

# URBAN INNOVATION TOURS IN BARCELONA



As part of the official event program, **Smart City Expo World Congress and Build Tours** offer a **curated series of guided walking tours across Barcelona** designed to connect Congress participants with the city's groundbreaking urban projects, public policies, and innovation ecosystems.

These Urban Innovation Tours provide an immersive experience aligned with SCEWC25 central themes. **Discover our 5 routes and book your tour today!**



# URBAN INNOVATION TOURS IN BARCELONA

The Urban Innovation Tours will explore the real-life application of smart city principles in Barcelona, offering immersive experiences aligned with the Expo's central themes.



## **1. Barcelona's Urbanism, Expos and Olympics to Today's Smart City**

Time: **Nov. 3, 10h**

Place: Montjuïc



## **2. The Old Town Reimagined: History Meets Smart Urbanism**

Time: **Nov. 3, 14h**

Place: Poble Sec, Raval, Gòtic, Born



## **3. Streets for People: Mobility, Public Space, and the Green Axes**

Time: **Nov. 3, 17h**

Place: Eixample



## **4. Urban Renewal: From Industry to Innovation**

Time: **Nov. 6, 14h**

Place: Poble Nou, 22@



## **5. The City and the Sea: Coastal Resilience and the Waterfront**

Time: **Nov. 6, 17h**

Place: Olympic Port, Barceloneta

**Tours curated and guided by:**

**BUILD TOURS**

# Tour 1. Barcelona's Urbanism, Expos and Olympics to Today's Smart City

*Sustainable architecture. Circular design. Green Buildings*

**Location:** Montjuïc | **Start:** Plaça Espanya (towers) - [See map](#)

**End:** Olympic Village | **Time:** November 3, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

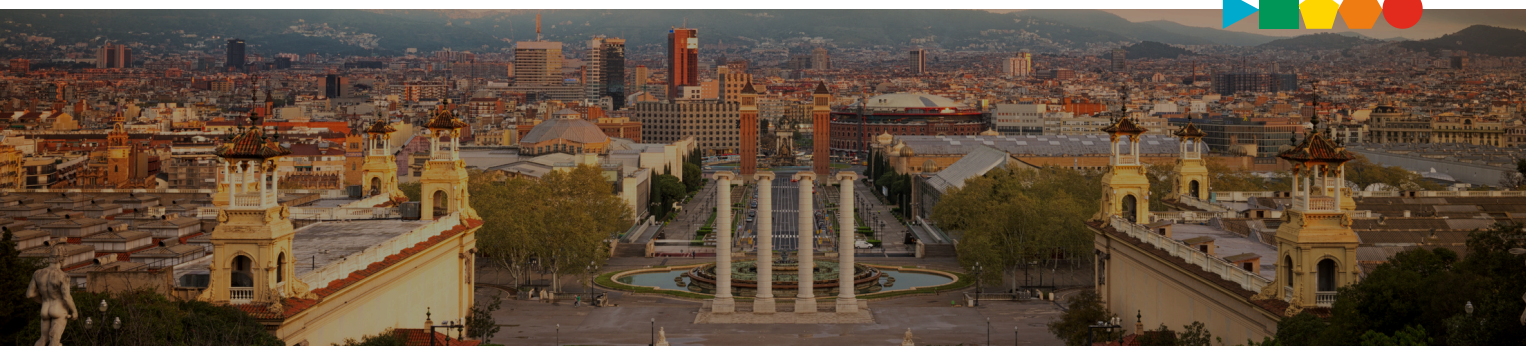
This walking tour explores Barcelona's transformation through its major urban milestones: **the 1929 International Exposition, the 1992 Olympic Games**, and its ongoing evolution into a **Smart City**. We'll uncover how architecture, landscape, and urban planning have shaped the city's sustainable future from industrial reuse and retrofitting to green infrastructure and technological innovation.

This tour reveals how Montjuïc has evolved into a cultural park and a model of resilient urbanism, blending architecture, landscape, and policy. It highlights how Barcelona turns its heritage into a driver of innovation, connecting the past with a **sustainable, Smart City future**.

Our journey ends overlooking the **Olympic Village (1992)**, a model of **urban regeneration** that turned an obsolete industrial waterfront into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood. The district set the stage for Barcelona's ongoing **Smart City initiatives**, emphasizing sustainable mobility, renewable energy, and digital infrastructure, connecting the city's historical evolution to its future vision.

