

1862 Dry Bar – Perfection Served in a Glass

Looking for a perfectly crafted cocktail? Do you prefer the classics, or something a little more adventurous? No matter your taste, there is a spot for you at [1862 Dry Bar](#), located in the heart of Malasaña.

If you need structure, snag a table on the street level, with tables peppering the perimeter of the room, and the bar as the center of attention. For those looking to lounge and drop into a comfortable sofa, head to the dimly lit basement, and find yourself losing all concept of time.

The cocktail menu is comprehensive – running the gamut from Old Fashioned to Cosmopolitan; you name it, they serve it. Don't miss out on the house specials on the backside of the menu, with intricate mixes that you didn't know you wanted until you saw it on the menu.



If you are indecisive like I tend to be, simply ask for a recommendation-the service is friendly and can help you craft your drink based on your likes and dislikes without a second thought. Each careful creation is fairly priced at **8€**.



The basement displays quite literally a cage of alcohol, decoratively illuminated in case you still aren't sure what you're in the mood for.

If you are able to climb out of your comfortable seat on the couch, look beyond the curved archway in the basement that gives way to a smaller bar counter, with old fashioned photos, exposed brick walls, and hanging stemware.



[1862 Dry Bar](#) has all you could ask for-aesthetic appeal in a comfortable setting, affable, knowledgeable employees, and expertly crafted cocktails. But don't take my word for it-start tasting your way through the menu and decide for yourself if you're more of the traditional type, or if you can handle something a little different.

[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Where: Calle del Pez, 27

Metro: Noviciado

Looking for more on Madrid's bar scene?
Check out:

[Madrid's Best Cocktail Bars](#)

[Madrid's Best Craft Beer Bars](#)

[Madrid's Best Rooftop Bars](#)

Naïf: King of Burgers

In a city so jam-packed with restaurants that one could eat out in a different place every meal and never repeat, it's saying a lot to return to a place more than once, and then too many times to count. Such is the case with [Naïf](#), a cozy/grunge burger spot nestled into Plaza de San Idelfonso serving burgers, with a side of sass. Ask for a glass of water and one of the snarky waiters will return saying they've run out of water, but they do have gin. Alternatively, copas of beer and wine are available for cheap and are a must for washing down the grub.



The jocular banter with the waiters, the hype that comes with having to (almost) yell over the music in order to be heard across the table, the flickering candles of the dining room, all contribute to making repeat [Naif](#) visits, **but the real reason to return is for the burgers. Never a disappointment, never.**



Here, the king of burgers, is, undoubtedly, the Hamburguesa de Trufa: hamburger gold. The rich flavor of truffles oozes out of the burger with every bite. La Ibérica also pleases with its hefty slices of jamón and manchego respectively. [Naif](#) has the Goldy Locks principle working to its advantage: the burgers are not too big, not too small— they're just right. Nevertheless, they can be a challenge to eat; baskets of napkins are placed on the tables for this very reason. Don't mind about minding manners.



A large chalkboard wall boasts nachos among the house specialities. What comes to the table is a **casserole dish of chips bathing in a tangy bath of cheese, plus some avocados and peppers for a spicy punch**. These are not skating rink nachos. They can be a meal in itself or something to share—cheesy fingers for all.



And beyond burgers, dessert awaits on the horizon. There is **carrot cake**, of course, as well as **cheesecake** and **American Pie**. It's not your mom's recipe, but it's pie! Inexplicably,

it lacks the bottom layer of crust, but there's a top. Let's not be too picky, now. The **carrot cake** benefits from the **addition of nutella and walnuts**.



Eating at [Naif](#) is addicting. You want to be there, wrapped up in this rough and rugged metropolitan environment, until closing time. [Naif](#) can serve as the backdrop for any social situation: **friends, dates, and parental visits alike**. The soundtrack somehow always fits the occasion and the dim lighting makes everything seem cooler than it probably is.



