

# Ultimate Kid Friendly Barcelona Itinerary & Travel Guide

## WHY DO THE 2 IDIOTS RECOMMEND BARCELONA?

Spain is our favorite country, and Barcelona is one of our favorite cities. It is one of the most underrated countries in Europe, and we love Barcelona even more than Paris. (Yes! We said it!) You'll find the entire city, and country, for that matter, is very child-friendly – they will not shush your children for making noise in a restaurant! Instead, Barcelona is very laid back, vibrant and fun, and the people are very warm and welcoming. Here's what to see when traveling to Barcelona with kids.

## WHERE TO STAY

Although it is a popular area, we do not recommend staying in Las Ramblas with kids. It is quite crowded, even into the night. Instead, we stayed by Plaza Espana, which is closer to the center of town, making it easier to get around. Traveling to Barcelona on a recent trip with our extended family, we also found an AirBnB with four bedrooms and room for all of us.

## CREATING AN IDEAL ITINERARY

Some visit Barcelona as their jumping off point for a Mediterranean cruise, only staying for a day. While you see a lot in one day, we love this city and all of its artistic, historic and kid-friendly attractions and recommend traveling Barcelona for at least 3 days. If you can add on a day trip outside the city, by all means do. Spain is a wonderful country for families. Here is some information that can help you get started!

Days	Itinerary	Cost*
1	Visit Park Guell	7.50 Euro for adults, 5.25 Euro for kids 7 to 12, and free for kids 6 and under
	Walk by Casa Batilo (optional)	Tickets to enter are \$28 for adults, free for kids 6 and under
	Visit Sagrada Familia	15 Euro for adults, free for children 11 and under
	Go up Arenas de Barcelona for sunset	1-2 Euros per adult

	Visit the Magical Fountains at night	Free
2	Start day at Plaza de Catalunya	Free
	Walk and explore Las Ramblas	Free
	Explore Gothic Quarter and Cathedral of Barcelona	Free
3	Take the Montjuic Cable Car	12.70 Euro for adults, 9.20 Euro for children, free for 4 and under
	Spend the afternoon relaxing at Barcelona's beaches (we recommend Bogatell beach)	Free
4	Take a day trip outside of Barcelona	

### *Day 1: Discover Gaudi*

- Barcelona's famed artist Antoni Gaudi left quite a mark on the city, and the best way to start a visit to Barcelona is to visit all of the places he touched. Gaudi was an incredible architect in the 1800s and to see his work in person is awe-inspiring. Start your day at Park Guell, which was built in 1900 and is located on Carmel Hill. The park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is made up of amazing gardens and we were fascinated by Guell's architectural sculptures and elements, as well as the views of the city. Our son loved the park because, simply, it's a park! He could play and explore, and although he didn't recognize the significance of it, we have beautiful pictures of him with Gaudi's work as a backdrop. It is a very popular stop for tourists and can become quite crowded, so visit in the morning to truly enjoy the park. Plan on spending a couple of hours here.
- If you are in the mood to walk, stroll by Casa Batilo, one of Gaudi's masterpieces. You don't even need to go inside to discover his unusual style in the building's façade -- it's one of the most unique designs we have ever seen. We didn't go in, but if you do want to visit, plan for an hour to see the house come to life -- just make sure you save enough time for your next stop.
- Located near the Casa and your next stop, find a Spanish restaurant for a lunch break. The area is near prime shopping, as well as the Mandarin Oriental Hotel
- After lunch, make your way to the awe-inspiring Sagrada Familia, which we would rank the No. 1 church in the world. Gaudi began construction on this Roman Catholic church in 1882 and never saw the competition of what most consider his greatest work of art. Still under construction to this day, the church is a unique display of shapes, color, and décor. Basic

tickets get you a peek at the church, but if you want the best views, opt for the top tickets, where you'll get panoramic views of the city. However, this can be super hard with kids because there is no elevator. Plan to be here for at least a couple of hours, although AJ could spend all day here taking in every detail.

- Before dinner, head to Arenas de Barcelona, once home to the city's bullfighting. The last bullfight was held in 1977, although the city did not ban bullfighting until 2012. In 1999, the empty arena was converted into a modern shopping and entertainment center, and its roof makes a nice place to take in 360-degree views of the city and amazing sunsets. Ride the elevator to the top 15- to 30-minutes before sunset -- which is one of the most beautiful. Spain's warmth extends to its sunsets and a golden glow covers the entire city. But, you need exact change to ride the elevator to the top, so have change with you.
- In Spain, dinner doesn't start until 8 p.m., but you'll find the restaurants are lively during the hours of 5 and 7 p.m., when people gather for tapas, small bites. This is a good time to stop and get some food, but if you can hold out for a later dinner, the city feels as if it's just come to life the closer you get to midnight. Have dinner at Arenas de Barcelona or one of several restaurants around it, and finish by 9 or 10 p.m. to make it to the first or second show of the magical fountains (below).
- Once the sun sets, make your way to Placa de Carles Buigas, where a large fountain right across the street becomes magical during summer months. The Fountain of Montjuic was constructed in 1929, and while it is lively every day, during peak summer periods, the fountain is illuminated with color and synchronized to music for a show kids and adults both will love. The crowds can get crazy here, so if possible, avoid on weekends, when crowds are at its peak. Be sure to [check the schedule](#) before you go, as it is only open certain days of the week.

### *Day 2: Explore the City Center*

On your second day, after you have exhausted the must-see sights, explore the City Center. We found just walking around the city to be quite exciting: there is much to see and take in, and we felt a closer connection to the city by exploring more neighborhoods and interacting with locals, who are so friendly to kids.

- Start your day at Barcelona's large Plaza de Catalunya, considered the city center. Located where the city's old medieval and new city meet, you'll find fountains, statues and plenty of room to let your child play. There are many cafes along the plaza, where you can grab breakfast.
- From the plaza, walk and explore Las Ramblas, a pedestrian street stretching more than a mile. Lined with trees, the street is a boundary between Barri Gotic and El Raval. You'll find lots of shops along the street, and can catch live street performances, including

dance, magic and singing. We visited the famous La Boqueria Market and Chok, an amazing chocolate confectionary, but if you're hungry, skip eating in this area, as it's very commercial and you can get better food in the next area, Barri Gotic.

- Before going to the Gothic Quarter, walk to the Columbus monument, a tribute to the famous explorer who left Barcelona in search of the New World. The Columbus monument is found at the end of Las Ramblas.
- After walking along Las Ramblas, explore Barri Gothic, or the Gothic Quarter. The medieval streets wind along cobblestoned road with architecture dating back to the Romans, and also very kid-friendly. Our son played with a guy blowing bubbles in the street, and was fascinated by a band playing live music. While here, you'll definitely want to visit the gothic Cathedral of Barcelona. Not that it's a competition between Gaudi's church, but this structure took two centuries to build!
- Spend the rest of day "getting lost" in the Gothic Quarter. Just walk around and enjoy the neighborhoods and get to know the city.

### *Day 3: Enjoy the Sea*

- After yesterday's busy day, begin your last day in the city catching a ride to the top of Montjuic Park on its cable car. Natasha hates heights and cable cars but gathered her courage for the ride and thought the views were absolutely worth it. At the top, you'll have views of the sea and can explore the ruins of Barcelona's castle, as well as the 1992 Olympic Stadium. Montjuic Castle is actually an old fortress dating back to the 1600s. You'll find more 360-degree views from the castle, along with special art exhibits. Finding the cable car can be tricky: you can get to it by using the funicular railway.
- After a full morning exploring Montjuic, take the afternoon and enjoy one of Barcelona's beaches. We especially love Bogatell beach, which was created for the 1992 Olympics and is 10 minutes from the city center. They have lifeguards and dressing rooms, which will help when you are with kids. While here, we had lunch on the beach with a picnic, but you'll also find fresh, local seafood often served near the beach and its marina.

### *Day 4: Leave the City Behind*

If you have an extra day, use it to visit nearby areas outside of Barcelona, such as Monserrat, Tarragona or Sitges. We rented a car to explore outside of the city, finding it easy to get around Spain. However, the train is also easy to use and brings you directly to these destinations.

Monserrat is the mountain range less than an hour from Barcelona, and easily accessible via train. You can hike and relax here, but there is also a monastery and quaint village you can explore, accessible via another cable car to the top of a mountain.

Tarragona, along the Sea, is also a fantastic day-trip because it is an ancient port of Rome. The medieval Old Town is filled with fascinating sites, including the Necropolis with Roman tombs, the 2nd-Century Amfiteatre, and a Roman Forum. You can walk along the ramparts as we did, our son comfortable in his stroller, and take in the amazing views.

Sitges is another coastal town near the city, and located near mountains and the Parc Natural del Garraf. The town is small enough to explore in few hours, and you can spend time enjoying the beautiful beaches of Catalonia.

## KID-FRIENDLY TIPS

- Ensure you adjust kids schedule for Spanish times, which means sleeping late and waking up later. Dinnertime starts after 8 p.m., and the city stays lively through midnight. Adjusting your schedule will mean you can enjoy Barcelona the way its residents do.
- It's easier to take a taxi to get to places with children vs. using the subway. You can do it but it likely will involve a lot of carrying strollers up and down stairs -- elevators were hard to find in the Barcelona subway system.
- The aquarium in Barcelona is fantastic. Located near the beaches, the aquarium has more than 11,000 species of fish and animals -- perfect for a rainy day when you have to be stuck indoors, or if you have extra days in the city.
- Be prepared to walk a lot... and make sure you have a [good stroller!](#)
- Neighborhood parks are on every corner -- make the most of them. We used to try to have lunch or dinners in restaurants by a playground so we could drink and eat while the kids could play within our watch and reach.

## OTHER TIPS

- Be sure to try Sangria and tapas. Sangria is a punch made with wine and fresh fruit that originated in Spain, available in both red and white wine. We loved both! Our favorite tapas were albondigas (Spanish meatballs), patatas bravas (spicy potatoes), Gambas al ajillo (Spanish garlic shrimp) and Gazpacho (Spanish cold soup).
- Get tickets for [Sagrada Familia](#) and [Casa Battlo](#) in advance. Lines can be extremely long and you can save yourself over an hour waiting if you purchase in advance. Some hotels sell tickets, so be sure to ask your hotel.
- Spain is renowned for its afternoon naps, called siestas, which takes place during the peak of afternoon heat. Take advantage of siesta time and have long lunches or early dinners.

- Be careful of pickpockets especially around Las Ramblas. This is a super-crowded area filled with souvenir shops and restaurants. Visit the area quickly to see it, but otherwise, enjoy the dining and shopping in less tourist-filled neighborhoods.