

Restaurante Badila, you need this place in your life

[Restaurante Badila](#) is my number one. My favourite place to eat in Madrid. I've flirted with other restaurants during the years I've lived here but I keep coming back to this one, it's just SO good. I've dragged pretty much all of my visitors here (some of them multiple times) and Badila never fails to disappoint. It's really only taken me so long to write a post about it because I was wrestling with the idea of whether to share Madrid's best-kept secret, but here we go. The secret is out.



This gem of a restaurant is tucked away behind Plaza Tirso de Molina, on the corner of Calle Cabeza with Calle San Pedro Mártir. Its interior is light and airy, with simple decor and a host of delicious wines on display. There's only room to squeeze in about ten tables, so the atmosphere is informal and unpretentious, with lovely owner Miguel waiting on tables himself. But the real star of the show here is, of course, the food. Oh, the food.

The menu consists of updated versions of Spanish classics, with a smattering of international dishes, all based on

the tried-and-tested formula: simple, home-cooked fare prepared with the freshest ingredients. Miguel shops around for the best stuff on offer each morning, so the menu changes from day to day and from season to season. **It's a *menú del día* format for both lunch and dinner**, with around six or seven options for *primeros* and the same for *segundos* – far too much choice for someone as indecisive as me!



On our most recent visit, my boyfriend ordered the ***ensalada mixta con frambuesas y queso de cabra*** (mixed salad with goat's cheese and raspberries) to start, whereas I opted for the ***salteado de espárragos con carabinero y crema de lechuga*** (a divine concoction of asparagus, red shrimp and lettuce – it needs to be tasted to be believed!).



For my second course, I went with my old favourite: ***escalopines al cabrales*** (pork fillet with *cabrales* cheese sauce). I must have ordered this dish over a dozen times at Badila but I can't help myself, it's just so damn tasty.



My boyfriend chose the *redondo de ternera a la austriaca* (stumped on how to translate this one, very tender veal in a delicious sauce?!) which he hadn't tried before. Initially I told him off for ordering something fairly unphotogenic but quickly forgave him because it tasted absolutely amazing and I ended up stealing half of it.



Naturally, we managed to squeeze in dessert. I had a slice of wonderfully gooey chocolate cake and my boyfriend went for his favourite **cuajada de queso** (describing this as milk curd just doesn't do it justice) which I didn't even manage to get a photo of because he ate it so quickly.



The *menú del día* costs just under 14 euros per person and is worth every penny. The portions are very generous and everything is well thought-out and unbelievably tasty. Even the bread here is delicious, unlike in many Spanish restaurants. The price of the lunchtime menu goes up to just under 18 euros at weekends and the evening menu is slightly more expensive at around 20 euros.

Badila is open every day for lunch from 14:00 – 16:30 and on Friday and Saturday evenings for dinner from 21:00 – 00:00. They only take reservations for dinner, so if you go at lunchtime I'd recommend either going early or going late otherwise you might have to wait for a table. As you'd expect, a place this good does get pretty busy!

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle de la Cabeza 7
- **Metro:** Tirso de Molina

• Telephone: 914 29 76 51

La China Mandarina, a Flashy New Bistro in Plaza de Cascorro

[La China Mandarina](#), a bistro situated in Plaza de Cascorro, was previously an antique shop that underwent a loud and prolonged renovation over the course of several months. Upon its completion, I peered in through its glass windows in an attempt to scope it out. **I'm always on the prowl for affordable & pseudo-classy locations to write about.** La China Mandarina is a large space, dimly lit, with **a long communal table in the center.** The crowd in the establishment was young and well-dressed. The interior design of the place was a little bit swankier than the older businesses in the zone that remain frozen in time.



Their 11€ menu del dia changes daily, offering a broad spectrum of healthy & gastronomic snacks. The menu that was available on the day that I entered consisted of a thick and spicy lentil soup followed by a plate containing three small

portions, a salad with apples and olive-based dressing, a couscous curry with vegetables and a salmon tartar. I traded a wine/beer in favor of a *cafe cortado*. I was tempted by their delicious desserts on display although in this instance I exerted restraint for once.





I learned that the location **offers a brunch for 16€** on weekends which I will absolutely return for. I can imagine the spot, like all businesses in this area, being thumping on Sundays due to Rastro traffic. **The location doubles as a coffee shop with wifi during non-meal hours** which allowed me to chronicle my foodie experience while it was fresh in my head. With their gastronomic menu del dia changing every day in all likelihood it will be impossible for me to sample all of their offerings. This ambiguity as to what else they can whip up in the future furthers my desire to return.