[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

Where: Calle San Joaquín, 16

Phone: 910 07 20 71

Photos courtesy of Pablo Arias

**Looking for other cool spots in Malasaña?
Check out:**

[La Paca, the perfect Malasaña café and bar](#)

[Pepe Botella, a coffee place where you can think](#)

[Toma Café, Fuel up, Feel hip](#)

[Best Café-Bookshops in Madrid](#)

[Best First Date Ideas in Madrid for foodies](#)

Cafelito, a trendy spot for coffee lovers in Lavapies

In a *barrio* undergoing the gradual process of gentrification, chic cafes are a dime a dozen. [Cafelito](#), situated on Calle Sombrerete near [Mercado de San Fernando](#), quickly stood out amongst the crowd as my go-to spot for coffee and studious activity in the barrio. The owner, Julio, imports his coffee from locations such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Mexico.



During my first two years abroad I lamented the absence of iced-coffees, especially during the pinnacle of the Madrid summers. This past summer, when **Cafelito** opened, they boasted of offering **homemade iced-coffee using cubes of frozen coffee as the ice**. Since then, I have gone through 6 full punch cards and been rewarded for my loyalty with as many free drinks.



My favorite winter drink, which I typically take to go, is **dirty chai**. When I need to sit and be studious as I write assignments like this, I usually take a **double espresso** of **whichever imported coffee is available that week**.



[Cafelito](#) is now a hub for the writers amongst us in the barrio. The charms of the cafe are enhanced by the recycled furniture and open library. Coffee drinkers can borrow books—on the honor system—and leave books in the hope that they in turn will be borrowed.



They have cakes too.



[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Sombrerete 20

Metro: Lavapiés

Looking for other spots in Lavapiés?
Check out:

Baobab, an authentic Senegalese restaurant

Tribuetxe, a Basque pintxo bar

Mercado de San Fernando, the real food emporium

Taberna Lamiak, another Basque pintxo bar with free wine tastings

Bocadillo de Jamón y Champán- Sandwiches with Substance

If I have learned anything during my time living in Madrid, I know the importance of *jamón*. It is a staple in the diet here, and the variety of forms, cuts, and quality can be overwhelming. Luckily, [Bocadillo de Jamón y Champán](#) recognizes the significance of this and offers a **simplified menu of assorted ham sandwiches and an impressive champagne selection.**



Located a short walk away from **Alonso Martínez**, the hanging mini-lights adorning the exterior of the restaurant tastefully illuminate hanging ham legs and bottles of champagne behind the bar.



Settle in at one of the tall tables inside, and consider yourself lucky if you don't have to wait to take a seat! Space is coveted at **this cozy restaurant**, making it a destination more suited to small groups, or for those who don't mind posting up at the countertops opposite the bar.



Each ham sandwich is given a name and comes in different sizes; ideal for trying more than one! The **Telmo** is filled with a creamy cheese, caramelized onions, and peppers, along with finely cut ham of course, while the **Antonito** is accompanied by Manchego.



Nothing is left to chance, with crispy fresh bread toasted to perfection to top it all off. For those preferring the straightforwardness of ham without the accoutrements, Bocadillo offers servings of different ham cuts as well without the fuss of bread.

The sandwiches are all reasonably priced, varying from €3.5 for a half sandwich, to €7.5 for the whole enchilada, or bocadillo so to speak, and glasses of champagne start at €2.5 but you could spend up to €9.



Although other beverages are on the menu at [Bocadillo de Jamón y Champán](#), the champagne is the obvious choice, served in long-stemmed glasses. Available options, either by the glass or bottle, are advertised on a chalkboard, allowing you to choose based on the occasion.

There is nothing snobby about [Bocadillo de Jamón y Champán](#). It is the perfect spot to indulge in the quality hams Spain is so known for, without needing the background of a connoisseur, or a study guide of the history of jamón—you can simply enjoy the delicious sandwich put in front of **you feeling like a true**

Madrileño.

[Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Fernando VI, 21, 28004 Madrid

Metro: Chueca & Alonso Martínez

**Looking for other nice spots in Madrid?
Check out:**

[Cozy Wine Bars in La Latina \(with gluten free options!\)](#)

[Toma Café: Fuel up, Feel hip](#)

[Best Date Ideas for Foodies in Madrid](#)

[Best Brunch on a Budget in Madrid](#)

Tribuetxe, a Basque Pinchos Bar in Lavapies

I was recommended [Tribuetxe](#) by one of my former students, a stoic Basque Señora, who wanted me to try the cuisine of her region's chefs. I haven't yet explored Pais Vasco, but I have every intention to due to the hype surrounding their food culture. I sampled Tribuetxe's fried shrimp tapa during Tapapies, the competitive international food festival of the barrio—I was not surprised to learn later on that they had

won .





A fairly new location, situated behind [Mercado San Fernando](#) on Calle Tribulete, [Tribuetxe](#) is always *petado*. I clearly understand why after consuming four of their excellent pinchos alongside glasses of vino tinto. One of my new years resolutions was to incorporate more **eggplant** into my diet after sampling their **berenjena pincho**. I followed this up with **duck**, a skewer of **shrimp** and **octopus** and a skewer of fried merluza. Each filling pincho costs between 3€ and 3.50€.







[Mercado San Fernando](#) is one of my favorite hubs of community within the barrio. If you are exploring that area on a pleasant weekend afternoon, I strongly advise you to venture to Tribuete for your daytime drinking and snack endeavors.

[Facebook](#)

Address: Calle de Tribuete 23

Metro: Lavapiés

Here's a full article on El Mercado de San Fernando, entitled: ['Lavapiés and its market: the real food emporium!'](#)

Another Basque pincho bar in Lavapiés and La Latina that we love is: [Lamiak](#)

If you're looking for wonderful wine bars in La Latina, check out: [‘The cosiest wine bars in La Latina \(with gluten free options!\)’](#)

StreetX0 – An Eclectic Fusion of High and Low, East and West

If you're a foodie living in Madrid, then you've probably heard of [DiverX0](#), the Michelin three star gourmet restaurant born from the wild mind of Mohawk-totting creator and chef **David Muñoz**. If you haven't, watch [this video](#) first.

Muñoz has been omnipresent in gossip media ever since TV personality **Cristina Pedroche** recently confirmed rumors about their relationship on Twitter. Though, young, punkish, and charming, Muñoz is a celebrity in his own right – he even stars in his own [Mercedes ad](#), playing cheeky about his Michelin accolades.

A quick look at DiverX0's reservations online shows there are no openings till June; however, luckily for those of us who don't have reservations or who can't wait to sample Muñoz's creations, there's **StreetX0**. Originally opened in 2012, StreetX0 is Muñoz's more casual and affordable restaurant.



Recently relocated at **El Corte Ingles's Gourmet Experience** on Serrano 52, the restaurant boasts exciting decor, delicious cocktails, and intriguing food. It's no surprise that Muñoz serves up Asian-inspired dishes seeing as he cut his teeth at Nobu and Hakkasaan in London. His fare, though, is a little grittier, as the name of his new restaurant implies – the decor and the food are supposed to conjure up a wet market in Hong Kong or a food alley in Singapore (minus the cockroaches). Upturned crates serve as bar stools and neon signs line the walls.





First things first, as soon as you sit down, somebody comes and gets your cocktail order – doesn't matter if you're coming

for lunch or dinner. The cocktails are beautiful, perfumed concoctions that put you in the right mood for the feast to come.



An open kitchen sits at the heart of the restaurant breathing hot and loud as chefs wearing straight-jacket-like coats call

out the orders and stoke the coals. Definitely try to get a bar seat, you'll get dinner and a show.





When you hear '**sandwich**' called out every few minutes you know that's one thing on the menu you *have* to order. The *Sandwich Club* sounds inconspicuous and unexciting compared

to the rest of the menu, but that is where your assumptions would be wrong.



Now, does that look like any club sandwich you've ever had? I thought not. The fried egg tops a Chinese *bao* filled with succulent, melt-in-your-mouth pork. Bizarre, unlikely, and strangely good. Then there's the Korean inspired wonton lasagna dish and the Mexican mole dish with obligatory chips drizzled over tender quail.





The mole is served on a thick, waxy paper, no plate. When you're done, they just crumple the paper-plate up and take it away. If you're craving desert after, you'll have to take yourself to the frozen yogurt stand on the same floor, as StreetX0 doesn't serve sweets. But hey, who needs sweets when you have cocktails?



