the shore. The beach stretches for 2.5 miles. You can stroll to the Port Olímpic (Olympic Port) one mile away, where there are lots of cafés, beach bars (*xiringuitos*), clubs and a casino. Overlooking it all is a giant copper goldfish sculpture by Frank Gehry in front of the Hotel Arts.

LA RAMBLA WALK

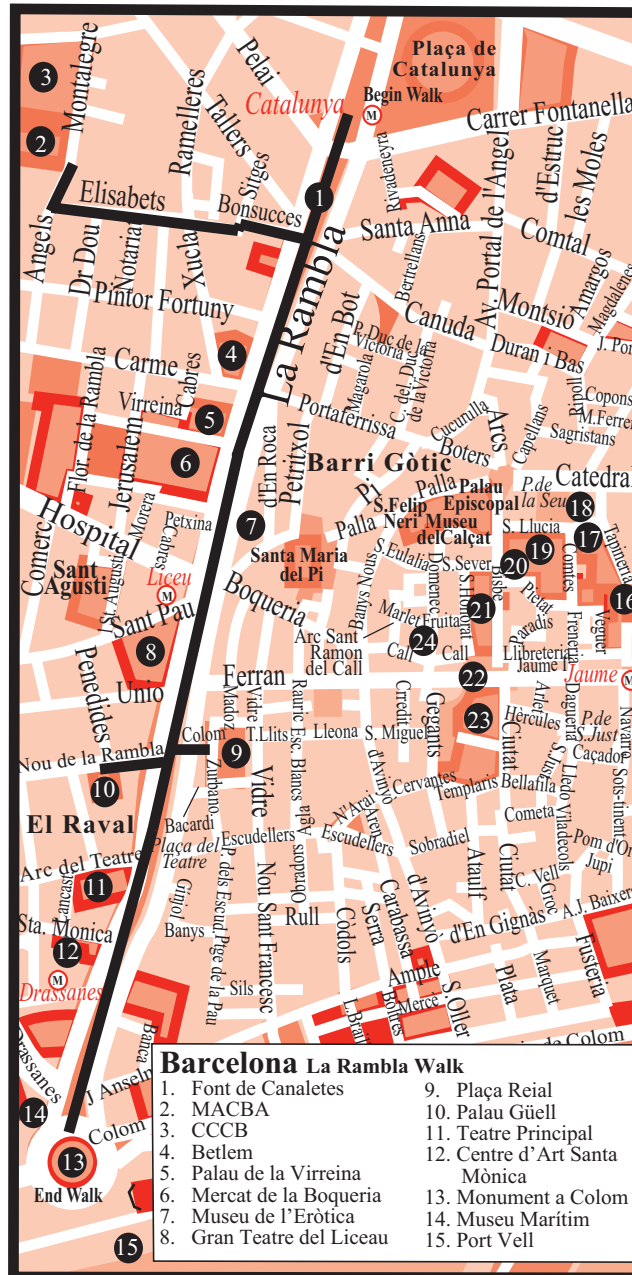
Metro: Catalunya

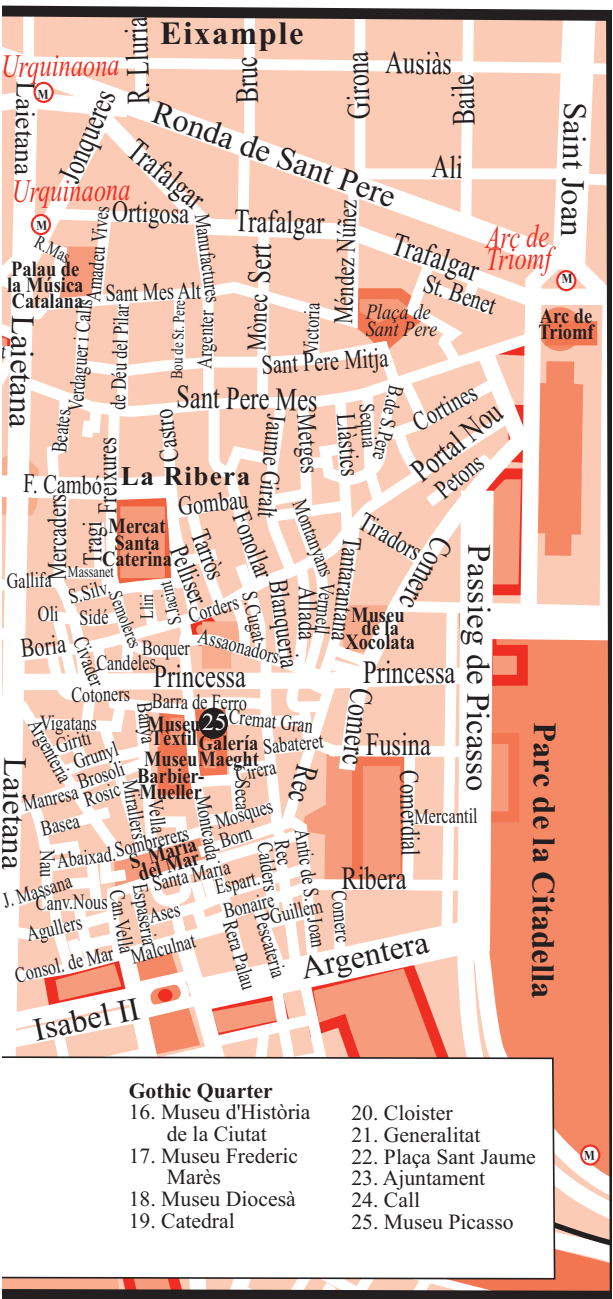
A walk down La Rambla is a must for all visitors to Barcelona. Highlights: **Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona**, **Mercat de la Boqueria**, and **Monument a Colom**. Approximate distance: one mile. See map on pages 10-11. Note that the Mercat de la Boqueria is closed on Sundays.

To begin your walk, take the metro to the Catalunya stop.

You begin at the large square, Plaça de Catalunya, and begin your trek down to the port.

Be warned that Barcelona is notorious for pickpockets. Be extra careful near tourist attractions, especially along La Rambla.





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If you like to shop, pop into the giant department store **El Corte Inglés** on the square at 14 Plaça de Catalunya. This is *the* department store in Barcelona and all of Spain. In addition to clothing and household goods, check out the supermarket on the lower level and the café/restaurant on the seventh floor. Closed Sundays.

Head to the pedestrian walkway La Rambla. Walk down the middle of the street. This section of the street is called Rambla de Canaletes after the fountain Font de Canaletes located here.

