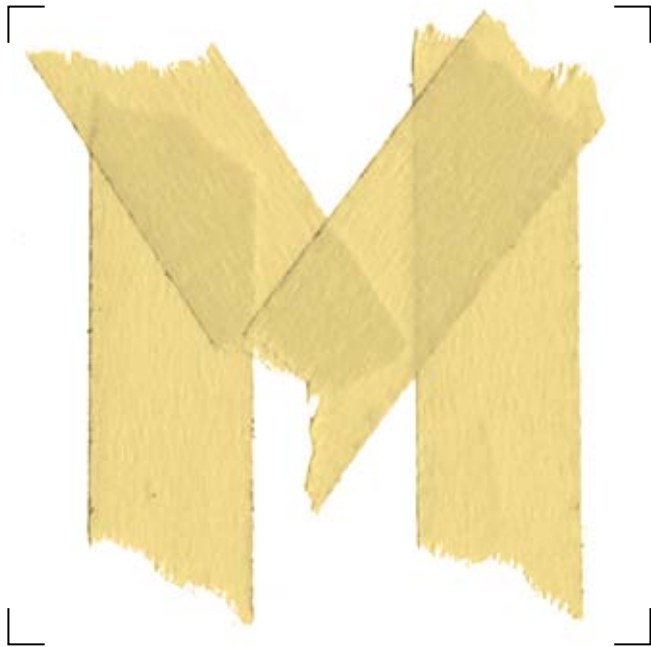


Mercè 10

The festival of barcelona
23 to 26 September

ENGLISH



Ajuntament
de Barcelona

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Many are the visitors who come to Barcelona and quite a few, on a repeat visit, have even succeeded in discovering the most hidden corners of the city. However, only those who have been here during La Mercè can claim to know the city inside-out. This is when the soul of the city is shown in the clearest way. The festival mixes the latest street events, music and dance with deep-rooted traditions, including gunpowder and Mediterranean fireworks. Do you really want to get to know Barcelona? We are waiting for you at La Mercè.

The traditional Mercè is a compendium of Catalan popular culture, from the sardana, from Girona, to castells (towers) from Tarragona, or cercaviles (music-led street marches) that are the modern version of ancient processions. With the restoration of democracy, La Mercè was modernised and new celebrations were invented, such as the Correfoc (Fire Run).

Tradition

THE OPENING PROCESSION (TOC D'INICI)

PLAÇA DE SANT JAUME

Thursday 23 / 7.45 pm

The Barcelona Devils, the City Giants, the Eagle, the Lion, the Dragon Monster... To understand right from the start the festival's main protagonists, those who make up Barcelona's festival imagery, it's best to watch the first event of La Mercè, when all these characters and several more come to the Plaça de Sant Jaume in a procession packed with traditional dances. Don't miss the music, played by an orchestra of forty musicians with traditional instruments such as the flageolet, the *gralla*, flute and drum. They are only heard once a year.

FIRE RUN (CORREFOC)

PORTA CAMBÓ, AV. DE FRANCESC CAMBÓ, PL. DE ANTONI MAURA, VIA LAIETANA, PL. DE ANTONIO LÓPEZ AND CONSOLAT DE MAR.

Saturday 25 / 8 pm

Although it is not one of the festival's older activities (in fact it was created in the first years of democracy and owes its name to the visual poet Joan Brossa), it is one that has the strongest roots among the people of Barcelona. It is the great festival of fire, which starts with the opening of the gates of Hell, from which all kinds of male and female devils and fire beasts pour out, throwing bangers and fireworks, filling the city's central streets with smell of gunpowder and chasing even the boldest participants. As there will be dragons, flames and explosions, it's best to remain on the sidelines as spectator, unless you know the festival well.



Above all, take care

Whoever wants to watch the Correfoc must be aware, above all, that it involves a certain level of danger, so the greatest care must be taken and a number of rules need to be respected. As well as avoiding taking children to the Fire Run (the children's Fire Run exists for them), those attending should cover up as much as possible to avoid burns. We recommend you wear long-sleeved clothes, avoid shorts and use a cap and scarf to cover your neck. Wear clothes made of cotton rather than sintethic materials. Above all, never throw water on the devils, as damp gunpowder is dangerous.

