

Mazál Bagels – authentic New York bagels in Madrid, finally

Whenever I would visit my home to New York my primary mission would be to devour as many real bagels as possible with a strong sense of urgency knowing that I would not be able to find them in my regular day-to-day life in Madrid. That has been the case until now.

I learned of [Mazál Bagels](#) via word of mouth, this new establishment opened in Mid-January. I jumped at the opportunity to interview its founder, Tamara Cohen from Philadelphia, to showcase her inspiring pivot from English Teaching to baking and entrepreneurship.



Tamara originally arrived in Madrid as many of us do, to teach English via the *Auxiliar de Conversacion* program back in 2015.

Upon realizing that Madrid was lacking in the area of authentic pumpkin pies at Thanksgiving, Tamara filled this niche by selling homemade pumpkin pies and other baked goods to the international community, taking orders at first via social media and later a website devoted to her craft called Bruja's Bakery.



After the Thanksgiving influx of demand came to an end, Tamara contemplated other products that she could bake that would appeal to her audience year-round. With her creative spark ignited, she became a self-taught bagel baker, selling bagels made at home three at a time in the toaster of her tiny Madrid apartment. Tamara thrived in the digital space, releasing bagel-themed content to social media to garner visibility. Demand for her bagels skyrocketed and her small-scale operation quickly became a full-time job. This permitted Tamara to step away from the teaching sector to focus on her passion for gastronomy.



As an American Jew of Sephardic origins, Tamara was eligible for and proceeded to obtain Spanish nationality via the Law of Return after a complex three-year legal process. Now a citizen of her adopted country, Tamara set forth to expand her baking operations by opening Mazál Bagels in Madrid's Chamberí neighborhood. Her storefront is equipped with a proper commercial kitchen, enabling the production of bagels in larger batches to satiate the masses with comfort food.



The origin of the name Mazál is that Tamara wanted her business to have a name that was easy to pronounce in both languages while holding cultural significance. “Mazel” is the Hebrew word for “luck” and mazál (spelled with the accent) is the Sephardic pronunciation of the word.

Tamara wants to make it very clear that true bagels have a long fermentation period and are then boiled and baked. “Bread with a hole in it is not a bagel.” As an ambassador of Jewish gastronomy, Tamara’s bagels are crafted with love, and the sandwiches she prepares are built with precision, with their presentation in mind.



I sampled an everything bagel, served with lox, capers, onions, and plain cream cheese. This bagel's texture and flavor lived up to my expectations, outshining any competitors whose works that I've sampled here in Madrid or during my time in Paris.



Mazál offers the following cream cheeses: Herbal with dill and parsley, salmon, chive, and honey cinnamon nut. Her bagel selection includes sesame, poppy seed, plain, everything, and cinnamon raisin with daily special bagels such as jalapeño cheddar, onion, garlic, pumpkin, gingerbread, and blueberry.

There's a learning curve as Spanish people have heard of this product, but are yet to try it themselves and don't know how to properly eat it. Recently I had a customer come in and for a pan con tomate on a bagel. I wasn't offering this but it sounded like a good idea. I would like to find creative ways to blend the bagel with Spanish gastronomy.

As I sat in the freshly opened shop, many joyous anglophones entered, thrilled to savor Tamara's culinary gems and Spanish people passing by would peer in to see what all of the commotions were about. Tamara would charismatically explain to curious locals what this niche foreign product is, in a flawless Spanish accent, which can be attributed to her

Madrileño partner who played an instrumental role in navigating the red-tape of opening a business.

What became clear was that at Mazál Bagels, Americans, local Spaniards, and the international community can gather in an environment where they can feel at home.



Mazál Bagels

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#), IG: [@mazalbagels](#)
 - **Address:** Calle Alonso Cano, 30
 - **Metro:** Alonso Cano / Ríos Rosas
-

Mad Improv – shows and courses of the unexpected

If you've ever ventured to Lavapiés on a Thursday night you may well have felt the vibrant pulse of English language entertainment beating to its own rhythm at [La Escalera de Jacob](#). The long-established indy theatre hosts [MAD Improv](#) – Madrid's go-to group for all things improv in English. The group offers up their [weekly show](#) (now in its third season) to audiences of native and non-native English speakers alike, as reflected in the multiple reviews on their [Trip Advisor page](#). They're now the 44th highest-rated show in all of Madrid, no less.



Their show formats include MAD About You, an improvised chat show complete with improvised interviews with audience members and an improvised house band, and MAD Monologues where fresh stand up material from comics on the local stand up scene inspires the mad improv that follows. But coming to see a MAD Improv show on a Thursday night is, for some, just the beginning of a deeper and ever-surprising journey into doing improvisation themselves.

Improv training



MAD
IMPROV



IMPROV IS THE 'LIFE HACK'
THAT WE ALL NEED.
NOW MORE THAN EVER.

