

# Toscanaccio, gourmet Italian takeaway in Lavapiés

Toscanaccio is a cute little Italian bakery and pizzeria situated on a side street in Lavapiés, opened a year and a half ago by Guillermo (Madrid) and Federico (Siena). Out of their small kitchen and sole oven comes authentic homemade bites from Tuscany, all lovingly crafted on site, from scratch and with prime ingredients.



While you'd think the creators of [Toscanaccio](#) hailed from a long line of Italian bakers, their story is rather unexpected. Guillermo and Federico met over a decade ago while studying in London, and have since travelled and lived around the world, always picking up new skills and game for new adventures along

the way.



Neither of them had planned on opening an Italian bakery. That is, until a few years ago when they decided to set out on a new venture in Madrid: a Tuscan-inspired takeaway joint in Lavapiés.

Before opening, they spent months training with a *señor* who's been hand-crafting authentic Italian baked goods for over 40 years. After learning from the best, they found a place and refurbished it practically by hand. And here they are!



Toscanaccio fits perfectly into the already diverse and eclectic neighborhood of Lavapiés, full of charming gems and

surprises scattered throughout its sloping, winding streets.



When you step into Toscanaccio, you'll immediately see a tempting display of prepared foods. Options range from savory bites like pizza, *focaccia*, *calzoni*, and *ciaccino ripieno* (sandwiches typical of Tuscany) to a wide selection of traditional cookies, cakes and pastries like *crostatines*, *tarta de la nonna*, and *panello de uva*. Depending on the day, you may even find brownies and carrot cake.



The *ciaccino* filled with brie, arugula and pesto is my new favorite go-to snack.



There's also an assortment of homemade breads, with an additional daily special. Today's was *pan de calabaza* (pumpkin bread). All the dough is made with different types of organic wheat, rye and spelt flour, made right here in the kitchen, in plain sight.



The space is quite tiny, but it's all you need. If you want to sit, there are only two stools and a bench outside. Otherwise, it's best to order to go. Luckily their hours are quite accommodating: they open from 11am-11:30pm every day, and until 3:30am on Fridays and Saturdays. Tuesday is their day off.

So thanks to these two guys, we've now got the perfect place to grab a delicious Italian bite on the go, almost any day of the week.

## Toscanaccio

- **Facebook**
- **Instagram:** @toscanaccio\_
- **Address:** Calle de la Fe 16
- **Metro:** Lavapiés

- **Phone:** 912974729
  - **Hours:**
    - Monday through Thursday 11:00 AM – 11:30 PM
    - Fridays and Saturdays open till 3:30 AM
    - Closed on Tuesdays
- 

## **Bolero Meatballs... You Gotta Try These Balls!**

'Spicy balls?' 'Juicy balls?' 'I want cheese on my balls.' Let me explain...

I first stumbled upon [Bolero Meatballs](#), a fun new meatball shop in the center of Madrid, while walking around town with James. I saw the red MEATBALLS sign and my heart jumped. See, in New York (where I'm from), a restaurant called "The Meatball Shop" opened up a few years ago and it got so popular that it now has several locations. Whoever came up with this idea is a genius. Who doesn't like meatballs?





I asked the two young ladies who own and run [Bolero Meatballs](#) – Nina, from Russia, and May, from Spain – if they had gotten the idea from The Meatball Shop in NYC, but they said they had gotten it from elsewhere, as meatballs were already becoming trendy in Moscow and Paris too. In fact, when I asked Nina if she was nervous about opening up a restaurant dedicated solely to meatballs in Madrid, she said no. She was more afraid that someone else would beat her to it.

Prior to opening **Bolero Meatballs**, both Nina and May had worked a few different jobs (among them, May had been a pastry

chef and Nina, a translator), yet both wanted to do something else. As roommates, they spent a lot of time in the kitchen preparing meals. But it wasn't until Nina returned from a trip to Moscow, where she witnessed the meatball craze, that she returned to Madrid and, coincidentally, May was cooking up a batch of meatballs for dinner. They saw it as their sign. The two foodies immediately began experimenting with meatball recipes in their home and soon started looking for a place to open a shop. And now, thanks to these two brave ladies, we in Madrid can feast on **meatball sandwiches and platters** too!



Opened in April and located on Calle de las Conchas, Bolero

**Meatballs** has a few tables outside and a few stools inside. Their friend from [newmadprojects](#) did the design, making the place look colorful, inviting and fun. It's a great place for a quick bite on the go or to get a few balls to take away. All their meatballs and desserts are homemade from original recipes. Apart from their regular menu, they also serve a weekly special, such as **Greek balls with yogurt sauce, mint and Greek herbs**. Last time I went, they had a dessert special too—**red velvet cheesecake**, which was beyond delicious.

At **Bolero Meatballs**, you can choose from **four types of homemade *albondigas* (meatballs)**—***La Abuela*** (veal, garlic and parsley, in a roasted vegetable and tomato sauce), ***Oriental*** (pork balls dressed with cilantro and ginger, in a coconut milk and peanut sauce), ***Parm & Chick*** (chicken parmesan balls in mushroom sauce) and ***Vegana*** (quinoa, tofu, rice, shiitake mushrooms and caramelized onion).





My favorite so far are the ***albondigas orientales***, because the coconut and peanut sauce is heaven, and James' favorite is ***la abuela***, as he thinks his grandmother might have actually made them. I recommend ordering the ***ración*** (platter) of four balls so you can try each one, and it also comes with your choice of potatoes or rice for **6.50€**. You can also get a ***bocata*** (meatball sub) for the same price. Lastly, do not miss out on the homemade desserts here which range in price from 1.20€-4.50€—***Oreo Brownie with Ice Cream, the Cookie, the Cookwich or Banana Bread.***



[Facebook](#)

**Address:** Calle de las Conchas, 4

**Metro:** Callao, Opera, Santo Domingo

**Hours:** 2pm-4:30pm & 8pm-11:30pm. Closed on Tuesdays.

**Phone:** 911 10 60 41