

Casa Camper Hotel

El Raval, Barcelona, Spain

Camper shoes bring cool comforts to Barcelona's hip-hotel scene in the vibrant Raval district, a short stroll from Las Ramblas

OVERVIEW

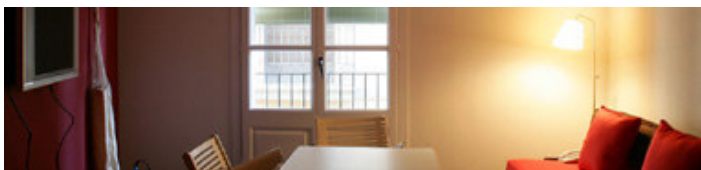
This is a fine old stone building that's recently been restored: old age shines on the outside, youthful good looks blush within. You're in the middle of the up-and-coming Raval district, entwined in narrow lanes, with trendy shops, an ancient market and an opera house on your doorstep. The Museum of Modern Art is across the square, the old town is a short walk and a cab to the beach will cost about five euros.

As for Camper, well, their groovy shoes have already conquered the world (one of their hyper-cool stores is next door), and they also have a macrobiotic noodle bar in the same street. The hotel itself embodies the Camper ethic: the very best basics, a bit of colour, friendly people at the helm. This is their first foray into the world of hotels, though they plan to spread through Europe. It's nicely understated, and you get a pillow menu and free snacks included in the price. Head to the top of the building and you'll find a roof terrace with great views over town. Pop out for supper and return to find your bed turned down; wake in the morning and they'll bring your breakfast up to you.



ROOMS

No other hotel does it quite like Casa Camper. You get two rooms: a bedroom and a mini-lounge. The rooms are separated by the main corridor which runs along each floor. Lounges are at the front of the building and have French windows that open onto the alleyway. Bedrooms are at the back of the house and look out over a tiny courtyard in which pot plants rise on giant shelves. There are 25 rooms in total, five of which are suites. The feel is simple, comfortable and stylish. Rooms come in red, white and green (the Camper colours). Bedrooms have open-faced wardrobes and slate floors. You get crisp white linen, good lighting, slippers and glass bedside tables. Spotless en suite shower rooms come with cymbal-sized shower heads, natural soap and shampoo and fluffy white towels; the suites have baths, too. Lounges (one step across the corridor) come in white. You'll find plasma screen TVs, French windows and balconies. There are hammocks, too, so don't forget your siesta. You get white wooden tables and chairs, and big red sofas which turn into beds (children under 12 stay free). All rooms have wifi connection; all you have to do is bring your laptop.



FOOD

A small room-service menu is available. You can have breakfast in your bedroom or lounge, though there's a funky dining room downstairs with huge photographs of Barcelona street scenes wallpapered onto the walls. A continental breakfast offers fresh OJ, croissants and pastries, fruit and yoghurts, cold meats and cheese, and eggs cooked to order. Another quirk of the hotel is the

Ten Ten Pie a snack that's served from midday onwards. Help yourself to salads, sandwiches, fruit, pastries, soft drinks, coffee and tea - it's all on the house. This is one of Barcelona's hippest quarters. Step outside the front door and you'll find loads of restaurants within a five-minute walk - tapas, modern Spanish, pizza, Chinese. Staff will happily advise.



THINGS TO DO

The **MACBA**, Barcelona's contemporary art museum is a two-minute walk across the square; it's well worth checking out. In September, **SONAR**, a techno/house music festival takes place locally. Don't miss the district's famous market, **El Boqueria**; it's huge, wonderfully theatrical and at its best before midday. Head east and you'll pick up **Las Ramblas** within a minute. This is one of Barcelona's most famous streets, a bit touristy perhaps, but still worth a look. Follow it up to the north and you move into **Gaudí** territory; La Pedrera, Casa Batlló and La Sagrada Familia are all up here, as is shopaholic heaven in the form of **Passeig de Gracia**, Barcelona's main shopping street. Head north west (few people do) and find the **Nou Camp** for a tour of FC Barcelona's stadium. A short cab or metro ride will get you there within fifteen minutes. Head south east from the hotel for about a kilometre and you come to the wonderful old **Gothic quarter**; don't miss the magnificent cathedral (La Seu) with its soaring stone-laced facade, gothic gargoyles and gaggle of geese guarding the leafy cloister. Keep going east and you'll come to **El Born**, a tangled web of ancient alleyways that is now one of the chicest districts in town. Whatever you want - clothes, tapas, nightclubs, bars - you'll find it all here. Finally, if you want to take a dip in the Mediterranean, head south to the **beaches** of Barcelonetta. In summer, bars, clubs and restaurants open up and the city comes down to the sea.



HIGHS

- This is a groovy little district just west of Las Ramblas - young at heart, easy on the eye - and if you want a bit of night life you'll find it here.
- Hotel bikes on which to wheel round the city (€15 for 4 hours, €20 for one day)
- All day snacks on the house

LOWS

- You get two rooms here, a bedroom and a lounge, but some people won't like the fact that the main corridor on each floor separates these rooms.
- The ultra-modern bedrooms are sparsely furnished: bed, wardrobe, lights and that's about it.
- This is quite a lively district. Bedrooms are at the back of the house, but if you want to be tucked up by ten, this might not be the place for you.

Name	Casa Camper	Location	El Raval, City
Type	Contemporary boutique hotel: 25 rooms	Country	Spain: Barcelona
Price Guide	Dbl: €245-285, B&B	Open	All year

DISTANCES Airport: 20km Nearest Shops: 0.3km Nearest restaurant: 0.1km Beach: 5km

Source: http://www.i-escape.com/minihotel.php?hotel_key=BC009