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museu de la xocolata

## BARCELONA'S MUSEUM OF CHOCOLATE

*Sweet, fascinating, addictive, artistic... the chocolate world is full of surprises and the Museu de la Xocolata de Barcelona is the best place to discover them. Taking advantage of their guided tours in English, we took a group of ESADE ELC students to a visit that was both a sweet way to practice their language skills and an opportunity to learn about one of the most delightful museums of the city.*

—Created on the initiative of the **Provincial Guild of Bakers and Confectioners of Barcelona**, the Museu de la Xocolata was inaugurated in 2000 in the beautiful building of the old Convent de Sant Agustí (C/Comerç, 36), in the neighbourhood called Borne.

Eleven years later, it has become one of the city's most visited museums, with dozens of daily visitors interested in learning about the history of chocolate and about all kinds of curiosities related to its rich culture. This is our objective when we all gather at the museum's main entrance. Once inside, visitors are welcomed by a guide who will take them on a tour around the museum while

providing information in English. The guide is also in charge of giving each visitor a bar of chocolate, an excellent way of wetting the appetite to better appreciate what comes next. The museum's different halls are devoted to the main producers of chocolate (Theobroma Cacao), to how cocoa paste (the base of chocolate) and cocoa butter (used in cosmetics and in the elaboration of white chocolate) are obtained from cocoa seeds. Visitors will also learn about the process of making chocolate and about its symbolic and magic value for Mayan and Aztec cultures. The following halls explain the arrival of chocolate in Europe, how its formula of elaboration changed to become sweet instead of bitter, as it used



*Very positive and interesting. What I have enjoyed most was seeing the big chocolate sculptures. I think doing this type of activity is very useful for the language.*

**Nuria Martínez Maldonado**  
Preparados Alimenticios S.A  
Accounting Manager

*It was a nice visit and I discovered new things about chocolate. We could use English in a different place from the school and we could speak about other topics.*

**Pilar Hernán García**  
Saicapack  
Commercial Marketing



*It has been a very interesting visit and it met my expectations. I think it is a very good experience to speak English in a different way and in a real situation. What I enjoyed most was sharing a different day with my colleagues and Robyn.*

**Juanjo Díaz Blas**  
Imago Group  
Operations Director



*It is a new way to practice English. I found the chocolate sculptures impressive. I think it is great to do activities like that.*

**José Antonio Muñoz Carrillo**  
Roca  
Buyer



to be eaten by the Aztecs, and how Barcelona became Europe's gateway for chocolate. The halls dedicated to the art and creativity surrounding chocolate are the most interesting and the most admired by visitors. All kinds of huge and detailed chocolate sculptures are displayed in glass showcases. Real works of art made exclusively with chocolate, they represent Gaudi's Dragon, the symbol of Parc Güell; Don Quixote fighting windmills, a bullring, chariot races, the house in the animation film *Up* and Sant Jordi rescuing the princess, among others. Made using different tech-

niques, they are kept in cold cameras during the night to preserve their perfect state. All the sculptures go through periodical checkups at the Guild's Patisserie School, located in the same building. Chocolate sculptures are reminiscent of the *monas*, which is why the museum consecrates several halls to them. Thanks to the information panels and the guide's *savoir faire*, we learn that in 1947, Catalan confectioner Lluís Santapau started what would later become one of Catalunya's most important traditions: the chocolate *monas*. During the 1950s



*What I found most interesting was seeing the raw materials of the chocolate. I like the possibility of sharing communication in another environment.*

**Manolo Ortiz**  
Gates PT Spain  
H.R Manager

*It was so interesting! I have discovered a lot of new things, the most important that you can make a lot of different sculptures with chocolate. I love doing activities in English outside the classroom.*

**Estefanía Cortés**  
Esade ELC  
Student



*What I did enjoy more about the visit was to be all together. I think doing activities in English outside the classroom is a good idea.*

**Manuel González**  
Nestlé  
Key Account Manager



*It was different and also exciting. I've never been in the Chocolate Museum before. I discovered different things. First of all, I discovered chocolate beans. Secondly, that white chocolate comes from butter, so I think it is less healthy than the black one. What I enjoyed most was being with all the group.*

**Anna Vilarrodona Serrat**  
Hospital Clínic  
Doctor Manager



*I think this type of activity gives a different value to the course. What I enjoyed most about the visit was sharing a different atmosphere with my colleagues.*

**Sandra Gigliotti**  
Akzo Nobel Car Refinishes  
Accounting Manager



and the 1960s, confectioners like Joan Giner and Antoni Escribá started exploring the artistic possibilities of the *monas*, an industry that in the 21st century is still booming, a fact backed by different initiatives like the Museu de la Xocolata itself and by the numerous patisserie's windows displaying and selling *monas* during Easter.

On the other hand, the museum's Barcelona Hall shows all kinds of chocolate sculptures representing different symbols of the city, from the Barcino letters near the cathedral to the Canaletas Fountain, the Sacred Family's towers, the streetlights on Las Ramblas and even the city's original recycling con-

tainers! The museum's last hall displays different machines used from the beginning of the industry to the present. But, fortunately for us, the visit does not end here. To top things off, the guide will take visitors across the patio and into an adjoining room to enjoy a generous serving of hot chocolate with *melindros*, a sweet snack to put and end to this delicious visit.

When leaving the museum there is still some energy left to go for a stroll around the Born neighbourhood, where the museum is located, and have a drink in one of the many terraces it boasts. This is indeed an excellent way to placidly end such a sweet morning.