

Specialities, Souvenirs & Gift Ideas

What to buy in Sitges

To save you some time we did some thinking - and came up with a list of gift ideas and Sitges specialities which could make great presents for friends and family (or yourself - I mean why ever not?)

Whether you're looking for something for old aunt Fanny, spoilt little Jimmy or maybe some flavours to bring back memories of your time in Sitges, hopefully there's something for you below!

Local Wines

Sitges sits not only in the middle of Catalunya, but also in the Penedès wine region. This area is blessed geographically, stretching from the peaks of the Pyrennes to the depths of the Mediterranean. This doesn't just offer a pretty landscape, but also a rich abundance of local produce throughout the year - including the wines!

The Penedes winemakers produce a red, white and rose wine, as well as Cava, often using local grapes which are less well-known outside Catalunya.

Popular local Penedes varietals include 'Macabeo', Xarello and Perellada - used for white wines and as the mainstay of cava.

There are even a handful of labels which use grapes grown on vines within the town?

Sitges Malvasia - A True Town Wine

A white varietal, originally introduced from Greece, is grown in Poble Sec in the grounds of the old Hospital, and is truly a wine of Sitges. Often drunk as a sweet desert wine, it can also be fermented to produce a dry Malvasia - marketed as Blanc Subur and Malvasia Seca under the label of the old hospital 'Hospital Sant Joan Baptista'

Penedes Cava

Although there are no true cavas produced from grapes in Sitges, the fields surrounding the town are covered in grapes destined to make the bubbly stuff. Famous vineyards such as Torres, Cordoniu and Freixenet cavas are world famous, but there are also myriad smaller producers who's labels will be less familiar, and who's sparkling wines simply don't travel far as they are too popular with the locals who know!

Porrans & Botas

In more traditional restaurants, after a hearty lunch you may be offered a 'porró' a clear glass vessel with an elongated neck and a conical spout - normally filled with dessert wine and served with almond biscuits. Be warned these are NOT the easiest souvenirs to transport home in one piece, but if you can manage it they are always well received, and can make for an interesting evening when mastering the art of getting a sip (tip: don't wear your best shirt first time out!)

Traditional drinking enthusiasts may also be interested in a 'bota' - a softer, flexible drinking vessel made from leather/hide and perfect for carrying your favourite tippie to festivals!? The best are not cheap at €25.00 and upwards depending on size - but if well-looked after will last years. Cheaper plastic ones are good throw-aways for stronger drinks.

Xato

Not really a gift to take home - but well worth a try if you are here and would like to try some authentic local food. This Sitges salad dish is well-celebrated, and combines many of the finest local seasonal ingredients. The exact origin of the recipe is hotly debated locally, with several towns claiming the dish. Dried cod, tuna, anchovies, black and green olives, and salad leaves covered with a dollop of local romesco-type sauce. Try it with a cold, crisp dry white wine out on a terrace. Delicious.

Painting / Artwork / Galleries

For decades Sitges has attracted artists, and there is a lively community of artisans working in different media within the town. With open galleries many work and sell their paintings from the same premises, which can offer a unique insight into their philosophy and the methods they use.

Perfume / Cigarettes & Tobacco

Travellers from Northern Europe may also be tempted to buy luxury items here such as perfumes, cosmetics, alcohol and cigarettes. The duty for all in Spain is typically much lower than elsewhere, and many shops cater to interested tourists, both with attractive offers, and also specialist wrapping, and transport arrangements.

Jamon

Around town in bars as well as in supermarkets, you will be confronted with large legs of 'jamon' a typically Spanish delicacy. These legs are often purchased for family get-togethers, and cost from around €35.00 upwards, depending on the type of animal, where it lived, what it was fed, how long it's been cured etc., There is a very strict quality system which governs the claims made by producers, and believe me you can really taste the difference between the lower and higher ends - with expensive jamon-meat literally melting in your mouth. Before you buy we'd recommend sampling some of the available legs in one of the specialist shops, and don't forget to ask for a quick demonstration how to cut slices - and also buy a 'jamonera' - the rest on which it stands!

Barcelona Merchandise

Barcelona is the Catalan religion. It is more than a club, it is more a national passion. When Barcelona plays Catalunya largely just stops to watch (oh and detonate something if and when they score..) Take any street, any day, stop and wait 2 minutes and someone will walk past with something bearing the FCB logo. This is not exaggeration. This is Catalunya! If you are looking for a gift for little Jimmy back home, get something 'blaugrana'