On your right at the beginning of the walk (near #129) is a lamppost with a drinking fountain at its base. It's said that if you drink from the fountain **Font de Canaletes**, you're guaranteed to return to Barcelona.

All along La Rambla, you'll see crowds of people gathering around street performers. Devils, mimes (unfortunately), and, if you're lucky, the old bald guy with goofy glasses stroking his guitar and playing a Pan flute with his Chihuahua in matching goofy glasses by his side.

Now continue walking down La Rambla. Turn right at number 121 La Rambla (there's an old-fashioned pharmacy on the corner) onto Carrer del Bonsuccés.

Walk through the Plaça del Bonsuccés. The street turns into Carrer Elisabets (check out the old herb store at number 2).

You'll run into the street Carrer dels Àngels. To your right (that white building) is the **Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona** (Museum of Contemporary Art), also called MACBA. Housed in a building that is a work of art itself, this museum features contemporary works by Spanish, Catalan and international artists. *Tel. 93/4120810. Open Mon, Wed-Fri 11am-8pm (only until 7:30pm Oct-May), Sat 10am-8pm, Sun 10am-3pm. Admission: €6. Metro: Universitat or Catalunya. www.macba.es.*

Behind MACBA is the **Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona** (CCCB) (Center of Contemporary Culture of

Barcelona). There are changing exhibits at this cultural center housed in the Casa de la Caritat, a former almshouse dating back to the 1800s.

Retrace your steps to La Rambla, and continue down the street. This section is called Rambla dels Estudis.

At number 115, you'll pass by a market filled with shops selling all sorts of pets, especially birds and fish.