## KEY TOPICS

- Geography and connection to Montjuïc's topography
- The 1929 International Exposition
- The 1992 Olympic transformation
- Industrial heritage and adaptive reuse
- Landscape and public space design
- The Cerdà grid and urban evolution
- The arrival of modern architecture
- From brownfield sites to botanical gardens
- Barcelona's path toward smart urbanism





# Tour 1. Barcelona's Urbanism, Expos and Olympics to Today's Smart City

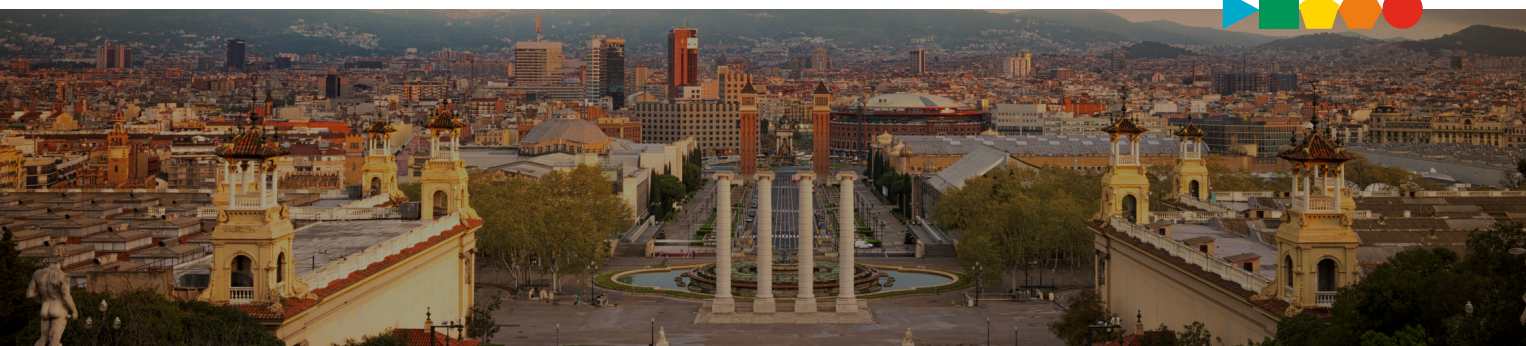
*Sustainable architecture. Circular design. Green Buildings*

## ITINERARY

1. *Plaça d'Espanya*, Josep Maria Jujol & Nicolau Maria Rubió i Tudurí, 1929
2. *Les Arenes*, August Font i Carreras, 1900; Conversion: Richard Rogers Partnership & Alonso Balaguer, 2011
3. *Barcelona International Exposition*, 1929
4. *German Pavilion (Pavelló Alemany)*, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 1929; Reconstruction by Cristian Cirici, Fernando Ramos & Ignasi de Solà-Morales, 1986–1987
5. *Magic Fountain (Font Màgica de Montjuïc)*, Carles Buigas, 1929
6. *CaixaForum Barcelona*, Josep Puig i Cadafalch, 1911 (original Casaramona Factory); Renovation by Arata Isozaki, 2002
7. *Palau Nacional (National Palace)*, Enric Català & Eugenio Cendoya, 1929
8. *Olympic Stadium (Estadi Olímpic Lluís Companys)*, Pere Domènech i Roura, 1929; Renovation: Vittorio Gregotti, 1989–1992
9. *Palau Sant Jordi*, Arata Isozaki, 1990
10. *Torre de Comunicacions de Montjuïc*, Santiago Calatrava, 1992
11. *Jardí Botànic de Barcelona*, Carlos Ferrater, Josep Lluís Canosa & Bet Figueras, 1999
12. *Fundació Joan Miró*, Josep Lluís Sert, 1975