- BEN SERIO, MAD IMPROVISER



That's because MAD Improv, which began life in 2014, run [courses and workshops](#). This month their flagship Green Course for beginners and near-beginners starts for the 7th time, as well as their Blue Course, specially designed for those with existing improv training, such as their own Green Course.



[Steve Loader](#), one of the founding members of MAD Improv, is the teacher of their beginners course. He describes the experience as:

Witnessing a brilliant whirlwind of personal discoveries and magic Eureka moments as participants grasp the basics of improv and run with them. The feedback we get from our alumni is proof that not only anyone can learn improv but also that improv turns out to be much more than just a type of performance, but something that feeds into everyday life.

One student from their last Green Course, Carlos, put it like this:

It's such a good environment, Steve is so enthusiastic and patient that we are all relaxed and lose our shyness and inhibitions. It's more than educational, it's therapeutic. I've received a training in spontaneity and I love it!

Flexing creative muscles



As committing to regular participation on a course isn't for everyone, every Sunday at [Espacio en Blanco](#) the MAD Improvisers offer their weekly [MAD Improv Gym](#), an open drop-in session for anyone who wants to try their hand at improv. The Gym also attracts a group of regulars and is always followed by post-improv drinks. According to Steve:

Between 10 and 20 people come every week to our Gym. It's always formed the foundation of our community. We love offering the sessions.



Steve has been a Madrid resident for 6 years and also runs [courses in clown](#), physical theatre and [scripted theatre](#). In fact, the MAD Improv community acts not only as a meeting point for anyone interested in improv in English, but also as a skills hub for the wider English-speaking arts community.

So, maybe 2020 is the year to find your own creative beat with some mad improv of your own.

MAD Improv

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@mad_improv](#)
 - [Show listings](#)
 - [TripAdvisor](#)
-

Art lover's guide to Madrid: 7 resources to keep you up to date

Happy 2020! Perhaps you're one of the many people who have made various resolutions to start the year afresh and become a better version of yourself. Is one of your resolutions to increase your cultural knowledge and take full advantage of the art offered by this great city? Even if you're not the resolution type and you're just looking for some guidance in terms of where to find out more about art in Madrid, never fear! We're here to guide you to the relevant information.

1. [EsMadrid](#)



Now let's say you don't speak Spanish. In that case, your best choice to find information about art in English in Madrid is from the Art and Culture section of Madrid's official tourism website, [EsMadrid](#). In addition to English and Spanish, this site is available in 7 other languages, including Japanese and Russian. Now one of its great pluses is that it breaks down the various tourist passes available like the Paseo del Arte Pass which grants the holder one visit to the permanent collection of each of the city's main museums, the Prado, The Reina Sofia and the Thyssen-Bornemisza. This pass is great for visitors who are just in the city for a short while and who only want to dive into the big ticket sites but there are other passes which give you access to more museums for periods such as ten to fifteen days for the consummate art lover.

EsMadrid's great strength is the breadth of its scope – it covers cultural centres to exhibition halls to house museums and contains the most pertinent information at a glance, including the location, price, opening hours and best transport options. And if you want a great overview of Madrid's art offerings, be sure to take a gander at the Art in Madrid Guide PDF which is an unbeatable introduction to both the leading museums and their holdings as well as some of the lesser known but just as formative art centres like the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, just off of Sol.

2. [Time Out Madrid](#)



Now if you're looking for information that is a bit more curated, don't miss [Time Out Madrid](#). While the English version of their website is not quite as comprehensive as the Spanish one, there are still a number of articles, which are constantly updated, highlighting the most popular, current exhibitions, free art, street art and graffiti as well as the city's most celebrated paintings and museums.

Time Out is an incredibly well-known and versatile publication with branches all over the world and it has even recently launched a print magazine here in Madrid which releases monthly. You can often find the print magazine being given out for free at major metro stations just after release, or later, in trendy cafes, independent bookshops and some libraries. I would highly recommend grabbing a copy if you can because it goes into even more detail of certain expositions and features some recommendations and interviews which are exclusive to the magazine.

3. [Madrid Diferente](#)



Continuing on to Spanish-language recommendations, another favourite is [Madrid Diferente](#). Similar to Time Out Madrid, Madrid Diferente publishes a [weekly agenda](#) of things to do over the entire upcoming week, not just the weekend. Their picks are often eclectic and a little bit off the beaten path. I almost always discover some activity or event that I've never heard of before and that is only happening for just this weekend and that's why I try to check every Thursday because you don't want to miss out!

Madrid has so much to offer it can be overwhelming but here you have a streamlined list of options. Now, if you check their "Es Capital" section, you will be exposed to a host of activities and spaces that are intimate and rewarding like Madrid's smallest photo gallery or a self-guided tour of Madrid's most unusual, outdoor sculptures. And if you want to kill two birds with one stone, Madrid Diferente's writers have recently begun including suggestions for recommended restaurants or cafes near to the gallery or museum they're currently highlighting. A win win, in my book!

