

PinsaPizza: Authentic Italian pizza with a twist in barrio Salamanca

Madrid is known for many things. **Pizza is not one of them.**

While Rome, Chicago, or New York have their signature styles of homemade 'za, the Spanish capital hasn't carved out a legacy in this realm. In fact, you'd be hard pressed to find a pie with much flavor at all, with late-night, budget chains such as Papizza and Telepizza reigning supreme over its sad, sad kingdoms.

But in recent years, things have been changing in Madrid. With globalization has come picky eaters with refined palates demanding all the hipster delicacies: [specialty coffee](#), [craft beer](#), [artisan gelato](#), and now, pizza that makes your eyes triple in size.

This small "movement" has gained traction in the past year or so with players like [Picsa](#) (Argentine-style pies) and [Massa](#) (doughy, personal pan pizzas). But I'm tempted to give the top vote to [PinsaPizza](#), an authentic Italian pizzeria with some very surprising twists.

We went on a freezing November evening to their Salamanca location near Gregorio Marañón (they have another shop up north in La Paz). We were immediately warmed up by the cozy dim lights and the smell of cheese being baked...

We started off with the burrata pesto salad, which, if you aren't very hungry, is a meal in itself.



For the main course, my date went for the **mushroom truffle pizza**. Note: even the personal pan pizzas are enough to fill you up if you've had a starter, so be prepared to ask for a to-go box.



I went for the weirdest thing on the menu (*¿qué quieres?* I'm an Aquarius): the **chicken masala pizza**, hold the chicken. The sauce was very flavorful and the cheese fresh, but I recommend adding some veggies to it, as it was pretty basic without.



And saving the best for last, as always: dessert. I ordered one of my favorite foods in the whole universe (and I would never exaggerate in a million years [yes, that's 110% a dad joke]): *tiramisu*. And they don't skimp here. The photo does it no justice—creamy, flavorful, and a portion big enough for two. **Bliss.**



All in all, the experience was fantastic, and the menu definitely had some options to come back for: diavola, tartufo di parma, flor de quesos, a veggie number with grilled asparagus on top, even a Nutella dessert pizza...

And if you're a serial killer and don't like pizza, there are also **calzones** and **enormous Italian-style salads**.



Next time I'm craving real, authentic Italian pizza, I'll be back...

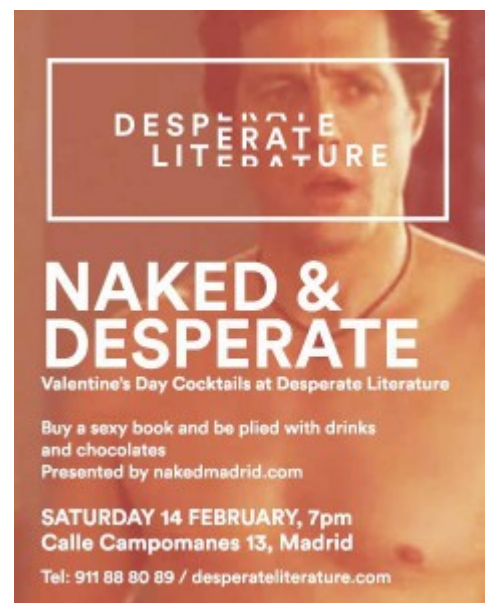
PinsaPizza

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Desperate Literature, so much more than a bookshop

Four years ago I stumbled upon a newly opened gem, [Desperate Literature](#). I immediately went in, spoke to the staff (who were practically still building the place), and wrote an article about it: [Desperate Literature, for book lovers in Brooklyn, Santorini and now Madrid.](#)

Something about it felt so homey to me. Perhaps it was the English-speaking staff, the familiar titles on the shelves, or the fact that they were playing my brother's kind of music. It just felt like I was stepping into an avid reader's living room in New York rather than a bookshop in Madrid.



I haven't stopped going back since. Many of the times I've gone in with friends and family, we've either been offered a cup of green tea or a glass of whiskey. Naked Madrid even co-hosted a Valentine's event there in 2015. I remember there being lots of mulled wine, chocolate, and a discount in the erotica section.

So much has changed since then, yet the same wonderful vibe and essence remains. The staff is still rotating,

international and friendly as ever. The book selection of both new and old titles in English, French and Spanish keeps on growing. With so many great additions, it was time for a new article, with updated pics too.

First some background info

For anyone who hasn't been yet, Desperate Literature sells by far the best selection of English books in the city, from art and philosophy to history and sociology. Plus a nice "boozy books" section where you get a shot of free whiskey with every purchase. You can also find titles in other languages, as well as handpicked rare editions, signed copies, tote bags, postcards, maps, and more. There's even a kids' section!

Desperate Literature was founded by hardcore book fanatics: Craig Walzer (UK), Corey Eastwood (US), Charlotte Delattre (France) and Terry Craven (UK). Between them, they also own [Atlantis Books](#) in Santorini, Greece, and [Book Thug Nation](#) and [Human Relations](#) in Brooklyn, New York.

