



Press Dossier

Barcelona Guide Bureau

"A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption of our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider of our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him. He is doing us a favour by giving us the opportunity to do so"

Mahatma Gandhi

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1. BARCELONA GUIDE BUREAU – an overview

○ Pioneers in tourism to Barcelona

Barcelona Guide Bureau (BGB) is a company specialized in all kinds of guided visits to Catalonia and in particular to the city of Barcelona. **Founded in 1990 by 9 licensed, professional guide-interpreters** in the business incubator "**Barcelona Activa**", Barcelona Guide Bureau became **a pioneer company in visits exclusively dedicated to the city** and the first company that centralized services to tourists that included licensed guides and interpreters in the incoming cultural-tourist sector of Barcelona.

"Through us, visitors discover the real city of Barcelona "

Joan Callís, Managing Director, Barcelona Guide Bureau.

What is the philosophy behind Barcelona Guide Bureau?

Quality of service and client satisfaction are the principals that inspire our activity. We believe that the characteristics essential to a guide are professionalism, flexibility and enthusiasm. Coordination between the guide and management teams is the key to customized services adapted to the needs of each client.

What is the future projection of tourism in Barcelona?

Very good. Barcelona has become a reference city for business, but also to come and enjoy its cultural heritage, particularly its *modernista* and *Gaudinian* architecture. The opening of the city to the sea has made it even more attractive.

What is the 21st Century traveller like?

Group travel is giving way more and more to individuals organizing their own trips. They tend to find out more about the place they are going to and to know what they want. Internet gives them all the information they need. The 21st Century traveller looks for authenticity in the places they visit.

○ **Barcelona Guide Bureau in numbers**

Barcelona Guide Bureau has a team of **25 full-time licensed guides** as well as over a hundred more who work when demand is high. As a pioneer company in the tourist sector in Barcelona, BGB has made over **130,000 services**, showing Barcelona to more than **2 million tourists**.

The **Daily Tours**, a new service started in 2008, has taken **10,000 tourists** around the city by coach in style and comfort.

The Montserrat Tour, **33%** of all the Daily Tours, was the favourite, just ahead of the *Gaudí Tour* with **31%**. The *Highlights Tour* was chosen by **28%** of the tourists and *Montjuïc & Waterfront Tour* had **8%** of Daily Tour visitors.

As for the nationalities of the visitors, **31%** were from the **United States**, **15% from the UK**, 9% from Australia, 6% from Canada, 5% from Ireland, 3% from Germany, 2% from India and the remaining 29% from the rest of the world.

○ **Statistics of the Barcelona tourist sector**

Data from the Consorci de Turisme de Barcelona (2007)

Number of tourists	7.1 million
Number of overnights	13.6 million
Vacation tourism	46 %
Professional or business tourism	51 %
BCN Airport Passengers	32.8 million
Cruise Passengers	1.8 million
Country of origin:	
Spain	29%
Europe (other than Spain)	52%
United States of America	7.5%
Others	11.5%
Average length of stay	1.92 nights
Form of transport	aeroplane (84.2%), car (8.1%) coach (3.3%) train (3.2%) other (1.2%)

2. MAIN LINES OF ACTIVITY

○ Smart Daily tours

In 2008, Barcelona Guide Bureau introduced the **Smart Daily Tours**, a quick and comfortable way to see the city and one which has taken over **10.000 tourists** to visit Montserrat, the architecture of Gaudí, the Port and Montjuïc. The daily tours are open to everyone and have a licensed guide who gives the tour in English from beginning to end.

The aim of the Daily Tours is to meet the growing demand of high end tourism which Barcelona has received in recent years. Barcelona is the biggest cruise port in Europe and the Mediterranean, berthing over 700 ships in 2007 and 1.8 million passengers. These visitors usually have one day to visit the city and the Smart Daily Tours are the ideal way to reach the most famous sites in Barcelona.

