



Press Pack 2012





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Introduction

Catalonia is a Mediterranean destination with a millenary history, its own culture and language and a wealthy historical and natural heritage.

Population. 7.5 million

Surface area. 32,107 km²

Cities. The capital is Barcelona. Girona, Tarragona and Lleida are province seats. There are also county seats and many other towns with a remarkable heritage and monuments spread all over the territory.

Economy. Catalonia's GDP has been affected by the global crisis like the rest of the world, yet it was able to consolidate a slightly positive trend, experiencing a 0.1% increase in the third quarter of 2011, placing year-to-year growth at 0.6%. [Source: Idescat. Economic situation reports. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Catalonia. Basis 2000.]

Territory. Catalonia offers a great scenic variety:

- The Catalan Pyrenees with their 3000 metre peaks dominate the northern area of the country. Especially interesting is Val d'Aran, a valley draining into the Atlantic Ocean that has preserved its own culture, language (Aranese) and government bodies.
- 580 kilometres of Mediterranean coastline cover Costa Brava, Costa Barcelona, Barcelona, Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre.
- The four Catalan province seats feature a great heritage. Handsome old quarters, buildings from Romanesque to Modernism and a wide range of museums are worth a visit.
- Besides the province seats, we find inland towns with a distinctive character and noteworthy heritage, like Berga, Figueres, Manresa, Montblanc, Olot, Ripoll, La Seu d'Urgell, Solsona, Tortosa, Vic, Vilafranca del Penedès and Vilanova i la Geltrú, among many others.

Climate. Generally speaking, Catalonia enjoys a temperate and mild Mediterranean climate, characterised by dry, warm summers and moderately cool winters.

Catalonia, a tourist destination. Catalonia offers many attractions for all sorts of visitors: culture, relax, nature, families, sports, business, etc. Its great capacities and excellent facilities place it among Europe's prime tourist areas.

Catalonia welcomes 24 million tourists a year, more than half of whom come from abroad, making it Spain's main tourist destination. A clear increase has been noted compared to last year, and the latest data indicate that individual tourist expenditure has grown by 7.4% in 2011. The number of foreign tourists to Catalonia increased by 4.7% on a year-to-year basis. At 12% on GDP, tourism is one of Catalonia's main sources of wealth, making it a strategic priority. (Source: Idescat, Frontur and Egatur).

Communications network

Roads. Catalonia has a good road network that enables travel to any main European city in less than twelve hours. Its large commercial airports, Barcelona, Girona, Lleida and Reus, as well as the main cities in the country are well connected by motorway.

Rail. The railway network offers good communications, both between Catalan towns and cities and abroad. There is a well-developed commuter train network in the Barcelona metropolitan area, with connections between the city and the tourist coastal areas in Maresme and Garraf, now joined together under the Costa Barcelona brand. Apart from state-run Renfe, there is also Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat (FGC) operating in Catalonia, with a network extending from Barcelona to cities such as Igualada, Manresa, Terrassa and Rubí. The renewed Montserrat and Núria rack railways are also run by this company.

High speed train. After opening the Barcelona-Madrid high-speed line running also through Lleida and Tarragona, work is taking place on the future connection with France via Girona, in the course of which the Figueres-Perpignan-Paris line came into operation. On top of this, a bypass allows travel from Barcelona to Andalusia within less than six hours without stopping in Madrid. Catalonia is thus becoming a very well communicated region at top European level, making it the true hub of a vast Mediterranean Euroregion.

Thanks to its scenic variety, Catalonia has become an appealing destination for many travellers. While the Pyrenees are an ideal place for skiing, winter tourism, hiking and active tourism, the Catalan coastline combines steep cliffs with hidden coves, long sandy beaches and a wide range of water sports. The five protected seaside areas in Catalonia—Cap de Creus Natural Park, Aiguamolls de l'Empordà Natural Park, Montgrí, Baix Ter i Illes Medes Natural Park, Delta del Llobregat Natural Reserve and Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park—ensure environmental conservation while offering a combination of sustainable tourism and leisure.

Airports. Catalonia has four commercial airports.

Barcelona. Roughly 34 million passengers used Catalonia's main airport in 2011. Its new T-1 terminal represented a quantum leap in air passenger mobility. Passenger figures have not stopped growing since it started operating. Its capacity is 30 million passengers a year, extendable to 55 million. The old T-2 terminal is regaining momentum as several low-cost airlines operate in it. Future plans for the airport include La City, a 150 hectare area with hotels, office buildings and all kind of facilities.

Girona-Costa Brava (Girona). Situated 100 kilometres from Barcelona and 15 from Girona, Girona-Costa Brava airport is strategically located for tourist (being the closest airport to Costa Brava), trade and economic purposes. It has an annual 4.8 million passengers on average.

Reus-Costa Daurada (Reus). Located 110 kilometres from Barcelona and only 13 from Tarragona, it is the closest airport to Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre. It welcomes an average 1.45 million passengers every year.

Lleida-Alguaire (Alguaire). Located 15 km from Lleida, it is the first airport planned, built and run by the Government of Catalonia. It allows promoting Catalonia as a top winter and mountain tourism destination. With its innovative architectural style integrated into the environment, the airport building has a total area of over 4000 m², including the passenger terminal, support services and the 42.5 metre high control tower. With its 2500 m long and 61 m wide runway, the airport is able to handle 400,000 passengers and 3500 tons a year at an initial operative capacity of 14 flights per hour. It started operations with more than 60,000 passengers. With a customs post, the airport can now handle flights from countries outside the Schengen area, such as Russia and the United Kingdom.

Ports

Barcelona. The largest cruising port in Europe, Barcelona welcomed 3.6 million passengers in 2011, 2.5 million of which were on cruises, with a 16% increase during the summer season. 900 cruise ships berthed at the Barcelona port in 2011. Thanks to its safety, service quality, the lure of the city and Catalonia and proximity to the airport,

virtually all cruise ships sailing on the Western Mediterranean stop over in Barcelona. The port has nine terminals, seven of which are devoted solely to cruises. Given the high demand for berths, the port authority started modernising the existing terminals, building new ones and enlarging the port to the south. There are also regular ferry lines between the two terminals made for this purpose and Rome, Livorno, Sardinia, Genoa, Tangier, Tunis and Algiers. Regarding goods transportation, all docks between Ponent and Sud have railway access.

Palamós. Palamós has been consolidating its position as a stopover port for cruise ships year after year, making it second to Barcelona in Catalonia. Several expansion and promotion plans adapted to this market have been developed by the Government of Catalonia, the Chamber of Commerce of Palamós and the Costa Brava Girona Tourism Board. 40 cruise ships with 40,000 passengers berthed at Palamós in 2011, a slight increase compared to the previous year. At seven ships, September was the best month.

Roses. Several institutions signed an agreement to include Roses on Costa Brava into Mediterranean cruise programmes. The goal of this plan is to promote cruise passenger traffic and develop the related tourist offer in both this municipality in Alt Empordà county and all of Costa Brava.

Tarragona. Tarragona has the basic conditions to be a stopover for cruises, with an adequate port, high-quality facilities and an attractive hinterland. A big investment plan is under way to increase both goods and passenger traffic. The first outcome has been a capacity increase of the Llevant wharf for sports and leisure.

Catalunya Bus Turístic is an initiative that allows discovering all secrets of Catalonia, with trips from Barcelona to enjoy Montserrat and picturesque Sitges, Dalí's art in Figueres, charming Girona, Vic's most traditional market and the wine and cava culture in Penedès, visiting century-old wineries and tasting its products.

More information on www.catalunya.com and www.barcelonaturisme.com

Catalonia, a Quality Destination

There are thousands of highly qualified professionals in the tourism branch in Catalonia who strive year after year for improving quality and providing customers with an unbeatable offer. A proof of this excellence is the growing number of Catalan businesses requesting reputed certificates such as Q for tourist quality, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, EMAS and the Environmental Quality Guarantee every year. As a result of this collective commitment to improvement, Catalonia has over 1200 businesses holding currently some kind of certificate.

Certificates are basically divided into two categories: tourist quality and environmental quality.

- **ISO 9001** (approved by the European Committee for Standardization and the International Organization for Standardization) and **Q** (awarded by the Spanish Institute for Tourist Quality) are tourist quality certificates.

- **ISO 14001** (approved by the European Committee for Standardization and the International Organization for Standardization) and **EMAS** (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) are environmental quality certificates.

- In addition to these standards, several Catalan municipalities are also working according to the **SICTED** (Integrated System for Spanish Tourist Quality in Destination) methodology. The aim of the project is to promote quality in tourist destinations through overall awareness-raising actions and to coordinate the different stakeholders in the tourism branch. This standard is obtained through implementing a Best Practice Handbook. There are currently Best Practice Handbooks for 28 tourism-related branches (hotels, bars and cafes, taxis, shops, guides, beaches, etc.). At present, Catalonia is the Spanish region with most businesses certified by SICTED, amounting to almost 600. Various areas in Catalonia already feature this standard and many more are working on its implementation.

- Other labels that are becoming well accepted are ecolabels. One of them is the **European Ecolabel**, a system created in 1992 under a new labelling regulation for its products since 2010. Moreover, the **Environmental Quality Guarantee**, a brand created by the **Government of Catalonia**, has been designed to encourage companies to commercialise environmentally friendly products and services.

The Catalan Tourist Board has a specific section on its website www.catalunyaqualitat.cat covering Catalan tourist businesses, organisations and locations having earned a tourism and/or environmental quality label.

Tourist Attractions

UNESCO World Heritage in Catalonia

The following sites in Catalonia have been declared World Heritage by UNESCO:

- **Palau de la Música Catalana.** Barcelona. Modernism. Built by Lluís Domènech i Montaner between 1905 and 1908.
- **Hospital de Sant Pau.** Barcelona. Modernism. Built by Lluís Domènech i Montaner in 1902.
- **Poblet Monastery.** Poblet (Tarragona). Built in the 12th and 13th century, the largest Cistercian monastery in Europe.
- **Roman Tarraco.** Tarragona. In the second half of the 1st century BC, Tarraco was given the status of a colony according to Roman law and became the capital of Hispania Citerior. Important remains from those times are preserved in the city and the neighbouring towns of Altafulla, Constantí and Roda de Barà. Tarragona is part of the Spanish World Heritage Cities network.
- **Mediterranean cave art in the Iberian Peninsula.** There are 27 sites in Catalonia with listed paintings found in caves, grottoes and shelters.
- **Romanesque churches in Vall de Boí.** Some 150 kilometres from Lleida, in Alta Ribagorça county, eight churches and one chapel make one of the most significant sets of Catalan Romanesque art regarding both its architecture and paintings:

- **Sant Climent de Taüll**
- **Santa Maria de Taüll**
- **Sant Joan de Boí**
- **Santa Eulàlia d'Erill la Vall**
- **Sant Feliu de Barruera**
- **La Nativitat de Durro**
- **Sant Quirc de Durro**
- **Santa Maria de Cardet**
- **Assumpció de Còll**

- The work of Antoni Gaudí:

- **Park Güell.** Barcelona. First garden city experience.
- **Palau Güell.** Barcelona.
- **La Pedrera (Casa Milà).** Barcelona.
- **Casa Batlló.** Barcelona.
- **Colònia Güell Crypt.** Santa Coloma de Cervelló (Barcelona). Unique structure built in stone and brick.
- **Casa Vicens.** Barcelona.
- **Sagrada Família Crypt.** Barcelona. Built between 1884 and 1889, Gaudí's oldest religious work.
- **Nativity Façade at the Sagrada Família.** Barcelona.
- **La Patum.** UNESCO declared the ancestral La Patum festival in Berga (Barcelona), celebrated on the festivity of Corpus Christi, a Masterpiece of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- **Castellers.** A genuine piece of Catalan folk culture featuring up to ten-storey human towers, it was recognised by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010.

Natural parks and protected areas

30% of the Catalan territory enjoys some degree of special protection. Apart from one national park, there are 11 natural parks spread all over Catalonia, as well as marine and natural reserves, natural sites of national interest and ten natural protected areas managed by the Barcelona Provincial Council.

Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, belonging to the Spanish national park network, is the area enjoying the highest protection. Almost 14,000 hectares are covered by the national park itself, plus a further 26,000 of peripheral area. Noteworthy is also **Montserrat Natural Park**, declared a **Biosphere Reserve** by UNESCO.

Tourist Accommodation

Hotel accommodation

The offer is subject to strict regulations enforced by the Government of Catalonia, which looks after hotel rating. According to these regulations, there are two groups of accommodation: **hotels (H) and boarding houses or hostelries (P)**, plus another category within the hotel group, **hotel-apartments (HA)**.

As regards classes, the range goes from Grand Luxe to 1 star in hotels, whereas boarding houses or hostelries have no specific rating. Some hotels are part of the world's most renowned chains, such as The Leading Hotels of the World or Relais & Châteaux, and many have some sort of quality certificate.

