

3 Days in Barcelona

One thing is for sure, 3 days in Barcelona, a mere 72 hours is not nearly enough time to enjoy this magnificent city, but I was limited for time and took the chance to take in as much as possible from the city situated between the sea and the mountains.



Parc Güell's "El drac" (the dragon).

Day 1 in Barcelona

Get to Know the Hood – Barcelona is full of trendy and cool “barrios”, or neighborhoods as they are called in Spanish. Take the time to walk around living and interacting with the locals to explore the uniqueness of at least the top five barrios; Gracia, El Borne, Gotico, Raval, and Eixample. You'd be surprised how much 3 Days in Barcelona can yield.

Head to the Market – La Boqueria is the city's large public market in the Ciutat Vella district of Barcelona, and a must for all foodies. Located right off Las Ramblas, you'll feast your eyes on some of the freshest seafood, meats, fruits and vegetables in the world. There are places to enjoy excellent Tapas such at [El Quim](#) and watch the mad photographers clicking away at the gorgeous food displays.

Please Don't Stop the Music – A visit to [La Palau de la Musica](#) a feast for the eyes and ears. The concert hall is an

exquisite example of Catalan modernism design. Daily tours are available and the most fascinating thing to see is the stained-glass skylight, but the rest of the concert hall is also full of intricately detailed sculptures and metalwork. The concert hall is truly magnificent and well worth the price to spend on a concert instead of the building tour only.



Magic Fountain of Montjuïc

Watch the Waters Dance – Ok, the Magic Fountain Show is sort of touristy but also romantic and FREE. The water fountain show has been drawing crowds since 1929 and the spectacular display of light, streaming waters, and music make for a romantic water acrobatics performance.

Tip #1: If you arrive by airplane, take the [Barcelona airport bus](#) and arrive in the city center in about 30 minutes. Alternatively, you can purchase T 10 strips and take Bus 46 to the city. The strips are also good for local Metro travel.

Day 2 in Barcelona

Take a Walk – I love city tours which are a perfect way to get a sense of the city, its history, and the surroundings. I love them even more when they're FREE such as [Runner Bean Tours](#). The guides are extremely knowledgeable, most having studied

not only the Catalan and Spanish languages, but the history and architecture of Catalan too. The tour guides are fun, informative, and helpful if you need local tips, so I didn't hesitate to tip accordingly after the tour.

Rumble Las Ramblas – You'll probably end up on Las Ramblas anyway looking for a tour, Tapas restaurant, shop, or just to people watch. The tree-lined car-free zone stretches for 1.2 kilometers (0.75 miles) and is made for walking, shopping, and hanging out on lazy days.



Las Ramblas

Go to Church – A visit to La Sagrada Familia is an absolute must. Barcelona's most famous landmark does charge admission, but I must admit, it's best viewed from the outside where you get a better sense of the magnitude architect Antoni Gaudí emphasized on this place of worship. Also, some of the best photos are taken outside the structure, an architectural wonder to the heavens.

Weird Barcelona – How about a visit to the Museum of Funeral Carriages. Ok, it's creepy, weird, FREE, and one way to find out how people transported their deceased to the cemetery and much more. Enough said! If that doesn't grab your interest, remember that admission is FREE at many of the city's museums every Sunday from 3 pm and the first Sunday of every month all day. Check museum sites to plan your visit and confirm entrance fees.

Tip #2: Do you hate queuing as much as I do? Then avoid the long lines at [La Sagrada Familia](#) and purchase your tickets ahead of time.

Day 3 in Barcelona

Roam the Roman Remnants – Old Gothic Quarter (Barrio Gotico) is a labyrinth of winding streets full of peaceful squares (plaças). It's just perfect for strolling through the medieval part of the barrio which is full of history, palazzos, mansions and Gothic churches. In addition, you'll find tradespeople who still take the time to perfect their skills repairing and tuning guitars, mending repairers, restoring furniture, as well as new designers showcasing their unique crafts. You can easily get lost in Barrio Gotico discovering another side of Barcelona, so don't forget your map or download an app.



Casa Milà

Ogle at the Architecture – Barcelona architecture masterpieces are a mix of old and new, bizarre and brazen, but one thing is for sure, there's plenty of it and all nearly picture post card perfect and best discovered on foot. You can gaze for FREE at some of Gaudí's wonders such as the Casa Milà, Casa Batlló, Casa Calvet and more just by walking the city. Gaudí's Casa Fajol o de la Papallona located near Placa Espanya and Parc Joan Miro. Check your Barcelona map tourism map for details.

Walk the Champions Route – It's been a while since Barcelona hosted the 1992 Olympic Games, but I still adore a walk along the sea front at Barceloneta, Port Olympic. It's generally void of tourists and peaceful as you look at the seagulls gliding through the sky. There are lots of restaurants, clubs, place to dock your yacht, and lots of wide spaces for wheel chairs, strollers, and skateboards too. You'll pass by the port anyway on the way to L'Aquàrium de Barcelona, the largest Mediterranean-themed aquarium in the world, so go check it out.

