

TARRAGONA SPAIN

City Routes



Photo credit: Plaça de la Font © Manel Antolí (RV Edipress) courtesy of Tarragona Tourism

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Table Of Contents

Roman Route: Tàrraco - UNESCO World Heritage Site Since 2000	2
Tarragona Medieval Route	5
Tarragona Modernist Route	8
Welcome to Travel Inspires Unique Family Travel Guides	12
SIGN UP FOR NEW GUIDES	12

Roman Route: Tàrraco – UNESCO World Heritage Site Since 2000

Tàrraco was founded in 218 BC, and this was the capital of the Roman Empire in Hispania Citerior. This was the Romans logistical base here, and covered an impressive space of 60 to 70 hectares, which included its own circus, a Roman amphitheatre, the provincial forum, amongst many other elements.

In 2000 this was declared a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#), and below is a breakdown of the Tarragona Roman Route.



Plaça del Fòrum (Forum Square) © Alberich Fotògrafs

Please note: In Tarragona city, on Mondays all monuments are closed except for the Model of Roman Tarraco, the Cathedral and Diocesan Museum

Follow in the footsteps of the Romans, and find out about life during the Roman Era. This route takes you to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Tarraco, where you can see the temple, walls, amphitheatre, circus, local forum and much more.

Maqueta de la Tàrraco Romana – Model of Roman Tarraco – Antiga Audiencia, Plaça del Pallol, 3 – This is a detailed model of what Tarraco was like at its peak.

Muralles – Walls – Avenida Catalunya, Phone: 977 245 796



The Walls (Archaeological Promenade) © Manel Antolí (RV Edipress)

3500 metres of walls were built in the 2nd century BC, of which around 1100 metres remain today. The Passeig Arqueològic is the highlight of the remaining wall, which borders with the old quarter of Tarragona. Unusual megalithic foundations are revealed in these very well preserved sections.

Temple – Temple – Pla de la Seu

The construction of the Roman circus and provincial forum had gained the city monumental status in the second half of the 1st century AD. In Tarraco the provincial forum had been constructed around two squares that were on different terraces – the upper one being the cult complex, which contained the magnificent temple. Of course today's cathedral is also in this area.

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Fòrum Provincial – Provincial Forum – Plaça del Pallol, Pl. del Forum and Pl. del Rei

The lower square of the forum measured 318 metres by 175 metres, and was enveloped on three sides by a portico, inside of which today you can still see a number of inscribed pedestals.

Circ – Roman Circus – Rambla Vella



Front of the Circus © Alberich Fotògrafs

This is one of the best preserved examples of a Roman circus in the Western world, where once our ancestors would have seen chariot races.

Amfiteatre – Amphitheatre – Parc de l'Amfiteatre Romà

As you may expect from films, this was where the fights and entertainment used to take place – so everything from fights between gladiators, to wild beast fights, and public executions.



Amfiteatrvm © Manel Antolí (RV Edipress)

Museu Nacional Arqueològic – National Archaeological Museum (MNAT) – Plaça del Rei 5

In the 19th century this museum was founded to merge two earlier museums, and today there is a fascinating, invaluable collection of ruins from Roman times. The exhibition at the museum presents a summary of eight centuries of Tarraco's (Roman Tarragona) history. At the time of writing (October 2018) the main museum building at the above address is undergoing renovations. However you can still discover Tarraco and view a selected collection of MNAT in the Port, at Tinglado 4.

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Fòrum Local – Local Forum – Carrer Lleida

This was the forum of daily life, but a fair bit of it was destroyed because of 19th century urban expansion.



Local Forum © Alberich Fotògrafs

Necròpolis Paleocristiana i Conjunt Paleocristià del Francolí – Paleochristian Necropolis and Francolí River Paleochristian Complex – Avenida Ramón y Cajal 84

A burial ground was started here in the middle of the 3rd century AD, which includes the remains of St. Fructuosus.

Vil·la de Centelles – Centelles Villa – 4km – Afores, Constantí

The remains you can see today are most likely of a villa which was thought to be built around the 4th century AD, although originally there are signs that it dates back to around the 2nd to 1st centuries BC, of habitation.

