

DROPPING ANCHOR IN BARCELONA

THE THOROUGHLY MODERN AND OH-SO-SLEEK ONEOCEAN CLUB IS JUST ONE ELEMENT OF THE \$100 MILLION REDEVELOPMENT THAT HAS TRANSFORMED BARCELONA'S PORT VELL INTO EUROPE'S LARGEST CITY CENTRE MARINA

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Late afternoon and the sky, a languid hue of duck egg blue, casts somnambulant, nap inducing heat onto the white roofs of the yachts, jostling and swaying with metronomic rhythm at Barcelona's OneOcean Port Vell Marina. On arrival, The Gallery's stylish expanse offers a serene respite from the Spanish sunshine, with all the requisite facilities to recharge and relax housed in a spectacular space, designed in the style of a superyacht jutting out over the water to blend in with its surroundings. Floor to ceiling glass offers alluring views of the city beyond to admire while working out in the fitness centre, reclining on the sundeck, or taking care of business from one of the private meeting rooms. An exclusive crew lounge occupies The Gallery's ground floor, alongside a cultivated concierge who will readily assist to ensure a sense of familiarity within OneOcean Port Vell and the locality ensues swiftly and all amenity needs are met with refinement.



THE POP OF A CAVA CORK, A PEAL OF LAUGHTER, THE CLINKING OF GLASSES AND THE VELVETY AROMA OF RED SNAPPER AND MONKFISH EMANATING FROM THE KITCHEN; THE ONEOCEAN CLUB EXUDES SYBARITIC INDULGENCE

PORT VELL MARINA

The pop of a cava cork, a peal of laughter, the clinking of glasses and the velvety aroma of red snapper and monkfish emanating from the kitchen; the OneOcean Club exudes sybaritic indulgence in its dining room, bar and outdoor terrace; all notably lacking in the traditional yacht club stuffiness, replete with copper lights, abundant foliage hanging from the roof beams, calming green and blue banquettes and the OneOcean Wellness spa offering a myriad of massage and spa treatments.

A chocolate and white cube shaped structure, which seems to visibly throb with amber lighting at night, OneOcean is a major catalyst of the \$100 million redevelopment to transform formerly unloved and ignored Port Vell into Europe's largest city centre superyacht marina.

Oysters from Oléron, cocktails infused with elderflower and passion fruit, grilled octopus and seductive DJ beats make departing OneOcean Club difficult, but a walk around the adjacent traditional fisherman's neighbourhood of Barceloneta is to experience a Barcelona aeons away from the selfie taking mobs outside Gaudi's classics and the bellicose hordes choking up the Ramblas.

In Barceloneta, life continues as it has done for centuries amid the nicotine yellow coloured houses, bijou squares and Lilliputian tapas bars such as El Vaso de Oro, an impossibly narrow hostelry decked out with wrought iron light fittings and a blonde wood bar rendered smooth by decades of Catalan elbows leaning on it to consume plates of patatas bravas, anchovies and charcuterie. It's a tight knit community and the welcomes are effusive from locals, most of whom will be impressed that you made it here to one of the last true 'local' hoods in the centre of the city.

Though, this being Barcelona, glitz and glamour are never too far away – oft in the most unlikely and original of locations.

None more so than Torre d'Alta Mar, located 250ft above Port Vell at the top of the Sant Sebastià cable-car station, in an old water tower accessible only by a lift that rises to reveal the exposed, industrial chic interior of the restaurant and 360 degree views of the city. The culinary focus here is on 'mar i montanya' (sea and mountain) and the menu is inventively composed with some knockout highlights including sea bass with black garlic, watermelon soup with caviar and a prawn rigatoni with a creamy unctuous explosion of flavour.

Around Port Vell, options for some superior slumbers have blossomed in recent years. The H10 is a small, chic and discreet bolthole overlooking the harbour with crisp white sheets, monsoon showers and a breakfast buffet groaning with artisan meats and cheeses.

Yet for unadulterated glamour it's hard to top the recent arrival of the W Barcelona. The buzz around the entrance to this soaring, handsome tower is palpable on a weekend evening with blacked out limos pulling up to drop off designer clad socialites visiting Wave, an airy restaurant that offers a demure array of lighter takes on Catalan favourites with a few global flourishes including sumptuous coconut crispy prawns and mini calamari strips.

Even if you're not staying here, a bit of Catalan charm with the staff should get you access to the 26th floor Eclipse bar where some of the city's most desirable parties are held and Barcelona's pulchritudinous residents cavort with the endless Med horizon sparkling like a jewellery box beneath.

It's the perfect confluence of experiences, typical of Barcelona: a dazzling hybrid of the industrial and the intuitive, a city where the harnessing of hedonism and the legacy of industry still merge seamlessly underneath an insistent blue sky.

For more information on OneOcean Club and OneOcean Port Vell see: oneoceanclub.es and oneoceanportvell.com

For high end, luxury Barcelona experiences and accommodation visit: barcelonapremium.com