

lonely planet Hotels & Hostels

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SLEEPING

top picks

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SLEEPING

Barcelona's hotel-building boom continues apace. This is good news for everyone. Some fine, up-to-the-minute hotels in a broad price bracket have opened in historic buildings and key locations, the number of options near the sea has increased, and new high-end digs have popped up in various strategic spots. Between 1997 and 2007, hotel space in the city doubled. More than 40 more hotels (almost all three stars and up) will be built by 2011. As competition grows, many of the more established spots are obliged to upgrade – at the upper levels, this means more hotel pools, spas, designer bars and chic dining.

ACCOMMODATION STYLES

The city has hundreds of hotels in all categories and a good range of alternatives, including numerous youth hostels.

If dorm living is not your thing but you are still looking for a budget deal, check around the many *pensiones* and *hostales*. These are family-run, small-scale hotels, often housed in sprawling apartments. Some are fleapits, while others are immaculately maintained gems.

Hotels cover a broad range. At the bottom end there is often little to distinguish them from better *pensiones* and *hostales*, and from there they run up the scale five-star luxury.

A cosier (and sometimes more cost-effective) alternative to hotels can be short-term apartment rental. A plethora of firms organise short lets across town. Typical prices are around €80 to €100 for two people per night. Among these services are: **Feelathomebarcelona.com** (Map pp76–7; ☎ 902 343644, 651 894141; www.feelathomebarcelona.com; Carrer Nou de la Rambla 15); **Barcelona On Line** (Map pp108–9; ☎ 933437993/94; www.barcelona-on-line.es; Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 662); **Barcelona Apartments** (Map pp122–3; ☎ 934145528; www.barcelonapartments.com; Via Augusta 173); **Apartment Barcelona** (Map pp108–9; ☎ 932157934; www.apartmentbarcelona.com; Carrer de València 286); **Lodging Barcelona** (Map pp108–9; ☎ 93 467 78 00; www.lodgingbarcelona.com; Carrer de Balmaes 62), which also offers accommodation options on *apartamentos flotantes* (boats) in Port Vell; **Rent a Flat in Barcelona** (Map pp64–5; ☎ 93 342 73 00; www.rentaflatinbarcelona.com; Carrer de Fontanella 18); and **Oh-Barcelona .Com** (Map pp64–5; ☎ 93 467 37 81; www.oh-barcelona.com; Avinguda del Portal de l'Àngel 42). If you're looking to do a short-term house swap, check out the ads on www.loquo.com. Want to sleep on a local's couch? Try your luck at www.couchsurfing.com.

Longer-term Rentals

The **Universitat de Barcelona** (Map pp108–9; ☎ 93 402 11 00; Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 585; 🏛️ Universitat), the **British Council** (Map pp122–3; ☎ 93 241 99 77; Carrer d'Amigó 83; 🇬🇧 FGC Muntaner) and **International House** (Map pp84–5; ☎ 93 268 45 11; Carrer de Trafalgar 14; 🇺🇸 Arc de Triomf) have notice boards with ads for flat shares. An option for students coming to Barcelona to study is the private **Rent a Bedroom** (Map pp140–1; ☎ 93 217 25 83; www.rentabedroom.com; Avinguda Paral.lel 101). It can organise rooms in share houses for between €300 and €700 per month, inclusive of bills.

The free English-language monthly *Barcelona Metropolitan*, found in bars and some hotels, carries rental classifieds in English, as does another monthly freebie, *Catalunya Classified*. Check out the ads at www.loquo.com too. Otherwise, get a hold of *Anuntis*, the weekly classifieds paper. The last few pages of the *Suplement Immobiliària* (Real Estate Supplement) carry ads for shared accommodation under the heading *lloguer/hostes i vivendes a compartir*. Expect rent of €350 a month or more for a room. You may need to add your share of bills (gas, electricity, water, phone and *comunidad* – building maintenance charges).

CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT TIMES

Always confirm your arrival, especially if it's going to be late in the afternoon or evening. Generally there is no problem if you have paid a deposit or left a credit-card number. While you can check in at any time of the morning, you may not get access to your room until after

noon. Most of the time you will be able to leave your luggage at reception and go for a wander until the room is ready.

Check-out time is generally noon, although some places can be a little draconian and set a leaving time of 11am or, in rare cases, even 10am!

RESERVATIONS

Booking ahead is recommended, especially during peak periods such as Easter, Christmas/New Year, trade fairs and throughout much of summer (although August can be quite a slack month owing to the heat). You may be asked for a credit-card number and be charged a night's accommodation if you fail to show up. If you prefer to check rooms personally, you could book for the first night or two and then seek an alternative place once in Barcelona.

You can book accommodation at the tourist office at Plaça de Catalunya (p279).

ROOM RATES

Even in deep low season, you're unlikely to pay less than €18 to €20 for a dorm bed in a youth hostel. In small *pensiones* or *hostales* you are looking at a minimum of around €35/55 for basic *individual/doble* (single/double) rooms, mostly without a private bathroom. (It is occasionally possible to find cheaper rooms, but they can be unappetising.) For around €100 to €140, there are extensive options for good doubles across a broad range of hotels and areas. The top-end category in this guide starts at €250 for a double, but can easily rise to €500 (and beyond for suites).

Some places, especially at the lower end, offer triples and quads, which can be good value for groups. If you want a double bed (as opposed to two singles), ask for a *llit/cama matrimonial*. Single travellers are penalised, frequently paying around two-thirds (or more) of the double-room rate (especially in those places that have no single rooms).