With the music pulsing in the background and a delicious, albeit expensive, cocktail list, it's easy to see why this spot is so hot – no matter the time of day, there's always a line. Atmosphere and energy trump food here, but the food is worth it, too, just be sure to get there very early (at least half-an-hour before opening) or very late (past nine-thirty) if you don't want to have to wait in line.

Address: Serrano, 52

Times: Sun 11:00 am – 12:00 am. Mon – Sat 10:00 am – 12:00 am.

There's also a happening [Gourmet Experience at the Corte](#)

[Inglés at Callao](#) with an outdoor rooftop terrace. Check out our previous article on it [here](#).

Best Brunch on a Budget in Madrid

It's noon on a Sunday, you have just peeled off the covers and opened the blinds, and it's decision time: breakfast or lunch? Who says you have to choose? Brunch, combining the best of both meals, is a concept quickly growing in Madrid, and with multiple affordable options, you don't have to break the bank to enjoy a delicious meal!

1. Ojalá (featured in the cover photo and rightly so)



Located on one of Malasaña's narrow streets, you might walk right past Ojalá without realizing the hidden treasure that lies inside. At first glance, this café appears to be another one of Malasaña's trendy locales, with groovy colored light bulbs dispersed around the café, and bleacher-like seating across from the kitchen, with a clear window allowing a look inside as mouth-watering food is being prepared. Head downstairs for more seating, and you will find yourself being transported quite literally to a sandbar, with sand serving in place of carpet or wood flooring. Get comfy on the lounge

chairs and tables low to the ground, feeling warmed immediately by the heat lamps for added effect. A tikki bar completes the look at one end of the “beach.”



The extensive brunch menu offers a little something for everyone, and is all-encompassing, including a coffee or tea (taking care of caffeination needs), and the choice of juice, soda, beer or wine. No detail is overlooked, with fresh juice accompanied by a paper crafted straw served in a tasteful glass bottle.

As for the food, options include something for those looking for something on the sweeter side, with offerings of pastries and fresh fruits, or savory platters, including “World Mix”: organic cornbread with hummus, guacamole, poached egg, and a side of fruit salad and arugula lightly dressed, artfully served on a wooden plank.

It’s hard to leave the oasis that is Ojalá, but it provides the ultimate refuge for a weekend afternoon no matter the season, with outdoor seating when the weather permits.

Facebook

Price for brunch menu: €8-12€

Where: Calle de San Andres, 1

Metro: Noviciado/Tribunal

2. Little Big Café



With less than 10 tables inside, the Little Big Café is a cozy spot situated in Chamberí, with chalkboards inside advertising the expansive menu offerings. You are drawn in immediately by the cakes, pies, brownies, and other assorted bakery items displayed on the counter before you have even glanced at the brunch menu. (Don't worry, the sweets are on that menu too).



This café, with the tagline “A little café with a big heart,” is just that, with friendly staff willing to spend time explaining the menu to you. Wooden benches and tables add to the neighborhood feel of the café, along with the bulletin board with Polaroid’s of the “Club VIP” of Little Big.



The brunch menu allows diners the “Menu Cerrado,” a hearty offering that includes both a savory and sweet dish, choice of beverage, a dessert (head to the counter to survey which pastries suit your fancy), and a coffee or tea. Alternatively, diners can pick and choose from sandwiches, French toast or pancakes with your choice of toppings, or the brunch classic Eggs Benedict. The Eggs Benedict don’t disappoint, with an accompanying delicate side salad, and the pancake topping selection is overwhelming, served alongside the thin “tortitas” that won’t last long on your plate.

But the real star of the show is the previously mentioned dessert. Options vary, but the carrot cake is perfection, while the chocolate frosted chocolate cake will delight chocoholics. The best thing about the vast selection of desserts: you'll have an excuse to return and try them all.