4. [Madrid Free](#)



Perhaps your number one New Year's resolution is to sort out your finances and you're afraid that this is all sounding very expensive. Well, did you know that there's a website dedicated

solely to free cultural activities in Madrid? It's called [Madrid Free](#) and it has a [dedicated section for Expositions](#) which is updated frequently. It also covers exhibitions from contemporary art galleries as well as the ones from museums and cultural centres like CentroCentro Cibeles and the Matadero. If you want even more up to the minute information on free activities, be sure to also follow them on Facebook if you have it because they update it often.

5. [Arte Informado](#)



So if you want the absolute, most comprehensive list of temporary art offerings in the city, look no further than [Arte Informado](#). This is basically a holy grail for art lovers as this website aims to serve almost every country in the Iberian-American space and includes a magazine, art courses and art prizes. However, even if you just want to know about art expositions, they compile those too with an incredible search engine that allows you to narrow down your choices by date, city or country and even specify the type of art.

At this very moment, if you search for exhibitions in Madrid, narrowing it down no further, it shows 19,787 exhibitions available. You can't deny – that's a lot of art. If that sounds like a bit much, Arte Informado also has a weekly newsletter which you can sign up for that delivers some of the most prominent exhibits right into your mailbox.

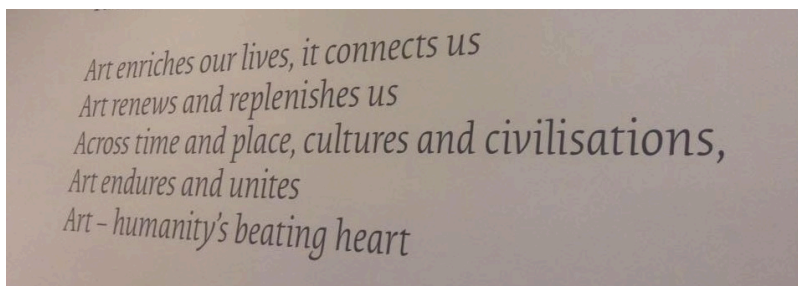
6. [Museo del Prado's Instagram](#)

account



If you want your Instagram experience to be more positive and enlightening, follow the [Museo del Prado's official account](#): @museoprado. Every weekday morning, they do an Instagram Live video highlighting either an art work or a room of the museum, which is then left up for the rest of the day so you can check it out when you can. Additionally, in their posts, they often share videos showing the mounting of exhibits as well as other day-to-day aspects of working and running a major museum. It's a fantastic, accessible way to flesh out your art history knowledge.

7. Madrid Art and Culture Facebook group



Finally if you'd like to get more of my insight into Madrid's cultural goings-on, feel free to join my Facebook group, [Madrid Art and Culture](#), which is meant to showcase the many different sides of this city, although it is quite heavy on art and film. I created it about a year and a half ago and

the group now has just over 1400 members with frequent posts about film festivals, art exhibits, plays and much more. Furthermore, as it's a Facebook group, all members are able to post about activities and events that interest them or that they are taking part in.

I hope I've given you the tools to hit the ground running this year when it comes to art. To a culturally enriching 2020!

By Kristen Wiltshire (IG: @makidocious)

When she's not at a museum or the movies, Kristen can usually be found trying to make headway in her giant pile of books or her miles long Netflix queue. She also runs [Madrid Art and Culture](#), a Facebook group dedicated to Madrid's myriad cultural offerings.

Your go-to guide for hipster coffee to go in Madrid

Coffee, oh delicious coffee. You love it, I love it, we both probably drink too much of it. Almost 12 years deep into my love affair with Madrid, coffee has saved the relationship more than once by taking the edge off a particularly bad hangover. You haven't really experienced Madrid until you've gulped down a scalding hot *café con leche* served in a *caña* glass in a *bar de toda la vida*. Even Ana Botella pointed out that Madrid is a great place for "a relaxing cup of *café con leche*" in that [horrible speech of hers](#).

Recently however, I've been taking advantage of the hipster

coffee places that have sprung up all over the city centre and ordering coffee to go. Why not order in and enjoy a coffee whilst playing a round of hipster-coffee-point-grab? (Marks for each of the following: unfinished walls, stadium seating, Edison lightbulbs, weird plants, funny hair cuts, anything vegan, fixie in the corner, tables that look like a bunch of random boards nailed together).

Well, maybe you're out early walking your dog. Or perhaps you are, once again, walking directly from the bar to work and need a little pick-me-up. Or, maybe you're a sleep-deprived parent of a newborn who refuses to sleep unless strapped to you whilst you pound the city streets to the soothing sounds of traffic, jackhammers and circular saws. For example.

