

Macera TallerBar, a modern twist on an old tradition

There are handmade cocktails and then there are *handmade cocktails*. [Macera TallerBar](#) is a pioneer in the latter. One look inside this hip bar and you may be confused—there aren't any familiar spirits lining the simple glass shelves.



Don't worry, though. What you'll find is much better. Because instead of the well-known brands of gin, vodka, or rum, there's only Macera's own hand written labels.



The idea behind Macera's name is also what makes its bar shelves so unique. Founder Narciso Bermejo took inspiration from *paxtaran*, a Basque liqueur made by soaking crushed sloe fruits (a blackish berry) in liquor. This traditional technique, called maceration, infuses the host liquor with the color and flavor of whatever ingredient is added.



Wanting to put a modern twist on a piece of Spanish heritage, Bermejo began experimenting with liquors and their complimentary flavors. The result is the many unique spirits that make up Macera's menu today. Think rum infused with cinnamon and orange, gin with rosemary and thyme or red fruit, and whiskey with cherries.

The cocktail menu starts with a list of classics, which are then personalized with your choice of flavor infusion. Turn the page to find the spirits categorized by type with a list of all the different varieties of macerated flavor. If you prefer, you can simply pick one of these and a mixer of choice. No matter which combination you choose, all drinks are accessibly priced at 7€.



Macera's interior is modern and clean with an industrial vibe. In front, a handful of wrought iron tables face glass doors that slide open on nice days. The openness makes you feel like there's always room for one more, a good thing since this

place gets packed in the evenings. When you visit make sure to take a look towards the back, where lit shelves showcase the spirits on deck, all full of spices, herbs, and fruits working their magic.



If it's too early for a tippie, Macera is also an excellent workspace. To keep you going, there are green juices, natural sodas, and coffee, as well as a small selection of toasted sandwiches and homemade desserts. It goes without saying that all of these are made with the same care as their cocktails.

Info

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
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By Danielle Owens

A former Oregonian, Californian, and Bogotana, Danielle is (for now!) settled in Madrid. Since 2014, she's chronicled her experiences living abroad on her blog, [No Longer Native](#) ([Website](#) & [Facebook](#))

Live In Theater's "The Lombardi Case" comes to Madrid from NYC!

