

La Nodriza, Madrid's loveliest health food store!

Around Christmastime I got an email from Terry and Charlotte who run [Desperate Literature](#), an international bookstore that's just a street up from Opera. Here's what they wrote: "We came across a local health and organic food store that we fell in love with. The owner is great... and it's a crying shame that locals and health-conscious expats don't know about the place. It only has [Facebook](#), but voila, now we've done our part and spread the good news," inferring it was Naked Madrid's turn to do the same!

Thank you, Terry and Charlotte, for sending me that email! I finally made it to [La Nodriza](#) today and I have to agree – how had I not known about it earlier? It's just a few steps from plaza Opera and lovingly run by a woman named Lucía, who handpicks each item with careful consideration to customers' requests and also speaks English. Originally from Spain, Lucía has lived all over the world, having spent years in England, Sweden (she speaks Swedish, too), Chile and even Kuwait and Oman. Long story short, she's got a lot of stories. Eventually she decided to follow her passion and study nutrition, which led her to **open [La Nodriza](#) two years ago, "her dream come true."**



Although La Nodriza is small, it offers an impressive selection of handmade and organic products, ranging from cosmetics and olive oil to fresh produce and yogurt. You can even get a weekly order of local fruits and vegetables. Chances are you'll find that hard-to-find item here, or you can ask Lucía to order it for you! Not to mention, **La Nodriza is also a great place to find a gift for someone back home** (like locally produced olive oil or raw honey), **or even for someone in town** (like Burt's Bees products).



What I bought

What caught my eye the most was her wide selection of raw honeys. She has two large containers of honey from local producers that you can purchase by the kilo: one is made with lavender (*lavanda*), and the other with heather (*brezo*). Lucía let us taste both of them, which were so pure and delicious. **I bought a kilo of the heather honey (€10.50) because it was darker and richer, which is the kind I prefer, and I also got to pour it myself.**



The next thing I bought was **organic peanut butter** by a brand called **Monki**. Although it wasn't cheap (€7.20) and there was another less expensive option, Lucía assured me this one's quality was well worth it. As I sit here with my Monki peanut butter on toast, all I can say is I second her opinion.

While browsing, Lucía gave us both a piece of **dark chocolate with chilli peppers** because, "it's something different." As we were leaving, she popped two bite-size **red apples** into our bag. "They're small," she said, "but totally fresh and pack in a lot of flavor." And they do, indeed.

So, people of Madrid, if you're looking for a place to get your supply of organic, fresh and local products in the heart of the city, you've found it. These products may be more expensive than what you'll find at Mercadona, but they're oh so worth it!

Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Hours:** Open Tues-Sunday from 12pm-10pm
- **Phone:** +34 912 50 29 65
- **Address:** Calle Caños del Peral, 5

You may also like:

- [Best Gifts from Madrid](#)
- [Desperate Literature, for book lovers in Brooklyn, Santorini and now Madrid!](#)
- [Where to take your Mom in Madrid](#)

Courage on the corner: a window into the life of a Senegalese migrant and Baye Fall culture

Barrio Lavapiés can be personified by its many smells: the Indian curries and scents escaping from the ethnic restaurants and the grit of the infrequently cleaned streets. Least subtle of all is the lingering scent of weed and hash smoked by entrepreneurial gentlemen on the corner, who actively solicit the business of passersby. People of all ages congregate and *botellón* when the weather allows it. There is a strong sense of community here among the international and local residents.

In recent years the neighborhood of Lavapiés has become trendy and has been slowly undergoing the inevitable gentrification process.



I was moved by a Vice documentary titled ["Storming Spain's Razor-Wire Fence"](#) that depicts the odyssey undertaken by many African migrants in their attempts to enter mainland Spain via the border shared between Morocco & Ceuta y Melilla. The documentary provided a brutal window into their journeys but didn't go into any detail as to how those who had succeeded would go on to assimilate. My curiosity was piqued as to potential stories that could be shared by my neighbors in Lavapiés if they were granted an adequate platform to do so.



My close friend Kam “El Profesoul” accompanied me as my barrio ambassador; together we scoured the block, my notebook in hand as we searched for subjects to interview. As an active musician and long-term resident of the neighborhood, Kam has befriended many members of the African community. One such friend of Kam’s was responsive to my interview request and invited us to join him and his crew on the smoky stairs where they were strategically perched. **Moha**, a bearded African with dignified posture, kept his eyes hidden behind yellow plastic sunglasses. In the background was [Zikr music](#) from Senegal playing softly. **Moha and his companions identify themselves as [Baye Falls](#), a sub-group of the Mouride Brotherhood that is prominent in Senegal.** The ensuing conversation took place in Spanish with my notes taken in English.

My interview with Moha



Where are you from? Do you feel at home here?

I am from Senegal and I am grateful to be a documented resident of Spain for five years. My family moved here before I did and I was fortunately granted permission to join them. Many of my friends were separated from their families during their journeys or after arriving here because without legal papers they cannot leave Spain. Every resource of value was taken from our Africa and we come here to have a better life. We've made this barrio our home. We bring our music, our food our culture and our love.

What do you want members of my community

to know about yours?

Baye Fall culture is about respect, love and valor. We don't steal. We love our neighbors. If we see one of our own misbehave, we confront them and put them on the right path. (During our conversation one of Moha's peers catcalled a passerby and was swiftly berated by the group, exemplifying these principles.) We believe in nonviolence and love. We're open to outsiders. See him? My white friend below, we're teaching him *Baye Fall*. We don't fight, when we do it's not with the world but within ourselves. "Su lucha es suya misma"

What is a typical day like on the corner? What qualities have helped you survive here?

