

El Patio De Fisgon – Feel like you've discovered Narnia

My blog posts would imply that I pretty much do nothing but eat in Madrid but I assure you that's not the case. Also ranking high on my to-do's are drinking, tanning, exercising (this is a new found passion that's surprised me more than most) and just general all round gallivanting... But it has to be said that going out for dins is one of my very favourite pastimes and I never need much encourage to ditch home cooking in favour of being waited on. To this end, I am constantly on the prowl for somewhere that will satiate my appetite and not break the bank.

This leads me onto my current fave, [El Patio De Fisgon](#). Not an obvious choice for lovers of Malasaña/Chueca as it tucked away on a swanky side street just off of Calle Ortega y Gasset (but it's most definitely worth the 5 or so euros in a cab) to find yourself in what felt like something out of The Secret Garden. *All twinkly lights, scented candles and the like – you can picture the scene.



The quest for somewhere simple yet swanky came about upon realising that I was hostessing three rather glam PR gals for the weekend, whose tastes are definitely more Balthazar than Burger King. Suffice to say El Patio impressed on all counts. Gorgeous food (and hefty portions), attentive staff (but not claustrophobic-ally so), wine in abundance (and cheap at that) ensured that my crown as a Madrid aficionado remained intact. We ate, drank and were merry for the grand total of 70 euros; coming from London where a soggy sarnie can set you back a fiver this was beyond bargainous. Post dinner drinks followed at the similarly gorgeous Punk Back which is sadly not quite as purse friendly – but equally swish. We're not talking the

need to remortgage a casa for a copa but it's definitely at the higher end of the scale price for Madrid. Saying that, if you like to sip your gins surrounded by the beautiful people then it's worth letting your wallet take a hit.





El Patio wise, I recommend requesting a table out on the terrazza to fully enjoy the 'see and be seen vibe' and let's face it, we all look that little bit better when illuminated by the soft focus glow of a fairy light. So what's been one of my best kept secrets looks set to be no more. I suggest you book a table and for the record, the rollitos artesanos de pato are worth every gluttonous cal.

Slight disclaimer alert Having recently gone back for a second visit, I have to red flag that the 8.30pm dinner sitting results in your being kicked off your table (rather

unceremoniously) by 10pm so defo book a later dins if you can...

Info

[Facebook](#)

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La Maruca, a Swanky Cantabrian Restaurant in Barrio Salamanca

My Dad comes to Spain frequently in order to see myself and his close friends, Rafael, Catherine, Alfredo & Ruth. It has been hugely comforting to have such trusted and accessible “real adults” during my time abroad. In addition to being warm, generous, and offering of exceptional council, my Dad’s friends are in the know in regards to **Madrid’s ritzier restaurants**. I was fortunate to have been invited to tag along to their **dinner at La Maruca**, an establishment in **barrio Salamanca** that I certainly would not have discovered under different circumstances.





A large space with a stylish staff and a cozy fireplace by the bar, the location radiates class. Catherine took the initiative to order several appetizers—***croquetas de carne cocido***, a tartar of smoked salmon & avocado as well as a plate of delicious anchovies with red bell peppers. We drank wine and had a pleasant conversation with a lot of swift code-changing between Spanish & English.



For my main course I ordered *pluma de cerdo*, a delicious dish of perfectly cooked pork. Rafael ordered *pulpo a la plancha*, which was presented quite aesthetically. Enrique, my Dad, consumed the *albondigas*, which he enjoyed greatly. Catherine's dish was the *tajada de merluza*. Ruth ordered *canelones rellenos de poularda con salsa de foie*, another incredibly photogenic plate.



Initially I believed that this restaurant would be well above my pay grade, but that was not the case—each plate cost between **10-14€**. This isn't the first time that the “real adults” have introduced me to a seemingly unapproachable establishment that ultimately turned out to be reasonably priced. I can imagine tactfully utilizing this location in the future in order to put up a front of fanciness while on a date.



Contact info

[Facebook](#)
[Website](#)

Where to find La Maruca

Address: Calle de Velázquez 54

Metro: Velasquez

Phone : 917 81 49 69

You may also check out series on best first date ideas in Madrid:

[Flowers are nice, but this first date is better \(part 1\)](#)

[Chocolates are nice, but this first date is better \(part 2\)](#)

[Dating in Madrid for Foodies \(part 3\)](#)

Tandoori Station, a raved about Indian restaurant

Having heard wonderful things about [Tandoori Station](#) from so many people, I finally went there the other night with a group of friends, one of whom had previously written about the restaurant in her own food blog, [Las Mesas de Vanessa](#).



Tandoori Station is located in [Barrio Salamanca](#). Now I must admit that I was reluctant to eat Indian food that far from **calle Lavapiés** (if you don't know this street, it's lined with cheap and fun Indian restaurants that I like to call *curry row*). But **Tandoori Station** is different. One, it's

higher-end and thus pricier, which is well worth it for its **generous portions** and **outstanding quality**. And two, **the service is very good**—you will be asked how everything is and given recommendations. If you go often enough, your name will be remembered and after-dinner shots will be on the house. And lastly, it's the kind of **comfortable place** where you can linger over drinks and dessert as long as you wish. So needless to say, **it lived up to my expectations indeed!!**



Just one last note before I talk about the food—the **décor** includes features of a train station (as its name implies) and they have a **spacious outdoor seating area** which was very alluring even though we decided to sit inside.



from Tandoori Station's web

So here's what we ordered:

To start, they give you the typical crispy bread with three sauces to choose from. To drink, we ordered Indian beer called **Crown** and Vanessa ordered her favorite, **salted lassi**. We then ordered two appetizers—**Samosas** (filled with potato, peas and cilantro seeds) and **Aloo Tikkia** (mini potato hamburgers with paneer cheese). The ingredients tasted fresh and delicious, plus the sauces added a great kick to each bite.



When it came to the main course, I was planning on ordering **lamb curry**, because my friend Alondra told me it was out of this world. But as I looked at the menu I instantly fell in love with **Murghi Ki Balti** (curried chicken with yogurt sauce, tomato, cilantro, anis and other spices). It was really nice, but I still want to go back for the lamb!



Murghi Ki Balti chicken curry

We shared several other dishes too. Our table was full of colours and smells, and it took some creativity as to what sauce and rice to mix with what chicken or vegetable. We had **Murgh Ka Tikka** (marinated tandoori chicken) which I liked even more than the **Murghi Ki Balti**.



Murgh Ka Tikka (marinated tandoori chicken)



curried spinach

We also ordered **Kashmir Ka Pulau** (rice dish with raisins, nuts, and saffron), **curried spinach**, **aubergines** and **Madras Wali Machli** (swordfish curry, mildly spicy with a touch of coconut milk), and some **naan bread** too, of course. What can I say? It was all delicious! I don't think you can go wrong with anything here.



Madras Wali Machli swordfish



Kashmir Ka Pulao rice

Although I've only been here once, my friends have been back many times and say they've always enjoyed it thoroughly. So if you're looking for **great quality Indian food in Madrid**, I would definitely recommend **Tandoori Station**. It's especially **good for groups** (I noticed that many of the tables around us were either large groups of families or friends, and there was plenty of space). **Do make a reservation!**

[Web](#)

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Price Range: (20-30€)