**GUIDE:** Ivan R. Shumkov PhD

**REGISTER FOR THIS TOUR**





# Tour 2. The Old Town Reimagined: History Meets Smart Urbanism

*Heritage preservation. Social innovation. Urban regeneration*

**Location:** Ciutat Vella | **Start:** Sant Antoni Market - [See map](#)

**End:** El Born Market | **Time:** November 3, 14:00 - 16:00

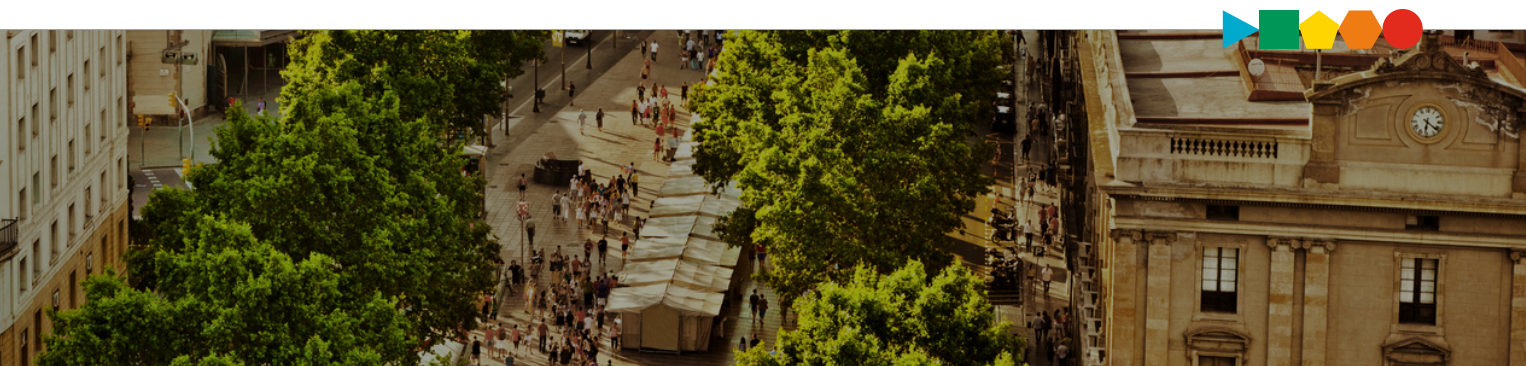
Barcelona's **Ciutat Vella** (literally “Old Town”) reveals how centuries of history can coexist with 21st-century urban innovation. Once dense and deteriorated, the area underwent major transformations beginning in the 1980s, driven by urban “surgery,” adaptive reuse, and social programs that revitalized public spaces and improved living conditions.

This walking tour explores how **heritage preservation**, **cultural institutions**, and **sponge urbanism** strategies have reimagined the city's medieval fabric, balancing authenticity and innovation.

Ending at **El Born**, we reflect on how Barcelona's historic center became a living laboratory for **social and sustainable urbanism**. By integrating digital infrastructure, cultural programs, and architectural conservation, Ciutat Vella exemplifies how cities can evolve — not by erasing the past, but by building upon it.

## KEY TOPICS

- Urban regeneration and housing access
- Culture as a catalyst for urban transformation
- Sponge city principles and permeability
- Evolution from Roman Barcino to contemporary metropolis
- Adaptive reuse of historical buildings
- Urban “surgery” and civic renewal during the 1980s



# Tour 2. The Old Town Reimagined: History Meets Smart Urbanism

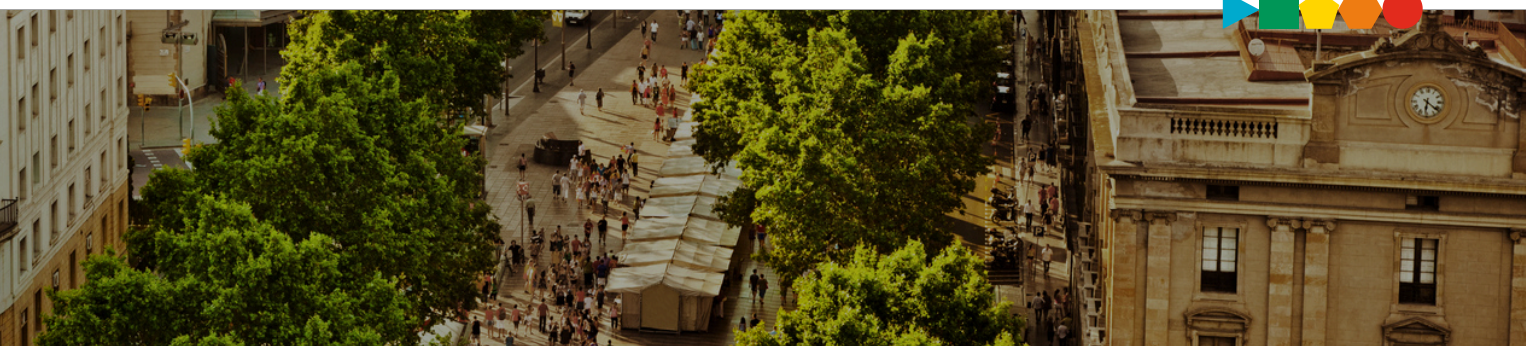
*Heritage preservation. Social innovation. Urban regeneration*