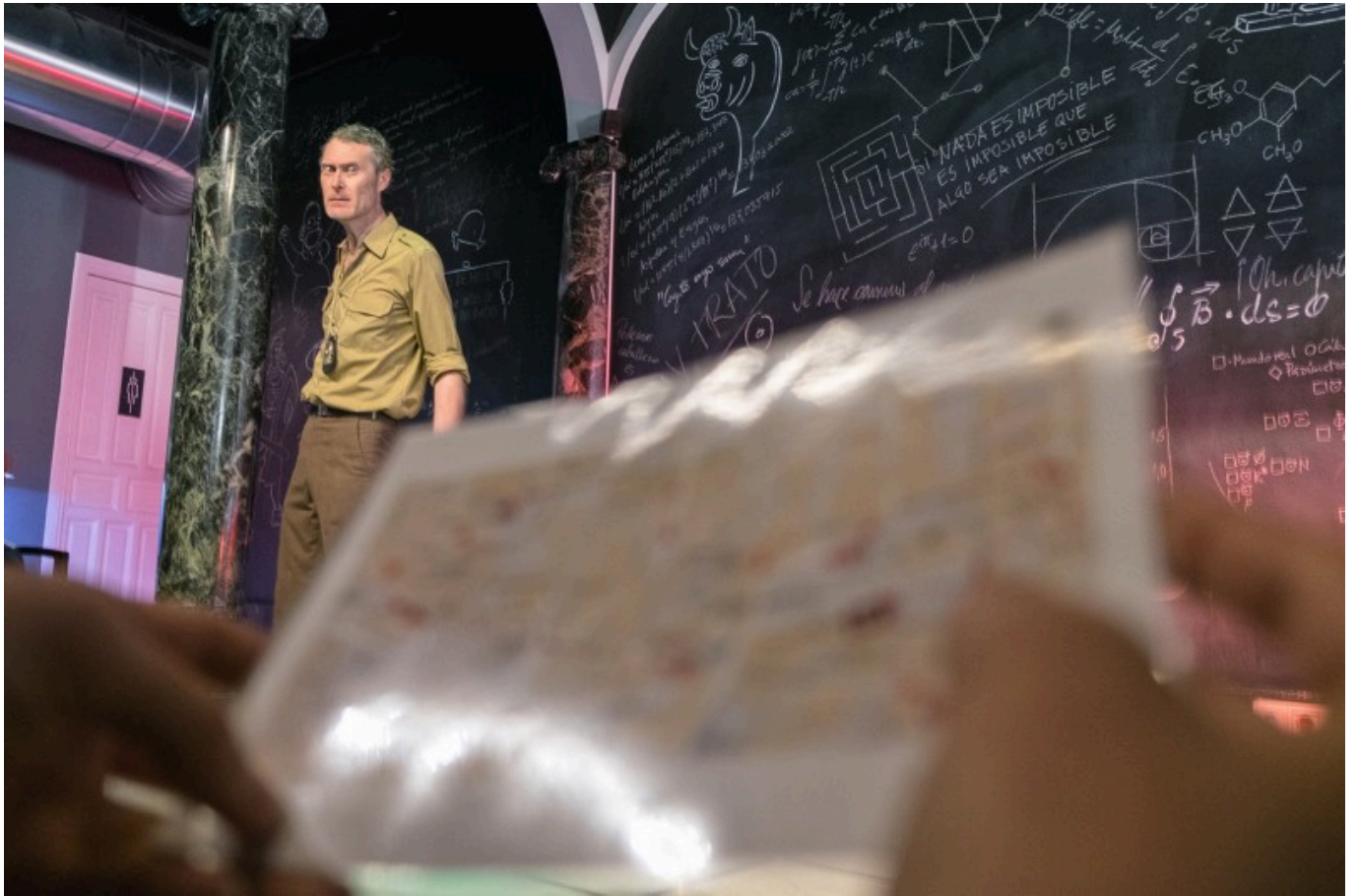
It's not everyday that you get to help solve a murder case, interview a drag queen, or be transported to another era. But that's what you're in for with the interactive show *The Lombardi Case*, brought to us by the NY-based **Live in Theater** group. I had the chance to go the premiere in May and here's what it was like.



When I stepped into the theater, I was first greeted by a cop with a Brooklyn accent, played by a Scotsman; and then grabbed a seat among the 60-person international audience. We got split into small teams and an officer presented us with the case details in effortless Spanglish.



It's suddenly the early 1980's and we're in the midst of Madrid's sex- and drug-ridden *La Movida* movement. The daughter of the US ambassador has just been murdered. And it's on us to find out who did it.



Readily equipped with clues, a map and a list of suspects – from a doorman to a junky – we headed out onto the streets to conduct our interviews at nearby locations like a jazz bar, public plaza and street corner; and then came back and tried to solve the case with our findings.



The 7-member bilingual cast relied heavily on improv to communicate with us as we interrogated them, and they impressively stayed in character the whole time.



Although none of us ended up solving the tricky case, it was a really fun and unique experience, with lots of laughter and participation between the actors and audience. I loved being able to play an active role in the show, get out there on the street, interact with new team members and in Spanglish, no less. All in all, it's a guaranteed great time and as a benefit you'll get to learn about the history of Madrid.



Since the debut, **Live in Theater** has put on two more productions of the *The Lombardi Case* in the heart of Malasaña at [La Industrial](#). While the format is identical to the NYC show, the storyline has been adapted to Madrid's history. For example, the original takes place in 1975 which works in a time of drugs, disco and gentrification in NYC, while the Madrid show takes place in the early '80s during the time of *La Movida*, the experimental movement that broke out after the fall of the Franco regime. This is especially pertinent as audience members get to actually interview suspects in the neighborhood that was the epicenter of the movement, Malasaña. Another key difference is that here, the show is put on in Spanish and English.

LOMBARDI CASE

ASESINATO EN LA MOVIDA



**LIVE
IN
THEATER**

INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES
NYC

24 y 29 de Junio - 19:00h

La industrial - C/ San Vicente Ferrer 33

Tickets: Oficinas de La Industrial c/ San Andrés 8 Local

Tickets Online: www.liveintheater.com/madrid

CAN YOU SOLVE THE CASE?
AN INTERACTIVE MURDER MYSTERY

SPANISH & ENGLISH

The Lombardi Case has been brought to Madrid by three partners: [Carlo D'Amore](#), the founder (and guru) of the NYC-based theater group, **Live in Theater**; [Leslie Freschet](#), who's been living in Madrid for 25 years; and [Benjamin Nathan-Serio](#), who's been an active member of Barcelona and Madrid's English-speaking theater circuit for nearly a decade. He's also one of the Madrid organizers and co-founders of [Mad Improv](#).

