



# TABLAO DE *Carmen*

**Flamenco Tablao in Barcelona**  
Press release

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# FLAMENCO IN BARCELONA

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It was in the wake of the wave of immigration that flamenco arrived in Catalonia. This migration came as a product of industrialisation in the second half of the 19th century. Under the impetus of the many gypsies who arrived from Andalusia, Extremadura and the Murcia region, Catalan society opened up to this art form and dozens of flamenco cafés and *estancos* (taverns) sprang up in Barcelona and its surroundings. Gypsy neighborhoods were formed, with houses made of bricks and mortar, such as Somorrostro (where flamenco icon Carmen Amaya was from), or of white stone,

as in Andalusia. Thanks to these settlements, Barcelona became one of the capitals of flamenco, like Seville and Madrid. Flamenco had always been a way of life for the gypsies in Andalusia, but more and more of them began to earn a living through the shows organized in Barcelona at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Flamenco experienced a second boom in Catalonia in the 1930s, in the wake of the Universal Exhibition which took place in the city in 1929. It was here that Carmen Amaya performed for King Alfonso XIII.



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# CARMEN AMAYA

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The Tablao de Carmen was created as a tribute to the great flamenco dancer Carmen Amaya (Barcelona, 1918 - Begur, 1963), who had formed a beautiful friendship with the founders of the place.

She was still a little girl when she danced for the King of Spain, Alfonso XIII, in the Poble Espanyol, where the Tablao de Carmen is today. It was 1929, and the inauguration of the pavilion that represented Spain at the Universal Exhibition.

As a teenager, she was already part of one of the most prestigious dance companies of the time. It is said that she never rehearsed before going on stage and that she possessed an energy that was unique in the world of flamenco (“Carmen Amaya is hail on

the windows, a swallow’s cry, a black cigar smoked by a dreamy woman, a thunder of applause”, said the writer Jean Cocteau). She soon became a legend and is still an icon of flamenco today.

Her rise to fame was meteoric and international. Always proud of her Barcelona origins, Carmen Amaya has triumphed in the greatest theaters of Europe, the United States and South America. She was praised and admired by great personalities of the twentieth century such as Charlie Chaplin, Fred Astaire, Picasso, Orson Welles, Marlon Brando and even the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who chartered a private plane for her to come and perform at the White House.



# THE POBLE ESPANYOL

**T**ablao de Carmen is located in the Andalusian quarter, in the heart of the Poble Espanyol, on the mountain of Montjuïc, one of the most important green areas of Barcelona, near many tourist attractions (several museums, the Olympic stadium, famous theaters...) and a few minutes away from the magical fountains of Montjuïc. Built in 1929 for the Barcelona World Fair, the Poble Espanyol illustrates the richness and variety of Spanish architecture as well as the history and culture of the country. Considered one of the first theme parks in the world, this “Spanish village” is a true open-air museum that allows

its visitors to discover the different atmospheres of the Iberian Peninsula during a single walk.

In the heart of the Poble Espanyol, the courtyard of the Tablao, known as the Patio of the Farolillo (Lantern), is one of the highlights of the Barcelona flamenco scene. It was here that Carmen Amaya danced before King Alfonso XIII on the occasion of the inauguration of the Universal Exhibition, which made Montjuïc part of history.

Combining a visit to the Poble Espanyol with a flamenco dinner show at Tablao de Carmen is without a doubt the most authentic experience you can have in Barcelona.



The small square of the Andalusian quarter. With the entrance to our Patio de Carmen, historical “Patio del farolillo”

# THE TABLAO DE CARMEN

In 1988, while the Poble Espanyol was being renovated for the 1992 Olympic Games, Sunchy Echegaray fell in love with the Patio of the Farolillo. She decided to buy the place to create a new space where she erected a tablao in homage to her friend, Carmen Amaya. Traditionally, tablaos are places to watch flamenco that derive their name from the Spanish word “tabla,” the wooden boards which cover the stage and on which the dancers make their heels sound. After more than thirty years of existence, the Tablao de Carmen is a reference of flamenco in Spain. One of the founder’s daughters, Mimo, took the reins a few years ago and continues to run the place to this day. The space of the Tablao is conceived in such a way that there is a closeness and complicity between the artists and the spectators, erasing the distance created in a theater, recreating the atmosphere that reigned in the “singing cafes” of the golden age

of flamenco in Barcelona. As was customary at the time, the spectator eats and drinks at the table during the show. The Tablao de Carmen team (from the cooks to the artists to the waiters and the management) strives to perpetuate the essence and the traditional atmosphere of flamenco, offering the audience an unforgettable experience.

Many of the flamenco artists who work at the Tablao today - singers, guitarists, dancers - have been involved since the beginning. But we also discover young artists representing the new generation of flamenco in Barcelona. The Tablao de Carmen is a breeding ground for flamenco talent and has seen the emergence of Chicuelo, Miguel Poveda, Sara Baras and Rosalía. For the Catalan artist now known worldwide, “the tablaos are the temples of flamenco”, which help to keep this culture alive.



