

# Madrid Artist Showcase: Local Composer and Violinist Santiago Vokram

Madrid's vibrant music scene is full of gems and untold stories. Despite winter taking hold, there are many upcoming gigs with emerging artists and performers. For each of these, there is an untold story waiting to be showcased. [Santiago Vokram](#) is a local performing artist who wields a violin to serenade his audiences. I have had the good fortune to witness him in action and interview him about his life and creative journey.

My first impression of him was that his attire and unique sense of style reflected that **he is a person who breathes in creative energy**. He can take the sound to areas I didn't think violins were capable.

So without further ado, here's his story and upcoming dates so you, too, can experience his music.

## Santiago Vokram's musical story and style

Hailing from Mexico City, Santiago began his career as a musician there in Rock-Celtic fusion band *La Agonia de Leonara* at 13. He devoted himself fully to practicing the violin, and growing as a performer, citing it as an escape from the empty spaces of life. He would go on to study music at Mexico's elite *Escuela Nacional de Musica*.

Santi reminisced on how in his youth he was inspired by the Spanish band *Mago de Oz* and when he learned that the group had split, he relocated to Madrid to join José Andrëa & *Uróoboros*, the next project of original *Mago de Oz* members.

Santi remained modest when describing his ascension to **dreaming of meeting his heroes and then having the opportunity to create alongside them** in his newly adopted country. He became deeply embedded in Madrid's thriving creative scene and began performing alongside other revered local artists such as [Ataca Paca](#), and on the international circuit with renowned Gypsy musician [Robby Lakatos](#).

## Where he is now



Santi's current band, which reflects his personal expression, is *La Sonrisa de Cibeleles*. This trio seeks to create something unprecedented as a cross-over fusion of world-classical and pop music. Its members are **Santi on Violin, Benja Bravo on Double Bass and Germán Nuñez on Guitar**. Their goal is to help a younger audience expand their perception of "classical" music and to disrupt the local music scene by introducing sounds with less precedent.

Santi's style as a performer ranges from classical to

unconventional. The violin is an essential part of traditional mariachi groups and can be weaved into classical jazz, rock, folk and other improvisational contexts. In addition to his solo-acts and collaboration with other artists, Santi performs at upscale events and in luxury hotels seeking to provide a stylized ambiance. Notably, **Netflix has utilized Santiago as a creative asset** in the mariachi ensemble featured in *Narcos Mexico*.

## Our connection

What Santiago and I share is that both of us have collaborated on creative projects with the versatile public relations strategist, programmer, event planner, and art instructor Vesta Rounsaville. Vesta manages Santi's social media presence and coordinates his routine concerts in Madrid's venues. With her help, he has managed to expand his circle of collaborators to Madrid's international community of musicians, comedians, and actors. Additionally, his concerts have raised funds for [Madrid for Refugees](#), a prominent volunteer group.

Santi confided in me that as his visibility increased, he became exposed to uglier elements of the music scene noting that "adoration can become insanity or envy." He went on to say that **"If you have a vision, you need to improve it little by little."**

Despite a lack of a conventional road map to follow, coupled with at times a lack of financial security, **Santi never wavered in his pursuits** despite sometimes deeply missing his parents in Mexico, or his loved ones whenever he'd tour for prolonged periods.

## Upcoming shows

You can be captivated by Santiago's stage personality and violin prowess at Teatro-Bar Hipócritas (La Latina) this

Saturday the 23rd at 22:00 where La Sonrisa de Cibeles will enchant their audience.

You can also catch them at [Microteatro Por Dinero](#)'s mini-concert festival Microsound in December (Malasaña/Gran Vía). Tickets for the concert in Teatro-Bar Hipócritas can be purchased via [Entradium](#).

Santiago Vokram

y  
La Sonrisa de  
Cibeles

POP jazz fusión Latina clásica

3 + 10 + 17 diciembre



microteatro

# Contact

If you would like for Santiago Vokram to perform at an event, or to utilize his work for branded content, contact [Vesta Rounsaville](#).

*If you know of any other Madrid-based artists that you'd like to showcase on Naked Madrid, don't hesitate to [get in touch with us to submit a post](#).*

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## Where to Take Your Mom in Madrid – Round 2

Knowing where to take your mom in Madrid can be tough, especially if she's already visited you five or six times. So here's a follow-up to my [first version](#) of this post with some fresh ideas, some favorites, and some recommendations from fellow Naked Madrid writers – and my mom, too, of course. She also helped me edit this whole piece. Thanks ma!