The Gaudí Tour (3 hours)

Visitor can discover the works of this universal architect who has made Barcelona the emblem of *Modernisme*, assuring its place in Art History. Hear of his double-edged genius, aesthetic and technical, of his extraordinary imagination and enter his world of fantasy and geometry.

Passeig de Gràcia: The main "Boulevard" of the city, this is the area of luxury and design boutiques. There are several *modernista* buildings, the most interesting being:

Casa Batlló: One of Gaudí's special buildings, declared World Heritage by UNESCO, its originality and creativity of shapes have earned it many popular names such as "the house of bones" or "the dragon house" among others.

La Pedrera: Residential building declared World Heritage by UNESCO, the Milà family commissioned Gaudí to build it in 1910. It is considered as much a sculpture as a building and has become one of his most famous works. The top floor houses the Espai Gaudí (Gaudí Space) where models of his works and their technical calculations are exhibited, and, on the 4th floor, the Apartment, restored to its original state and an example of how rich families lived at the beginning of the 20th century.

Park Güell: Gaudí's unfinished garden suburb financed by Eusebi Güell. The park brings together all the characteristics of *modernisme* and the particular vision of the architect (sinuous, organic shapes, integration with nature, mosaics). It has been declared World Heritage by UNESCO.

Sagrada Família: Unfinished temple to which Gaudí dedicated his last years, synthesis of his conception of architecture. The richness of detail and its significance need to be explained to fully appreciate this fascinating and extraordinary building. The Crypt and the Birth Façade have been declared World Heritage by UNESCO.

The Montserrat Tour (4 hours)

Barcelona Guide Bureau gives you the opportunity of visiting Montserrat in the afternoon. It is a good option as you will avoid long queues and will be able to enjoy the magic of the Sanctuary in more seclusion.

Montserrat is a Natural Park, a geographical formation outstanding in Catalonia and in the world because of its dimensions and spectacular shapes. Popular tradition have given the peaks and shapes fanciful names: the Mummy, the chair, Bernard the Horse.

Montserrat is a Benedictine Monastery, nearly 1000 years old, which shelters a Sanctuary to the Mother of God. The spiritual presence of la Morenta as she is known, patron of Catalunya, and the following of the Gospel according to the rule of Saint Benedict mark the lives of the monks in a special and significant way.

Montserrat is culture: a library with 300,000 books; a boys choir; a museum with works by el Greco, Picasso and Dalí, and treasures from Ancient Egypt including a mummy.

Montjuïc Hill & Waterfront Tour (4 hours)

Montjuïc rises up between the city and the sea to a height of 170 metres, offering magnificent views over Barcelona and the port. It housed the 2nd International Exposition in 1929 and is divided between nature, culture and sport.

Plaça d'Espanya: Built for the International Exposition, the two Venetian towers mark the main entrance to the pavilions of Montjuïc hill. It has become a destination for many events held in Barcelona.

El Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) (The National Museum of the Art of Catalonia): What was once a pavilion in the 1929 Exposition now houses over 1000 years of Catalan art including one of the most important collections of Romanesque art in the world, a Gothic art collection, a recently rehoused modern art collection and the spectacular oval room.

The German Pavilion (Miess Van der Rohe): Reconstruction of the original built by the last director of the Bauhaus. It was dismantled after the 1929 Exposition and sent to Berlin. It is the Mecca of all the architects who visit Barcelona, example of avant-garde architecture.

INEFC: Venue of the Greco-Roman and freestyle wrestling in the '92 Olympic Games, it is now known as the university of sport where future physical education teachers come to learn.

Piscines Picornell: Remodelled for the Games, they are open well into the night in the summer.

Olympic Stadium: Heart of the '92 Olympic Games where the opening and closing ceremonies were held, it has since been used by the Reial Club Esportiu Espanyol, one of Barcelona's two first division football clubs, as their home ground.

Palau Sant Jordi: Sports pavilion built for the Games by the Japanese architect Arata Isozaki. It is used for a variety of indoor sporting events and major concerts.