## ITINERARY

1. *Mercat de Sant Antoni*, Antoni Rovira i Trias, 1882; Restoration by Ravetllat Ribas Arquitectes, 2018
2. *Rambla del Raval*, Urban redevelopment, 1998–2000, Barcelona Regional
3. *Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB)*, Original Convent del Carme, 1802; Renovation by Helio Piñón & Albert Viaplana, 1993
4. *Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA)*, Richard Meier & Partners, 1987–1995
5. *University of Barcelona (Historic Campus)*, Elies Rogent, 1863–1882
6. *Mercat de la Boqueria*, Josep Mas i Vila, 1840–1853; Canopy Renovation by Carme Pinós, 2007–2015
7. *La Rambla*, Urban boulevard, 18th century onward
8. *Barcelona Cathedral (Cathedral of the Holy Cross and Saint Eulalia)*, Construction 1298–1448; Neo-Gothic façade by Josep Oriol Mestres, 1888
9. *Mercat de Santa Caterina*, Original market, 1848; Reconstruction by EMBT Enric Miralles & Benedetta Tagliabue, 1997–2005
10. *Ajuntament de Barcelona (City Hall)*, Original Gothic building, Arnau Bargués, 1369–1373; Neoclassical façade by Josep Mas i Vila, 1831
11. *Centre Cívic Pati Llimona*, Ignasi de Solà-Morales, 1998
12. *Basilica de Santa Maria del Mar*, Berenguer de Montagut & Ramon Despuig, 1329–1383
13. *Fossar de les Moreres*, Urban memorial by Carme Fiol, 1989
14. *Mercat del Born (El Born Centre de Cultura i Memòria)*, Josep Fontserè i Mestre, 1876; Restoration by Rafael de Cáceres Zurita & Enric Sòria Badia, 2013

**GUIDE:** Ivan R. Shumkov PhD

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# Tour 3. Streets for People: Mobility, Public Space, and the Green Axes

*Tactical urbanism. Inclusive mobility. Superblocks*

**Location:** Eixample District | **Start:** Arc de Triomf - [See map](#)

**End:** Passeig de Gràcia | **Time:** November 3, 17:00 - 19:00

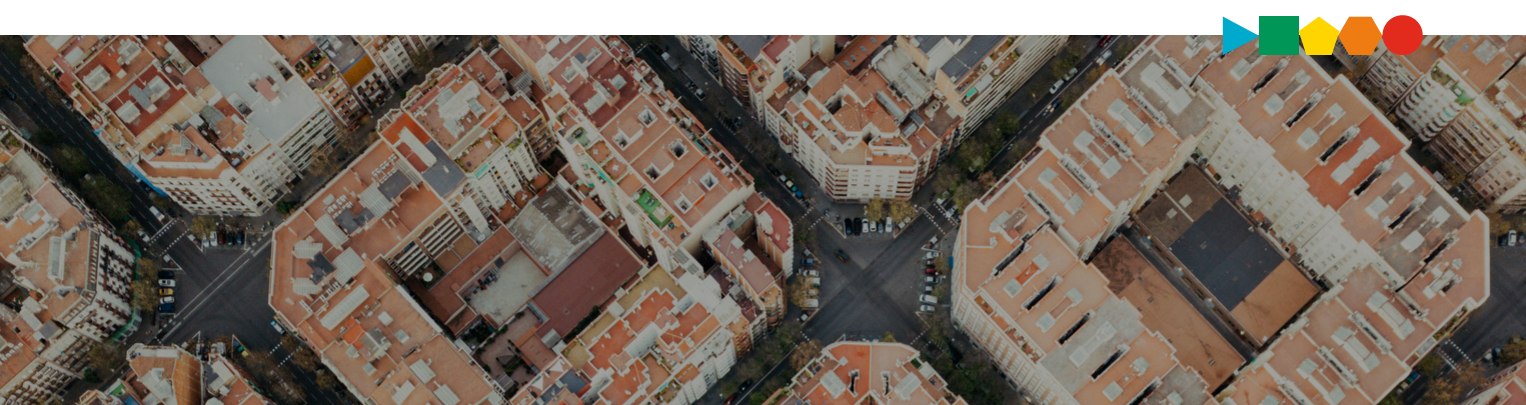
Barcelona's **Eixample**, designed in the 19th century by Ildefons Cerdà, remains one of the world's most visionary urban plans. Originally conceived to ensure sunlight, ventilation, and equality, it has become the framework for the city's **green transformation** in the 21st century.