Not to mention these ideas are great for any out-of-town guests. Here goes:

### **1. Museo del Romanticismo for an intimate art experience**



Madrid has several charming museums worth visiting, and if you're like me, you'll appreciate their small size. My mom and I loved [Museo de Artes Decorativas](#) and [Museo Naval](#); but we enjoyed [Museo del Romanticismo](#) the most. Something about wandering around someone's former mansion makes it unique, and each room tells a different story. Just stay on the grey carpet or the attendant will scold you, like she did my mom when she wanted to take a closer look at the 19th-century furnishings and art! Plus it has a wonderful tea room.

For more ideas, check out [Madrid's obvious and not-so-obvious museums \(and how to get in for free!\)](#)

## **2. Mad Improv events for fun and laughter**



This was such a great discovery. My mom has been to Madrid several times over my ten years of living here, yet we never quite found the right way to spend an evening out that didn't just involve food. [Mad Improv](#) is an English-speaking theater group that holds shows (right now on Thursdays at La Escalera de Jacob) and regular workshops and jams at [VeraContent](#) (Naked Madrid's sister company).

Jams cost 3€ and include a first drink. Anyone is welcome to get up and join in on improv games, or you can just watch if you're on the shyer side – understandably so, as you'll see some pretty impressive improvisors up there. Either way, you're going to laugh a whole lot. I promise.

Here's a [full post on Mad Improv](#) to find out more.



### 3. Juana la Loca for excellent Spanish food



[Juana la Loca](#) is an exceptional family-run restaurant in La Latina, serving Spanish food with lots of fusion and lots of love. Everything you eat here is exquisite, from the *pintxos* at the bar to the main dishes. I had been several times before I finally got the chance to speak to one of the family members, the son, who explained everything on the menu with such passion. Culinary arts clearly run in the family.

### 4. Bosco de Lobos and Ana la Santa for cozy and chic dining



I wanted to include a few more restaurants on this list so I asked for recommendations from [Cat](#), one of Naked Madrid's most active writers. With no hesitation at all, she said: "[Bosco de Lobos](#) and [Ana la Santa](#) are both mum pleasers!" Bosco de Lobos is situated in a beautiful courtyard of an architecture school in Chueca, and its casual-chic look immediately lures you in. Ana la Santa also has a great location, right in Plaza Santa Ana. Cat especially recommends going here when it's cold outside, as it's the perfect place to warm up.

Check out [Cat](#)'s articles on [Bosco de Lobos](#) and [Ana la Santa](#) – I'd definitely take her word for it.

## 5. Chuka for Japanese ramen and gyozas



Once you've had your taste of Spanish food, you shouldn't feel bad about going to an [international restaurant](#). Really, it's okay. Madrid's culinary scene is full of fusion cuisine from all over the world, and Madrileños love it. [Chuka](#) is one of our all-time favorites for ramen, gyozas and baos. And we just found out the owners are actually two Americans who have been living in Madrid for over a decade. Go figure!

Here's a full post on [Chuka](#). Another great restaurant nearby is [L'Artisan Furansu Kitchen](#), offering French-Japanese fusion cuisine and a *menú del día* that changes daily.