Calatrava Tower: Designed by the internationally acclaimed Valencian architect and engineer Santiago Calatrava, it was financed by Telefónica. It is 120m tall.

Montjuïc Cemetery: The largest of the ten cemeteries of the city, it has 150,000 niches.

Montjuïc Castle: For spectacular views from both sides of the castle.

El Mirador de l'Alcalde (the Mayor's Lookout): Balcony over the Mediterranean with a monument to the Sardana (traditional Catalan dance).

The Miró Foundation: Interesting building designed by Miró's friend the architect Josep Lluís Sert. Opened to the public in 1975, it has a permanent exhibition covering different facets of Miró's work as well as temporary contemporary exhibitions.

Poble Espanyol (The Spanish Village): Built for the 1929 Exposition, it is a reconstruction of the varying styles of building from different regions in Spain and is the home to many traditional artisan workshops.

Barceloneta: This quarter was built in the second half of the 18th Century and was the fishermen and sailor's district. Situated between the old port and the beaches, it has preserved its charm.

Olympic Port: Flanked by two of the tallest buildings in the city, the Arts hotel and the Mapfre Tower, it is a good example of new architecture. Don't miss the copper fish sculpture by Frank O. Gehry which sparkles in the sun.

Olympic Village: A rundown industrial area of the city was rebuilt to house the 13,000 athletes and 2,000 staff and officials, right on the sea front. The new apartments were sold to the public after the Games, thus forming a new district which has kept the same name.

All Barcelona Highlights Tour (6 hours): A tour that includes the most interesting and famous places in Barcelona, described in the Gaudí Tour and the Montjuïc & Waterfront Tour. This tour has been designed for people passing through Barcelona, maybe on business or a cruise, and who would like an overall picture in just one day.

○ **Tailor-made Tours**

Barcelona has consolidated its position in recent years as one of the main **tourist destination cities** in Europe. The tourist sector of the City of the Counts has grown more than any other European city over the last 10 years. In 2002 it was chosen as Gourmande City and **nine buildings** have been made **World Heritage by UNESCO** (Palau de la Música Catalana, Park Güell, La Pedrera, Palau Güell, Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau, la Sagrada Família, la Casa Batlló, Casa Vicens and the Crypt of the Colònia Güell).

The Catalan capital has also become a **shopping city**, with the best international firms along the longest Shopping line in Europe. 35,000 shops ensure competitive price/quality.

The core business of Barcelona Guide Bureau is top of the market tourism, people who want to get to know the city and enjoy the cultural, gastronomic and commercial delights. With our tailor-made tours designed together with our clients, the guides of Barcelona Guide Bureau become personal shoppers, gourmets and cultural experts from the city.

Tailor-made Tours made up **55%** of the total number of services given by Barcelona Guide Bureau in 2008.

○ **Team building**

The tourist sector in Barcelona has reached a perfect balance between professional and vacation tourism. With a wide range of venues and services focussed on congresses, conventions, product presentations and incentive trips, **professional tourism made up 51%** of tourist activity in the city. The Barcelona International Convention Centre (CCIB), two additional congress centres and an excellent hotel sector with over 50,000 beds, easily meet the expectations of company conventions and incentive trips.

With professional tourism in mind, Barcelona Guide Bureau has designed a way for company groups to get to know the city in a different way and at the same time build team involvement, by participating in a **treasure hunt**. Participants will discover a lot of things about the most famous of Gaudí's buildings in an amusing way and as part of a team, strengthening ties between members and building team spirit.

The activity includes the interior and exterior of the Sagrada Família and the façade of "la Pedrera" (Casa Milà) and la Casa Batlló.

○ **Barcelona Walks**

Barcelona Guide Bureau and *Turisme de Barcelona* together started the walking tours in 1997, around the old quarter of the city. Many tourists have decided to take a walk around the city centre with a licensed guide and **82%** chose to do the **Walk in English**. With an average of 40 people a day, Barcelona Walks has formed a niche, offering a service to those of the public who prefer to wander around the old streets with a guide who knows every corner and the history behind it.

