

Gibraltar, an authentic Moroccan restaurant in Lavapies

My close friend Kameron “el ProfeSoul” Sterling has been an excellent resource to me in my mission to shed light on the endearing establishments hidden within our multi-cultural barrio of Lavapies. “It’s all about the fellas,” he said charismatically as he led me into Gibraltar, a charming Moroccan restaurant situated on C/ Casino by the Embajadores park. Entering this location was akin to leaving Europe and entering Morocco—the authenticity made visible by its lively crowd of Moroccan gentlemen who were sipping tea, bantering in French and casually shooting the shit.



Kameron was greeted warmly by the head server, who presented us with **delicious mint tea**. Kam is well acquainted with this establishment considering its essentially in his backyard. He recommended that I try the **al harira**, a thick, spicy soup containing chicken, tomatoes and ginger with other herbs.





This was followed up by our respective main courses: a **Tajine of chicken with prunes, almonds, egg, and vegetables** & a **Tajine of Lamb, couscous and vegetables**. Both of these Tajines were phenomenal, with their spectrum of fresh flavors dancing on our palates.



The staff of this establishment are extremely amicable and efficient. The head server, who was quite vocal to me about exactly how fond he is of Kam, was able to guess correctly based on my accent that I'm from New York. I felt very much accepted as an outsider.

Kam and I left this establishment incredibly full and pleased with ourselves—the check was **11€ each**. I strongly recommend this establishment to any adventurous eaters who are searching for a **colorful window into a completely different world**.

Info

Address: *Calle Del Casino 16*

Metro: *Lavapies, Embajadores*

Phone: *606 78 75 67*

Also check out:

[Baobab, an Authentic Senegalese Restaurant in Lavapiés](#)

[Tribuetxe, a Basque Pintxo Bar in Lavapiés](#)

[Lavapiés and its market: the real food emporium!](#)

[Badila – you need this restaurant in your life](#)

Perdizione, a hidden Tex-Mex Burrito shop in Lavapiés

Until quite recently, kebabs and falafels had the monopoly over nighttime snacks in Lavapiés. **My favorite new Tex-Mex hole in the wall is hidden due to its awkward branding.**



Perdizione, a pizza franchise with another location in Legazpi, has partial ownership of this site—the sign above the door says “**Perdizione Pizzeria**” which causes passersby to be none the wiser that inside can be found hearty and filling burritos and other Mexican treats.



For **4 euros** you can get an **enormous burrito** of cochinita, vegetables or chicken, and for an additional €1.50 you can add on nachos, guacamole and a beer. **Tacos cost 1.50**. I smiled when I saw that they offered **Negra Modelo**, my Dad's favorite beer from his native city of Mexico D.F. The staff of this location have always been super *majo*.



Once I earned regular status I offered my council to the owner—this establishment needs to focus on its strengths and prioritize the burritos and its branding as a Mexican joint.

Info

[Facebook](#)

Where: Calle Miguel Servet 9

Metro: Lavapiés, Embajadores

For more on Mexican food in Madrid, check out:

[Madrid's Best Mexican Joints](#)

Also in Lavapiés:

Baobab, an Authentic Senegalese Restaurant in Lavapiés

Tribuetxe, a Basque Pintxo Bar in Lavapiés

Cafelito, a trendy spot for coffee lovers in Lavapiés

Pecados Argentinos, Freshly-baked Argentine Empanadas in Plaza de Cascorro

When I am scurrying between my private lessons I sometimes get swept up in a blinding hunger. Empanadas are often the most practical solution because they can be both served and consumed quickly, leaving me full, satisfied and capable of fighting onwards. [Pecados Argentinos](#) is a shop situated in **Plaza de Cascorro** that sells delicious, filling **Argentine empanadas** as well as other products from the land of silver.