Whatever your reasons, the following spots are all set up to serve you as much tasty takeaway coffee as you desire (in a paper cup hand-stamped with their logo, naturally). If you're reading this, chances are you already know about coffee, so I'm not going to waste your time trying to describe subtle flavour variations – these places all made the list because they serve coffee which is hot, caffeinated and delicious. I ordered a flat white at each to compare prices.

1. [Acid Cafe](#)



Best for: Minimalists. With their sleek interior and pared-down menu, these guys are no-nonsense. Also great for indecisive types like myself.

[Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Verónica 9

Flat white: €3

2. [Boconó](#)



Best for: People fed up with digital nomads – this place has a no laptops policy.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Embajadores 3

Metro: La Latina/Tirso de Molina

Flat white: €2.50

3. Coffee and Kicks



Best for: Pretending you're in Brooklyn.

[Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Navas de Tolosa 6

Metro: Callao

Flat white: €2.20

4. [Faraday](#)



Best for: Hangover purposes. It doesn't open until midday – perfect for when you've slept in.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle San Lucas 9

Metro: Chueca

Flat white: €3

5. [Federal Café](#)



Best for: The volumetrically-minded. Not the cheapest on the list but definitely the most bang for your buck.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Plaza Comendadoras 9 and Plaza Conde de Barajas 3

Metros: Noviciado/San Bernardo and Sol/Ópera

Flat white: €2.20

6. [HanSo Café](#)



Best for: Funny hair cuts. Plus there's almost always a queue as the coffee is goood.

[Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Pez 20

Metro: Noviciado

Flat white: €2.70

7. Hola Coffee



Best for: A scenic stroll afterwards. This café is on one of the coolest streets in Lavapiés.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Doctor Forquet 33

Flat white: €2.50

8. Misión Café



Best for: People who like futuristic coffee machines set into the counters. So future!

[Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Reyes 5

Metros: Plaza de España/Noviciado

Flat white: €2.50

9. Mistura Ice Cream



Best for: If you're broke. Great ice-cream place that also does great, affordable coffee. Also, they're in muchos locations.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Addresses: Calle Ciudad Rodrigo 6, Plaza Ángel 2, Calle Toledo 71, Calle Augusto Figueroa 5, Calle Goya 50

Flat white: €2.10

10. [Ruda Café](#)



Best for: Cuteness. Small but perfectly formed.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Ruda 11

Metro: La Latina

Flat white: €2.30

11. [Toma Café](#)



Best for: The most avant-garde ordering and paying set-up (in the Malasaña branch). Coffee is on point though.

[Website](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Address: Calle Palma 49 and Calle Santa Feliciano 5

Metros: Tribunal/Noviciado and Iglesia

Flat white: €2.50

**All images are from each establishment's respective social media accounts. Feature image belongs to Toma Café.*

You'll also like:

- [Top 5 specialty coffee shops in Madrid](#)
 - [5 Work-friendly cafes with great WiFi in Madrid](#)
 - [Best breakfast and brunch spots in Madrid](#)
 - [Unleash your creativity at Madrid's best coworking spaces](#)
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La Espumosa – a little bit of what you fancy (does you good)

Does anyone else find the run-up to Christmas just one big guilt-laden box of chocs? Surely it can't just be me? As soon as December 1st swings around, I struggle not to be reaching for the party favours and my booze intake sky rockets – well it 'tis the season. So in an attempt to not become 50% mulled wine, 50% *turrón*, I headed to La Espumosa, the new Chamberí hotspot which combines healthy grub and bubbles, of the champagne variety.



Myself and my vegetarian date (who is dragging a self-confused carnivore kicking and screaming into healthier habits) headed

out last Tuesday and found ourselves salivating over La Espumosa's menu. Juliette, the owner who coincidentally quit her day job to follow her dream of opening La Espumosa, has curated a menu that sits perfectly within the era of clean eating. These days millennials (much like myself) enjoy a tippie but then again, we also love an avo – everything in moderation is my mantra.

So to this end, the menu sounded delicious, but not dangerously calorific. We split the following offerings; sautéed veggies which provided an instant shot of virtuousness, a burrata with pesto, halloumi fingers (I could've eaten a bucketload of these) and La Espumosa's take on 'patas bravas' that was baked sweet potatoes with a vegan mayonnaise, which were less of the naughty, and a lot more of the nice.



In addition to the nutritious nosh, the cocktails were to die for (I wasn't polishing my halo the entire time, we definitely embraced the notion of 'a little bit of what you fancy does you good'). The waiter whipped us up a gin-based cocktail using my all-time favourite gin, G'vine and a yuzu-based bitter hailing from Japan which was dangerously more-ish. However, as it was a Tuesday evening and not a thirsty Thursday, we exercised a bit of self restraint. Come the

weekend though, La Espumosa is the perfect place to enjoy a hard-earned glass of champers to toast farewell to the working week.





