

PRESS RELEASE

## **Turisme de Barcelona Heads Up a Promotional Mission to the USA**

- **Several organisations are taking a trip to the USA to promote Barcelona and Catalonia as tourist destinations**
- **Roadshow in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago to present a city and country offering culture, authenticity, sustainability and diversity**
- **USA is the main international source market for Barcelona with a high spending power**

**Barcelona, 14 February 2018.** Turisme de Barcelona is travelling to the United States this week along with the Catalan Tourist Board and Barcelona Provincial Council on a mission to promote Barcelona and Catalonia, in order to boost the position of the destinations and transmit a message of normality and tranquillity.

The roadshow will travel to Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles; in 2017 the latter two cities launched direct flights to Barcelona operated by Norwegian Air.

The purpose of the trip is to boost the position of Barcelona and Catalonia as tourist destinations and transmit a message of normality, which is why the institutional collaboration with the CTB, Barcelona Provincial Council and Turespaña is so significant.

For the companies involved, this roadshow lets them promote their product through a platform with the experience and knowledge of **Turisme de Barcelona** and the CTB, combining forces to make a proposal that highlights values such as culture, authenticity, sustainability and diversity.

### **The United States as a Market**

The United States is the second largest tourism source market in terms of spending volume, only exceeded by China. In 2016 over two million Americans chose Spain as a destination for their holidays; Catalonia was their preferred autonomous community, with 43.1% of the total number of visits.

In Barcelona, 762,000 American tourists stayed in the city's hotels in 2016. In 2017, using still provisional figures, this market grew by 11%, making the USA again the main international source market for Barcelona, ahead of the United Kingdom. The United States is only exceeded by the domestic market, in other words, visitors from the rest of the Spanish state.

In terms of spending, Americans spend on average in Barcelona €234 per day, a much higher figure than the traditional European markets (France €148.40, Italy €147.30, United Kingdom €177.40). Some of the main reasons for travelling are: visiting the major monuments and cultural tourism; shopping; and rural tourism, ideal for the decentralisation strategy of the campaign *Barcelona is much more*.

A particularly important aspect of this market is the interest in gastronomic tourism. It is the largest market for this segment on a global level. A tourist with this profile spends an average of €390 on gastronomy in Spain. Spain is one of the best positioned countries for gastronomic tourism and Catalonia is in the lead in terms of gastronomy spending, with 21.7% of the total.

### **Corporate, business and knowledge**

The companies travelling with **Turisme de Barcelona** include five cultural operators: Barcelona Obertura, Icono Serveis Culturals, Casa Vicens, Casa Batlló and La Pedrera. The participants also include hotel operators such as the H10, Derby and Nuñez i Navarro chains, Hilton, SOL-VIP Travel, the Association of Passeig de Gràcia and Renfe-SNCF. Cellers Torres and Norwegian Air have also joined the mission as sponsors of the roadshow. Workshops and learning sessions have been organised in each city to combine business with knowledge acquisition.

In each city a workshop is organised for the American operators and agents, and a learning session allows the Barcelona and Catalan companies to acquire further knowledge about the target markets. Each session covers a single theme, such as travelling, the importance of the experience and the challenges of the tourism industry, with talks from experts and visits to companies or places of interest, such as the sustainable building of the California Academy of Sciences, for the case study on sustainable infrastructure.

**For further information, please contact:**

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