



The Best Spring Getaways Near Barcelona

by Isabelle Kliger March 14, 2016



Courtesy Calma Blanca

What city is more ideally situated than [Barcelona](#), nestled between the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean, with the ruggedly beautiful Costa Brava to the north and the golden sandy beaches of the Costa Dorada to the south? Here are our picks for the best weekend



getaways from the city this season.

1. Tarragona

The charming town of Tarragona, situated just over an hour from Barcelona, is known for its Roman ruins and beautifully preserved Old Town, but the main draw is the surrounding coastline, which is dotted with sandy beaches and coves with sparkling waters. The name La Costa Daurada translates as Golden Coast, referring to the fine, golden sand for which the area is famous. Check out the family-friendly beaches at Altafulla or Calafell, or enjoy some privacy at the Cala Fonda naturist cove (better known to locals as Waikiki).

Where to stay: The exclusive five-star [Le Meridien Ra Beach Hotel & Spa](#) enjoys an unbeatable beachfront location overlooking the Mediterranean. Within easy striking distance of Tarragona, Barcelona, the Port Aventura amusement park, and the Penedès and Priorat wine regions, Le Meridien Ra has something for everyone. For those who prefer to stay closer to home, it also offers a bilingual kids' club, lively beach club, and lavish spa. Rooms from \$270.

Where to eat: If Catalan-Italian-Asian fusion sounds like your cup of tea, look no further than [AQ](#). House specials in this lively, laid-back eatery include squid carbonara, and shrimp soup

with curry and coconut.

2. Baix Empordà

If there's one area of Catalonia that has everything it's the Baix Empordà. With its charming fishing villages, stunning coves and beaches, medieval towns and world-class gastronomy, you really can't go wrong. Must-visits include the fishing villages of Calella de Palafrugell, Tamariu, Aiguablava, and Sa Riera, the spectacular medieval towns of Pals and Peratallada, as well as Girona, the region's capital that is most famous for its gastronomy.

Where to stay: Treat yourself to a luxurious weekend at [Mas de Torrent](#). Set in a converted 18th-century farmhouse, this upscale hotel and spa does everything to make its guests feel pampered. The hotel partners with [Own Experiences](#), inviting guests to enjoy once-in-a-lifetime excursions ranging from helicopter rides over the Baix Empordà to an intimate seafood lunch cooked on board a private yacht. Rooms from \$330.

Where to eat: When you're this close to the world's best restaurant, [El Cellar de Can Roca](#), you'd be crazy not to at least try to get a reservation. For something different, [Bo.Tic](#) is a lesser-known but Michelin-starred eatery serving creative cuisine on its fabulous patio. At \$85 per person, the 16-course tasting menu is a steal.

3. Alt Empordà

With its ideal weather conditions and beautiful countryside, the Costa Brava is one of the most idyllic spots for golfing in Spain. [Peralada Golf Club](#) is home to a magnificent championship course and five-star hotel and spa just outside the village of Peralada, only a few miles from Dalí's hometown of Figueres, the French border, and the stunning beaches of the Costa Brava. In addition to golfing, major draws in the area include Peralada Castle, the Dalí museum in Figueres, local wineries and the seaside towns of Roses and Cadaqués.

Where to stay: Hotel Peralada Wine Spa & Golf is a five-star hotel located right on the driving range. When they're not perfecting their swing, guests like to relax on the hot rock beds in the Wine Spa (where the cosmetics are all made from antioxidant grape extracts). Rooms from \$175/night.

Where to eat: Apart from the hotel's excellent Aires restaurant, Peralada is also home to several charming spots. The best is Cal Sagristà, which serves delicious, affordable local cuisine food, ranging from tapas of Iberian ham and anchovies to more elaborate dishes of duck confit and pulled pork (Cal Sagristà, C/ Rodona, 2, 17491, Peralada).

4. Penedès

The Penedès wine country is one of the most interesting wine regions in Spain. Famed primarily for its white wine and

cava, the region's famous wineries include Torres, Codorniu, and Pinord. We suggest taking the [Carretera del Vi](#) (wine road), which winds through the Catalan countryside, past medieval castles and villages, linking 12 of the top Penedès vineyards to the beaches of Garraf.

Where to stay: In addition to the five-star [Hotel Mastinell](#), which also houses an excellent winery of its own, the region is full of authentic Catalan masias (or country houses), such as the charming [Comarquinal Bioresort](#). Set in a 16th century farmhouse surrounded by vineyards, its individually designed rooms combine modern design with authentic rural details. Rooms from \$100.

Where to eat: Family-run [Cal Ton](#) in Vilafranca del Penedès serves local specialties, including cuttlefish with meatballs and fresh seared foie served over mushroom risotto, in its dining room and pleasant garden terrace.

5. Cadaqués

Of all the Costa Brava's delightful seaside towns, none is more enchanting than Cadaqués. Isolated from the rest of the Alt Empordà by the Pení mountain, visitors have to brave several miles of serpentine roads, before descending into the town. Once in Cadaqués, discover the winding cobbled streets of the Old Town, which has gathered an array of artists and intellectuals over the years,

from Salvador Dali to Pablo Picasso and Federico Garcia Lorca.

Where to stay: The charming four-star [Calma Blanca](#) boutique hotel has only seven rooms.

Located at one of the highest points of Cadaqués, it is an oasis of peace and tranquility, with its heated pool and spa, and relaxing terrace overlooking the sea. Rooms from \$400.

Where to eat: Visitors to Cadaqués are spoiled for choice when it comes to food, but the cream of the crop is undoubtedly [Compartir](#). Run by three ex-head chefs of former best restaurant in the world, El Bulli, who also own the outstanding Michelin-starred Disfrutar in Barcelona, Compartir focuses less on elaborate molecular cuisine and more on deliciously mouthwatering Catalan dishes (anchovies with truffle sauce, razor clams). Don't miss the red tuna cannelloni and lobster with chicken sauce.