Turisme de Barcelona and Barcelona Guide Bureau propose four guided routes: the **Gothic Quarter** and the historical and political centre of the city; the **Picasso Route**, to evoke the Bohemian life of the artist at the turn of the 19th/20th Centuries; the **Modernisme Route**, for a closer look at the **Modernista** buildings by architects Antoni Gaudí, Domènech i Montaner and Puig i Cadafalch among others, and the **Gourmet Route** to enjoy Barcelona's gastronomic culture in emblematic places with specialities of Catalan cuisine.

3. BGB GUIDES

Barcelona Guide Bureau has a team of **25 licensed guides**.



Mercè Mill
Spanish, Catalan, English,
French and Italian
Spain



Carmen Turiera
Spanish, Catalan, English,
French and Italian
Spain



Mònica Sánchez
Spanish, Catalan, English, and
Italian
Spain



Carles Picazo
Spanish, Catalan, English,
German and Italian
Spain



Somnia Bisbe
Spanish, Catalan, English, and
Italian
Spain



José Luís Izuel
Spanish, English, French and
Italian
Spain



Bernat Liso
Spanish, Catalan, English,
French and Greek
Spain



Elisabet Morera
Spanish, Catalan, English, and
French
Spain



Lali Badosa
Spanish, Catalan, English,
German, French Italian and
Russian. Spain



Sònia Crespo
Spanish, Catalan, English, and
French
Spain



Maria Nadina
Spanish, English, German,
Portuguese, Russian and
Serbocroatian
Serbia



Jèssica Casanovas
Spanish, Catalan, English, and
Dutch
Spain



Jospe Maria Romero
Castellà, català, anglès i
francès
Espanya



Núria Bargalló
Spanish, Catalan, English,
German and French
Spain



Mariona Prats
Spanish, Catalan, English,
Italian and Russian

Spain



Elisabeth Talwitz
Spanish, English, German
and Dutch
Germany



Wendie Joy Planting
Spanish, English, German
and Dutch
The Netherlands



Abel Roca
Spanish, Catalan, English,
and German
Spain



Virginia Perez
Spanish, Catalan, English,
and Italian
Spain



Joana Wilhelm
Spanish, English, French and
Greek
Switzerland



Mònica Surís
Spanish, Catalan, English,
French and Italian
Spain



Jordi García
Spanish, Catalan,
English, and Italian
Spain



Cristina Milà
Spanish, Catalan, English,
and Portuguese
Spain



Clara Callís
Spanish, Catalan,
and English
Spain



Eva Mayol
Spanish, Catalan, and
English. Spain



Francesca Gufoni
Spanish, English, French and
Italian. Italy



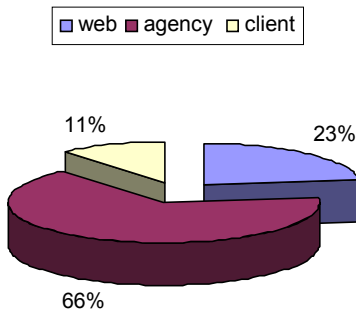
Oliver Casado
Spanish, Catalan,
English, and French
Spain



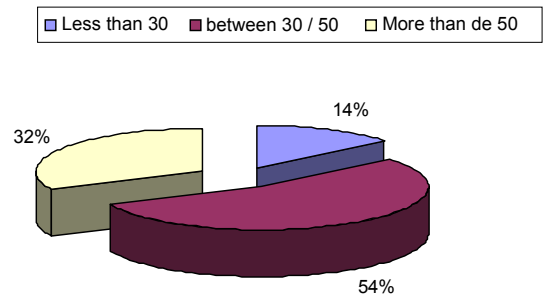
Luís Gabriel Cantero
Spanish, Catalan, English, and
French. Venezuela

