

# Vicky Cristina Barcelona (2008)



Theatrical release poster (Wikipedia)

## TOMATOMETER

### All Critics

81%

Average Rating: 6.9/10  
Reviews Counted: 197  
Fresh: 160  
Rotten: 37

### Top Critics

87%

Average Rating: 7.2/10  
Reviews Counted: 45  
Fresh: 39  
Rotten: 6

Critics Consensus: A beguiling tragicomedy, Vicky Cristina Barcelona charms with beautiful views of the Spanish city and a marvelously well-matched cast.

## Audience Score

74%

liked it

Average Rating: 3.6/5  
User Ratings: 103,294  
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## Movie Info

Vicky and Cristina, these two young Americans spend a summer in Spain and meet a flamboyant artist and his beautiful but insane ex-wife. Vicky is straight-laced and about to be married. Cristina is a sexually adventurous free spirit. When they all become amorously entangled, both comedic and harrowing results ensue.

Rating: PG-13 (for mature thematic material involving sexuality, and smoking)

Genre: Drama, Romance, Comedy

Directed By: Woody Allen

Written By: Woody Allen

In Theaters: May 17, 2008 Wide

On DVD: Jan 27, 2009

Box Office: \$23.2M

Runtime: 1 hr. 36 min.

[The Weinstein Co. - Official Site](#)

[\[www.rottentomatoes.com\]](http://www.rottentomatoes.com)

# ***Vicky Cristina Barcelona***

[from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia]

***Vicky Cristina Barcelona*** is a 2008 romantic comedy-drama film written and directed by Woody Allen. The plot centers on two American women, Vicky (Rebecca Hall) and Cristina (Scarlett Johansson), who spend a summer in Barcelona where they meet an artist, Juan Antonio (Javier Bardem), who is attracted to both of them while still enamored of his mentally and emotionally unstable ex-wife María Elena (Penélope Cruz). The film was shot in Spain in Barcelona, Avilés and Oviedo, and was Allen's fourth consecutive film shot outside of the United States.

The film premiered at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival, then received a rolling worldwide general release that started on August 15, 2008, in the U.S., and continued in various countries until its June 2009 release in Japan. The film was nominated for four Golden Globe Awards, including nominations for Bardem, Hall and Cruz for Best Actor, Best Actress, and Best Supporting Actress, respectively, and won the award for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy. Cruz won both the Academy Award and BAFTA Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role. Altogether, the film won 25 out of 56 nominations.

## **Plot**

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Vicky (Rebecca Hall) and Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) visit Barcelona for the summer, staying with Vicky's distant relative Judy (Patricia Clarkson) and her husband Mark (Kevin Dunn). While the two are great friends, Vicky is practical and traditional in her approach to love and commitment and is engaged to the reliable Doug (Chris Messina), whereas Cristina imagines herself to be a nonconformist, spontaneous but unsure of what she wants from life or love.

At an art exhibition, Cristina is intrigued by artist Juan Antonio (Javier Bardem), who

Judy says has suffered a violent relationship with his ex-wife. Later, he brazenly approaches the two women to invite them to join him right away for the weekend in the city of Oviedo, in a small plane he flies himself, for sight-seeing, fine eating and drinking, and hopefully, love-making. Cristina is won over by the offer almost at once, but Vicky is unimpressed and reluctant; she however eventually decides to accompany her friend anyway, mainly to watch over her.

At the end of their first day, Vicky refuses to join Juan Antonio in his hotel room, citing her fidelity to Doug, but Cristina accepts his invitation immediately. Before the love-making starts, Cristina suddenly falls ill with digestive complaints, and is put to bed, with food poisoning. Vicky and Juan Antonio proceed to spend the weekend together alone while they wait for Cristina to recuperate. Vicky gradually changes her opinion of Juan Antonio as he tells her about his tumultuous relationship with his former wife, María Elena (Penélope Cruz). Vicky accompanies him to visit his father, an old poet, and then becomes deeply moved by a Spanish guitar performance later that evening. She finally succumbs to Juan Antonio's advances as they walk through a grove of trees in the dark. The next day, with Cristina recovered, the three of them fly back to Barcelona.

Feeling guilty, Vicky does not mention the incident to Cristina, and the two begin to grow apart. Vicky starts throwing herself into her studies while Cristina and Juan Antonio take up a relationship. Cristina then moves in with Juan Antonio and begins to discover more about his past. After learning that María Elena attempted to kill herself, Juan Antonio brings her to his home, where Cristina already lives. After some defiance, the two women grow fond of each other. Cristina realizes that the ex-spouses are still in love, and María Elena suggests that Cristina may be the element that can give balance and stability to their relationship. All

three become romantically involved with one another.

In the meantime, Vicky is joined in Spain by an enthusiastic Doug and the two get married. When Cristina describes her new life with Juan Antonio to Vicky, Vicky becomes secretly jealous, and after a few other awkward moments, she realizes she is unsatisfied in her married life and is still attracted to Juan Antonio. Learning that Judy is similarly unhappy in her marriage, she confides to her, and Judy, who sees her younger self in Vicky, decides to bring Juan Antonio and Vicky together. Meanwhile, Cristina becomes restless and at some point decides to leave Juan Antonio and María Elena; without her, their relationship quickly falls apart again.