Aqüeducte – Aqueduct – 4km on N240 to Lleida

Of two aqueducts that were built during the 1st century AD, the one that the Francolí river fed, which was around 15 km long, is today the most interesting surviving stretch, with around 217 metres remaining. Although it's official name is Les Ferreres Aqueduct, it is best known as the Devil's Bridge. This is because there is a legend that the devil built the bridge. We have modernised that legend for 21st century children and you can read it here: [Daniel the donkey and the devil's deal](#).



Tarraco Viva © Manel Antolí (RV Edipress)

Torre dels Escipions – Scipio Tower – 6km on N340 to Barcelona

Situated off the Via Augusta, this is a funeral monument constructed with large ashlar, during the early 1st century AD.

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Pedrera del Mèdol – Mèdol Quarry – 8km on N340 Barcelona direction, by the service area of Medol

You can actually see many walls here, from where the Romans would have extracted blocks of stone.

Vil·la dels Munts – Els Munts Villa – 14km – Passeig del Fortí, Altafulla

Just on the boundaries with Altafulla, you can see a Roman villa that is impressive in terms of some of the surviving rooms, and the fact that there were actually three different bathing complexes.

Arc de Berà (MNAT) – Berà Arch (MNAT) – 20km from Tarragona, N-340 Roda de Berà



Berà Arch © Manel Antolí (RV Edipress)

The N-340 is the National 340 road that runs right down to the south of Spain, and the Berà Arch was built back in the late 1st century BC, dedicated to Emperor Augustus, on what was in those days the Via Augusta. One of Catalonia's best known monuments, because of its shape and location, originally it was decorated with Corinthian moulding and pilasters, crowned by a frieze, architrave, attic and cornice.

The Tarragona Tourist Board has created an app which you can download by clicking on [Tarragona Roman Route](#).

Tarragona Medieval Route

There are a number of medieval monuments preserved in the city of Tarragona, of rich artistic heritage. This route takes you to a number of sites which include the churches from this period, the King's Castle and the Provost's castle, and of course the spectacular cathedral.



The Walls (Archaeological Promenade) © Manel R. Granell

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La Muralla - The Wall, Arandes Tower, Montges Tower and Tintoré Tower

The city already had Roman walls, which by medieval times needed some maintenance and repair, although the southern closure needed to be entirely re-done. This was reinforced by the towers named above.

El Pla de la Seu - Cathedral Area - Carrer Major 39 and Carrer Merceria

Here you'll experience the city's area which most retains its medieval ambience. There are a number of notable Gothic structures here, such as the Casa Balcells and the ancient rectory.



La Catedral de Santa Tecla Tarragona - Tarragona Cathedral and the Cloister and the Diocesan Museum- Pla de la Seu

A truly magnificent cathedral, please refer to the **Tarragona Monuments Section (coming soon)** to read more about this, which also includes information on the Cloister and Diocesan Museum.



Tarragona Cathedral © Alberich Fotògrafs

La Capella de Sant Pau - The Chapel of Saint Paul - Carrer Sant Pau 4

This is one of a number of religious buildings which has been conserved from the 12th/13th centuries. Austere in the interior, it has a rectangular entrance, decorated with a mullion, with a rose window which crowns it.

Another one of the preserved 12th/13th century religious buildings, inside of special note are two arcosolia, each of which contain a sacrophagus.

L'esglesia de Sant Llorenç - The Church of Saint Lawrence - Plaça de la Pagesia

This church is the only place of worship, which is entirely Gothic, left in Tarragona. Rebuilding was done in 1362 and inside there are two important medieval works - a late Gothic exquisite chalice and the spectacular Saint Lawrence altarpiece.

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L'Antic Hospital de Santa Tecla – The Ancient Hospital of Saint Tecla – Carrer les Coques 3



In 1171 the hospital was founded, but as only the façade can be seen today, nothing is known about the original layout, however what is there is worth seeing.

Call Jueu Tarragona – Tarragona Jewish Quarter – Plaça dels Àngels, Tarragona 43003

Back in the 12th century the Call Jueu was entirely separate from the other parts of the city, linked only by four gateways to connect it to the outside world.