This walking tour examines how Barcelona is reclaiming its streets for people through **Superblocks (Superilles)**, **Green Axes**, and **inclusive mobility** strategies that prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and social life over cars.

We end in **Passeig de Gràcia**, surrounded by the architectural masterpieces of Modernisme, reflecting on how Cerdà's 19th-century ideals of equality, health, and connectivity have been reinterpreted in the 21st century.

## KEY TOPICS

- Cerdà's 1851 master plan and the principles of hygienic urbanism
- The 1888 International Exposition and urban expansion
- 21st-century interventions for sustainability
- Shared streets and micromobility
- Public participation and urban equity
- Superblocks and Green Axes as models for the future





# Tour 3. Streets for People: Mobility, Public Space, and the Green Axes

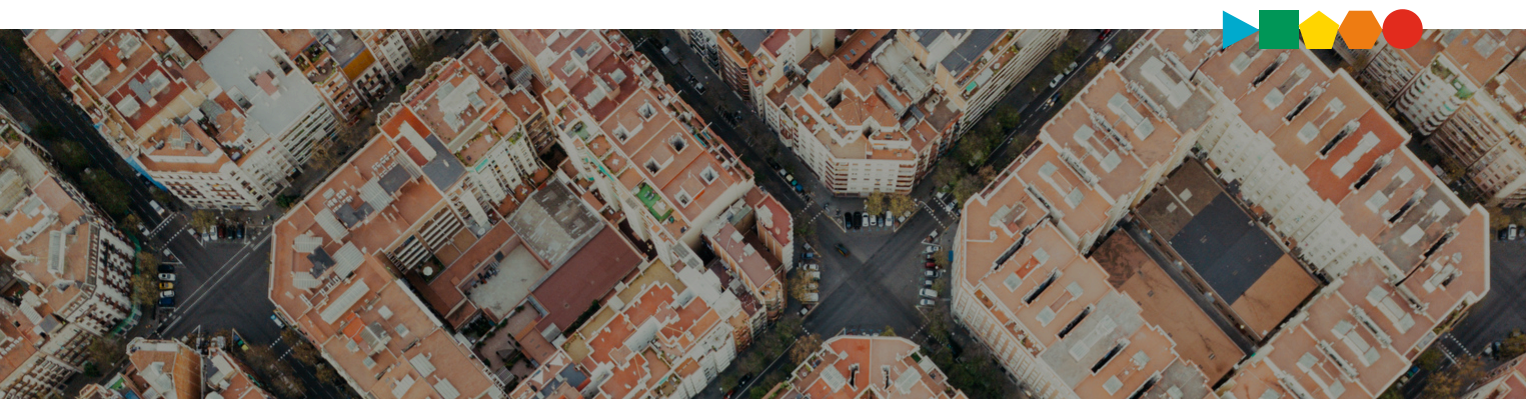
*Tactical urbanism. Inclusive mobility. Superblocks*

## ITINERARY

1. *Arc de Triomf (Triumphal Arch)*, Josep Vilaseca i Casanovas, 1888
2. *Parc de la Ciutadella*, Josep Fontserè i Mestre, 1872–1888; contributions by a young Antoni Gaudí
3. *Passeig de Sant Joan*, Urban redevelopment, 2015–2018, BCQ Arquitectura Barcelona (Bach, Mora & Carreras)
4. *Consell de Cent Street (Carrer del Consell de Cent)*, Green Axes network, pilot completed 2022, Office of Ecological Transition and Urban Ecology (BCN Ajuntament)
5. *Girona Street (Carrer de Girona)*, Superilla Barcelona, 2020–2023, Directorate of Urban Ecology, BCN Ajuntament
6. *Passeig de Gràcia*, Traced in 1827; major urbanization 1850s onward; modernista architecture by Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Antoni Gaudí, Josep Puig i Cadafalch, among others
7. *Avinguda Diagonal*, Ildefons Cerdà, 1859 (plan proposal); contemporary redesign by Manuel de Solà-Morales, 1990s–2000s
8. *Urban Plazas and Landscaping Interventions*, Superilles and Eixos Verds Program, 2016–present
9. *Urban Infrastructure and Smart Mobility*, Citywide mobility and energy network initiatives, 2010s–present 368k 3419

**GUIDE:** Ivan R. Shumkov PhD

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# Tour 4. Urban Renewal: From Industry to Innovation

*Urban transformation. Adaptive reuse. Innovation ecosystems*

**Location:** 22@ Innovation District | **Start:** Disseny Hub - [See map](#)

**End:** Olympic Port | **Time:** November 6, 14:00 - 16:00

Once the industrial heart of Barcelona, **Poblenou** has been reborn as the **22@ Innovation District**, which has become one of the world's most ambitious examples of urban renewal. Launched in 2000, the project reimaged over 200 hectares of obsolete industrial land into a vibrant ecosystem for technology, education, design, and culture.