Some specific brands have been developed recently, such as **Petits Grans Hotels de Catalunya**, which includes 40 hotels with up to fifteen rooms, usually located in heritage buildings and providing a very comfortable atmosphere. Noteworthy are also **Gourmet Hotels**, featuring family businesses characterised by fine food and their location in a prime natural environment, as well as **Associació Fondes de Catalunya**, a traditional accommodation and food option including 29 businesses firmly rooted in their local community.

Generally speaking, Catalan hotels are modern and comfortable. In Barcelona, a large number of hotels have been developed all over the city due to the increase of tourism experienced in recent years, especially along the coastline stretching from the Olympic Village to the Forum of Cultures area, where congress and convention facilities were built in 2004. The area around the Montjuïc-2 fairgrounds, very close to the airport, has also seen its top-range hotel offer increase considerably.

Catalonia has currently **2800 accommodation units**. Some of them have become specialised in segments such as golf, health and wellness tourism, winter sports, water sports and active tourism. Services provided by Catalan hotels usually include an excellent food offer, which definitely contributes to Catalonia's great gastronomic reputation.

Camp sites

Catalonia has a network of roughly **350 camp sites**, with an offer of 100,000 camping plots and a total accommodation capacity exceeding 240,000 places. They are classified into four categories: luxury (L), 1st class, 2nd class and 3rd class. Although they tend to concentrate on the coastal areas and the Pyrenees, they can be found all over the territory.

Thanks to the mild Mediterranean weather allowing for a longer summer season, Catalonia is an excellent destination for campers and caravaners. Moreover, members of renowned clubs like the Automobile Touring Club of the Netherlands (ANWB) with nearly 4 million associates or the German ADAC automobile club with 17 million member families honour Catalan camp sites year after year, rating them among **the best in Europe** for their high quality.

Federació Catalana de Càmpings i Ciutats de Vacances

www.campingscatalunya.com

Tourist apartments

Tourist apartments take an important share in Catalonia's accommodation offer. They are spread over almost all of the territory, yet concentrating rather on the coastal areas. There are apartments for all tastes: big or small, in cities, on the beach, in the mountains or for skiing.

Hereunder are some tourist apartment associations:

Associació Turística d'Apartaments Costa Brava-Girona (ATA)

www.apartamentos-ata.com

Associació d'Apartaments Turístics Costa Daurada (AT)

www.atcostadaurada.org

Associació d'Apartaments Turístics de Barcelona (APARTUR)

www.apartur.com

Rural tourism accommodation

There is a wide offer in rural tourism accommodation with different types, from village houses to isolated country houses. There are different associations by geographic areas, commercialising their member rural tourism homes.

A new voluntary rating system by wheat ears was implemented in 2010. Accommodation is classified as follows:

- **“Cases de Pagès” or agro-tourism accommodation:** accommodation units where the owner, a professional farmer, has agricultural, stockbreeding or forestry earnings and users can become familiar with the work of the agricultural business they are attached to.

- **Rural accommodation:** accommodation units where the owner has no obligation of earning an income from farming but must actually live in the same county or dwelling, depending on the mode.

There are four modes for each of these two groups: “masia” (house shared with owners), “masoveria” (independent house rented out as a whole), shared village house and independent village house. Each group is identified with a specific sign. There are currently over 2000 rural tourism accommodation units in Catalonia accounting for over 15,000 beds.

Confederació Catalana de Turisme Rural - Concatur

www.ecoturismecatalunya.com

Confederació del Turisme Rural i l'Agroturisme de Catalunya - Turalcat

www.turalcat.com

The Directorate General of Tourism at the Catalan Department of Enterprise and Labour edits a guide, available on www.gencat.cat, for each different sort of tourist accommodation (hotels, camp sites and rural tourism), a guarantee for users as businesses listed are subject to Catalan legislation.



Tourist Brands

Catalonia is made up of nine tourist brands gathered under and promoted by tourism boards.



Costa Brava

Costa Brava, Catalonia's prime sun and beach destination, features a 220 kilometre coastline, where long beaches and coves surrounded by vegetation hide between steep cliffs. It stretches from Blanes to Portbou and encompasses La Selva, Baix Empordà, Gironès, Pla de l'Estany and Alt Empordà counties.

Costa Brava's diversity and extension make its tourist offer highly varied, so besides sun and beach it offers a wide range of options in different areas, from active to cultural tourism, including water sports, gastronomy, golf, health and wellness, conventions and business. Its varied accommodation facilities, services and infrastructure allow tourism to thrive all year round at Costa Brava, catering for needs and expectations of any sort of visitors and providing them a unique experience. Big resorts like **Roses**, **Empuriabrava**, **L'Estartit**, **Platja d'Aro** and **Lloret de Mar** are characterised by high specialisation in tourism.

Water sports are especially popular in the area, partly thanks to the good water quality and facilities provided at almost two-hundred beaches and coves as well as the different harbours. Many of these beaches and facilities fly the Blue Flag, an **environmental management** certificate for protecting natural resources. Some Costa Brava beaches feature the Q for Quality award and the EMAS and ISO 14000 certificates. This stretch of the Catalan coast has 17 leisure and two commercial ports, Palamós and Roses, which have become the sea gate to Costa Brava and a stopover for cruises.

The hinterland is well preserved, with distinctive medieval towns like **Mollet de Peralada**, **Peralada**, **Castelló d'Empúries**, **Monells**, **Peratallada**, **Pals** and **Castell d'Aro**. Local gastronomy takes a prominent place within Catalonia's internationally reputed cuisine. Fourteen restaurants in the area, some of them located in the Girona Pyrenees, with a total 17 Michelin stars awarded for 2012 give good proof of it.



On a visit to Costa Brava, visitors must not miss the Triangle Dalinià (Dalí Triangle) composed of the Dalí Museum-Theatre in Figueres, the Salvador Dalí Museum-House in Portlligat near Cadaqués and the Gala Dalí Castle Museum in Púbol.

Natural protected areas feature prominently three natural parks: Aiguamolls de l'Empordà, where a large number of water birds nest, Cap de Creus, the outmost rampart of the Pyrenees on the eastern tip of the Iberian Peninsula, and Montgrí, Illes Medes i Baix Ter, created in 2010. Very interesting are also the Albera range bordering with France, the Montseny Natural Park in the pre-coastal range on the limit between the Girona and Barcelona provinces and gardens like Cap Roig in Calella de Palafrugell, Santa Clotilde in Lloret de Mar and Marimurtra in Blanes, forming stunning balconies overlooking the Mediterranean.

The city of Girona, 100 kilometres from Barcelona and 50 from the French border, features some of the most significant heritage sites in the country. Within the highly interesting old town, the Jewish quarter (el Call) is the most beautiful example of Catalonia's Hebrew past, making it part of the Spanish Jewish Quarter Network – Ways of Sephard, to which nearby Besalú is also associated.

A good way of discovering Costa Brava is through the watch paths, a network of trails following the coves that have been recovered as hiking routes. These ways lead through some of the most scenic areas on the Girona coast, offering breath-taking views of Costa Brava. Another way of discovering the area on foot is walking along the Itinerannia trail network with 2500 km of signposted paths through Ripollès, Garrotxa and Alt Empordà counties.

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Costa Brava Girona Tourism Board
www.costabrava.org

Costa Barcelona

This tourist brand includes Alt Penedès, Baix Llobregat and Garraf counties south of Barcelona and Maresme north of it. These counties used to be promoted separately under the Costa de Garraf and Costa de Barcelona – Maresme brands. The new Costa Barcelona brand shall take advantage of the international reputation of Catalonia's capital while keeping the uniqueness of each area.

As a tourist brand, Costa Barcelona features a great leisure offer. Almost two million foreign visitors come to the area every year, with over 15 million overnight stays. At around 75,500 beds, the accommodation offer is only surpassed by Costa Brava and Costa Daurada.

There are many attractions in this area extending over more than a hundred kilometres of coast in Maresme and Garraf counties. In the former, distinctive places with remarkable Modernist buildings such as **Mataró, Argentona** and **Canet de Mar** can be found; **Caldes d'Estrac, Sant Andreu de Llavaneres** and **Sant Vicenç de Montalt**, known for the quality of their thermal waters already enjoyed by the upper class in the 18th and 19th centuries; **Arenys de Mar** with its important fishing port; **Sant Pol de Mar**, still preserving its nice old town, and places in Alt Maresme such as **Calella, Pineda de Mar, Santa Susanna** and **Malgrat de Mar**, where a big offer in activities adds to the **predominant tourist industry**.

The towns of **Sitges** and **Vilanova i la Geltrú** in Garraf county are perched on the sea. The former features Es Baluard in the old quarter as its main cultural attraction, with former palaces now hosting museums. This is completed with **fine beaches** and a big **offer in leisure and restaurants**. Vilanova i la Geltrú in its turn has always been looking to the sea, with a large fishing and leisure port, besides maintaining some deeply



rooted traditions. Inland, Vilafranca del Penedès and Sant Sadurní d'Anoia are the wine and cava (sparkling wine) capital respectively, featuring a great offer in wine tourism by which visitors get to know the **products together with their related culture and heritage**. Colònia Güell in Baix Llobregat county is the site of a big former industrial “colònia” (factory with adjacent worker dwellings) and its church, a masterpiece by Antoni Gaudí listed as **World Heritage**.

Costa Barcelona combines the wealth of an internationally renowned tourist area **featuring prominently its culture, gastronomy** and folk traditions in combination with beautiful Mediterranean beaches and the green of its four natural parks. The balance between sea, plain and hills shapes a **gentle landscape and an excellent climate** that make the area a land wealthy in produce, as show the gastronomic events held all year round, together with a fine cuisine based on fish and seafood. These climate conditions have also allowed developing winegrowing, with three of Catalonia’s twelve Denominations of Origin found in the area: Penedès, the country’s largest, Alella, one of the smallest, and internationally reputed Cava.

Events like the Vilanova i la Geltrú and Sitges carnivals or the main festivals in Vilafranca del Penedès and Mataró are fine examples of the area’s cultural wealth, while tourist initiatives created to promote local products—such as Vijazz, Cavatast, the Vintage Festival in Alella, the Xató Route (a typical winter dish), Ganxet beans, peas and strawberries from Maresme, cherries from Sant Climent de Llobregat and Arenys de Munt, Calamarenys, the Prat breed chicken and Penedès rooster fairs—prove its gastronomic diversity.



Barcelona Provincial Council Tourism Delegation
www.diba.cat/turisme

Barcelona

Barcelona is **the capital of Catalonia** and one of Europe's largest cities. Its cultural and leisure attractions have turned it one of Catalonia's most visited places. The **international role** played by the city makes it a main hub in the Mediterranean and southern European economy.

Potentialities of **cultural tourism** are rich and varied. The **National Art Museum of Catalonia** (MNAC) and the **Picasso Museum** spearhead the offer in museums, completed by the **Museum of Catalan Modernism** and the heritage bequeathed by **Gaudí**, including recently renewed Palau Güell, and **Modernist architecture** with nine World Heritage buildings. New museums include the Rock Museum in the new Les Arenes shopping mall, the Motor Bike Museum in the Gothic Quarter, the Museu Blau in the Forum building devoted to the evolution of life on our planet and the Frederic Marès Museum showing the art collection gathered by this reputed sculptor.

Noteworthy are also shopping and services, restaurants and markets like the **Boqueria** on the popular **Rambla** street as well as the **Barri Gòtic**, bearing witness to the city's medieval past, and the different charming quarters with their traditional festivals.

Barcelona is also fully equipped to host **congresses** and **conventions**. Professional tourism is consolidated, with major events taking place such as the Mobile World Congress, the world's largest mobile phone trade fair that will stay in Barcelona until 2018, or EIBTM, the planet's biggest show in the convention branch, which will continue to be held in the city until 2013. **Cruise tourism** has equally increased considerably in recent years following improvement works in the port, which has become the biggest cruise port in Europe.



The opening of Barcelona's **beachfront** to the sea following the 1992 Olympic Games has added on attraction for all visitors to the city as the cultural offer is now joined by a large, well-preserved beach in the old Barceloneta seamen's quarter with its numerous indoor and outdoor restaurants where fish and seafood can be enjoyed. A good way to discover this seafront is with "**Barcelona Walks Marina**", a guided walking tour that includes a ride on the Golondrinas, the popular boats sailing along the Barcelona shore.

Other programmed routes allow discovering Gothic Barcelona, Modernist Barcelona, Pablo Picasso's Barcelona, cinematographic Barcelona along the places used as a set for the many films shot in the city and gastronomic Barcelona visiting the most popular markets. Visitors can also take the **Barcelona Bus Turístic** that covers the most significant sights in the city. In summer, there are **4.5 km of beaches** equipped with showers, sports facilities, lifeguard and refreshment stalls.