Facebook

Price of brunch menu: €16.50

When: offered Saturdays and Sundays-11am-4:30pm

Where: Calle Fernández de los Ríos, 61

Metro: Moncloa/Islas Filipinas/Quevedo

3. Martínez Bar

For those who have given up on finding any resemblance of a bagel in Madrid, wander over to Martinez on Sundays for a gourmet Bagel Brunch at a reasonable price. Soft jazz greets you as you enter Martinez, followed by mouth-watering smells you'll find yourself hoping are coming to your table. The aesthetically simple design of Martinez has an antiquated feel reminiscent of times past, and the small tables lining the restaurant make it an ideal destination for smaller groups.



Start off with a fresh orange or grapefruit juice, and then dive into the bagel selection. Bagels are served with a variety of accompaniments, including the salmon and cream cheese, hummus, or goat cheese and marmalade. The warm, freshly toasted bagel is presented on round wooden boards, with the option of a supplemental Bloody Mary or Mimosa to complement your meal. The bagel toppings are not overpowering, and allow diners to enjoy the simplicity of the bagel below at the same time.



The brunch concludes with a coffee or tea, and one of Martinez's fresh desserts. The cheesecake, topped with a berry jam and a perfectly thick graham cracker crust is a guilty pleasure to be enjoyed slowly. Other dessert options include a brownie, carrot cake, or apple tart.



The simplicity of Martinez's Bagel Brunch is what makes it so enjoyable-minimal ingredients allow diners to enjoy fresh flavors without any unnecessary additions.

[Facebook](#)

Price of bagel brunch: €9.90

When: Sundays 1pm-4:30pm

Where: Calle Barco, 4

Metro: Gran Vía

4. Carmencita Bar

Located on an unassuming street in Malasaña, Carmencita is

anything but ordinary. Reservations are a must here, and you might even find yourself out of luck if you dare call past Thursday for the coming weekend. A popular expatriate hangout, you will hear a fair amount of English spoken here, and the restaurant offers a language exchange on Tuesday evenings starting at 9pm.



You can't mention Carmencita without talking about the 1€ mimosa. Little hair of the dog never hurt anyone! You can treat yourself to one (or two, who's counting?) without putting a dent in your wallet.



The brunch plates include Huevos Rancheros, Eggs Benedict, French Toast, and the “American Plate” complete with fried egg, sausage, bacon and hash browns. The fixed price brunch menu is generous: Eggs Benedict with your choice of salmon, avocado, or bacon, your preferred side (hash browns, potatoes, or salad), dessert of the day, coffee and mimosa.

The hollandaise sauce can be a bit excessive, but by the time you get to the hash browns you will have forgotten; these crispy potatoes are beyond compare, and a rare find in Madrid at that.



If you find yourself still having room left for a bit of dessert, you can't go wrong with the dessert of the day. The fluffy cakes are featured on the counter of this small restaurant, so you will be tempted throughout your meal. Finishing the last sips of your mimosa you might find yourself already planning your next trip to Carmencita.

Facebook

Price for complete brunch menu: €14.

*When: brunch served Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays
12pm-4:30pm.*

Where: Calle San Vicente Ferrer, 51

Metro: Noviciado

La Gringa (Carmencita Bar's sister restaurant a few doors down)

Carmencita Bar has a sister location right down the street called **La Gringa** that serves the same delicious brunch. When it's not holding brunch, it's a fun Mexican restaurant that organizes language exchanges and offers great deals on Mexican beers, cocktails, *tacos*, *burritos* and *micheladas*. Here's a sneak peak of their brunch menu, filled with a variety of burgers, egg dishes and of course, mimosas and bloody marys.



Facebook

Where: San Vicente Ferrer 57

When: Saturday & Sunday 12pm-4:30pm. Best to make a reservation: 679 183 399

Metro: Noviciado

5. The Toast Café

From the hanging light bulbs encased in mason jars to the freshly squeezed orange juice served in champagne flutes, The Toast is an Instagrammer's paradise, and will satisfy your grumbling stomach too. Just one street over from the Little Big Café, The Toast is nearly always full of content diners lingering over the tasty two course brunch (coffee or tea and juice included) offered on weekends.



Start off with a generous Bloody Mary as you consult the

comprehensive brunch menu. The first plate options include pancakes, tostada, salad with light vinaigrette, or a croissant.



