

Café Barbieri: A 114-year-old Art Nouveau café in Lavapiés

[Café Barbieri](#) first brought modernist charm to Madrid's working class district, Lavapiés, in 1902, and although the *barrio* has evolved dramatically over the last 114 years, the interior of this elegant bar hasn't changed one bit.

Some things have changed though – Café Barbieri is owned by a charismatic chap from New Delhi and staffed with bilingual youngthings. It also now has a small terrace, but this is not why you'd come here – its appeal is truly the interior.

The whole place is lined with mirrors which back then were a symbol of wealth. These mirrors are now aging well, stained a smoky bronze colour with dots of grey rust creeping in from the edges. The ceiling is framed with grids of ornate girders that are connected to decorative cast-iron beams, typical of older buildings in Lavapiés. Although never on, there are ceiling fans too – something increasingly rare in Madrid.

At the back of the bar is a grand piano on a small raised stage. Almost every evening there's a live music session often featuring the piano, and this place does food too – typical Spanish stuff but with an edge.

The worn white marble table tops and red velvet seating lining the dining area mark this place out as opulent, but that's really not the vibe – it's chilled and cosy and attracts a spectrum of people, from the intrepid tourist who's braved it down the hill, to the unassuming local who fancies a read of one of the papers on offer.



Café Barbieri by day



Café Barbieri's beautiful ornate ceiling



The grand piano taking centre stage, and look at all those beautiful mirrors



Look at that original tiled floor!



The bar has a great selection of spirits & vermouth on tap



Café Barbieri by night

Café Barbieri is also on the same street as the Greek foodie place, [Egeo](#), so there you have it, your night is planned!

Info

- C/Ave María 45
 - Metro: Lavapiés
 - [Website](#) [Facebook](#)
-

Pum Pum Cafe, a new Lavapiés coffeeshop and weekend brunch spot

Situated on C/ Tribulete, 6 is the new establishment [Pum Pum Cafe](#). It was brought to my attention by the charismatic Jordan, well known by the coffee-lover community for his tenure as a barista at the popular [Toma Cafe](#) in Malasaña. The tastefully exposed brick pattern of the wall is a remnant of the conversion process from the butcher shop that previously occupied the space. I'm always keen on discovering new cafes to perch with my laptop. One can easily foresee this business becoming another thriving watering hole in the barrio.



Pum Pum stands out amongst the competition for its breakfast/brunch offerings: a splendid eggs benedict and avocado tostada, an assortment of healthy juices, baked goods and organic products. **Their mission is to offer breakfast at all hours of the day as to not discriminate against those who wake up at 5pm after a rowdy night.** Aficionados of coffee will be as thrilled as I was to see that Pum Pum is equipped to prepare V60 and chemex filter coffees.



The owner Papo is from Argentina, his brother Dam operates the kitchen, barista Jordan hails from Australia and the cafe manager Ira is from Ukraine. Papo has an adorable and well behaved infant son who can be seen on site at the weekend. Their hours during the week are 9am-9pm and their weekend brunch hours are 10am-9pm. This location is strongly recommended to any lovers of coffee and breakfast.



Photo: Steff Gutovska

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- **Adress:** Calle Tribulete 6
- **Metro:** Lavapiés

You may also like:

- [Toma Café, Fuel up, feel hip](#)
 - [El Cafelito, for coffee lovers in Lavapiés](#)
 - [Best brunch on a budget in Madrid](#)
 - [Swinton & Grant, art, books and coffee in Lavapiés](#)
-

New Cucos, a family-style restaurant in Arturo Soria

Sometimes when I go out to have lunch or dinner I can't help but think that an important part of customer service is missing. So when I had dinner at New Cucos with my friend, when we went outside afterwards, we could only say how well we were treated and what a wonderful dinner we had.

New Cucos is a family-style restaurant in the neighborhood of Arturo Soria. This closeness and warmth can be seen in the way Juan (the owner) treats everyone who works there, as well as all the customers who are having dinner or lunch.