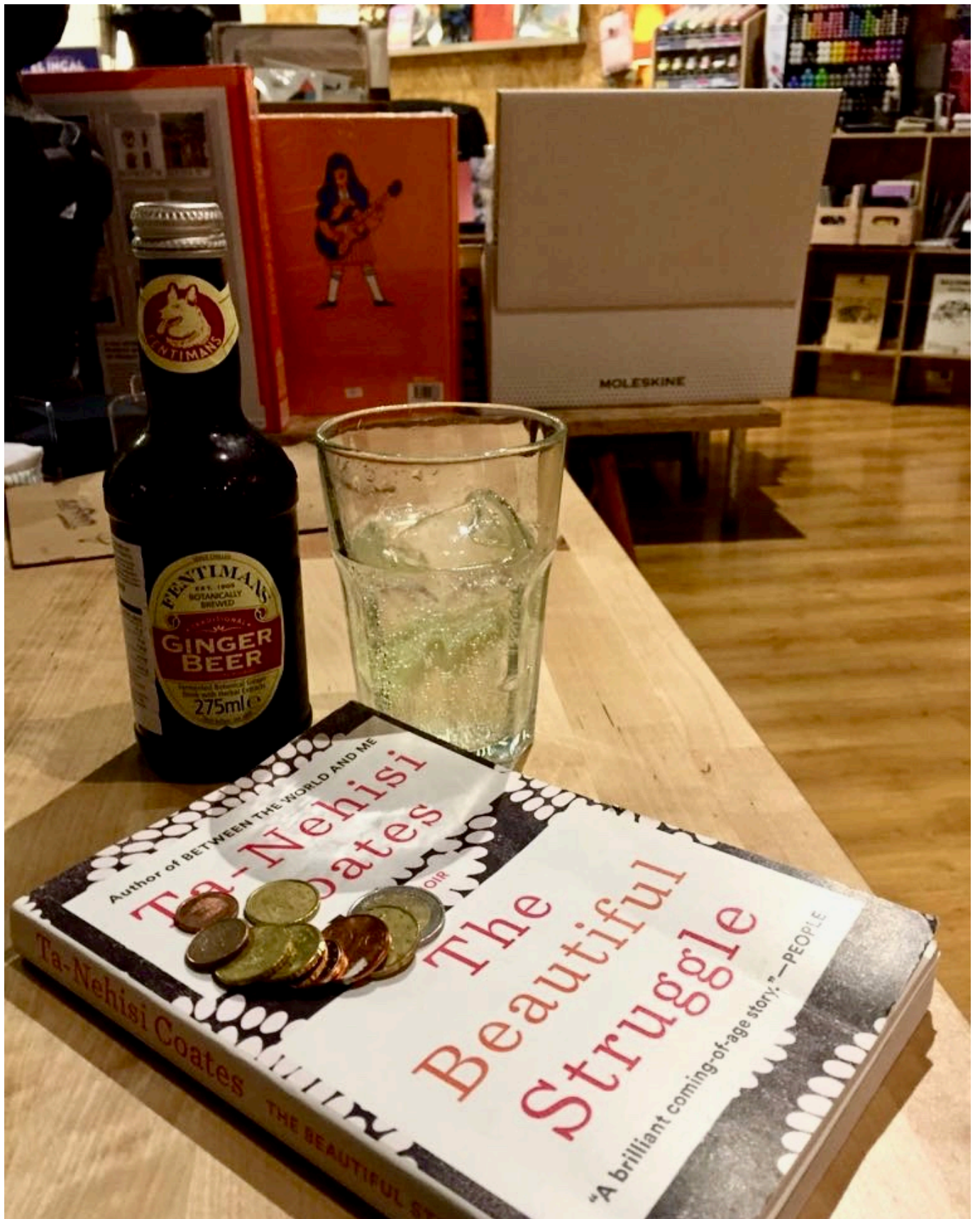
## 6. Salmon Guru for fun cocktails



Before going into Chuka we had a half hour to kill so we walked down the street and got a drink at [Salmon Guru](#). This funky bar has a great cocktail selection and truly unique decor. If we'd stayed a little longer and sampled another round, my mom thinks we might have solved the mystery of what "Salmon Guru" actually means.

Read our full post on [Salmon Guru here](#).

## **7. Swinton & Grant for when you're working**



Coffee shops are always great places to park your mom while you're working (or napping). If she hasn't brought her own book with her, she'll surely find something to read at [Swinton & Grant](#) – a café that sells art books and also has a

downstairs gallery – while enjoying a *cortado*, a spicy ginger soda, or a beer.

Another one of my mom's favorites, mentioned in the [previous article](#), is [Café La Libre](#), right by the Reina Sofia museum. She couldn't resist going back twice on her most recent visit. And we always make a pit-stop at [Desperate Literature](#) to check out their international book selection and delightful event calendar.

## **8. Templo de Debod for stunning views**



This beautiful ancient Egyptian temple is perched on a hill providing breathtaking views of the city, making it the perfect spot to watch the sunset or have a picnic. [Templo de Debod](#) is also a great place to walk to after a visit to the Royal Palace or the [Cerralbo Museum](#) which are both a hop skip away. You'll find a free-entrance museum inside the temple – one of [Mad Improv](#)'s organizers, Summer, said her parents loved

it.

## 9. Casa Pueblo for another cocktail



I've been going to this bar since my first year in Madrid. You can bring anyone here – a date, a friend, a colleague. There's something warm and special about [Casa Pueblo](#) that makes me keep coming back. And my mom couldn't agree more. There's also a small stage in the back where they regularly put on live music.

## 10. The Rastro for a Sunday flea market experience





pic from [Madrid No Frills](#)

When I asked for a recommendation from [Leah](#), she said: “My mum absolutely loves the Rastro, of course. She wants to buy everything but can’t fit it in her suitcase, but she always manages to squeeze something in like a spoon!”

Leah has been writing about and capturing the Rastro for years on her awesome blog, [Madrid No Frills](#), and instagram accounts [@rastrolife](#) and [@portaitofmadrid](#). Here’s her latest Rastro-inspired post: [Seven eccentric museum-worthy collections found only in the Rastro](#)

**11. Shopping day in Malasaña – and a mandatory drink afterwards**



Mojitos at Cubanismo, a rooftop bar in Malasaña

When it comes to shopping, I like getting it over with in one shot on Calle Fuencarral (which merges with Gran Vía if you want to hit all the big stores like Zara and H&M). Afterwards, there's beer and tapas waiting for you at some of our favorite spots. I recommend going into one of the happening food markets in the area – [Mercado de San Ildefonso](#) or [Mercado de San Anton](#) – both with great outdoor seating areas.