Info

[Facebook](#)

Address: Plaza de Coscorro, 17

Metro: La Latina

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

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

Taberna Lamiak, a Basque pintxo bar with Tuesday-night wine tastings

Tribuetxe, another Basque pintxo bar you have to try

Baobab, an authentic Senegalese restaurant in Lavapiés

La Maruca, a Swanky Cantabrian Restaurant in Barrio Salamanca

My Dad comes to Spain frequently in order to see myself and his close friends, Rafael, Catherine, Alfredo & Ruth. It has been hugely comforting to have such trusted and accessible “real adults” during my time abroad. In addition to being warm, generous, and offering of exceptional council, my Dad’s friends are in the know in regards to **Madrid’s ritzier restaurants**. I was fortunate to have been invited to tag along to their **dinner at La Maruca**, an establishment in **barrio Salamanca** that I certainly would not have discovered under different circumstances.





A large space with a stylish staff and a cozy fireplace by the bar, the location radiates class. Catherine took the initiative to order several appetizers—***croquetas de carne cocido***, a tartar of smoked salmon & avocado as well as a plate of delicious anchovies with red bell peppers. We drank wine and had a pleasant conversation with a lot of swift code-changing between Spanish & English.



For my main course I ordered *pluma de cerdo*, a delicious dish of perfectly cooked pork. Rafael ordered *pulpo a la plancha*, which was presented quite aesthetically. Enrique, my Dad, consumed the *albondigas*, which he enjoyed greatly. Catherine's dish was the *tajada de merluza*. Ruth ordered *canelones rellenos de poularda con salsa de foie*, another incredibly photogenic plate.



Initially I believed that this restaurant would be well above my pay grade, but that was not the case—each plate cost between **10-14€**. This isn't the first time that the “real adults” have introduced me to a seemingly unapproachable establishment that ultimately turned out to be reasonably priced. I can imagine tactfully utilizing this location in the future in order to put up a front of fanciness while on a date.



Contact info

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

Where to find La Maruca

Address: Calle de Velázquez 54

Metro: Velasquez

Phone : 917 81 49 69

You may also check out series on best first date ideas in Madrid:

[Flowers are nice, but this first date is better \(part 1\)](#)

[Chocolates are nice, but this first date is better \(part 2\)](#)

[Dating in Madrid for Foodies \(part 3\)](#)

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.

TRIBUETXE

BAR

PINTXOS y RACIONES

Zarajo de txipiron	4,00
Flamengán de la lenda	3,00
Sobremesa basconica	3,50
Sopresa de brieif	2,00
Lataña de aorral	3,00
Flamengán cordobés	3,50
Morosa galandina 2 saldos	3,00
Morosa de cordina agriada	2,50
Piscon	6,00
Pacheta de langostinos y ostras y Durrón	3,50
Txipiron a la asturiana	3,00
Cazorlan caldop de Tiro de Madrida	2,50
Racion	4,00
Panuello de hongos Racion	6,00
Pimientos rellenos de puerro y gambas con salsa de paprika	6,00
Racion	6,00
Dustincos de Buzenona con miel de cañon	2,50

Estrella



TRIBUETXE



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 \(with gluten free options!\)’](#)

An insider's guide to Sol: avoid the tourist traps and beat the Christmas crowds

Madrid is a fantastic place to be at Christmas and nowhere is more festive, and more popular, than the area around Puerta del Sol, Ópera and Plaza Mayor. As well as the usual hordes of foreign tourists, Spaniards from all over Madrid and beyond flock to the city centre to see the Christmas lights, queue up at Doña Manolita for their lottery tickets, shop for nativity supplies in Plaza Mayor and take in the spectacle of Cortylandia.

If you plan on doing any of these things, my top piece of advice would be avoid going at the weekends, as the whole centre is utter chaos. During last year's December *punte* they even had to temporarily suspend metro services to Sol and make people get off at neighbouring stations, due to the sheer volume of people already in the plaza and surrounding streets.

Whatever day you embark upon your festive jaunt, you'll no doubt be in need of a break and some refreshment after a while. Christmas shopping can be thirsty work! Many of the bars and restaurants around Puerta del Sol are incredibly

touristy or incredibly busy (or both!), so how do you find a decent spot?

Read on for our insider's guide to the hidden gems of the Madrid's centre.

If you want breakfast...



You'll need a decent desayuno to set you up for a busy day of shopping and sightseeing, and in time-honoured tradition you might head to [San Ginés](#) (Pasadizo de San Ginés 5) or [Valor](#) (Calle Postigo de San Martín 7) for some chocolate con churros. Go early if you do, and certainly don't visit at merienda time as the queues are out of the door. Alternatively, you could try one of these lesser-known spots for breakfast:

Ferpal (Calle Arenal 7)



Many tourists eye up the delicious meats, cheeses and other treats in the windows of this top-quality delicatessen, but few realise there's also a bar inside. They serve delicious coffee, croissants, bocatas and sandwiches, all for only a couple of euros. Kill two birds with one stone and pick up a few tasty Christmas presents while you're here. They normally close on Sundays but will be open over the festive season.

