

La Barraca, an upscale Valencian restaurant in downtown Madrid

It is easy to be skeptical about the quality of the seafood in Madrid due to its severe lack of an ocean; I would write off most locations that serve paella as tourist traps while advising visitors to seek out their paella in Valencia or elsewhere. However, after sampling the *arroz negro* at [La Barraca](#) I am more optimistic about the state of paella affairs in Madrid and strongly recommend this stellar location.



My first time visiting Madrid was in August of 2008. This excursion with my grandmother, "Safta" Lucy, was a present for my acceptance to college. At that time I never would have

fathomed that shortly after finishing my undergraduate degree I would go on to call Madrid my home. Back then I was not nearly as adventurous of an eater as I am now – I have *verguenza* that I had an aversion to seafood when Safta Lucy originally brought me to [La Barraca](#), an upscale location in Madrid devoted to seafood and rice dishes.

In the present day, 7 years later, Safta Lucy and her friend Semita were passing through Madrid together as a stop on their journey between Mexico and Israel. Lucy made a reservation for us once again at [La Barraca](#), which my stomach now had the refined maturity to appreciate. The walls of this establishment are decorated with **tasteful ceramic art** as well as photos of the **famous clientele**.



Our starters consisted of *gambas al ajillo*, *gallos a la madrileña*, and *mejillones rellenas*. Garlic prawns are my favorite *marisco* and I jump at any opportunity to eat them during visits to coastal cities. The **gallos** were hearty and filling while the **mussels** were both meaty and delicate in texture.





For the main course we shared **arroz negro**, a paella dish served with squids with the rice blackened by their ink. The ink is a delicacy that contributes positively to the flavor and texture of the rice.



And of course dessert, a **cheesecake** to end on a sweet note.



Info

[Website](#)

Address: Calle de la Reina

Phone: 915 32 71 54

Reservations advised.

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