Art Nouveau in Barcelona

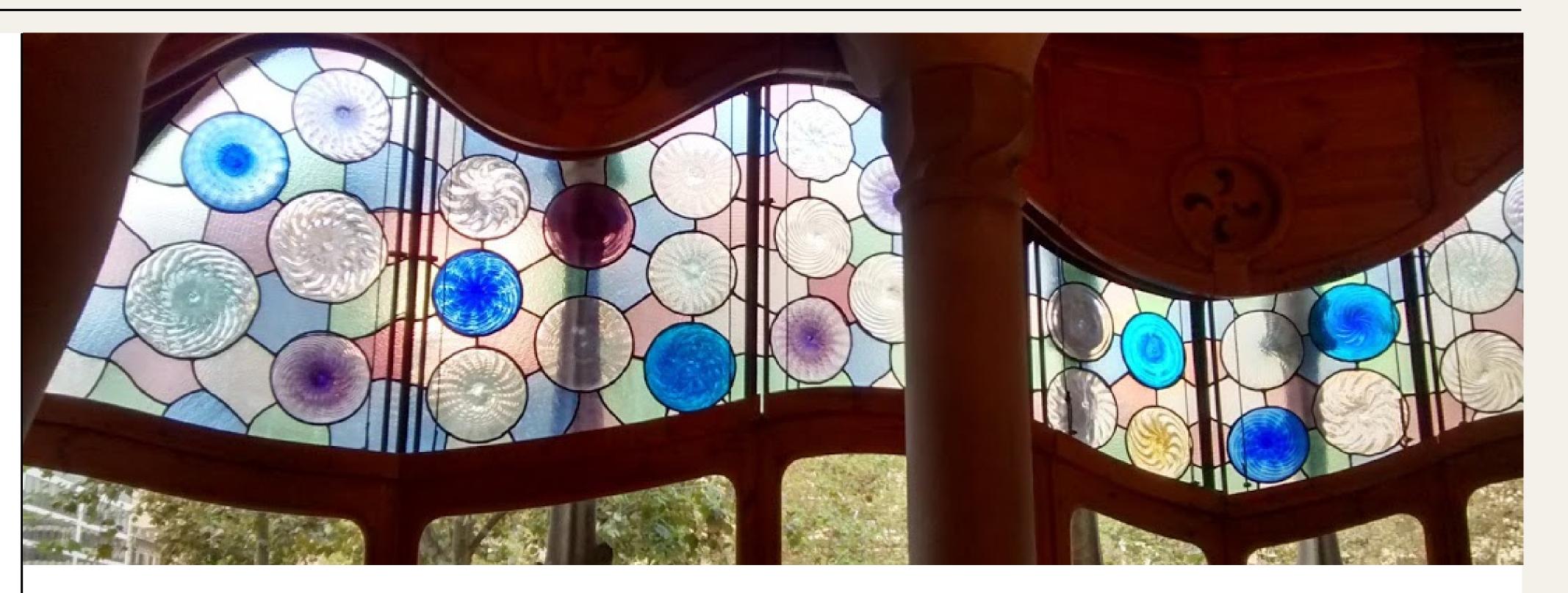




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<u>Art Nouveau: Origins &</u> <u>Contemporary Appeal</u>

The Art Nouveau movement took hold in Barcelona in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a unique period in the city's history where artistic effervescence ran parallel to the city's economic and physical expansion, following the demolition of the city's original medieval walls.



This style was manifested mainly in architecture and the visual arts, though artists who were specialized in these fields often performed in disciplines outside their own to great artistic effect.

To date, nine of Barcelona's Art Nouveau masterpieces have been declared UNESCO World Heritage sites, As a result, Barcelona is one of the top European cities where Art Nouveau has an immense and essential presence in forming the identity and narrative of the city.

Barcelona: attractive city, but overtouristed

Impact of Covid–19 on Barcelona's tourism sector: 2019–2020

	2019	2022	%
			Difference
Arrivals	9.5	2.1	-77.8%
	million	million	
Overnight	19.8	3.9	-80.3%
stays	million	million	

Barcelona boasts a well-developed, diversified tourism portfolio, including the important influence of cultural tourism. However, the city's relationship to tourism is complex, in large part due to its path dependency as a hub for knowledge economy workers and a purposefully remodelled, attractive city in connection with hosting the 1992 Olympic Games. Before the pandemic, Barcelona was considered an "over-touristed" destination, drawing praise for the sector's contributions to economic development and complaints about the lack of sociocultural sustainability. Covid-19 shocked the city's tourism sector in 2020; while 2021 saw a tepid recovery, in 2022 tourism arrivals are expected to reach pre-pandemic numbers once more.

RESIDENTS SURVEY (2020)

• Residents cited **historical & cultural heritage sites and buildings** (including Art Nouveau) and **cultural routes** as

TOURIST SURVEY (2021)

• **91% of tourists were international:** 66% from Europe, 14% from North America, and 11% from South America.