Some hotels, particularly at the lower and mid levels, maintain the same prices year round. Others vary the rates for *temporada alta* (high season), *temporada media* (mid-season) and *temporada baja* (low season). Low season is roughly November to Easter, except during the Christmas/New Year period. Whenever there is a major trade fair (they are frequent), high-season prices generally apply. Conversely, business-oriented hotels often consider weekends, holiday periods and other slow business times to be low season. Booking on the web is sometimes cheaper than turning up at the door.

Virtually all accommodation is subject to IVA, the Spanish version of value-added tax, at 7%. This is often included in the quoted price at cheaper places, but less often at more expensive ones. Ask: '¿Está incluido el IVA?' ('Is IVA included?'). In some cases you will be charged IVA only if you ask for a receipt.

BARRI GÒTIC & LA RAMBLA

La Rambla is lined with hotels, *pensiones* and fleapits, and in the labyrinth of the Barri Gòtic are scattered countless others. Carrer de Ferran is lined with popular but mostly cramped, noisy options – a little too close to ranks of pseudo-Irish pubs for comfort. Many of the smaller joints are nothing special, catering to

PRICE GUIDE

Prices in this chapter are divided into three categories and are high-season maximums. Prices can fluctuate enormously, especially at the higher end. If a place interests you but seems too expensive, check it out anyway – you may find lower rates for your dates. Many hotels have a several prices for several kinds of room – all these variations are impossible to set out in the listings below. Rooms come with private bathrooms (which at low-end places often means a shower, not a full bathtub) unless otherwise stated. These price categories are for doubles:

€€€	over €250 a night
€€	€70–250 a night
€	under €70 a night

an at-times rowdy party crowd. But there are some real gems too.

HOTEL 1898 Map pp64–5 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 552 95 52; www.nnhotels.es; La Rambla 109; d €270–372; 🏠 Liceu; 📍 📞 📺 📺

The former Compañía de Tabacos Filipinas (Philippines Tobacco Company), whose business was cut short when the islands swapped Spanish for American masters

in 1898, has been resurrected as a luxury hotel. Some of the rooms are smallish but deluxe rooms and suites have their own terraces, and all combine modern comfort and elegance, with parquet floors and tasteful furniture. Some of the suites (up to €1600) have access to a private indoor pool, while all guests can use the outdoor one.

HOTEL NERI Map pp64–5 Design Hotel €€

☎ 93 304 06 55; www.hoteleria.com; Carrer de Sant Sever 5; d from €248; Liceu;

Occupying a beautifully adapted, centuries-old building that backs on to the quiet Plaça de Sant Felip Neri, this is a tranquil, luxury stop. The light, sandy stone and timber furnishings give the 22 rooms a rustic feel, although they come with cutting-edge technology, including plasma-screen TVs and infrared lights in the designer bathrooms. Choose from a menu of sheets and pillows, and sun yourself on the roof deck, where you can also take a shower and order a drink.

HOTEL COLÓN Map pp64–5 Hotel €€

☎ 93 301 14 04; www.hotelcolon.es; Avinguda de la Catedral 7; standard s €160, d €188-246; Jaume I;

The privileged position opposite the cathedral lends this hotel a special grace. A range of rooms (142 in all), from modest singles to diaphanous doubles and suites, offers quiet, elegant accommodation. Decoration varies considerably (from hardwood floors to carpet) and the top-floor superior rooms with terrace are marvellous (about another €60 on top of the standard double-room rate).

HOTEL MEDINACELI Map pp64–5 Hotel €€

☎ 93 481 77 25; www.gargallohotels.es; Plaça del Duc de Medinaceli 8; s/d €130/150; Drassanes;

ROOMS FOR TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Many hotels claim to be equipped for guests with disabilities but reality frequently disappoints. Check out www.accessiblebarcelona.com for help with finding genuinely accessible accommodation. For more information on facilities for travellers with disabilities in Barcelona, see p279.

Within the stately shell of a grand old building, on a pleasant square just inland from the waterfront, is this modern hotel. The 44 rooms are pleasant enough and mostly spacious, if unimaginative. The location is second to none, however, putting you within strolling distance of the heart of the Barri Gòtic and seaside.

HOTEL JARDÍ Map pp64–5 Hotel €€

☎ 93 301 59 00; www.hoteljardi-barcelona.com; Plaça de Sant Josep Oriol 1; d €79-106; Liceu;

This fairly spartan option has a couple of attractive doubles with a balcony over one of the prettiest squares in the city. If you can snare one of them, it is worth putting up with the general mayhem that seems to reign here. The remaining rooms are all doubles and the basic interior ones are not particularly attractive.

HOTEL CONTINENTAL Map pp64–5 Hotel €€

☎ 93 301 25 70; www.hotelcontinental.com; La Rambla 138; s/d €82/92; Catalunya;

You can imagine being here in 1937, when George Orwell returned from the front line during the Spanish Civil War, and Barcelona was tense with factional strife. Rooms at the Continental are a little spartan, but have romantic touches such as ceiling fans, brass bedsteads and frilly bedclothes. You will pay €20 more for a double with a balcony overlooking La Rambla. Take breakfast in bed.

HOSTAL CAMPI Map pp64–5 Hostal €

☎ 93 301 35 45; hcampi@terra.es; Carrer de la Canuda 4; d €62, s/d without bathroom €31/54; Catalunya

This is an excellent budget deal that appeals mostly to younger backpackers. The best rooms at this friendly, central *hostal* are doubtless the doubles with their own loos and showers. They are extremely roomy and bright. Located just off La Rambla, you are protected from much of the street noise.