"Si no trapicheos, no comes" – If we don't hustle, we can't eat.

Many are obligated to stay in the game, whether or not it's what we want. We meet a lot of people this way. On a typical day we can work the corners and do our parts in peace and there is no problem. Sometimes we are confronted by the police. I have seen many friends detained and disappeared for not having their legal documents. Without my documents I would not have the freedom and peace that I am blessed with now. To avoid police, it helps to change our clothes several times throughout the day. Without papers, one must find alternatives to contracted work. Many of us have mastered a trade or art form. **We're painters, drummers, singers, sculptors, woodworkers.** We are many things. We gather on Sundays to teach our skills to each other and anyone else who seeks it.



The police interrogating my African neighbors in a previous Lavapies apartment

What can be done to improve the assimilation process in the future?

We must be reminded that we are all equal. That we can forget our differences. **Opportunities that we create ourselves cannot be taken away from us.** We must not fall weak and be foolish. We must be able to ask for help when we need it and then give it back.

What is your happiest memory in the barrio?

There is a yearly grand party of *Baye Falls*. The exact date depends on the lunar cycle; this past year it was in November.

People come from all over to celebrate and dance in the streets. It is beautiful.

How do you feel that Lavapiés is now becoming a “trendy” neighborhood? Are you concerned that it will become gentrified and lose its charm and essence?

The Spanish youth that live in the barrio are not affecting it in a negative way. The students and artists are innovative and have many ideas that could work. They have clear hearts and have *Baye Fall* in them even if they don't know it. **Lavapiés is the heart of Madrid, let's not forget that.**



Please share any comments you may have, and stay tuned – Dan will be providing us with more special

articles like this one over the coming months.

You may also like:

- Baobab, an authentic Senegalese restaurant in Lavapiés

Egeo, delicious Greek cuisine in Lavapiés

New bars and restaurants seem to open up constantly in the diverse neighborhood of Lavapiés. Among these additions is [Egeo](#), a Greek *souvlakeria* situated on the corner of C/ Ave Maria and C/ San Carlos. Here you'll find several Greek-style street food dishes, including pita sandwich options (€3-4), as well as salads and skewers (€5-7).



Egeo has quickly become my go-to place for take-away in the barrio, due to the quality of their ingredients. Zanas, the proprietor of the restaurant, is from Greece and is pleased that his establishment has been so well received by residents of the neighborhood.



The Greek salad is served with a very generous portion of feta cheese and warm slices of pita bread.



The souvlaki and skewers are hearty and filling. The one pictured here is the “hamburger” gyro – it has both veal and lamb meat, plus a fried egg! There are more traditional gyros on the menu as well, such as pork with tomato, onion and tzatziki. Also worth noting is their vegetarian option, a delicious pumpkin souvlaki.



Sometimes they introduce new menu items, like grilled Haloumi cheese (made from a mix of goat's and sheep's milk).



Most of the main dishes come with homemade fries and tzatziki. Otherwise you can order them as sides, as we did. Tip: order the potatoes with feta cheese on top. Amazing.



And what better way to end your Greek meal than with baklava? Plus you have the option of adding vanilla ice cream to it. Can't say no to that...



**This article was updated in February, 2019*

Info

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#)
 - **Address:** C/ San Carlos nº 17 (on the corner of C/Ave María)
 - **Metro:** Lavapiés
 - **Phone:** 918 26 46 44 –
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Perrachica, Prioritize A Pow Wow Here Now

Chamberi isn't an area that's necessarily on everyone's radar. Once you battle through the sea of yummy mummies pushing bugaboos you might not have the 'ganas' to locate somewhere for your weekend brunch. But all that's changed with the arrival of the shiny, new (quite frankly beautiful) Perrachica.

Meaning 5 pesetas, Perrachica is pretty hard to miss. Stumbled upon when getting my weekly mani, it's a glamorous (fairly cavernous) bar/cafe/restaurant that doesn't quite look as though it belongs on the humble looking Calle Eloy Gonzalo but I for one am chuffed to bits that there's somewhere so swish within walking distance of my flat.



Photo from [Facebook](#)

Heralding from the super successful Larrumba group, (which also boasts Juanita Cruz, Frida and the like) Perrachica feels like you walked into the rather glam home of a friend who makes you feel like you live in a hovel.

However, aside from the envy inducing decor the food is equally great and the prices won't leave your eyes watering – in fact, they may leave you bemused. With a recent choice of French toast costing a grand total of (drumroll please...) €3.50.



Photo from [Facebook](#)

The biggest challenge though isn't making your menu selection – it's getting in. Each time I've walked past it's been full to the rafters with madrileños clearly making the pilgrimage from barrios afar. Waiting lists allegedly exist having been told that the chance of a Saturday reso was slim to none until the end of February.

So I advise making like the Harrod's sale and just camping out – or failing that just take your chances early morning and take advantage of the relative calm. Come 7ish a DJ (quite literally) pops out of the wall and dancing shoes may be required.

From dawn to dusk, Perrachica is set to be an undisputed crowd pleaser *and the perfect place to take out of towners who you're keen to impress (whilst spending less). Sorry, couldn't resist a rhyme.

Info

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