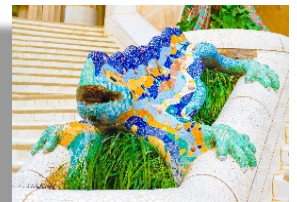




## ***Itinerary For a Four Day Geography Study Tour to Barcelona. Prepared For The Geography Department.***

***Dates: To Be Confirmed.***



*The itinerary is designed to balance visits of the greatest interest with recreative activities. It aims to make the maximum use of time without exhausting participants. The itinerary we have proposed is flexible and is only finalised after discussion with the Group Leader(s). Flexibility is also built into the tour itself as changes can be made at very short notice according to weather conditions etc. The tour can be guided throughout. All excursions are well-prepared and are backed by a tour guide commentary. The expert tour guide is able to run the tour according to Group Leader wishes. In this way Group Leaders will be free to concentrate on the care of their pupils rather than the organisation of the tour. The whole stay is underpinned by excellent accommodation, catering, transport and security.*

# ACCOMMODATION



## **Hotel Exe Campus\*\*\***

**Vila Universitaria, (Campus UAB), 08193 Bellaterra, Barcelona, Spain.**

Tel: 0034 93 580 8353. Fax: 003493 5808978.

[www.exehotels.co.uk](http://www.exehotels.co.uk)

The Hotel Exe Campus\*\*\*\* is located within 25 minutes of the heart of Barcelona in a picturesque woodland setting on the outskirts of the city. The hotel is a part of the large Bellaterra University Campus & guests have access to the university's facilities (football pitches, swimming pools etc.)

All of the 104 rooms have en-suite bathroom facilities, satellite televisions, telephones & desks with reading lamps. There is a pleasant bar & meeting area on the ground floor as well as several conference rooms.

There is a rail link at the end of the road which services the university campus & which takes our groups directly into the Placa Catalunya, the heart of Barcelona, in 25 minutes. Many of the groups which have joined us report that it is very welcome to return to the tranquility & calm of our hotel on the hills outside the city after a day in the hustle & bustle of Barcelona centre. The hotel management are extremely friendly & helpful & we have found the Hotel Exe Campus to be a very popular base for our groups visiting the Barcelona region.

# CATERING

## **En Route**

We ask parents to supply a packed lunch for the outward journey. On the final day, lunch is the final meal provided by Varsity Travel so participants should keep 10 Euros for an evening meal.

## **Breakfast**

A continental breakfast of croissants, bread, butter, jam, coffee, tea or hot chocolate is served either in the main or the group dining room.

## **Lunch**

For lunch, the Tour Guide will distribute lunch money to students before taking the group to a particularly good area of the city for cafes, restaurants, pizzerias & pasticerias. Participants will have a wide choice of food & can either purchase a sandwich & a drink, enjoy a pizza on the terrace of a restaurant or try some tapas. The Tour Guide will take staff to one of the local tapas restaurants where they will be able to savour local foods.

## **Dinner**

Meals are taken in the excellent 'FresCo' Restaurant in the heart of Barcelona's Port Vell shopping complex & directly overlooking the port & close to the beach. This self-service restaurant has an extensive salad bar for the first course. Participants then take another plate for the hot buffet section which includes pizza, pasta, croquettes, chicken legs, vegetables & chips. For dessert, pupils help themselves to unlimited 'Mr. Whippy' style chocolate or vanilla ice-cream from a machine. Pupils can have soft drinks with their meals while wine is served for staff or older pupils with coffee to finish. We have found the FresCo Restaurant to be extremely popular with our groups & the staff are very helpful & friendly. We are able to cater for all special diets.