Put your Credit Card to the Test – Some of the best shopping for all budget types is found in Barcelona. With around 35,000 shops, including El Corte Inglés, Spain's premier full-service department store (a great rainy day alternative) you are sure to find something to bring back home. The 5 kilometer shopping line extends from the top of the Las Ramblas, through Plaça de Catalunya along Passeig de Gràcia and up Avenue Diagonal. Also, you'll find lots of trendy designer boutiques in and around the Barrios of Barcelona.

Tip #3: If you have an early check out, ditch the suitcases and get more mile for your vacation, by storing your luggage before you depart. I used [Locker Barcelona](#) (across from the side of El Corte Inglés) which was affordable, has a friendly staff, and the best is that you enter personal key codes, so no need to carry a key.

Anytime of year whether on sunshiny days or rainy day, 3 Days in Barcelona gets you a lot of bang for your Euro with so many interesting and FREE activities to discover on vacation in only 3 Days in Barcelona.

Shiver Me Timbers, I Just Ate Gooseneck Barnacles

From the rocky shores of Spain's coast, a slip of the foot and you'll plunge 300 feet into the deep icy waters of the sea. As the water violently beats against the cliffs, the crustaceans are not weary, in fact they take pleasure in hard beatings which will eventually make them, the gooseneck barnacles, even more bankable.



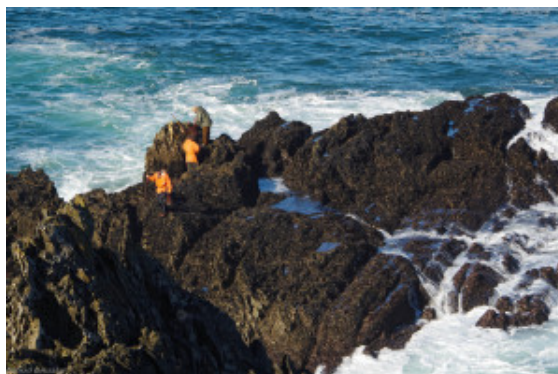
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The crustacea challengers on the other hand are tired yet persist knowing all too well the danger of prying away the pesky little creatures. At least one life per year is lost gathering the opponent, but the bottom line is getting paid. The risk is high, but well worth it because far too many people will relish a plate of gooseneck barnacles nonetheless.

Percebes or goose barnacle is a crustacean that grows on wave beaten rocks mainly in Asturias, Basque Country, Cantabria and Galicia. They attach themselves to mussels and can only be reached near the bottom of cliffs mainly along the Spanish coastline.

As you can imagine, the location of one of Spain's most sought after delicacy is difficult to reach. At dusk and dawn, and

always at low tide, the brave divers or *percebeiros* as they are called work in teams of two to four. Using their sharpened hand tool and awaiting cues from the safety lookout, they quickly take the chance to pry small clusters of the treasure from the rocks sometimes jumping from one cliff to another to avoid the strong tide surges.



Divers in search of Percebes, © Gabriel González GGL1, on Flickr

Sailors consider the hull-adhering barnacles a nuisance to their ship, which can create considerable drag on the boat, slowing it down and costing fuel. On the other hand, foodies consider percebes an ultimate gourmet treat. Captain Haddock, said “Blistering Barnacles” probably not because of the appearance, but the price, where in Europe, barnacles cost up to \$100 a kilogram.

For some the taste is to die for, and the quest to get them is as well and many *percebeiros* drown in an attempt to reach the crustaceans before the pounding icy waters reach them first. Some amateurs attempt to capture percebes, but the locals watch over their territories to safeguard their livelihood.

The percebes flavor depends on water motion for feeding, hence the stronger the waves crash against the cliffs, the more flavorful they become. Tasting like the sea; not salty but briny, I’d say the flavor is a mix of crab and scallops, but you’ll just have to see for yourself. That is if you can get

over the appearance. Remember how grotesque the crustacean-faces were from Pirates of the Caribbean? Well, percebes look similar to that—no they look worse, more like dead toes or little arms.



Gooseneck barnacles, an expensive foodie choice

The components of percebes are the shell, claw, and delicious meat within the claw. After a glass of the local beverage or two, you get over the less than visually appealing appearance as the platter of long, slender, percebes in their triangular shells are served steaming hot.

At the current prices you have to pay, one thing is for sure, you had better not waste a single gram by eating them incorrectly. Pay attention to your restaurant neighbor, or follow these guidelines to enhance your blistering barnacle dining experience:

1. Grab a percebes from the end of its claw end.
2. Break the sleeve (outer shell) from the claw to expose the arm (meat).
3. Slide off the sleeve and eat the arm.
4. Imagine the ocean's roar, and suck the briny juices from the sleeve.

Finally, sip a glass of Spanish white wine and repeat steps 1-4!