From the 14th century, however, the Jewish Quarter went into a decline, and in 1492 they were expelled. Today much of this interesting labyrinth of streets has been partially destroyed due to old urban planning reformations, as well as some demolition.

El Castell del Rei – The King's Castle – Plaça del Rei

At the beginning of Christian re-settlement, the King's Castle was built on the site where there was a Roman tower and until 1171 it was the city's Norman family's residence. When it passed back to the crown, it had restoration work done, and today you can see its southern façade, as well as the walls and arcades of its interior.



El Castell del Paborde – The Provost's Castle – Avenida Catalunya

In the early 19th century this was destroyed and today it's only its northern façade that you can see, as well as the Archbishop's tower. It is situated where the Archbishop's Palace stands.

L'església de Santa Maria del Miracle – The Church of our Lady of the Miracle – Parc de l'Amfiteatre Romà

The remains of the church, which is actually situated at the very centre of the Roman Amphitheatre, date from the 12th/13th century.

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**Tamarit – 10km from Tarragona, N-340 KM
1171 Tarragona to Altafulla**

For more information please refer to the
Tarragona Monuments Section (coming soon).



Tamarit Castle © Pau Lagunas

Tarragona Modernist Route

Find out about the city's Modernist legacy, which reveals the beauty of the architecture, as well as the lifestyles of the people of that period.

The route includes 23 different examples, amongst them the Tomb of King Jaume I, the Slaughterhouse, the Central Market, the Metropole Theatre, the Ximenis House and lots more.

**1. El Teatre Metropol – Metropole Theatre –
Rambla Nova 46**



A modernist building constructed in 1908, the Metropole is a covered theatre situated at 46 Rambla Nova.

We can see in the work the of the architect, Josep Maria Jujol, a clear influence of Anton Gaudí. The design intends to be a boat which leads the spectators to the sea of salvation.

2. El Cambril del Convent dels Pares Carmelites Descalços - The Shrine of the Convent of the Barefoot Carmelites



In 1896, the architect Pau Monguió i Segura, designed the plans for this project. Outside visitors can see a Modernist façade, along with Neo-Gothic elements on the church's portal. The bell tower is styled with sculptural and ceramic tiles decoration.

3. La Capella de l'església de Sant Francesc - The Chapel of the Church of St Francis

This convent of St. Augustine formerly belonged to the Jesuits. It is classed as a cultural asset of local interest and its artistic value is because of its link with works of Rome and as an example of what was known as the Escola del Camp (The School of the Camp - being the area).

These days it belongs to the parish of San Francisco (Sant Francesc in Catalan.)

4. La Casa Ximenis - Ximenis House

Another work of the architect, Josppe Maria Jujol, is the beautiful Modernist building, Casa Ximenis. This work of 1914, was rather challenging as the building is attached to the Roman wall.

The striking Modernist building climbs up to three floors, embellished with lots of beautiful sgraffito and wrought iron railings which knot on its balconies.



Jujol left reminders of his religious fervour with an inscription of Ave Maria on the house's entrance door and an inscription on the upper façade, in Greek letters fashioned from wrought iron, which reads: JHS – Jesus Salvador de los Hombres (Jesus Saviour of Men).

5. L'església de Sant Llorenç del Gremi de Pagesos de Sant Llorenç i Sant Isidre

This Gothic Church suffered during the Spanish Civil War, and it was Jujol's brother in law, whom got Jujol involved in restoration and design work. The various works of Jujol that can be seen there are later examples of his work. One of which is the 1942 passage of the Holy Sepulcher, made of wood and adorned with a fine layer of gold.

6. El Santuari de Nostra Senyora del Sagrat Cor – the Sanctuary of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart



Another work of Jujols that was built in 1923, is the Church of the Sacred Heart, located in the Vista Bella neighbourhood of Tarragona.