Through the portal <http://bcnshop.barcelonaturisme.com>, tourists can organise their visit to Barcelona before arriving to the city and choose the routes and sights pleasing them most. The Barcelona Card, Articket, Artcoticket, Arqueticket and the Barcelona Bus Turístic Card allowing a ride to discover the city can be purchased at a discount there. The website also provides information on accommodation and restaurants including bookings.



Turisme de Barcelona
www.barcelonaturisme.cat

Costa Daurada

Costa Daurada encompasses Tarragonès, Alt Camp, Conca de Barberà, Baix Camp, Priorat and Baix Penedès counties. It is characterised by a highly varied, top-range tourist offer with a rich and diverse **cultural heritage**, clear **specialisation in families** and a specific focus on **wine tourism** and **gastronomy**.

The **coast** is one of its main attractions. Along nearly a hundred kilometres, it features from small secluded coves between cliffs to large beaches with fine sand and shallow waters, ideal for family holidays. The offer is completed by cultural centres and leisure facilities like the **Pau Casals museum and auditorium** and **PortAventura** theme park, the main leisure centre on Costa Daurada.

Inland, the **Montsant**—now a natural park—, **Prades** and **Mussara** ranges provide a laid-back rural landscape, where vineyards predominate together with other typical Mediterranean crops like olives, cereals, almonds and hazelnuts. **Five Denominations of Origin** prove the quality of local wines, one of which—Priorat Qualified DO—enjoys a great international reputation.



Present-day Tarragona used to be **Roman Tarraco**, the capital of the three provinces into which the Iberian Peninsula was divided under the Roman Empire. It hosts one of the world's largest Roman sites, declared World Heritage by UNESCO. Very close is **Reus**, **Antoni Gaudí's** birthplace, with its great Modernist architectural heritage. Local **Gaudí Centre** is an interpretive centre providing explanations on the basics of Antoni Gaudí's architecture, the formation of his creative genius and the city and environment that inspired him.

Another attraction in the area is the Cistercian Route including Poblet—a World Heritage site—, Santes Creus and Santa Maria de Vallbona monasteries, the latter in Terres de Lleida. A hiking trail marked as GR-175 links them all along 104 km. Modernist wine cellars are a further attraction of Costa Daurada, where visitors can taste and purchase products made there.

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Tarragona Provincial Council Tourism Board
www.costadaurada.info

Terres de l'Ebre

Terres de l'Ebre encompasses the four counties on the **river Ebro** on its nearly 130 kilometre stretch through Catalonia: **Baix Ebre, Montsià, Terra Alta and Ribera d'Ebre**. The landscape and gastronomy in these counties feature a great diversity. Cupped oyster and **local mussel culture** in the calm and warm waters of the Ebro Delta is completed with **fish and seafood** from the Mediterranean and the distinctive **inland cuisine**. Citrus fruits, especially clementines with Protected Geographical Indication, quality wines made in Terra Alta with a Denomination of Origin of their own, rice from the Delta, one of the area's most important crops, and honey, a quality product rounding up any sort of desserts, have all become distinctive gastronomic and tourist icons of Terres de l'Ebre.

The Ebro is the area's main artery, playing a key role in its history and economy. On the way from L'**Ametlla de Mar** to **Les Cases d'Alcanar**, which takes the fascinating world of the **Ebro Delta** on an area of little more than 3000 square kilometres, we can find inland Els Ports Natural Park, with peaks towering up to almost 1500 metres, as well as other natural areas like the **Montsià, Pàndols, Cavalls and Cardó** mountain ranges. Birdwatching can be done in Terres de l'Ebre anytime during the year.

Terres de l'Ebre has a rich and varied tourist offer, with **monuments and cultural heritage** found in many towns such as Tortosa with its interesting Jewish quarter, Horta de Sant Joan that fascinated young **Picasso**, Miravet's old town perched on top of a rock



overlooking the Ebro, Tivissa with Castellet de Banyoles, one of Catalonia's most relevant Iberian sites, **La Fatarella** with its unique arcaded streets in the town centre and **Ulldecona** with some fine cave paintings classed as World Heritage by UNESCO. Given the strong impact caused by the Ebro battle in the Spanish Civil War, the Ebro Battle Studies Centre in Gandesa and several interpretive centres in different towns have been created. Another option for cultural tourism is the Terres de l'Ebre Green Route from Tortosa to Alcañiz (98 km) that can be done by bike, on foot or on horseback.

The Ebro Delta provides a landscape changing according to the season. It was formed by sediments brought by the river over millions of years. A part of it is covered by a **natural park**, one of the most significant and unique natural areas in the whole Mediterranean. Different outdoor activities can be done here, **including birdwatching, river navigation, cycling** and enjoying numerous **unspoilt beaches**. This combination of environmental protection and agricultural use has earned the Ebro Delta international recognition.

The Ebro is a thriving river that recovered its navigability some years ago. Some stretches can be covered by "llagut", an old traditional wooden boat that is now used for tourist purposes, overlooked by Miravet castle. It is also possible to canoe or kayak along the whole lower stretch down from Riba-roja d'Ebre, while tourist boats take visitors to the river mouth.

I-019



Tarragona Provincial Council Tourism Board
www.terresdelebre.org

Pirineus

The Pirineus brand includes the tourist offer of the **Lleida, Girona and Barcelona Pyrenees** plus **Val d'Aran**. It encompasses Alt Empordà, Alta Ribagorça, Alt Urgell, Berguedà, Cerdanya, Garrotxa, Pallars Jussà, Pallars Sobirà, Ripollès, Solsonès and Val d'Aran counties.

The Catalan Pyrenees offer visitors a **splendid range of attractions**: great scenery including Catalonia's highest peak, Pica d'Estats (3143 metres), on the limit between Pallars Sobirà county and the French department of Ariège, beautiful valleys such as **Camprodon, Núria, Vall de Boí, Vallferrera** and **Cardós**, villages with a wealth of Romanesque art heritage, numerous **mountain sports** including alpine and cross-country skiing, climbing, hunting and fishing, **adventure sports** and **active tourism** like rafting and kayaking as well as countless hiking routes.

Mountain bikers will find almost a hundred signposted routes and **several mountain biking centres** scattered across the area. The local offer is completed with a tasteful **mountain cuisine** based on local produce, golf and health and wellness tourism, with good service facilities allowing full enjoyment of the scenery both in winter and in summer.

It is in the Lleida Pyrenees where Catalonia's only **national park, Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici**, is located. Yet there are more protected areas in the Catalan Pyrenees, like **Alt Pirineu Natural Park**, the largest in Catalonia with almost 70,000 hectares, **Zona Volcànica de la Garrotxa Natural Park** featuring the biggest volcanic



area in the Iberian Peninsula with around forty volcanic cones, providing a distinctive natural setting that is unique in Europe, and **Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park** with famous **Pedraforca**. All in all, protected areas in the Pyrenees amount to 331,661 hectares, half of Catalonia's total.

From a cultural perspective, La **Seu d'Urgell** cathedral, **Santa Maria monastery in Ripoll** and churches like **Sant Quirze de Pedret** and **Sant Jaume de Frontanyà** in Berguedà county are some of the finest examples of Catalan Romanesque art worth visiting in Pirineus. Yet the most outstanding are the Romanesque churches in **Vall de Boí**, the architecture and mural paintings of which earned them recognition by UNESCO as World Heritage.

The accommodation offer in Pirineus concentrates on ski resorts, towns and villages, mostly in the shape of small family businesses. They are completed with camp sites, rural tourism accommodation, tourist homes and hostels.

Winter tourism is particularly important in the area, with ten alpine and six Nordic ski resorts. La Molina was the first ski resort in Spain and a pioneering winter sports site. A great economic driver of the mountain counties, winter tourism has been the forerunner of the alternative offer provided by ski resorts, with year-round proposals suitable for all audiences.

I-021



More information on:
www.visitpirineus.com

Terres de Lleida

This brand encompasses Noguera, Pla d'Urgell, Segarra, Urgell, Segrià and Garrigues counties, where a **great variety in sports and active tourism**, a **unique culture**, local gastronomy and top-range rural tourism can be enjoyed all year round, all of which surrounded by a generous agricultural setting that yields a wide range of products, especially **sweet fruit**.

Lleida, the capital of Segrià county and the province bearing the city's name, is located in a unique natural setting overlooked by the impressive silhouette of the **Seu Vella**. It is the largest city and the economic hub of inland Catalonia, with an economy based on the agrofood industry and services of all kinds.

The city's cultural life has experienced a significant boost thanks to new facilities and offers such as the **Knights Templars Interpretive Centre in Gardeny**, the **Castell del Rei** nearby the Seu Vella, the **Diocesan and County Museum** and **La Lleida Secreta** route tracing the old urban layout of the city through its archaeological remains.

The opening of the **airport** together with the **high-speed railway** link and **La Llotja Congress Centre**, opened one year ago, place the Pyrenees, the Lleida area and its capital as destinations with large potentialities.



Other attractions in the area are the **Montsec Astronomy Park**; **Santa Maria de Vallbona** monastery, which forms the **Cistercian Route** together with Poblet and Santes Creus in Costa Daurada; **the Sió Castles Route**, a tourist circuit encompassing about twenty castles in Segarra, Urgell and Noguera counties, with its new interpretive centre in Concabella; recovered **Ivars-Vila-sana lake** in Pla d'Urgell county, Catalonia's largest inner lake and an ideal place for nature lovers, especially birdwatchers; the **Wine and Olive Oil routes**; the **Vaulted Hut Route**, a guided circuit along different dry stone constructions in Garrigues county; and **Camí de Sant Jaume**, one of the latest big tourist initiatives that covers most of Terres de Lleida.

Top-quality food products and related events are plentiful in this area. This is the case of Les Garrigues extra virgin olive oil with Protected Denomination of Origin, "torró" (nougat) from Agramunt with Protected Geographical Indication, wine from Costers del Segre DO, Lleida pears, also with PDO, and snails, which are cooked in a special way here.

I-023



Lleida Provincial Council Tourism Board
www.lleidatur.cat

Val d'Aran

Located in the Western Pyrenees, Val d'Aran has a **singular history**, its **own language** (Aranese, a variety of Occitan/Provençal), specific political bodies (Conselh Generau) and an own president (síndic). For this reason, the Government of Catalonia transferred a part of its powers to the Conselh Generau, some of which related to tourism.

Val d'Aran features a significant, mostly **Romanesque** architectural and artistic heritage. It also has ideal places to do the most different types of sports at any time of the year—like **Baqueria Beret**, the largest ski resort in Catalonia and one of the most relevant in Europe—and state-of-the-art sports facilities such as the Palai de Gèu (Ice Palace) in **Vielha**, the county seat. Furthermore, its **unique gastronomy** is noteworthy, with typically high mountain produce and excellent caviar. **Health tourism** also plays a relevant role. Further, a **local museum network** allows tracing former ways of life, while **ancestral feasts and dances** are held in the different villages of this outstanding area in the Catalan Pyrenees.

Whereas snow dominates the landscape during winter, spring and summer are the seasons to enjoy nature with a wide offer in active tourism. Mountain bikers have at their



I-024

disposal a mountain biking centre with 25 tracks having different levels of difficulty and specific offers like **Dèfi Occitan** covering some of Occitania's most important mountain passes. Hikers are provided with different products specifically designed for mountain trekkers. The offer includes the **Termal Trek**, a combination of hiking and wellness along the best thermal area in Pirineus (Boí, Tredòs, Arties, Vielha and Les); the **Setau Sagèth** (Seventh Seal) track signposted as GR-221 that tours the valley in five stages; the **Camín Reiau** (Royal Way) with 150 km suited for everybody to be done in different stages along the old paths that used to link the different villages in Val d'Aran; and **Pass'Aran**, a cross-border track designed to be done in five stages.

Autumn shows Val d'Aran at its best as the forest features plenty of colours in its deciduous trees and different **gastronomic events** present the best of local food. All this is completed with a wide **top-range accommodation offer**. A total 13,300 beds, 3000 of which in 4 and 5-star hotels, make Val d'Aran a **prime year-round destination**.

The creation of the Val d'Aran Convention Bureau is a new opportunity to consolidate the area as a congress tourist destination, taking advantage of existing tourist and sports facilities and services.

I-025



Torisme Val d'Aran

www.visitvaldaran.com

Catalunya Central

The land in inner Catalonia, with its rich natural heritage located very close to the city of Barcelona, covers Anoia, Bages, Osona, Vallès Occidental and Vallès Oriental counties. It is dominated by the large plains of the Central Depression surrounded by mountains, including towns like **Vic, Manlleu, Manresa, Cardona, Igualada, Terrassa, Sabadell and Granollers**, bearing a great history and monuments as well as a long market tradition. There are also magnificent monasteries, the most outstanding being Montserrat alongside others like **L'Estany, Lluçà, Sant Benet de Bages, Sant Cugat and Sant Pere de Casserres**, as well as top sports facilities like the **Circuit de Catalunya** racetrack.