El Riojano (Calle Mayor 10)



Ok, so it's not exactly a hidden gem, but did you know that this famous pastry shop has a secret tea room in the back? If you have a sweet tooth and you fancy a more relaxing experience than the scrum at [La Mallorquina](#) (another must-see, although perhaps at a quieter time of year!), then this is most definitely your place. Read Laura's more detailed [post on El Riojano here](#).

If you fancy a drink...

Battling your way to the front of the Cortylandia crowd on a Saturday afternoon is enough to make anyone need an alcoholic beverage! (If you've never heard of Cortylandia I won't go into details other than that it's one of those Spanish traditions that you probably need to see for yourselves. Oh, and this year, it's penguins.) Here are a couple of my favourite places:

[La Torre del Oro](#) (Plaza Mayor 26)



If you've been shopping for your Christmas tree or the moss for your nativity, then this bar is extremely handy for a quick beer. The terraza outside is like any other, you need to go inside for the decor that makes this bar special. The waiters are all extremely jolly and dish out tasty tapas with every drink. An Andalusian classic hidden slap-bang in the centre of Madrid.

Matador (Calle de la Cruz 39)



Another bull-themed bar with interesting stuff on the walls, I love this place for its cosy atmosphere, great-value drinks and generous tapas. Its cave-like interior is pretty small so it can get crowded, but if you're lucky enough to grab a stool you might end up forgetting the shopping and spending all afternoon here!

If you're hungry...

There are times when tapas just won't do and you need something more substantial. Try one of these spots for some tasty grub:

[El Ñeru](#) (Calle Bordadores 5)



Cachopo at El Ñeru. Image from [El Ñeru's Facebook](#)

There are plenty of Asturian restaurants around this area but this one is my favourite. You can stand at the bar upstairs and gorge yourself on free tapas (try the cabrales cheese one) and dishes such as their magnificent cachopo, or you can take the weight off your feet and dine in the cavernous restaurant downstairs. It isn't the cheapest but it's worth it for the exquisite (and extremely filling!) food and excellent service.

[Bar Lambuzo](#) (Calle de las Conchas 9)



Image from [Lambuzo's Web](#)

If you fancy something a little lighter, stop by this delightful restaurant run by a family from Cadiz. From salmorejo to croquetas to a whole array of pescadito frito, everything on the menu is absolutely delicious, extremely reasonably-priced and will inject a little ray of Andalusian sunshine into even the darkest winter day. Check out Daphne's [post for more information on Bar Lambuzo](#).

If you need to get away from it all...

Even for the most die-hard Christmas fans, the crowds can sometimes get a bit much. All of these bars are just a short walk from Puerta del Sol and each provides a much-needed oasis of tranquility away from the masses.

Anticafe (Calle Unión 2)



Image from [Anticafe's Facebook](#)

Tucked away on a quiet street near Ópera, Anticafe is a great place to chill out with a coffee, caña or cocktail. The music

is great and the decor wonderfully quirky, so just sink into one of their mismatched armchairs, put your feet up and forget all about your festive to-do list.

Casa Pueblo (Calle León 3)



Image from [Casa Pueblo's Facebook](#)

This cosy bar is the perfect antidote to the madness of the Christmas crowds. Let the friendly staff whip you up one of their delicious mojitos or order a tasty slice of cake if you're in need of some sugar. If you're lucky you might catch one of their live jazz sessions too.

Plaza Menor (Calle Gómez de Mora 3)



Head to this fantastic little drinking den nestled right behind Plaza Mayor for a cocktail, a copa or just a cup of tea. The interior is a maze of low-roofed caves so grab a spot and maybe some of their yummy carrot cake and lose yourself for a couple of hours.

Know of any other hidden gems in the centre of Madrid? Let us know!

Taberna Alipio Ramos

I'm not so much a picky eater as extremely finicky about when my food arrives. There is a specific window between having ordered and the food actually arriving that is crucial to my enjoyment of a restaurant meal. If I ever find myself thinking

that, really, my order should have arrived by now, the meal starts to go downhill from that moment on – regardless of the dish that eventually arrives.

You could place the finest cuisine in the world in front of me but if the wait has been just *slightly* too long, you've lost me. The best restaurants in my book deliver the meal moments before the "where's our food?" thought has had a chance to cross anyone's mind.

In regard to The Taberna Alipio Ramos, it wasn't only their timing that was perfect.

An old friend and I had decided to take a long weekend break in Madrid. We wanted to say our farewells to another old friend who had died the Christmas before and to spend some time with his wife and two grown-up children. Our Galician hostess, Lines, had laid on a delicious buffet lunch for us and this was to be my introduction to Iberico ham – and what a wonderful experience that was. I have never tasted cooked meat quite like it and, together with French (Spanish?) bread, great company and a delicious salad, we were welcomed to Madrid.