A few weeks ago I had the chance to sit down with Ben and talk about the *Lombardi Case* and what makes interactive theater so special. He said:

The show offers a truly unique experience for the audience because interactive is empowering. It's a real niche for actual human, genuine interaction. There's something magical about this show. It's not just conversation in a bar or speed dating, or meet-ups; it's super empowering because you become a cop. You have a mission. You become a detective. There's a murder, and you need to solve it! And there's a time limit... urgency.

See a show!

Stay tuned for upcoming productions by following their [Facebook page](#) or put in a request by emailing them at liveintheaterproduction@gmail.com.

You can also book them for private events such as company team-building exercises. The show has a very versatile format – you can hire them to go into your apartment as long as it has 2 rooms, with 3 actors playing 6 characters; and it can also be presented to up to 200 people.

And if you feel like getting more involved in Madrid's interactive theater scene, definitely check out [Mad Improv](#) which holds free improv workshops on Sundays and monthly performances.

La Musa Malasaña, the restaurant equivalent of a little black dress

According to Yves Saint Laurent, “Fashions fade, style is eternal.” And in my humble opinion he’s absolutely spot on. Trends come and go, new restaurants pop up more often than I get my roots done (you heard it here first, no I’m not a natural blonde) and seemingly zeitgeist bars can often sink without trace.



However, some places become perennial favourites that barely need an introduction. Part of the fabric of the city, they

become the kind of places so comfortable to visit, that they really are the foodie equivalent of popping on your favourite little black dress, you know, the one that makes you look hot to trot but requires minimal effort.



When struggling for dinner inspiration or in times of when you simply can't be bothered to cook (it happens, let's be honest) I head to [La Musa](#) – partly out of sheer convenience (it's about a 3 and half minute stroll from my flat, yes that's a personal best in stilettos) but trust me when I say it's nigh on impossible to ever spend more 20 euros on dinner AND drinks. Wine ordered, check. An abundance of tapas that's never swimming in grease and is both pleasing to the eye and not just the tum, double check.



Having recently gone an understated renovation, [La Musa Malasaña](#) is looking lovelier than ever – you know a bit like a friend having gone through a recent break up and has hit the gym, hard. My friend and I ordered a few small plates including one of their most infamous dishes called a ‘bomba’ – I still don’t quite understand what it is, but I will divulge that it’s carby (yes that’s a word) meaty and downright delish, so be sure to opt for one, if not two.



I always come away from La Musa with my appetite satiated and my purse (although feeling lighter) not depressingly so. They don't take reservations so I suggest you pop on your LBD, get in line with your twenty euro note in tow and enjoy.

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle de Manuela Malasaña, 18
 - **Phone:** 914 48 75 58
 - **Metro:** San Bernardo / Bilbao
-

Verbena Bar Review

Madrid (and more specifically) Malasaña is choc-a-bloc with cute looking bars, so much so that it's often nigh on impossible, to pick from the myriad of options. However, should you find yourself Saturday strolling around the vintage shops that pepper Calle Velarde, Verbena is the perfect choice. Not a case of style over substance, Verbena is the perfect mid-shopping pit stop, as well as the ideal place for tapas time.



Like similar bars in the area, its decor is pleasing to the eye, as is its proximity to the perennially popular Plaza Dos De Mayo. It offers more than your simple caña/vino combo; I was particularly impressed with its **gin selection**, which could rival a far swankier locale. I plumped for a Nordes (which

hails from Galicia in the north of Spain) – it came expertly served in a Copa de Balon and was quite the snip at 8 euros – I've spent obscene amounts on a G&T so this felt relatively bargainous.



My fellow bar hoppers enjoyed a crisp **Albariño** and an **Estrella Damn** – I was assured that they were both suitably pleasing to the palate and purse (an entire round came to less than a sarnie would in a city such as London or Paris).



