MUTA Smoking Club…Barbecue a lo Ponzano

Calle Ponzano has been getting a lot of love not only on Naked Madrid, but in other Spanish press as well. I have the fortune of being a Chamberí resident, with Ponzano literally around the corner from my apartment, so a quick *tomar algo* is always another excuse to go *ponzaning*. I have been to **Bar Lambuzo**, La Contraseña, and of course, my all-time favorite **Sala de Despiece**, (other restaurants on calle Ponzano featured in Naked include **Taberna Alipio Ramos**, **Casa Picsa** and **Toque de Sal**) but I had always passed by MUTA Smoking Club without ever trying to get in. Then there was Blanca Suárez's blog post for Vogue that mentioned **MUTA**; the headline said *si queréis flipar*. I casually added it to my list of neighborhood joints to try and was waiting for an excuse to go. It was much to my surprise that on a Saturday night at 9 PM I was able to get in before going to a party in Embajadores.

MUTA, the brainchild of Javier Bonet (who owns Sala de Despiece and the Academia del Despiece), changes its concept every few months. That's where the name comes from. There was one point where it served food from Baleares, but now, as a smoking club, everything is barbecue, aka smoked meat. Walking in takes you away from Madrid and instead transports you to a barbecue joint somewhere in America, at the very least like those barbecue places they always show on *Man vs. Food*, the fire episode of Michael Pollan's *Cooked* on Netflix, or the season of American *Top Chef* when they were in Texas.


TRANTES
ASADO CON HUMO & LOVE
+ SIDES
160



The menu is varied, with appetizers, a variety of meats you can order to share, and more. We first decided to share a take on croquetas with cornbread and potato that had tzatziki sauce on top. The greens that came on top were also top-notch. They were definitely worth the extra amount of exercise I needed to do the next day to make up for it.



Next up was the meat and the green salad. The green salad was fantastic; the dressing was light enough to make sure the

flavor reached all of the greens, but the dressing doesn’t overpower the palate-cleansing attributes you look for in a salad. To go with the salad, we couldn’t go to a barbecue place without consuming some meat.



Like the carnivore’s paradise that is its sister restaurant, MUTA Smoking Club is the perfect place for carnivores (like me). There are different types of meats you can choose from in trays to share: there’s beef tongue, brisket, salmon, or even hamburgers. There is also a mixed tray that you can get to share with different kinds of meat to try (this is ideal for larger groups looking for a true *picoteo*). Since we weren’t that hungry, we stuck with one meat, and I decided to go with pulled pork. I am not the biggest pork fan if it’s not in the form of *jamón* or *fuet* because cooked pork tends to be very dry (too dry for my taste), but when I took that first bite of pulled pork into my mouth, I was sold.



It comes with classic potato rolls reminiscent of summertime family cookouts and mustard, so you can either make your own sandwich or just dip the meat into the mustard and eat it. I decided to go with some by itself, some as a sandwich, and then have the rest along with the salad.

While we didn’t take the next step and get dessert, the tray they passed around looked absolutely to die for. Fortunately, when you live around the corner from there, there’s always a reason to go back (and also to try the mixed meat tray because that looked absolutely incredible) and have some more barbecue

a lo Ponzano.

Info

Where: Calle de Ponzano, 10
Phone: +34 912 50 98 97
Website & Facebook
Metro: Alonso Cano (Line 7) or Iglesia (Line 1)

More gems on Calle Ponzano:

- Bar Lambuzo, a family-run Andalucían tavern
- Casa Picsa, great Argentine pizza on Calle Ponzano
- Toque de Sal restaurant, so chic and so good
- Taberna Alipio Ramos, old school bar on Calle Ponzano