We'd made no plans for our last day in the city but Chris had come armed with the addresses of two or three Galician restaurants which had been recommended by a friend in the United States. The only information on the scruffy piece of paper advised that the Taberna Alipio Ramos: "*...did a good seafood special*". We had no idea where Ponzano was except somewhere in the North of the city and a taxi dumped us in an unremarkable one-way street just off the main drag. None of the restaurants appeared open and had I been on my own, might well have gone round the corner to a Macdonalds instead.

But it was 1pm and that's the time us Brits need to eat. So eat we must.

The Spanish dine late and we quite surprised the young girl

behind the bar when we walked in. Entering a restaurant which appears unprepared for guests is a bad sign in my book.

“Yes, we’re open...but we weren’t expecting customers!”

Certainly in England, the sudden presence of people who want to eat in an otherwise empty restaurant seems to immediately engender resentment by staff at the intrusion and not least from an invisible chef heard taking it out on the pots and pans in the kitchen. Had this been an English establishment in an English town we’d probably have walked straight out, avoiding a sub-standard meal and surly service.

The waitress was business-like and showed us to a small area towards the back of the restaurant. There was only a Spanish menu (I don’t remember one in English) but somehow we successfully ordered drinks and the seafood special. Both arrived almost seconds later.

At this point in the review I am supposed to start listing the types of seafood contained in the special, the sauces, side salads and the dressings. But I can’t. I’m afraid you are just going to have to go there and experience it for yourselves. All I can remember are the Razor clams. Mmmm...mmm.

There must have been fish, prawns, yet more clams, possibly lobster, crab, (yes, I’m sure there was crab) but my only true recollection is that the dish the Alipio Ramos served up that lunchtime— and at lightning speed — was perfect in every way. Stunning fresh ingredients and simple sauces thrown into a pan and served up way before my stomach had even the slightest chance to grumble.

And at the end of the delicious meal, while toasting our dear friend, Paul — the reason for us being in Madrid in the first place — we couldn’t help but wonder if perhaps he just might have had a hand in guiding us to this place, filling our glasses, and preparing the food.

And I have one niggling thought that keeps running through my head when I think back to that lunch. Perhaps, just perhaps, the Taberna Alipio Ramos is not alone and that we could have eaten almost as well in a hundred Madrid restaurants and enjoyed similar fabulous cooking. So, even if I've reviewed completely the wrong restaurant (the card lists three names) I have absolutely no doubt you will eat well.

But for Chris and I it was the spontaneity and unexpectedness of such a great meal that made lunch at the Taberna Alipio Ramos so perfect. And isn't that what life is all about?

By Hugh Trethowan.

[Taberna Alipio Ramos](#)

Address: Calle Ponzano, 30

Metro: Ríos Rosas or Alonso Cano

Tel: 91 441 49 61

For more on our favorite *tabernas* in Madrid, check out:

- [Bodegas Rosell](#)
 - [Bar Lambuzo](#)
 - [Taberna Lamiak](#)
 - [Casa Mingo](#)
-

Gourmet Experience at El Corte Ingles in Callao

Spain's major department store, El Corte Inglés, first opened in the 1940's. Today, many of us Spaniards love El Corte Inglés as it sells virtually anything under the sun, from your laptop and underwear to your mattress and plane ticket. A little outdated indeed, one of the stores decided it was time for a facelift – a few months ago, the Corte Inglés in Callao converted the top floor into **Gourmet Experience**, a tantalizing food hall with stunning views of Madrid's Gran Vía and the emblematic Schweppes sign.



But why is it so special it? First off, we have a variety of food stalls serving anything you can think of – sushi, pizza, quesadillas, pinchos and hamburgers, etc. – all in the same space. You can also have your meal at each individual stall, or in the main dining area where the views will take your breath away. On the same floor, there's also a supermarket specializing in international gourmet products, like sauces, jams and olive oil, just to name a few.





Here's a look at all the food stalls you can find at this gourmet heaven:

1. HAMBURGUESA NOSTRA



Hamburguesa Nostra is one of the most popular stalls. Trying to ask for a burger during the weekend can be a complicated task. And we're not surprised. HN offers us a variety of more than **30 types of meat, as well as sauces and unique breads**. Yet, surprisingly enough, it's easy to order! You just have to choose the burger meat you want and customise it with your choice of bread sauce and other garnishes. Then wait for the call so you can pick it. You won't regret it ... we always end up returning.

Prices range from 9€ for a basic burger to 13€ for a gourmet burger. For 0.50€ and 1€ euro you can customize it.