The restaurant is located on the quiet street of Arturo Soria. It is a large space with a perfect covered terrace for more intimate dinners or larger celebrations. The terrace provides a very cozy place where you can talk quietly without being bothered by the next table, and then there's also a smaller and equally cozy interior. The first day we decided to sit in inside, as Real Madrid was playing and we wanted to see the match. The second day we sat in the covered terrace, great decision.

The Food

New Cucos has a simple and traditional menu with very good quality ingredients. **The portions are generous, in fact, the most popular dishes on the menu are large sharing platters;** these can be great among a group of friends, or even just for two.

First we went for the warm burrata salad with cherry tomatoes. It was simply delicious. Great quality, never tried the burrata and I have to say I totally loved it.



Burrata Salad

Then we decided to try the spring rolls with vegetables and prawns – a highly recommended and delicious dish as well.



Spring rolls

By the time we had to eat our third dish, we were already full, but how can you say no to a plate of ravioli? These were filled with pumpkin and cheese sauce – simply spectacular and very rich. In fact the second time we went we couldn't help but order them again.



Ravioli

The second day we also ordered a delicious mixed salad. For me, nothing beats a well-prepared mixed salad.



Salad

As for the rest of the menu, in addition to the dishes to share, they have a small selection of fish and meat dishes. I have to say the South African ostrich burger looks delicious.

Prices are very reasonable. The first day we had three dishes, three glasses of wine and two beers for 47 euros. The second day our bill came out to 33 euros.

I'd also like to highlight once again that we received fantastic service both times we went; the staff was attentive, asking if everything was fine, and very importantly, without putting any pressure on us to leave. That sort of thing is very noticeable and makes your dinner even better.

Nothing else to add, **New Cucos** points out on Twitter: *"eat and drink in an oasis"* And I couldn't agree more.

So, *"Mucha mierda"* (or "break a leg") to Juan and the rest of his family. I'm sure we'll see each other again soon!

Info

- *Where: Calle Arturo Soria 84*
 - *Metro: Arturo Soria*
 - *Tf: 913774039*
 - [Twitter](#)
 - *Monday to Saturday 11 to 1.*
-

De María: Fabulous Argentinian Restaurant

I discovered this fabulous restaurant not too long ago, called [De María](#), as two people recommended it to me on separate occasions. Since then it has become one of my go-to spots in Madrid. [De María](#) is one of those restaurants that always leaves a good impression on everyone who dines there; the food is great, portions are generous and the price is fantastic.

[De María](#) is popular to say the least; photographs of famous patrons line the walls: athletes like Beckham and actors like Javier Bardem are just some of the familiar faces who have enjoyed this wonderful restaurant.



De María has several locations. So far I've tried three of them and none was disappointing.

The menu is varied and contains good-quality ingredients. You can choose from a variety of mouth-watering starters, such as "chorizo criollo", or vegetable dishes, pastas and salads and, of course, the traditional Argentine beef. The last time I dined here we weren't very hungry so we opted for a lighter menu. Something that stands out to me about **De María** is that

you always get tasty snacks to nibble on while you wait for your food to arrive.



The **chimichurri** and **pepper sauces** are a must, as is the **cream cheese spread**. During the summer they usually bring a glass of gazpacho or salmorejo. When it's cold out, they tend to bring you a creamy vegetable soup – in our case, we got a delicious pumpkin soup.

As a starter, we went for the **grilled Provolone cheese**. It was simply exquisite and even more when covered with one of their tasty sauces. "**Chorizo criollo**" is another must.



After the cheese plate, my friend and I ordered salads; she ordered a **mixed salad** and I had a **caprese salad** – light, fresh, and deliciously paired with a beer and a glass of white wine.



We decided to skip dessert because we weren't too hungry, but the waiter didn't seem to care: he brought us each a glass of tangerine sorbet and a yogurt and mango sauce (on the house!), along with their traditional shots.





