

## **Seminar: *Flora, Fauna and Maritime Heritage of Catalonia: Coastal Park Montgrí***

**Course:** INTL 410 – Cultural, Educational, Active Seminars and Workshops

**Series:** Nature-Culture relationships and regional heritage

**Leader:** ALBA Study Abroad in Barcelona, Spain via the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Int'l Global Studies, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon, USA.

**Location:** Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain

**Contact hours:** 8–12 hours over the course of one day OR more than one day (inquire, pls).

**Undergraduate Credit/CEU:** 1 credit/1 unit

**Day of the week offered:** Most days except Monday, year-round, open enrollment

**Logistics:** If you do not have your own vehicle you can pre-arrange to leave Barcelona at 8.30h with the group leader in the bus or vehicle he will be driving (free of charge).

**Schedule:** 9h to 19h (10 hours)

### **SEMINAR STRUCTURE**

- **Pre-reading:** Downloadable PDF(s) or web based articles
- **Full-day field study:** composed of site visits, discussion and task(s). 10–12 hours.
- **Research Paper:** Topic and due date to be decided on day of the seminar

**FIELD STUDY DESCRIPTION:** This is an active, outdoor seminar in the Natural Park of Montgrí on the Catalan Costa Brava. The day is spent examining the culture, heritage, politics and natural beauty of this coast that has always been a driving force in the regions economy and that has a history dating back to the Iberians (6<sup>th</sup> century), whose ruins can still be visited today. The day may be carried out hiking along the coast or by sea kayaks\*. The approach from the sea allows us to visit and appreciate the natural park in a privileged and very efficient way and gives us a direct look at the incredibly diversity of flora and fauna and discussing struggles and triumphs with degradation and restoration. This Coastal Park hosts over 600 species of fish and indigenous plants can be found alongside plant life from all over the world, creating an explosion of colors and aromas on our way to each stop. If conditions allow we'll get a look at some of the red coral reefs and extensive meadows of Posidonia Oceanica that flank the coastline. Great opportunities to use snorkel kits (provided) to see the rocks, plants, fish and coral below the surface. Preservation of the coast is apparent and gives us a fantastic model for understanding the past and current social, political and economic aspects of the region and the benefit of conserving resources and proactively addressing issues of sustainability to educate the local community from a young age. Throughout the day we discuss the rich cultural roots from past communities (popular in year-round festivals) including the Greeks, Romans, mariners of golden-age empire expansion, Spanish-American colonies and their relation to the local economic boom, the influence on the Catalan industrial revolution and the post-Franco struggles against urbanization along the coastline. \*NOTE: Kayaking version requires being in good physical form and to know how to swim as the day is spent paddling to get to the points of interest.

### **SEMINAR ITINERARY**

**8.00h** Meet at café meeting point in Barcelona's Gothic Quarter for introductions and overview of the day before departing for the day.

**8.15h** Depart for the province of Girona and the Natural Park of Montgrí on the Costa Brava.

**9.30h** Safety and paddling/boating safety instruction is given to the entire group before making any contact with the water.

**10.00h** We take to the water and begin moving up or down the coast based on wind and water conditions. We will enter into each cove and cave where possible and make stops at select beaches and towns for group discussion and the opportunity to snorkel and/or explore the coastal hills, trails and botanical gardens.

**12.00h** Stop for picnic lunch (provided) in one of the coves. We have an hour to eat, relax, re-cap

what has been discussed while on the water, explore local trails for plants and birds and snorkel to experience the subaquatic flora and fauna.

**13.00h** Paddle back towards our origin but staying off the coastline about 100 meters for the views.

**16.00h** Return to beach. Seminar concludes. Participants can stay in the area, take the train back to Barcelona or ride back to Barcelona in the guide's vehicle if there is space in the vehicle and previous arrangement had been made to do so.

**Program follow-up and completion:** You'll receive an email within 72 hours with a re-cap of the day's events and discussions and the assignment instructions. Participants, including

non-credit participants, will receive a certification of participation within 30 days if requested.