

NOVELS, ESSAYS AND STORIES SET IN BARCELONA

CARLOS RUIZ ZAFÓN

Biography: Based in Los Ángeles since 1993, he is considered one of the most widely read Spanish writers in the world. In addition to his literary career as a novelist, he works as a scriptwriter. *The Prince of Mist (El Príncipe de la Niebla)* - Edebé Prize – was his first work, followed by *September Lights (Las Luces de Septiembre)* and *Marina*. In 2001 he published the novel *The Shadow of the Wind (La Sombra del Viento)*, which became an immediate literary phenomenon worldwide. He has published a million copies of his most recent book, *The Angel's Game (El Juego del Ángel)*. His works have been translated into more than forty languages, and he has obtained numerous prizes and a readership of millions in the five continents.

THE SHADOW OF THE WIND (LA SOMBRA DEL VIENTO)

The Shadow of the Wind (La Sombra del Viento) is a historical novel set in Barcelona in the first half of the 20th century, from the Modernist period to the post-Spanish civil war era. One early morning of 1945, a boy is taken by his father to a mysterious place hidden in the heart of the old city, The Cemetery of Forgotten Books, where the boy, Daniel Sempere, will find a cursed book that will change the course of his life.

MARINA (MARINA)

Marina is a fantasy novel whose action takes place in Barcelona in the second half of the 20th century. The novel tells the story of Oscar Draí, a boarding school student who meets Marina, a beautiful and enigmatic girl, and is involved with her in a terrifying investigation. Intrigue, mystery and a love story are the main ingredients of the novel. Spanish critics have characterized it as a gruesome and fantastic, in addition to beautiful, story. Some of its scenes belong to the literature of terror and intrigue.

THE ANGEL'S GAME (EL JUEGO DEL ÁNGEL)

This novel, published in 2008, is set in Barcelona in the roaring twenties. A young writer, obsessed with an impossible love, gets a substantial offer by a mysterious publisher to write a book like nothing written before. The author weaves intrigue, romance, tragedy and friendship into this story.

JAUME SOBREQUES

Biography: He was born in Gerona in 1943. This history professor began his political career in 1977 as a senator. In 1982 he was appointed director of the Museu d'Història de Catalunya (Museum of the History of Catalonia).

HISTORY OF BARCELONA (HISTORIA DE BARCELONA)

In scarcely 300 pages, Jaume Sobrequés manages to summarize with great success the long historical process that has transformed a small Roman colony founded by the emperor Augustus into the most cosmopolitan metropolis in the Mediterranean area in the early 21st century: Barcelona. He expatiates on the main social, economic, human and, most importantly, urban changes undergone by the city in the course of its history, revealing the imprint left by many generations of Barcelona inhabitants (born in the city or coming from other places) whose work and imagination helped build, stone by stone, street after street, the open city we know today.

COLM TÓIBÍN

Biography: An Irish writer born in Enniscorthy, a town near Dublin. In his twenties, he left for Barcelona, where he worked as an English teacher. He has written the following non-fiction books: *Homage to Barcelona* (1990), *The Sign of the Cross* (1994) and *Love in a Dark Time* (2002). Among his novels are: *The South* (1990), *The Store of the Night* (1996) and *The Master* (2004). He works as a critic for the Irish Times.

HOMAGE TO BARCELONA (HOMENAJE A BARCELONA)

Homage to Barcelona (Homenaje a Barcelona) is an essay commissioned by a New York publishing house in the eighties. Tóibín elaborates on a number of cultural, social, political and historical aspects regarding the city. This book is an interesting historical guide to delve into Catalan culture. Some of the chapters are: A History of the Gothic Quarter, Picasso, Miró, the Spanish Civil War, Food and Sex, and the Olympic Games.

ROBERT HUGHES

Biography: Robert Hughes is an Australian writer and art critic born in 1938 in the city of Sydney. In the year 1970 he moved to New York, where he has held the position of art critic for Time magazine up to the present time. Among many prizes awarded to Robert Hughes stands out the El Brusi prize for literature and communication granted by Barcelona Cultural Olympics. Some of his works: *The fatal Dhore*, *Lucian Freud Paintings*, *Nothing if Not Critical*, *Barcelona*, *Goya*, etc.

BARCELONA (BARCELONA)

With all the wit and verve of his famous art criticism, with all the vehemence of his account of the colonization of Australia, *The Fatal Shore*, Robert Hughes undertakes in Barcelona an impassioned and passionate biography – all through its history - of a city he first visited in 1966, succumbing to its enticement for the rest of his life. This book has become recommended reading in order to get acquainted with the history and culture of Barcelona.

MANUEL VÁZQUEZ MONTALBÁN

Biography: Manuel Vázquez Montalbán was born in Barcelona in 1939 and died in Bangkok (Thailand), in 2003. He defined himself as a journalist, novelist, poet, essay writer, anthologist, prologuist, humorist, critic, gastronomist, Barcelona football club supporter and generally prolific person, and he really stood out in all those fields, being one of the most renowned authors of Spanish contemporary poetry.

THE SOUTH SEA COMPANY (LOS MARES DEL SUR)

Planeta Prize 1979 and Prix International de Littérature policière 1981. In the Barcelona of 1979 Stuart Pedrell, a prominent businessman, is found dead when everybody thought he was on a business trip to Polynesia. Detective Pepe Carvalho has to investigate the crime and, step by step, becomes acquainted with the peculiar personality of the victim and his obsessive desire to follow the example of painter Gauguin and leave for the South Seas.

AN OLIMPIC DEATH (SABOTAJE OLÍMPICO)

Detective Carvalho goes once more into action, living adventures in the Barcelona of the 1992 Olympics in this satirical farce.

EDUARDO MENDOZA

Biography: He was born in Barcelona in 1943; he studied law and lived for almost ten years in New York, where he moved to work as a United Nations interpreter. In 1975 he published his first novel, which would make him famous, *The Truth about the Savolta Case (La verdad sobre el caso Savolta)*; the novel was made into a movie by Antonio Drove. In all likelihood, his most widely acclaimed novel is *The City of Marvels (La Ciudad de los Prodigios)*, depicting the social and urban evolution of Barcelona in the period between the two universal exhibitions of 1888 and 1929, which was also adapted to the screen by Mario Camus.

THE MYSTERY OF THE ENCHANTED CRYPT (EL MISTERIO DE LA CRIPTA EMBRUJADA)

The mysterious disappearance of several schoolgirls from the convent school *Colegio de las Madres Lazaristas de San Gervasio* is the beginning of an adventurous investigation carried out by an asylum inmate who, forced to become a detective, gets involved in all sorts of skulduggery and, after some narrow escapes, reveals the shady goings-on of a group of powerful people.

NO WORD FROM GURB (SIN NOTICIAS DE GURB)

This book tells the story of the exploratory mission of an extraterrestrial (Gurb) that has disappeared in the city of Barcelona after having assumed the shape of a famous Spanish singer. The story is not told from the point of view of Gurb, but from the point of view of one of his alien partners, who goes in search of Gurb and takes on the guise of different characters as the plot unfolds. His diary is the real guide of the narrative. His remarks on different aspects of everyday life and the ensuing parodic effect are important elements of the book.

ILDEFONSO FALCONES

Biography: He is a Catalan lawyer specialized in Civil Law. *The Cathedral of the Sea* is his first novel. The book hit the stores in 2006 and became the best selling novel of the year both in the Catalan and Spanish languages, with a million books sold just in Spain.

THE CATHEDRAL OF THE SEA (LA CATEDRAL DEL MAR)

This novel, set in the 14th century, is an account of the life of Arnau Estanyol, the son of an escaped serf living in Barcelona. In the course of an entrancing plot, we follow Aranu's progress as he tries to go ahead and achieve social success.

PABLO TUSSET

Biography: A writer born in Barcelona in the year 1965. He was awarded the Tigre Juan prize for his work, *The Best Thing That Can Happen to a Croissant (Lo mejor que le puede pasar a un cruasán)*, which was a remarkable success. This novel was adapted to the screen by director Paco Mir.

THE BEST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN TO A CROISSANT (LO MEJOR QUE LE PUEDE PASAR A UN CRUASÁN)

The Best Thing That Can Happen to a Croissant is the first novel written by author Pablo Tusset, and it was published in 2001. It tells the story of Pablo José Miralles, an ill-adjusted and lazy man in his thirties faced with a puzzle that he has to solve in Barcelona: the sudden disappearance of his brother, *The First*, chairman of *Miralles & Miralles*, the family business.

OTHER LITERARY REFERENCES

- *Homage to Catalonia (Homenaje a Cataluña)*, George Orwell.
- *Diary of a Humiliated Man (Diario de un hombre humillado)*, Félix de Azúa.
- *The Ring: The Last Knight Templar's Inheritance (El anillo, La Herencia del Último Templario)*, Jorge Molist.
- *The Bilingual Lover (El Amante Bilingüe)*, Juan Marsé.
- *Le grand roman de Barcelona (Der große Roman über Barcelona) (La gran novela sobre Barcelona)*, Sergi Pamiès.
- *Traveling Bunny (Conejo de Viaje)*, Liniers.
- *Blankets (Cuaderno de viaje)*, Craig Thompson.

OTHER SPANISH VERSIONS

- *Una novela de barrio*, Francisco González Ledesma.
- *El día que murió Marilyn*, Terenci Moix.
- *Nada*, Carmen Laforet.
- *Lo que la ciudad esconde*, Pablo Caralps.
- *Ochenta y seis cuentos*, Quim Monzó.
- *Busco señor para amistad y lo que surja*, Empar Moliner.
- *La ciudad sin tiempo*, Enrique Moriel.

BARCELONA TRAVEL GUIDES

LONELY PLANET

The Lonely Planet guides offer a good price-quality ratio as well as very useful information. This guide describes the main places and attractions of the city. There is a map on the back cover (useful for general reference purposes, not as a specific guide to find your way in the city). The book is printed in A5 format, which makes it easy to carry. Part of the information contained in this guide can be accessed via its Web Page.

