



# Iwanna Weekend in Barcelona



Overview

## Author

# My Barcelona, just for You

## by Roberto Enríquez

Roberto Enríquez (Madrid, 1971), also known Bob Pop, is blogger [<http://blogs.vogue.es/convdevogue/>], columnist (Público) and novelist ('MANSOS', Caballo de Troya).

Love brought him to Barcelona seven years ago, and he decided to stay for love with his husband, Mauricio.

**Roberto defines himself as a consumer, voyeur, fetishist and bon vivant.** That's the way he lives in Barcelona, and that's how he'd like to show you the city.



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Some things you should know before you arrive:

- \* Barcelona is a perfect city to get to know by walking
- \* Outdoor cafés are the perfect places for watching people come and go during all seasons
- \* Most of the restaurants with English menus outside are not good places to eat
- \* Mexican hats are not typical Catalanian
- \* Catalonia is not the same as Spain
- \* This trip is an excellent chance to try good and cheap Spanish or Catalanian wine and forget about beer for a few days
- \* Book a hotel at the city center. Disregard newer areas such as Olympic Port, Forum, Diagonal Mar ... The Eixample area is the best to book for a hotel or an apartment
- \* This guide is not compatible with Ruiz Zafon's novels
- \* The architecture in Barcelona is amazing, so try to look up at the buildings as you walk the city
- \* Get used to the city's rhythm. I recommend that you have a second breakfast around 11am so that you'll be able to have lunch at 2:30pm and dinner at 9:30pm. This will improve your experience and give you a better understanding of city life
- \* This guide is recommended for avid readers. Take a good book with you and enjoy Barcelona not only as a tourist, but also as a citizen. When you find a nice place to sit and read, DO IT!
- \* Dress code: in summer, avoid sleevesless t-shirts or shorts
- \* Make reservations at the recommended restaurants before arriving



**10:00 a.m.** Have your second breakfast at **Flamant** (*Enric Granados, 23*), a fancy restaurant with a nice outdoor eating area and an extremely well-decorated interior. It's a good place to start your visit and plan a day that will not follow a tourist schedule, but instead will consist of a real Barcelonean experience that will continue with a post-breakfast walk up the street on the corner: **Consell de Cent**, where you will find several very interesting contemporary art galleries (**Tapiès, Senda, Lluçia Homs, Circulo de Lectores ...**)



**12:00 a.m.** After this arts stroll, you should follow **Consell de Cent to Rambla de Catalunya**, a nice broad boulevard full of stores, outdoor cafés and very special places to see: **Colmado Quilez**, a grocery and liquor store with an amazing amount of gourmet-quality foods and beverages. It is quite near the **Tapiès Foundation**. In this recently renovated building, **Antoni Tapiès** – considered the Catalan Joseph Beuys – and his work, paintings, and sculptures are well explained and shown. Also worth a visit is **Servei Estació** which will surprise you with its window displays. You'd never imagine such fashionable displays could be made from such unglamorous materials.

After, you should take **Rambla de Catalunya** up while taking a look at all the buildings around. Walk to **Mallorca Street**. There you will find a great bookshop named **La Central** where you can purchase some Spanish, French, and English books and magazines just in case you did not bring your own reading materials with you. Keep walking until you get to **Enric**



**Granados** Street, one of my favourite streets in Barcelona. It is full of special places, stores and nice areas. After that, you will take Valencia Street where you will find Reina, a very nice tapas bar, winery and restaurant.

**02:30 p.m.** Lunch at **Reina**, a very good restaurant with excellent traditional cuisine including Catalonian tapas (featuring the city's best 'ensaladilla rusa' – meaning Russian salad) and great wines. Reina is an unpretentious, moderately-priced option with high-quality food and service. Some recommendations from the menu: eggplants with honey, grilled mushrooms (if in season), Spanish omelette.



**04:00 p.m.** Have coffee, or a drink, at **Hotel Granados 83**. It is quite near and has a magnificent courtyard downstairs with very comfortable seats. It's a perfect place to have a rest, read, or even take a discreet nap in order to recharge for the rest of the evening.

**05:00 p.m.** Browse through the stores and art galleries on the street:

**L'appartement** // they sell interior design items such as Scandinavian lamps and jewelry hand made in Barcelona. They are unique pieces of the city at very good prices.

