

La Pecera, Affordable Fine Dining at Círculo de Bellas Artes

Fancy a decadent meal in a regal setting that doesn't burn a hole in your wallet? We found it! El Círculo de Bellas Artes is one of Madrid's most emblematic buildings and its street-level restaurant, [La Pecera](#), serves a top-quality *menú del día* every day of the week for just €15 (€17 on the terrace). It includes a starter, main course, drink and coffee or dessert, with a variety of dishes and vegetarian options to choose from. And to top it all off, you'll be enjoying your delicious meal in a stunning dining room with beautifully painted ceilings, elegant chandeliers and excellent service.







James and I went on a Monday for the [menú del día](#) and we're still amazed that you can get such a fine dining experience for only €15 a person. I kept thinking I wished I'd [brought my parents](#) here each time they'd come to visit. Like myself, I'm sure a lot of people walk by [La Pecera](#) with its outdoor terrace and fans in the summertime, and assume it is too exclusive to go in. Wrong! Prices are similar to what you'll find at almost all nice restaurants in Madrid. But you just can't beat this magnificent setting...

Now on to the food. For starters, I had the **arroz caldoso (rice in broth) with clams and shrimp**, and James had the **pasta with sautéed vegetables and cuttlefish**. Other starters that caught my eye were the homemade salmorejo, ham croquettes, lentils and duck magret salad... good thing I just went with the waiter's recommendation or else it would've taken me ages to order.





The **arroz caldoso** is prepared in an individual pot and with a deliciously flavored seafood sauce. The portion was generous, so I was happy my main course was also fish. James' cuttlefish pasta had a surprising Asian flavor, something he loved but didn't expect given the more traditional setting.

For the main course I had the smoked salmon with vegetables in a coconut sauce, another unexpected mix of flavors.



But I must admit that James' main course took the cake: the **Carrillada Ibérica** (Iberian beef cheeks) with apple quince jelly. The meat was so tender it melted in his mouth and the sauce was so flavorful that all James could say was, "Oh, wow."



All the desserts are homemade and included in the menú del día. James had the apple pie and I had a semi-cold yogurt with a reduced Pedro Ximénez sauce. So good.





As we were leaving, I asked the waiter if there's anything else we should try. He told us we had to come back for the **breakfast menu**, which features a range of options, from the standard toast and freshly-squeezed orange juice to a full-on British-style breakfast and [American-style brunch](#).

At night, the restaurant holds live jazz concerts and its **bar offers an impressive selection of over 400 bottles of liquor**; all to please local and foreign palates at a reasonable price, within a gorgeous space that'll make any day feel like a special occasion.



So before or after your next visit to a [museum along Paseo del Prado](#), or shopping in the center or whatever brings you and yours to Madrid, you're in for a treat!





Lastly, I can't end this article without reminding you that El Círculo de Bellas Artes has one of the [city's best rooftop bars](#), called [Tartan Roof](#). Make sure to pop up to take in the view, visit its restaurant (just book ahead of time) or enjoy a cocktail.

Info

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle Alcalá 42
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- **Phone:** 677458448 / 913 605 400

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