ALBERG HOSTEL ITACA Map pp64–5 Hostel €

☎ 93 301 97 51; www.jo-oh.com/itaca; Carrer de Ripoll 21; dm €18, d €50-55; Jaume I;

A bright, quiet hostel option near La Catedral, Itaca has spacious dorms (sleeping six, eight or 12 people), with parquet floors, pleasant spring colours and a couple of doubles with private bathroom. They also

have an apartment for six people (€100 per night). You can make use of the upstairs kitchen and book exchange.

EL RAVAL

A handful of good hotels and some youth hostels lie scattered in or on the periphery of this mildly wild side of the old town.

CASA CAMPER Map pp76–7 Design Hotel €€€

☎ 93 342 62 80; www.camper.es, in Spanish; Carrer d'Elisabets 11; s/d €240/284; Liceu;

An original designer hotel in the middle of El Raval, Casa Camper belongs to the Mallorcan shoe company of the same name. The massive foyer looks more like a contemporary art museum entrance, but the rooms are the real surprise. Slip into your Camper slippers and contemplate the Vinçon furniture. Across the corridor from your room is a separate, private sitting room with balcony, TV and hammock. You can contemplate the city from the rooftop.

HOTEL SAN AGUSTÍN Map pp76–7 Hotel €€

☎ 93 318 16 58; www.hotelsa.com; Plaça de Sant Agustí 3; s/d €123/171; Liceu;

This former 18th-century monastery opened as a hotel in 1840, making it the city's oldest (it's undergone various refits since then!). The location is perfect – a quick stroll off La Rambla on a curious square. Rooms sparkle, and are mostly spacious and light-filled. Consider an attic double with sloping ceiling and bird's-eye views.

HOTEL MESÓN DE CASTILLA

Map pp76–7 Hotel €€

☎ 93 318 21 82; www.mesoncastilla.com; Carrer de Valldonzella 5; s/d €117/149; Catalunya;

Some Modernista touches give character to the 1st floor of this elegant hotel. Heavy wooden furniture in several timeless sitting rooms contrasts with playful stained glass, murals and Gaudiesque window mouldings. Rooms have a classic charm and you can breakfast (included in the price) on the small terrace.

HOSTAL GAT RAVAL Map pp76–7 Hostal €€

☎ 93 481 66 70; www.gataccommodation.com; Carrer de Joaquín Costa 44; d €80, s/d without bathroom €50/70; Universitat;

top picks

STYLE HOTELS

- **Casa Camper** (left) Original idea with Vinçon furniture and hammocks.
- **Hotel Banys Orientals** (p234) Bite-sized boutique gem in the old town.
- **Hotel Constanza** (p237) A midrange jewel with bright colours and fresh flowers.
- **Hotel Omm** (p236) Fantasy-filled hotel with a 'peeling' façade.
- **Hotel Prestige** (p237) Chill in the hyper-modern ambience and the Zeroom.

There's pea-green and lemon-lime décor in this hip 2nd-floor *hostal* located on a bar-lined lane dominated by resident migrants and wandering bands of uni students. The individual rooms are pleasant and secure, but only some have private bathrooms. The staff also run the more upmarket *Hostal Gat Xino* (Map pp76–7; ☎ 93 324 88 33; www.gataccommodation.com; Carrer de l'Hospital 149-155; s/d/ste with terrace €66/84/130; Liceu;) nearby.

HOTEL PRINCIPAL Map pp76–7 Hotel €€

☎ 93 318 89 70; www.hotelprincipal.es; Carrer de la Junta del Comerç 8; s €70, d 90-130; Liceu;

This hotel has clean-lined rooms complete with parquet floors, hairdryers and original art depicting Barcelona. All rooms have double-glazing and flat-screen TVs, and you can sunbathe on the roof. For €175, they have a big room with private terrace.

HOSTAL CHIC & BASIC Map pp76–7 Hostal €€

☎ 93 302 51 83; www.chicandbasic.com; Carrer de Tallers 82; s/d €60/80-102; Universitat;

The theme colour is predominantly white, with exceptions like the screaming orange fridge in the communal kitchen and chill&basic area where you can make yourself a cuppa or sandwich. Rooms are also themed lily white, from the floors to the sheets. Finishing touches include the plasma-screen TVs and the option of plugging your iPod or MP3 player into your room's sound system. The street can get noisy.

HOTEL PENINSULAR Map pp76–7 Hotel €€

☎ 93 302 31 38; www.hpeninsular.com; Carrer de Sant Pau 34; s/d/t/q €55/78/95/120; M Liceu; ☎ ☑

An oasis on the edge of the slightly dicey Barri Xines, this former convent (which was connected by tunnel to the Església de Sant Agustí) has a plant-draped atrium extending its height and most of its length. The 60 rooms are simple, with tiled floors and whitewash, but mostly spacious and well-kept. There is wi-fi throughout.

HOTEL ANETO Map pp76–7 Hotel €€

☎ 93 301 99 89; www.hotelaneto.com; Carrer del Carme 38; s/d €55/75; M Liceu; ☎ ☑

This budget bargain is in a handy spot on one of the more attractive streets of El Raval's upper half. The best of the 15 rooms are the doubles with the shuttered balconies looking onto the street.

BARCELONA MAR HOSTEL

Map pp76–7 Hostel €

☎ 93 324 85 30; www.barcelonamar.com; Carrer de Sant Pau 80; dm €16-27, d €42-60; M Paral. lel; ☎ ☑

This is a no-nonsense hostel with double rooms and dorms which sleep six to 16 people. Not only are you within stumbling distance of plenty of bars on Rambla del Raval and beyond, it's open 24 hours and there's free access to internet, lockers, kitchen and luggage storage. Quiet it ain't and you need to watch your pockets in the streets at night.