One of the other somewhat unique aspects of La Espumosa in a city with more restaurants than you can shake a stick at, is

that the owner Juliette really wants the restaurant to become a social hub. There are already live music nights, fashion brunches and a whole host of events in the pipeline, even one of my own @littlemissmadrid mixers is pencilled in – so watch this space. And when Madrid edges its way out of its recent cold snap and people can feel their toes once again, I predict that the terraza will become quite the hotspot for Sunday morning brunches and post work cañas too.



La Espumosa looks set to to become my local, and not just for fizzy Fridays. It's hard to walk on by when a venue boasts a

menu that's going to leave you feeling great, rather than guilty. The decor, the food and indeed the concept got my corks popping *couldn't resist a champagne pun. And to this end, we all know there's only one thing better than a glass of champagne, a bottle.



2020 update: monthly brunches!

Given the healthy nature of La Espumosa, the Chamberí locale is now offering what is currently planned to be a HIIT workout followed by a healthy brunch. As La Espumosa does a great line in champagne, the combination of burpees and bubbles is sure to be an appealing one! One Sunday per month, you can workout for 30 minutes at the venue with a fully qualified UK personal trainer and then enjoy a delicious (and nutritious brunch) – ensuring that there's zero guilt about the calories. The brunch includes a healthy detox juice including green apple, cucumber, ginger and pineapple. A coffee of your choice meaning you get an endorphin and a caffeine hit. Followed by either scrambled eggs or avocado on toast. So don your leggings, grab a friend and put your Sunday to good use. Stay tuned to Naked Madrid for the date of the next one and kickstart your 2020 fitness goals.





La Espumosa

- [Facebook](#) & IG: [@laespumosa.es](#)
- **Address:** Calle Santa Engracia 60
- **Metro:** Iglesia

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 Cibeles*. 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 Sorrisa 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](#).

The best places for breakfast and brunch in Madrid

Madrid is better known for never-ending, three-course lunches and late-night tapas than breakfast. The Spanish are famous for staying up late. So, maybe it's not surprising that the first meal of the day doesn't seem to get as much attention.

But the humble Spanish breakfast has a lot going for it. Firstly, it's common to have two breakfasts, one first thing in the morning and one between 10-11am to tide you over until lunch. What breakfast lover would say no to a second opportunity to enjoy your favourite meal of the day? During the working week, the second breakfast is also a great chance to have a quick break from work and chat with your colleagues. Secondly, eating cake for breakfast is perfectly normal. Yes, cake for breakfast. I'm already won over. Finally, pretty much every bar and cafe in Madrid serves my all-time-favourite breakfast: toasted bread, drizzled with oil and topped with crushed, fresh tomato (and some *jamón ibérico* for an extra

treat).

Brunch has become more and more popular in recent years and with all of the international food in Madrid, your options aren't limited to a traditional Spanish breakfast. Here's a list of my favourite places for breakfast in the capital.

1. Little Big Cafe



Tucked away in a side street off Calle Guzman El Bueno, [Little](#)

[Big Cafe](#) is one of the best spots in Madrid for breakfast, brunch and sweet treats. If you're looking for a light breakfast, they have toast topped with everything from the traditional tomato and oil to more adventurous ricotta, cinnamon, nuts and honey. If you order toast, it comes with free tea or coffee, making a good value breakfast.

From the brunch menu, you can choose one sweet and one savoury dish, which come with fruit or scones and your choice of drinks. The brunch is big for one person! So, unless you want to be stuffed for the rest of the day, I always prefer to share one between two. You can always order a slice of one of their delicious homemade cakes if you're still hungry.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@thelittlebigcafe](#)
- Address: c/ Fernández de los Ríos 61
- Metro: Moncloa, Quevedo or Islas Filipinas

2. The Toast Café



[The Toast Café](#) is a place for fellow bread lovers. As you would expect from the name, the toast here (whole grain rye or white sourdough) is pretty good. It's not far from Little Big Cafe and serves a similar breakfast and brunch menu. Like at Little Big Cafe, you can choose two dishes to make a substantial brunch. And you can add one of their brunch cocktails for an extra €4! This place gets much busier on weekends, so it's best to book a table for brunch.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@thetoastcafe](#)
- Address: Calle Fernando el Católico 50
- Metro: Moncloa, Quevedo, Arguelles

3. Cafetería HD



Cafetería HD has kept its 60s decor and retro style, even after being taken over by La Musa group a few years ago. A neighbourhood favourite, it gets packed on weekends so get down early! The menu is inspired by American diners, but you'll still find some Spanish favourites.

The best thing about the breakfast here is you customise everything just how you like it. Choose from eggs, toast or "something sweet" then select how you want the eggs cooked, the type of bread, and add toppings. For brunch, they have an American, Swedish or veggie version. Unlike in some places, it's a good (filling) portion for one. So, there's no need to share if you don't want to!