# DAY ONE

07.00	Join coach at School.
07.15	Depart School. Transfer to Local Airport.
08.30	E.T.A. Local Airport. Commence check in.
11.20	Depart Local Airport on Easyjet flight EZY8575.
14.35 <small>(Note: Continental time is 1 hour in advance of UK time)</small>	E.T.A. Barcelona Airport.
15.30	Coach transfer to central Barcelona.
16.15	<b><u>Exploration of The Maremagnum Port Vell Commercial Centre.</u></b>
<p>Students will enjoy visiting the shops, cafes &amp; ice-cream bars of the popular Port Vell Commercial Centre, overlooking the sea &amp; surrounded by the harbour. There are many popular shops for teens &amp; the whole complex has late opening-hours.</p>	
18.00	<b><u>Dinner at FresCo Restaurant, Maremagnum Shopping Centre. Barcelona.</u></b> <a href="http://www.fresco.com">www.fresco.com</a>
19.30	Coach transfer to Hotel Exe Campus.
20.10	E.T.A. Hotel Exe Campus. Check-in & allocate room keys.

## DAY TWO

08.00 Breakfast.

09.15 Coach transfer to La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park.

10.45 **Day Visit to La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park.**

The region to the north of Barcelona is a highly volcanic landscape providing geography students with abundant opportunities to view the effects of volcanic activity & the adaptation of a rural area to the activity below ground.

### **View of Croscat Volcano**

We will commence our visit of the volcanic national park with a view of the youngest & highest volcano in Spain. The last eruption was 14,000 years ago & this visit is a fascinating study of a volcanic activity. The cone is 189 metres high & has a horseshoe shape caused by the lava flow breaching the volcano on its western side during its last eruption. The volcano has damage to its northeastern flank due to quarrying for volcanic gravel until the early 1990's, however the mining allows us to view the internal structure of the volcano as if in a cutaway format. Students will apply their learning of the structure of cinder cones & the nature of volcanic materials.

11.45 **Visit to La Pomereda.**

This is the site where the lava flow from the final effusive phase can be viewed. We will visit a forest where students can view the roughened surface & remarkable blisters on the landscape to gain an impression of the power of the volcanic eruptions & their influence on the surrounding geography.

12.00 Coach transfer to Sant Joan Les Fonts.

12.20 **Lunch in Sant Joan Les Fonts.**

Students will have time to purchase lunch & explore the small town of Sant Joan les Fonts before the afternoon activities.

13.15 **Exploration of Sant Joan les Fonts.**

This town is a perfect example of the effect of solidified lava flows as three lava flows coursed along the valley of the Fluvià river. Students will examine the lenticular formations & basalt columns formed thousands of years ago.

14.30

**Visit to Santa Margarida Volcano.**

Our second volcano of the day remains perfectly formed with a height of 682 metres & a perimeter of 2km. Peculiarly, this volcano contains a tiny chapel sited inside the caldera which has functioned as a place of worship since the Middle Ages. The chapel sits empty for most of the year but is swarmed with pilgrims once a year on 20<sup>th</sup> July during the Festival of Alpec – a religious event that includes a concert, a mass, food & celebration.

15.45

Coach transfer to central Barcelona.

17.15

**Visit to The The Sagrada Familia**

This spectacular building was to be Gaudi's crowning achievement until he was killed by a passing tram while admiring his work from the street. This building is still being built and locals wonder whether it will ever be completed. pupils will ascend one of the eleven towers after viewing the deeply religious facades at the front and rear of the temple. Some of the best views of Barcelona can be gained from the top of the Sagrada Familia. Afterwards we will view the subterranean museum, including Gaudi's workshop and the crypt where he is buried.

19.00

**Paella Dinner at Aitor Restaurant, Sagrada Familia.**

Students & staff will enjoy a traditional paella dinner at this popular tapas restaurant located around the corner from the Sagrada Familia. Served in wide shallow pans after being roasted in the oven, this traditional Spanish rice dish comes in several varieties & students will enjoy sampling the local cuisine for dinner.

20.15

Metro transfer to Placa Espanya.

20.45

E.T.A. Placa Espanya Metro. Walk to Magic Fountains.