Earlier this year I was dabbling with the idea of relocating next to Buenos Aires and I made a point of befriending the staff of this establishment so that I could pick their brains as to what life there entails. The staff of this shop are a group of lovely ladies that greet their clients with terms of endearment such as *mi amor* and *cariño*. The Porteño accent is my favorite of the various forms of Spanish that I've been exposed to—when they speak it's almost as if they're singing and my instinctive response is to melt. Several times I have entered this location while rushing between point lessons and have lost track of time due to the hypnotizing nature of their accents during our small-talk.



The establishment offers 11 different types of empanadas and my intention is to eventually sample all of them. My favorite thus far is filled with mushrooms and both mozzarella and parmesan cheese. Another that has aided my recovery from crippling resacas is their empanada of chicken, mozzarella cheese and caramelized onions. I've also enjoyed their staple empanada, which is filled with tuna, red pepper, & onion. The empanada stuffed with mushrooms makes my mouth water.

Not to mention their typical Argentine desserts filled with dulce de leche...



The next time you find yourself navigating the **Rastro flea market**, I strongly recommend you picar a few snacks from this charming establishment.

Info

Web

Facebook

Address: Plaza de Cascorro 11

Contact: 910 840 505

Looking for other spots in La Latina and Lavapiés area? Check out:

Tribuetxe, a Basque pintxo bar

Los Chuchis Bar, downright good food in Lavapiés

Cafelito, a trendy spot for coffee lovers in Lavapiés

Lavapiés and its market – the real food emporium!

Cosy Wine Bars in La Latina

Mastropiero, Indulgent Gourmet Pizzas in Malasaña

A few evenings ago I was trading notes with an enthusiastic foodie friend who pointed me in the direction of Mastopiero, **a gourmet pizzeria in Malasaña operated by Argentines**. As you might already know, the Porteño accent just slays me. I was not led astray when I followed up and checked out the establishment for myself. A cozy and intimate space, Mastopiero is dimly lit and smells absolutely delicious.



Their *carta* offer a broad range of gourmet pizza variety. I like to consider myself to be an imaginative person yet **I never would have previously fathomed that *pulpo gallego* on a pizza could be a thing.** Of course when I saw that as an option I ordered a pizza that was half octopus. I asked the staff to surprise me with the other half and their creation entailed **spicy peppers, chorizo, olives, and caramelized onions.**



The literal icing on the cake of this experience is that diners are given a **free slice of chocolate fudge cake** accompanied by creamy *dulce de leche* to top off their experience. If it were possible I would totally have an IV drip of their dulce de leche installed into my body. The service in this establishment was absolutely stellar and I am confident that I will return soon to sample their other pies.



Facebook

Address: Calle San Vicente Ferrer, 36

Metro: Tribunal/Noviciado

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

[Aiò, a piece of Sardinia in Malasaña](#)

[Toma Café, Fuel up, Feel Hip](#)

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

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

[Naif, the king of burgers in Malasaña](#)

Soy Kitchen – a Fusion of Asian Flavors

Previously, I wrote about [StreetX0](#), a hip Asian fusion restaurant in Salamanca helmed by culinary wild child, David Muñoz. Though the food was intriguing more than delicious, I thought it was a decent and fun effort on Muñoz's part – I also thought I'd probably found the best Asian fusion in Madrid.

Then I went to [Soy Kitchen](#).



Located in a old area around Grand Via, in **Plaza de los Montenses**, Soy Kitchen looks unassumingly like a typical neighborhood bar. Inconspicuously sitting in a familiar list

of *cocktails*, *vinos*, and *vermut* sits ***tapas asiáticas***, the only indication that this place serves altogether different fare than most bars. The lower half of the establishment serves drinks and tapas, the upper portion is the restaurant. The decor is simple, but that's where the simplicity ends.



The popularity of Soy Kitchen rests solely on the machinations of proprietor and sole chef, **Julio**. Born in Shanghai and educated in Hong Kong, Julio's career in Spain began when he moved to Pamplona and won a prestigious tapas award. If you get a chance to speak to him, do. Julio is just like the dishes he serves: an eclectic mix of Asian flavors in a

thoroughly Spanish setting.