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@cafeteriahd](#)
- Address: Calle Calle Guzman el Bueno, 67
- Metro: Moncloa, Islas Filipinas

4. La Infinito



With quirky but comfortable decor and mismatched furniture, [La Infinito](#) is a lovely spot to relax with friends or read a book. There's even a lending shelf, where you can swap books you've read for new ones. They serve light breakfasts and brunches, including vegan options, accompanied by excellent coffee and a good selection of teas. Everyone has their own personal preference as to how they like the classic *pan con tomate*. Still, La Infinito does my personal favourite: smooth but flavourful tomato pulp with lots of oil on artisan bread. On weekends, they also host live music and comedy brunches.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@lainfinito](#)
- Address: C/ Tres Peces, 22
- Metro: Antón Martín or Lavapiés

5. La Colectiva Café



Whether you're vegan or not, you'll love the selection of cakes, pastries and light bites, all free from animal products, at [La Colectiva Café](#). They also serve some of the best coffee in Madrid and don't charge extra for plant-based

milk. But don't worry, you still have the option to order cow's milk if you prefer.

My favourite breakfast here is toast with cashew nut butter and sugar-free fig jam. They also have lots of gluten-free options for coeliacs. If you want to bring your laptop, they have a workspace on the lower floor, although it can get a bit cramped on weekends.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@lacolectivacafe](#)
- Address: Calle Francisco de Rojas 9
- Metro: Bilbao

6. Toma Café



If you're more of a coffee and go person than a leisurely bruncher, [Toma Café](#) has you covered. Probably one of the best-

known coffee places in Madrid, the beans are good quality, roasted in house, and the coffee is never burnt. Their cold brew is perfect for the unbearably hot Madrid summers. As well as coffee, there are lots of different teas, juices and even spicy hot chocolate.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@tomacafe](#)
- Address 1: Calle La Palma 49 (Metro: Noviciado, San Bernardo)
- Address 2: Santa Feliciana 5 (Metro: Iglesia, Quevedo)

7. Cafelito



[Cafelito](#) (little coffee in English) is a tiny cafe with a simple menu. Choose from their list of signature coffees, including unusual flavours like cardamom or lemon rind, and try one of their delicious homemade cakes. The staff are always friendly, and there's a trendy vibe without being

pretentious. Make sure you check out the weird collection of second-hand knick-knacks (including a typewriter) in the toilets!

- [Facebook](#) & IG: [@cafelitomadrid](#)
- Address: Calle Sombrerete 20
- Metro: Lavapiés

8. Restaurante Botillo

Like most Spanish bars, Botillo is open from the early morning all the way through to night time. When I worked in the area, it was always my favourite spot for a mid-morning *pincho de tortilla*. It's a very generous slice of runny *tortilla*, served with a hunk of bread to soak everything up.

- [Website](#)
- Address: Calle López de Hoyos, 10
- Metro: Gregorio Marañón

9. Federal



First things first, [Federal](#) definitely does not serve a traditional Spanish breakfast. The Australian-inspired cafe started in Barcelona and then opened up in Madrid a few years ago. With filled croissants, “morning” burgers, French toast, bruschetta and more... Federal has a hearty but (relatively) healthy breakfast menu. They serve fresh juices, smoothies and cocktails as well as the usual tea and coffee, including the iconic Australian flat white. Vegetarians and vegans will also find they have plenty of options.

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@thefederalcafe](#)
- Address 1: Plaza de las Comendadoras, 9 (Metro: Noviciado)
- Address 2: Plaza del Conde de Barajas, 3 (Metro: Tirso de Molina, Sol)

**All images are from each restaurant's respective social media*

accounts. Feature image belongs to The Toast Café.

By Ellen Fouweather (IG: [@efouwee](#))

Also read Ellen's article: [10 great vintage and second-hand shops in Madrid](#)

Have your cake with coffee or gin at La Prima Lejana

Thanks to waking up early for work during the week, I'm pretty much a guaranteed earlybird at the weekends. Luckily for me, this meant that last Saturday I had first dibs of the delectable treats on offer at La Prima Lejana. The cool little cafe that's just a stone's throw from C/ Huertas and offers up 'gram worthy decor and cakes worth setting an alarm for.

A venture that's the birthchild of three friends hailing from Galicia, La Prima Lejana combines two of my great loves – cake that's worth the calories and gin. The gin needs no further explanation. Forget strawberries and cream, bangers and mash, fish and chips, there's no pairing that I could love more. Especially when all of the gins on offer are Spanish, including one of my current fave, Nordes.



Now don't get me wrong, I didn't swerve my Saturday morning spin class to swig gin before midday, there's great coffee on offer as well as fresh lemonades in a variety of flavours – I opted for lemon and ginger which was zingy and fresh and was an attempt to offset the cake-shaped goodies.