BUSINESS SURVEY

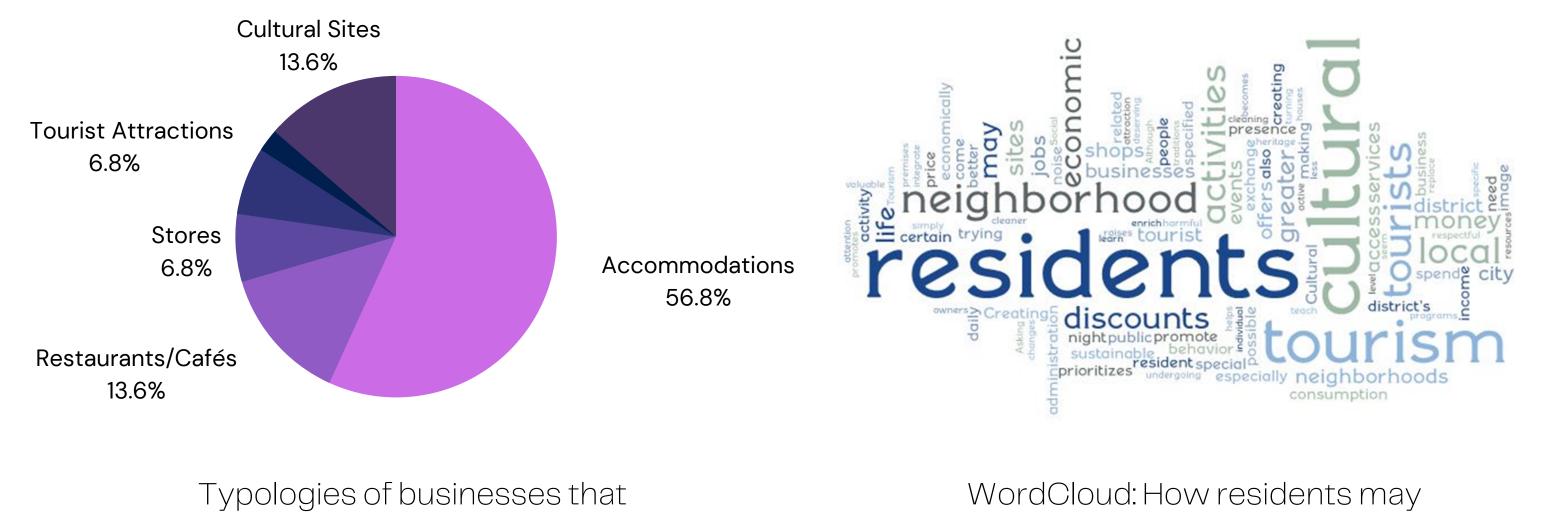
(2021-2022)

