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Barraca Catalan rice dishes. Relaxed. PASSEIG MARITIM DE LA BARCELONETA 1 (near port)

Nectari Carrer València, 28 08015 Barcelona (near hotel) Tel. 932 26 87 18

ABAC : Chef Jordi Cruz was the youngest Spanish chef ever to win a Michelin star, at the restaurant *Estany Clar*. In this sleek, stylish space, Cruz, a culinary celebrity in Catalonia, showcases local produce in dishes such as scallops on potato blinis, lobster Bolognese, roasted octopus with a shrimp emulsion, and roasted baby lamb with vanilla. *Ave nida Tibidabo 1. Tel. 319-6600. US\$125.*

CA L'ISIDRE : This grand restaurant has a decor of beige walls, dark wood paneling and wall sconces. Waiters in starched white jackets provide excellent service as they deliver superb dishes such as *cigales* (large shrimp), bull's meat stew, baby octopus in onion sauce, and other impeccably cooked Catalan classics. There are also French dishes on the menu, but the Spanish ones are the stars. *Carrer de Les Flors 12. Tel. 441-1139. US\$110.*

CINC SENTITS : Chef Jordi Artal grew up in Canada before returning to his parents' native Catalonia and opening this excellent restaurant with low-lit contemporary decor. Artal uses only the finest local produce to create dishes such as pork belly with sweet potato puree and grilled spice bread, grilled mackerel with roasted garlic and eggplant, and sea bream with green bean broth and roasted tomatoes. *Aribau 58. Tel. 323-9490. US\$60.*

COMERC24 : Chef Carles Abellan trained alongside Ferran Adria before opening this restaurant with its steel beams and dark wood tables. Experience his clever cooking as part of a 10-course tasting menu inspired by the cuisine of Catalonia, Andalusia, Asia, Italy and America. Expect dishes such as marinated sardines with balsamic vinegar, blood sausage layered with mashed potatoes, black rice with aioli, and curry-scented banana soup. *Carrer de Comerç 24. Tel. 319-2102. US\$60.*

Els PESCADORS : Overlooking a quiet square in the Poblenou district, this excellent under-the-radar fish restaurant is much loved by the locals, who flock here for dishes such as fried baby squid, rice with shrimp and smoked cheese, salt cod with romesco sauce (tomatoes, garlic and almonds) accompanied by creamed spinach, and lemon cake. Be sure to try the delicious white Priorat Catalan wines. *Plaça Prim 1. Tel. 225-2018. US\$80.*

SAUC : Despite its casual decor, this is one of the city's most popular restaurants, thanks to the brilliant cooking of chef Xavier Franco. His menu follows the seasons, but always includes eight appetizers, 10 main courses and six desserts. Among the signature dishes are fried ham with squid and artichokes, octopus and potato salad with saffron, and roasted suckling pig. *Ohla Hotel, via Laietana 49. Tel. 321-0189. US\$75.*

TAPAS:

[Bar del Pla](#) Carrer de Montcada, 2, 08003 Barcelona **Phone:** 93 268 30 03

El Xampanyet Carrer de Montcada, 22, 08003 Barcelona **Phone:**+34 933 19 70 03

[TICKETS](#) :After becoming one of the most famous chefs in the world with his restaurant *elBulli* (now closed), Ferran Adria has opened this high-concept tapas bar with a cracked white tile floor and a showbiz-themed decor. The modern Spanish tapas are excellent, including tuna belly with salmon eggs and green-apple bread, grilled quail with honey and mint, and rabbit ribs with foamy garlic mayonnaise. However, it is noisy and service can be uneven. *Avinguda Parallel164. No phone; online reservations only at ticketsbar.es. US\$60.*

[ALTA TABERNA PACO MERALGO](#) :Conveniently located in the central Eixample neighborhood, this attractive modern tapas bar takes reservations, and most of its staff speak English. Try the *pan con tomate*, the delicious Catalan specialty of toasted bread dressed with olive oil, crushed fresh tomato and a little garlic; sauteed baby clams; tortilla Espanola (a potato-filled omelet); and tuna belly dressed with sesame oil and soy sauce. *Muntaner 171. Tel. 430-9027. US\$so.*