4. PROFILE OF THE CLIENTS OF BARCELONA GUIDE BUREAU

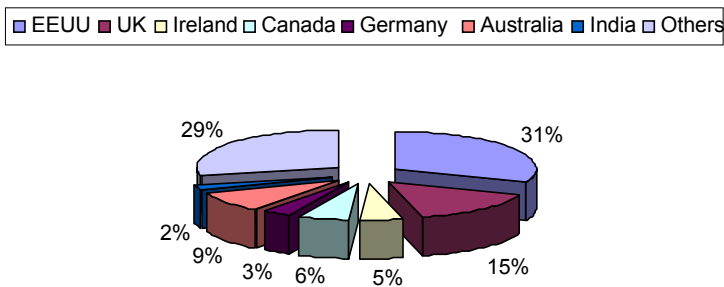
Origin



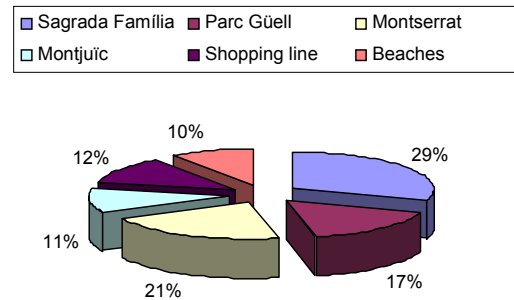
Age



Nacionality



Preferences



- (1) Origin web agency client
- (2) Age under 30, 30-50, over 50
- (3) Nationality USA UK Ireland Canada Germany Australia India Other
- (4) Preferences Sagrada Família Park Güell Montserrat Montjuïc
Shopping Line Beaches

More data

- **11%** bought our services through Internet.
- **38%** have looked for information on Barcelona Guide Bureau on Internet.
- **81%** would recommend Barcelona Guide Bureau to one or more persons.
- **12%** declare they are satisfied with Barcelona Guide Bureau and **88%** very satisfied.

5. BRIEF HISTORY OF BARCELONA GUIDE BUREAU

1990 April: 9 licensed guides of Barcelona found BGB and choose Joan Callís and Carmen Turiera as administrators.

1995 February: They form the first guide cooperative in Barcelona with 15 partners/guides which absorbs the original association.

1997 Joint venture with *Turisme de Barcelona* to start the Barcelona Walks, Gothic Route.
Cooperation agreement with the *Palau de la Música Catalana* to start guided tours of the *Palau*.

2000 BGB celebrates its 10th Anniversary by obtaining the qualification ISO 9002.

2001 and 2002 BGB donates 0.7% of total sales to *Fundació Vicenç Ferrer*, used to build two schools in India.

2002 The partners of the cooperative create a limited company with the following board of directors: Joan Callís, President; Carles Picazo, Vicepresident and Carmen Turiera, Secretary.

2005 BGB becomes a wholesale-retail travel agency in order to broaden its field of activity.

2008 Daily Tours start with 4 different tours: The Gaudí Tour, The Montserrat Tour, All Barcelona Highlights Tour and Montjuïc & Waterfront Tour.

6. TECHNICAL DATA

Coordinates of Barcelona Guide Bureau

- **Name:** Barcelona Guide Bureau, S.L.
- **Travel Agency Registration number:** GC-153-MD
- **Year founded:** 1990
- **Managing Director:** Joan Callís
- **Number of full-time licensed guides:** 25
- **Activity:** tourism and leisure in Catalunya
- **Team:** 40 persons in Barcelona
- **Central office :** Via Laietana 54, 3-4 Barcelona
- **Main telephone:** +34 93 268 24 22
- **Smart Daily Tours telephone:** +34 93 315 22 61
- **Web:** www.barcelonaguidebureau.com / www.bgb.es
- **E-mail:** bgb@bgb.es / info@barcelonaguidebureau.com

7. AFFILIATIONS

Barcelona Convention Bureau



Unió catalana d'Agències de Viatge



Barcelona Meeting Total



BarcelonaMeetingTotal
Convention Bureau

European Tour Operators Association