**Fins de Siecles** // an antiques shop filled with 20th century pieces. Marvelous but really expensive.

Or take a walk to **Valencia** street and discover a wonderful glove store where they manufacture the leather and make each pair by hand: **Guantes Victoriano**, across from the legendary cocktail bar: **Ideal**, an excellent place to stop and have a long drink before dinner.

**09:00 p.m.** There are three very good options nearby for dinner:

**Belvedere** // a cocktail bar with delicious handmade potato chips (a must) and a really sophisticated menu. They have amazing steak tartar and vegetables salads. The quality is excellent, and the food expensive.

**La Palmera** // its specialty is foie gras, cooked and used as an ingredient in different and delicious ways. Moderate prices.

You could also choose **La Palmera** for dinner and, later, have a drink at **Belvedere**. Its outdoor eating area is marvelous for spring and summer.

### **A // 10:00 a.m.**

Restaurant Flamant  
Enric Granados, 23. Barcelona.  
933 231 655

### **B // 12:00 a.m.**

Colmado Quilez  
Rambla Catalunya, 63. Barcelona.

### **C // 12:00 a.m.**

La Central Bookshop  
c/ Mallorca, 237. Barcelona.

### **D // 02:30 p.m.**

Restaurant Reina  
Carrer de València, 202. Barcelona.  
934 526 450

### **E // 04:00 p.m.**

Hotel Granados  
c/ Enric Granados, 83. Barcelona.  
934 929 670

### **F // 05:00 p.m.**

Ideal Cocktail Bar  
c/ Aribau, 89. Barcelona.  
934 531 028

### **G // 04:00 p.m.**

Restaurant La Palmera  
c/ Enric Granados, 57. Barcelona.  
934 532 338





**10:00 a.m.** You have two options in the morning for breakfast at University Square (Plaça Universitat).  
Option 1: If the weather is nice and the University gardens are open, it is very pleasant to have breakfast there. You can go to the Starbucks across the street and get your coffee “to go”. Have your coffee there in the small garden with a tiny lake, beautiful trees and flowers, and sit to enjoy your breakfast while you read a good book, the newspaper, or have a chat.

Option 2: If the weather is nice but the garden is closed (they have an odd schedule) you can choose any of the two outdoor cafés in the square and try a bikini (ham and cheese sandwich) with your coffee to start the morning. You’ll have a chance there to observe the skaters. If it rains, the first floors at both bars are good places to have your bikini and watch the people on the street.

**11:00 a.m.** Discover Carrer Tallers, a street you can take from Plaça Universitat and where you will find very interesting record shops with excellent prices and huge catalogues. There are also second hand clothing shops, bookshops, etc. Before arriving to La Rambla, turn onto Carrer Ramelleres, where you will find another very nice square (Plaça de Vicenç Martorell) with nice outdoor cafés. There is also a small bookshop with alternative titles (Watergate Bookshop) and the back entrance of another location of La Central bookshop, which deserves a visit as the building is a former chapel from the 18th century. You can make your way across the bookshop and exit onto Carrer Elisabets, a beautiful street that leads to La Rambla, MACBA (Barcelona Museum of Modern Art), CCCB (Barcelona Center of Contemporary Culture), and to one of my favourite stores in Barcelona: Optica Bassols, where I buy all my eyeglasses. At this point, you can visit an exhibit at MACBA or CCCB before having lunch nearby.

**02:30 p.m.** Lunch at

**Fortuny** // they serve a prix fixe lunch menu that incorporates seasonal



vegetables, and great fish and meat. You'll find they have sophisticated food at very reasonable prices. The service is excellent and the staff is great at recommending good wines.

**Bar Lobo** // if you have made a reservation here, you will enjoy a very nice meal with a mix of Spanish tapas, japanese dishes and international snacks in a crowd of fashionable people.

**La Xina** // Chinese food with a unique touch. This is a very good place to rediscover Asian flavours.

**04:00 p.m.** After lunch, have coffee at one of my favourite secret spots: the courtyard of the National Library of Catalonia, on Carrer Hospital. There you will find a splendid outdoor café surrounded by old buildings, sculptures and historical plaques. If the weather is a bit cold, don't worry. They provide you with individual blankets for warming up. This is a good place to read, chat, or plan the rest of the day.

