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Enjoy Barcelona

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'Enjoy Barcelona'

Barcelona is one of the *most beautiful cities* in Europe, full of history and culture. But what makes it so special is the *Mediterranean lifestyle*, which you feel in every single corner of the city, and the mixture of modern and historic buildings.

There is so much to see and do in Barcelona that it is hard to decide where to visit, and *what to see and do* on any given day. You can take it easy, however, because your Edelweiss tour guide will take you by the hand and *show you some secrets* and a very personal view of the city.

After taking the *train to Barcelona Sant*, the main train station, we explore the city by subway and by foot. We start with probably the most famous site in Barcelona, the *Sagrada Família* - the still-unfinished *masterpiece of architect Antonio Gaudí*. We have coffee just in front of this impressive building, before admiring the stunning interior and learning the story of the building and its architect.

Then we *stroll down the busy Ramblas*, the main shopping street of Barcelona, from the Plaza de Catalunya to the harbour. We inhale the atmosphere and watch the locals

shopping in the *old market hall*, while having fresh-pressed fruit juice.

The local *Serrano Ham* and all kinds of fruit dominate the scenery. The Serrano is air dried for several months - up to two years - and gets darker the longer you dry it. It is expensive, of course - up to 100 Euros per kilo! The shops, restaurants and artists along the way encourage us to stop several times, while hidden squares in the side streets *invite us to take a short rest*.

At the marina we say hello to *Christopher Columbus* and find some historic sailing yachts, before we end up in the Gothic Quarter, the *historical center of Barcelona*. Here it's time for lunch at a small, romantic square and you can try all kinds of Tapas, the typical local snack. You can also try the *Sangria*, a mix of red wine and orange juice. (But not too much, because we still have some walking to do.)

It is easy to get lost in the *narrow little alleys*, but it is a unique atmosphere and the walk along ruins of the *Roman Wall to the Cathedral* is a real pleasure. The Cathedral itself is a masterpiece of Gothic architecture and the counterpart of the modern Sagrada Familia, which we saw in the morning. After the cathedral we enjoy the *street musicians* who play Spanish guitar or sing Spanish folk songs.





Just across the square we 'encounter' a famous man from Spain: *Pablo Picasso*. The modern facade of a local public building is a huge, *three-dimensional footprint* of him.

There is one more highlight to see before the tour comes to an end and we say good-bye to downtown Barcelona. The *Casa Batlló* is one of the most impressive apartment buildings of Antonio Gaudi. The house looks like a big dragon from a distance and the details, like the balconies and the form of the roof, are just amazing.

It is hard to leave this lively and fascinating city behind, but your bikes are waiting for you to *explore more of the country* so this isn't a bad alternative.

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Barcelona (1,621,000 inhabitants) is Spain's second largest city, after Madrid. It is the capital of Catalunya and one of the major tourist destinations in Europe.
- In a top ten list, Barcelona Beach has been listed as the number one city beach in the world, according to National Geographic and the Discovery Channel.
- Barcelona won the 1999 RIBA Royal Gold Medal for its architecture, the first (and as of 2012, only) time that the winner has been a city, and not an individual architect.

- Barcelona (1,621,000 inhabitants) is Spain's second largest city, after Madrid. It is the capital of Catalunya and one of the major tourist destinations in Europe.
- Barcelona contains seven beaches, totaling 2.8 miles of coastline.
- Its cultural roots go back 2,000 years. Whereas the native Catalan language dominates most of Catalonia, Barcelona is a bilingual city: Catalan and Spanish are both official languages and widely spoken.
- Barcelona is designated as a world-class city by the Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network.
- FC Barcelona is a sports club best known worldwide for its football team, one of the largest (and the second richest) football clubs in the world. It has 62 national and 15 continental trophies, including four from the UEFA Champions League and two from the FIFA Club World Cup.
- Circuit de Catalunya/Circuit de Barcelona is a race track for Formula 1 and Moto GP in the suburbs of Barcelona.
- In 2007, Barcelona's City Council started the 'el Bicing', an innovative burrowing scheme service, as an adjunct to public transport. Once individuals acquire their user card, they can take a bicycle from any of 100 stations and use it anywhere in the urban area of the city, then leave it at any station when done using it. The service has been a success, with 50,000 subscribers in three months.

USEFUL INFORMATION

For more information about *availability and pricing* please do not hesitate to contact our Edelweiss Bike Travel team. We are looking forward hearing from you:

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