



The Nou Camp

A European

The Nou Camp (Catalan: Camp Nou) is the famous home of FC Barcelona. With almost 100,000 seats, it is the largest football stadium in Europe, and since opening in 1957 it has been a must-see destination for fans of the beautiful game.

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FLIGHT INFORMATION

Norwegian flies to Barcelona from Oslo/Gardemoen, Bergen, Stockholm/Arlanda and Copenhagen.

For more information:
www.norwegian.com

norwegian #04 2010 65

The deafening roar of almost 100,000 spectators at the Nou Camp makes you realise that being in this wonderful stadium is indeed something special. It boasts a glorious history and is something of an icon for Barça fans. This is the place where several generations have experienced countless emotional evenings spanning more than 50 years. The stadium is huge and you do not have to be a fan of FC Barcelona (or football for that matter) to be thrilled by a visit here. The upper tiers rise 48 metres above the pitch and at times the players can look like miniature figurines.

Passion

The passion and the history that permeate every inch of the Nou Camp started in September 1957, when FC Barcelona played their first match at the stadium in front of more than 90,000 spectators. After the Second World War it became apparent that Barça's former stadium, Les Corts (The Cathedral of Football), built in 1922, could no longer accommodate the Catalonian club's massive support. In 1950 the board signed an option to buy some new land, but it took almost five years of financial and practical wrangling before the building of the new stadium got underway. The stadium has retained its essential features despite having undergone several renovations and improvements since opening, including the construction of a temporary tier to increase capacity to 115,000 for the 1982 FIFA World Cup and the lowering of the pitch in 1994.

Host to major international events

The Nou Camp has hosted a number of international football finals over the years, including a memorable UEFA Champions League Final between Manchester United and Bayern Munich in 1999, when United scored two goals in injury time through Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjær to win 2-1. The five-star stadium not only hosts domestic and international football matches, it also stages major concerts. Michael Jackson, U2, Frank Sinatra, Bruce Springsteen and Pink Floyd are just some of the artists that have performed here. Even Pope John Paul II has 'appeared' here, when he celebrated Mass before more than 120,000 people in 1982.

A new architectural icon

Now FC Barcelona is looking to the future. On the occasion of the stadium's 50th anniversary in 2007, it was announced that the renowned British architect Lord Norman Foster would remodel Nou Camp at an estimated cost of EUR 250 million. Although the revamp will add another 10,000 seats and a new roof covering for the entire stadium, the iconic asymmetric seating bowl will be preserved. The most stunning innovation will be translucent tiles forming a coloured mosaic around the whole stadium, including the new roof. On match nights, the stadium will radiate the club's beautiful red, blue, white, orange and yellow colours, making the Nou Camp a new architectural icon for the city of Barcelona. The work was due to start in 2009, but not even a high-profile brand like FC Barcelona is immune to global recession. When the remodelling eventually gets underway, it will incorporate the latest construction technologies, allowing football matches and other events to continue. With the start of a new season approaching, there are plenty of reasons to visit beautiful Barcelona and watch the Spanish Champions entertain in the largest stadium in Europe.



The future Nou Camp

giant

Other great European stadia

Text and photo: Jens Wejsmark Sørensen

Europe boasts several other great stadia that are well worth a visit. Below is a selection of old, traditional and spectacular new stadia.



AMSTERDAM
THE AMSTERDAM ARENA
(Capacity: 52,000)

The Amsterdam ArenA was built in 1996 and it was the first stadium in the world with a fully retractable roof. Spectators enter the stadium at ground level, but the pitch is actually nine metres higher up, leaving space below for a car park and a major road. The Amsterdam ArenA is the home of Ajax, one of Europe's most successful clubs, who won the European Cup three times from 1971 to 1973 and the UEFA Champions League in 1995.

Norwegian flies to Amsterdam from Oslo/Gardermoen and Copenhagen.



COPENHAGEN
PARKEN
(Capacity: 38,000)

Parken is the largest stadium in Denmark and was reopened in 1992 following extensive redevelopment of the Danish capital's former national stadium, Idrætsparken. A retractable roof was added for the Eurovision Song Contest in 2001 and in 2009 the last stand from the old stadium, dating back to 1955, was replaced. In 1998 FC Copenhagen bought Parken, making it one of only a few national stadia to be owned by a club.

Norwegian flies to Copenhagen from Oslo/Gardermoen, Bergen, Stockholm/Arlanda, Bornholm, Karup, Aalborg and 34 other destinations.



PARIS
PARC DES PRINCES
(Capacity: 49,000)

Parc des Princes was opened in 1972 and immediately won plaudits for its avant-garde architecture and focus on comfort and visibility. It has hosted several international football finals along with six matches during the 1998 FIFA World Cup.

In 1974 it became the home of Paris Saint Germain, a club founded in 1970 when two local teams merged.

Norwegian flies to Paris/Orly from Oslo/Gardermoen, Bergen, Stavanger, Copenhagen and Aalborg.



BERLIN
THE OLYMPIC STADIUM
(Capacity: 75,000)

The Olympic Stadium is one of the most impressive and historic stadia in the world. It was built from limestone for the 1936 Summer Olympics with clear input from both Adolf Hitler and his chief architect Albert Speer. Before the 2006 FIFA World Cup, the stadium acquired a much-needed roof. A visit to the Olympic Stadium is an amazing trip back in history as well as a visit to one of Europe's most modern venues. It is home to the football club Hertha Berlin.

Norwegian flies to Berlin/Schönefeld from Oslo/Gardermoen, Bergen and Stavanger.



LONDON
CRAVEN COTTAGE
(Capacity: 26,000)

Craven Cottage has one of the oldest stands in the world, dating back to 1905. The stadium exudes football history and has been the home of Fulham Football Club since 1896. The ground's capacity is one of the smallest in the English Premier League, but with its amazing riverside view, Craven Cottage remains a beautiful stadium. Fulham FC has the honour of being the oldest professional football team in London, and has enjoyed an unbroken run in the Premier League since 2001.

Norwegian flies to London/Gatwick from Oslo/Gardermoen, Bergen, Stavanger, Trondheim, Tromsø, Stockholm/Arlanda, Copenhagen and Aalborg.



ROME
ESTADIO OLIMPICO
(Capacity: 82,000)

The Estadio Olimpico has remained relatively unchanged since its opening for the 1960 Summer Olympics. The concrete stadium is a perfect, unbroken bowl, where all stands form a single tier. It has hosted several major football finals, including the 1990 FIFA World Cup Final and the 2009 UEFA Champions League Final. The Stadio Olimpico is home to both AS Roma and SS Lazio, which means that at least twice a year it becomes an inferno when the two teams clash in the Rome derby.

Norwegian flies to Rome/Fiumicino from Oslo/Gardermoen, Bergen, Stockholm/Arlanda and Copenhagen.