Charlotte and Terry are currently running the shop (and living upstairs). Before coming to Madrid, they both worked for several years at the world-famous Paris bookshop [Shakespeare and Company](#). Lucky for us, they're bringing the same philosophy to Desperate Literature, making it much more than a bookshop – it's also a community, event space, publishing house, and a home. According to Terry:

"Desperate Literature's aim is to create a place where people meet for and through literature and to that end we're developing not only our stock, focusing on having the best literature in English, Spanish and French, but a whole array of literary events, a literary magazine and all types of literary collaborations."



Great events: readings, concerts, and more

Desperate Literature has truly blossomed into an international haven for literature and art. It collaborates with local and expat writers, poets, musicians, and artists on a regular basis. They constantly put on cozy concerts, trivia nights, chess events, readings, and talks, as well as fun holiday-themed events like Bloomsday and Christmas sing-alongs. All these intimate events are healthily booze-infused, and usually cost just €3 entry including a drink.

Children's corner

In the back you'll find a very sweet children's corner full of class titles that will make you feel nostalgic, from Dr. Seuss to Roald Dahl. There's also a cute little couch where you can curl up with a good read.



First literary prize

Desperate Literature launched its very own short fiction [prize](#) this year, receiving over 450 entries. They offered a €1000 prize, a stay at the beautiful Civitella Ranieri foundation, and publication in various literary magazines, as well as events at Desperate Literature and Shakespeare and Company.

We'll be launching again in December 2018 and (hopefully) every year to come, with the aim of putting our small bookshop on the international scene for excellent experimental fiction written today.

And first magazine and book!

The shortlist from the fiction prize even led to the publishing of Desperate Literature's first book "[Eleven Stories](#)" in April. And they put out their first magazine last year, [La Errante](#).



While all these additions are undeniably impressive (and there's certainly more in store), what speaks to me most is that the shop continues to feel as warm and cozy as ever, almost as if you were walking into a friend's personal library. Plus the music is great, the signs are quirky, and you're likely to make a friend or get offered a drink if you stick around awhile.

If you're interested in getting to know more about Desperate Literature, definitely stop in and say hello. For more info, here's an insightful article written by Katie Dycus: [Portrait of a Bookstore: Desperate Literature \(Madrid\)](#).

Desperate Literature

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)

Address: Calle Campomanes, 13

Metro: Santo Domingo, Opera, and Callao

Madrid with Kids! – Tips from a Mom

Whether you're planning a trip to Madrid or a long-time resident looking for new ideas, Madrid is full of great options to keep your little ones entertained.

You might also like my article on [workout tips for moms in Madrid](#).

Parks

Madrid is home to several great parks that offer lots of fun activities.



Madrid Rio: Why not go for a run with your baby along the park lining the Manzanares River? Parents running with a jogging stroller in Spain used to get a lot of odd stares. The running boom has changed all that and made jogging strollers a trend that's here to stay. Get yours at [Baby Running](#) – an online store with top-of-the-line sport strollers.

Casa de Campo: Casa de Campo is a huge park housing the [amusement park](#), [zoo aquarium](#) with more than 6,000 animals, and a scenic lake with outdoor cafes and boats for rent. If you'd like to avoid traffic jams and screaming kids on the metro, try the [cable car](#) for a scenic view of Madrid along the way. You may want to make sure you are out of the park before it gets dark as escorts tend to make their appearance later in

the day.

Retiro: Look for a puppet show at the [outdoor theatre](#) on weekends and enjoy the many other street performers surrounding the pond at the center of the park. You can also rent row boats if you're feeling confident in your deltoids, or sit back and relax on the solar boat. If you are looking to get some exercise, [Diverbikes](#) across from the O'Donnell entrance rents all different kinds of bikes, and surreys.

Rain driving you and your kids up the wall? Check out the second floor of the [library](#) in the park for a space dedicated to babies and children.

Theme parks and zoos

In addition to the amusement park and zoo aquarium in Casa de Campo, your children will also love seeing the animals at [Faunia](#) in Valdebernardo. Visitors can interact with cage-free animals, and even feed them. The manatee exhibit and petting zoo tend to be a big hit.

If you have a car, the 30 kilometer drive to [Warner Theme Park](#) is the worth the trip. With five different park areas, including Hollywood Boulevard, Superheroes World, Cartoon Village, the Old West and WB Movie World Studios, there are plenty of options to keep everyone in your family happy. Younger kids will love seeing Batman, Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and Superman while older kids and parents check out the latest roller coasters, log fumes and rapid rivers.

You also have the largest water park in Europe about 15 minutes from Madrid in Villanueva de la Cañada. [Aquópolis](#) can get very packed during the peak season so you may be better off going to one of Madrid's [outdoor pools](#) on hot summer weekends.



Summer pool by UCM

Sports fans

Kids dreaming of becoming the next Cristiano Ronaldo will forever thank you for taking them to the tour of the [Santiago Bernabeu stadium](#). Mini Real Madrid fans will be in heaven as they visit the players' locker room, the President's Balcony and even sit on the players' bench.