There is **no menu** (though they always check with the customer if they have any preferences/allergies), which means you are

left in the hands of the chef – and what incredibly capable hands they are. This is Asian fusion done by an Asian, and you can taste the difference.

The image above is a noodle dish that comes with a peanut sauce made with four different types of soy, a lovely mild spice, and many other little secrets that I wish I knew. The image below is a coconut filled with a medley of seafood, and the image below that is a whole garlic and soy lobster that was finger-sucking good.





Throughout the ten course meal (yes, Julio single-handedly cooks ten courses for each and every one of his tables), I was continuously surprised and impressed by the harmony of flavors. As I said earlier, I tend to be suspicious of fusions

because they often reflect an ignorance about the diversity in Asian cuisine.

Every bite was an explosion of so many different flavors from all over Asia I kept expecting them to clash or become too overwhelming, but they never did. Julio is a master chef and finds the perfect balance between spicy, sweet, sour, and savory in each of his dishes.



Julio serves up at least eight dishes, and if you're still hungry you can have an additional meat option of beef or fish. I had the beef. The chef himself came out to stir up the tender pieces in a hot pot and place the perfectly cooked meat on grilled rice cakes.

If you manage to get a reservation, my only suggestion is that you come hungry and stay for an after-dinner *vermut* downstairs – your palette will have gone around Asia and landed firmly back in Spain in a single night.

Info

[Facebook](#)

Address: Plaza Montenses, 4

Metro: Plaza de España

More Asian restaurants featured on Naked Madrid:

- [Ramen Kagura, Madrid's \(almost\) perfect ramen bar](#)
 - [Kintaro – Oy Vey](#)
 - [Sumo – This Japanese restaurant's name says it all](#)
 - [Tuk Tuk – Asian-inspired street food](#)
 - [Chuka Ramen Bar – Madrid's hottest ramen restaurant](#)
 - [Hattori Hanzo – Japanese food, straight up. No sushi.](#)
 - [Nippon 2 – top quality yet affordable sushi, finally!](#)
 - [Krachai – A cozy and elegant Thai restaurant in Alonso Martínez](#)
-

Baobab, an Authentic Senegalese Restaurant in Lavapies

Plaza Nelson Mandela, near *Calle Cabestreros*, is my favorite communal space in Madrid. The plaza is a concrete social hub, perfect for *botellon* and people watching. Situated here is **Baobab, a Senegalese restaurant** that is always *petado* (packed). I had been living near the restaurant for several months before I made a point of seeing what all the hubbub is about.





Baobab did not disappoint—at the time I called it the final frontier of my palate. My first dish was the **Maffe**, a warm peanut and veal curry containing an assortment of vegetables, served with rice. Another popular dish, **Thieboudienne**, consists of fish, onions, cabbage, carrots and peanut oil and a dulce mystery vegetable with a distinct creamy texture. **The skewers of chicken or lamb** and caramelized onions are served over potatoes and salad that become soaked in the delicious juices from the meat. At any given time the restaurant only serves half of what is offered on their menu, with an unpredictable rotation. The plates available are recited quickly by the server—I often need to ask him to repeat himself.