LA RIBERA

After years of almost a complete absence of hotels in La Ribera, things are beginning to change. A few good ones operate on the area's fringes and a growing number of the sometimes bombastic buildings on thundering Via Laietana (along which the town hall is considering reducing traffic) are being converted into top-end hotels.

GRAND HOTEL CENTRAL

Map pp84–5 Design Hotel €€

☎ 93 295 79 00; www.grandhotelcentral.com; Via Laietana 30; d €230; M Jaume I; ☎ ☑

With super-soundproofed rooms not smaller than 21 sq metres, this design hotel, complete with rooftop pool, is leading the way. Rooms are decorated in style, with high

ceilings, muted colours (beiges, browns and creams), dark timber floors and subtle lighting. LCD TVs and MP3 players are standard.

HOTEL BANYS ORIENTALS

Map pp84–5 Boutique Hotel €€

☎ 93 268 84 60; www.hotelbanysorientals.com; Carrer de l'Argenteria 37; s/d €89/107; M Jaume I; ☎ ☑

Book well ahead to get into this magnetically popular designer haunt. Cool blues and aquamarines combine with dark-hued floors to lend this clean-lined, boutique hotel a quiet charm. All rooms, which are on the small side, look onto the street or back lanes. They have more spacious suites in two other nearby buildings.

CHIC & BASIC Map pp84–5 Hotel €€

☎ 93 295 46 52; www.chicandbasic.com; Carrer de la Princesa 50; d €96-171; M Jaume I; ☎ ☑

In a completely renovated building with high vaults in the façade are 31 spotlessly white rooms. There are high ceilings, enormous beds (room types are classed as M, L and XL) and lots of detailed touches such as LED lighting, TFT TV screens and the retention of many beautiful old features of the original building, such as the marble staircase. Have a drink in their ground-floor White Bar.

PENSIÓ 2000 Map pp84–5 Pensión €€

☎ 93 310 74 66; www.pensio2000.com; Carrer de Sant Pere més Alt 6; s/d €66/86, without bathroom €54/67; M Urquinaona; ☑

This 1st-floor, family-run place is opposite the anything-but-simple Palau de la Música Catalana (p87). Seven reasonably spacious doubles (which can be taken as singles) all have mosaic-tiled floors. Two have ensuite bathroom. Children from five to 12 pay just €25. Eat brekkie in the little courtyard.

top picks**BUDGET OPTIONS**

- Alberg Mare de Déu de Montserrat (p240)
- Hotel Marina Folch (opposite)
- Hostal Girona (p239)
- Hostal Mambo Tango (p241)
- Hostal Campi (p232)

PORT VELL & LA BARCELONETA

There's just a handful of seaside options around Port Vell and La Barceloneta, ranging from a youth hostel to a grand five-star.

GRAND MARINA HOTEL

Map p93 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 603 90 00; www.grandmarinahotel.com; Moll de Barcelona s/n; r €278-385; M Drassanes; P ☎ ☑

Housed in the World Trade Center, the Grand Marina Hotel has a maritime flavour that continues into the rooms, with lots of polished timber touches and hydro-massage bathtubs. Some rooms on either side of the building offer splendid views of the city, port and open sea. The rooftop gym and outdoor pool have equally enticing views.

HOTEL 54 Map p93 Hotel €€

☎ 93 225 00 54; www.hotel54barceloneta.com; Passeig de Joan de Borbó 54; s/d €135/145-190; M Barceloneta; ☎ ☑

This place is all about location. Modern rooms, with dark tile floors, designer bathrooms and LCD TVs are sought after for the marina and sunset views. Other (cheaper) rooms look out over the lanes of La Barceloneta. You can also sit on the roof terrace and enjoy the harbour views.

HOTEL DEL MAR Map p93 Hotel €€

☎ 93 319 33 02; www.gargallohotels.es; Pla de Palau 19; s/d €102/118; M Barceloneta; ☎ ☑

The nicely modernised Sea Hotel is strategically placed between Port Vell and El Born. Some of the rooms in this classified building have balconies with waterfront views. You're in a fairly peaceful spot but no more than 10 minutes' walk from the beaches and seafood of La Barceloneta, and the bars and mayhem of El Born.

HOTEL MARINA FOLCH Map p93 Hotel €€

☎ 93 310 37 09; Carrer del Mar 16; s/d €45/75; M Barceloneta; ☎

A simple digs above a busy seafood restaurant, this hotel has just one teeny single and nine doubles of varying sizes and quality. The most attractive are those looking out towards the marina. The rooms

are basic enough but the location is unbeatable, just a couple of minutes from the beach.

HOSTEL SEA POINT Map p93 Hostel €

☎ 93 231 20 45; www.seapointhotel.com; Plaça del Mar 1-4; dm €22; M Barceloneta ☎ 17, 39, 57 or 64; ☎ ☑

Right on the beach in a rather ugly high-rise (but hey, you don't have to look at the high-rise) is this busy backpackers' hostel. Rooms are cramped and basic but you will not find a room closer to the beach. They organise activities such as bike tours (and rentals). You pay extra for lockers, sheets and towels.

PORT OLÍMPIC, EL POBLENOU & EL FÒRUM

For years the breathtakingly located Hotel Arts Barcelona has been *the* place to stay in Barcelona. It is getting some tower hotel competition in the Fòrum area, mostly aimed at a business crowd.