On your right (at the corner of Carrer del Carme) is the Baroque exterior of the church **Betlem** (the interior dates back only to the 1930s because of a fire). On the next block down La Rambla (on your right at number 99) is the **Palau de la Virreina**. It has a fantastic Baroque and Rococo interior that you can see as part of the cultural department's changing exhibits. If you want, you can pop into its courtyard. If you're lucky, they will have the *gegants* out. They're 16-foot-tall fiberglass statues that are used in festivals and parades. A great photo opportunity.

Continue down La Rambla. This section of the street is called Rambla de Sant Josep.

Right after number 91 (on your right) you'll reach **Mercat de la Boqueria**. Pass through the iron gateway to one of the largest, most interesting and colorful markets in Europe. You'll find everything from fresh produce to delicious snacks under its wrought iron-and-glass roof. Each stall in the market is numbered. My favorite is the counter of **El Quim** at numbers 584-585. It's a great place for a drink and *tapas*. Closed Sundays.

After visiting the market, continue down La Rambla.

Across from the market at number 96 is the **Museu de l'Eròtica** housing over 800 pieces of erotic art from the Middle Ages to today. Tel. 93/3189865. Open June-Sep 10am-midnight, Oct-May 11am-9pm. Admission: €8. Metro: Liceu. www.erotica-museum.com.

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On the right at number 83 (at the corner of Carrer de la Petxina) check out the beautiful mosaic façade and the fantastic sweets (especially the chocolates!) at **Escribà** (open daily 8:30am-9pm), an Art Nouveau eatery dating back to the early 1900s.

Admire the interesting façade of the building at number 77 on the right. It's covered with Art Nouveau mosaics.

Look for the mosaic set into the sidewalk by abstract artist Joan Miró at Plaça de la Boqueria. You're about halfway through your walk.

Continue down La Rambla. This section is called Rambla dels Caputxins.

On your right, at the corner of Carrer de Sant Pau, is the renovated opera house **Gran Teatre del Liceu**, parts of which date back to 1848.

Guided tours of the hall, Room of Mirrors and marble foyer are daily at 10am for €6 (shorter tours at 11:30am, noon and 1pm for €4).

On the left side of the street is the famous **Café de l'Opera** at number 74.

If you cross the street to the left side, you can visit one of the loveliest squares in all of Europe (entry through Carrer de Colom).

At number 46, head into the square **Plaça Reial**. This lovely square, with the Fountain of Three Graces, is filled with palm trees, cafés, shops and bars. A great place for a break. Check out those interesting lampposts designed by Gaudí (notice the winged dragons perched on top with their tails wrapped around the posts).

Detour

On the left side of the street is Carrer de la Boqueria. This will take you into the narrow streets of the **Barri Gòtic** (Gothic Quarter) filled with medieval buildings.

Now head back to La Rambla and cross the street.

Right after the Hotel Oriente, turn right on Carrer Nou de la Rambla. You'll see Gaudí's incredible **Palau Güell** (at number 3-5) (one-hour guided visits only, for €3). As you approach, look up to your left at the chimney and ventilator shafts covered with colorful and ornate tile patterns.

You've now entered **El Raval**. It's an ethnically diverse neighborhood where you must be careful, especially at night, as this is a favorite haunt of pickpockets and prostitutes. It's not nearly as bad as it's been in the past, but still be careful.

Restaurant Tip

TAXIDERMISTA

8 Plaça Reial

Tel. 93/4124536

Open daily

Metro: Liceu

This popular eatery has great food and is known for its serious people-watching. When this space housed a taxidermy shop Salvador Dalí purchased a stuffed elephant and had his photo taken on it in the square. Try the *pa amb tomàquet* (a local toast snack with tomato sauce and olive oil). Inexpensive–Moderate.

Now head back to La Rambla and continue walking toward the port.

On your right at number 27, just after the Carrer de l'Arc del Teatre, is the curvy façade of the theater, **Teatre Principal**, which dates back to the mid-1800s.

Continue down La Rambla. This section is called Rambla de Santa Mònica. You'll find portrait artists and local art for sale here.

At number 7 are the cloister and tower of the **Centre d'Art Santa Mònica**, a former convent dating back to the early 1600s. It's now a cultural center with changing exhibits.