Another amazing place for a post-shopping drink is El Paracaídas. This multi-story and multi-purpose concept store actually has two rooftops – our favorite is [Cubanismo, a tropical rooftop escape!](#)

## **12. Food tour for insight into Spanish**

## bar culture and cuisine



Another Naked Madrid writer, Melissa, recently went on the [Context Tavernas and Tapas Tour](#) in Barrio de las Letras. Melissa is a true foodie, and works as a full-time writer and translator at [VeraContent](#), where she researches Spanish food on a daily basis. She said the culinary tour was truly insightful, and a wonderful way to better understand the history and nuances behind Spain's delicious cuisine as you enjoy every bite.

Read Melissa's full article on the [Context Travel Tours](#) here.

Don't forget to read round one of [Where to Take Your Mom in Madrid](#) for more ideas!

You might also like: [Take a Peek Inside 5 Historical Madrid Bars](#)

Of course Madrid is full of more options that mothers will love, so please feel free to share in the comments!

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## Where to Dance Bachata and Salsa in Madrid

Always wanted to learn how to dance bachata but didn't want to pay high costs for private lessons? Well, look no further!

It is *muy de moda*, or very popular to dance bachata right now in Spain. Each year there seems to be more meet-up groups and more bars offering *noches de bachata* or *noches latinas*. Located right by Templo de Debod, [The Host](#) offers three bachata classes followed by social dancing every Wednesday night.

For 8 euros you'll have entrance to the bar, access to three classes over the course of two hours and a drink (alcoholic or not) of your choice. You can choose to take all three classes or just one. If you're more of a "people watcher" there are plenty of seats at the bar and around the perimeter of the dance floor. Don't show up too early though because the first class starts when the bar opens at 9PM.



For new dancers, the first question often asked is “Do I need to bring a partner?” **You do not need to bring a partner but you can if you’d like!** The classes tend to begin with the basics, which everyone dances individually. Then, when you do partner up, the pairs rotate so often that by the end of the class you’ll have danced with nearly everyone, you might even remember a few names or have made a new friend by the end of the lesson. On this particular Wednesday, the classes were: modern bachata, Dominican bachata and lastly, sensual bachata.



After the classes end and the students watch or record as the dance instructors model all the steps learned, the social dancing starts! You get the chance to practice what you learned with friends from the class or meet others who are just arriving for the social dancing. The fun doesn't end until 3AM! **If you're more interested in salsa, you should join The Host on Thursdays for class (see below).** You'll also hear a little bit of salsa and kizomba throughout the night but Wednesdays are specifically for bachata at The Host!



## Info

- Address: Calle Ferraz 38
- Metro: Argüelles / Ventura Rodriguez / Plaza España
- [Facebook](#)

## Other classes at The Host:

Tuesday: Kizomba (classes 21:00-23:00 and social dancing until 3)

Wednesday: Bachata (classes 21:00- 23:00 and social dancing until 3)

Thursday: Salsa (classes 21:00-23:00 and social dancing until 3)

Friday: Bachata (classes 22:00-@24:00 and social dancing

until 5:30)

## Facebook pages and groups on Madrid's salsa and bachata scene:

1. [Salsa Madrid](#) (page)
2. [Salsa Madrid](#) (group)

## Here are some more salsa places to check out:

### [Azucar:](#)

For 8 euro you can enjoy classes and a drink at Azucar near Metro Atocha. It is a smaller nightclub but brings in dancers of many levels.

### [Tropical House:](#)

Near Metro Plaza de España is the best place to start dancing salsa or bachata as a beginner. Tropical also offers kizomba lessons on Fridays and Saturdays.

### [Cats:](#)

On Sundays at Cats (now called Sala Mitty) you can dance salsa and bachata. The crowd is great and there's plenty of room to dance as it doesn't get completely packed.

### [El Son:](#)

A close walk from Puerta del Sol, El Son offers classes from Monday through Thursday at 6 euro a class.



## [La Negra Tomasa:](#)

In Sol but doesn't feel like it. Live Cuban music every night and although there isn't a lot of space to dance, if you love salsa music, La Negra Tomasa is a must.