LITTLE DEVILS FIRE RUN

MANRESA, VIA LAIETANA, PL. DE ANTONIO MAURA,
AV. DE FRANCESC CAMBÓ AND PORTA CAMBÓ
Saturday 25 / 6.30 pm

Children feel particularly fascinated by fire and gunpowder, but in reality the Correfoc is an event for adults. This is why this other fire festival, designed for the younger spectators, exists, with less intense pyrotechnic material and where the numerous groups of child devils can feel at home. It is the best way to experience this festival as a family. Nevertheless, as it is still a spectacle based on gunpowder and fire, it should be treated with just as much care.

FESTIVAL MORNING

PL. DE LA MERCÈ, CATHEDRAL AND PL. DE SANT JAUME
Friday 24 / From 8 am on

Those who want to see the most traditional part of the festival will have to get up early, because on September 24, festival of La Mercè, the celebrations start very early.

8 am

Pipers' Morning Call (Matinades de Grallers)

First, a series of musicians armed with their flageolets (*gralla* in Catalan, a traditional instrument) roam up and down the neighbourhood's streets, from the Basilica of La Mercè to the Plaça de Sant Jaume, waking up the residents and inviting everyone to celebrate the festival.

10 am

Blunderbuss Gala (Galejada de Trabucaires)

Then, after the flageolets, the sound of the blunderbusses fired into the air. Centuries ago, they were fired by highwaymen who paid

homage to the patron saint with their arms. Today they are groups of traditionalists who fill the streets of old Barcelona with gunpowder.

11 am

Giants' Morning

You will see them dancing in the Plaça de Sant Jaume, then taking a stroll through the Old Quarter to Montalegre Street. They are the tallest known Barcelona residents. It's well worth seeing them in movement!

12 noon

Authorities Procession (Seguici d'Autoritats)

The authorities of the city and the main figures of festive imagery (the giants and Barcelona beasts) walk from the Basilica of La Mercè to the Plaça de Sant Jaume. There, the Mayor goes up onto the balcony of the City Hall and the giants and Eagle of the city perform their dances, central moment of the festival (12.15 pm).

CASTELLS AND SARDANES

Human towers (*castells*), a tradition originating in Tarragona, and the *sardana* dance, from the counties of Girona, have become two of the most visible signs of Catalan popular culture. As such, they are an essential part of the La Mercè festival.

Human Towers Day

PLAÇA DE SANT JAUME

Friday 24 / 12.30 pm

All the *colles*, or human tower groups of the city, occupy the Plaça de Sant Jaume for an exhibition at the end of the dances of the city's giants and Eagle. It is well worth attending this human tower event. This year, in particular, some of the groups are in outstanding form.

Human Towers Festival

PLAÇA DE SANT JAUME

Sunday 26 / 12 noon

Every year at La Mercè, the Barcelona Human Tower Group invites two of the best tower groups in Catalonia for an exhibition of three *colles*. This year, the Minyons from Terrassa and the Castellers of Vilafranca, two front-ranking groups, will try to set up their most attractive *castells*.

Sardana

Those who are curious to get to know the Catalan popular dance *par excellence* better have several opportunities of enjoying the *sardana* during the festival.

AVINGUDA DE LA CATEDRAL

Thursday 23 / 7 pm

With the *Cobla* (Band) Sant Jordi - Ciutat de Barcelona.

BASILICA OF LA MERCÈ

Thursday 24 / 7 pm

With a concert, at 9 pm, given by the *Cobla* Sant Jordi - Ciutat de Barcelona.

PLAÇA DE SANT JAUME

Saturday 25 / 6 pm

With the *Cobla* del Prat del Llobregat and the *sardana* group, Violetes del Bosc.

AVINGUDA DE LA CATEDRAL - PLA DE LA SEU

Sunday, 26 / 11 am

Competition of *sardana* associations (*colles sardanistes*) and *sardana* dancing with the Federation of Sardana Associations (1 pm).