The fluffy pancakes don't disappoint, while the mixed greens salad is artfully topped with fresh vegetables.

The first course is just a warm-up for the second plate options: the obligatory Eggs Benedict, Huevos Rancheros, Breakfast Burrito, omelet, or salmon bagel.

The breakfast burrito is complemented with guacamole, pico de

gallo, while the filling inside surprises with potatoes.

The Toast is a popular weekend destination, so make sure to reserve a table ahead of time, so that the toughest decision will be whether to top your Eggs Benedict with salmon, avocado, or bacon!

Facebook

Price for brunch: €14

*When: brunch served Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays
11am-5pm*

Where: Calle Fernando El Católico, 50

Metro: Arguelles/Moncloa/Quevedo/Islas Filipinas

By Meredith Parmalee

Toma Café: fuel up, feel hip

[Toma Cafe](#) could very well be a coffee shop in a hipster mecca like San Francisco or Brooklyn. Upon wandering into the sparse space with narrow benches lining the walls and a bicycle dangling from the ceiling, one might wonder: "Have I wandered onto the set of Portlandia?"



People peck at their laptops while seated at teensy tables. The baristas take their posts at the helm of the espresso machine seriously. More seats can be found in the back, but space is rather cramped. One's daily dose of **espresso** can be consumed in various different forms. Options extend beyond the

confines of *café con leche*.



A gem on the beverage menu: *chocolate picante*. In this concoction, bitter chocolate and prickly heat make ordinary chocolate seem lame.



A limited **breakfast** list exists offering a few variations on toast (tomato and olive oil, butter and jam, not much more). Alternatively, as Marie Antoinette famously did not say, *let them eat cake*. **The chocolate cake is made with Madrid's own Cerveza La Virgen**—what could be better for breakfast?



The omnipresent **carrot cake** also beckons from the pastry case. Here, the crowd-pleaser takes on a spicy character and the cream cheese frosting makes an already good cake better.



Luckily for those in search of a caffeinated workspace, **Toma Cafe** opens for breakfast at early hours. Come here to fuel up and to fill hip.



[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Address: calle La Palma 49

Metro: San Bernardo or Noviciado

Hours: M-F 8am-8pm. Sat & Sun 10am-8pm

Here are some more of our favorite cafes in Madrid:

[Pepe Botella, a Coffee Place Where You Can Think](#)

[La Paca, the Perfect Cafe in Malasaña](#)

[Best Cafe-Bookshops in Madrid, Round 1 & Round 2](#)

Cosy Wine Bars in La Latina (with gluten free options!)

If you're looking for some dark and cosy wine bars to enjoy a glass of fantastic Spanish wine and some delicious tapas, then head to La Latina. Known as Madrid's tapas district, this neighbourhood is famous for its lazy Sunday afternoon tradition of tapas-bar-hopping, up and down the winding streets of Cava Baja and Cava Alta.

But first, the history of Cava Baja has more to do with foreigners in Madrid than you might think.

Originally a deep trench that ran along the outside of the medieval city walls, Cava Baja protected the city from bandits and scoundrels, and allowed the people of Madrid to come and go freely without using the city gates. Soon the city boundaries spread, and local taverns sprung up along this stretch to lodge (and feed) travellers and farmers, who came to Madrid to sell their wares at market; You can still see the

street sloping downhill and curving to follow the path of the old city wall.

This means that, for expats and visitors to the city, enjoying a glass of local wine and food amongst the higgledy piggledy bars and old taverns of Cava Baja is to not only enjoy La Latina, but also repeat the history of many a travelling peddler visiting Madrid.

[El Tempranillo](#)

For people that like Spanish wine: El Tempranillo. From the moment that you see the entire wall of wine bottle racks behind the bar, you know that you are in the right place.

Chic and modern from the outside but small and traditional on the inside, El Tempranillo has the perfect mix of low lighting, muted conversation and good Spanish wine- and a table to sit at if you order some tapas.



Compared with other wine and tapas bars in Cava Baja, El Tempranillo has something unique that is difficult to put your finger on.

