

GENERAL INFORMATION

Geographical situation and population

Barcelona, capital of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, is the second biggest city in Spain, after the capital, Madrid. It is situated in the South of Europe and in the North of Spain, very close to France (aprox. 150 km. to the French border). It has a population of approximately 1.600.000 inhabitants. Its total metropolitan area has a population of 4 million inhabitants. Barcelona is placed between two rivers, the Besòs to the north and the Llobregat to the south, and between the mountain of Collserola to the east and the mountain of Montjuïc and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. The surface area of the city is 99 square km. and its coastline stretches for 13 km.

Language

Two languages are spoken in Barcelona; Castillian (Spanish), the official language for the whole of Spain, and Catalan, a language derived from Latin, the official language in Catalonia. English is spoken in hotels, and in most of the shops and restaurants.

Passports and Visas

No visa is required for European Community member countries. A valid passport is required for most non-European Community member countries. It is, however, advisable to contact the Spanish Embassy or Consulate in your country to enquire about entry formalities.

Practical information:

www.mae.es/en

www.spain-visas.com/Visas-Endorsements-pag1.htm

How to get to Barcelona

AIRPORT : Barcelona is served by [Barcelona International Airport](#) in the town of [El Prat de Llobregat](#), about 13 km from Barcelona. The airport mainly serves domestic and European destinations, but some airlines offer destinations in [Asia](#) and the [United States](#). The airport is connected to the city by highway, commuter train and scheduled bus service.

Aerobus : www.aerobusbcn.com

Taxi : Approximately a taxi from the airport to the city centre will cost aprox. 30€

Phone taxi numbers:

• BARNA TAXI Phone: 933 002 314	• FONON TAXI Phone: 933 001 100	• RÀDIO TAXI 033 Phone: 933 033 033
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TRAIN : <http://www.renfe.es/horarios/english/index.html>

MOTORWAY: Barcelona is less than two hours from the border with France, connected by a modern three-lane toll highway. The entrance into Barcelona is well signposted and the main commercial area of the city is signposted "Centre Ciutat".

Barcelona

Barcelona is a city with more than two thousand years of history and one of the liveliest urban centres in the Mediterranean and European world. It is open to the visitor as a first class economic and commercial centre, as well as having the satisfaction of offering a wide ranges of cultural and leisure activities. The 1992 Olympic Games served to complete a spectacular urban transformation, which opened the city to the sea, modernised infrastructures and services and revitalised many areas which had fallen into decay and disuse. After the Olympic event, the city's dynamism did not stop, and Barcelona is today a city in which the preservation of its rich historical heritage combines with a continual renovation of its economic fabric, of its commercial centres and all those infrastructures of communication and transport which are consolidating it as a great entrance to the South of Europe.

In the cultural and leisure world, the city has a wide range of diverse and attractive activities to offer the visitor. These include architectural and artistic treasures such as the Gothic quarter, modernist jewels such as the Park Güell, la Casa Milá, la Casa Batlló, el Palau de la Música and the Sagrada Familia. Artistic centres such as the museum of Catalan Art, Picasso museum, the Miró foundation and the impressive museum of contemporary art.

Added to this, the city also possesses more than four kilometres of beaches, parks, restaurants for all tastes, including the rich local cuisine, theatres and an endless network of streets, squares and boulevards. Wandering around them is a fantastic voyage through history, and will undoubtedly seduce the visitor with its unique mixture of vitality and hospitality.

About Barcelona

Attendees to the Congress in Barcelona can be offered tourist information about the city using the contact details below:

www.barcelonaturisme.com

Tel. +34 932 853 832

Local Transport

Practical information: http://www.tmb.net/en_US/home.jsp

Shopping

Department stores and big commercial malls are open from 10.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. while most other shops open from 10.00 a.m. to 08.00 p.m. On Sundays department stores and shops are closed with some few exceptions.

Restaurants

Barcelona offers a huge selection and variety of restaurants and bars. "Tapas" are a specialty and part of the lifestyle and culture of Spain. The "tapa" is a small portion of a simple dish that is eaten with a glass of wine or beer. Tapas are served at all times of the day.

There is also a rich choice of local cuisine and regional specialties on offer. Of recommendation are the excellent fish and seafood dishes famous for their freshness and quality. Wide ranging international cuisine is available in Barcelona from all corners of the world including French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, etc. Barcelona is also home to excellent restaurants run by internationally recognised chefs.

Spaniards tend to eat later than people in most other countries of the world. Most of the restaurants are open from 1.00 p.m. for lunch and from 8.30 p.m. for supper.

SECURITY

IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS

Welcome,

Barcelona is a safe city. Nevertheless, you should take the common sense precautions you would take when visiting any major city:

- Always remove your congress pass when leaving the event venue.
- Watch out for distractions. Keep an eye on your personal belongings at all times, never leave them unattended.
- Be vigilant in crowds, restaurants and on public transportation.

Other recommendations:

- Do not carry or display large amounts of cash; only as much as you need.
- Leave at least one credit card, your driving license and valuable items in the safety deposit box at your hotel. That way, you will always have access to money and ID, even if you are unlucky enough to be pickpocketed.
- Put the "do not disturb" sign on the hotel door if you have to leave valuable items in the room and there is no safety deposit box.
- When travelling around the city, check how to get to your destination in advance, so that you appear confident in how you are walking and where you are going.

If you do suffer any incident, please report it to:

- At the hotel where you are staying.
- Call the Police to the phone number 088 or 112

It helps the city to fight petty crime if you report incidents.

Thank you for your cooperation.