**05:00 p.m.** Follow Carrer Hospital to La Rambla. Once you get to La Rambla, take a quick look up and down and then... walk away from this tourist trap! Cross to the other side of La Rambla and enjoy the crowded little streets there that will take you to Plaça del Pi. Carrer Petritxol is a great place to have hot chocolate; it is full of traditional chocolate bars where you can order a hot chocolate with some pastries. Walk around Plaça del Pi to enjoy one of the most incredible vintage stores in Europe: Heritage (Carrer dels Banys Nous) is a small store where some of the best haute couture designers get trimmings and clothing for their collections. They also sell or rent dresses for movies and TV shows. You will be able to find, at quite



reasonable prices, old jewelry, original Dior, Hermès or Prada items from the 60s and 70s, and even hats, gloves, or small art pieces from the 19th and 20th centuries. It's a place you shouldn't miss.

Around Banys Nous, there are several small streets full of antique shops, art galleries, and antique toy stores that you should see before taking Carrer Ferrán to Vía Laietana.



After crossing Vía Laietana, take Carrer Princesa, where you will find an amazing costume shop and other small and stylish shops. When you arrive to Paseo del Borne do not miss Hamptons, a shop with a unique selection of fashion and cosmetics for both men and women.

**09:00 p.m.** By now, you are probably exhausted -and happy, I hope- so it is the perfect moment to have some dinner. Here are several choices that will satisfy you for sure:

**Santa María** // creative tapas in a very cool atmosphere. Here you'll discover an interesting mix of cultures and flavours on your plate. The dishes are moderately priced and highly satisfying. I recommend you try the tasting menu.

**El Salero** // vegetarian and Asian food with a special touch. This is one of the coolest places in Barcelona to have dinner or a drink. It is moderately priced.

After dinner, if you fancy a drink, there are two very nice cocktail bars nearby:

**Gimlet** // one of the most traditional bars in Barcelona.

**Creps Al Born** // a new spot that deserves good luck because of their good service, nice atmosphere, and delicious drinks.

Cheers and see you tomorrow morning for a luxury brunch!

### A // 10:00 a.m.

University Square  
Plaça Universitat

### B // 12:00 a.m.

c/ Tallers, Barcelona.

### C // 12:00 a.m.

Barcelona Museum of Modern Art  
Plaça dels Àngels, 1. Barcelona  
934 120 810

### D // 02:30 p.m.

Fortuny  
c/ Pintor Fortuny, 31. Barcelona.  
933 179 892

### E // 04:00 p.m.

National Library of Catalonia  
c/ l'Hospital, 56. Barcelona  
932 702 300

### F // 05:00 p.m.

Heritage  
c/ Banys Nous, 14. Barcelona  
933 178 515

### G // 05:00 p.m.

Hamptons  
Pg. del Born, 24. Barcelona.  
933 104 116





### See, be seen, and walk some more

**A//** If 'April is the cruelest month', as Elliot wrote, then Sunday is surely the **1:00 p.m.** saddest day. It's your last day in Barcelona and that's why I'm taking you out to brunch at one of the most exclusive and amazing places in Barcelona: Hotel La Florida, where you can have an exquisite meal (seafood, oysters, ham, etc.) featuring some of the best views of the city from Tibidabo mountain. It is an expensive choice, but it'll also be unforgettable. And you'll get excellent value for your money. Eat, drink champagne, enjoy the beauty of the place, and spend some time in their huge outdoor eating area full of trees – from those heights you'll feel like you own Barcelona! I promise you will not regret it.

The best way to arrive at the hotel is by taxi. I recommend that you also take a taxi on the way back down to Barcelona. The staff at the reception desk will be happy to get one for you.

**B//** After your luxurious brunch, nothing could be better than taking a walk **4:00 p.m.** through the old part of Barcelona right by the sea at La Barceloneta. Follow the boardwalk, where people go skating, cycling, and walking. Spend Sunday afternoon looking out over the water, enjoying coffee at any of the cafés with sea views, or discovering the old fishermen's houses in the area.

**C//** After your time by the sea, it would be nice to take La Rambla up from **6:00 p.m.** the seaside to the city center -Sundays are the best days for La Rambla. Observe the nearby buildings, old hotels and beautiful houses. Enjoy some people watching. Discover the essence of the city. Once you arrive at the beginning of La Rambla at Plaça Catalunya, you can take Ronda Universitat and go into Milano, a very quiet cocktail bar where they play jazz and where you can forget that it's Sunday.