STREET XS0



Street XS0 serves modern and contemporary food. Chicken marinated in sweet chilli, smoked razor clams in olive oil and grilled tataki butter fish are just some of the wonderful dishes that you can enjoy in this great stand.

LA MAQUINA



If you're in the mood for traditional Spanish cuisine, then go to La Maquina, where you can find delicious tapas and pinchos. Tortilla de patatas, *pincho de jamón*, cheese, and delicious *bocadillos*. We love the food but we love the prices even more. What truly stands out about La Maquina is its simplicity and good quality food.

CENTRAL MEXICANA



One of our favourites is always crowded and don't get me wrong, I understand why. On the menu, we can find all types of delicious Mexican dishes, from traditional enchiladas to wonderful tacos. And let's not forget about the generous salads and nachos topped with cheese and guacamole. My favorite dishes are the chicken taco Coyoacan and the nachos with guacamole. The prices are very reasonable. You can get two tacos for 6€.

TSE YANG DIMSUM CLUB



If you love sushi and Japanese cuisine in general, then TYDC is for you!

AMORINO



If you've got a sweet tooth, Amorino will be your parries. Here you can enjoy ice cream, sorbets, waffles and pancakes with an infinite variety of toppings. They also serve great drinks, like milk shakes and frappes. Now they also sell macaroons that are out of this world!

AL CUADRADO



There can be no Gourmet space without a place for pizzas and the ones here are simply delicious. These are served “*al corte*” and “*al taglio*” as the Italians say, and the price depends on the weight. What we like the most about this pizza place is that they try to innovate, although always with a very Mediterranean touch.

HARINA



Perfect for breakfast, lunch, dinner or an afternoon tea. Many Madrileños already know this space because it's not the only Harina. We love how they mix the minimalist touch of their decoration with the more traditional cuisine. The breads and cakes are simply delicious. Our suggestion: "empanada de bonito" (tuna empanada) and a cup of coffee.

JUANILLO CLUB



A 1950's-style cocktail bar located in the heart of Madrid! Here you can enjoy traditional cocktails as the caipirinha, mojitos, bloody marries, cosmopolitans, etc., to the most avant-garde cocktails. In addition, you can accompany them with some delicious oysters. What else can you ask for?

ASADORES IMANOL



Here we can find a piece of San Sebastian and its traditional “pintxos”. We’ve fallen in love with their simple and unpretentious menu. Our suggestions: For cold pintxos, go with the Iberian ham and *boqueron en vinagres* (anchovies in vinegar). For hot pintxos, go with the croquettes and *solomillo* (pork tenderloin). When it comes to tapas: We are passionate about the *tortilla española* (Spanish potato omelet) and *huevos rotos con jamón* (french fries topped with two fried eggs and ham).

Plus, the prices are more than reasonable: 2.35€ and 2.50€ for any of the pintxos. 4.90€ for desserts. The price on tapas ranges from 8 to 11 euros.

So, what do you think? Are you going to leave Madrid without having had a gourmet experience atop El Corte Inglés?

Where: Corte Inglés Callao. 9th floor.

Metros: Callao, Sol and Gran Vía.

Bodegas Rosell, one of Madrid's best tabernas

Madrid is a fascinating city. We see so many new restaurants and bars opening up every week and yet, the city's good-old *tabernas* and more traditional bars are also thriving. When I crave the latter (which is quite often), one of my go-to spots is Bodegas Rosell.

Bodegas Rosell, one of my favorite old taverns in Madrid

[Bodegas Rosell](#) is one of those havens that I like to go to when I want to get away from the city's newer spots. Located close to Atocha, everything about **Bodegas Rosell** screams Madrid; you can breathe in tradition as soon as you walk in.

This wonderful place was founded in 1920 by the Rosell family, who converted a former wine shop into a neighborhood *taberna*. Today, **Bodegas Rosell** preserves the spirit of the old, traditional taverns that were so popular in another time. Its decor, food, portions, staff and service will take you a step back in time.

The Decor

When you arrive and stand in front of its facade, you realize you're in a special place. The facade's tiles are a genuine work of art, painted by Alfonso Romero, who also painted altar pieces in the **Plaza de Toros de las Ventas** (Madrid's iconic

bullfighting ring).



While the exterior oozes with tradition, the interior doesn't leave you unimpressed either. It's not a particularly large place, which makes it even more charming. The walls are decorated with guitars, photographs of the Rosell

Family, bottles of wine, and of course, we can't forget about the great map of the Community of Madrid. Can it be more traditional?

Bodegas Rosell is just perfect for a quick snack on a stool at any of the *barrel tables*; or for a quieter lunch or dinner at any of their *4-legged tables*. They also have private salons, so it won't be a problem if you are a large group.

