

Salivate at Sargo

The run-up to Christmas is undoubtedly (if you're anything like me) a social whirlwind. I'm not quite sure where the need came from to see literally *everyone that you know* before Santa arrives; it's almost as though we feel like the world might implode come December 25th.

In light of this, I often wind up feeling as though I'm over stretched having over committed. And therefore – rather than be filled with “Christmas cheer” – this quickly turns to “Christmas fear” as I realise I've spent too much time partying and not enough time purchasing (other people's gifts that is).



However, there are some dates in the old diary that are no hardship to keep. In this case, it was dinner at the recently opened [Sargo](#). Located in Barrio Salamanca – not my usual stomping ground, but in an area that I do aspire to spend more time in and around – Sargo felt like the sophisticated older

sister to many of the [restaurants that I tend to frequent.](#)



I met my friend at the bar for a sparkly start (some gin-based fizz) and began to peruse the menu. It quickly transpired that whilst there were definite crowd pleasers to be found, innovation was the buzz word at Sargo with plenty of inventive options, of which I'll elaborate on later.



For me, I'm all about the "three S's" when I go out for dinner, so let me explain. Style, service and (lip) smackingly good food. It wasn't wasted on me that the decor at [Sargo](#) was Pinterest worthy in terms of its prettiness and if I'm going to be sat still for hours, then I want something nice to look at.



On that note, next comes the service. It didn't go unnoticed on myself or my dining companion that our waiter was incredibly attentive and essentially, he could've been plucked from the beaches of Rio. Pau was everything you'd want in a server, knowledgeable but not pushy. Friendly but not overbearing. Gorgeous but not so distractingly so that our food would go cold.



So onto the food, it passed the “S” test and then some. As I went with a veggie friend (we cover all food group bases) and tried A LOT of different things – what can I tell you, we were warming up for Christmas.



The standout dish for me was the *sashimi de atún rojo*, which was a work of art – quite literally, it was served upon a *pintoresco*. The concept of the menu is undoubtedly unique though – split into easy-to-read groups such as “*de machete*” – perfect for meat lovers and “*de cuchara*” which is ideal for those seeking comfort – which to be honest in these tiresome temps, who isn’t?





We bid the team at [Sargo](#) farewell having tackled the menu as a tag team and safe in the knowledge that we'd given their marvellously Mediterranean menu a good old bash.

If you're looking for a spot that definitely isn't style over substance, give Sargo more than just a glance. Set to become a darling of the Salamanca scene, set up camp now before the hordes arrive.

Info

- [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Website](#)
 - **Address:** Calle del General Diaz Porlier 57
 - **Metro:** Lista
 - **Phone:** 910 1066 57
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Varsovia Bar – Cocktail o'clock in the run-up to Christmas

It's safe to say that bars in Malasaña are pretty much ten a penny. There's possibly more bars than beards, and that's saying something. What's not so common though, is to find a bar that looks super appealing from the street, yet for one reason or another you're yet to make it inside.

This had been the case with [Varsovia](#) for literally, months. I'd strolled past it almost daily either on the way to work or the gym, however, I'd never actually been. So feeling high on hump day vibes last Wednesday, I decided to suggest it to a friend for a long overdue catch up, and to see if what was on the inside was as engaging as the exterior.



It was rammed. This might be partly due to Madrileños being on a countdown to Christmas and therefore not really needing to have their arm twisted when it comes to a post work *copa*. But even at 8pm (a slightly weird time to be boozing here) – not quite after work, definitely not post dinner – but the atmosphere was buzzing.

We quickly discovered that it was one of the waitresses' birthdays so a chorus of *Cumpleaños Feliz* rang out as we entered, and a cake appeared from nowhere – which the lovely Virginia even offered to share. First impressions count and the immediate feeling was one of friendliness and very much that it was a local bar, for local people.

The cocktail list is extensive but we thought we'd pace ourselves and start with a gin. Virginia kindly recommended that we sample a Nordes (one of my faves hailing from the North West of Spain) which even came with a little tapa of manchego cheese.



I'm always beyond thrilled when you're offered a food freebie in Madrid, as whilst it remains commonplace in the south of Spain, it's a lot less common in the capital unless you're offered some bog standard olives. Manchego cheese has become a cheese of choice for me and for this reason alone I was delighted.

Gins slurped, we thought we'd then sample some of the hard stuff. A gin cocktail that was nameless (we explained that it was our spirit soulmate) and we were promptly presented with a concoction that was gin based but laced with juicy apple flavours.

Cocktails in hand, we were able to chat whilst appreciating the background tunes which weren't offensively loud , as can

so often be the case. I was told that come weekends, DJs frequently take to the decks and kick-out doesn't happen until 3am – leaving you plenty of time to get the party started.



Varsovia seemed to offer something for everyone. Cocktails for those looking for some for weekday (or weekend) glamour. As well as vermouth for those who like their tipples to be a little more traditional.

Don't make my mistake of walking on by. Stick your head in and give it a try (apologies for the terrible rhyme, clearly there's a frustrated poet in me itching to get out).

Varsovia Info

- [Facebook](#)
- **Address:** Calle San Andrés 33
- **Metro:** Bilbao

Crackers for Caramba

Is it just me or does the run up to Christmas turn into a complete whirlwind of eating, drinking and being very, very merry – and that's all before the main event has even started. By the time December 25th rolls round you're often fit to collapse thanks to the endless festive functions that have filled your diary from the get go of the month.

However, where's the fun in being all 'bah humbug' about the excuse to crack open the bubbles and swerve the gym? There's none. So in the spirit of embracing the delirium of December, I booked a dinner at [Caramba](#) with a visiting friend and headed out to celebrate the most manic of months.



[Caramba](#) hails from the well known Grupo Larumba; which means that a stylish setting is a guarantee. Close to Puerta de Alcalá, it's perfectly placed for locals and tourists alike.

Should you have spent the day pounding the pavements in an attempt to soak up the city you can easily grab a tasty treat at the end of your day.



Alternatively, it's an ideal place to enjoy a leisurely lunch before mooching around the nearby stores on Gran Via. The menu is a mix of Spanish traditional, modern classics and an Asian twist. For instance, we indulged in *croquetas de jamón* (a nod to Spain's finest), but we also had some delectable Japanese style prawns that remained on the plate for all of about 13 seconds.

Next up came a tuna tartare that made us feel slightly more virtuous on the old health front (having polished off some golden, crispy chicken fingers beforehand that were almost wholly responsible for me now reaching for the old spanx). We concluded the sumptuous savoury side of things with a beef tenderloin that was as tasty as any steak that I've sampled in Argentina.



However, what got my pulse racing was the quirky list of cocktails; of which my personal favourite was the rather

novelty named 'De Madrid Al Cielo' – a magical mix of violet flavoured gin, lime juice and egg white – it was as pleasing on the palate as it was on the eye. Speaking of all things aesthetically pleasing, the decor was as lovely as the almond cake that we concluded the evening with.

FROM MADRID TO THE SKY 8,90

If Madrid has something special, it's the spectacular sky it has, and we'll bring it put it on your lips.

Violet and Ginger Gin *

Lime juice

Peppers and Jasmine Orgeat *

Egg white

In a country where sadly the service often leaves a nasty taste in the mouth (anyone else feel like they have to beg for

a bill?!), our server, Cata, deserves a special shout out. