

NAP, real Neapolitan pizza in the heart of Lavapiés

Ahh, pizza. The star of so many childhood memories, last minute dinners, college dorm room feasts, and drunken (or sober) declarations of love. At this point pizza is more than a food; it's a cultural emblem, no matter what country you're in.



But if you want the real deal, you'll have to go to Naples, where the original Margherita pizza was invented in 1889. And if RyanAir flights to Italy aren't quite within your budget, head to NAP—Neapolitan Authentic Pizza in Madrid.

As soon as you walk through the doors, you'll be greeted by a rainbow-hued mural by Okuda, the famed Spanish street artist. Check out the wood-fired pizza oven (essential for true Neapolitan crust) as you settle into the bright and airy space.

Obviously, the specialty here is pizza. They offer everything from the classic Margherita (tomato, mozzarella, olive oil, basil, and parmesan) to spicy salami and speck, to anchovies and eggplant, to innovative daily specials. If you want to get creative, you can add as many extra toppings as you like (for a small fee).

The pizza is made in the true Neapolitan style: a thin, doughy, and bubbly crust composed of nothing but flour, yeast, water, and salt, topped with tantalizingly fresh ingredients. Each one is enough to fill up one very hungry diner—but if you're like me you'll want to save some for lunch (or breakfast) tomorrow. At 6-10 euros per pie, it's affordable either way.



Marinara pizza: tomato, garlic, olive oil, oregano, and basil

There's plenty more on the menu, too. Don't miss the

bruschetta, burrata, and baked eggplant, plus tiramisu for dessert. If you're going for the full experience, have a limoncello digestif, and then sit back and enjoy the satisfaction that only pizza can impart.



Eggplant bruschetta, one of the four varieties offered

Pizza may be beautiful in all its various forms (deep dish, frozen, square-shaped cafeteria style...) but if you ask me, nothing beats the original. Give me a charred and slightly sour crust with a thin layer of sweet ripe tomatoes, and I'm sold.

NAP provides just that: pizza in its simplest, truest, and freshest form. Forget Telepizza, get off your couch, and make the trek to Lavapiés—it's not Naples, but it might just be the next best thing.

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Ave María, 19
- **Metro:** Lavapiés & Tirso de Molina
- **Phone:** 932 46 26 15

(Pro tip: NAP also has two locations in Barcelona; Madrid is the latest addition.)

Pasta Mito, an Italian Eatery in Mercado de Chamartín – a gem!

In [Mercado Chamartin](#), in the central aisle on the lower floor, you'll find a brand new, chic little Italian eatery called [Pasta Mito](#). All food is freshly prepared in the on-site kitchen, and the owners definitely know what they're doing. Also, the brilliant thing about eateries in neighborhood markets is that the ingredients they cook with tend to come directly from the market's food stalls, so at the same time as being **top-quality stuff**, eating there is great for local businesses too.



My fella and I sat in the cosy 3-tabled dining area and, based on enthusiastic recommendations by the owner, we had... (ima write a list):

- *Glass of the house white each*
- *Complimentary and HUGE antipasto appetiser*
- *Burrata Caprese with fine green pesto*
- *Truffle ravioli with only butter sauce and fresh parmesan sprinkled on top*
- *Tiramisu in a cup*
- *All accompanied by a fresh basket of focaccia*



The food was absolutely incredible and plenty between us – we're glad we shared! The bill came to **€26** exactly, which felt

very reasonable for the quality of food and wine and friendly service.

Whilst we were sat there, we saw lots of people ordering to take away. Great idea too, but the dining experience was way more fun.



The owners are a husband and wife duo. She's Italian, he's Spanish and speaks fluent English. We got chatting and he told us that he spent 4 years cooking under Heston Blumental, then worked in one of the UK's top restaurants for a few more years before coming back to Madrid.

I asked him about future plans and he said that next month, they're expanding into the veg stall just opposite, which will mean **an extra 6 or so tables**. Having only opened in September

'14, they'll be staying put in [Mercado Chamartin](#) for now as the business is going well and they seem to love what they have.

[Pasta Mito](#) is by far the best Italian food we've had in Madrid yet – **it's really quite a gem.**

By Leah Pattem

Info

Mercado de Chamartín: [Facebook](#) & [Web](#) (*calle Bolivia 9 <m> Chamartín*)

Pasta Mito: [Facebook](#) (*inside the Mercado de Chamartín, central aisle, lower floor*)

Another market we recommend:

[**Mercado de San Fernando in Lavapiés – the real food emporium!**](#)