
TRAVEL

Barcelona Travel Guide: A Perfect Weekend in Spain

Planning your weekend trip to the gorgeous city just got a lot easier. Here, *AD's* guide on where to stay, what to do, and where to eat

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Barcelona is a city brimming with exceptional cuisine, breathtaking architecture, and a plethora of museums—it's no wonder that travelers favor the Catalan capital. In fact, the World Economic Forum *reported* it as the 12th most-visited city in the world in 2016. And if you've never been, well, *carpe diem*, as they say, and experience the magical city for yourself. Where to begin? We've got that covered for you. Below, your guide to the perfect weekend trip in Barcelona.

To Stay...

In a city filled with eye candy, it's only apropos that you stay in a design-focused hotel. The Neoclassical *Cotton House Hotel, Autograph Collection* is arguably one of the most beautifully decorated options in Barcelona. From a hanging spiral staircase (the first of its kind) to an outdoor terrace laced with fragrant jasmine flowers, you'll find something to your liking at every turn. Or for the shopper who wants to be conveniently positioned on Passeig de Gracia (an equivalent of New York City's Fifth Avenue), check in to *Monument Hotel*, a member of the Preferred Hotels & Resorts LVX collection, where rooms are spacious and the ceiling above your bed is dotted with tiny buds of light that evoke the feeling of sleeping under the stars.

To Eat and Drink...



Restaurant Lasarte.

Photo: Courtesy of Preferred Hotels and Resorts

Barcelona has its fair share of fine dining options, including *Restaurant Lasarte* inside the Monument Hotel, the first and only establishment to receive three Michelin stars in the city. *Enoteco Paco Pérez*, located within Hotel Arts Barcelona, has two stars and is the perfect Saturday lunch spot thanks to its sunlit dining room. Or check out acclaimed chef Albert Adrià's *Tickets* and *Enigma*; the former is a high-end tapas eatery that ranked 25 on the World's 50 Best list, and the latter is his highly anticipated concept restaurant, which just opened earlier this year and serves around 40 courses over the span of several experience-centric hours. For more reasonably priced options, *Somodó's* Japanese-inspired Mediterranean cuisine will check off all of the boxes, and seafood lovers *must* go to the tiny *La Cova Fumada* in the Barceloneta neighborhood. And if you have a sweet tooth, make your way to *Hofmann Pastisseria*; there you'll find delectable cakes, but the real winners are the stuffed croissants—opt for the mascarpone, with the buttery and flaky pastry lightly glazed, dusted with cocoa powder, and filled with the rich and creamy cheese.

Once you're ready for a tippie, head over to the solarium-style bar at *Batuar* inside Cotton House Hotel for an afternoon cocktail in a chic setting. In the evening, *Boca Chica* and *Collage* are both great options for exemplary craft cocktails.

To See...

This could easily be called architect *Antoni Gaudí's* city given the abundance of his masterpieces at every corner. While we await *the opening of Casa Vicens* as a public museum, the iconic *Sagrada Família*—which is finally approaching its final stage of construction—is an absolute must, as are *Casa Batlló*, *Casa Milà*, and *Park Güell*, where you'll be granted unobstructed panoramic vistas of Barcelona. Then there's of course *Museo Picasso*, the only museum honoring the renowned artist that was built while he was alive, which has one of the most extensive collections of his work. If you plan to focus your vacation around museums, consider buying the *Barcelona City Card*, which affords free entry to the majority of them, as well as discounts to many attractions. Lastly, don't forget to take a stroll and wander around the picturesque alleyways—you'll find that there's plenty to gawk at, especially in the Gothic Quarter.