



II Japan Weekend Barcelona 2009

Text and pictures by Iluigib

On March 7th and 8th, HispaLUG was invited to the II Japan Weekend, in Barcelona. At first, it seemed not the kind of event where a LEGO® exhibition would fit, but in the end we realized that there's some connection between otakus (manga and Japanese culture fans) and AFOLs.

We arrived on Saturday, 9:00am, ready for arranging the exposition. We were 5 AFOLs, bringing Star Wars™, Indiana Jones™, Spiderman™, Batman™, Mindstorms® NXT and modular building sets. We presented the Medieval Market Village set, and its many details were greatly appreciated. And we also had some of car_mp's great MOCs: Bender and Zoidberg's heads, and a custom R2-D2.

The event opened at 10:00am, and a steady flow of visitors began. Many of them were weirdly dressed by our standards. Some of these disguises made us laugh. But when they started to look at what we were showing, people started to gather around the stand.

Zoidberg and Bender's heads drew a lot of attention. Most people were attracted by the big heads, and then they came closer to see the rest of the



exhibition. Once they were at the stand the visitors began to look at Star Wars ships, or Spongebob Squarepants minifigs. I was surprised by the success of the Spongebob Squarepants set. It was just a set with three minifigs, but it created a lot of excitement.

The modular building sets also attracted a lot of attention, especially from female visitors. The Café Corner, Market Street and Green Grocer sets were



joined together. I imagine that so many details, and the fact that they can be played with like dollhouses (one of Japan's many culture icons), was the key for their popularity. The popularity of the Star Wars sets goes without saying. We all know how appealing this line is and whatever you show, it's a winner. In addition to a couple of UCS's - a Snowspeeder and a Y-Wing - we brought a new-for-2009 set based mini diorama about a droids vs clonetroopers battle.

Comic heroes Batman and Spiderman had their own place too. There were many people who were interested in buying these sets which, unfortunately, have already been discontinued. There was a Mindstorms demonstration, with the Alpha-Rex and a

test vehicle. Many visitors didn't know about this line, and were surprised about all the things this powerful robotics tool is able to do.

Satanspoet and Dirty were so kind to bring HispaLUG, Hispabrick and Hellfreak bookmarks. This is a good marketing tool, and it was greatly appreciated.

On Sunday, at 7:00pm, we started clearing up, knowing that many visitors had discovered a new world. We hope to see them soon in our community. ■