This walking tour explores how **urban policy, architecture, and public-private collaboration** turned a declining neighborhood into a **model of sustainable economic regeneration**, linking the city's industrial heritage with its digital future.

The tour concludes at the **Olympic Port**, symbolizing Barcelona's continuous evolution from the 1992 Games to the 22@ Innovation District and beyond. Here, the city demonstrates how **urban renewal** can foster **economic transformation**, turning former industrial landscapes into dynamic, inclusive, and creative environments that define the 21st-century metropolis.

## KEY TOPICS

- Urban rezoning and economic incentives
- Adaptive reuse of industrial architecture
- The role of culture, education, and start-ups
- Urban renewal and mixed-use development
- Public-private partnerships
- Sustainable mobility and smart infrastructure



# Tour 4. Urban Renewal: From Industry to Innovation

*Urban transformation. Adaptive reuse. Innovation ecosystems*

## ITINERARY

1. *Plaça de les Glòries Catalanes*, Redesign by Agence Ter & Ana Coello de Llobet, 2015–2023
2. *Mercat dels Encants (Encants Market)*, b720 Fermín Vázquez Arquitectos, 2013
3. *Disseny Hub Barcelona (Design Museum of Barcelona)*, MBM Arquitectes — Oriol Bohigas, David Mackay, Josep Martorell & Oriol Capdevila, 2013
4. *Torre Glòries (formerly Torre Agbar)*, Ateliers Jean Nouvel with b720 Fermín Vázquez Arquitectos, 2005
5. *Edifici Mediapro*, Carlos Ferrater (OAB), Patrick Genard & Xavier Martí, 2008
6. *UPF Campus de la Comunicació – Poblenou*, Josep Benedito & Ramon Valls, 2009
7. *Media-TIC Building, Cloud 9* – Enric Ruiz-Geli, 2010
8. *Can Framis – Fundació Vila Casas*, BAAS Arquitectura – Jordi Badia, 2009
9. *Superilla del Poblenou (Poblenou Superblock)*, Urban concept by Salvador Rueda & Urban Ecology Agency of Barcelona, 2016–2019
10. *Can Ricart*, Original: Josep Oriol i Bernadet & Josep Fontserè i Mestres, 1853–1877; Restoration: Arantxa Manrique & Yaiza Terré, ongoing since 2014
11. *Parc del Centre del Poblenou*, Ateliers Jean Nouvel, 2008
12. *Ecourban Complex*, William McDonough + Partners with Hines, 2004

**GUIDE:** Ivan R. Shumkov PhD

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# Tour 5. The City and the Sea: Coastal Resilience and the Waterfront