De María's prices are very reasonable. We paid about €21 each. So if you want to enjoy Argentinian cuisine and a friendly atmosphere, this is your place. It also has the advantage of having several locations so finding a table will not be a problem.

The locations I've visited are:

- *De María: Calle Hortaleza, 81, 28004, Madrid*
- *De María: Calle Preciados 32, 28013, Madrid*
- *De María: Calle Correo 2, 28012, Madrid*

You can find all the locations listed on their [web](#)

If you want to enjoy more Argentinian restaurants in Madrid, then check out our article on [Casa Federica](#).

J&J Books and Coffee, 1€ Pub Quiz by Noviciado

Check out [J&J's](#) Friday night pub quiz where you can play in teams of 4 and win a cash prize. J&J is a [bookstore/coffee shop](#) where you can find thousands of English-language books downstairs. Up at the bar, you can get craft beer, wine, coffee, bagels and other things to munch on.

You can also enjoy their other events such as the Intercambio Night on Wednesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays where you can improve your favorite language while having a good time meeting new people.

Also check out our series on [Madrid's Best Cafe-bookshops](#)

Maria's: Sensational Sweets on Calle Zurbano

I heard from a few friends that a [recent New York Times article](#) had rated **Calle Zurbano** one of the writers' "favorite streets in Europe." I remembered Zurbano; I had stayed in a hotel on the north side as my introduction to both Madrid and my teaching program. While the people I met and the things I learned on Zurbano were of the highest quality, the street itself did not surprise or amaze me eight months ago. Nevertheless, my friend and I committed to revisiting Zurbano

and seeing if anything inspired us. We stumbled upon inspiration. Hidden in the article's recommendations sits a tiny bakery hiding between ritzy hotels, bustling banks, and mainstream restaurants: **María's Bakery**.



Maria's Bakery



The New York Times
Favorite Streets
in 12 European
Cities
MENDI MARIA'S BAKERY
Café Zorba



The New York Times
Favorite Streets
in 12 European
Cities
MENDI MARIA'S BAKERY



Maria's

Desayunos

- 2³⁰ Café con leche
- 3³⁰ Café con leche
- 3³⁰ Café con leche
- 3³⁰ Café con leche

María's looks like it crashed onto **Calle Zurbano** straight out of your Pinterest news feed. The place oozes chic hipness—grey wood panels lead to off-white walls, chalkboard paint menus, reclaimed benches with homemade cushions, and wooden card tables covered in doilies and faux-70s tablecloths. Like your Staten Island grandmother got a hold of a Paula Dean magazine.



The bakery's eponymous María is apparently famous around these parts. **Locals pop into her ten square meters of space just to say hi**, read her newspapers, drink her coffee, and grab a baguette or a pastry to-go. Even the other staff know visitors by name, asking about babies or job lay-offs or who won the Real-Juventus match.

And, of course, there's the food. María and company arise before the sun to proof, knead, and bake the day's glutinous goods. *Pistolas, artisanas*, croissants, cookies – all things line María's stuffed shelves. **The cake selection includes dozens of decadent decisions:** "Muerte por chocolate," "mousse

de Bailey's," "tarta de queso con salsa de mora," even the oft-elusive "red velvet."



Maria's Bakery in Zurbano

As you get a high from the smell of bubbling yeast and caramelizing sugars, take a look at **María's eclectic selection of international sweets**, like *bonbones*, *alfajores*, tarts, *pasteles de Belén*, *dulces de leche*, macarons, and much more.

However, a proper critic has to judge any bakery by the Spanish classic: *pan con aceite*, with a coffee. Luckily, María's does not disappoint, masterfully toasting its 8-cereal brown bread, complimenting its nutty savoriness with peppery Andalusia olive oil and ground rock salt. Washed down with frothy milk and brewed beans, it makes for a **great breakfast deal around €2**.