The staff were friendly and knowledgeable (particularly when questioned about their own gin faves). Furthermore, Verbena boasts a simple menu that offers all the classics that you'd come to expect from Madrid – tortilla de patata, croquetas, complete breakfasts and the like.



Verbena is the equivalent of a trusty pair of jeans – a comfy option that requires minimal effort. Smack bang in the city centre, it'd be a crime to walk on by.

3.5 stars out of 5

Info

Address: Calle Velarde, 24

Buns & Bones: mouthwatering baos & Asian fusion near Malasaña

If you're not yet hip to the 'bao' trend that's winning the hearts of foodies everywhere, we'll give you the scoop: a bao is a super-soft steamed bun with various fillings ranging from meat to veggies. If Tom Haverford were to describe it, he'd likely call it a mouth pillow. Sometimes they're sealed at the top like a dumpling, sometimes they're flattened out and served like a thick taco, but one thing remains the same: **they are always fire.**



Pictured: three baos, the vegan (eggplant, hummus, walnuts, & sundried tomato), the veggie (tofu tempura with pisto), & the Tonkatsu (Iberian pork, coleslaw, & tonkatsu sauce).

Restaurants in Madrid are quickly jumping on the bandwagon ('baowagon,' if you will), but one stands out for its prices, location, decor, varied menu, and incredible flavors: [Buns & Bones](#), a streetfood oasis on near Plaza España and Gran Vía.