That huge monument at the port is the **Monument a Colom** (Columbus Monument) honoring the famous explorer from where it is said he was welcomed home in 1492. You can take an elevator to the top for great views (€2.20).

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An interesting end to your walk is to take a *golondrina*, one of the boats docked here at the Port de la Pau. These boats provide excellent views of the city's coast. They depart to the breakwater (35-minute trip, €4) or to the Port Olímpic (a two-hour journey, €9).

Also at the **Port Vell** (Old Port) is the **Museu Marítim** (Maritime Museum) housed in the **Drassanes Reials** (Royal Shipyards), tracing the history of the Catalans' reliance upon the sea. A historic 1918 sailing ship, the Santa Eulàlia, is docked in the harbor across the street. A must for sea lovers. *Tel. 93/3429929. Open daily 10am-7pm (closed Mon in winter). Admission: €6. Metro: Drassanes. www.diba.es/mmaritim.*

Cross the footbridge here and you'll find the **L'Aquàrium**, part of the **Maremagnum** entertainment complex. This large aquarium is home to 8,000 fish in 21 tanks, including a huge shark tunnel that kids love. *Tel. 93/2217474. Open Jul and Aug daily 9:30am-11pm, Sep and weekends 9:30am-9:30pm, rest of the year 9:30am-9pm, admittance until one hour before closing. Admission: €14. Metro: Drassanes. www.aquariumbcn.com.* And here ends our Rambla walk!

Barri Gòtic

(Gothic Quarter)

Metro: Jaume I

Explore the narrow streets and lovely squares of Europe's best-preserved medieval quarter. It's home to the following sights:

The **Museu d'Història de la Ciutat** (Museum of the History of the City) contains the largest underground excavation of any European city. You'll walk on glass ramps to view the remains of the Roman town of Barcino. You'll also have access to the beautiful **Saló del Tinell**, a banquet hall dating back to the 14th century. It was here that Columbus was received upon his return from America. *Tel. 93/3151111. Carrer del Veguer. Open Oct-May Tue-Sat 10am-2pm and 4pm-8pm, Sun 10am-3pm; June-Sep Tue-Sat 10am-8pm, Sun 10am-3pm. Admission: €4. www.museuhistoria.bcn.es.*

The **Museu Frederic Marès** (Museum Frederic Mares) is located in an impressive Romanesque and Gothic palace. This museum (named after a Spanish sculptor) houses sculpture from pre-Roman times to the 20th century. It's also home to the **Museu Sentimental**, an interesting collection of household items from the past four centuries. *Carrer dels Comtes. Tel. 93/3105800. Open Tue-Sat 10am-7pm, Sun 10am-3pm. Admission: €3. www.museumares.bcn.es.*

Devotees of religious art shouldn't miss the **Museu Diocesà** (Diocesan Museum). *Plaça de la Seu. Tel. 93/3152213. Open Tue-Sat 10am-2pm and 5pm-8pm, Sun 11am-2pm. Admission: €4.*

Construction on Barcelona's massive **Catedral** (Cathedral) began in the 13th century. It's a splendid example of Catalan Gothic architecture, and features sculpted choir stalls dating back to the 14th century. The **Sala Capitular** (Chapter House) is home to a museum of medieval art. The roof (when open) has great views of the Barri Gòtic. The cathedral's beautiful and serene **cloister** is filled with palm trees and magnolias. Notice the 13 geese here; they're in memory of St. Eulàlia, the patron saint of the city. She was a 13-year-old who was tortured by the Romans 13 times for refusing to renounce Christianity. The geese also acted as guards by honking if someone entered. Their descendants still do lots of honking today!

The cloister is lined with chapels. You can buy a candle at the small booth at the entry. Notice that Saint Rita's chapel has the most candles, not just because it's near the entry, but because she is the patron saint of desperate, seemingly impossible causes and situations. *Plaça de la Seu. Tel. 93/3151554. Cathedral: Open daily 8am-1:30pm and 4:30pm-*

Entertainment Tip

The **sardana**, a colorful Catalan folk dance, is performed every Sunday at noon (and some Saturdays at 6pm) in front of the cathedral.