Likewise, there are attractive mountain areas like **Montseny**, a natural park, as well as **Guilleries and Collsacabra** around Sau reservoir. Montserrat monastery and mountain is much more than just a protected natural area, and nearby **Sant Llorenç del Munt**, topped by a former monastery, is also under protection.

Industrial tourism is dominated by two rivers, Ter and Llobregat, and has become an increasingly strong tourist product. The former textile “colònies” (factory sites with adjacent worker dwellings), now attractive museums, remind of a not too remote past in which industrial progress and workers’ struggles had their fair share in Catalan history.

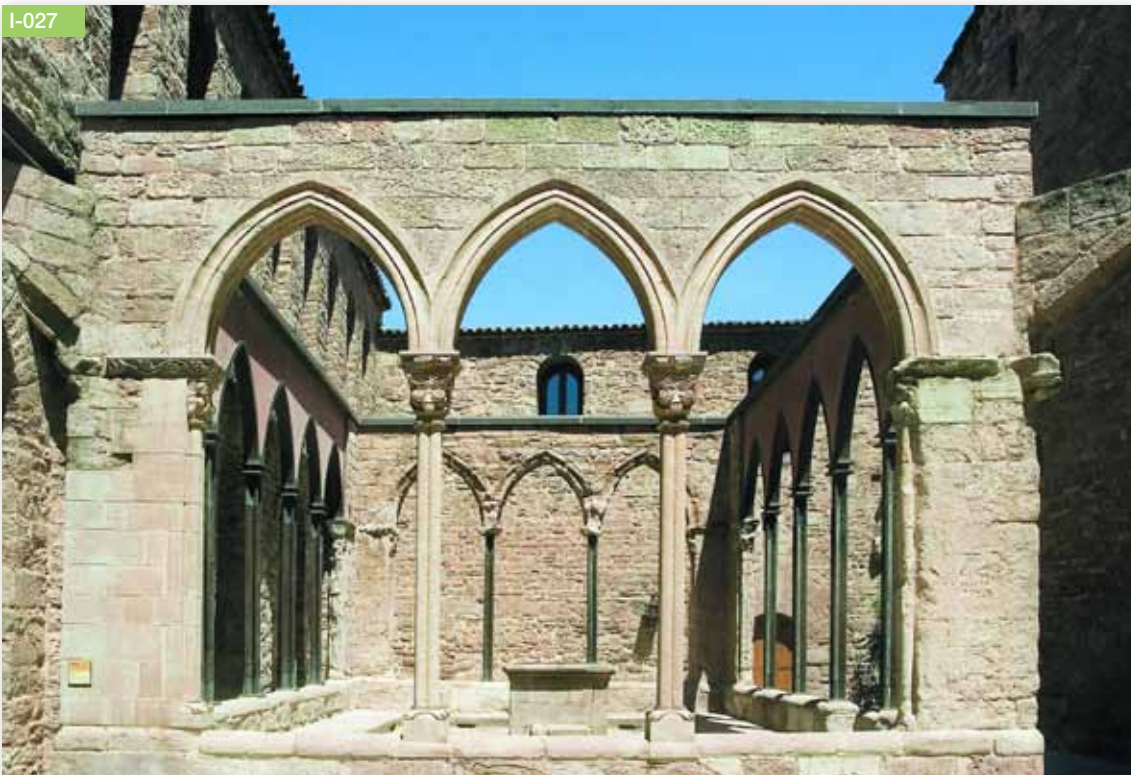


Top gastronomy and especially dry sausages play a distinctive role in the area, together with Pla de Bages DO wines.

Hot **baths** are well represented in towns like Caldes de Montbui and La Garriga, with a long spa tradition. The **Thermalia Museum in Caldes** houses a noteworthy collection of artworks by sculptor Manolo Hugué, a great friend of Picasso, taking visitors back to artist life in the 20th century. Meanwhile, La Garriga, a significant summer resort of the Barcelona bourgeoisie in the 19th and 20th centuries, features a large number of Modernist buildings alongside its thermal baths.

The Sant Benet heritage site in Sant Fruitós de Bages nearby Manresa combines different singular projects: the Romanesque monastery, an architectural and cultural gem featuring an innovative museological scheme; the Fundació Alícia under the leadership of chef Ferran Adrià and cardiologist Valentí Fuster, devoted to popularising good food and health; and four-star Món hotel with meeting rooms for congresses.

I-027



Barcelona Provincial Council Tourism Delegation

www.diba.cat/turisme

Tourist Products

CATALAN TOURIST BOARD (CTB). This is the official body of the Government of Catalonia in charge of promoting and supporting marketing of Catalonia's tourist resources, both in the rest of Spain and abroad. Its purpose is to consolidate the image of the country as a diverse top-range tourist destination.

The CTB breaks down the tourist offer into different products with the aim of drawing the best from its appeal. Promotion focuses among others on:

- Accessible Tourism
- Active and Nature Tourism
- Cultural Tourism
- Sports Tourism
- Family Holidays
- Gastronomy Holidays
- Golf Tourism
- Watersports
- Business Tourism
- Winter Tourism
- Rural Tourism
- Health and Wellness Tourism
- Sun & Beach

Marketing support programmes

The **Catalan Tourist Board** has created several support programmes to commercialise the different segments of the Catalan tourist offer: product clubs, the **Family Holiday Destination (FHD)** and **Sports Tourism Destination (STD)** labels and the **Catalunya Convention Bureau**.

The goal of these programmes is to define, together with the companies and organisations taking part in each programme, the promotion strategies and plans adapted to market needs. The Catalan Tourist Board provides programme members with the knowledge, facilities and services needed for joint specific promotion.

The different programmes have some general and specific requirements linked with each activity and goals, e.g. a specific marketable offer according to the specifics of each product.

There are currently five Product Clubs: the **Active and Nature Tourism Club**, the **Cultural Tourism Club**, the **Golf Tourism Club**, the **Gastronomy Holidays Club** and the **Health and Wellness Tourism Club**.

More information on the marketing support programmes by the Catalan Tourist Board and the different tourist products is available on www.catalunya.com.

Accessible Tourism

Tourism is a leisure activity reaching out to all areas of life. There is for instance cultural, nature, sports, health or gastronomic tourism. The Catalan Tourist Board considers that the concept of accessible tourism has to be based on the principle that **tourism is a fundamental social right for everybody**. For the disabled and persons with reduced mobility as well as the rest, anything under the leisure and tourism label is crucial for quality of life. Therefore **the Catalan tourist industry is increasingly aware that architectural and communication barriers are to be removed** in order to make most places accessible so this population segment can enjoy the cultural and natural heritage.

Catalonia has been able to position itself as **one of Europe's most accessible tourist destinations**. This is proven by its **24 identified accessible proposals and destinations**, which show that accessible tourism has actually come true in Catalonia.

These 24 tourist destinations chosen for their high degree of accessibility provide a whole set of services and facilities adapted to the needs of disabled tourists or persons with reduced mobility: accommodation, restaurants, museums, side activities, beaches, etc. The areas and proposals identified are:

- Vall de Boí
- Val d'Aran
- Pallars Sobirà
- La Seu d'Urgell
- La Molina-La Cerdanya
- Garrotxa
- Costa Brava-Alt Empordà
- Costa Brava-Baix Empordà
- Lleida
- Vic-Osona
- Maresme
- Barcelona
- Delta de l'Ebre
- Garraf-Sitges
- Costa Daurada
- Penedès-Accessible Wine Tourism
- Dalí Route
- Cistercian Route
- Route of the Monasteries along St. James' Way in Catalonia
- Industrial Tourism
- St. James' Way for Everybody
- Terra Alta and Sebes Natural Reserve
- Tarragona-World Heritage
- Montseny and Sant Llorenç del Munt Natural Parks

As a part of its promotion plan, the Catalan Tourist Board has a **specific website, www.turismeperatohom.com**, providing information on the offer in accessible tourism in Catalonia beyond the selected 25 accessible tourist destinations, which includes facilities, resources and services catering for persons with disabilities and/or reduced mobility. The website is available in Catalan, Spanish, English, Italian, German and French.

Proposals for all tastes

Over 150 km of accessible Green Ways and paths. The accessible Green Way stretch in Terra Alta is the only one of all Spanish Green Ways adapted to visually impaired people.

Examples of best practices regarding accessibility can be found in **Camins de Vent** and **Vol de Coloms**, companies specialising in **balloon** flights, the only in Spain having a gondola adapted to persons with reduced mobility. Some **scuba diving centres, riding schools** and **kayaking businesses** have adapted their offer to become accessible. **L'Escala sailing school** has become a reference in adapted sailing, and **La Molina ski resort** is pioneering in adapted skiing as it opened its facilities to the disabled several years ago.



I-028

Especially remarkable is action taken by many **museums and monuments in Catalonia** to improve accessibility to persons with sensorial disabilities (deaf, hearing impaired, blind and visually impaired). Plans in Braille and high relief, audiodescriptions and tactile scale models have positioned **La Pedrera** among Catalonia's and Spain's most accessible museums for the blind and visually impaired. With the inclusion of sign guide devices in three sign languages (Catalan, Spanish and international), the **National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC)** has become the only in all Spain providing this service to the deaf in three sign languages.

Finally, there are **numerous beaches** along Catalonia's coast with facilities for the disabled.

Catalonia has become one of Spain's tourist destinations with the highest amount and diversity of accessible sports and leisure activities for persons with disabilities or reduced mobility.

More information on

www.turismeperatothom.com

www.camidesantjaumeperatothom.cat



Activity & Nature Holidays

Catalonia offers numerous ideal settings for leisure, adventure activities and enjoyment of nature. This allows visitors knowing the country's history as well as its natural and cultural heritage in an easy and pleasant way.

Hiking

The Catalan footpath network is linked to the European and Peninsular networks thanks to its almost 9000 kilometres of signposted ways, more than half of which are part of the long distance footpaths (GR), the rest being short distance (PR) and local ones (SL). Some routes are noteworthy for their uniqueness: **Camí dels Bons Homes** (Good Men's Way) follows the ancient routes of the Cathar exiles; **Carros de Foc** (Fire Chariots) connects different huts in Aigüestortes National Park; **Porta del Cel** (Gate to Heaven) links four huts in Alt Pirineu Natural Park; **Cavalls del Vent** (Wind Horses) leads through Cadí-Moixeró Natural Park; and **Estels del Sud** (Southern Stars) is a trek through Els Ports Natural Park.

Other interesting routes are **Camí de Sant Jaume** (St. James' Way), the pilgrimage way between Sant Pere de Rodes and Alcarràs; **Els Tres Monts** (The Three Hills) linking three significant natural areas, Montseny, Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac and Montserrat; **Ruta dels Refugis** (Hut Route) through Montsant Natural Park and the Prades range; **Ruta del Ter** (Ter Route) along the course of that river; **Camins del Bisbe i Abat Oliba** (Bishop and Abbot Oliba Ways) through Catalunya Central; and **Itinerànnia** in the Girona Pyrenees.

Cycling tourism and mountain biking centres in Catalonia

There is a wide offer to discover and enjoy Catalonia by bike. The **Green Ways** (Vies Verdes), cycling paths along abandoned railway lines, and some cycling route networks like that in Baix Empordà are most notable. For mountain bikers, Catalonia has a complete network of mountain biking centres spread all over the country, a pioneering project in Spain set up thirteen years ago.

Mountain biking centres in Catalonia are freely accessible areas with a minimum 100 kilometres of signposted ways starting from a visitor centre with tourist information and cycling services. The 18 mountain biking centres composing the network offer a total 306 routes with over 6400 kilometres of signposted ways and different degrees of difficulty.

I-030



Birdwatching

Catalonia's strategic location and geographic diversity make it a **prime birdwatching destination**. The Aiguamolls de l'Empordà, the Ebro and Llobregat deltas, Ivars-Vilassana lake, the Segre, Cinca and Ebro river junction known as Aiguabarreig, Els Ports, Montserrat, Cap de Creus, Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park, Cadí-Moixeró, Mont-rebei i La Terreta and Vall de Núria are some of the most interesting areas. Many existing birdwatching facilities in Catalonia are accessible for persons with reduced mobility.

Other activities

Catalonia's extraordinary biodiversity allows visitors doing **rafting** and **hydrospeed** on its rivers as well as river and sea kayaking, canyoning, **hang gliding**, **paragliding**, flying in a **balloon** or **light aircraft**, **parachuting**, **horse riding** and **rock climbing**. The coast boasts a great diversity in its seabed: to the north, the Costa Brava with over thirty scuba diving centres and two marine reserves **Cap de Creus Natural Park** and **Illes Medes** plus **Illes Formigues** joining soon; further south are the rugged **Garraf coast** and **Costa Daurada**.