Stick around long enough and you'll get to try some of María's newest experiments. While we crunched and munched our *pan*, we also were brought small plates of other samples, new treats that the bakery's working on right now. This season, María's is toying with **nut and oat hard crackers**, thin biscotti to market as "light" for snacking clients. To go with the recent holiday, we also tried María's ***rosquillas de San Isidro***, the *listas* covered in orange and lemon glaze, the *tontas* smacking of anis and cloves.

CHOCOLATE
 con Queso
 Chocolate negro con Naranja
 Mousse de Baileys
 Zaná horida
 Crumble de Manzana
 Crumble de Frambuesa
 Tartá de Queso
 Tartá de Queso con Dulce de leche

TIRAMISU
 Oreo
 con Naranja
 Freso
 Limon

PASTELES
 Boleo, Canelón, Joromo, Cuscus
 Chocolate, Frutas del bosque

BIZCOCHOS
 Naranja y Yogurt, Joromo
 Chocolate, integral con Cuires

BOLLERIA ARGENTINA
 Medias lunas, salsitas y dulces
 Vigilantes

BOLLERIA FRANCESA
 Croissant, Napoleones, Corchetes
 Mayas de Juras, Sanfutoles, mltos

IRLANDES (Caramelo, cafe, chocolate), Intenso, Pasten Menta, Tiramisu...

CAFES HELADOS
 Mungo, Kiwi, Platano, Freso, Melocoton, etc...

ZUMOS NATURALES

SANDWICHES
 Jamon y Queso, Jamon y Huevo, Salmon,
 Salmon y Huevo, Salmon y Queso crema,
 Atun y Huevo, Atun aceituna negra y lechuga,
 Pavo Queso y Curry, Pollo y tomate

COMIDAS
 Empanada Argentina, Morsale,
 Empanada (Atun, Lomo, Pollo), Pasta,
 Pollo al Curry, Pollo a la Almodra,
 Pisto, Escaladas variadas, etc...

CATERING
 Mini Bocaditos salados con
 Croquetas, Tartaletas, mini Quiches
 Rollitos chinos, Hojaldres rellenos, etc...

MONTAJE DE BODEGONES
 Para Cumpleaños, Bodas o
 Primeras Comunionen

Debido a la frescura de los productos, se requiere ENVÍO PREVIO!!!



As we got *napolitanas* and *medias lunas* filled with *dulce de leche* to go, Erika told us from behind the cash register that we weren't the first Americans to visit; the **New York Time's** "favorite streets in Europe" gave the bakery a steady drop of international attention. Since then, Anglos amble around Zurbano, waltzing into María's and placing their orders with a combination of gestures, grunts, and broken English. While we laughed, I taught the staff how to say "home made," hoping it would help guide our more linguistically ignorant compatriots. If you're walking down Zurbano and trying to see what all the fuss is about, give María's a try. It's small, it's strange, it's out of place – and it's adorable.

Info

Web

Facebook

Address: Calle Zurbano, 15

Metro: Alonso Martínez

Phone: 91 702 63 02

Also check out:

Mama Campo – a restaurant/market of organic delights in Plaza Olavide

Harina – for something sweet or savoury

Pan Comido – a French bakery where our bread will most certainly be eaten all up

4 Coziest Cafes in Chamberí

Swinton & Grant: Art, Books, Coffee

We wandered Lavapiés on an overcast day, searching for our regular *dosis* of *cafeína*. As we crept to the door of [our usual haunt](#), my friends and I found a CLOSED sign awaiting us. Spain's *siesta* schedule had tricked us yet again – even baristas need a break. The time had come to try a new café.