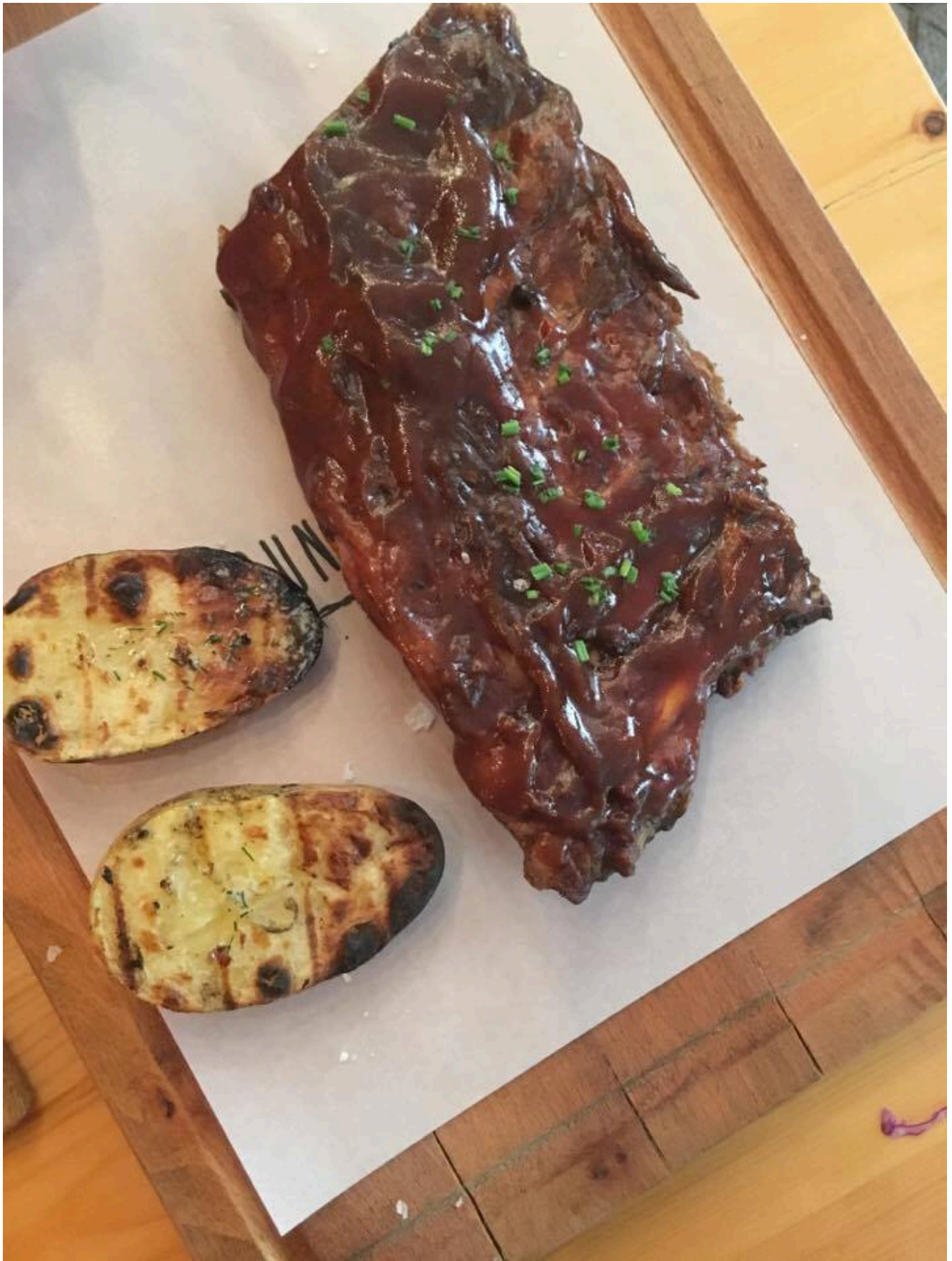


This place has much more than baos, though. **Their menu is broken down into three sections:** 'buns' (baos), 'bones' (meat and fish dishes), and 'ni buns ni bones' (other options), which includes alluring and modern Asian dishes such as yellowtail sashimi with ponzu sauce and jalapeño, mint hanoi spring rolls, charcoal-grilled octopus, or the farmer's market vegetable tempura.



We started with some delicious edamame and veggie tempura (both vegetarian options).

As you can see, **there's something for everyone here:** the vegans and the meat lovers, the healthy and the indulgent, the daring and the traditional...