21.00

**Visit to Montjuic's Magic Fountains**

Lights, colour, music, water...action! Montjuic's Magic Fountain has it all. Soft tones of coloured lights bathe the watery mist in shades of reds, greens and yellows as the Magic Fountain sprays and shoots water in all directions to the sounds of Mozart, Queen and Whitney Houston.

Montjuic's Magic Fountain was built in 1929 and restored in 1992 for the Barcelona Olympic Games. The fountain spurts, shoots and sprays water to the sound of music and a mixture of colorful lights. Located at the foot of the steps up to the Museum of Catalan Art on Montjuic mountain, this visit is a highlight for many visitors to Barcelona.

22.00

Coach transfer to Hotel Exe Campus.

22.35

E.T.A. Hotel Exe Campus.

## DAY THREE

08.00 Breakfast.

09.30 Local train transfer to central Barcelona.

10.15 **Walking Tour of the Old Quarter of Barcelona**

The tour will include the old town of Barcelona and will end with a visit to The Palau Reial. This was the Palace of the Counts of Barcelona and now houses a museum of the history of the city. Pupils will enjoy wandering through the Gothic area of the city, near the Placa Reial. The streets in this area have remained unchanged for decades and give a good impression of the severe lack of space that the city has experienced as a result of its historic immigration from Andalusia and other southern regions.

Pupils will enter the Moorish style cathedral and see the traditional 11 white geese that have inhabited the cloisters. Initially they acted as a noisy alarm in case of ransack or invasion by hostile foes. Outside the cathedral, pupils will view marks made in the wall by the elite troops as they sharpened their swords on the soft cathedral brick. The tour will end at the Picasso Museum, where the wealthy traders who profited from trade with the Americas could afford to buy the city's most prestigious and sumptuous houses with courtyards. These can still be seen today as most of the houses now house a wide variety of art museums.

12.00 **Lunch by the Gothic Cathedral.**

Students will enjoy breaking for lunch in front of the Gothic cathedral. There are good cafes, tapas bars & fast-food outlets in the area as well as street entertainers & market stalls.

13.15 Metro transfer to Placa Espanya.

14.00 **Visit to Las Arenas Shopping Centre & Former Bullfighting Arena**

In 2011, after Catalunya decided to outlaw bullfighting, the city of Barcelona was left with an enormous bullfighting arena dating from 1900 & built in traditional Mudejar style. It was decided to add an enormous domed roof & to create Barcelona's newest & most impressive shopping arena. The shopping area now boasts over 60 cafes, restaurants & shops over 6 floors. Much of the original architecture of the arena has been sympathetically included into the modern use of the building. Pupils will enjoy exploring the various floors of this historic building which overlooks the historic Placa Espanya below.

15.00 Walk to The Olympic Park, Montjuic.

15.30                                **Visit to The Olympic Park, Montjuic.**

Pupils will enjoy visiting the impressive Olympic Park which hosted the 1992 Olympics. We will pass the enormous white statue which towers over the area before entering the stadium itself.

16.15                                Walk to Montjuic Cablecar.

16.45                                **Cablecar transfer to Barceloneta Beach.**

Pupils will enjoy a cablecar transfer above the sea, the Port Vell & over the Columbus Monument to arrive at the beach of Barceloneta, where we will have lunch. Panoramic views will be enjoyed from the cablecar over the city below.

17.45                                **Exploration of Barceloneta Beach.**

No visit to Barcelona is complete without a visit to the local beach. Students will enjoy a walk along the long & sandy Barceloneta Beach on this popular Sunday afternoon. This is the main beach for the city & is very popular during the hot months of summer. We will enjoy a game of football, a stroll by the seaside & view of the enormous bronze fish that borders the sea from the Olympic Village. This is where the city comes to relax & students will enjoy savouring the laid-back atmosphere of the beachfront, with its skateboarders, scooters, beach football, barefoot beach bars & entertainers.

