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Barcelona & Catalonia (Cadogan Guides) (Cadogan Guide Barcelona & Catalonia)



Synopsis

Discover the unique spirit of Catalan with this intelligent and in-depth guidebook. Take a tour of Gaudi's revolutionary architecture in the exciting and dynamic city of Barcelona; savor the stunning views of medieval Girona and the Roman ruins at picturesque Tarragona; and bask in the beauty of the Costa Brava beaches and the magnificence of the Catalan Pyrenees. * Includes in-depth cultural and historical backgrounds * Contains practical travel advice and easy-to-use maps * Hand-picks the best places to stay and eat * Recommends the top sites for each region.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dana Facaros and Michael Pauls are passionate about Europe and have written over 40 guides for Cadogan, including many in the flagship France, Italy and Spain series. They have lived all over Europe, but are currently settled in an idyllic farmhouse surrounded by vineyards in the Lot Valley, France.

Over the last couple of years I have become a loyal customer of Cadogan travel guides (I also own Cadogan guides for "France", "Bologna and Emilia Romagna" and "Gascony, the Pyrenees and Toulouse", all of which I liked a lot). I prefer guides that devote a lot of space to history and site description and not too much to hotels/restaurants etc and these guides are just like that. I used this guide while spending a few days in the wonderful Barcelona and I liked it a lot. The guide is well-written with a lot of historical information (taking into account the size of the book), nice maps

(with a caveat, see below), very nice formatting, useful tips on "don't miss" locations. We tried only one of the restaurants suggested in the guide (which was all right) but we also checked out a few others and they seemed to be very good choices overall. In one case we could not get a table because the restaurant was already all booked for the day (Kaiku, on the beachfront)! The section on the history of Barcelona was quite long and interesting. Also insightful were the sections on Gaudi', Parc Guell, the Sagrada Familia and the architecture of the Example. Perhaps the one thing I thought could have been done better was the maps. There are two maps for Barcelona, a larger one which covers most of the city, and a more detailed one for the area around the old town. Both were reliable and very useful for general orientation. The problem is that these maps were instead not very useful in finding restaurants, whose location is briefly described in the "eating out" section but not located on the map. In some cases the street/square where the restaurant was located wasn't even labeled in the map, which caused us some trouble. Cadogan's maps would be much improved if hotels/restaurants were clearly indicated. Given that, as I was writing before, these guides include a relatively small number of options, I think these locations could be included in the maps without adding too much clutter. But with this caveat this is a great guide and I would certainly buy it again. Good job once again, Cadogan!

This is only for those of you who do not need pictures. Cadogan guides don't do pictures. The maps by region (often times very small regions) are the most useful. The layout features related regions and driving within them. One can find often obscure and potentially important sites not covered in other guides which only touch on the really high spots. This gets to the folkways of a region in powerful citations. I have never been steered wrong by a Cadogan guide. This is the second copy of this guide I have owned. I gave away the last one. Yes Barcelona is wonderful BUT the places covered in this book reveals a whole different cultural guide; one fundamental to the identity of Barcelona but so much more. Don't miss out on this it goes way beyond the pretty picture books.

We used this book in combination with Rick Steeves's brief book (or extended booklet) and a fabulous and indestructible Rough Guide map. We already knew where we wanted to stay, so our focus was on understanding the history of Barcelona, prioritizing the sites we would see (and taking in those sites in a sane way), and getting lost only in the best of ways. The Cadogan guide was outstanding for the first of these things especially and made a solid dent in the second (especially where background details were concerned). The maps were merely OK -- good for exploring a specific neighborhood but not for cross-neighborhood navigation. The Metro map in the back, on the

other hand, was perfect and extremely useful. But we didn't buy this book for its maps. The authors are clearly familiar with the area and possess a witty yet informative writing style. We loved the area and if we can manage to return, we will bring this book along for the journey. Would give 4.5 stars if it were possible.

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