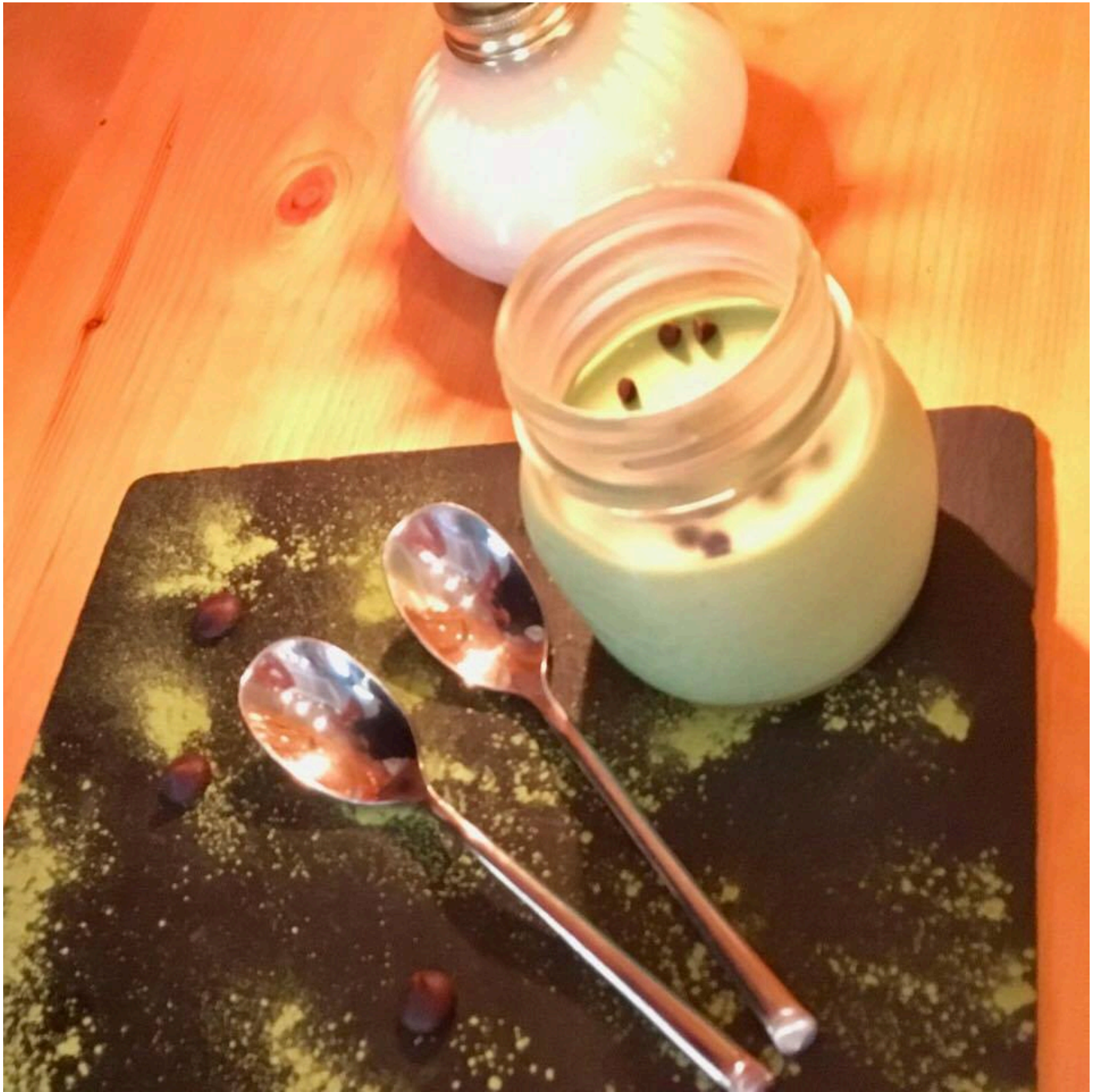


Go starving if you're planning on ordering the BBQ spareribs. They are bigger than my face.



'Poke,' another foodie trend sweeping the nation, is a Hawaiian salmon and veggie rice dish with chili threads. Healthy and bursting with flavor.

If you somehow have room for dessert, they have some unique options—we tried the **green tea panna cotta with chocolate chips**, and it was delightfully light and not overly sugary.



Buns & Bones is open for lunch and dinner (except on Mondays) and has two other locations: in the Antón Martín market and in Chamberí. All have a super laidback atmosphere and are open late, inviting you to digest over a Corona while you admire the quirky decor (one wall reads 'reserved for Banksy').





Info:

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** C/ San Bernardo, 12
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Creamies: Malasaña's new ice

cream & cookie sandwich bar

Sugar addict? Keep reading. Don't have a sweet tooth? This place is not for you. Opened just three weeks, [Creamies](#) is a tiny ice cream sandwich bar in the heart of Malasaña that lures guests in with its neon '80s-esque decor and customers leaving with their sugary mounds of perfection.



The process is simple and tailored to your tastes.

First, you pick the “bread” of the sandwich: a donut (regular

or Oreo), a blueberry muffin top, or a cookie—classic chocolate chip, white chocolate, triple chocolate... Undecided? **You can mix & match** the top and bottom.



Next, **choose the ice cream filling**: “triki” monster (kind of like birthday cake flavor), donut cream, “La Movida Madrileña,” double chocolate brownie, Kinder, yogurt & berry...



Lastly, **you can choose a “topping”**—whichever you choose, they’ll roll the sandwich in it. There are sprinkles, Lacasitos, marshmallows, Froot Loops, cookie crumbs, chocolate sauce, and more.



Would ya just look at that happiness?!

It's cheap, it's delicious, and the service is friendly.
Corred!

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- Insta: [@creamiesmadrid](#)
- Address: C/ Corredera Alta de San Pablo, 30
- Metro: Tribunal

You may also like:

- [Madrid's best ice cream shops](#)

Jack Percoca: The Little Italian Joint with Big Hearty Food

“The amount of food on the plate says a lot about the person who put it on the plate,” laughs Luca. “I serve my customers like I serve my family.”

Naples-born Luca is a professional restaurateur. For eight years, he travelled around the world opening and running game-changing restaurants before finally settling in Madrid and opening Jack Percoca Bar & Kitchen, a cosy little Italian restaurant in the heart of the city’s Conde Duque district.



The bar area



The cosy dining area with lots of natural light at lunchtime

The sheer wealth of experience Luca has picked up over the years becomes clear from the moment you walk in. A great deal of thought has gone into the style and layout: **the lighting is soft, there's no 'short-straw' table, the service is attentive, and the food is flawless.**

FOOD FOR FOUR (TO EIGHT)

To start, we ordered Burrata Tricolore, served on a bed of rocket with slices of perfectly ripe tomato and drizzled with Luca's famous basil pesto. We also ordered a bowl of "Smoking Bullets": deep-fried, cheese and ham-filled rigatoni, like an Italian take on croquettes. We loved the tomato-laden Bruschetta and, on the opposite end of all spectrums, the (intensely) Creamy Meatballs.