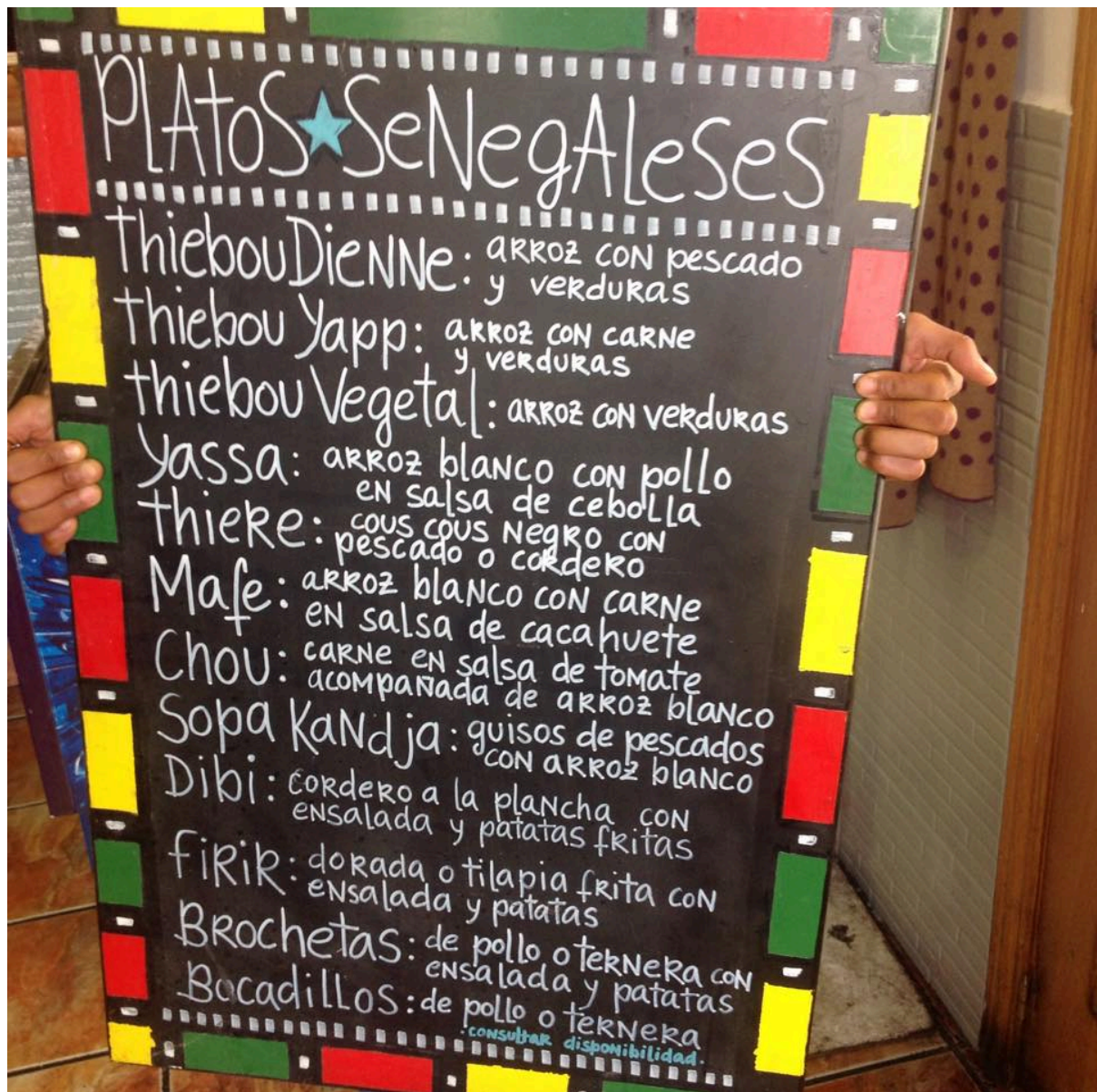


What amazed me about this establishment is that **each portion is monstrous**—often too much to eat in one sit down, even for a notoriously hungry foodie such as myself. **Leftovers can be rationed for several days.** It is known that diners are rewarded with even larger portions for ordering their food take-away.



In the warmer seasons, **Baobab's terraza** is a desirable location for diners who wish to observe the lively happenings in **Plaza Nelson Mandela**. I've seen large groups of young people swing dancing, children assembling DIY badminton or tetherball, with a vast majority of the chatter in languages that are not English or Spanish.





It is important to note that the terraza is a common target for petty criminals—especially after the Rastro on Sundays—because they are aware that the restaurant is popular amongst Madrileños who hail from outside the barrio. Be wary of your possessions and the occasional pickpockets who often have noticeable lingering presences.

