



CU/AN 338 BARCELONA: THE CULINARY CITY

IES Abroad Barcelona

DESCRIPTION: In the early 2000s, the *NY Times* has called Spain “the new France”. Since then, Barcelona has become known as a culinary capital of the world, thanks in large part to the legacy of chef Ferran Adrià and his followers. How can we explain this revolution? This course will trace the legacy of Barcelona’s culinary culture, dating back to its history within Catalunya and the Mediterranean region, and following it all the way to the city’s current status as a modern-day influential gastronomic and culinary hub.

As we analyze the long, rich history of food culture in Barcelona, we will discover that in traditional Mediterranean cultures, food is about much more than what’s on the plate, hence allowing us to establish multiple connections to culture, lifestyle, and rituals. This historical and cultural understanding will provide us with a framework to analyze current topics and trends in Barcelona’s contemporary food scene, such as the avant-garde, from Ferran Adrià and his influence over chefs locally and around the world; the changing role of the chef in society; the role of gender in food; or chocolate as an example of the globalization of food. We will also take on the pressing issue of sustainability in the food industry. The course will make full use of the city of Barcelona, which we will explore as a social and cultural space for the development of the local food culture.

This course engages with the IES Abroad Global Pillars of sustainable living, equitable living, and human wellbeing. The course includes the discussion of relevant topics such as: accessibility to food; sustainable shopping/cooking/eating habits; alternative food movements (such as plant-based eating, farmers markets, and a long etc.); food justice; gender equality in the food industry; and critical historical perspectives of class structure and food. The course does so through methodologies that engage with the pillars such as: in-class group debates and discussions, guest speakers (Slow Food Barcelona and Mujeres en Gastronomía), field studies to local markets, and assignments through which students reflect on their own eating and shopping habits and how to improve them, such as designing a more sustainable version of their favorite recipe.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

INSTRUCTOR:

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: Students share the cost of the culinary workshop and will be charged for a textbook.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- **Lectures:** In each class the instructor will provide the students with the background to the session topic through a lecture, which will summarize the theoretical information of the session, and provide some key concepts related to the readings.
- **Class Discussion:** A significant part of the course will consist of the discussion of key themes from course readings. Students **must** come to class having completed and reflected on the assigned readings. The required readings for each class will be available on Moodle.
- **Guest speakers:** We will have the opportunity to receive some prominent local figures in our classroom as guest speakers.
- **Course-related trips:** See *Course-Related Trips* section for detailed information.
- **Student presentations:** In addition to the mandatory graded oral presentation, students will be asked to give brief presentations on readings or class discussions. Sometimes these may be in small groups. These will count towards the participation grade.



REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Class participation - 10%
- Midterm Exam - 20%
- Final Observation Essay 20%
- Food Video 20%
- Oral presentation 20%
- Quizzes 10% (2 quizzes, 5% each)

Class Participation

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings, core issues and questions proposed by the instructor. Participation is more than just attending class; students should show that they have done the readings and are thinking critically, based on the core concepts used throughout the course.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will consist of brief essay questions on the topics covered up until the date of the midterm. Students will be expected to answer the questions in full paragraphs with an essay structure, proper grammar and punctuation.

Oral Presentation

Students will present to class orally, in a 10-minute presentation, on a Catalan dish/recipe of choice, including: history and traditions of the dish, preparation techniques, consumption habits, evolution of the dish to modern times, and ways in which they could improve the sustainability of it, throughout the entire system (sourcing ingredients, preparation, consumption).

Food Video

In pairs, students will prepare a 5-minute video in which they prepare and taste a Catalan food/recipe of choice. The information given will not only focus on the sensory aspects of the dish, but also its preparation techniques, sustainability, sourcing, and cultural consumption habits.

Final Observation Essay

This assignment is a course conclusion which invites students to reflect on the entire semester, in which we will have explored Barcelona, present and past, through the lens of food as a cultural system, i.e. a language through which identity, history, and social relations are expressed. Students will combine ethnographic observation with scholarly research and critical reflection to examine how culinary aspects in Barcelona reflect larger questions such as cultural and national identity, globalization, and cultural change. Students will use their ethnographic observations, in combination with scholarly research and critical reflection, to reveal how we perform, negotiate, and experience culture in everyday contexts of eating, cooking, and gathering around food. Some class time in previous sessions will be devoted to preparing for and workshoping this assignment. The final essay will be written in class. Students will be allowed to bring in citations and source references.

Requirements:

Length: 2-3 pages

Sources: Minimum of 3 scholarly sources

Observation: students will conduct at least three field observations of distinct culinary sites or practices in Barcelona. Examples include but are not limited to:

a neighborhood market

A café, bar or restaurant during peak and off hours

A school, community kitchen, urban garden, or cooperative project

A traditional festival or food-centered ritual



Everyday conversations or interactions observed around the table as well as around specific foods such as olive oil, wine, or other local products

During these visits, students should take detailed field notes describing social interactions and symbolic cues.