I-031



The Transcatalunya mountain bike route is a proposal stretching over more than 1200 kilometres that allows crossing Catalonia from a mountain biking centre to the next by stages. It is designed to be made with GPS support as it is fully georeferenced, yet with specific signposting along already existing mountain biking routes. www.transcatalunya.catalunya.com

More information on

www.actiunatura.catalunya.com

Cultural Tourism

Catalonia boasts a unique artistic and monumental heritage in Europe, making it a **preferred cultural tourism destination**. As a result of this historical and cultural legacy, UNESCO has declared a total ten **World Heritage** sites, two **Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity** and one **Biosphere Reserve** in Catalonia (cf. Tourist attractions).

The Catalan Tourist Board aims at promoting Catalan culture and heritage as a quality resource, focusing on those elements providing **identity and uniqueness**. Catalonia's cultural offer is diverse and allows visitors following the trace of different architectural styles (Romanesque, Gothic, Modernist, etc.), well-known writers and great artistic geniuses such as **Dalí, Picasso, Gaudí, Miró** and **Tàpies**. New routes have been added, like **Camí de Sant Jaume** (the Catalan stretch of St. James' Way), and others are consolidated as attractive top-range tourist products: **Camí dels Bons Homes** (Good Men's Way), **Catalunya Jueva** (Jewish Catalonia), **Ruta dels Íbers** (Iberian Route), **Catalunya Romana** (Roman Catalonia), **Ruta del Císter** (Cistercian Route), **Ruta del Temple** (Knights Templars Route) or the various routes associated to industrial and religious heritage.

There is further an endless offer in cosmopolitan **Barcelona** and other cities such as **Tarragona, Girona** and **Lleida**, ideal places for **urban tourism** combining the cultural interest with a wide range of leisure options. In this respect, the offer in **musical tourism** is large, with unique venues like the Girona Auditorium as well as the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Auditori and the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona.



Several towns also organise summer **music festivals** in heritage sites and areas of special artistic interest, such as the Castell de Peralada International Festival, the International Music Festival in Torroella de Montgrí, the habanera singing in Calella de Palafrugell and the International Music Festival in Cantonigròs.

In this respect, great cellist Pau Casals is also noteworthy. His birthplace El Vendrell (Costa Daurada) features the Vil·la Casals museum house and the Pau Casals Auditorium with a fine music programme.

Craftwork also plays an important role as a reflection of Catalonia's cultural heritage, dating back to the Middle Ages in some places.

Catalonia has more than 400 museums and arts centres devoted to all periods and styles, completed by a vast exhibition programme. Two of its finest examples are the National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC), housing one of the world's largest collections of Romanesque art, and the Museum of Science and Technology of Catalonia (mNACTEC), located in the Modernist Vapor Aymerich, Amat i Jover building in Terrassa, with branches scattered throughout Catalonia.

I-033



More information on
www.cultura.catalunya.com

Gastronomy Holidays

Discovering a country's gastronomy, strolling along market stalls, buying, savouring and chatting with its cuisine makers, travelling along wine routes—all this and much more makes gastronomy holidays.

Gastronomy is a part of a nation's **cultural heritage**. Catalan cuisine dates back to times immemorial, with a long tradition of recipes gathered in ancient handbooks. An example for it is the Book of Sent Soví, a Catalan recipe book from the 14th century, considered one of Europe's oldest and a landmark in early Catalan cuisine.

Catalonia is playing an international leading role in gastronomy. Ferran Adrià, Carme Ruscalleda, Santi Santamaria, Joan Roca, Carles Gaig and Sergi Arola, among others, have become ambassadors of our culture. Catalonia features 53 stars in the 2012 Michelin Guide.

In addition to the great names of Catalan cuisine, the gastronomic landscape also features the **Cuisine Associations of Catalonia**, groups of restaurants and other food establishments whose offer is based on local produce, the cuisine and the territory they represent. They are the following:

On **Costa Brava:**

- **Cuina de l'Empordanet**
- **Cuina del Vent**
- **Girona Bons Fogons**
- **Grup Gastronòmic del Pla de l'Estany**
- **Joves Cuiners**

On **Costa Barcelona:**

- **Club de Tast de Sitges**
- **Penedès Fogons**
- **Corbera Sabors**

On **Barcelona:**

- **Barceloneta Cuina**

On **Costa Daurada:**

- **Cuines del Vendrell**
- **El Gust és Nostre (Calafell)**
- **Tarragona en Essència**

In **Pirineus:**

- **Cuina Pirinenca de Cerdanya**
- **Cuina Volcànica**
- **Cuines de la Vall de Camprodon**
- **Fogons de la Vall de Ribes**
- **La Xicoia**

In **Terres de l'Ebre:**

- **Cuina de La Ràpita-Delta de l'Ebre**

On **Terres de Lleida:**

- **Noguera Cuina**

In **Catalunya Central:**

- **Cuina Vallès**
- **Osona Cuina**

Catalonia cultivates and produces a large basket of **quality products**. Some of them have different origin and food quality labels such as the denominations of origin and protected geographic indications. Organic products take a relevant position in the Cat-

alan agrofood offer and are audited and certified by the Catalan Organic Production Council (CCPAE).

Some producers and gastronomic groups have joined the so-called **Slow Food** movement in recent years, an international association that intends to safeguard food, raw materials and growing and processing techniques passed on by local tradition consolidated over time.

The role of **crafts** at the table is also important. The ties between cuisine, produce and the land shall point out the role of craftspeople manufacturing products related with gastronomy, either for the kitchen or the table, like basketry, wooden spoons and forks, blown glasses and earthenware pots.

More than 300 gastronomic events and shows take place in Catalonia during the year. Biannual events such as the **Gastronomic Forum** in Girona, **Alimentaria Barcelona** and the **Health and Slow Food Fair** in Lleida are noteworthy.

Villages full of charm, wineries, “wine cathedrals”, museums, wine routes and festivals make Catalonia a must for wine tourism lovers. There are 11 Denominations of Origin for wine: Alella, Catalunya, Conca de Barberà, Costers del Segre, Empordà, Montsant, Penedès, Pla de Bages, Priorat, Tarragona and Terra Alta, plus the Cava (sparkling wine) DO.

I-034



I-035



More information on
www.gastronomia.catalunya.com
www.gastroteca.cat

Sports Tourism

Catalonia has a great **sporting tradition** and stands out for its high **organisational capacity**, with over 40 international tournaments taking place every year. The most important events so far have been the 1992 **Olympic Games**, the 2003 **World Swimming Championships**, the 2004 **World Rowing Championships** as well as the **Formula 1 Grand Prix of Spain** and the **Motor Bike Grand Prix of Catalonia** held every year.

In sports tourism, the main motivation to travel is an individual stay or a team camp, or to enjoy any great sports event. Also, the FC Barcelona Museum is one of Catalonia's most visited, with more than 1.3 million visitors a year.

Sports Tourism Destination (STD)



This is a **specialisation label** recognising tourist destinations characterised by offering top-range resources and services aimed at top athletes, professionals, amateurs and tourists wishing to do or watch sports. STDs comply with a set of overall **standard sports requirements**, such as having top facilities to do different sports.



The Catalan Tourist Board has certified Catalonia's **ten** first **STDs**:

On **Costa Brava**:

- Banyoles-Pla de l'Estany www.banyoles.cat
- Castelló d'Empúries-Empuriabrava www.empuriabrava.cat and www.castello.cat
- Lloret de Mar www.lloretdemar.org
- Blanes www.visitblanes.net

On **Costa Barcelona**:

- Santa Susanna www.stasusanna-online.com
- Calella www.calellabarcelona.com
- Castelldefels www.castelldefelsturisme.com

In **Pirineus**:

- Sort www.sort.cat
- La Seu d'Urgell www.turismeseu.com and www.parcolimpic.cat
- Val d'Aran www.visitvaldaran.com

Amposta (Terres de l'Ebre) and Cambrils (Costa Daurada) are in the process of obtaining this specialisation label.

I-037



More information on
www.esportiu.catalunya.com

Family Holidays

60% of tourists visiting Catalonia are families. Hence Catalonia has been pioneering in Europe in looking for a certified label for destinations suitable for family holidays.

Family Holiday Destination (FHD)



The Catalan Tourist Board has developed the Family Holiday Destination (FHD) brand, a specialisation label ensuring that a destination has an offer in accommodation, restaurants and leisure adapted to the needs of families: miniclubs at the accommodation and on the beach with wardens, children playgrounds, water and theme parks, children seats and menus in restaurants, children swimming pools, identification wristbands, security staff at all destinations, a wide children animation programme at the accommodation and in the street, connected rooms, availability of cradles and pushchairs, socket protectors, etc.

There are currently thirteen FHD certified destinations:

On **Costa Brava:**

- **Roses** www.roses.cat
- **Torroella de Montgrí - l'Estartit** www.visitestartit.com
- **Calonge-Sant Antoni** www.calonge.cat
- **Lloret de Mar** www.lloretdemar.org
- **Blanes** www.visitblanes.net



I-038

On **Costa Barcelona:**

- **Malgrat de Mar** www.turismemalgrat.com
- **Santa Susanna** www.stasusanna-online.com
- **Pineda de Mar** www.pinedademar.cat
- **Calella** www.calellabarcelona.com

On **Costa Daurada:**

- **Calafell** www.turisme.calafell.cat
- **Salou** www.visitsalou.cat
- **Cambrils** www.cambrils-turisme.com
- **Vila-seca la Pineda Platja** www.lapinedaplatja.info

This specialisation label will soon be expanded to inland destinations already providing an offer suited for family holidays, such as **Valls d'Àneu and Vall de Boí** in the Pyrenees, featuring Spain's first family mountain resort, 95% of its guests being families. The same applies to La Molina and Vall de Núria **ski resorts**, traditional locations for family skiing offering activities for children even in summer. **Rural tourism**, an increasingly popular choice with families, completes the range of options.

In addition to the current thirteen FHD certified destinations, there is another in the process of certification: Platja d'Aro – Castell d'Aro – S'Agaró on Costa Brava. To obtain this label, the municipalities need to comply with strict requirements and be audited.

I-039



More information on
www.catalunya.com

Golf Tourism

Catalonia has a long-standing **golf tradition** (the first golf course dates from 1914) and several factors have contributed to popularising this sport, to the point that roughly 50,000 players are currently registered.

The **Golf Tourism Club** was created in 1996 and includes numerous companies related with this sport. Its goal is to present Catalonia's golf offer in a structured and consistent manner. The club is currently made of 22 golf courses, tourist accommodation businesses having an arrangement with a course, specialised travel agents and booking centres, golf course and hotel associations as well as organisations with a structured golf offer.

Parallel to the increase in golf players, Catalonia has become one of **Europe's main destinations** to do this sport. The top level of its courses proves it, and so do international recognition and high-profile tournaments being held at different Catalan golf courses every year.



Some courses are part of resorts or close to facilities specifically designed for golf players and amateurs as well as accompanying persons, featuring a great **side offer** generally related to **health** and **wellness**, **gastronomy** and **culture**.

Catalonia has 37 golf, 38 pitch & putt and 7 par 3 courses. The facilities concentrate on Costa Brava, Costa Daurada, Barcelona surroundings (Garraf, Maresme and Vallès areas), the vicinity of Lleida and the Pyrenees.



More information on
www.golf.catalunya.com

Watersports

Watersports are mainly done at the sea but also in **rivers, lakes** and **reservoirs**. Catalonia has a long coastline stretching from Cape of Creus in the north, close to the French border, to Terres de l'Ebre in the south. A total **580 kilometres of coast** include counties in three provinces: Girona, Barcelona and Tarragona.

Marinas (www.acpet.es). Catalonia has developed a network of marinas, all equipped with suitable facilities for sailors. Their total number is 49: 17 in Girona, 16 in Barcelona and 16 in Tarragona province.

Nautical resorts. A nautical resort is a tourist and recreational area for enjoying active holidays in contact with water and for any kind of nautical activity, like dinghy sailing, cruiser sailing, motor boating, surfing and windsurfing, scuba diving, kayaking, rowing, cruiser charters, water skiing and sea trips. Nautical resorts also provide a set of facilities such as accommodation, restaurants, a tourist, cultural and recreational offer in the surrounding area as well as boat maintenance services.



The Catalan Nautical Resort Association (AENC) is part of the Spanish Nautical Resort Association (AEEN), which is made of a total 25 nautical resorts located along the Spanish coast. There are six nautical resorts in Catalonia (www.encatalunya.cat):

**- L'Estartit - Illes Medes, in Costa Brava
www.enestartit.com**

**- Vilanova i la Geltrú, in Costa Barcelona
www.estacionauticavilanova.com**

**- Salou - Cambrils - Montroig/ Miami Platja Vandellós/ L'Hospitalet, in Costa Daurada
www.estacionautica.info**

**- Santa Susanna, in Costa Barcelona
www.nauticastasusanna.com**

**- Sant Carles de la Ràpita-Delta de l'Ebre, in Terres de l'Ebre
www.enlarapita.com**

**- Roses - Cap de Creus, in Costa Brava
www.holaroses.com**

I-043



More information on
www.catalunya.com

Ski Holidays

Catalonia has been pioneering in skiing as La Molina ski resort in the Girona Pyrenees opened in 1943, the first in all Spain. Four years later Vall de Núria followed, also in the Girona Pyrenees.