*Climate adaptation. Waterfront urbanism. Tourism. Public Space*

**Start:** Barcelona Fish, Olympic Port - [See map](#)

**End:** Moll de la Fusta | **Time:** November 6, 17:00 - 19:00

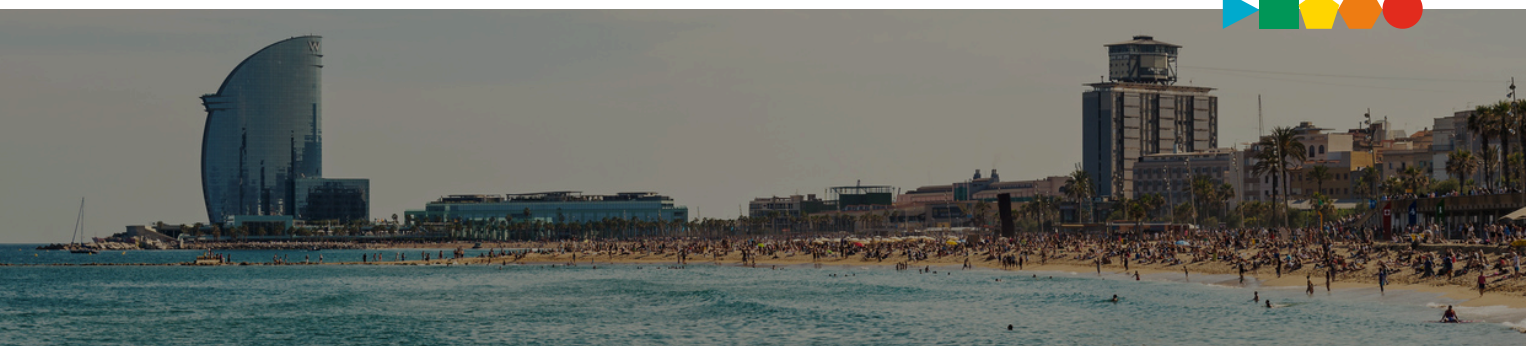
Barcelona's relationship with the sea is one of continual transformation: from an industrial and infrastructural barrier to a **vibrant public waterfront** that balances recreation, tourism, ecology, and resilience. Since the 1980s, the city has reimagined its coastline through bold urban design projects, beginning with the **1992 Olympic Games**, the **2004 Forum of Cultures**, and continuing with recent climate-adaptive and sustainable initiatives. This tour ends at **Moll de la Fusta**, overlooking Port Vell, the starting point of Barcelona's waterfront renaissance.

This tour explores how architecture, landscape design, and public policy have reconnected **the city and the sea**, turning the waterfront into a testing ground for **coastal resilience** and urban innovation.

From industrial docks to smart coastal parks, the city's 40-year transformation demonstrates how **design, infrastructure, and policy** can reconcile urban growth with climate responsibility. Barcelona's coast now serves as a living laboratory for **resilient urbanism**, where **the city and the sea** meet in balance.

## KEY TOPICS

- Coastal resilience and climate adaptation
- Public access and waterfront design
- Integration of mobility and public transit
- Reclaiming and reprogramming the waterfront
- Tourism management and sustainable development



# Tour 5. The City and the Sea: Costal Resilience and the Waterfront

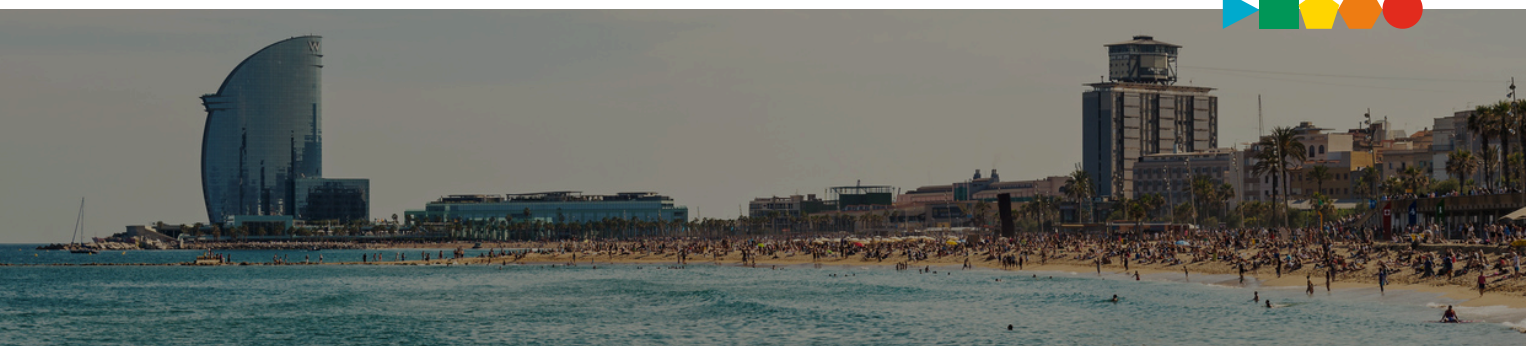
*Climate adaptation. Waterfront urbanism. Tourism. Public Space*