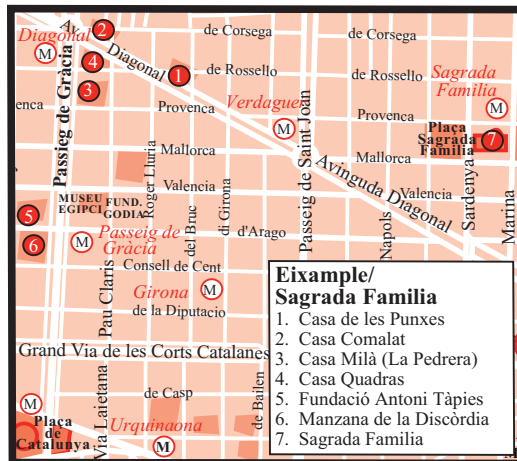
The square **Plaça Sant Jaume** is home to the government buildings for Barcelona (**Ajuntament**) and Catalonia (**Generalitat**).

Example

Metro: Passeig de Gràcia or Diagonal

**Exemple/
Sagrada Família**

1. Casa de les Punxes
2. Casa Comalat
3. Casa Milà (La Pedrera)
4. Casa Quadras
5. Fundació Antoni Tàpies
6. Manzana de la Discòrdia
7. Sagrada Família



Passeig de Gràcia*Metro: Passeig de Gràcia*

The fantastic block between Carrer Consell de Cent and Carrer Aragó is nicknamed **Manzana de la Discòrdia** (Block of Discord) because the buildings seemed to be trying to outdo one another.

At number 35 of Passeig de Gràcia is the **Casa Lleó-Morera**, designed in 1906 by Domènech i Montaner. The exterior is covered with balconies and carved floral designs, with a rooftop garden and unusual tower.

Notice the interesting *Modernisme* lampposts along the street.

At number 39 is the **Museu del Perfum** (Perfume Museum) with a collection of 5,000 perfume vessels, including flasks from ancient Greece, a bottle designed by Dalí, and one owned by Marie Antoinette. *Tel. 93/2160121. Open Mon-Fri 10:30am-1:30pm and 4:30pm-8pm, Sat 11am-2pm. Admission: €5. www.museodelperfume.com.*

At number 41 is **Casa Amatller**, dating back to 1900. Its interesting mixture of wrought iron, sculptures and ceramics was designed by Puig i Cadafalch. Its interior is Gothic Revival (which you can see only by appointment).

At number 43 is the **Casa Batlló** by Gaudí. You have to see it to understand how unique it is. It dates back to 1905, and its wavy façade of stone, iron and tiles is extraordinary. You can pop inside and take a look at the equally interesting interior. The roof has fascinating twisted tile chimneys. *Tel. 93/2160306. Open daily 9am-8pm. Admission: €10 (€16 includes access to the roof). www.casabatllo.es*

Around the corner at 255 Carrer d'Aragó is the **Fundació Antoni Tàpies**. This iron-and-brick building dates back to the 1880s. It contains a collection of the Catalan artist's mostly Abstract Expressionist works. Notice his huge sculpture on the roof. *Tel. 93/4870315. Open Tue-Sun 10am-8pm. Admission: €5. www.fundaciotapies.org.*

At number 92 Passeig de Gràcia is **Casa Milà** (La Pedrera): Is this building melting? From the unbelievable exterior to the Art Nouveau apartment to the bizarre chimneys, this great work by Gaudí is a must. It's called La Pedrera, which means "The Stone Quarry." *Tel. 90/2400973. Open daily 10am-8pm. Admission: Free to the exterior and courtyard. Interior: €8, guided tours in English Mon-Fri at 4pm.*

Entertainment Tip

In the summer, you can attend a concert on the roof of Casa Milà and sip **cava** (Spanish sparkling wine). *Tel. 90/2400973. Fri and Sat €10. Reservations required.* If you just want to try Spanish wines, head down Carrer de Provença to **Vinoteca**, a wine bar and wine store at number 169. *Tel. 93/4677023. Open Mon-Fri 10am-2pm and 4:30pm-8:30pm, Sat 10:30am-2pm and 5pm-8:30pm.*

Avinguda Diagonal

Metro: Avinguda Diagonal

At 442 is **Casa Comalat** by Valeri i Pupurull. Notice the twelve curved stone balconies and elaborate wrought-iron railings. If you view the building from the rear (at 316 Carrer de Còrsega), you'll see a totally different-looking building with bulging shutters.