Skiing is a growing industry in Catalonia, attracting over two million visitors every year. Resorts concentrate on the Girona and Lleida Pyrenees as well as a little part of the Barcelona province.

Ski resorts. The 16 ski resorts in Catalonia make a varied offer, the largest in Spain. The overall **skiing area encompasses roughly 600 kilometres** of slopes and a capacity to carry more than 163,000 skiers per hour.

Catalan ski resorts have undertaken an investment of approximately 10 million euros for the 2011/2012 season. There are over **2100 snow makers** for artificial snow production, which allows extending the skiing season. All-year sports and leisure facilities have turned ski resorts into tourist destinations beyond the winter season, featuring now a significant summer offer.

Thanks to the high quality of its ski resorts, Catalonia hosts different **international competitions** every year. Besides, the Catalan Pyrenees also host Pirena, the biggest sled dog race in Southern Europe.



The Catalan Pyrenees are an ideal destination for enjoying snow. Snow racket excursions can be done amidst the stunningly beautiful landscape of Cerdanya, Vall de Núria and Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park. Most ski resorts also provide activities like riding dog or horse sleds, snow bikes or quad bikes, building igloos and orientation, thus allowing enjoying a full experience in white.

I-045



More information on

www.visitpirineus.com

Associació Catalana d'Estacions d'Esquí i Activitats de Muntanya - ACEM

www.catneu.net

Business Tourism

Catalonia is one of Europe's most dynamic destinations and Spain's leading economic, industrial and business region. Its strategic position, the mild Mediterranean climate and one of Europe's highest living standards make it an ideal place to live and do business.

Organisers of meetings will find good facilities, a big variety of locations, unique settings and highly qualified specialist services in Catalonia, which add to a long-standing tourist expertise. There are many reasons to choose Catalonia as the venue of an event, like great organisational skills, a wide side offer and the status of its capital Barcelona as a landmark in international business tourism.

Catalunya Convention Bureau  Catalunya Convention Bureau

To consolidate Catalonia as a destination for meetings, congresses, conventions and incentive trips, the Catalan Tourist Board counts on the Catalunya Convention Bureau (CCB), a promotion and marketing programme supported by more than 120 specialised member companies and associations. The joint effort of public authorities and the business sector provides organisers of events with all possible tools facilitating the choice of Catalonia as a qualified business tourism destination.

The main goals of the Catalunya Convention Bureau are to position Catalonia in the global business tourism market, bundling and coordinating the business created by this industry in the country as well as promoting, disseminating and supporting specialised companies in the different markets.



Main services for organisers:

- Exhaustive knowledge of Catalonia and its resources geared at business tourism.
- Free, unbiased, professional advice on facilities, companies and tourist services specialising in organising meetings and in making post-meeting, social and incentive programmes.
- Contact and intermediation with associated companies.
- Support to nominations to capture congresses.
- Familiarisation trips, prospections, actions to communicate the offer and specific programmes.

Based in Barcelona, the Catalunya Convention Bureau welcomes professionals of the meeting industry at any of the ten offices held by the Catalan Tourist Board in Spain, France, the UK, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, the US, Russia, China and the Benelux.

The Catalunya Convention Bureau has a website, www.ccb.catalunya.com, and a sales guide containing all the necessary information to organise any kind of meeting in Catalonia. This publication is edited in Catalan, Spanish, English, French and German and includes the offer of the hundred CCB member companies and organisations. It is distributed to agencies specialising in the organisation of congresses, conventions and incentive trips as well as associations and companies looking for a destination and facilities to hold their events and meetings.

I-047



More information on
www.ccb.catalunya.com

Rural Tourism

Rural tourism in Catalonia has consolidated as a quality accommodation offer, reaching a strong footprint across its territory and a high penetration in the Catalan market.

More than 2000 rural tourism businesses are currently registered with the Tourism Registry of Catalonia. This places Catalonia among Spain's main destinations as regards the number of homes and beds.

This strong footprint led to the need of creating a project for **voluntary rating of Catalan rural tourism businesses** (CaTR), which has been implemented now. This initiative is the result of intensive joint work between the Catalan rural tourism industry through its most representative associations and the Government of Catalonia.

Catering for new challenges and requirements, the rating model for Catalan rural tourism businesses (CaTR) has become a priority addressed jointly by the public and private tourism sector in Catalonia.

Rating model for Catalan rural tourism businesses

The criteria defining each of the five categories into which the CaTR model is divided are the following:

- House environment and building type
- Inner rooms



- Outdoor area
- Furniture and equipment
- Commercialisation conditions
- Services provided to guests (food, welcome, health, etc.)
- Cultural, nature, family and rural tourism activities offered to guests

The Catalan rural tourism industry and the Government of Catalonia have defined together a rural tourism business rating model that is pioneering in Europe and aims at becoming a key tool to consolidate and grow this tourist product in the future. The certification process is voluntary and open to all rural tourism businesses in Catalonia.

The five categories within the model are graphically identified by wheat ears, resulting in the following rating:

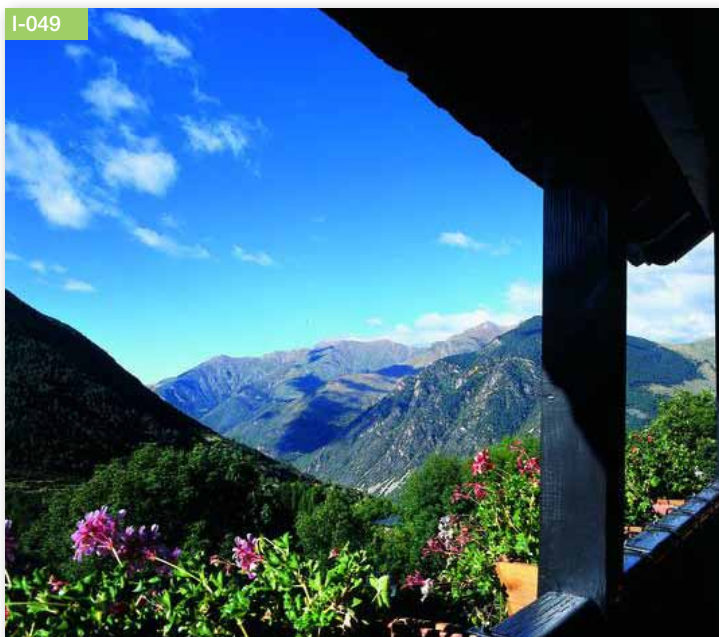
Basic: 1 wheat ear

Comfort: 2 wheat ears

Grand Comfort: 3 wheat ears

Superior: 4 wheat ears

Superior Premium: 5 wheat ears



Confederació Catalana de Turisme Rural - Concatur

www.ecoturismecatalunya.com

Confederació del Turisme Rural i l'Agroturisme de Catalunya - Turalcat

www.turalcat.com

Wellness

Catalonia has been one of Europe's largest thermal hotbeds over history. The properties of its medicinal mineral waters have been attracting all sorts of visitors for centuries. Whether thermal, from the sea, relaxing, to cure or simply for consumption, water is one of Catalonia's main appeals, making it Spain's leading region in thermal facilities.

Catalonia's thermal tradition dates back to Roman times. Spa towns provide baths and tourist attractions like cultural heritage, nature, leisure, gastronomy, festivals and traditions. They include places like Benifallet, Caldes d'Estrac, Caldes de Malavella, Caldes de Montbui, El Vendrell, La Garriga, Sant Climent Sescebes, Sant Hilari Sacalm and Santa Coloma de Farners, which have a great wealth in mineral, medicinal and/or thermal waters.

Thanks to this natural wealth, there is a highly varied top-quality health and wellness offer made of:

- **Thermal baths.** Catalonia has 18 traditional thermal baths providing over 2000 beds, located in natural settings of great beauty. They are usually found in unique locations, at an underground health mineral water well, and their waters are mineralised or become thermal through their depth or resting time in the water table. Their therapeutic application depends on the physical and chemical properties of each health mineral water declared for public use. These centres have now adapted their facilities to new accommodation trends, offering quality standards in accordance with the modern hotel industry.



- **Wellness centres.** They include spas (treatment with ordinary water to improve physical and/or mental health) and thermal leisure centres (spa treatment facilities and services with or without health mineral waters declared for public use).
- **Thalassotherapy centres.** Exclusive beauty and health treatment with sea water with preventive or curative effects.
- **Medical and health centres.** Catalonia offers top-quality medical care attracting many people from all over the world every year. Barcelona has become a reference in health tourism. In this respect, Barcelona Centre Mèdic is a unique initiative in Europe providing full-range top-quality health care at twenty health care centres in Barcelona with highest international reputation.

As a side offer to thermal tourism, there are several routes to enjoy nature as well as water museums. The most noteworthy examples are Montseny Natural Park with its wealth in underground mineral water, most of which is bottled; La Selva county, the natural continuation of Montseny down to the Costa Brava; and Sant Hilari Sacalm, called the one hundred well town.

The Health and Wellness Tourism Club is the programme developed by the Catalan Tourist Board to support commercialisation of this product in Catalonia. Promotion is done in collaboration with health and wellness businesses, associations and organisations.

Health and Wellness Tourism Club

www.catalunya.com

Spa Association

www.balneario.org

Spa Towns of Catalonia

www.catalunyatermal.com

Barcelona Centre Mèdic

www.bcm.es

I-051



Sun & Beach

With its 580 kilometre coastline and almost 350 coves and beaches, Catalonia is still one of the best so-called sun & beach destinations.

The Government of Catalonia is heavily working on prevention, control and improvement of coastal waters and beaches, while each municipality is in charge of cleaning its main beaches every day during the summer season.

The Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club (ADAC), with more than 17 million member families and a high reputation in German public opinion as an unbiased organisation with tourism expertise, certifies year after year the quality of Catalan beaches, which are characterised by their water quality, large environmentally friendly leisure offer and countless tourist facilities, many of which are adapted to be accessible to any kind of users.



Beyond the blue flags and quality certificates at a vast number of Catalan beaches, facilities provided in the coastal municipalities and the numerous marinas and water sports businesses, it is the millions of tourists coming back to Catalonia every year who provide the best quality proof.

In its beach section, the www.catalunya.com portal provides information on every beach with all available services and often also pictures. The search can be done by tourist brand, county, municipality or beach name.



More information on
www.catalunya.com

What's New 2012

Strategic Tourism Plan for Catalonia

The Directorate General of Tourism and the Catalan Tourist Board, two bodies under the Department of Enterprise and Labour of the Government of Catalonia, are working together on the new **Strategic Tourism Plan** for Catalonia.

The goal of this plan, looking out till **2015**, is to **define** the basic principles of the **tourist model** to be implemented in Catalonia. It sets the priority for several actions related to adapting the tourist structure to new demands by the market, updating coastal tourism and fostering inland tourism, all of which combined with the most convenient strategies to promote Catalan tourist destinations abroad.

Moreover, the first measures have been taken to set the foundations of the first **Tourist Marketing Plan of Catalonia**, which is to become together with the Strategic Plan the tool on which Catalonia's tourist promotion will be based in the coming years.

www.act.cat

New Business area in the Catalan Tourist Board

The Catalan Tourist Board is starting into 2012 with the **new Business area**. Its aim is to create a **strategic partner pool** with internationally renowned companies (within the tourist industry or not) in order to **join synergies, optimise financial resources** and ensure a **larger impact** on promotion, communication and marketing actions for the "Catalunya" tourist brand.

Future CTB partners will be associated with a **world-class tourist destination**, share the **values** of the "Catalunya" **tourist brand**, increase their company's **presence** in major markets, reinforce **internationalisation** in new markets, improve **notoriety** of their brand, feature prominently on CTB **platforms** and **promotion, communication** and **marketing channels** and have access to **market intelligence** developed by the Catalan Tourist Board.

www.act.cat

“Catalonia. I like sharing”

The Catalan Tourist Board has launched the new “Catalonia. I like sharing” promotion campaign, based on the internet, the 2.0 environment and social networks.

The campaign consists mainly of a blog and a Facebook profile that become promotion platforms and participation channels for real-time interaction with the public through actions like contests and sweepstakes.

This campaign is the result of implementing joint efforts by the private industry and public institutions.

<http://megustacompartir.catalunya.com>

Buy Catalunya 2012, a must on the agenda

Buy Catalunya has become Catalonia's most important **promotional** and **commercial event** as well as a must on the agenda of global tour operators and Catalan tourist businesses.