Smoking Bullets, Creamy Meatballs, Bruschetta and Burrata Tricolore



The Bruschetta

Feeling full yet? For mains, we had the Spaghetti Burger – a succulent home-made burger perched on a crispy basket of spaghetti – and the Steak Tartare with chunky chips. The Donna Sofia pizza is right up there with the best pizzas in Madrid, but the colossal **Truffle Mac and Cheese** was, as usual, the **star of the show.**



The Spaghetti Burger



The Truffle Mac 'n' Cheese

Despite being pretty full, we ordered the Margherita Cheesecake and the Amaretto Connection for all of us to share, because when a dessert is good enough (and you know what I'm talking about here), you'll find room for it.



The Amaretto Connection

WELCOME TO PROHIBITION-ERA NEW YORK

This excerpt from the menu sets the scene for the restaurant perfectly:

"It's the era of prohibition and the state has declared war on alcohol. Social downfall in America has reached rock bottom and liquor is squarely to blame. But New York City has been hit by a new wave of crime – the black market. The word on the street is that immoral men are brewing their own high-proof alcohol. Hip flasks of this "moonshine" are stuffed into the boots of liberated women to supply hundreds of "speakeasies". It's also the beginning of the underground jazz movement –

inspiration is thriving in these illegal alcohol-fueled parties, but only the coolest guys and dolls in town are in the know. It was here, in a speakeasy beneath the streets of New York, that Sandy met Jack..."

The infamous black market liquors of the Prohibition era echo throughout Luca's cocktails, which are **strong enough to cut through all three hearty courses and still leave you feeling merry.**



A selection of the classic cocktails

Jack Percoca Bar & Kitchen is humbly priced, but with big hearty food, strong cocktails and a charming atmosphere. This Little Italy eatery is determined to keep Madrid's restaurant

scene on its toes.

INFO

- Jack Percoca's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
 - Address: [Calle Conde Duque 14](#)
 - Call Luca to reserve: **915 13 50 44**
 - Opening hours: Mon-Sun 13.00 – 16.00 / 19.00 – 01.00
-

Amargo, the city's best veggie burger (and much more)

The title says it all.

On a cozy corner in Malasaña, [Amargo Place To Be](#) lures you in with its fairytale facade, enveloped with ivy and illuminated by twinkle lights.

Inside, the vibe is both industrial and homey. Friendly faces will greet you (not always a given in the city) and you'll be overwhelmed by a menu **so international** you'll forget where you are.

Nigiris, Mexican nachos, giant *croquetas*, dim sum, lasagna with wonton pasta and pine nuts, duck magret over hummus and a raspberry coulis...

But as we're all biased—especially when it comes to food—what I wanna sell you on is their veggie burger.

I can't even bring myself to try anything else from the impressively diverse and delicious menu, because when I come to Amargo, I only have one thing on my mind: that thick and

savory soy burger piled high with zucchini in tempura, a fried egg, a thick slab of goat cheese, green shoots, caramelized onion, crispy onion crunch, and the special house sauce.



Go starving—just half of this monstrous burger fills me up.

They're open for breakfast, lunch and dinner (from 9am-2am every day!), have a fantastic *menú del día* (€11.90 M-F and €13.50 on weekends and holidays), and boast a lengthy drink list that includes signature cocktails and organic wine (!!!).

But wait, there's more.

If you venture downstairs (follow the 19th-century painting in which a stoic aristocrat dons some fly ass Nikes), you'll find the seating area where diners become audience members.



Since last year, **Amargo has hosted concerts** throughout the week. If you're dining in (make sure to make a reservation—it fills up!), it's just €2 to enjoy anything from flamenco to soul to acoustic while you eat. When I went, I was treated to [Chisara Agor](#)'s achingly soulful voice.

Check out this month's programming on Amargo's [website](#).



The mindblowingly talented Chisara Agor and the amazing Christian García-Fonseca Secher on cajón.

If you're somehow not yet experiencing sensory overload, the lower level also functions as a revolving art gallery. The current artwork is by local visual and urban artist [Misterpiro](#).



Just some pals having a very candid laugh.

In a hurry? Amargo also does **speedy-quick orders to go.**

You have no excuse.