LA MERCÈ CAVALCADE

*PL. DE CASTELLA, GRAVINA, PELAI, LA RAMBLA, FERRAN,
PL. DE SANT JAUME, JAUME I, VIA LAIETANA, JOAQUIM POU
AND AV. DE LA CATEDRAL*

Friday 24 / 6 pm

The 2010 Chopin Year is the reason for dedicating this year's cavalcade to the world of music. We will hear rhythms of every kind and see in action a lot of street artists, who will devote all their imagination to illustrating the theme of this parade. Those who are part of the city's festival imagery, especially the giants, will be present too. Look out, in this year's festival for the first time, for the recently baptised giants dedicated to Frédéric Chopin and George Sand.

POPULAR CULTURE

Do you know the main characters who make up Barcelona's festival imagery? During the festival they are exhibited at the following sites:

Popular Procession of Barcelona

PALAU DE LA VIRREINA (LA RAMBLA, 99)

From 19 to 26 September

Exhibition of the Giants of Barcelona

THE MANNING PATIO OF THE CASA DE CARITAT

From 12 to 23 September

Exhibition of Fire Dragons and Beasts

VESTIBULE OF THE BARCELONA CITY HALL

From 18 to 25 September

Fireworks

XIIIth INTERNATIONAL FIREWORKS FESTIVAL

BARCELONETA BEACH (THE GAS BREAKWATER)

On 23, 24 and 25 September, at 10 pm

This year, a Valencian, a French and a Canadian fireworks company will compete in the Fireworks Festival, an event that fills the city's sky with light and colour. Barcelona's beaches are the ideal place from which to watch the creations of these gunpowder magicians.

Thursday 23 / 10 pm

Fiatlux (Canada)

Friday 24 / 10 pm

Pyragric (France)

Saturday 25 / 10 pm

Piromusical (Valencia)

MUSICAL FIREWORKS DISPLAY (PIROMUSICAL)

AVINGUDA DE LA REINA MARIA CRISTINA

Sunday 26 / 10 pm

The La Mercè festival traditionally ends with a magnificent spectacle in which fireworks and music combine to create spectacular choreography that can be seen from all parts of the city. However, to make the experience complete, you have to go to the Avinguda de la Reina Maria Cristina and share with the people of Barcelona a spectacle that this year turns on very well-known musical themes, those that have taken on a second life in the voices of other artists who have made versions of them.

Music

BAM (BARCELONA MUSICAL ACTION) FESTIVAL...

VARIOUS STAGES

From 23 to 25 September

If you want to discover a new group or submerge yourself in Barcelona's emerging music scene, you have to attend BAM, a festival that has always served to reveal the city's new talent, but also receives highly attractive visits from elsewhere. This year, BAM has programmed concerts by Goldfrapp, Belle and Sebastian, Els Amics de les Arts and the Surfing Sirls, among others.

...AND OTHER MUSIC

Many other musicians have already triumphed, but they were or could perfectly have been invited to BAM in previous years. Many of them form a part of this year's concert programme, such as Delafé y las Flores Azules. Others performing are rock legends, such as Loquillo, Rebeldes and Josele Santiago; or world musicians, from the Senegalese Daby Touré and Awadi to the Chinese band, Shan Ren. This year, La Mercè has stages set up in the Plaça de Sant Jaume, the Plaça de Catalunya, the Avinguda de la Catedral, the Avinguda de la Reina Maria Cristina and the Forum.

Street entertainment

Circus, street performances, light shows... Barcelona's Main Festival offers us all this and more a number of points in the city, completing the festival with a variety of programmes on specific themes.

PROJECTIONS ON THE FRONT WALL OF THE CITY HALL

PLAÇA DE SANT JAUME
From 23 to 26 September

Stones can take on life and even dance, thanks to the magical effects of these light projections. Every night during the festival the Barcelona City Council Building will reveal a new, hidden face to the public in Plaça de Sant Jaime. └

THE PARK OF THE CREATORS AND DANCE

PARC DE LA CIUTADELLA
From 24 to 26 September

During the festival, the levels of magic and imagination per square metre in the Ciutadella park are so high that inevitably the public is drawn there. It is not surprising: there are fun proposals of every kind, from extravagant inventions to recreational science, not forgetting poetry events and attractive dance shows, such as the one led by the contemporary musician Carles Santos and the city's traditional dance groups. └