TIME OUT

This guide contains a lot of interesting and useful information, and has many colour photos. It features exclusive advertisements of restaurants, hotels, and businesses in Barcelona which may be useful and interesting to the visitor. The edition format is A5. The reference maps are easy to read and follow; however, they are attached to the information included in the main body of the book, and you have to take the whole book with you in order to orientate yourself in the city. Part of the information supplied in the guide can also be accessed on its Web Page.

TOP 10

This guide is particularly recommended for trips lasting a few days. It focuses on the 10 best restaurants, bars, shops, attraction, etc. It has a good many colour photos and maps and it is a really useful and concise guide when it comes to short stays in the city. The book is smaller and thinner than the Lonely Planet or Time Out guides, which makes it more convenient to carry. If you don't require an exhaustive guide, but you need one containing the essential information to visit the city, this is a good choice.

ROUGH GUIDES

Barcelona and Catalonia is a very interesting guide for a tourist trip. It has the advantage of using PDA/Palm devices to view the information. These guides were originally designed as travel books for impecunious backpackers and students. However, it's been a few years since these guidebooks have been aimed at visitors on any budget, and they have an on-line version. To commemorate their 25 anniversary, Rough Guides has produced a list of the 25 most spectacular places in the world. Ninth on the list is Gaudi's Sagrada Familia.

MOVIES SET IN BARCELONA

VICKY CRISTINA BARCELONA (WOODY ALLEN, COMEDY, 2008)

Two girlfriends (Rebecca Hall and Scarlett Johansson) on a summer holiday in Spain become enamored with the same painter (Javier Bardem), fully unaware that his ex-wife (Penelope Cruz), with whom he has a tempestuous relationship, is about to re-enter the picture.

THE SPANISH APARTMENT (L' AUBERGE ESPAGNOLE) (CÉDRIC KLAPISCH, COMEDY, 2002)

A straight laced French student moves into an apartment in Barcelona with a cast of six other characters from all over Europe. Together, they speak the international language of love and friendship

ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER (TODO SOBRE MI MADRE) (PEDRO ALMODÓVAR, TRAGICOMEDY, 1999)

A single mother in Madrid sees her only son die on his 17th birthday as he runs to seek an actress's autograph. She goes to Barcelona to find the lad's father, a transvestite named Lola who does not know he has a child. With echoes of *Lorca, All About Eve*, and *Streetcar Named Desire*, the mothers (and fathers and actors) live out grief, love, and friendship.

60th ANNUAL EAAP CONGRESS, BARCELONA 2009
READINGS SET IN BARCELONA

THE CITY OF MARVELS (LA CIUDAD DE PRODIGIOS) (MARIO CAMUS, DRAMA, 1999)

Based on the Eduardo Mendoza's famous novel of the same title, exposes the 20 year time frame which transformed Barcelona, starting in the late 1880s. Onofre is a youngster down on his luck, abandoned by his fortune seeking father to a life of poverty and misery, alone with his mother. Once an adult, he also decides to seek fortune, and travels to Barcelona on the eve of the Universal Exposition of 1888, which so transformed the city, and falls in love with Delfina.

BARCELONA (WHIT STILLMAN, COMEDY, 1994)

Ted, a stuffy white guy from Illinois working in sales for the Barcelona office of a US corporation, is paid an unexpected visit by his somewhat less stuffy cousin Fred, who is an officer in the US Navy. Over the next few months, both their lives are irrevocably altered by the events which follow Fred's arrival, events which are the trivial stuff of a comedy of manners at first but which gradually grow increasingly dramatic.

LAND AND FREEDOM (TIERRA Y LIBERTAD) (KEN LOACH, DRAMA, 1994)

Spring 1936, a young unemployed communist, David, leaves his hometown Liverpool to join the fight against fascism in Spain. He joins an international group of Militia-men and women, the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista). After being wounded he goes to Barcelona, where he decides to join another group of fighters.

IF THEY TELL YOU I FELL (SI TE DICEN QUE CAÍ) (VICENTE ARANDA, DRAMA, 1989)

Based on the Juan Marsé's novel of the same title. In the post Spanish Civil War years, Catalan kids would sit in circles among the ruins and tell stories, known as *aventis* (the film's original title in Catalan). These tales mix war stories, local gossip, comic book characters, fantasy and real events.

EN CONSTRUCCIÓN (JOSÉ LUIS GUERÍN, DRAMA, 2001) (SPANISH O.V. SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH)

Guerín takes us to a building under construction in the Chinese Neighbourhood of Barcelona, creating an authoritative, authentic and nude portrait of a stigmatized social stratum, which although likes to obtain beauty, charm and poetry that give to this film a not conventional quality. It is a multilateral story, in which it is only exposed the present aspects of the represented people, and how they face the day by day.

BARCELONA, UN MAPA (VENTURA PONS, 1997) (SPANISH O.V.)

Seis personajes, arquetipos contemporáneos de la soledad urbana, se encuentran en un viejo piso del Ensanche barcelonés. Un matrimonio anciano, el hermano de ella y tres realquilados: una mujer rubia, un joven vigilante de seguridad y una muchacha sudamericana embarazada.