

Bless Hotel rooftop bar – beautiful sunsets, bebidas and bowling!

One of the major perks of being a teacher (which is my day job), has undoubtedly got to be the holidays. Let's be real... Yes, teaching is a vocation for most, but I defy anyone to shirk the idea of having two blissfully sun-soaked months off each summer. The benefit of being a part-time lady of leisure is that when I've not escaped to the coast (it's no joke that Madrid is literally an inferno come July), but on the plus side, the city feels like a veritable playground for all those left sweltering in the city.



So with all this free time, I've found myself strolling round barrios that I tend to neglect in favour of my own and as a result, I stumbled upon the holy grail of hotels that is the BLESS hotel on Calle Velázquez. From the rooftop bar slash restaurant, to the clandestine bowling alley nestled below the lobby, the hotel offers a taste of luxe living – and in my case, all within walking distance. Who doesn't love to get their steps up before sinking a G&T guilt free?

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So let's talk terrace – Madrid has really upped its game when it comes to rooftop vistas of late and there's plenty of competitors vying for your attention, and your hard-earned cash. However, in my humble opinion, BLESS has the edge as its pleasingly buzzy, not overwhelmingly busy, and has beautifully considered decor, rather than your bog standard minimalist modern vibe that currently prevails. Most recently, my friends and I managed to snag a beaut of a booth and it wouldn't be out of place at a beach club in the south of France.



But the big draw is ultimately that the views are to die for – nab a spot for golden hour and watch the sky resemble Monet at

his best as it changes from azure blue, to blush pink, to burnt orange – all whilst sipping on a perfectly prepared cocktail of your choice. On this note, don't get me wrong, BLESS is not cheap – but what you splurge on the drinks you slightly claw back on the naughty but nice nibbles that accompany each tipple. And the service is faultless – I can attest to this given the patience and perseverance to get the perfect shot of me and my amigas for the 'gram.



So having been up top I returned to see what was down below and it didn't disappoint. Tucked under the hotel is a

speakeasy-type bar that houses... a BOWLING ALLEY! Yes, limber up and get ready to strike. We booked a lane on a Saturday night and continually cursed our lack of bowling prowess but it still made such a welcome change from the usual dinner-then-drinks drill. I bowled in vertiginous heels assuming that (like my humble megabowl back home) they'd give you those Velcro shoes that make you feel about 5 years old – anyways, they do not.



Worth bearing in mind if you're competitive and I still maintain that it was my stilettos and not my lack of technique

that hampered my score. Again, the bowling alley may be underground but bargain basement this ain't. Games cost €12 per person so whilst it's a bit of a treat, it was well worth it to be cocooned in what felt reminiscent of a prohibition-era speakeasy.



You might be getting the gist that I like the BLESS hotel and you'd be right. The vibe in Madrid is shifting, business is booming, tourists are appearing in their droves and whilst this is all economically excellent, I still like my social scene to come with a side of secrecy. BLESS is a gem in barrio Salamanca, just go wielding cash (and comfy shoes).

Bless Hotel Madrid

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@blesshotelmadrid](#)
- **Address:** Calle Velázquez, 62
- **Metro:** Velázquez

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Killer Cocktails at NH Collection Madrid Eurobuilding

I haven't always been able to call **Malasaña** home. In fact, since decamping to Madrid almost eight years ago, there have been a plethora of places that I have indeed called 'home', if only for a short time. There was the awful place on Calle Barco (complete with a landlord who just used to rock up unannounced and sit in his dressing gown on the sofa, true story). There was the hovel in Iglesia where running water was frequently considered a luxury. There was even a place near Moncloa where mould featured heavily as part of the interior design.

However, in the midst of all of this, I found a lovely little place to call mine near Cuzco. Since migrating south to **Malasaña** and having become a fully fledged member of the barrio, I rarely find myself back up north as it were, but

given that it's August and the city feels like your own private playground (due to the lack of folk in the sweltering oven that is Madrid), I decided to spread my wings, as it were and make a pilgrimage to my old hood.



The reason for making it to the **Eurobuilding Hotel** was that I'd heard whisperings about their killer cocktails. Having just got back from three weeks in Vietnam, where drinking beer felt like a national past time, I figured my bikini bod (or current lack thereof) would thank me for laying off the hops. We're also not talking any old cocktails here either; the menu (which changes annually) was created by cocktail maestro, **Diego Cabrera**.



So I went hopeful that the tipples would trump the kind of ropey offerings served up during a happy hour in your bog standard beach bar. Given the heat and the thirst that I'd worked up thanks to the mercury melting temps, I sampled three delights (as well as a sneaky bit of tapas to ensure that I could remember the journey home – tempura prawns and a veal-stuffed potato, both equally delish and devoured within seconds). Whilst they offer all the classics, the specially curated menu is unique to say the least. Pairings of flavours are quirky and presentation is paramount. Being a huge fan of

Pisco (sadly at the moment it's the closest I'll get to Peru), I tried a **Sherbert Shurb Punch**. The recipe for which was to be found niftily on the back of my coaster, a nice touch.



The outdoor terrace was also the perfect spot to people watch and watch we did as the Real Madrid team bus sailed by en route to the nearby **Bernabeu**. So if you'd struggle to sell the place to your man friend there's definitely something for the boys on offer; its close proximity to the stadium makes it the ideal place to enjoy a celebratory tippie. Which given Los Blancos' current form, could be happening more often than not.

Info

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