Now, onto the decor which was basically my own version of utopia. A mix of pinks, gold and marble –essentially the mood board for my own recent flat renovation – had me hot footing it to Maison du Monde to snap up the same shelving that they have there. The attention to detail is second to none, partly due to one of the lovely business partners being an architect, and clearly one with excellent taste.



I often find Spanish cakes waaaaay too sickly sweet but the cakes here were some of (if not the best) that I've tasted in

the capital. I had carrot cake which was inhaled at breakneck speed and we also tried the courgette cake with lemon icing. Again, the plate was all but licked clean.



La Prima Lejana is as pleasing to the eye as it was to the tastebuds and I plan to work my way through their menu, I urge you to do the same.

La Prima Lejana

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@laprimalejanamad](#)
 - **Address:** Calle Lope de Vega, 7
 - **Metro:** Antón Martín
-

10 of the best craft beer bars in Madrid

One of the things I miss most as an expat in Madrid is quality craft beer. While I'm grateful for Spain's cheaper beer prices, there's only so much Mahou and Estrella I can take. Coming from a city like Austin, Texas, which is full of microbreweries and tasty local beers, the light Spanish pilsners just don't really do it for me.

Luckily, craft beer is on the up and up in Madrid, with more brewpubs and bars devoted to *cerveza artesanal* popping up around the city. Some feature as many as 40 beers on tap, while others combine craft beverages with pizza, tortilla or specialty cheeses.

Whether you're looking to discover more local brews, drink from a wider selection on tap, or pair good beer with good food, you can't go wrong with these craft beer bars in Madrid.

1. The Stuyck



This cozy bar with a rustic feel features a rotating beer list focusing on Spanish and European beers. The staff is friendly and passionate about what they do—just scope out their [craft beer blog](#) which has information from how to properly taste beer to the history of IPAs. Part bar, part restaurant, their international menu features food that pairs well with beer like burgers, wings and sandwiches.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@thestuyckco](#)
- Address: Corredera Alta de San Pablo, 33
- Metro: Tribunal

2. Mikkeller



I stumbled upon this place on a magical weeknight to find it relatively empty. The inviting, open interior lured me in, and the friendly bartender who let me sample a few of the 21 beers on tap made me stay.

I soon learned that it was one of Mikkeller's coveted outposts. The popular Danish beer brand recently graced Spain with another location of its brewpub after opening one in Barcelona. The prices are a little high by Madrid standards, but at this place it's quality over quantity.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@mikkellermadrid](#)
- Address: Calle de la Luna, 22
- Metro: Noviciado, Santo Domingo

3. Bee Beer Craft Beers and Cheeses



If you thought wine and cheese was the perfect pair, let [Bee Bar Craft Beers and Cheeses](#) prove you wrong. Like the name says, pair a nice craft beer with a meat and cheese board, which the staff will happily recommend for you.

Even though they have a smaller selection of beers on tap than other places on this list, more than half of them are Bee Beer's own unique brews, ranging from a Pineapple IPA, to a Wasabi Lager or an Orange Honey Ale. Or you can browse through their expansive selection of bottled international beers (just be sure to ask about prices first).

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@beebeermadrid](#)

- *Address: Calle de Augusto Figueroa, 30*
- *Metro: Chueca*

4. Fábrica Maravillas



This tried and true Malasaña favorite was one of the OG craft beer bars in Madrid before the trend took off. On one of the neighborhood's quieter streets, this place is small but packs a punch. Unlike some of the other food-heavy bars on this list, this microbrewery focuses on beer and beer only, offering a small menu of bar snacks like olives and nuts. Beer counts as a meal, right?

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@fabricamaravillas](#)
- *Address: Calle de Valverde, 29*
- *Metro: Chueca, Tribunal*

5. Taproom Madrid



[Taproom Madrid](#) has one of the largest beer selections in the city. With 40 beers on tap, it's great for experimental beer lovers as well as novices; both are bound to find a brew they like. What's more, you can pop by Tierra—arguably the best burrito place in Madrid—next door and bring food back with you.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@taproommadrid](#)
- Address: Calle de Guzmán el Bueno, 52
- Metro: Moncloa

6. El Callejón de La Virgen



A couple of years ago local craft beer La Virgen was hard to come by, but now—much to my delight—their logo is popping up at more and more bars around the city. While the La Virgen brewery in Las Rozas is worth the trip, you can now enjoy a full selection of its brews in the center of Madrid.

El Callejón de La Virgen, one of the brewery's official pubs in the trendy Conde Duque neighborhood, features favorites like their Trigo Limpio (Hefeweizen), Jamonera (Amber Ale) and classic Madrid Lager. Pair that with a juicy burger and you've got a solid weeknight plan.

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#): [@cervezalavirgen](#)
- *Address: Calle Acuerdo, N°3*
- *Metro: Noviciado*

7. Chinaski



This cozy and colorful beer bar in Lavapiés is the perfect spot for a lowkey night with friends.