Every other year, the Catalan Tourist Board organises a **meeting upon appointment** at which **Catalan companies** have the opportunity of presenting their offer not only to Europe's 150 biggest **tour operators** but also to some major emerging markets such as Russia and China. Furthermore, these tour operators will first enjoy a **familiarisation trip** allowing them to know the products and land of Catalonia on site.

Buy Catalonia is held for the fourth time this year and will take place in **June**. Its previous edition in May 2010 welcomed 150 tour operators and 200 Catalan tourist companies with more than 2700 interviews held.

www.buycatalunya.com

www.workshops.catalunya.com

Costa Barcelona, a new tourist brand

The Catalan Tourist Board has created the **Costa Barcelona** brand, which encompasses the former Costa de Garraf and Costa de Barcelona-Maresme brands. Its aim is to allow **international promotion** of Catalonia taking advantage of the lure of powerful brands such as Barcelona while keeping the uniqueness of each area.

Costa Barcelona includes Maresme, Garraf, Baix Llobregat and Alt Penedès counties, all of which are close to the capital of Catalonia and feature a relevant offer in both **natural areas** and **cultural heritage**, plus **100 kilometres of coastline** with large beaches.

At more than 1.7 million foreign visitors, the new brand is Catalonia's **third largest tourist destination**. After this restructuring, Catalonia features now **nine** tourist brands.

www.diba.cat/turisme

Catalonia in New York

The Catalan Tourist Board has just opened its **tourist promotion office** in **New York**, which will be in charge of promoting Catalonia as a tourist destination in the **United States** and **Canada**, two markets with a big growth potential.

With this opening, the CTB has already **nine** offices abroad: France, Benelux, Nordic Countries, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Russia and China. Its goal is to help the Catalan tourist industry **analyse** its **potential customers** abroad and **adapt its products** to be able to introduce and present them successfully to each of these markets.

www.act.cat

New destinations in accessible tourism

Catalonia has become one of **Europe's main destinations** in accessible tourism in the last four years. This is proven by its **24 identified accessible destinations**, showing that accessible tourism has actually come true in Catalonia. The **three latest destinations** to join have been Terra Alta and Sebes Natural Reserve, Tarragona-World Heritage as well as Montseny and Sant Llorenç del Munt Natural Parks.

These 24 tourist destinations that have been selected for their high degree of accessibility provide disabled tourists with a wide offer in **services adapted** to their **specific needs** regarding accommodation, restaurants, museums, side activities, beaches, etc.

Promotion of Catalonia's offer in accessible tourism is a **major strategic line** of the Catalan Tourist Board. There are 120 million potential tourists with some sort of disability, reduced mobility or special need in Europe. Catalonia has moved from 600 to over **1100 adapted tourist resources** in the last four years, some of which are unique in Spain.

www.turismeperatohom.com/en

Vila-seca – La Pineda Platja, a new Family Holiday Destination

Vila-seca – La Pineda Platja has joined the list of municipalities certified as a **Family Holiday Destination** (FHD). Hence there are as many as four destinations on Costa Daurada specialising in family holidays. Moreover, **Castell-Platja d'Aro – S'Agaró** on Costa Brava is in the **process** of certification, thus increasing the future number of Family Holiday Destinations on the Girona coast to six.

Certification as a Family Holiday Destination (FHD) is one of the **main action lines** promoted by the Catalan Tourist Board. To be eligible, a destination needs to have a pre-set percentage of facilities and services designed for families, such as beach miniclubs, children playgrounds, security installations and facilities at hotels and restaurants for the youngest.

Family holidays amount to **60% of tourists** visiting Catalonia. This specialisation label will be soon implemented at **inland destinations** already providing an offer for this segment.

www.catalunya.com

Catalunya Convention Bureau: new actions in business tourism

In its second year of life, the Catalunya Convention Bureau plans to set up the "**Catalonia Convention**" programme, the aim of which is to **promote** Catalonia as a **business tourist destination** at both national and international level.

This programme intends to develop the necessary **tools** to **capture** and **handle conventions** to be held in Catalonia together with the business and the different bodies involved, creating synergies at local and regional level.

Another priority is to draft a direct **commercial agenda** addressed at prescribers and potential convention generators as well as to organise a branch-specific **familiarisation trip**.

Also during 2012, the “**Catalonia, meetings and incentives**” programme will be set up with the aim of **identifying** and taking value from all of **Catalonia’s offer** in this area as well as making specific proposals to cater for all sorts of needs within the business tourism industry.

The final result of this action will be a **catalogue** aimed at the industry’s target groups in order to enhance commercialisation of the resources presented in the publication. This catalogue will be used as a reference for all future actions to promote and support marketing done at the Catalunya Convention Bureau.

www.ccb.catalunya.com

Catalonia “shares” snow with novelties included

Catalonia’s **ski resorts** are tackling the new year with many **novelties**, among which a larger snowed area and optimised snow production systems with the aim of saving energy costs.

At **16 alpine** and **Nordic** ski **resorts**, Catalonia has not only been pioneering in ski but features also the **biggest snow offer** in Spain. Investment exceeded 10 million euros this year, seven of which at the eleven ski resorts in the Lleida Pyrenees.

<http://megustacompartir.catalunya.com>

www.catneu.net

New wheat ear rating system for rural tourism in Catalonia

In its second year of functioning, **388 new rural homes** joined the **wheat ear** rating system for rural tourism in Catalonia.

This project initiated by the Directorate General of Tourism aims at **identifying** and **classifying** rural accommodation **by wheat ears** (from 1 to 5) according to its quality, surroundings and services. This shall enable potential customers to **better identify the product** and the **features** and **services** provided by rural homes.

With this enlargement, there are already **498** homes under this rating, making a **quarter** of the total **offer** registered at the Tourism Registry of Catalonia.

www.ecoturismecatalunya.com

www.turalcat.com

Traditional Catalan cuisine, immaterial heritage of Catalonia

The Parliament of Catalonia has recognised **traditional Catalan cuisine** as **immaterial heritage of Catalonia**. With this recognition, it makes an indispensable step towards the **nomination** to be submitted to the **UNESCO** for recognition as Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

The UNESCO requires for all nominations that the territory forwarding them recognises within its legislation the reason why it is intended to be preserved as immaterial heritage, together with **conservation** and **promotion measures**. It is also important to show that the territory regards it as an own immaterial heritage and has been working in its **recognition**.

A new gastronomic specialisation label

The Directorate General of Tourism and the Fondes de Catalunya association have started a **pilot test** to implement a **gastronomic specialisation** project at Catalonia's **tourist establishments**.

Between fifteen and twenty "fondes" (guesthouses) will take part in this action aimed at **distinguishing** those **businesses** taking **Catalan gastronomy** as a reference for either traditional or creative cuisine. The gastronomic offer shall be related with **local produce** and the business has to ensure sufficient knowledge of these products.

The label can be awarded to **other establishments** that despite not being Cases Fon-da fulfil the **requirements** by which they are characterised, namely a gastronomic offer based on **Catalan cuisine**, a **family-run** business, **personal service** and a **footprint in the area** where they are based.

This new distinction is one of the **tourist quality labels** developed by the Directorate General of Tourism with the ultimate goal of being recognised by the public and promoting service quality at Catalan tourist businesses.

www.casafonda.com

Ferran Adrià at Palau Robert

From **31 January**, Barcelona's Palau Robert will host an **exhibition** on "**Ferran Adrià and El Bulli**: risk, freedom and creativity" showing the career of the proclaimed "world's best chef".

The exhibit takes a look along the **history of El Bulli** from its beginnings to its closure last year, using graphic, photographic and audiovisual material. According to Ferran Adrià himself, it is also “the first building brick of the future **El Bulli Foundation**”.

Simultaneously to the exhibition, Palau Robert will organise an **educational** programme aimed at schoolchildren, hostelry schools and universities, **guided visits** for schoolchildren and the general public as well as **lectures** and various events. The show can be visited **throughout 2012** and will then move to several **cities around the world**, promoting Catalonia abroad.

www.gencat.cat/probert

Homage to Joan Miró

“Joan Miró: **The Ladder of Escape**” is the title of the exhibition shown at the **Joan Miró Foundation** in Barcelona till **18 March**.

Organised together with London **Tate Modern**, the exhibition shows over **fifty works** by the artist, giving an insight into the different stages of his **development** from childhood in Mont-Roig del Camp to his introduction into surrealism, including the drama of the Spanish Civil War that led to a new painting language.

Having already been shown in London, the exhibition will travel from Barcelona to Washington.

www.fundacionmiro-bcn.org

Petits Grans Hotels de Catalunya, a consolidated brand

In its third year of existence, Petits Grans Hotels de Catalunya has consolidated as a **top-range brand** within the Catalan **hotel** industry. It is made of hotels with **less than 15 rooms**, usually in historical buildings run by their owners, making a **quality offer** at reasonable prices, a segment increasingly sought by a very demanding audience.

The new catalogue, introduced in late 2011, includes **40 hotels**, seven of which are new, besides highlighting those featuring a **top-range restaurant**, some with a **Miche-
lin star**.

www.petitsgranshotelsdecatalunya.com

Motorbikes and Formula 1 at Circuit de Catalunya

The Circuit de Catalunya racetrack hosts the **Moto GP World Championship** and the **Formula 1** Santander GP of Spain for another year.

The **Formula 1** Grand Prix will take place from **11 to 13 May**, while the **Moto GP** Aperol Grand Prix will be held from **1 to 3 June**, the fifth race of the Motorbike World Championship.

Tickets can be purchased from the **racetrack website** and at the **Tourist Information Point** of Catalonia in Madrid (Calle Alcalá, 44).

www.circuit.cat

Balneari, Catalonia's health and wellness tourism brand

Fifteen establishments from the Spa Association of Catalonia have joined to create Balneari, the **new commercial brand** for health and wellness tourism in Catalonia providing spas with **health mineral waters** declared for public use.

The brand also created the **website** www.balneari.com providing not only **information** on each associated establishment but also **bookings** for any service without intermediaries, thus ensuring the **best price**.

www.balneari.com

Barcelona remains the world mobile capital till 2018

Once again, Barcelona will host the **Mobile World Congress**, the world's most important mobile phone event. It will take place on the **Montjuïc fairgrounds** from **27 February to 1 March**. Catalonia's capital has been hosting this congress since 2006 and will do so till 2018.

More than **1300 exhibitors** have confirmed their attendance so far. They include **leading companies** such as Microsoft, Google, Samsung, Nokia and Blackberry.

The last edition was visited by **60,000 professionals** from all over the world. The economic impact of the show on the city was estimated at around **220 million euros** and several thousand temporary jobs.

www.mobileworldcongress.com

www.firabcn.es

Architecture, a key tourist item in Barcelona

Turisme de Barcelona will include **architecture** as a **key item** into the city's international **tourist promotion**. To this end, the promotion body has asked Barcelona Centre de Disseny to identify the main architectural landmarks in the city.

The result has been a selection of over **250** architectural **sites** considered a “**must**”. They include the **Mies van der Rohe Pavilion** created for the 1929 World Exhibition, **Palau Sant Jordi** by Japanese architect Arata Isozaki, built for the 1992 Olympic Games, **Mercat de Santa Caterina** planned by Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue in 2005, **Hotel Omm** in the Eixample quarter or **Roca Barcelona Gallery** representing the values of the famous sanitary fittings manufacturer through architecture.

Fashion and decoration also have their share in this architectural selection, with shops like **Vinçon** on Passeig de Gràcia, **Nani Marquina** specialising in carpets and textile, **Santa & Cole** for inner furniture and lighting or **Munich**, a sports shoemaker located in Illa Diagonal shopping mall.

All these sites are part of the **Barcelona Design Tour**, a route that can be viewed on either a hardcopy map or several iPhone and Android apps.

www.barcelonaturisme.com

Artcoticket, art within everybody's reach

Turisme de Barcelona has created **Artcoticket**, a new **multiticket** product providing access to **contemporary art** collections at six private foundations in Barcelona at a **reduced price** for **one year** from the purchase date.

The proposal is aimed at tourists appreciating culture and allows visiting the **Alorda Derksen, Les Arts i els Artistes, Foto Colectania, Francisco Godia, Vila Casas** and **Suñol** Foundations, featuring collections from different art disciplines such as painting, sculpture, photography or video art.

This product, which can be **purchased online** from the Turisme de Barcelona website, costs **15 euros**, a 50% discount on the total price of all single tickets to the aforementioned exhibition centres.

www.bcshop.barcelonaturisme.com

CaixaForum Barcelona, ten years celebrating culture

CaixaForum will celebrate its **tenth anniversary** in Barcelona in 2012. For this occasion, it has organised numerous renowned **exhibitions**, **lectures** with international experts and **concerts**.