Quizzes

The course will also include two brief quizzes on Moodle, to ensure that students are keeping up with course readings and content.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Establish connections and analyze the relations between food, history, culture, and identities in the Catalan/Spanish case.
- Interpret aspects of local culture that relate to food, from cultivation to preparation to consumption, to the rituals and traditions that surround it.
- Evaluate issues of sustainability in local food practices.
- Formulate comparative assessments of the food-related practices of their home culture and local culture.
- Produce a historical timeline of culinary Barcelona, from the Middle Ages to the present day.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, attendance is required for all IES Barcelona classes, including course-related excursions. If a student misses more than three classes in any course without justification, 3 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Seven unjustified absences in any course will result in a failing grade. Absences will only be justified, and assessed work, including exams, tests and presentations rescheduled, in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Required Reading
Session 1	Course introduction to Barcelona's culinary history and culture.	• Goulding, M. (2016). <i>Grape, Olive, Pig: Deep Travels Through Spain's Food Culture. Barcelona</i> (pp. 1-39). Harper Collins.
Session 2	Introduction cont. The current Catalan place in culinary Spain.	• Song, R. & Riera, A. (2019). <i>A Taste of Barcelona. At the Top of the Gastronomic World</i> (pp. 7-36). Rowman & Littlefield.
Session 3	The Middle Ages: The Golden Age of Catalan cuisine and the origin of Barcelona's expansion Presentation dates assigned.	• Song, R. & Riera, A. (2019). <i>A Taste of Barcelona. Medieval Cooking in Catalonia</i> (pp. 37-68). Rowman & Littlefield.
Session 4	Markets I: visit to a city market	• Miller, M. (2015). <i>Feeding Barcelona 1714-1975. City of Markets.</i> (pp. 27-51). LSU Press.

Session 5	Markets II: La Boqueria: From one of Europe's oldest markets to the globalized tourist hub of today	Song, R. & Riera, A. (2019). <i>A Taste of Barcelona</i>. The Greatest Fresh Markets in the World. (pp. 107-130). Rowman & Littlefield.
Session 6	Quiz #1 EVOO tasting	Miller, M. (2015). <i>Feeding Barcelona 1714-1975</i>. Mirrors of Urban Growth. (pp. 52-79). LSU Press
Session 7	Chocolate in Barcelona: from New World import to globalized food. Course-related trip to the Museu de la Xocolata	Claval, P. & Jourdain-Annequin, C. (2018). The Dynamics of Mediterranean Food Cultures in Periods of Globalization. <i>Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies</i>, 4 (3), 225-242.
Session 8	Nineteenth century Barcelona.	Song, R. & Riera, A. (2019). <i>A Taste of Barcelona</i>. Cooking Up a Nation. (pp. 69-106). Rowman & Littlefield.
Session 9	Culinary Tourism in Barcelona	Mercer, L. & Song, R. (2020) <i>Catalanidad in the Kitchen: Tourism, Gastronomy and Identity in Modern and Contemporary Barcelona</i>, <i>Bulletin of Spanish Studies</i>, 97(4), 659-680, DOI: 10.1080/14753820.2020.1699346
Session 10	The Barcelona revolution: Ferran Adria. Quiz #2	Lubow, A. (2003, August 10). A Laboratory of Taste. <i>The New York Times</i> . https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/10/magazine/a-laboratory-of-taste.html
Session 11	Presentations I	
Session 12	Review for Midterm exam	
Session 13	Midterm exam	
Session 14	Culinary workshop field study	
Session 15	Presentations II	
Session 16	Contemporary and Alternative Food Movements and Sustainability. Guided visit to the fishing port and fish auction. Sustainable fishing with <i>El Peix al Plat</i> .	McBride, A. & Flore, R. (2019). The Changing Role of the Chef: A Dialogue. <i>International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science</i> 17(69):100157 DOI 10.1016/j.ijgfs.2019.100157

Session 17	Presentations III	
Session 18	Contemporary Culinary Issues cont. The changing role of the chef in contemporary society. Contemporary Culinary Issues: The rise of vegan and vegetarianism, organic farming, the first city farmers' markets and CSAs. Alternative Movements in the contemporary foodscape to broach sustainability: Food Waste, Co-ops, the Slow movement, etc.	• Grauerholz, L. & Owens N. (2015). Alternative Food Movements. In Wright, J. (ed). <i>International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences</i> 1 (pp. 566-572). http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.64133-8,
Session 19	Contemporary Culinary Issues: Women in the food scene. Guest speaker Tara Stevens	• Harris, D. and Giuffre, P. (2015). Home to Haute. In <i>Taking the Heat: Women Chefs and Gender Inequality in the Professional Kitchen</i>. Rutgers University Press (pp. 1-42).
Session 20	The role of the chef: changes in how chefs take their place in society. José Andrés and World Central Kitchen.	• McBride, A. & Flore. R. (2019). The Changing Role of the Chef: A Dialogue. <i>International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science</i> 17(69):100157 DOI10.1016/j.ijgfs.2019.100157
Session 21	Presentations IV	
Session 22	The present-day culinary scene in Barcelona Guest speaker	
Session 23	Workshop session for final essays	
Session 24	Final observation essay due	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Visit to a city market
- La Boquería
- Museu de la Xocolata
- Guided visit to the fishing port and fish auction