• 36% of respondents were family businesses, 30% private,

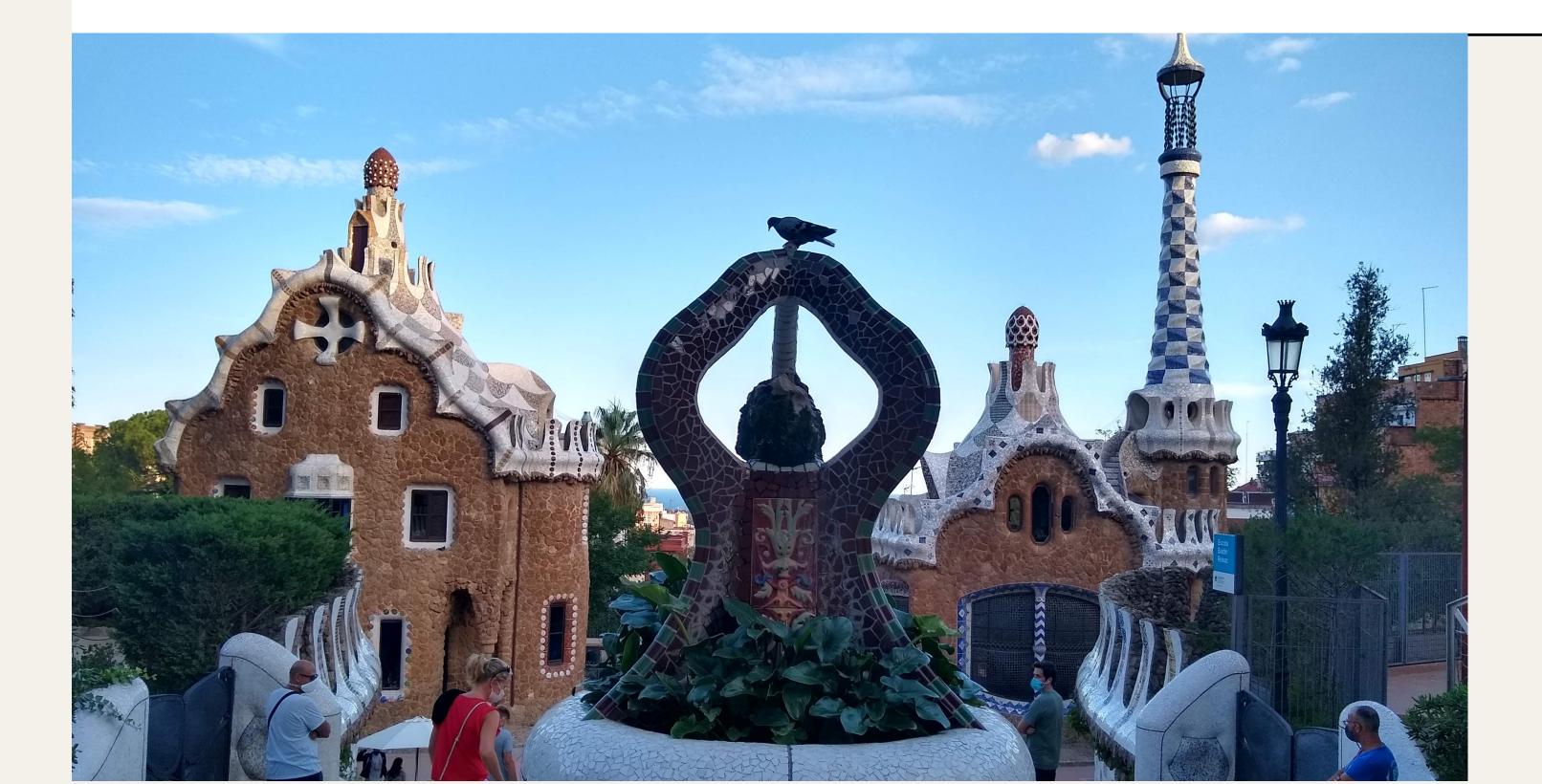
- the most attractive elements of cultural tourism in Barcelona.
- 90% believed there are too many tourists in the city, though the impact of cultural tourism showed a fairly equal distribution of positive and negative perceptions. Still, 57% believed tourism negatively impacts local traditions and 55% believed it is a nuisance on everyday life.
- Residents believed cultural tourism benefits them by driving economic development and promoting positive social effects, such as cultural exchange. However, there was a strong call for sustainable tourism that privileges residents over visitors and improves local quality of life.
- Tourists were most interested in visiting historical sites & buildings, townscapes/architecture, musuems, cultural heritage sites & buildings, and restaurants.
- 88% found travelling to Barcelona easy or very easy, while 95% said the same about travel within the city.
- Tourists were generally **satisfied or very satisfied** with their trip, number & diversity of cultural activites, and quality of products & services. 17% were **dissatisfied with price v. offer**.
- 93% visited Art Nouveau sites during their trip, and 41% cited Art Nouveau as a main reason for their visit.
- 89% believed Art Nouveau contributes to Barcelona's attractiveness, and 86% that it contributes to the city's identity.
- 20% formed part of a national chain, 2% part of an international chain, and 9% came from the public sector.
- Accommodations, Tourist Attractions, and Stores were far more likely to have **international customers**, while Cultural Sites and Restaurants/Cafés more often said they catered to a **local/ national clientele**.
- Before the pandemic, 63% earned 70–100% of their **yearly income from international tourists,** and 85% said their yearly billing showed an upward or strongly upward trend.
- However, 100% of businesses were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the vast majority of businesses showing drastic reductions in staff and temporary furloughs.

Main Takeaways

- Barcelona and its Art Nouveau sites are extremely popular tourism desinations, particularly for international visitors.
- The sector has long provided immense economic benefits, though its negative effects on local quality of life can no longer be ignored.
- Covid–19 has had a devastating impact on tourism & local businesses, but it also marks a turning point for the sector.
- The pandemic has provided local, regional, and national authorities with a window of opportunity to create a new strategic vision and tourism policies that address the sector's



negative effects and prioritize a more comprehensive sustainability: one that seeks not only economic benefits, but also improved social, cultural, and environmental sustainability.



answered the Business Survey (2021 - 2022)

benefit from cultural tourism (Resident Survey, 2020)

Policy Recommendations

 Over-touristed cities experiencing the negative social consequences of tourism should actively invest in cultural tourism initiatives designed to renew community engagement and improve sociocultural sustainability.
Cultural tourism sites must center a more comprehensive type of sustainability in both their missions and their actions if they wish to benefit all stakeholders.

3. The tourism sector should not lose sight of the contributions of local and "proximity" tourists in the post-COVID future. Instead, it should continue to attract them and to place even greater emphasis on adapting the tourism on offer to their specific interests and needs by allowing them to participate in the development of local tourism agendas.