You may also like: [Where to get fit in Madrid](#)

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## **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.*
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## Zoco Comidero: Eat well and feel great at Madrid's first (and only) flexitarian restaurant

### NOW CLOSED

I don't eat meat, but one of my life rules is: **never go to a Vegetarian restaurant.**

I've been jaded by too many poorly thought-out ventures where the food is created from fear of meat rather than love of veg. Vegan and vegetarian cuisine has existed all over the world for millennia, so where did the culinary black hole come from and why has it left us in such a veg-hating dark age feeling hungry and dehydrated?

Last week, a friend of mine recommended veggie-friendly [Zoco Comidero](#) and I might just have seen **the light at the end of the tunnel.**



**Rarely do you come across a restaurant with this much respect for food.** The concept: flexitarian – a primarily vegetarian diet which occasionally includes meat or fish. In other words, there's something for everyone.

No longer does the vegetarian friend have to eat a *racion de patatas bravas* for dinner, or the carnivorous friend have to suffer through a fish-less fillet or a tofurkey burger (a what?).

At Zoco Comidero, the menu is hugely varied and every dish is put together professionally. Everything on your plate hit the kitchen worktop raw and intact and has been **prepared freshly with no external influences.**

We kicked off Tuesday evening with a kale and kiwi smoothie, an arepa stuffed with an almond-based vegan cheese and chlorella pesto (a delicious black seaweed pesto).



Feeling healthy yet? We shared two *tostas*: one with goat's cheese and a juicy baked tomato and the other with a generous portion of beetroot-marinated raw salmon and homemade mustard. For mains we had a risotto made with kamut (an ancient large wheat grain), and prawn chop suey.





This was all underlined with a trio of deserts: an intense gooey dark chocolate brownie (the secret ingredient: avocado), quinoa 'cheesecake' and a face-twisting lemon curd.



By now the word “healthy” is in the background. **Exotic flavours, textures and presentation** of the food resonates more than anything else. I love Marbell’s zen and her way of transmitting it to us urban wildlife through edible flowers and doses of colour.



This is Marbell, the brains and owner of Zoco Comidero

Zoco Comidero is just off the beaten track but in the real

heart of Madrid's old town. The restaurant has an elegant interior with low lighting, good music and a bonus view of the palace. There's also a fun downstairs lounge which gets going on weekends. Every Saturday and Sunday, Marbell tries to organise a chilled bit of live music from 10:30 pm onwards so stick around after dinner for good DJs and Venezuelan bands.

## Info

- [Web](#) & [Facebook](#)
  - **Address:** Calle Moreria 11
  - **Metro:** La Latina
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## 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.

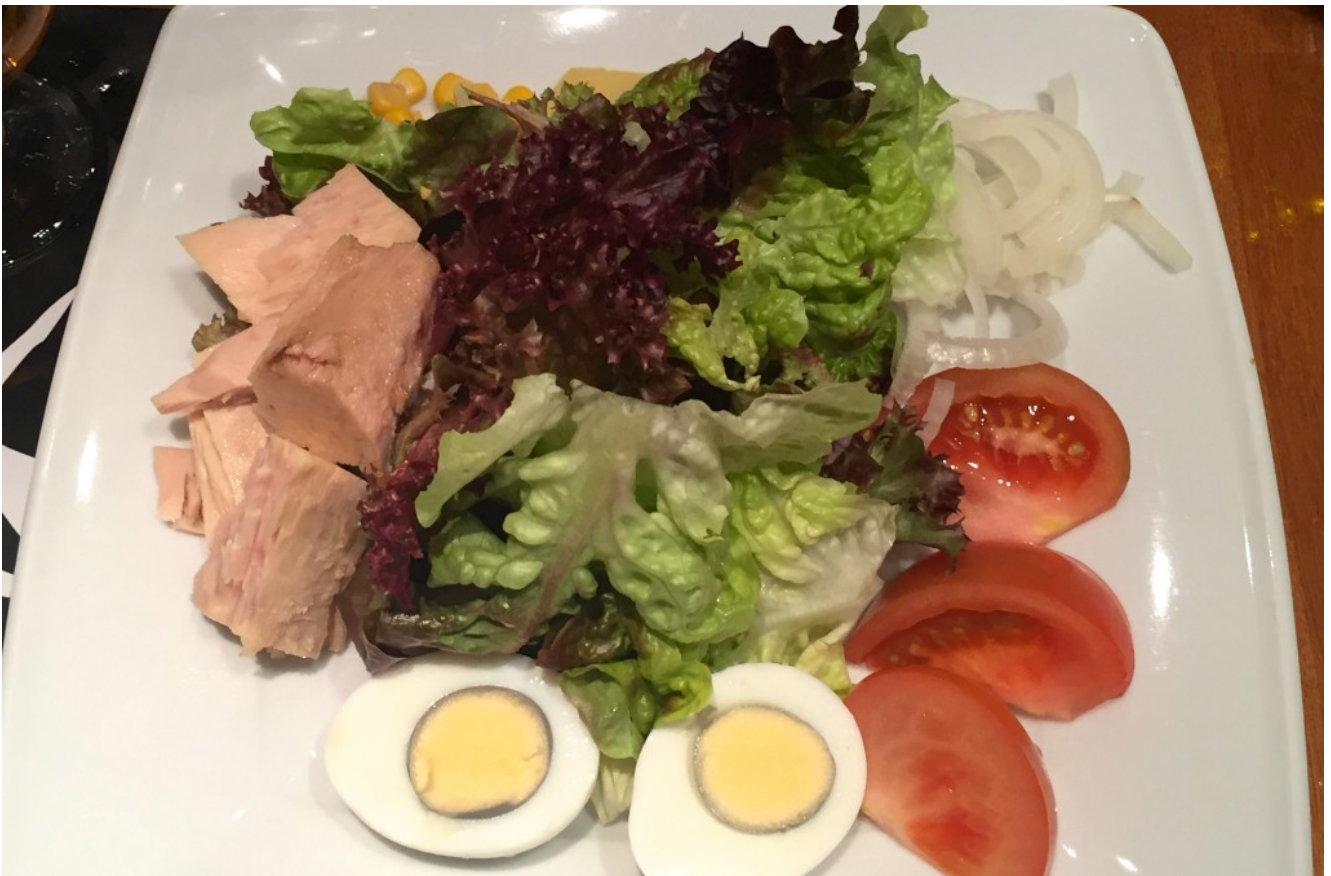


The **chimichurri** and **pepper sauces** are a must, as is the **cream cheese spread**. During the summer they usually bring a glass of gazpacho or salmorejo. When it's cold out, they tend to bring you a creamy vegetable soup – in our case, we got a delicious pumpkin soup.

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](#).

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# La Latina's 'seafood party' in Mercado de La Cebada: The place to see and be seen!

Mercados are the heart and soul of any Spanish city. If you want to get under the skin of the place you're visiting, make a beeline for the city's biggest food market. Wander around each section (meat, vegetables, fish, etc.) and you will instantly see what the region's all about. Then make your way to the *mercado's* busiest bar, order what everyone else is drinking and demand your rightful complimentary *tapa*. If it's something you've never clapped eyes on, even better.



La Latina's [Mercado de la Cebada](#) is no exception. The place encapsulates Spanish culture to almost cliché levels: **the heart and soul of Madrid is right here.**



Every weekday, [Mercado de la Cebada](#) will sell you fresh produce from all over Spain. There's also a good selection of local bars in the labyrinth of alleys both upstairs and downstairs, and even a few clothes stalls, toyshops and cobblers for some of the market's more devout punters.



But then, every Saturday at lunchtime, [Mercado de La Cebada](#) transforms into what I will describe as nothing less than a **seafood party**.





The atmosphere is electric; iced molluscs and pulpo are flowing, and groups of friends doing what they do best:

sharing food and belly-laughing, plastic cup of valdepeñas in one hand, half-eaten shrimp in the other.





Grab a few friends and get there **no later than 2:30pm**. Find one of the aproned chaps hovering in front of his stall, affectionately touching everyone with his fishy hands, and place your order per *ración* or by weight.



Before you take your polystyrene plates to the nearest paper-covered stack of crates, don't forget to pick up your **complimentary bottle of wine or cans of beer. Yeah... COMPLIMENTARY!** Due to licensing rules, these shops can't sell drinks. I imagine there's a slight markup on the prices of seafood but, having said that, **the prices are some of the lowest I've seen in Madrid, and the quality is some of the best.**

There are cups, serviettes, toothpicks and mussel 'spives' (spoon-knives) strategically strewn around the stalls – a seafood spectacular with no frills, and all the better for it.

## Info

[Web](#) – [Facebook](#)



**Address:** Plaza de la Cebada, La Latina, 28005

**Metro:** La Latina (right outside)

**Opening hours:** Mon – Fri 9am-2pm / 5-8:30pm; Sat 9am-3pm

**Another soulful neighbourhood market, not too far away, is [Mercado de San Fernando in Lavapiés](#)**

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## **Madrid's Top Shopping Malls**

Believe it or not, Madrid has some pretty fantastic shopping malls, with giant cinemas, mini-golf courses and even indoor ski slopes. And Ikea. If it's raining out (or simply too hot to stay outside), don't hesitate to check out one of our favourite shopping centres!