The Food

Bodegas Rosell offers a traditional menu with generous portions. Specializing in meat dishes, one of their star dishes is *solomillo* (**pork tenderloin**). Another favourite is *bacalao* (**cod**) prepared *al horno* (oven-baked) or *rebozado* (fried in an egg and flour batter). And of course, you can also find excellent **canned seafood**, such as *mejillones* (**mussels**), *berberechos* (**cockles**) and *anchoas* (**anchovies**).



I'm not very fond of fish, but this *bacalao* was superb.



The *entrecot* was so big that we had to ask the waiter to split it in two. This pic only shows half.



The *albóndigas* (meatballs) were amazing!

My favorite thing to order here is the plate of *embutidos ibéricos* (**Iberian cured meats**) and the **cheeses**. You can have various types of cheese such as **Manchego, olive oil, Idiazabal, goat, sheep**, so I recommend ordering **the cheese board** for those undecided or who like all of them. The Iberian cured meats are wonderful, such as *jamón serrano, chorizo, lomo* and *salchichón*. I also recommend ordering the *tabla de ibéricos* (**cured meat platter with all of them**).

Of course we also have the typical salads and vegetable dishes for those who aren't so keen on meat or cheese.



Mixed salad

Special mention; the fantastic *tostas* and tapas; perfect to accompany a refreshing *caña* (small draft beer). My favorite tapa is the *boquerones en vinagre* (**white anchovies in vinegar**).

The house specialties are also fantastic: My favorites are the homemade, absolutely delicious **croquettes**, not to mention the typical *callos a la madrileña* (**Madrid-style tripe**) and the Spanish *tortilla* (**egg and potato omelet**).



The house croquettes are wonderful, probably one of the best I've ever had in Madrid.

Despite all of these scrumptious dishes, Bodega Rosell's main attraction remains the **Cocido Madrileño** (a very typical and hearty stew prepared with garbanzo beans and all types of sausage) that they prepare by order.

Although the food menu is wide and varied, the dessert menu is smaller yet equally delicious; *leche frita* (**fried milk**) or *natillas* (**custard**) are some of the delights that Bodegas

Rosell offers to end a delicious meal.



Cheesecake



Flan

All that's left to say is that if you're looking for an **authentic Spanish tavern**, then you've found it!

Price & Contact Info

The price range is varied and quite affordable. You can have a *tosta* or *tapa* for **€2.90** or a great steak for **€13.50**.

- [Websit](#) & [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** c/ General Lacy, 14
- **Phone:** 914 67 84 58

Here are some of our other favorite Madrid taverns & Spanish restaurants:

- [Taberna Lamiak](#) (Basque-style pincho bar)
 - [Bar Lambuzo](#) (Family-run Andalusian restaurant)
 - [Casa Mingo](#) (Asturian cider house!)
-

3 Best Hotel & Restaurants in Madrid: Barrio de las Letras (Huertas)

Somewhere in the U.S., in a place whose name I do not care to remember, I found myself sleeping in a motel surrounded by gangs, in a room where the sheets hadn't been washed in a while and you could imagine picking up any sort of illness from the bathroom. A few years later, the story happened again, but this time back in Europe. Since then, every time I travel, I like to check out the best hotels on Trip Advisor and read the comments thoroughly before booking a room.

Here in Madrid, you've got plenty of fantastic and affordable hotels to choose from, which is why we're breaking this list down by [neighborhood](#). So, what do we look for in the perfect hotel? One, its location. Two, extra fun; those that boast [rooftop bars](#), great restaurants or free walking tours. And three, if we'd personally want to stay here and recommend it to our friends and family.

