

## **A book suggests 16 literary walks through Barcelona**

**There are many ways of getting to know Barcelona. With books, for instance, it is possible to discover houses, parks and places through the vision of the writers. *Walks through Literary Barcelona* brings together 16 urban walks inspired by authors such as Verdaguer, Mendoza or Montalbán.**

Barcelona is a literary city. This assertion emphasises that the capital of Catalonia has on several occasions been the privileged setting of many books. The examples are diverse and range from *Don Quixote*, four centuries ago, to the recent *The Shadow of the Wind*.

Coinciding with the holding of the Books and Reading Year 2005, Edicions 62, Barcelona City Council and the Fundació Germán Sánchez Ruipérez have published *Walks through Literary Barcelona*, a book released in three languages (Catalan, Spanish and English) that compiles the fruitful relationship between the city and books.

“We wanted to make an entertaining book,” explains Sergio Vila-Sanjuán, in charge of editing together with Sergi Doria. Vila-Sanjuán points out that, for this reason, the format used is that of walks and that the graphic aspect has been enhanced through a large number of photographs and an attractive design.

Thus, sometimes the book is closer to a travel guide than to a heavy volume full of scholarly references. The book is another step along the path opened in 2003 by the book *La Barcelona literària (Literary Barcelona)*.

### **Several authors and several walks**

The two editors of the book have commissioned the texts of the walks from several authors. José Enrique Ruiz-Domènec explores Gothic Barcelona as described by classic authors such as Bernat Desclot or Bernat Metge.

Jordi Galves traces a route from Don Quixote covering from Catalunya Library to the Royal Shipyards and including the printer’s that, apparently, the knight visited at numbers 14-16 of the carrer del Call.

There is also room for Eduardo Mendoza’s prodigious Barcelona, for Manuel Vázquez Montalbán’s Barcelona of crime and the Barcelona based on customs and social manners of Soldevila, Robert Robert or Serafí Pitarra. The latter authors invite us to discover the district of La Ribera, the market of El Born or Ciutadella Park through other eyes.

The district of Eixample is evoked from the point of view of authors such as Enrique Vila-Matas, Montserrat Roig, Teresa Pàmies, Jorge de Cominges or Carmen Laforet and her famous novel *Nada*. The building of Barcelona University, La Pedrera and Casa Amatller are some of the settings described.

### **Looking at the city**

“This book is halfway between a travel book and a cultural chronicle”, explains Ferran Mascarell, Arts Councillor at Barcelona City Council. Mascarell points out the “extensive information on our city” accompanied by “a range of suggestive tours” provided by authors “who have gradually contributed new ways of looking at the city”.

Some of these walks were created on site during tours organised by Barcelona Library Consortium. This is the case of the route devoted to George Orwell, author of *Homage to Catalonia*, that of the poet Jacint Verdaguer or that devoted to Don Quixote organised this year.

The book also includes a chapter devoted to the archives and the libraries of the city and another that brings together the monuments devoted to writers, books and the literary world in general. Finally, it includes an index of authors and works as an invitation to continue walking along the paths of memory through the aforementioned books and writers.