As the summer winds to a close, Judy arranges for Juan Antonio and Vicky to meet at a party. Juan Antonio begs Vicky to meet him again privately before leaving Spain, which she finally accepts, lying to Doug in the process. At his home, Juan Antonio seduces and wins Vicky over again, but they are interrupted by María Elena who bursts in with a gun, firing wildly as Juan Antonio tries to calm her. Vicky gets shot in the hand in the process, and leaves, shouting they are insane and she could never live like this. She confesses the entire story to Cristina, who never realized how Vicky felt about Juan Antonio, and wishes she could have helped her. Doug, Vicky and Cristina return to America; Doug never learns what truly happened, Vicky goes back to her married life, and Cristina is back where she started, unsure of what she wants.

## Cast

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- Javier Bardem as Juan Antonio Gonzalo
- Scarlett Johansson as Cristina
- Rebecca Hall as Vicky
- Penélope Cruz as María Elena
- Chris Messina as Doug
- Patricia Clarkson as Judy Nash
- Kevin Dunn as Mark Nash

- Pablo Schreiber as Ben
- Carrie Preston as Sally
- Zak Orth as Adam
- Julio Perillán as Charles
- Christopher Evan Welch as Narrator

The Spanish actor Joan Pera, who dubbed Allen's voice in his previous films, makes a cameo appearance.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Production

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In 2007, controversy arose in Catalonia (Spain) because the film was partially funded with public money: Barcelona's city hall provided one million euro and the Generalitat de Catalunya (Government of Catalonia) half a million, or ten percent of the film's budget.

This was the third time Johansson and Allen worked together, following *Match Point* and *Scoop*. This film also marked the second time Johansson and Hall worked together, the first time being in *The Prestige*.

The movie featured several paintings by the Catalan artist Agustí Puig. Puig was even commissioned to create a painting for the movie, the result being *La Protectora II*, though it was not used on set.

The film was shot on location in Barcelona (Park Güell, Sagrada Família, Casa Milà) and Oviedo.

## Critical reception

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### Box office

As of July 2009, the film grossed \$96 million worldwide; in relation to its \$15 million budget, it is one of Allen's most profitable films.

### Reviews

*Vicky Cristina Barcelona* garnered the best reviews Allen received since his Oscar-nominated 2005 film *Match Point* (also starring Johansson), particularly for Cruz's performance, earning a rating of 81% on Rotten Tomatoes.

Scott Tobias wrote in the *Onion AV Club* that it was "a witty and ambiguous movie that's simultaneously intoxicating and suffused with sadness and doubt". Richard Roeper suggested that Cruz should receive an Academy Award nomination for her role. Mick LaSalle of the *San Francisco Chronicle* praised the film as "the work of a confident and mature artist", referring to Allen. Manohla Dargis of *The New York Times* wrote "Although *Vicky Cristina* trips along winningly, carried by the beauty of its locations and stars — and all the gauzy romanticism those enchanted places and people imply — it reverberates with implacable melancholy, a sense of loss." Richard Corliss ended his review of the film with "The movie has neither the sardonic heft of Max Ophüls's *La Ronde* nor the emotional precision of Ingmar Bergman's *Smiles of a Summer Night*, two films that also dance the change-partners gavotte. But *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is so engaging so much of the time that it feels like a modest rejuvenation: evidence that a summer in Spain can do wonders for a writer-director who may not have outlived his prime." S. Williams of *Momzone* magazine singled out Johansson's performance for praise, writing, "Johansson's acting is syrup: fluid and sweet." Ian Freer of *Empire* gave the film 4 out of 5, and wrote "within Allen's recent output, *Vicky Cristina* is a highlight. See it for beautiful locales, an ambivalent look at human relationships and a clutch of great performances, especially from Cruz."

## Top ten lists

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The film appeared on many critics' top-ten lists of the best films of 2008.

- 5th – David Denby, *The New Yorker*
- 5th – Ray Bennett, *The Hollywood Reporter*
- 5th – Robert Mondello, NPR

- 7th – Joe Morgenstern, *The Wall Street Journal*
- 7th – Keith Phipps, *The A.V. Club*
- 7th – Kyle Smith, *New York Post*
- 7th – Steve Rea, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 8th – Mick LaSalle, *San Francisco Chronicle*
- 9th – Carrie Rickey, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 10th – Michael Sragow, *The Baltimore Sun*

## Awards and nominations

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The film won the Golden Globe Award for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy. Woody Allen won his first Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay and was nominated for the Writers Guild of America Award for Best Original Screenplay.

Penélope Cruz won the Best Supporting Actress award from numerous organizations including: the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, the Independent Spirit Awards, the Boston Society of Film Critics, the Goya Awards, the Kansas City Film Critics Circle, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association, the National Board of Review, the New York Film Critics Circle, and the Southeastern Film Critics Association.