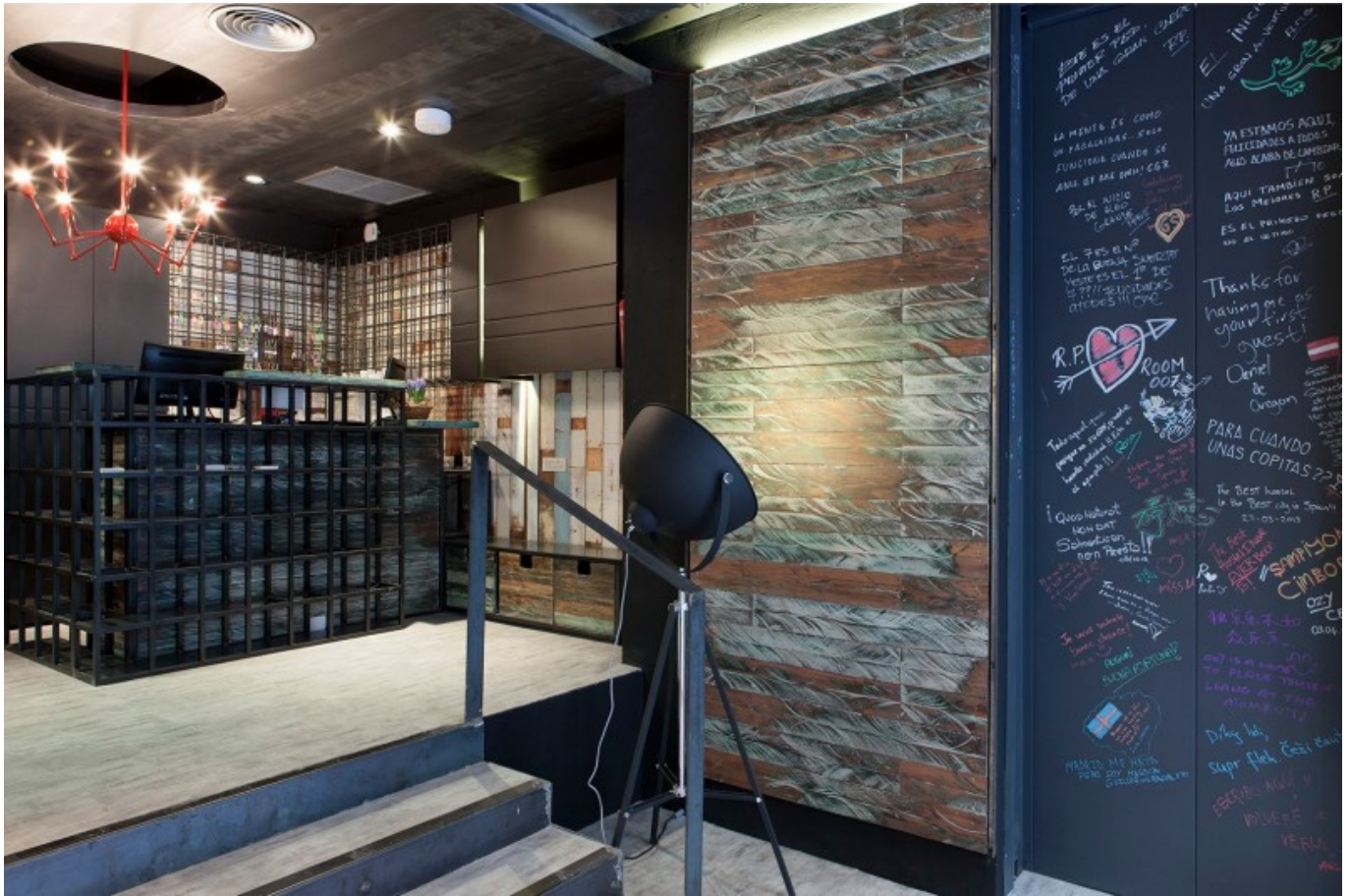
3 Best Places to Stay in Madrid's Barrio de las Letras (Huertas)

We're starting this series in [Barrio de las Letras](#), a central neighborhood named after the many famous Spanish writers who once lived here. This vibrant neighborhood offers tons of fun bars and restaurants, and is located close to the city's main attractions such as Puerta del Sol, Plaza Mayor and Paseo del Prado, along which you'll find the [city's finest museums](#). It's also very accessible by metro, near the city's main train station, Atocha, and the [airport shuttle bus](#).

Learn more about the neighborhood in our quick guide: [Madrid barrio overview](#)

**All rates are approximate, please check their webs to confirm*

1. Room007 & Restaurant Saporem



Room007 is a wonderful hostel with a hidden restaurant in a perfect location; a two-minute walk separates this whimsical and inexpensive hostel from *Plaza Santa Ana* or *Sol*, both must-see sites in Madrid. On top of that, it won't take you longer than 10 minutes to walk to the [airport bus](#).

Whether you're traveling with your backpack or with a family member, at **Room007**, you will find a good range of rooms from double rooms to a single bed in a 8-bed shared room. Moreover, the different kinds of people passing through will catch your attention.

As an added bonus, you'll get the chance to hang out on the **rooftop!** You will never want to leave. Also, let Adrian, the hostess, know that you want to enjoy some of the great activities that the place has to offer: **Free walking tours, bike tours, parties (3 bars + 1 club), drinking games, tapas experiences, affordable flamenco tablaos** and much more!

Hostel rates:

- Bed in shared room from 18€
- Double from 50€

**See special deals on their website.*

Contact info:

- **Address:** Ventura de la Vega, 5 & Hortaleza, 74
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla (Ventura) Chueca (Chueca)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Web site](#)
- **Email:** reservas@room007.com





1. Saporem Restaurant

If that wasn't enough, **Room007** also has an **outstanding restaurant** downstairs, which you will have discounts on during your stay. Here you can find all kinds of food including burgers, vegetable platters and homemade pizza and pasta dishes. The average price is **around 20€/each** without the discount.