On the other side of the street (just before Carrer de Pau Claris) is the first of two

works by architect Puig i Cadafalch. At number 373 is the **Casa Quadras**, built in 1904 and featuring a St. George-slaying-a-dragon theme and beautiful stained glass. Cross the street if you want to see the detail. It houses the **Casa Asia**, an Asian cultural center with changing exhibits devoted to Asian art and history.

If you want to take a break, head into **Bar Mut**, a wine and *tapas* bar at 192 Carrer de Pau Claris near the corner of Avinguda Diagonal.

You can't miss the towers at numbers 416-420. Those towers give the **Casa de les Punxes** (House of the Spikes) its nickname (its formal name is Casa Terrades). It's another work by architect Puig i Cadafalch and dates back to 1903.

Montjuïc*(Mount of the Jews)*

You can view music and lights shows at the fountain every thirty minutes May-Sep Thu-Sun 8pm-midnight, Oct-Apr Fri and Sat 7pm-9pm. Several outdoor escalators make the walk more tolerable. The blue tourist bus also stops here. Bus number 55 runs through the park.

Metro: Espanya. Then you'll walk (uphill) for about 10 minutes and pass the Art Deco Font Màgica (Magic Fountain).

Shopping Tip

At 85 Carrer de Roger Llúria is a great place to stock up on local food specialties. The deli/grocery **J Murrià** has been run by the same family since the early 1900s. Go on, try something interesting and delicious!

There are several sights to visit on this large hill overlooking the city center, including **Olympic Stadium**, **Poble Espanyol** (a fake and touristy Spanish village), and public gardens. Two of the museums here are:

Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC): Catalan National Art Museum in the huge **Palau Nacional** (National Palace) with one of the world's finest collections of Romanesque and Early Gothic art. Closed Mondays.

Fundació Joan Miró: thousands of works by Joan Miró, one of Spain's greatest painters, known for his vibrant colors and abstract art. Closed Mondays.

BARCELONA GETTING THERE/GETTING AROUND

Pick up a free map of the city (or a larger, more detailed one for €1) and a brochure on public transportation at the tourist information offices in terminals A and B of the airport. There are also tourist offices at city hall at Plaça de Sant Jaume in the Barri Gòtic, or at the office at Plaça de Catalunya.

When you arrive at Barcelona's El Prat de Llobregat Airport, you can either take a **taxi** into town (about €30) or the **Aerobús** for €4 (in the arrivals lobby, you buy the ticket on the bus) to the Plaça de Catalunya (with stops at Plaça d'Espanya, Carrer Urgell and Plaça Universitat) and then take the **metro**

to your hotel. The trip takes 35-45 minutes (depending on traffic). The **bus** operates 6am to midnight weekdays and 6:30am to midnight on weekends (departs at least four times per hour). To return to the airport, catch the Aerobús in front of the El Corte Inglés department store on Plaça de Catalunya (weekdays 5:30am to 11:15pm, weekends 6am to 11:15pm). **Trains** leave the airport train station two times per hour between 6:13am and 11:40pm for €2.25 (with stops at Sants, Plaça de Catalunya, Arc de Triomf and Clot-Aragó). Return trains leave the Plaça de Catalunya two times per hour between 5:30am and 10pm.

Once in the city, think about hopping on and off the double-decker tourist bus (**Bus Turistic**). The blue route covers the Gothic Quarter and Montjuïc, and the red route covers most Gaudí architectural sights and most of northern Barcelona. Public transportation is easy to use. You'll use the same ticket for bus, metro, tram or local train: Single ticket is €1.15, ten-trip ticket is €6.30. Don't forget to validate the ticket before you get on. If you're caught without a valid ticket, you'll pay a €40 fine.