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## THE SHOW

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Twice a day, the Tablao de Carmen offers a one-hour show that allows you to discover the three arts of flamenco: singing, dancing and guitar. The group of artists who perform regularly in a tablao is called cuadro de la casa. The cuadro de la casa is composed of guitarists, bailaores (dancers), palmeros (those who clap their hands to accompany the singing, dancing or guitar) and cantaores (singers). Each evening is unique and contains a great deal of improvisation, just as flamenco requires. The young talent take the stage first, followed by the more experienced performers. In a traditional tablao like Carmen's, the flamenco show is conceived as a succession of palos (traditional varieties of singing). Each performance is independent of the previous one and of the one that will follow. Each palo expresses a feeling

that is brought to life by the sound of the guitar strings, the dancer's gestures, the taconeo (rhythmic and percussive use of the heels), the rhythm (called compás in flamenco) and the play of silence. Through the different palos, the show moves through a variety of rhythms and emotions: we will discover, for example, a joyful atmosphere through an alegría and a more dramatic one with a seguiriya. The palo that marks the end of a flamenco show is the bulería, a festive palo, which calls for a party and where the artists improvise a lot. At the Tablao de Carmen, you will witness authentic cultural expression, the expression of a collective whose musical culture is ancestral and timeless. You will discover that flamenco is a heritage, a way of being and a way of life.



## THE VENUE

The Tablao de Carmen has three distinct spaces, which are suitable for all occasions. The main room of the Tablao is where the flamenco shows take place. Its decorative elements evoke the south of Spain, the cradle of flamenco. With simplicity and modernity, they transport you to the world of flamenco: with references to the arena; its sand and fences; the balconies of the neighborhood; the typical lanterns of Andalusian festivals and its red carnation, the Spanish flower par excellence. With a capacity of up to 220 people, it is a large space with all the amenities that lends itself perfectly to all types of events: corporate parties, weddings, private dinners, seminars, etc. The Patio de Carmen (also called Patio del Farolillo) offers a more intimate atmosphere (capacity of 80 people for a cocktail party or 50 seats). It was here that Carmen Amaya

danced in 1929 on the occasion of the inauguration of the Poble Espanyol for King Alfonso XIII. It is a typical Córdoba patio, which perfectly reflects the character and beauty of Andalusia. It is an open-air space, with the option of a cover, ideal for a drink before the show or to hold a private concert.

The Terrace of the Freiduría (from the Spanish fry shop, in reference to the Andalusian cuisine) is located at the entrance of Arcos Street and has a capacity of 30 people. You can have a drink, enjoy pieces of ham and the Barcelona sun in this small flamenco corner with an Andalusian atmosphere, which is located under a vine and surrounded by geraniums, orange trees and whitewashed walls. Equipped with our own kitchen, our facilities are at your disposal for your events. Furthermore, our chef has extensive experience in the event industry.



To rent the space of Tablao de Carmen, write to: [info@tablaodecarmen.com](mailto:info@tablaodecarmen.com)

## OUR CUISINE

Tablao de Carmen is the only one in Barcelona that offers its guests the possibility of eating and drinking during the show, as was traditionally done. The cuisine is prepared on site by Rosalía, an Andalusian chef who has been working at the Tablao for many years, using carefully selected local products. The Tablao offers meals suitable for everyone, whether you are vegetarian, celiac or vegan.

### The Tablao offers four options to suit all tastes and budgets:

**The “Copa” menu** allows you to enjoy the show and a drink (with the option of wines or a pitcher of sangría to share) for 48€.

**The “Tapas” menu** consists of a typical selection of Spanish-style tapas, accompanied by wine or sangria. Ideal for sharing while enjoying the show, as the locals are used to doing. This menu consists of large green olives, mature cheese with sticks, Russian salad, patatas bravas, Andalusian chicken skewers, homemade croquettes, potato dumplings stuffed with meat + Catalan creme brulee + water, wine or sangría + coffee or tea, for 68€. Supplement for Iberian ham: 7€.

**The “Carmen” menu** is composed of the most elaborate dishes of Spanish cuisine. It consists of large green olives, Iberian ham, homemade croquettes + chef’s soup or gazpacho (depending on the season) or lettuce heart salad + fillet of white hake with tomato sauce and roasted potatoes or filet mignon with green pepper sauce and homemade mashed potatoes + chocolate mousse or Catalan creme brulee + water, wine or sangría + coffee or tea, for 85€.

**The “Flamenco Star” menu** entitles you to various privileges, including a personalized welcome from the management of Tablao de Carmen, a welcome drink in the Patio de Carmen and a privile-



ged location for your table. For the most demanding palates, this menu presents the best dishes of Spanish gastronomy, accompanied by our best wines, ideally chosen to enhance the flavors tasted. It consists of large green olives stuffed with orange, goat cheese payoyo from the Sierra de Grazalema, Iberian ham from Salamanca Guijuelo, homemade foie gras, diced beef fillet sautéed in olive oil, red shrimp from Palámos, codfish croquettes with tarragon mustard, oxtail confit in red wine + chocolate mousse with fleur de sel and olive oil + water, Rioja or Ribera del Duero wine + coffee or tea, for 154€.

# See you at the Tablao!

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**The Tablao is located in the Poble Espanyol of Montjuïc (Av.  
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(Photographs by Eva Blanch)