HOTEL ARTS BARCELONA

Map pp98–9 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 221 10 00; www.ritzcarlton.com; Carrer de la Marina 19-21; r from €425; M Ciutadella Vila Olímpica; P ☎ ☑

In one of the two sky-high towers that dominate Port Olímpic, this is Barcelona's most fashionable hotel, frequented by VIPs from all over the planet. It has more than 450 rooms with unbeatable views, and prices vary greatly according to size, position and time of year. Luxury suites shoot into five-figure sums. Services range from personal bath butlers to the new spa facilities on the 43rd floor, to fine dining in Arola, run by the Michelin-starred Sergi Arola.

L'EIXAMPLE

It comes as little surprise that this extensive bourgeois bastion should also be home to the greatest range of hotels in most classes. The grid avenues house some of the city's classic hotels and a long list of decent mid-range places.

HOTEL MAJÈSTIC Map pp108–9 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 488 17 17; www.hotelmajestic.es; Passeig de Gràcia 68; d €266-406; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

This sprawling, award-winning option has the charm of one of the great European hotels. The rooftop pool is great for views and relaxing. The standard rooms (no singles) are smallish but the suites are stunning. You can get your newspaper of choice via satellite.

HOTEL CLARIS Map pp108–9 Design Hotel €€€

☎ 93 487 62 62; www.derbyhotels.es; Carrer de Pau Claris 150; d €251-401; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

The designer upgrade of the 19th-century Palau Vedruna has resulted in one of the city's most stylish hotels. It houses plenty of art, from 19th-century Turkish kilims through two ancient Roman statues and a collection of Egyptian artefacts. Rooms show all sorts of colour combinations, some bordering on the garish. The rooftop restaurant bar is the perfect place for summer cocktails. Sit by the pool and enjoy the views.

HOTEL MURMURI

Map pp108–9 Design Hotel €€€

☎ 93 550 06 00; www.murmuri.com; La Rambla de Catalunya 104; d €290; **M** Diagonal; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

Large rooms with a contemporary feel and efficient service are hallmarks of this new hotel, splendidly located at the top end of La Rambla de Catalunya. With touches like iPod adaptor and smart lobby bar, it is a

good spot, as long as you obtain a decent internet room rate – the official start price for standard rooms of €450 is, to put it politely, inflated.

HOTEL OMM Map pp108–9 Design Hotel €€€

☎ 93 445 40 00; www.hotelomm.es; Carrer de Rosselló 265; d €257; **M** Diagonal; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

Design meets plain zany here, where the balconies look like strips of skin peeled back from the shiny hotel surface. The idea would no doubt have appealed to Dalí. In the foyer a sprawling, minimalist and very popular bar opens before you. Light, clear tones dominate in the ultramodern rooms, of which there are three categories: Omm room (standard), Superior and Suite.

ST MORITZ HOTEL Map pp108–9 Hotel €€

☎ 93 412 15 00; www.hcchotels.com; Carrer de la Diputació 262bis; s/d €198/224; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

This upmarket hotel has 91 fully equipped rooms and boasts an elegant restaurant, terrace bar and small gym. Some of the bigger rooms, with marble bathrooms, even have their own exercise bikes. You can dine in the modest terrace garden.

HOTEL HISPANOS SIETE SUIZA

Map pp102–3 Hotel €€

☎ 93 208 20 51; www.barcelona19apartments.com; Carrer de Sicília 255; r (for up to 4 people) €214-278; **M** Sagrada Família; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

Within spitting distance of the towering madness that is La Sagrada Família is this

original lodging option. Wander in past seven vintage Hispano-Suiza cars to one of 19 apartments, which have two double rooms with separate bathrooms (note the super showers!), a lounge, fully equipped kitchen, washer-drier and terrace. There is also a suite (for up to six people).

COMTES DE BARCELONA

Map pp108–9 Hotel €€

☎ 93 445 00 00; www.condesdebarcelona.com; Passeig de Gràcia 73-75; d €193; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

Also known by its Spanish name, the most attractive half of the Comtes (Condes) de Barcelona occupies the 1890s Modernista Casa Enric Batlló. Across the road stands a more modern extension. Inside both, clean, designer lines dominate, with hardwood floors, architectural touches reminiscent of the Modernista exterior and luxurious rooms. The standard rooms are, at 25 sq m, the smallest. All come with touches like Bulgari bath products. The pool on the roof is a great place to relax after a hard day's sightseeing.

HOTEL PRESTIGE Map pp108–9 Design Hotel €€

☎ 93 272 41 80, 902 200414; www.prestigepaseodegracia.com; Passeig de Gràcia 62; d €192-245; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

The stark, steel-framed entrance can be a little intimidating, but don't be shy; once inside you find yourself in a 21st-century designer set (housed in a well-preserved 1930s edifice). The design theme continues in the rooms, with Bang & Olufsen TVs and soft back-lighting above expansive beds. Inside the block is a pretty garden and among the hotel's amenities is Zerom, a library and a music room to relax in. You can also take on the services of a personal shopper – highly appropriate in this neck of the woods!

HOTEL CRAM Map pp108–9 Hotel €€

☎ 93 216 77 00; www.hotelcram.com; Carrer d'Aribau 54; s/d €167/182; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

The standard rooms are indeed a little cramped, but full of designer twirls and a light, white and timber toned décor, all hidden behind an (often illuminated) 1892 façade. Wide-screen LCD TVs, comfortable Treca beds and high-pressure showers all make up for space shortages. Hang out on the roof terrace or dine downstairs in one of the city's most exclusive restaurants, Gaig.

FIVE ROOMS Map pp108–9 Boutique Hotel €€

☎ 93 342 78 80; www.thefiverooms.com; Carrer de Pau Claris 72; d €160; **M** Urquinaona; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

Like they say, there are five rooms in this 1st-floor flat which lies virtually on the border between L'Eixample and the old centre of town. Each of them is different and features include broad, firm beds, stretches of exposed brick wall, restored mosaic tiles and minimalist décor (with brilliant white dominating).

