



# ITINERARIO LIBERTY



## Spain

Nouveau, or modernism, developed very soon in Spain, almost simultaneously to the English events. It remained circumscribed to the city of Barcelona and, in fact, to a single genial representative, Antoni Gaudí (1852-1926). This situation, in some ways anomalous, made critics argue for a long time about the legitimacy or not of standardizing Gaudí's artistic activity to the Art Nouveau phenomenon. In order to bear out this legitimacy, one needs to remember, first of all, the influence of the theories of Ruskin and Morris on the formation of Gaudí, which brought him to an attention towards neo-Gothic and towards the Spanish tradition, characterized by Islamic art.

So, in order to dissipate any doubt, it must be remembered that the needs of all his production correspond completely, even though in the undiscussed originality of elaboration, to the needs of Art Nouveau: the expansion of the line as a vitalistic symbol, the cancellation of the anthesis between inside and outside, the searching in forms for the rhythm of spontaneous growth of nature, and in space for the constant game of expansion and asymmetry. It was in architecture that he expressed himself best; we would mention only the Güell Palace (1885-1889) and the Güell Park (1900-1914), the Batllò House (1905 – 1908) and the Milà House (1905 – 1910).

However, he not only took care of the architectural parts of the buildings, but also the minimum details: the gates, the railings, the handles of the doors, the furnishings, the lamps, the furniture and the large glass windows, drawing his inspiration from the same principals. Gaudí, in spite of his exuberant talent and perhaps because of this, was an isolated person. His influence interested only a restricted circle of pupils and, however, he did not manage to pass the Spanish borders.