With 18 rotating taps from around the world and “meet the brewer” events, it’s a beer nerd’s paradise. If someone in your group isn’t a fan of beer, they also have a good selection of spirits from absinthe to bourbon.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@chinaskilavapies](#)
- Address: Calle Salitre, 38
- Metro: Lavapiés

8. Pez Tortilla



Pez Tortilla has everything you could ever want in a bar: tortilla, croquetas and craft beer. It's simple enough, but what Pez does, it does well.

Try tortilla by the slice from truffle and brie to chicken curry. Mix and match croquetas ranging from classic ham to dessert croquetas like oreo—yes, you read that right. Order a flight to sample from their revolving list of craft beers, which often includes a decent selection of lesser-known Spanish beers.

You'll often find the uber-popular tapas bar at standing-room only, but it just opened its third location in Sol (the other two are in Malasaña and Lavapiés). And with a motto like "el buen rollo," it's impossible not to have a good time there.

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#): [@peztortilla](#)
- *Address 1: Calle del Pez, 36 (metro: Noviciado)*

- *Address 2: Calle de la Cava Baja, 42 (metro: La Latina)*
- *Address 3: Calle de Espoz y Mina, 32 (metro: Sol, Antón Martín, Tirso de Molina)*

9. Brew Wild Pizza Bar



What's not to like about beer and pizza? Brew Wild Pizza Bar has perfected both, with mouthwatering pizzas made by a Sicilian *pizzaiolo* and more than 100 beers to choose from between bottle and tap. Sample from a mix of house, local and

international brews and prepare to make your Instagram followers very jealous.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@brewwildpizzabar](#)
- Address: Calle de Echegaray, 23
- Metro: Sol, Antón Martín, Sevilla

10. Beerhouse



Beerhouse is the perfect combination of a traditional Spanish bar and an Irish pub: a laidback, no frills sports bar. Grab a pint from a large selection of beers and pair with traditional bar food like nachos, burgers and hotdogs. As one Google reviewer so aptly put it: “Humorous sports bar-meets-craft-connoisseur clash but the resulting vibe is fun and very unpretentious.” Sounds like my kind of place.

- [Facebook](#) & Instagram: [@beerhousemadrid](#)
- Address: Calle del Cardenal Cisneros, 16
- Metro: Bilbao

**All images are from each bar's respective social media accounts.*

By Alex Vickery (IG: [@alex_vickery](#), [LinkedIn](#) & [Website](#))

A lifestyle writer and content creator who has left pieces of her heart around the world, from Austin to Rio de Janeiro. She's always on the hunt for good Tex-Mex outside of Texas (but has yet to find it).

Did we miss any other of the best craft beer bars in Madrid? Let us know!

Somos Coworkers: Ditch your noisy local café for a proper coworking space

If you're a freelancer—or generally someone in constant search of the perfect workspace—you know the struggle of finding a coworking space that checks all the boxes: strong wifi, plenty of space, and an environment conducive to concentration (I'm looking at you, loud hipster cafes).

[Somos Coworkers](#) checks all those boxes and more (“more” mainly refers to very cute pets; more on that later). Located in the west part of the city near Ventas, the bright space is enormous, clean, and perhaps most importantly, draws a crowd of hardworking professionals.



The main coworking space



Perfect for grabbing a bite al fresco

I first got a taste of the space with my coworker Joss. We were warmly welcomed by cofounder Kimberly Neuterman, who showed us around, offered us some (unlimited) coffee or tea in the newly renovated kitchen, and got us all settled in with **high-speed wifi** (very important).

The space is split up into three main areas: the kitchen, which is fully equipped; the indoor coworking space; and the outdoor courtyard (pictured above).



Kitchen equipped with two microwaves, an oven, stove, fridge, coffeemaker...

Long-term, Kimberly plans to use this space and the connected—currently unused—space to host **community-building events for freelancers**. Whether you're a writer, photographer, consultant, graphic designer... there's a place for you in this space to work, learn, and share ideas.

Need a private meeting room? Somos Coworkers has you covered there too.



Don't be offput by the lack of decor—they're new in town!

And most importantly, members share this space with THESE ADORABLE FURRY FRIENDS.



So sleepy, so zen.



So....the opposite

And finally, the question you've all been thinking... The prices. The cost of the space is 110€/month for half days and 150€/month for full, unlimited access. And if you have a group of 4 or more people you'd like to work with, you can also get a special group rate. If you're looking for a regular workspace where you can count on being productive, this is the place for you.

Learn more about the workspace on their official [website](#).

Somos Coworkers Madrid

- [Website](#), [Facebook](#) & IG: [@somoscoworkers_](#)
- **Address:** Av. de Daroca, 38, local
- **Metro:** Ventas or El Carmen
- **Phone:** [654 91 05 90](#)