HOTEL ASTORIA Map pp102–3 Hotel €€

☎ 93 209 83 11; www.derbyhotels.es; Carrer de Paris 203; d €137-180; **M** Diagonal; **P** ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

Nicely situated a short walk from Passeig de Gràcia, this three-star is equally well placed for long nights out in the restaurants, bars and clubs of adjacent Carrer d'Aribau. Room décor and types vary wildly – you might have black-and-white floor tiles or dark parquet. The hotel has its own mini gym and wi-fi connection and boasts paintings by Francesc Guitart.

HOTEL CONSTANZA

Map pp108–9 Boutique Hotel €€

☎ 93 270 19 10; Carrer del Bruc 33; s/d €90/120; **M** Girona or Urquinaona; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

This boutique beauty has stolen the hearts of many a visitor to Barcelona. Even smaller single rooms are made to feel special with broad mirrors and strong colours (reds and yellows complemented by black furniture). Design touches abound, and little details like flowers in the bathroom add charm. Suites and studios are further options.

HOSTAL CÈNTRIC Map pp108–9 Hostal €€

☎ 93 426 75 73; www.hostalcentric.com; Carrer de Casanova 13; s/d €78/111; **M** Urgell; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

The *hostal*, in a good central location just beyond the old town, has rooms starting from basics with shared bathroom and ranges to renovated rooms with private bathroom facilities and air-con. Midrange ones are similar, but a little older and without air-con.

FASHION HOUSE Map pp108–9 B&B €€

☎ 637 904044; www.bcn-fashionhouse.com; Carrer de Bruc 13; s/d/t without bathroom €75/110/115; **M** Urquinaona; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒

The name is a little silly but this typical, broad 1st-floor Eixample flat contains eight

GAY STAYS

Barcelona has a few excellent gay-friendly options, one in the heart of the old town and fairly simple, another a full design explosion in the heart of the Gaixample.

Hotel Axel (Map pp108–9; ☎ 93 323 93 93; www.axelhotels.com; Carrer d'Aribau 33; s/d from €144/197;

M Universitat; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒) Favoured by a mixed fashion and gay set, Axel occupies a sleek, refurbished corner block and offers modern touches in its designer rooms. Plasma-screen TVs, a light colour scheme and (in the double rooms) king-sized beds are just some of the pluses. Take a break in the rooftop pool, the Finnish sauna or the spa bath. The rooftop skybar is open for cocktails from May to September.

Hotel California (Map pp64–5; ☎ 93 317 77 66; www.hotelcaliforniabcn.com; Carrer d'En Rauric 14; s/d €75/130;

M Liceu; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒) This friendly and central hotel has 31 straightforward but fastidiously sparkling clean rooms, with light, neutral colours, satellite TV and good-sized beds. Meet new friends in the bustling breakfast room and avail yourself of room service 24 hours a day.

Casa de Billy Barcelona (Map pp108–9; ☎ 93 467 41 24; www.casabillybarcelona.com; Rambla de Catalunya; d €70-120; **M** Passeig de Gràcia; ☒ ☑ ☒ ☒ ☒) This option is set in a typical late-19th century apartment overlooking a tree-lined shopping avenue in the heart of the city, and a stone's throw from the Gaixample bars. Three of the five rooms look on to the avenue. There is a three-night-minimum policy.

rooms of varying size done in tasteful style, with 4.5m-high ceilings, parquet floors and, in some cases, a little gallery onto the street. Bathrooms are located along the broad corridor, one for every two rooms. Breakfast is served in the main dining room.

HOTEL D'UXELLES Map pp108–9 Hotel €€

☎ 93 265 25 60; www.hotelduxelles.com;
Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 688; s/d €86/106;
M Tetuan; ☎ ☎

A charming simplicity pervades the rooms here. Wrought-iron bedsteads are overshadowed by flowing drapes. Room décor varies (from blues and whites to beige-and-cream combos), with a vaguely Andalusian flavour in the bathrooms. Some rooms have little terraces (€16 extra). Get a back room if you can as Gran Via is incredibly noisy. Hotel d'Uxelles has similar rooms in another building across the road.

HOTEL PALACIOS Map pp108–9 Hostal €€

☎ 93 301 30 79; www.hostalpalacios.com;
Rambla de Catalunya 27; s/d €69/99-129;
M Passeig de Gràcia; ☎ ☎

Housed in a classified building, this up-market *hostal* offers lovely rooms with high ceilings, heavy curtains, original tile floors, sun streaming through balcony doors and a clutter of old-style furnishings. The 'suites', which can be taken as triples, are roomy and worth the extra money.

HOTEL GOYA Map pp108–9 Hostal €€

☎ 93 302 25 65; www.hostalgoya.com; Carrer de Pau Claris 74; s/d €70/96-113; M Passeig de Gràcia; ☎

The Goya is a gem of a spot on the chichi side of l'Eixample. Rooms have a light colour scheme that varies from room to room. In the bathrooms the original mosaic floors have largely been retained, combined with contemporary design features. The lower floors were being renovated at the time of writing.