Right in the heart of the hustle and bustle of Cava Baja, it is comparatively understated- but quietly confident. It has a real buzz of people under the dimmed lighting, but is surprisingly quiet. This muted conversation gives a sense of privacy in which you can enjoy your glass of wine, share a few tapas and have a meaningful conversation with good friends- without having to raise your voice.

The tapas at El Tempranillo are addictive. Try the 'revuelto de champiñones salvajes' (mushroom omelette), or the tostas. You might have to wait a little to order at peak times during the weekend or evenings, but the dishes come out quickly once ordered and are worth the wait.

Then, the wine. Order from the chalk board, which has an impressive selection of wine that comes from almost all the wine regions of Spain. Most exciting, though, is their larger than average selection of good Spanish wines available by the glass, with prices starting as low as 2,50€ and 2,70€. Arrive a little early, set up your company at a table, and enjoy some good wine.



Calle Cava Baja, 38

[Juana La Loca](#)

Juana La Loca makes a nod towards Juana, the 'mad queen of Castile', who although was probably just another misunderstood female royal, still makes for a good story and name for a wine bar.



Small, dark, cosy and kinetic, Juana La Loca is perfect for a glass of Spanish wine and some delicious tapas.

Tightly packed inside, with small tables edging around the long bar, Juana La Loca mixes the worlds of both restaurant and wine bar into one dynamic space. With both bar and table enjoying tapas and wine, just with each enjoying more of one than the other, the two functions blend harmoniously into one shared space.

To start with a glass of wine, choose from the wine board behind the bar. Although the choices are slightly restricted and slightly pricier by the glass, the quality of the wine makes up for the lack of selection. If you like deep, complex red wines, try a Ribera del Duero *Crianza* or *Reserva*.

Without a doubt, the most famous dish served at Juana La Loca is the *tortilla de patatas*: a buttery, melt-in-the-mouth tortilla, finished with a crispy outer layer and served on top of a slice of bread. If you are being visited by friends or

family in Madrid who have not yet tried *tortilla de patatas*, this is the one to debut.

The '*huevos rotos*' are also to-die-for, either to share or as a *ración* for yourself: crispy, chewy, buttery fries topped with melting fried egg, small salty strips of *jamón*, salted *pimientos de padrón* and a shake of paprika, all served on a long plate.

Very well accompanied by a glass of fresh wine to clean your palate and a bowl of Juana La Loca's moreish olives, these delicious options can also be served gluten free if you ask the waiter. The prices may be a little higher, but the quality of the wine and food are a step above the rest.

A little tip is to bring cash with you, as they do not accept cards. The small wine bar-restaurant also fills up quickly in the evenings; after 20:30 tables are only for a meal of tapas (plus wine) and bar spots are only for wine (plus a tapa). Arrive early enough to enjoy some good wine and conversation amongst the relaxed atmosphere, and feel the bar fill up with the buzz of evening service.



Plaza Puerta de Los Moros, 4

www.juanalalocamadrid.com

[La Concha](#)

If you like sherry, cava or vermouth, then you are in luck. This tiny mismatched bar with painted wood panels and creative details offers a great selection of Spanish fortified wines and sparkling cava from Cataluña. A refreshing take on the usual full-bodied red wine offered in La Latina, come to La Concha for something a little different.



La Concha has a nomadic feel, keeping in tune with the street's history of travelling visitors, and offers both the upstairs bar for drinks and downstairs seating area for tapas.

If you have yet to try vermouth, a fortified wine infused with various roots, barks, flowers, seeds, herbs and spices, La Concha has 'Vermut Miró', a Spanish vermouth from the northern Spanish city of Reús.

La concha also has a selection of Spanish Sherries, or 'Jerez' in Spanish. Hailing from the D.O. wine region with the same name, Jerez de la Frontera, Jerez is unique in its elaboration; you cannot find a fortified wine like Sherry anywhere else in the world.



If you like bubbles: Cava. Spain's answer to champagne, this bubbly sparkling wine can come in 4 different kinds: Cava, Cava Reserva (minimum 15 months ageing), Cava Gran Reserva (over 30 months ageing) and Rosé. La Concha has more than one of each kind, from different wineries, to try. Order a glass with one of their tapas. Although Cava traditionally matches well with fish or sweet fruity flavours, this is not necessarily the case; a Brut Nature Gran Reserva would go well with meat dishes, roasts or spicier foods.