The season will open with an exhibition on **Eugène Delacroix** starting in February and another on **Francisco de Goya** one month later. The former will provide an overview over the 19th century French painter, the biggest ever held in Spain on this subject and organised in cooperation with the Louvre Museum. The second exhibition, entitled Goya: Lights and Shadows, will rely on the fund from the Prado Museum.

The centre will increase the number of **activities** aimed at **all audiences** and strengthen its **pedagogical task** oriented at schools and families in order to become a relevant meeting point between culture and people.

<http://obrasocial.lacaixa.es>

Spain's main professional conference organisers meet in Girona

From **15 to 18 February**, **Girona** will host the **25th Congress** of the Spanish Federation of **Professional Conference Organisation Companies**. It is the most relevant event in the Spanish business tourism branch as it gathers its main companies and professionals.

The contents of the Congress will be **pragmatic** and tailor-made for professionals so they can find efficient, straightforward answers to the challenges they face in their daily work. Hence a programme has been set up to include **panel discussions** and **lectures** about current issues. Also, four **workshops** are being organised, at which facilitators will show techniques, methodologies and products on relevant conference organisation matters.

The congress is supported by the Girona City Council, the Girona Convention Bureau, the Girona Chamber of Commerce, the Girona Auditorium and Congress Palace, the Catalan Tourist Board and the Catalunya Convention Bureau.

<http://www.congresoopcjirona2012.com>

From Figueres to Portbou on steam

The Railway History Studies Centre plans to operate a **tourist train** between **Figueres** and **Portbou** from **summer 2012**. The train, composed of 19th century carriages and pulled by a steam engine from 1877, will offer between **180 and 240 seats** per trip. The journey will last about **an hour**.

Also, the border town of **Portbou** will host the **Trans-Pyrenean Railway Interpretive Centre**. Thus this important railway hub in Alt Empordà will add another attraction to its tourist offer.

www.costabrava.org

Intermón Oxfam Trailwalker, a march against poverty

The **Girona Green routes** will host a great event of global importance in May: **Intermón Oxfam Trailwalker**. This competition is a double challenge: on the one hand, **100 km** are to be covered within **32 hours** by teams of four, on the other, funds shall be raised to **improve living conditions** of thousands of people living in poverty.

The race will be held on the **green routes** linking the Girona Pyrenees with the Costa Brava along towns like **Olot** and **Sant Feliu de Guíxols**. The competition will start in La Garrotxa Volcanic Area and finish by the sea.

Those interested in taking part in the event but unable to cover the whole 100 kilometres can participate through **donations** or in the **volunteer** programme.

<http://trailwalker.intermonoxfam.org>

The Costa Brava hosts water sports competitions

The **Costa Brava** will hold several **water sports world events** in 2012 gathering the best athletes in each discipline.

In the first half of June, the **14th Windsurf World Championship** will take place at Cortal de la Devesa beach in **Sant Pere Pescador**. This town and the whole Bay of Roses are considered one of Europe's finest windsurfing destinations.

L'Escala will host the **Sailing World Championship** from **12 to 24 July** in the International Europe class. **250 sailors** from 15 countries will take part in the races during two weeks. The local Club Nàutic de l'Escala has a wide experience in organising international competitions.

www.costabrava.org

New features in Lloret de Mar

Lloret de Mar introduces several **new features** this year. The Lloret Convention Bureau presents the “**Pack Festival and Events**”, a package providing event, meeting and congress organisers with a set of free services giving added value to their gathering: logistic advice regarding sites, public space occupation, institutional presence at the event, trophies and awards, merchandising, dissemination of the event through media and access to cultural facilities for participants.

Two new publications are also introduced. The **Sports Tourism guide** includes technical data of all sports facilities in Lloret and their free services, and the **Lloret Natura** brand introduces a **guide** with the full local offer in **active and nature tourism**. New features for 2012 include new signposting of walking trails and two new routes, the Beach and the Chapel routes.

Finally, to cater for the increasing number of tourist families from Russia, the miniclubs at Lloret and Fenals beaches have hired **Russian wardens**.

www.lloretdemar.org

Ruta del Paisatge dels Genis

El Paisatge dels Genis (The Landscape of Geniuses) is a route across the landscapes where four great Catalan geniuses lived: Pau Casals in El Vendrell, Antoni Gaudí in Reus, Joan Miró in Mont-Roig del Camp and Picasso in Horta de Sant Joan.

Reus hosts the **Centre Gaudí**, the only interpretive centre on Gaudí's life and work. Among other objects, this interactive centre shows scale models of his most famous buildings. The Reus tourist office also offers the Gaudí&Reus and the Modernist routes.

In **Mont-Roig del Camp** is the **Centre Miró**, an interpretive centre showing the painter's relation with this town where he spent the first years of his artist career. The tourist office organises the Miró walk.

The **Vil·la Museu Pau Casals** in **El Vendrell** shows the work of the musician and organises several activities. Pau Casals' birth house and grave complete the visit along his life.

The last stop on this route is the **Picasso Centre** in **Horta de Sant Joan** showing a part of the painter's work. The local tourist office also features a “Route through Picasso Landscapes”.

The **Genial Card** costs 9 euros. It is a multiticket allowing access to all interpretive centres along the route and providing advantages and special promotions at partner establishments.

www.elpaisatgedelsgenis.cat

2017 Mediterranean Games

Tarragona has been chosen to host the **XVIII Mediterranean Games** in 2017. It will be the third Spanish city to do so, after Barcelona in 1955 and Almeria in 2005.

The games will be held between **30 June** and **9 July, 2017**. Tarragona will host competitions in athletics, basketball, football, gymnastics, golf, water skiing, swimming, water polo, taekwondo, tennis, archery and volleyball. The rest will be spread over subsites in Barcelona, Calafell, Cambrils, Castelldefels, Constantí, El Vendrell, La Selva del Camp, Reus, Salou, Torredembarra, Valls and Vila-seca.

With a population of nearly 150,000 and several monuments from its Roman past being **UNESCO World Heritage**, the Games will bring into the city investment of over 200 million euros plus another 57 million from private sponsorship.

www.costadaurada.info

Europe's highest rollercoaster in PortAventura

PortAventura theme park will open **Europe's highest rollercoaster** in **spring 2012**. This new attraction will completely change the park skyline, being visible from several kilometres and becoming the new park icon.

The attraction will set **three European records**: the **highest** rollercoaster (76 m), the **longest** drop (78 m) and Europe's **fastest** hypercoaster as it will reach 134 km/h in the first drop. It will feature everything needed to experience a great adventure: dark tunnels, mountain lakes, all of which amidst a silhouette reminding of a mountain range.

It will include **5 camelbacks**, the lowest of which will equal a **7-storey** building. Each camelback will create an effect known as air time, by which riders lose grip with the seat, like at a road hump but much stronger.

PortAventura is investing **25 million euros** into this new attraction. This ambitious project has been designed and developed together by PortAventura and Bollinger & Mabillard, the company that also made Dragon Khan, the star attraction at PortAventura and one of the most preferred by visitors since it opened in 1995.

www.portaventura.es

New museums in the Ebro Delta

The Ebro Delta will see **three new museums** opening in 2012. **Món Natura** will do so in March, at a site built in La Tancada salt pond in the middle of the Ebro Delta and designed to disseminate the environmental value of this natural area.

The **Terres de l'Ebre Museum** will be located in Amposta and feature a wide collection of ethnological, archaeological and natural scientific material.

Finally, Sant Carles de la Ràpita will host the **Sea Museum**, a 450 square metre centre devoted to the sea and sea life. It will be located in the first floor of Les Casotes building.

www.terresdelebre.org

The Montsec sky is to become a Starlight Reserve

Since its opening, the **Montsec Astronomic Park** has not stopped growing in both its offer and visitors. The Consorci del Montsec will ask in 2012 the UNESCO to declare the **Montsec sky** a **Starlight Reserve**, a quality distinction related to the commitment of preserving the sky from light pollution.

The Montsec Astronomic Park has been conceived as a three-fold facility, being composed of the **Astronomic Observatory** devoted to research, the **Universe Observation Centre** for dissemination and scientific education and the **Universe Garden** completing the educational and dissemination side.

The **planetarium** will feature new shows in 2012 and the Universe Observation Centre will broadcast the **transit of Venus** through the internet, a very rare astronomic event. Montsec will also host the **Technoplanetary Congress** that gathers operators in charge of Spanish and Portuguese planetariums every other year.

www.parc astronomic.cat

Aigüestortes National Park in the internet

Guided tours through Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park can be **booked** in the **internet** now. Through a booking centre, users can easily choose their preferred day and time to visit the area up to two months in advance.

Bookings are made through the Spanish **national park portal** by selecting Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici National Park. The system will show the list of organised activities; after making their choice, users can click on the “Booking” tab and complete the process.

www.gencat.cat/parcs/

Picasso in Gósol

Gósol in Berguedà county opens the new **Picasso Centre** showing copies of the works painted by the artist in 1906 during his stay at this village in the Lleida Pyrenees.

The museum also features **books** on the Malaga-born painter and **pictures** showing him together with his partner Fernande Olivier. A 60 kilometre long **walking route** following the steps of the couple completes the offer related to Pablo Picasso.

<http://gosol.ddl.net>

“Territori de Masies”, a new tourist product in Solsonès

The big wealth of **masies** (traditional Catalan farmhouses) is a distinctive feature of **Solsonès** county. The “Territori de Masies” (Territory of Masies) project has been created to consolidate tourism, especially in the southern part of the county, with the aim of making known local material and immaterial **cultural heritage** including cultural **routes, activities and events** aimed at different target groups as well as local **markets and traditional festivals**.

The first part of the project has been devoted to bundling several **propositions** in a **portal** featuring information on sights and rural tourist accommodation.

www.territoridemasies.cat

Estany d'Ivars i Vila-sana, a scientific tourist destination

Located in Pla d'Urgell county, **Estany d'Ivars i Vila-sana**, Catalonia's largest lake, has consolidated as a prime destination for **scientific tourism**.

Thanks to its recovery as a natural area, it has been chosen as one of Catalonia's **model ecosystems** to disseminate **biodiversity** of inland **water systems**.

Estany d'Ivars i Vila-sana is home to an interesting and varied water flora and fauna. Moreover, several **activities** related to tourism and nature have been promoted.

www.estanyivarsvilasana.cat

Via Calda, between hiking and spas

Via Calda is a **high mountain trail** through Val d'Aran combining **hiking** and accommodation at **spas**. This trek from **El Pont de Suert** in Alta Ribagorça to **Les** in Val d'Aran features not only outstanding Pyrenees scenery with mountain passes higher than 2500 metres but also provides relax at the different spas dotting the area. The route can be done in either direction in **four** or **five** stages.

www.lleidatur.com

Sky Games 2012, the mountain sports world championship

From **29 June** to **8 July**, **Sky Games 2012** will gather the best athletes in six different mountain race disciplines: **Sky Km Vertical**, a 3 km long uphill race with a difference in altitude of 1000 m; **Sky Marathon**, a 42 km long race with a big total altitude difference; **Sky Bike**, a 30 km duathlon combining mountain biking and trail running; **Sky Speed**, a play-off speed race for teams of four; **Sky Raid** combining via ferrata and running; and **Sky Race Youth**, a 21 km race for young athletes aged 16 to 23.

Competitions will take place in **Alta Ribagorça** county in the Lleida Pyrenees, an area with an experience in hosting such events. Over a **thousand participants** from around twenty countries are expected, a hundred of whom being top athletes.

www.ocisport.net/skygames

Useful Addresses

Tourist bodies

Catalan Tourist Board

Tel. (+34) 934 849 900

www.catalunya.com

Costa Brava Girona Tourism Board

Tel. (+34) 972 208 401

www.costabrava.cat

Tarragona Provincial Council Tourism Board

Costa Daurada

Tel. (+34) 977 230 312

www.costadaurada.info

Terres de l'Ebre

Tel. (+34) 977 444 447

www.terresdelebre.org

Turisme de Barcelona

Tel. (+34) 933 689 700

www.barcelonaturisme.cat

Barcelona Provincial Council Tourism Delegation

Tel. (+34) 93 402 29 66

www.diba.cat/turisme

Lleida Provincial Council Tourism Board

Tel. (+34) 973 245 408

www.lleidatur.com

Turisme Val d'Aran

Tel. (+34) 973 640 688

www.visitvaldaran.com

Tourist Promotion Centres and Information Points outside Catalonia

Benelux

Tel. (+32) 26 406 151

info.bnl@act.cat

France

Tel. (+33) 140 469 892

media.fr@act.cat

www.enviedecatalogne.fr

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Tel. (+39) 02 873 935 73

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Tel. (+34) 915 241 893

turisme.blanquerna@act.cat

Tourist Information Point Casa de la Generalitat (Perpignan, France)

Tel. (+33) 468 351 714

info.fr@act.cat



**Catalan
Tourist Board**

 **Generalitat de Catalunya**
Government of Catalonia

