

Barcelona I – Transcript in English

Hello and welcome to Dynamic Spanish! Here, you can improve your Spanish while you explore this beautiful country. Are you ready? Let's go!

This is the first of several episodes in which we'll be exploring the wonderful city of Barcelona, in north-eastern Spain. It's the second most populous city in Spain, the capital of Catalonia and home to one of the world's biggest football clubs, FC Barcelona (Fútbol Club Barcelona).

If you've ever visited Barcelona, you may have come by sea, arriving at Barcelona port, which is Europe's busiest passenger port.

The port has a 2000 year history that started with the Romans and continued through the Visigoths, Moors, until today.

Next to the port is a 60 meter tall monument in honour of Christopher Columbus' first voyage to the Americas. The monument serves as a reminder that Christopher Columbus reported to Queen Isabella I and King Ferdinand V in Barcelona after his first trip to the new continent.

Where is Europe's busiest passenger port?

- A. Paris
- B. London
- C. Barcelona

Europe's busiest passenger port is in Barcelona.

North of the Columbus monument is the famous pedestrianised street, known as La Rambla. The promenade is lined with kiosks, some selling newspapers and souvenirs, others selling flowers. There are also lots of street traders, performers, and cafes and bars which spill out onto the pavement.

The Spanish poet Federico García Lorca once said that La Rambla was "the only street in the world which I wish would never end."

Plaça Reial, just off La Rambla, hosts many restaurants and some of the city's most famous and exclusive nightclubs. The street lamps here are also noteworthy, as they were the first project by the famous architect, Antoni Gaudi.

Also off La Rambla is the famous La Boqueira, a market with a very diverse selection of goods. Many tourists come here for the great food and lively atmosphere. However it's important to be alert to the risks of pickpockets, who target La Rambla and its nearby sites.

Why must you be alert when in La Rambla?

- A. Because of pickpockets
- B. Because of wasps
- C. Because of rabid dogs

You must be alert when in La Rambla because of the pickpockets.

North of La Rambla is Plaça de Catalunya, which is in the heart of the city and separates the old town from the Eixample area (Ciutat Vella y Eixample).

This square is known for its statues and fountains, as well as the flocks of pigeons that gather in the centre.

Another important plaza in the area is Plaça d'Espanya, which houses various landmarks, such as the old bullring, which is now a shopping mall, and the Venetian towers. These towers stand 47m high and serve an ornamental function, marking the entrance to Barcelona's trade fair zone (Fira de Barcelona.)

The final stop today is the Magic Fountain of Montjuïc, which is situated below the Palau Nacional on the Montjuïc mountain. It was constructed in 1929 and sprays 700 gallons of water per second, through 3620 jets to create its effect. The highest water spout is 170 feet! The fountain's night-time shows are accompanied by music.

The four columns are a powerful symbol for the independence of Catalonia, and were taken down in 1929, before being re-erected in 2010.

What animal gathers in Plaza de Catalunya?

- A. Rabbits.
- B. Cats
- C. Pigeons

Pigeons gather in Plaza de Catalunya.

The city is full of sights to enjoy, but it is also home to some political unrest due to the Catalan independence movement.

Peaceful and disruptive protests are common these days, with independence supported by the majority of Catalans. This is a challenge that Spain will be facing for the foreseeable future, as civil unrest continues to grow.

There's much more to see in Barcelona, and in the next episode, we'll continue our tour of the Catalan capital.

Don't forget to sign up at VRLanguages.co.uk to get access to the transcriptions and much more. Thank you for joining us. See you soon!