### **1. [Centro Comercial Príncipe Pío](#)**



Principe Pio is one of my favorite malls in Madrid because it's located right in the city center. I love it because you can spend the whole day here, shopping, eating and ending the day with a good movie. Among the many shops you can find here are Zara, Massimo Dutti, Mango, Oysho, Pull & Bear, Zara Home, etc. Restaurants: Vips, Burger King, MacDonald's, Wok Wok, etc

### ***Opening hours***

- *Monday to Saturday: From 10 to 22:00*
- *Sunday: 11 to 22:00*

### ***How to get there***

- *Metro lines: 6, 10 or "ramal" (from Opera), Línea 6 – Circular*
- *Cercanías lines: C1, C7, C10*
- *Bus lines: 25, 39, 41, 46, 75, 138, Circular 1, Circular*

## 2. La Gavia



La Gavia is one of the greatest shopping centres in Spain and even in Europe, where you can find everything you want under the sun. Some of the most popular stores are IKEA, Primark, Zara, Massimo Dutti, FNAC, etc.

### ***How to get there?***

- ***Bus lines:*** 142 and 145
- ***Metro line:*** Las suertes

### ***OPENING HOURS***

- **SHOPS:** \*Monday to Sunday from 10:00 to 22:00 hours \* On Sundays and holidays from February to November the center opens at 11:00
- **RESTAURANTS:** Sunday through Thursday from 10:00 to 01:00 hours. Fridays, Saturdays and on public holidays from

10:00 to 03:00

- **IKEA:** Monday to Sunday from 10:00 to 22:00 hours. The restaurant is open from 09:30 to 21:30

### 3. [La Vaguada](#)



La Vaguada is a large shopping mall located in Barrio del Pilar. It's big enough to offer several shops and restaurants, but small enough so you won't get lost and you can spend a quiet afternoon.

#### ***How to get there?***

- **Bus lines:** 42 , 49 , 67,83 , 124, 126 , 127, 128 , 132, 133 , 134, 135, 137 , 147 , N18 , N19
- **Metro lines:** 9 (Barrio del Pilar Herrera Oria) & 7 ( Peñagrande )

#### ***OPENING HOURS***

- **Shopping area:** Monday through Saturday: 10:00 h to 22:00h; Sundays and holidays: 11:00 h to 21:00 h
- **Dining and entertainment area:** Monday through Thursday:

10:00 h to 01:00 h; Friday and Saturday: 10:00 to 02:00 h Sunday: 10:00 h to 01:00 h

## 4. [Madrid Xanadú](#)



Xanadu is one of the best malls I have ever visited. They have everything you want, **even a ski slope**. In addition to clothing stores and restaurants, here you'll find tons of fun activities like bowling, mini golf, a ski slope, and much more!

### ***OPENING HOURS***

- Shops: Monday through Sunday from 10 to 22h
- *Entertainment and dining area*: From Sunday to Thursday from 10 to 01h Fridays and Saturdays from 12 to 03h

***How to get there?***

- Bus: From Príncipe Pío: 528, 534, 539, 541, 545, 546, 547 y 548

## 5. Centro Comercial Plaza Norte 2



Another huge mall located outside the center, Plaza Norte has tons of shops, restaurants, cinemas, you name it.

### ***Opening hours***

- Shopping area: Monday through Sunday from 10 to 22h
- Entertainment and dining area: Sunday through Thursday from 10 to 01:30h; Fridays and Saturdays from 12 to 03h

### ***How to get there***

- Buses: 171 and 156 (from Plaza de Castilla)
- Nearest metro: Reyes Católicos (Line 10)

## 6. Centro Comercial Plenilúnio



Plenilúnio is also situated in the outskirts, it has more than 180 shops, in addition to numerous restaurants, as many cinemas.

### ***Opening hours***

- Shops: Monday to Saturday, from 10 to 22h; on Sundays and public holidays from 12 to 21h
- Restaurants: Sunday to Thursday from 10 to 01 h; on Fridays and Saturdays from 12 to 03h

### ***How to get there***

- Bus: From Avenida de America: 221, 222, 223, 224, 224A, 226, 227, 228, 229, 281, 282, 283 and 284 from Ciudad Lineal: EMT no. 77

## 7. Centro Comercial Parquesur



In addition to the usual, here you'll find an **Apple store** outside the city centre.

### ***OPENING HOURS***

- Monday to Sunday From 10 to 22:00h
- Restaurants: Friday and Saturday From 10 to 2. Sunday from 10 to 1.