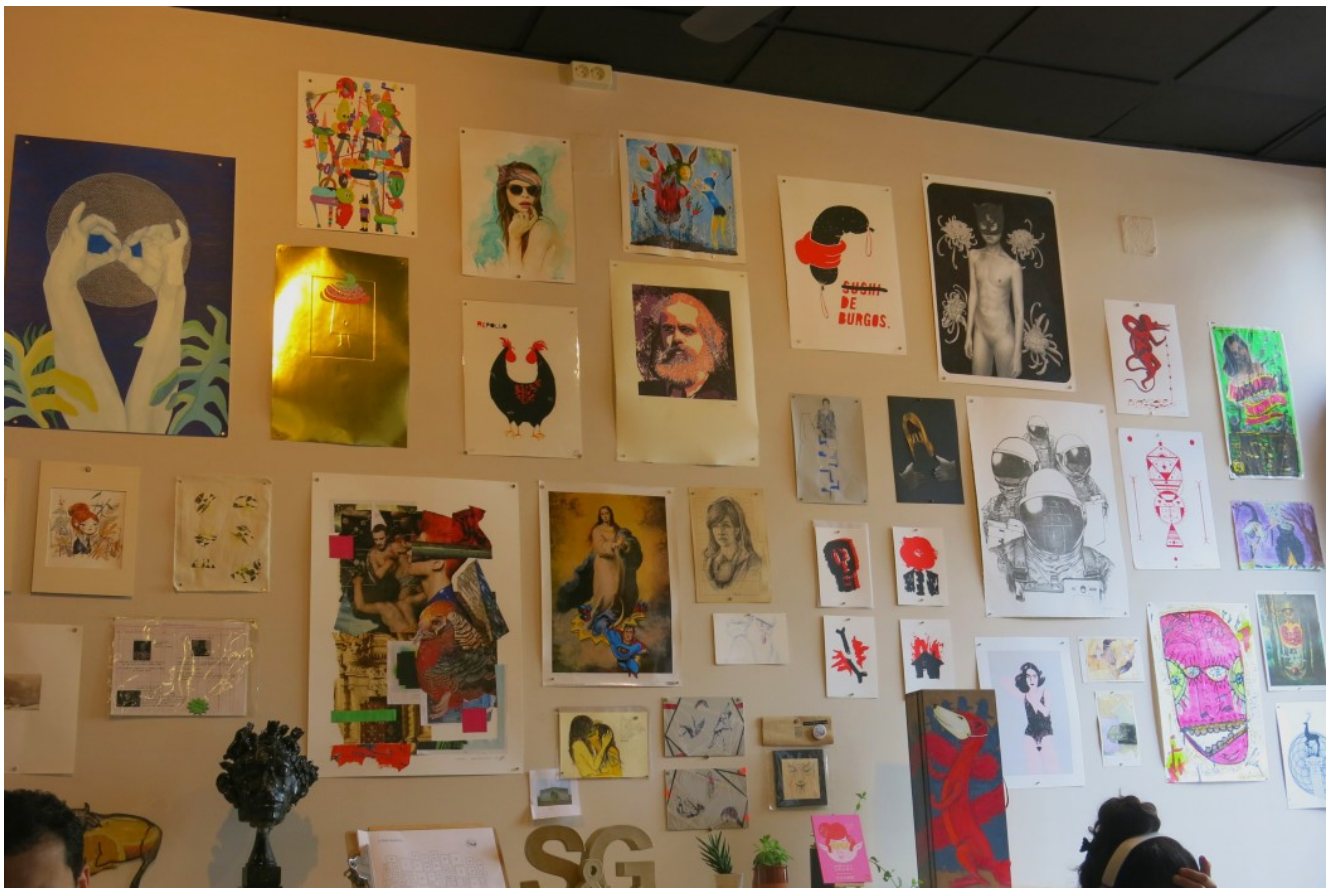


Open since last May, [Swinton & Grant](#) sits just off the Glorieta de Embajadores, amid North African falafel joints, street art, and cherry blossom trees. As you walk down **Calle Miguel Servet**, you'll first notice just how big the place is.

Natural light streaks through black velvet curtains, revealing two main areas: on the first floor, **Ciudadano Grant**, a café-bookstore. In the basement, the **Swinton Gallery**, a large space for local artist exhibitions.