On a week night you will easily find a spot here. Just head down the kooky stairs and order from their small tapas menu, which is also available completely gluten free.



Calle Cava Baja, 7
www.laconchataberna.com

Extra notes

If you would like to know what to look for in these wine and tapas bars, or are not sure what kinds of wines you like yet, you can also do some [wine tasting in Madrid](#).

Wine word

Maridaje – food and wine pairing

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[Madrid's 3 Best Wine Shops](#)

[Taberna Lamiak, another wonderful bar in La Latina](#)

[Madrid's Best Cafe-Bookshops](#)

Best Cafe-bookshops in Madrid, Round 2!

Welcome to round two of the [best cafe-bookshops in Madrid](#)! As you may have noticed in [round one](#), Madrid's central neighborhoods boast quite a lot of quaint coffee shops and bars that encourage drinking and reading under one roof.

There's something about drinking coffee or wine amidst a sea of books that makes me feel right at home. Whether you're looking for the perfect place to enjoy a quiet conversation or a good read, here are five more wonderful cafe-bookshops in Madrid that you're bound to fall in love with.

1. [La Central de Callao](#)



La Central (featured in the cover photo) is a trendy bookshop near Callao and hands down the most modern of all on this list. It boasts three floors, a happening café with a full menu and a selection of much more than books on offer. At La Central, you can also find funky mugs, quirky bags, useful calendars, board games, wrapping paper, you name it. It's a great place to get [gifts in Madrid](#).

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** C/ Postigo de San Martín, 8
- **Metro:** Callao

2. J&J Books and Coffee





A long-time staple among Madrid's expat community, this corner bar has a downstairs bookstore selling a large selection of primarily used English-language books, including ESL resources. Up at the bar, you can get craft beer, wine, coffee, bagels and other things to munch on. Also check out J&J's free events, including language exchanges and pub quizzes (trivia nights). Lots of fun!

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** c/ Espíritu Santo, 47
- **Metro:** Noviciado

3. italiana_madrid





This Italian café and bookshop is located on one of Madrid's most vibrant streets – Corredera Baja de San Pablo – which is lined with great bars, cafes and restaurants, such as [Aió Pizzería](#), [Elemental Bistro](#) and [Gymage](#) with its rooftop terrace. At [italiana_madrid](#), you can get a strong espresso or Aperol Spritz, plus browse through a wide selection of Italian reads ranging from cookbooks to children's books. It's also across the street from one of the city's favorite theaters, Teatro Lara.

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 10
- **Metro:** Gran Vía

4. La Ciudad Invisible



A travel bookshop selling food and drinks, this two-level cafe boasts huge windows, high ceilings, and plenty of large tables, couches and comfortable armchairs to choose from, making it a great place for getting work done and meeting friends. Plus it sells a killer **Rebujito for 2€** (a really refreshing yet deceptive drink from the South containing sherry, white wine and soda water). It's also across the street from one of my favorite restaurants in Madrid, [Bar Lambuzo](#).

- [Facebook](#)

- **Address:** *c/ Costanilla de los Ángeles, 7*
- **Metro:** *Opera & Santo Domingo*

[5. María Pandora](#)



María Pandora is one of my favorite spots in the city. Perched atop a hill overlooking Parque las Vistillas, behind the Royal Palace, here you'll find the perfect place to watch the sunset while enjoying a glass of champagne (the house specialty) or your drink of choice. Although María Pandora is more of a bar than a coffeeshop, it still deserves a spot on this list of literary cafés. It also holds events such as [poetry nights](#), microtheater, and book readings. [Check out our full article on María Pandora here.](#)

- [Website & Facebook](#)
- **Phone:** +34 910 42 82 13

- **Address:** Plaza de Gabriel Miró, 1
- **Metro:** La Latina or Ópera

Make sure to read: “[Best Cafe-Bookshops in Madrid, Round 1](#)”

Also check out our [favorite bookshop in the city, Desperate Literature](#)