### ***How to get there?***

- By bus: 432,481,483,485,488,497
- Nearest metro: Line 12. El Carrascal

## 8. Islazul

### ***OPENING HOURS***

- Commercial area: Monday through Sunday from 10 to 22h



- Entertainment and dining area: Sunday to Thursday from 10 to 01h; Fridays and Saturdays from 12 to 03h

### ***How to get there:***

- By Bus: 35 and 118. 5 minutes from the shopping center: 108, 155, 480, 484 and 485
- Nearest metro: Line 11: La peseta, San Francisco and Carabanchel Alto Stations.

Pictures: [Hola](#), [Un Buen día](#), [El país](#), flickr, [AbsoluteMadrid](#), [Dolce City](#), [Urbanity](#)

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# **Gluten free pastelerías in Madrid: Part 1- Confitería Marqués**

Sugar dusted pastries, chocolate dipped palmeras and fruit filled tarts: gluten free friends, the search is over. If you're a foodie who just happens to be of the gluten free inclination, finding delicious confectionary in the city can be a little, shall we say, challenging.

We all know that there are the international coffee shops that serve the same chocolate brownie and the supermarket aisles that sell the same two or three packaged cookies, but where do you go when your **traveller, foodie heart** wants to spring out into the city and explore its **homemade artisan treats**?

This series is dedicated to **Madrid's best hidden corners for delicious homemade cakes and cookies, gluten free style**. You can even take your non-gluten free friends, and I promise you that they will not be able to tell the difference; they may

even find their new favourite spot!

## [Confitería Marqués](#)

Tucked away on Fernando el Católico, Confitería Marqués is the little Madrid bakery where it feels like everything has been made especially for you. With its tea party bunting and dainty glass cake stands, it has an element of the Alice and Wonderland to it, with everything in miniature.

There are **fruit tarts, mini croissants, individual loaf cakes, savoury empanadas, palmeritas, apple slices, jam tarts, and more.**

The sheer selection that they offer is fantastic for any [gluten free Madrid](#) foodie, as well as any foreigner in Madrid that wants to try some local pasteles with a reminder of home. Everything is made in the pasteleria and tastes as homemade as it sounds.





As well as all of the above, another reason why Confitería Marqués is so unique is that it also makes savoury food such as **empanadas**, filled with cheese, vegetables, fish and meat. These crispy, buttery little pastry puffs make for a delectable little lunch.



Then there are the pastries, tarts, palmeritas, fruit slices and loaf cakes. Each are exactly as they should be, and some are even better.

The **apple loaf cakes** have a base of sweet apple pieces and raisins, are soft on the inside and scented with vanilla. The **palmeritas** are crispy and flaky and come traditionally plain, or coated in dark chocolate. Plus, the **chocolate orange tart** is rich and decadent, filled with dark chocolate cream, and hints of citrusy orange.



The owner of the shop is extremely friendly and can help you pick out something from the counter, or choose something from the incredible handmade confectionary that they have to the left of the counter and throughout the rest of the shop, including **small boxes of cookies** and **beautifully presented chocolates**. These would be perfect as a thoughtful little gift or -why not- a special treat for yourself.

You can even buy a **homemade birthday cake**, **chilled desserts** or a **traditional Christmas Roscón de Reyes** from the tall stand to the right of the counter; any would make a great surprise for a gluten free friend on a special occasion or a delicious traditional dessert to share after a meal at home with friends.

Another little tip is that they can make **gluten free bread** in house to order; just ask the lady at the counter when you would like it for.

## Info

Web: [www.confiteriamarques.com](http://www.confiteriamarques.com)

Address: Calle Fernando Católico, 76

Metro: Argüelles

## Extra notes

Don't forget to ask about the delicious foods available for **lactose and nut allergies**. You can go with all of your friends!

## You'll also like:

[Cosy Wine Bars in La Latina – with gluten-free options!](#)

[Rayen Vegano – a vegan “gem” of a restaurant in Huertas](#)

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## Beerlingual, Free International Pub Quiz in La Latina!

[Beerlingual](#) is a free, international pub quiz held every Thursday night from 9pm-11pm at [Cervecería La Espuma](#) in La Latina (c/ Arganzuela, 1). This fun event brings locals and

visitors from around the world together to meet new people, make friends, practice languages, win prizes and have a good time.

The event is run by the “Quiz Master” who asks questions in both **English and Spanish**, covering popular culture, tourism, music, cinema, and an array of other topics. The winners will be awarded prizes!

You’ll also find great offers on beer, drinks and cocktails. The game then continues online at [www.Facebook.com/-Spanglish.Madrid](http://www.Facebook.com/-Spanglish.Madrid) and questions can be directed to [madrid@spanglishexchange.com](mailto:madrid@spanglishexchange.com).

**Check out our full post – [“Beerlingual, a fun spin on a Thursday night”](#) – for more info.**