Swinton & Grant, Embajadores





Hip folks feel at home here. Bare bulbs and LEDs light customers' way to the pressboard bookshelves lined with English and Spanish biographies, comics, and children's picture books. Jars of LEGOs and framed pictures of Leonard Nemo draw your eye to bottles of Arizona Tea, Jones Soda, and fresh cakes and cookies. Bon Iver, Jorge Gonzalez, and Fleet Foxes tickle the ears while you waltz through the space.

The menu, with its own abstract artwork, impresses. **Coffees** come cheap (around €1.40). For a small charge, you can enjoy the flavor palates of **special bean blends** from Costa Rica, Kenya, Colombia, and other countries. **Teas** come in all sizes, colors, and temperatures.



The café offers a **desayuno special** before 1PM every day. While you appreciate the art that is half-Banksy, half-neoclassical, you can try the classic *pan con tomate*, a ham and cheese sandwich, or a slice of cake with your choice of beverage – all for €2-4. If you're still hungry, go for a full-size *bocadillo* or a giant cookie.





After your *sobremesa*, take a look downstairs, where artists hang their work in **rotating exhibits**. Next on the program are characteristic contemporary pieces from [Luis Pérez Calvo](#),

[Victor Solana](#), and [Antonyo Marest](#). If you're feeling fancy, feel free to buy the art, with prices ranging from a few euros to a few hundred.





Since my first fateful detoured day into Swinton & Grant's doors, it's quickly become one of my favorite Madrid spaces. These days, when I'm in the mood for comfort, cake, and

caffeine, I invariably make my way to Embajadores.

Info:

[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

Address: Calle Miguel Servet 21

Metro: Embajadores

Some photos courtesy of Keith Lema

You may also like:

[Best Cafe-bookshops round 1](#)

[Best Cafe-bookshops round 2](#)

[El Cafelito – for coffee lovers in Lavapiés](#)

[Desperate Literature – Santorini, Brookly and now, Madrid!](#)

The 4 Coziest Cafés in Chamberí

The district of Chamberi is the heart of Madrid's university life. During the week, the neighborhoods of Moncloa, Islas Filipinas, and Guzman El Bueno are bustling with students. It only makes sense that some of Madrid's best cafes are located in this area. After all, university students need their caffeine! The following is a short list of my personal favorites. These four cafes are all perfect for that much

needed study break!

1. La Rollerie





I discovered this adorable cafe about a year ago and fell absolutely in love with it. And I'm not the only one! Any day of the week you can find La Rollerie filled with people, especially during lunchtime. What I love most about this cafe, besides its friendly staff, is its extensive menu. La Rollerie is the perfect place for a coffee break (a delicious cappuccino) or a full meal (try their beef burger or their salad with goat cheese).

Contact Info:

[Facebook](#)

Guzmán el Bueno 105, 28003

Phone: +34 91 399 2193

Metro: Islas Filipinas

2. Chocolate y Nata





What's really nice about this cafe is how small and quiet it is. Never very noisy, Chocolate y Nata provides a cozy and authentic atmosphere. Enjoy their mixed croissant or any of their succulent cakes! As its name would suggest, this cafe offers some of the best chocolate pastries in the area.

Contact Info:

[Faceook](#)

Paseo de San Francisco de Sales, 21, 28003

Phone: +34 915 44 73 64

Metro: Guzman el Bueno, Islas Filipinas

3. Salon des Fleurs



Out of the four cafes on this list, Salon des Fleurs has been open the shortest amount of time. Still, it has created the biggest buzz! Customers are eager to enter into the unique experience that results from the fusion of a cafe and a flower shop. The flowery decor paired with a delicious selection of teas, coffee, and pastries sets Salon des Fleurs apart. You can also check out a previous article on Salon des Fleurs [here](#).

Contact Info:

[Facebook](#)

Calle Guzman el Bueno 106, 28003

Phone: +34 91 535 23 48

Metro: Guzman el Bueno, Islas Filipinas

4. Miga



Miga is a popular choice for students of Saint Louis University Madrid and CEU because of its convenient location, delicious coffee, and young (good-looking) staff. Often you will find Miga packed with customers but in the afternoon the cafe proves a perfect environment for unwinding and conversation. Miga provides a warm and friendly atmosphere definitely worth checking out. Try their delicious chocolate

muffins!