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Claval, P. & Jourdain-Annequin, C. (2018). The Dynamics of Mediterranean Food Cultures in Periods of Globalization. *Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 4 (3), 225-242.
- Goulding, M. (2016). Grape, Olive, Pig: Deep Travels Through Spain's Food Culture. *Barcelona* (pp. 1-39). Harper Collins.

- Grauerholz, L. & Owens N. (2015). Alternative Food Movements. In Wright, J. (ed). *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* 1 (pp. 566-572). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.64133-8>,
- Harris, D. and Giuffre, P. (2015). Home to Haute. In *Taking the Heat: Women Chefs and Gender Inequality in the Professional Kitchen*. Rutgers University Press (pp. 1-42).
- Lubow, A. (2003, August 10). A Laboratory of Taste. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/10/magazine/a-laboratory-of-taste.html>
- Mercer, L. & Song, R. (2020). *Catalanidad* in the Kitchen: Tourism, Gastronomy and Identity in Modern and Contemporary Barcelona, *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 97(4), 659-680, DOI: [10.1080/14753820.2020.1699346](https://doi.org/10.1080/14753820.2020.1699346)
- McBride, A. & Flore, R. (2019). The Changing Role of the Chef: A Dialogue. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science* 17(69):100157 DOI [10.1016/j.ijgfs.2019.100157](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2019.100157)
- Miller, M. (2015). Feeding Barcelona 1714-1975. *City of Markets*. (pp. 27-51). LSU Press.
- Simonetti, L. & Petrini, C. (2012). The Ideology of Slow Food. *Journal of European Studies* 42(2), 168-189, DOI: [10.1177/0047244112436908](https://doi.org/10.1177/0047244112436908)
- Song, R. & Riera, A. (2019). A Taste of Barcelona. *At the Top of the Gastronomic World*. Rowman & Littlefield.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Abrams, J. (2013). Mise en Plate: The scenographic imagination and the contemporary restaurant. *Performance Research*, 18(3), 7-14.
- Anderson, L. (2013). *Cooking Up the Nation: Spanish Culinary Texts and Nationalization in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century*. Tamesis.
- Andrews, C. (2010). *Ferran: The Inside Story of El Bulli and the Man Who Reinvented Food*. Phaidon.
- Andrews, C. (1999). *Catalan Cuisine*. Harvard Common Press.
- Beaugé, B. (2012). On the Idea of Novelty in Cuisine: A Brief Historical Insight. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science* 1(1), 5-14.
- Bernardo, M., Escalante, R., Arbussa, A. (2018). Analysis of the Catalan Haute Cuisine Success: The Role of Education and Network Creation. *Journal of Evolutionary Studies in Business* 3 (1), 84-111.
- Bou, E. (2020). Food and the Everyday in Spain. Immigration and Culinary Renovation. *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 97 (4), 681-700.
- Dimitrovski, D. & Crespi Vallbona, M. (2018). Urban Food Markets in the Context of a Tourist Attraction – La Boqueria Market in Barcelona, Spain. *Tourism Geographies*, 20(3), 397-417.
- Graham, M. & Skowronek, R. (2016). Chocolate on the Borderlands of New Spain. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*. 20 (4), 645-665.
- Haddaji, M., Albors-Garrigós, J. and García-Segovia, P. (2017). Women Chefs' Experience: Kitchen Barriers and Success Factors. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science* 9, 49-54.
- Joary, J.P. & Adrià, F. (2014). *Ferran Adrià and El Bulli. The Art, The Philosophy, the Gastronomy*. Overlook Press.
- Maurer, D. (2002). *Vegetarianism: Movement or Moment?* Philadelphia Temple University Press.
- Nicolau-Nos, R. & Pujol-Andrea, J. (2007). Urbanization and Dietary Change in Mediterranean Europe: Barcelona, 1870-1935. *Food and the City in Europe Since 1800*. In Lummel, P Derek et. Al. (eds.). Ashgate Publishing, (pp. 39 – 49).
- Roca, J. (2016). *Roots. Essential Catalan Cuisine According to El Celler de Can Roca*. Libbooks.
- Svejnova, S., Mazza, C. & Planelles, M. (2007). Cooking up Change in Haute Cuisine: Ferran Adrià as an Institutional Entrepreneur. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 28 (5), 539-561.