Info

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
 - Instagram: @amargoplacetobe
 - Address: Calle Pez, 2
 - Phone: 910 84 79 90
 - Metro: Callao, Noviciado, Tribunal
-

1862 Dry Bar, staggeringly chic cocktail bar on Calle Pez

They say that Madrid has more bars per square mile than any other Spanish city (some even go as far as to boast, in Europe). Whilst I'm not sure of the exact bar tally, not that I'm all that concerned, what I do know is that you only need to step foot out of your house to see that Madrid is certainly not lacking in places to get a drink. If there's one thing that Spaniards enjoy (aside from the stereotypical siesta) it's a tippie or two.

However, bars in Madrid tend to generally fall into one of two distinct camps; the ones with the unmissable glow of strip lighting and scattered napkins, that generally tend to be frequented by a more aging population. And those that cater to fans of an exposed brick interior, shabby chic furniture and a drink served in a jam jar. This is what makes [1862 Dry Bar](#) so unique. It falls into neither category and I'm all the more pleased for it. A staggeringly chic cocktail bar perched on the perennially popular Calle Pez, it may look discreet from the roadside, but upon stepping inside, you could quite easily be transported into the prohibition-era bars that are more likely to be found stateside, than in Spain.



The affable owner, Alberto, is a fountain of knowledge on the cocktail front, in other words, what he doesn't know about all things shaken or stirred isn't worth knowing. The building (an old hardware store I believe) manages to effortlessly straddle being airy and cosy simultaneously. The downstairs is particularly sumptuous, with plenty of nooks for a clandestine date or an intimate chat, whilst sipping on your expertly made pisco sour.



What I

particularly loved about 1862 Dry Bar, was the clearly knowledgeable and creative bar staff. The menu has all the classics in place, but also offers up some truly unique cocktails made by guest mixologists ranging from Trailer Happiness (hailing from Hoxton), with another one being from The Ritz Madrid.

The furniture, the staff and ultimately the delectable drinks, make Dry Bar 1862 the perfect watering hole for a date night or a glamorous venue for a gaggle of friends. The cocktails are potent and pack a punch, however, the jewel in the crown is Alberto, whose passion for a decent drink prevails in a city that is often lacking.

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address: Calle del Pez, 27**
- **Metro: Noviciado**
- **Phone: [609 53 11 51](tel:609531151)**

Manzana Mahou: Gourmet Art Experience

[Manzana Mahou](#) is the concept sponsored by Madrid's most iconic beer, Mahou. It's located in Malasaña (between metro stops Tribunal and Alonso Martinez) at Palacio de Santa Bárbara, a beautiful palace built in 1866. For the third consecutive year, the outdoor space has been turned into a popular terrace designed to provide an oasis during Madrid's warmest months.



The idea behind Manzanita Mahou is to bring together art, gourmet food and beer, to create a unique experience. It is open until October 8th, after which it will be temporarily closed until next summer. This year, the stars of the show will be chefs María Marte from [Allard Experience](#), Javier Goya, Javier Mayor and David Alfonso, from [Triciclo](#) and Roberto Ruiz from [Cascabel](#) by Punto MX.



These top chefs will be in charge of creating [exclusive dinners](#) inspired by the four resident artists at Manzana

Mahou. In addition to this, two restaurants, La Cabra and Tandem will offer a more casual dining experience. [La Cabra](#) is a Michelin Star restaurant that will also offer brunch on Sundays from 12pm to 4pm for only 25€, led by renowned chef Javier Aranda, who at just 29 is one of the most acclaimed chefs in Spain. Tandem, on the other hand, is Triciclo's little brother which has also become a leader in Madrid's restaurant scene.



This year, the outdoor space has expanded, enhancing the experience. Four artists will be exhibiting, Julia Llerena, María Platero, Françoise Vanneraud and PLAYdramaturgia. The latter are a group of artists that create a mix between visual and performing arts, while the first three are focused mainly on visual arts.



Entrance on Calle Hortaleza

Open Monday to Sunday, from 11am to 1am, Manzana Mahou is a great opportunity to try some of Madrid's greatest restaurants at a more affordable price while enjoying art and a few beers.

Info

[Facebook](#) & [Website](#)

Address: Calle Hortaleza, 47

Metro: Alonso Martínez & Tribunal