## ITINERARY

1. *Port Olímpic*, MBM Arquitectes — Oriol Bohigas, David Mackay & Josep Martorell, 1989-1992
2. *Hotel Arts and Torre Mapfre*, Hotel Arts: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), 1994; Torre Mapfre: Iñigo Ortiz & Enrique de León, 1992
3. *Peix d'Or (Golden Fish Sculpture)*, Frank Gehry, 1992
4. *Parc del Port Olímpic and AEMET Building*, Álvaro Siza, 1992; AEMET (Meteorological Agency) Building, Álvaro Siza, 1992
5. *Parc de Recerca Biomèdica de Barcelona (PRBB)*, Albert de Pineda, Manuel Brullet & Alfonso de Luna, 2006
6. *Hospital del Mar*, Manuel Brullet & Albert de Pineda, expansion 1999-2005
7. *Parc de la Barceloneta*, Jordi Henrich & Olga Tarrasó, 1996
8. *Barceloneta Waterfront and Beaches*, Urban redevelopment, 1990-1992; upgrades 2004-2020
9. *Casa de la Marina*, José Antonio Coderch & Manuel Valls Vergés, 1951
10. *Passeig Marítim de la Barceloneta*, Julià Espinàs, Olga Tarrasó, Jaume Artigues, Miquel Roig & Jordi Henrich, 1988-1992
11. *Torre Mare Nostrum (Gas Natural Headquarters)*, EMBT — Enric Miralles & Benedetta Tagliabue, 2006
12. *Mercat de la Barceloneta*, Josep Miàs, 2007
13. *Hotel W Barcelona & Platja Sant Sebastià*, Ricardo Bofill Taller de Arquitectura, 2009
14. *Nova Bocana (New Port Entrance)*, Infrastructure redesign and urban realm improvements, 2012-2023, Port de Barcelona Authority
15. *Maremagnum and Port Vell*, Helio Piñón, Albert Viaplana & Rafael Coll, 1995
16. *Moll de la Fusta Wharf*, Manuel de Solà-Morales, 1981-1987
17. *America's Cup Barcelona 2024*, Ongoing urban and infrastructural improvements, 2022-2024

**GUIDE:** Ivan R. Shumkov PhD

**REGISTER FOR THIS TOUR**



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **How do I register for a tour?**

Each tour costs €30 and requires registration to SCEWC. If you don't yet have your event pass, you'll be able to add it during the registration process. If you're already registered for the event, [log in here](#) and click on 'ADD PRODUCT' to include a tour in your current pass.

## **How are the Urban Innovation Tours related to the Smart City Expo World Congress?**

All the tours are curated based on the topics of the congress to bring those ideas into the city. Participants will see how some of the concepts are applied into Barcelona and understand them better.

## **Do I need an architecture or urbanism background to enjoy this?**

Not at all. Our guides make the history and design of each site accessible and engaging for everyone, from architecture enthusiasts to first-time visitors.

## **What should I bring?**

Comfortable walking shoes, water, weather-appropriate clothing, and a camera or phone if you'd like to take photos.

## **Is the tour suitable for groups?**

Yes, it's perfect for individuals and groups. We also offer private tours for companies and organizations.

## **Can I sign up together with my colleagues?**

Yes, we encourage you to sign up with your colleagues, but you'll have to get your tickets individually. We also offer private tour for large groups and companies.

## **Do tours run in all weather?**

Yes. Our tours run rain or shine. In the case of severe weather, we will contact you to reschedule or provide alternative arrangements.

## **How much walking is involved?**

Most tours involve 1.5-2 km of walking at a moderate pace with stops for discussion.

## **Are tours accessible for people with disabilities?**

We strive to make our tours inclusive and accessible. Many of our routes can accommodate wheelchairs or mobility needs. Please contact us in advance so we can adjust the route if needed.

## **Do you provide headsets?**

Yes. All participants on the tours are provided with individual headsets so they can hear the guide clearly, even in noisy or crowded areas.



## In collaboration with **BUILDTOURS**

**All tours are curated and guided by Ivan R. Shumkov PhD, Founder of Build Tours.**

Build Tours' mission is to help people see, understand and experience Architecture, Art and Cities in a profound and unique way. Each tour explores a different part of the city, weaving history, urbanism and architecture in an engaging, story-telling manner. On each tour, we revisit landmarks and uncover some of the city's hidden gems and urban trends.

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**Ivan R. Shumkov PhD**

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### Your PhD Architect Guide

**Dr. Ivan Shumkov** is a New York based architect, urban planner, entrepreneur, and professor. He is the **founder of Build Tours, Build World and Build Academy**, and professor of urban design at **Columbia University GSAPP**. Ivan earned his PhD in Architecture in 2009 at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia and graduated with four master's degrees from ETSA Barcelona, University of Florence, and Harvard University GSD.

Ivan combines his **experience in architecture and urbanism** with his passion for discovering and sharing the **history and secrets of cities**. His tours provoke curiosity, show hidden urban gems, and provide opportunities for experiencing and understanding architecture and urbanism through the eyes of an architect.

Being **fluent in multiple languages**, he can conduct tours in English, Spanish, Catalan, Bulgarian, French and Italian.