Contact: 91 530 4611

Address: Calle Cabestreros 1

Metros: Tirso de Molina or Lavapies

Products & Prices: All rice dishes: 7€. Skewers of Chicken or Lamb: 8€

Casa Adela, a Revered Hole-in-the-Wall Rotisserie in Lavapiés

[Casa Adela](#)'s chickens have been a staple for cheap eats during my time abroad. A tiny and intimate space on Calle Embajadores, Adela's is a watering hole for the residents of the barrio. **Adela's is a family-owned business operated by Señora Adela and her sons.** During their 20 years of business they have refined their process of preparing rotisserie chickens and fried chicken breasts to perfection.



Besides her culinary expertise, Adela radiates a real affection for her diners. She shows it by showering recurring clients with terms of endearment such as *corazon* and *cariño* and by taking the time to stop and talk to them about their lives, always remembering particular details from the previous conversations. I would never have discovered **this hidden gem** had my first Madrid apartment not been directly across from it—we would often joke about creating a delivery system via basket and pulleys.



Adela's holds a tender place in my heart because **I have learned so much Spanish slang from listening to their banter** amongst themselves and with their clients. Here, the unique sense of community in **Lavapies** is visibly apparent. I

initially met two of my neighbors, fellow *extranjeros* Matt and James, while waiting in line for a chicken during my first year. This chance encounter directly resulted with my absorption into the larger social circle that has now become my family.

After I moved out of my initial apartment on Calle del Oso, I feared that I would lose such easy access to my primary source of protein. Fortunately, I was told that they hired an employee to make deliveries on his scooter within the barrio for a 0.50€ cent supplement. I often stop by and say hello while grabbing a bite when walking down Calle Embajadores. It's comforting to frequent an establishment that is visibly frozen in time and has gone unchanged for 2 decades.

Would you like to try Adela's revered chickens?

Facebook

Contact: 91 530 4611

Address: Calle Embajadores 28

Metros: La Latina or Tirso de Molina

Products & Prices:

Half rotisseries chicken or fried chicken breast + fries or rice (5.50€)

Full rotisserie chicken (7.50€)

Hamburger (2€)

Albondigas (meatballs) (5€)

Our other favorite place to get rotisserie chicken is [Casa Mingo](#), which is an absolute must in Madrid. If you haven't been, check out our post 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

Harina, for something sweet or savoury

The temperature inside [Harina](#) is usually cranked well above the temperature of the street, thereby increasing the coziness factor. Within the walls of this white, bright, and charming locale lies one of the most satisfying menús in the city.



Available for both lunch and dinner, the menú begins with a luscious green salad dressed with sweet balsamic vinegar. The whole bowl of greens, a mealtime rarity when eating out in Spain, is like a pot of nutritious gold. Eating the salad, however, is just a warmup exercise for diving into a sprawling slab of pizza.



Keep gulping wine and it may feel as though the pizza has a magnetic force. The glowing light of the interior only becomes softer the less wine remaining in your glass. Thin crust, thick pieces of bacon, a runny fried egg perched in the middle—need I say more? Cut a piece away from the pie and cheese strings out like a game of cat's cradle.



Other menu options do exist, but this one consistently pleases. Dessert is not included in the menu, rather a pot of tea or a cup of coffee seals the meal. Baked goods can wait for another day—maybe when an entire pizza is not taking up stomach real estate.



Harina is a merienda dream come true. Whatever sweet tooth whimsy you may harbor, sugary goodness awaits behind the glass cases. The meringues have rock hard shells, but they shatter into smithereens, and what is left is a sugary marshmallow pillow.



Other desserts can be hit or miss depending on how freshly they were baked. The carrot cake was dry on a recent visit, but Harina gets brownie points for presentation and a mediocre cake can be forgiven.



Multiple locations around the city, prices vary.

Here's their [Facebook page](#) and [web](#).

You'll find one of their nicest locations inside **Plaza de la Independencia**, right next to **Puerta de Alcalá** and a hop skip away from **Plaza de Cibeles**.

After a trip to a nearby museum, you may want to pop into Harina for a coffee or snack. Here's an article on [Madrid's known and not-so-known art institutions](#), many of which are located near Harina.