Menu

- Pasta & Pizza9€-11€
- Fish & meat.....8€-12€
- Bottle of wine13€

2. Hostal Persal & Ginger Restaurant



Hostal Persal is another really good option located just a stone's throw away from **Puerta del Sol**. This hostel is also close to [La Latina](#) neighborhood, one of the most famous areas in Madrid, well known for its charming streets and gorgeous **pintxo bars** like [Lamiak](#).

Hostel rates:

- Single room from 40€
- Double from 50€

*Best price guaranteed on their website.

Hostal Persal Contact info:

- **Address:** Plaza del Ángel, 12
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)
- [Web site](#)
- **Email:** info@hostalpersal.com



2. Ginger Restaurant

Although it may look like an expensive place, Ginger offers great quality food at an affordable price. Ginger is owned by a restaurant group founded in Barcelona that now has [6 restaurants](#) in Madrid, all of which deserve a try. These restaurants run a chef apprenticeship program and share the same concept: nice ambiance, top quality and inexpensive food. On top of that, the group's foundation, **Andilana**, is a large NGO that invests money into helping people reintegrate into society.





Ginger Restaurant Contact info:

- **Address:** Plaza del Ángel, 12
- **Metro:** Sol or Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)
- [Website](#)
- **Email:** ginger@grupandilana.com
- **Tel.** +34 91 369 10 59

**3. One Shot 23 &
Ateneo Restaurant**



One Shot 23 is a modern hotel which boasts a healthy mix of luxury, convenience and affordability. The hotel has another location in **Barrio de Salamanca** and is set to open more in Spanish cities such as Valencia, Seville and Barcelona. One of the advantages of staying at **One Shot 23** is its location – it is very close to the [Prado and Thyssen Museum](#). Although Madrid is a very noisy city, the hotel is situated in a quiet area.

Hotel Rates:

- Single room from 68€
- Double from 72€

Contact Info

- **Address:** Calle Prado, 23 | One Shot 04 (Barrio Salamanca)
- **Metro:** Banco de España & Sevilla
- [Facebook](#)

- [Website](#)
- **Email:** prado23@oneshothotels.com





3. Ateneo Restaurant

Ateneo is much more than a restaurant. Since its founding, this institution has been a private cultural center. Today it is situated on Calle Prado, where you will be transported a century back in time. If Ateneo's walls could talk, they'd surely tell fascinating stories of the history of Spain.





Enjoy your stay!

**Taberna Lamiak, my favorite
Basque pintxo bar with**

Tuesday night wine tastings

If you've got the urge to fight those beginning-of-the-week blues, go to Taberna Lamiak on Tuesday nights for a free wine tasting and a few heavenly tostones. You will love it.

A few months ago, my sister-in-law, [Laura](#), told me I had to go to this bar called [Lamiak](#), and write about it for Naked Madrid. So I went, and ever since, Lamiak has turned into one of those bars that I actually have cravings for. This beloved Basque tavern has two locations—one near metro Antón Martín and the other on La Latina's most popular street, La Cava Baja. Both locations boast brick walls, tiny stools, a great wine list and delicious food.





[Taberna Lamiak](#) serves some of the tastiest *tostas* and *pintxos* I've ever had in this city (better than [Lateral](#)'s), and they only cost **€1,90 each**. The photos below can attest to the beauty and generous portions of these simple, yet delicious treats. And while a picture alone may speak a thousand words, I still hope you'll trust me when I say that the food here at Lamiak is so good, I sometimes wonder why it is that I ever eat anywhere else. It would seem the word is already out. **Lamiak's** divine offerings are no secret amongst Madrileños, who keep the place packed every night, clamouring for their weekly pintxo fix! Don't let the hungry throngs stop you, as this boisterous atmosphere is all part of the fun.

My favorite *tostas* here are the *queso de cabra con tomate y cebolla caramelizada* (goat cheese with caramelized onions and tomato) and the *empanada de confit de pato con pasas* (duck and raisin empanada). James' favorite is the *solomillo con cebolla y oporto* (pork tenderloin with onions cooked in a port wine sauce). James is a big meat eater, so he also orders the *jamón*

ibérico con tomate (Iberian cured ham with tomato), but there are plenty of **vegetarian options** here too, such as roasted vegetables, smoked salmon, cod and hummus.





Last Tuesday night, as I had my usual craving for Lamiak, James and I went to get my goat cheese fix at the location near Antón Martín, and were lucky enough to find a seat. At 9pm, mid-way through our second round of drinks and *tostas*, a man from [Vinocora](#) came up to us and said they were about to give a free wine tasting. Everybody in the bar got a free glass of Rioja to drink during the 30-min presentation. After that, a glass of that same wine cost just €1 for the rest of the night. What a lovely surprise!









[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

Locations:

- C/ Cava Baja, 42. Metro: La Latina
- C/ de la Rosa, 10. Metro: Antón Martín