THE PARK OF LIGHT

PARC DE LA CIUTADELLA
From 23 to 26 September

And by night, the Ciutadella Park is plunged into complete darkness, to be reborn at once, fully lit up. Here, every night, a number of shows are put on with light as their theme, specifically composed for night-time performances. Projections, aerial shows, plays of light and water... It's well worth staying up to the small hours to see it! └

THE GREAT MONTJUÏC CIRCUS

CASTLE OF MONTJUÏC

From 24 to 26 September

It used to be a military base, but today the cannons of the castle shoot out raucous laughter and the “soldiers” you find inside and in the surrounding gardens have poetry and magic as their only weapons. For yet another year, the Castle of Montjuïc is filled with clowns, acrobats, trapeze artists and numerous circus events of every kind. This year, new picnic areas have been prepared, making it worth going up to the castle and staying the whole day.]

THE NEW LIFE OF THE DOG TRACK (CANÒDROM)

CANÒDROM

From 24 to 25 September

Almost every year, a new space recovered for the enjoyment of the public is added to the La Mercè festival, effectively marking its introduction into society. This year it's the turn of the former Dog Track on the Avinguda de la Meridiana, which will become one of the centres of contemporary art in the city. During this year's festival, it hosts the performances of the street music band Always Drinking Marching Band and the Catalan company Artristras and its *Pandora* spectacle, performed on the nights 24 and 25 september.]

Trip to Dakar

DAKAR, INVITED CITY

We have seen how much the people of Barcelona love their traditions and fill the La Mercè festival with them. However, almost as much as its traditions, they adore getting to know other cultures

and soaking up the traditions of their neighbours and of distant countries. Thus, every year the Festival has a special guest, which this year is Senegal's capital, Dakar. The activities of La Mercè involving its honoured guest are concentrated in three spaces.

The Avinguda de la Catedral and the Plaça de Catalunya

You will be able to listen to a good number of concerts featuring well-known Senegalese musicians, like Daby Touré and his fusion of African rhythms, jazz, pop and funk, Awadi and his hip-hop with a powerful social content or Doudou N'diaye Rose, king of the traditional *sabar* drum.

The Greek Theatre

If you go up to Montjuïc, you will find a piece of Africa on the side of the hill. The Greek amphitheatre and its gardens not only welcome dance, percussion and hip-hop performances by Dakar musicians and members of the Senegalese community living in Catalonia, but also put on workshops, where we can learn rudiments of the Wolof language, listen to stories or watch Dakar artists creating their works.

Sunday, 26 september there is also a *sabar* party, a traditional Senegalese celebration in which the frenetic rhythm of the *sabar* drums enters into a singular dialogue with the bodies of the dancers.

The Ciutadella park

On 24 September, don't miss *Voyage through dance*, the performance put on in the Ciutadella park. You will be able to travel through the history and various styles of dance. In the same park, you can see the members of the Dakar dance company Tenane perform every day and you can attend a Senegalese fashion parade.]

Museums in the Festival

Many of the city's museums open their doors free of charge on La Mercè, Friday 24 September, and others organise activities on various days during the festival. It is well worth keeping an eye on the programmes of these museums and cultural facilities of the city:

[Photographic Archive of Barcelona](#)

CaixaForum

[Castle of Montjuïc](#)

Barcelona Contemporary Culture Centre (CCCB)

[Barcelona Botanical Garden](#)

The Aquarium

[Barbier-Mueller Museum of Pre-Colombian Art](#)

Museum of Archaeology of Catalonia

[Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art \(MACBA\)](#)

Museum of Music

[Museum of the History of Catalonia](#)

Frederic Marès Museum

[Maritime Museum](#)

National Art Museum of Catalonia (MNAC)

[Poble Espanyol, Montjuïc](#)

Attention!

These are just some of the events at La Mercè 2010.
You can find many more in the complete programme
of Barcelona's Main Festival.

Further information:

- **On the internet:**

Consult the web sites www.bcn.cat/merce and www.bcn.cat/canalcultura

- **By phone:**

Call 010 all day long.

€ 0.46 to connect the call plus € 0.06 a minute charged in seconds.

If you need adapted information for people suffering a hearing incapacity, send an SMS to 93 486 00 98.

- **At the information offices:**

Tiquet Rambles

Palau de la Virreina (La Rambla, 99), seven days a week,
from 10 am to 8.30 pm.