Taberna Griega, a real neighborhood Greek restaurant in Madrid

It took me seven years of searching, but only one bite to know I had finally discovered Madrid's most authentic Greek restaurant, **Taberna Griega**.

Although I grew up in New York City, my father was born and raised in Greece. Like many Greek-American families, we were the proud owners of a Greek restaurant. We also took regular month-long summer vacations to Greece, eating our way through small mountain villages, seaside spots and family gatherings large and small. So I do feel somewhat of an authority on Greek food to tell you that **Taberna Griega** is the real deal!



Taberna Griega is owned and run by Teo, a Greek man from Volos who has been living in Madrid for 37 years. Located in a residential neighborhood near metro Pacífico, this restaurant is the kind of place you won't find out about in guidebooks, mainly because of its location and lack of modernity, which is precisely what gives it its charm. I only heard about it from a friend who lives in the area.



The after-dinner shot lit all our throats on fire, except for Kaloyan, who says it's nothing compared to some Bulgarian alcohols he's tried. I'll take his word for it.

My friends and I had been planning on getting Greek food for a while because we like to try each other's home cuisine. We've gone to [Taberna Bulgara](#) with Kaloyan, and to a Filipino restaurant with Lorelie. With James it's pretty easy, as he's from Spain. With Edison, however, it's a bit tricky as he's from Taiwan and there are no Taiwanese restaurants that we know of in Madrid. But since he's also of Japanese heritage, he makes us Japanese curry at home and we frequent Japanese restaurants like [Kintaro](#) and [Sumo](#).

So it was time for us to eat Greek food in light of where my father's from. When we arrived at **Taberna Griega** on a rainy Sunday at 2pm, we instantly realized how wonderfully Greek this place was. The walls are painted blue and white to match

the Aegean sea. In case that's not enough to tell you it's Greek, you can also look around at the statues of Greek gods, or of course, at the Greek flags displayed in every corner.





But these over-the-top decorations shouldn't surprise you if you've seen the film, 'My Big Fat Greek Wedding'. What will surprise you, however, is the delicious meal you can get for under 20€.

We started with a round of drinks at the crowded bar alongside neighborhood patrons. Teo appreciated my effort to speak in the little Greek I remembered (my vocabulary is that of a three-year-old). Make sure to thank him and the staff with an enthusiastic *efharistó* (thanks) when leaving! When we moved to our table beside Aphrodite, we ordered four starters to share – a Greek peasant salad, taramá, tzatziki and spinach and cheese pies.



A typical way to start a Greek meal is with different dips, salads and pita bread.



Tzatziki is a dip made of yogurt, cucumber, garlic and dill. Absolutely delicious with pita bread.



Taramasalata is a creamy dip made of fish roe, usually mixed with either bread crumbs or mashed potatoes.



Spanakopita (spinach pie) and tiropita (cheese pie). On the menu you'll find them called 'empanadas griegas'

For the main course, Kaloyan ordered **souvlaki** (meat skewers), and I ordered **gemistá** (roasted red pepper stuffed with meat and rice). And James, Edison and Lorelie ordered the mixed meat platter of two chicken skewers, **befteki** (Greek hamburgers filled with feta cheese) and gyro meat.



Souvlaki, either lamb or veal skewers (Kalo ordered veal)



Gemistá, stuffed bell peppers filled with meat and rice. So good.



Mixed meat platter for 2-3 people

For dessert, we got the two most popular and delicious Greek sweets, **baklava** and **kataifi**, both made of honey, nuts and filo dough.



Baklavi



Kataifi

At the end of our meal, Teo gave us a round of shots to help us recover from what we had just devoured, and the bill came out to 20€ each. So if you've craving some real Greek food or want to experience an unpretentious neighborhood restaurant in Madrid, then here you are!

[Facebook](#)

Address: Juan de Urbieta, 6

Metro: Pacífico

Phone: 914 34 89 19

If you're looking for a more take-away Greek place in the center, you should definitely go to [Greek & Shop in Malasaña](#).

And if you're looking for an authentic Bulgarian restaurant, you must go to [Taberna Bulgaria](#).