19.00                                Walk to Port Vell Commercial Centre.

19.30                                **Dinner at FresCo Restaurant, Port Vell Maremagnum.**

20.45                                Coach transfer to Hotel Exe Campus.

21.20                                E.T.A. Hotel Exe Campus.

# DAY FOUR

08.00 Breakfast, hotel check-out & loading of suitcases into coach.

09.30 Coach transfer to The Parc Guell.

10.00 **Visit to The Parc Guell.**

Gaudi's modernist park is largely made from broken porcelain and china that was reclaimed from the Barcelona municipal rubbish tip. The park is set on a peaceful hillside overlooking the city & beach below. Our art students are always impressed with the Park Guell. They can choose to sketch, paint or photograph the various attractions which include a large porcelain lizard, a Modernist ceiling, brightly coloured seats, a grotto & Gaudi's House - one of the most eccentric buildings in Barcelona. We will have time to enjoy an ice-cream while watching the wild parrots fly overhead or simply to relax on the grass under a palm tree.

12.00 Lunch in vicinity of Parc Guell.

13.30 Coach transfer to Montserrat.

14.45 **Visit to the Mountain & Monastery of Montserrat.**

After ascending the perilous twisting road to the top of the Mountain of Montserrat, participants will be able to enjoy some of the most spectacular views in the whole of the Catalunya region. The literal translation of Montserrat is 'sawed mountain', named because of the many jagged rocks, many of which are given strange names based on their appearance. The Monastery of Montserrat is a place of pilgrimage for many & is the spiritual heart of the Catalan region. It is traditional for a worshipper whose prayers have been answered to give thanks by ascending the mountain barefoot. We will visit the monastery, with its holy relic - the Black Madonna.

16.30 Transfer to Barcelona Airport.

17.30 E.T.A. Barcelona Airport. Commence check-in.

20.30 Depart Barcelona Airport on Easyjet flight EZY8580.

21.35 E.T.A. Local Airport.

(Local time) (Allow 60 minutes to collect baggage and pass through the Immigration Control at Stansted Airport)

22.30 Coach transfer to School.

23.30 **E.T.A. School.**

*Please note: This is a Suggested Itinerary only. We make hotel, flight & itinerary bookings upon receipt of the initial deposit payments. The timings, airports, flight times & visits contained within this itinerary serve as a guide only & may change. The choice of hotel, visits & timings are confirmed upon receipt of initial deposits.*



# OPTIONAL DAY VISIT TO THEMEPARK

07.30 Breakfast.

08.45 Coach transfer to Port Aventura Theme park, Tarragona.

10.00 **Day's Visit to Port Aventura Theme park.**

We will spend the whole day at this excellent theme park, one of the most popular in Spain. The park is divided into five different lands - South America, The Wild West, Asia, Polynesia & Europe. Each land has its own distinct identity & attractions. There are shows throughout the day, a variety of restaurants & some of the world's most advanced roller coasters. 'Dragon Khan' is the only ride in the world to boast eight inverted loops. The 'Stampida' rollercoaster is constructed totally of wood & the Tutuki Splash ride leaves participants absolutely soaked to the skin! 'Hurakan Condor' is a gravity-defying ride which climbs 100 metres in the air before subjecting participants to a terrifying freefall which reaches speeds of 70mph - not for the fainthearted!

We will have our dinner within the theme park in order to maximise the amount of time spent enjoying the rides. Our groups who visit Port Aventura always find it to be a very memorable & enjoyable day.

17.00 Coach transfer to Barcelona.

18.30 **Dinner at FresCo Restaurant, Placa Catalunya.**

19.30 **Visit to the Port Vell Shopping Complex.**

Pupils will have shopping time at the excellent Maremagnum Shopping Centre, located directly on the seafront & overlooking the harbour.

20.30 Coach transfer to Hotel Exe Campus.

21.15 E.T.A. Hotel Exe Campus.