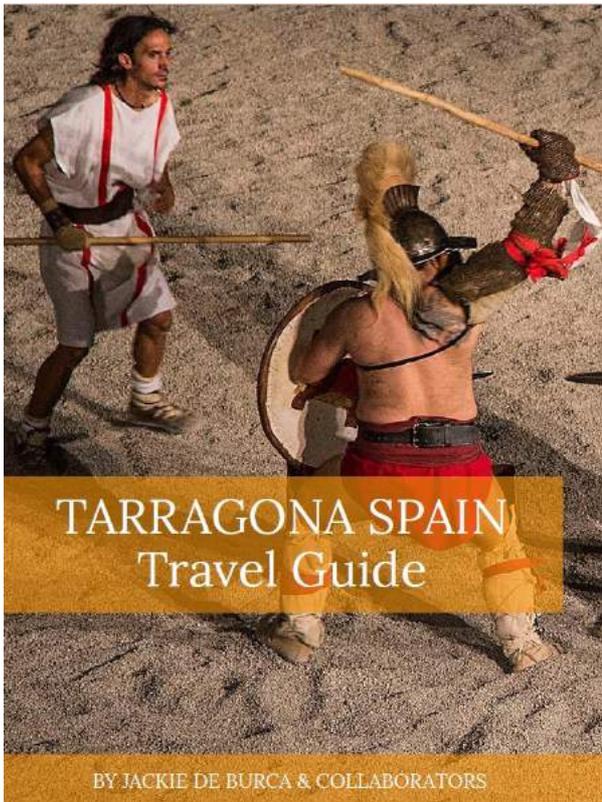
Not only did he was responsible for its structure and architecture, but as he was a Professor at the School of Arts and Craft, Jujol also designed the furniture and decorative elements, including lamps, candle holders, rails, bars and doors.

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Below are the remaining 17 Modernist highlights that you can visit in Tarragona.

7. El Mausoleu de Jaume I
8. L'ostensori de la catedral
9. L'escorxador
10. La Casa Ripoll
11. La Barana del Balcó del Mediterrani
12. La Casa Salas
13. La Casa Bofarull
14. El Convent de les Teresianes (Col·legi Santa Teresa de Jesús)
15. La Casa del doctor Aleu
16. L'edifici de la Cambra Oficial de Comerç, Indústria i Navegació
17. La Casa Rabadà o Casa Vallvé
18. La Casa Porta Mercadé
19. El Mercat Central
20. La fàbrica de la Chartreuse
21. El vell Hotel Continental
22. El rellotge del port
23. La Quinta de Sant Rafael

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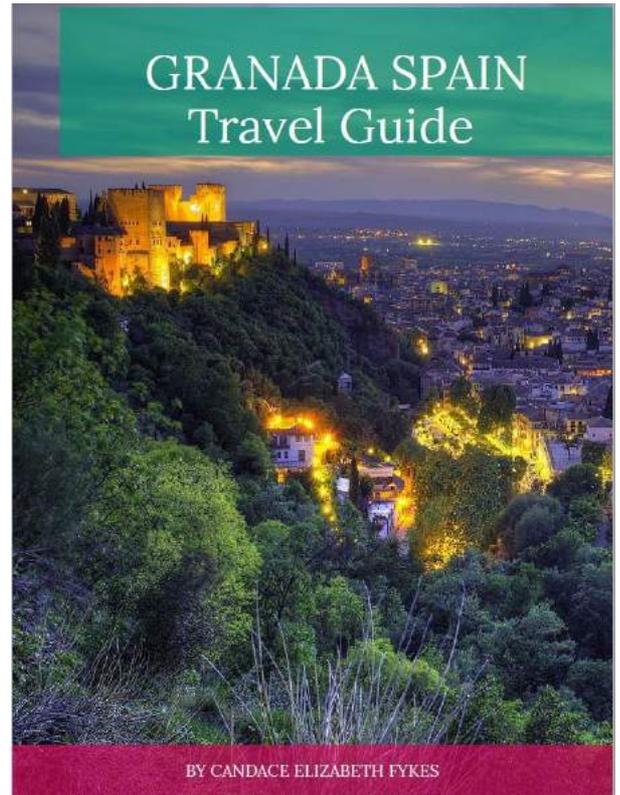


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