**D//** This is the perfect moment to go to Paseig de Gracia and experience **8:00 p.m.** the big avenues, as they are almost completely free of people with their luxury stores closed. From Plaça Catalunya, at the corner of Paseig de Gracia, you will see Mount Tibidabo all the way at the end of the avenue.



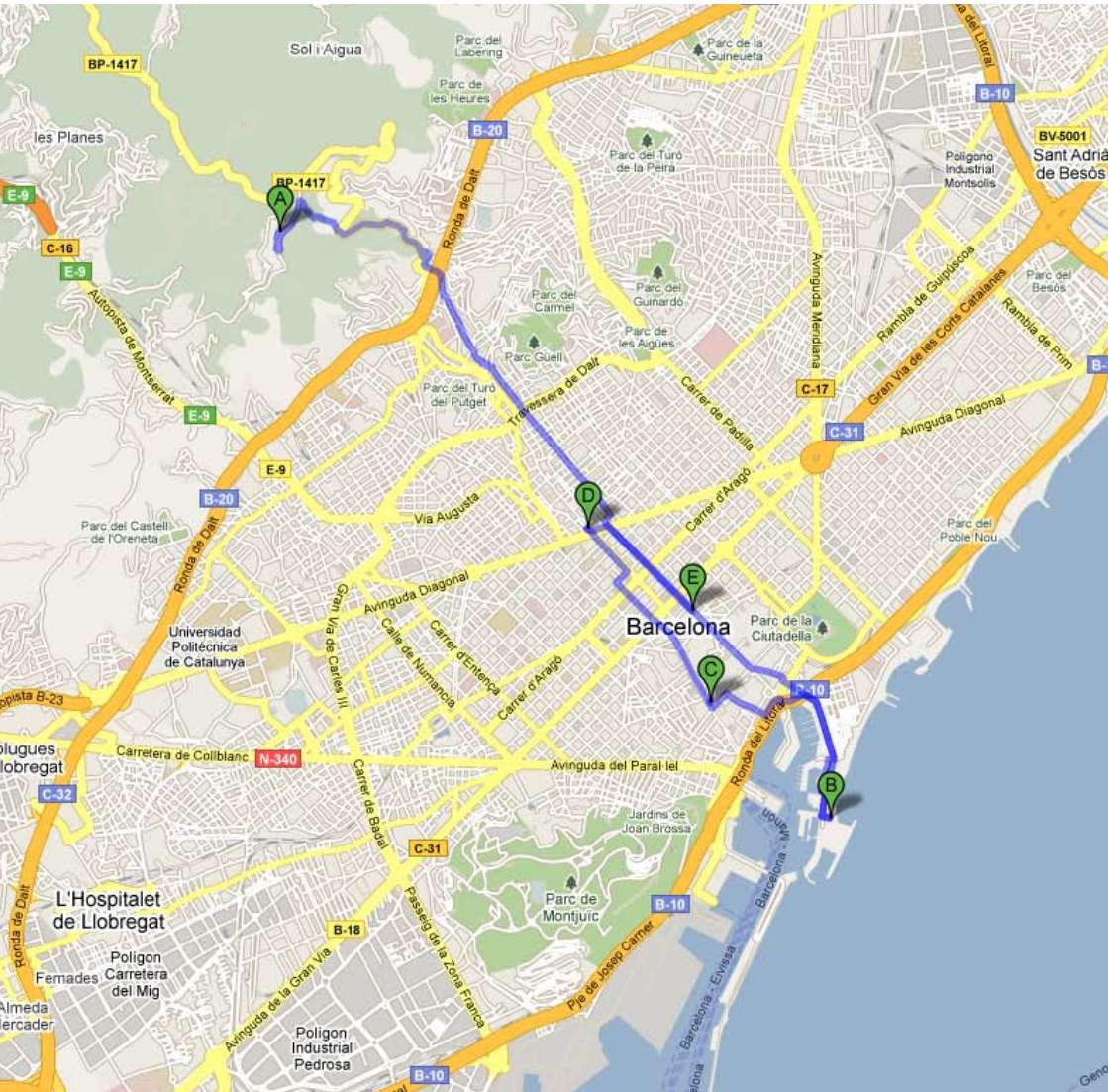
Have brunch

Sunday / Day 3

See, be seen, and walk some more

That's where you had brunch earlier today at Hotel La Florida. – I told you it would be unforgettable!