MARKET HOTEL Map pp102–3 Boutique Hotel €€

☎ 93 325 12 05; www.markethotel.com.es;
Passatge de Sant Antoni Abad 10; s/d/ste
€80/93/112; M Sant Antoni; ☎ ☎

Attractively located in a renovated building along a narrow lane just north of the grand old Sant Antoni market (which unfortunately is going to be shut for years of much-needed renovations), this place

top picks

HOTEL POOLS

- Comtes de Barcelona (p237) Unbeatable rooftop indulgence.
- Hotel Arts Barcelona (p235) Look down on the beach and do some short laps.
- Hotel Majèstic (p236) Panoramic views from the rooftop dipping pool.
- Hotel Rey Juan Carlos I (opposite) Keep fit in the indoor and outdoor pools.
- Grand Marina Hotel (p235) Small but nicely placed for portside views.

has an air of simple chic. Room décor is a pleasing combination of white, dark nut browns, light timber and reds. Downstairs is a busy restaurant serving up Catalan and Med cuisine.

HOTEL CENTRAL Map pp108–9 Hostal €€

☎ 93 245 19 81; www.hostalcentralbarcelona.com;
Carrer de la Diputació 346; s/d/t €50/85/106;
M Tetuan; ☎ ☎

In a pretty early-20th-century apartment building you'll find 13 renovated rooms (all nonsmoking and most with own bathroom). They are not excessively big but are pleasant and clean.

HOTEL OLIVA Map pp108–9 Hostal €€

☎ 93 488 01 62; www.lasguias.com/hostaloliva;
Passeig de Gràcia 32; d €80, s/d without bathroom
€37/62; M Passeig de Gràcia; ☎

A picturesque antique lift wheezes its way up to this 4th-floor *hostal*, a terrific, reliable cheapie in one of the city's most expensive neighbourhoods. Some of the single rooms are barely big enough to fit a bed but the doubles are large, light and airy, with tiled floors and dark old wardrobes.

HOTEL MUNTANER Map pp102–3 Hostal €€

☎ 93 323 30 88; www.hostal-centro.net; Carrer de Muntaner 175; s/d €40/75, s/d without bathroom
€25/40; M Hospital Clínic; P ☎

Within a five-block walk of Passeig de Gràcia and Diagonal, this is a busy residential location surrounded by restaurants and bars (especially along nearby Carrer d'Aribau, a block away). Crisp, simple rooms

are comfy and light. Be aware of traffic noise at the front of the house – a room deeper inside will guarantee tranquillity.

HOSTAL GIRONA Map pp108–9 Hostal €

☎ 93 265 02 59; www.hostalgirona.com;
Carrer de Girona 24; r €66; M Girona

This 2nd-floor family-run *hostal* is a basic but clean and friendly spot of the old world. The atmosphere is Catalan and somewhat frozen in time but good value. Rooms range from poky singles with communal bathroom to airy doubles with balcony (but beware of traffic noise in summer when you'll have to keep the windows open).

HOSTAL ARIBAU Map pp108–9 Hostal €

☎ 93 453 11 06; www.hostalaribau.com; Carrer de Aribau 37; s/d/t €60/65/80, s/d without bathroom
€45/55; M Universitat; ☎

Handily located within brisk walking distance of Ciutat Vella and in a busy part of l'Eixample, this is a straightforward family-run *hostal*.

CENTRIC POINT Map pp108–9 Hostal €

☎ 93 215 65 38; www.centricpointhostel.com;
Passeig de Gràcia 33; dm €21-27, d €50;
M Passeig de Gràcia; ☎ ☎

Hard to believe you can sleep at such low prices on the city's most expensive avenue! This busy *hostel* in a completely renovated building attracts a young backpacking crowd. They have an info service, big bar and common room, and can organise tours.

GRÀCIA & PARK GÜELL

Staying up in Gràcia takes you out of the mainstream tourist areas and gives you a more authentic feel for the town. All the touristy bits are never far away by Metro and the restaurant and bar life in Gràcia is great on its own.

HOTEL CASA FUSTER Map p118 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 255 30 00; www.hotelcasafuster.com;
Passeig de Gràcia 132; d €407; M Diagonal;
P ☎ ☎ ☎

This sumptuous Modernista mansion (built in 1908–11) at the top end of the city's showcase boulevard has been transformed into one of Barcelona's most luxurious hotels. Standard rooms are plush, if small-

ish. Period features have been restored at considerable cost and complemented with hydro-massage tubs, plasma TVs and king-size beds. The Café Vienés, once a meeting place for Barcelona intellectuals in the building's heyday, is the perfect spot for an apéritif before heading out at night.

APARTHOTEL SILVER Map p118 Hotel €€

☎ 93 218 91 00; www.hotelsilver.com;
Carrer de Bretón de los Herreros 26; s €79-120, d
€85-145; M Fontana; ☎

There are no fewer than five types of rooms here, from chintzy, tiny basic rooms to the very spacious 'superior rooms'. We recommend aiming for the better rooms. All come with a kitchenette and some have a terrace or balcony. There is a little garden too.

LA ZONA ALTA

Except for a certain business clientele, this mostly residential area is a little too far from the action for most people. Several exceptional places are well worth considering if being in the centre of things is not a priority.

HOTEL REY JUAN CARLOS I

Map pp122–3 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 364 40 40; www.hrjuancarlos.com;
Avinguda Diagonal 661-671; d from €225;
M Zona Universitària; P ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎

Like an ultramodern lighthouse at this southwest gateway to the city, the glass towers of this luxury mega-hotel hold spacious rooms, most with spectacular views. The hotel has pools and a gym, along with extensive gardens which belonged to

top picks

ROOMS WITH A VIEW

- Hotel Arts Barcelona (p235) Waterfront rooms with panoramic views up and down the coast.
- Hotel Rey Juan Carlos I (above) Bird's-eye views across the city from the west.
- Grand Marina Hotel (p235) Low-level views back up La Rambla, across the port.
- Hotel AC Miramar (p240) Depending on your room, vistas out to sea, of the port and city.
- Hotel 54 (p235) Sunset views across the marina.

the farmhouse that stood here until well into the 20th century. It houses its own conference centre and often has tempting weekend deals to attract nonbusiness customers. With the Metro close by, you can be in central Barcelona in about 20 minutes.