Little ones hoping to join Cholo's squad will love seeing the [Atlético de Madrid Museum](#). Atlético fans will adore looking at the trophies, memorabilia and collection of shoes and balls dating back to 1903.

Kid-friendly museums

If your kids hear the word "museum" and start to groan, several museums in Madrid could change all that.

The [Wax Museum](#) has over 450 figures including Harry Potter, Snow White, The Simpsons and Frodo from “The Lord of the Rings”. Look online for special discounts for families.

The [Madrid Railway Museum](#) contains a selection of 19th century trains, related exhibits and a wide range of family friendly activities. Take a break afterwards and have a snack in the café located in a 1930s carriage. In Spring and Fall you can also take a ride to Aranjuez on an old-fashioned train, the [Strawberry Train](#) (*Tren de la Fresa*).

Madrid’s [Planetarium](#) lets little explorers observe other galaxies, planets, stars and black holes. Children’s workshops are also available for Spanish-speaking little ones.

With huge dinosaur skeletons and weekend workshops for children, the [National Museum of Natural Sciences](#) is another good option for families.

Theatre and concerts for babies and kids

Madrid offers a wide range of theatre and concerts designed for babies and children. The bill is constantly changing so check [BabyTribu](#) and [Sapos y Princesas](#) for the latest options.

Other ideas

Older kids who are into go-carts will love the [Carlos Sainz Center](#) in Madrid and Las Rozas.

Little ones may enjoy visiting [The Casa Museo del Ratoncito Pérez](#) – the Spanish version of the tooth fairy. The hours change so check their website before going.

Located inside the [Kinépolis](#) movie theatre, [The Magic Forest](#) is a children’s park with slides, climbing trees and mazes.

Nearly every neighborhood in Madrid has a **play center** (*ludoteca*). Find the one closest to you [here](#).

By Marybeth Redheffer

Marybeth is the founder of [Baby Running](#), an online store selling sport strollers so you can stay fit with the little ones in the city! Check out her [website](#) and [facebook](#).

You might also like: [Workout tips for moms in Madrid!](#)

Workout Tips for Moms in Madrid!

If you are a former gym buff wondering how you can get some exercise that doesn't involve changing diapers or pushing a swing, fear not! Your workout days don't have to be over.

Also check out my previous article on [great child-friendly activities in Madrid!](#)



Yoga

Mom and baby yoga is a great way to get out of the house, recover strength and flexibility and spend time with your baby. Most yoga classes go from 6 weeks until the baby starts crawling. Check out the Mom and Baby yoga classes at [Centro El Patio](#) near the Bilbao metro stop and [Zentro Yoga](#) close to the Retiro on Calle Claudio Coello.

Yoga for families is another good option for toddlers and children (the age requirement varies from center to center). [City Yoga](#) offers classes for parents and toddlers from 1-3 years and [Centro Infantil Nariz Roja](#) starts at 4 years.

Gyms with daycare

Unfortunately gyms with daycare are few and far between in Madrid. Why deep-pocketed entrepreneurs aren't investing in gyms with daycare remains a mystery. If you are lucky enough to live near one of the gyms that offer daycare, be sure to ask the minimum age before going. Some won't take babies or

toddlers.

- [Virgin Atlantic Capitán Haya \(Tetuán\)](#)
- [Zagros Puerta Europa \(Chamartin\)](#)
- [Holmes Places \(Moraleja\)](#)
- [Reebok Sports Club \(Pozuelo\)](#)

Try Baby Running

Going for a run with your baby or toddler is probably the most convenient way to get some exercise. Just make sure you have a proper jogging stroller – you don't want to hurt your little one in the process! If you're tight on space, opt for a model that can go from swivel to fixed wheel and it can also serve as your everyday stroller. Check out [Baby Running](#) for a selection of top-rated sport strollers.

Try Baby Blading

If rollerblading is your thing, the BOB Revolution PRO is the first stroller to be certified for rollerblading. Get yours [here](#).

Rent bikes

Places to rent bicycles are popping up all over the city. Go for a bike ride with your kids in a nearby park, or if you live in the center, the Paseo del Prado is closed for cars from 9AM-4PM on Sundays. Located across from the O'Donnell entrance to the Retiro, [Diverbikes](#) is also a fun way for the whole family to get some exercise.

MamiFit classes

[MamiFit](#) classes are designed to help new moms in their postpartum recovery, with an emphasis on hypopressive exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor and core. The best part is that you can bring your baby, a few of his or her favorite toys and get in a workout (if your baby cooperates☺).

Go swimming

Take your children for a swim at one of the many [indoor](#) and [outdoor](#) public pools. If your little ones could use some help learning to swim, some pools offer swimming lessons. Take advantage of class time to do some laps yourself!

YouTube

Ignore your to-do list and use nap time to release some endorphins doing exercise at home. There are tons of good full-length exercise videos on YouTube. Some favorites are [All Around Fitness](#) and [Body Rock](#).

By Marybeth Redheffer

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