**E //** Have an early dinner at Maison Languedoc for exquisite French food at **9:00 p.m.** a reasonable price. This is probably the best way to end a great day, or your weekend, in Barcelona.



See, be seen, and walk some more

This is one time you will not hate Monday – because you will be spending it in Barcelona! Start off with breakfast at Hotel Casa Fuster, and follow it with a walk down Paseo de Gracia, where you'll find all the big luxury brands in Barcelona. Not all of those luxury stores are worth visiting, but several of them are really special:

**Gratacós** // founded in 1940, this clothing store offers incredible pieces and amazing accessories, most of them hand made by local artisans. It's a very special blend of haute couture and handicraft.

**Vinçon** // this is the best interior design and furniture store in the city. The building was once owned by the first Barcelonean haute couture designer, Asunción Bastida. Prior to that, it was also the studio of the painter and illustrator Ramón Casas. Vinçon is more than a temple of design; it is also a historical building that you should get to know.

**Bagués** // here you'll find 200 years of jewelry history, modernist pieces, and original designs created by Masriera, one of the most outstanding Art Nouveau artists from three centuries ago. It's a golden and precious experience.

**Loewe** // it's a beautiful luxury leather goods store. They also have silk items and jewels. The space has modernist architecture and surprising windows displays.

Obviously, visiting Gaudi's buildings is mandatory:

**Casa Milá** // They host free exhibitions that are usually very interesting. This space allows us to discover not only art and history, but also the building's incredible interior.

**Casa Batlló** // If you have been at Casa Milá before, it's not worth waiting on the long lines to view the interior of this building. It is great to see it from across the street, but I would not recommend waiting and paying for a visit inside.



See, be seen, and walk some more

**2:00 p.m.** Although there are a lot of places to have lunch in the area, most of them are too touristy, so it is important to choose the right one:

**El Japonés** // excellent Japanese food at communal tables. It's simply delicious.

**Tragaluz** // the bistro downstairs is an excellent place for light meals – salads, pasta or tapas. And the restaurant upstairs (with a beautiful skylight), has more sophisticated cuisine.

**Comerç 24** // fabulous tapas with a creative touch. They have excellent service and a really nice outdoor eating area that is always open.

**4:00 p.m.** After lunch you can have a cup of coffee, tea or liquor at three very different hotels in the area. All of them are really fantastic:

**Cigars Bar, Hotel Majestic** // just for smokers. A classic English bar for whisky and cigars – quiet, elegant and exclusive.

**Bank Bar, Hotel Mandarin Oriental** // the city's newest 5-star hotel. They transformed an old bank into this very special bar.

**Olivia Plaza** // this hotel, located in the very center of Barcelona (Plaça Catalunya), is home to a very quiet courtyard surrounded by the walls of a beautiful old church. The space has a very special light to it.

Now, I would recommend you take a nice nap at your hotel or apartment so that you can enjoy our plans for the evening and have a change of clothes.

**10:00 p.m. Anti-Karaoke at Apolo** (c/ Nou de la Rambla ,111)  
Expect a show that is part improvised rock concert, part sideshow, and all good vibes. Anti-Karaoke has turned the concept of crappy karaoke on its head by incorporating participants that put on a show through use of props, costumes, dancing – you name it! It takes place every Monday in at the Sala Apolo.

### MORNING

**Come Rain** Spend the whole morning at the Picasso Museum. Don't do it in a hurry, like a tourist would. Instead take the time to enjoy it calmly. Take pleasure in the experience. And give this magnificent museum the attention it deserves.

**or Come Shine** Spend the morning at Montserrat Mountain, where you can walk through the forest and visit several nearby spots:

**MNAC** (National Museum of Catalonia)

**Fundación Miró**

**Caixa Forum**

**Mies Van Der Rohe Pavillion**

**Grec Theater**

**Old Botanic Garden**

**LUNCH** **Manairó** // one of the best restaurants in Barcelona. Come for a gourmet experience at a very reasonable price that will satisfy your gastronomic expectations. Order the tasting menu and rediscover the pleasure of pure flavours.



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