HOTEL TURÓ DE VILANA

Map pp122–3 Design Hotel €€

☎ 93 434 03 63; www.turodevilana.com;
Carrer de Vilana 7; s/d €160/182;

📍 FGC Les Tres Torres or 🚗 64; 📞 📺 📺

This bright, designer hotel in residential Sarrià has hardwood floors, a warm colour scheme, marble bathrooms and plenty of natural sunlight in its 20 rooms. There is not a lot to do in the immediate vicinity, but for those who like the idea of being able to dip in and out of central Barcelona at will, this is an attractive option.

HOTEL ANGLÍ Map pp122–3 Hotel €€

☎ 93 206 99 44; www.hoteleurostarsangli.com;
Carrer d'Anglí 60; d €149; 📍 Sarrià;

📞 📺 📺 📺 📺

Hotel Anglí is a comfortable business hotel. Glass dominates the three-storey design – yes, the semi-transparent tower is lit up in various hues at night. Huge firm beds are set in rooms where floor to ceiling windows and expanses of mirrors add to the sense of light. The buffet breakfast is good and from the rooftop pool you can look out and contemplate the Collserola hills.

ALBERG MARE DE DÉU DE MONTSERRAT Map pp122–3 Hostel €

☎ 93 210 51 51; www.xanascat.cat; Passeig de la Mare de Déu del Coll 41-51; dm under 26yr or ISIC card-holders/others €20.45/24.30; 📍 Vallcarca then 🚗 28 or 92; 📞 📺

This 209-bed hostel is 4km north of Barcelona's city centre. The main building is a magnificent former mansion with a *Mudéjar*-style lobby set in a leafy location high up above the expanse of the city. Most rooms sleep six and you can buy towels for €4 if you've lost yours. The common areas are extensive and relaxed. The one catch is the midnight curfew. The website provides details of all youth hostels in Barcelona and wider Catalonia, so you can look into your options if this one doesn't appeal.

MONTJUÏC, SANTS & POBLE SEC

Several options are strung out along and near the Poble Sec side of Avinguda del Paral·lel, as well as near the train station in Sants. There's one luxury hotel on the mountain itself.

HOTEL AC MIRAMAR Map pp140–1 Hotel €€€

☎ 93 281 16 00, 902 292293; www.ac-hotels.com;
Plaça de Carlos Ibáñez 3; r €330-495; 🚗 50 or PM; 📞 📺 📺

Welcome to the only hotel on the hill, a designer five-star job. Local architect Oscar Tusquets took the shell of a building built for the 1929 World Fair (as a hotel!) and later the Barcelona HQ of Spanish national TV (1959–83), and created this olive-green block where all rooms have broad balconies and views over the port, city or park. The modern rooms feature neutral décor, with deep browns, creams and beiges dominating the colour scheme. Comfort touches include a gourmet restaurant, wi-fi access, spa, and a designer pool (with bar) set in gardens.

HOSTAL ABREVEDERO Map pp140–1 Hostel €€

☎ 93 441 22 05; www.hostalabrevadero.com;
Carrer de Vila i Vilà 79; s/d €65/85; 📍 Paral·lel; 📞 📺 📺

A bright new *hostal*, with simple rooms (some of them quite spacious), this place is worth contemplating if you want to stay just outside the old centre and close to Montjuïc. Light-hued yellows and whites in the décor and spotless bathrooms are standard. They have lockers for left luggage too, if you wish to skip town for a few days without dragging your life around with you.

MELON DISTRICT Map pp140–1 Hostel €€

☎ 93 329 96 67; www.melondistrict.com; Avinguda Paral·lel 101; s/d €43/54; 📍 Paral·lel; 📞 📺 📺

Whiter than white seems to be the policy in this brand-spanking new student residence, where you can stay the night or book in for a year. Erasmus folks and an international student set are attracted to this hostel-style spot, where the only objects in the rooms that aren't white are the green plastic chairs. There are meeting

lounges, a café and a laundrette on the premises.

HOSTAL OLIVETA Map pp140–1 Hostel €

☎ 93 329 23 16; Carrer del Poeta Cabanyes 18; s/d €40/60, without bathroom €30/50; 📍 Paral·lel; 📞 📺

Six squeaky-clean little rooms huddle above a simple family eatery just off busy Avinguda del Paral·lel in Poble Sec. It's hard to argue with the prices and you get to live just beyond the tourist hubbub. A short walk across the lower half of El Raval will have you on La Rambla.

HOSTEL MAMBO TANGO Map pp140–1 Hostel €

☎ 93 442 51 64; www.hostelmambotango.com;
Carrer del Poeta Cabanyes 23; dm €26; 📍 Paral·lel; 📺

A fun, international hostel to hang out in, the Mambo Tango has basic dorms (sleeping from six to 10 people) and a welcoming, somewhat chaotic atmosphere. This playful vibe is reflected in the kooky colour scheme in the bathrooms. Advice on what to do and where to go out is also always on hand.

ALBERGUINN Map pp140–1 Hostel €

☎ 93 490 59 65; www.alberguinn.com;
Carrer de Melcior de Palau 70-74; dm €25; 📍 Sants; 📺

This hostel is handily located close to Sants railway station and in a gritty, untouristy part of the city. Alberguinn offers crisp, clean dorm accommodation, and you'll also find lockers, washing machines, a kitchen and a common room for watching the TV.

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