Contact Info:

[Facebook](#)

Calle Julian Romea, 8, 28047

Phone: +34 917 52 46 35

Metro: Guzman el Bueno

*Photos provided by Charlotte Geier, instagram:
@charlotte_geier*

You may also like:

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

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

[Toma Café, Fuel up, Feel hip](#)

[El Cafelito, a trendy spot for cafe lovers in Lavapiés](#)

[Madrid's best cafe-bookshops, round 1](#)

[Madrid's best cafe-bookshops, round 2](#)

Cafelito, a trendy spot for

coffee lovers in Lavapiés

In a *barrio* undergoing the gradual process of gentrification, chic cafes are a dime a dozen. [Cafelito](#), situated on Calle Sombrerete near [Mercado de San Fernando](#), quickly stood out amongst the crowd as my go-to spot for coffee and studious activity in the barrio. The owner, Julio, imports his coffee from locations such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Mexico.



During my first two years abroad I lamented the absence of iced-coffees, especially during the pinnacle of the Madrid summers. This past summer, when **Cafelito** opened, they boasted of offering **homemade iced-coffee using cubes of frozen coffee as the ice**. Since then, I have gone through 6 full punch cards and been rewarded for my loyalty with as many free drinks.



My favorite winter drink, which I typically take to go, is **dirty chai**. When I need to sit and be studious as I write assignments like this, I usually take a **double espresso** of **whichever imported coffee is available that week**.



[Cafelito](#) is now a hub for the writers amongst us in the barrio. The charms of the cafe are enhanced by the recycled furniture and open library. Coffee drinkers can borrow books—on the honor system—and leave books in the hope that they in turn will be borrowed.



They have cakes too.



[Web](#)

[Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Sombrerete 20

Metro: Lavapiés

**Looking for other spots in Lavapiés?
Check out:**

Baobab, an authentic Senegalese restaurant

Tribuetxe, a Basque pintxo bar

Mercado de San Fernando, the real food emporium

Taberna Lamiak, another Basque pintxo bar with
free wine tastings

Toma Café: fuel up, feel hip

[Toma Cafe](#) could very well be a coffee shop in a hipster mecca like San Francisco or Brooklyn. Upon wandering into the sparse space with narrow benches lining the walls and a bicycle dangling from the ceiling, one might wonder: “Have I wandered onto the set of Portlandia?”



People peck at their laptops while seated at teensy tables. The baristas take their posts at the helm of the espresso machine seriously. More seats can be found in the back, but space is rather cramped. One's daily dose of **espresso** can be consumed in various different forms. Options extend beyond the

confines of *café con leche*.



A gem on the beverage menu: *chocolate picante*. In this concoction, bitter chocolate and prickly heat make ordinary chocolate seem lame.



A limited **breakfast** list exists offering a few variations on toast (tomato and olive oil, butter and jam, not much more). Alternatively, as Marie Antoinette famously did not say, *let them eat cake*. The **chocolate cake is made with Madrid's own Cerveza La Virgen**—what could be better for breakfast?



The omnipresent **carrot cake** also beckons from the pastry case. Here, the crowd-pleaser takes on a spicy character and the cream cheese frosting makes an already good cake better.



Luckily for those in search of a caffeinated workspace, **Toma Cafe** opens for breakfast at early hours. Come here to fuel up and to fill hip.



[Facebook](#)

[Web](#)

Address: calle La Palma 49

Metro: San Bernardo or Noviciado

Hours: M-F 8am-8pm. Sat & Sun 10am-8pm

Here are some more of our favorite cafes in Madrid:

[Pepe Botella, a Coffee Place Where You Can Think](#)

[La Paca, the Perfect Cafe in Malasaña](#)

[Best Cafe-Bookshops in Madrid, Round 1 & Round 2](#)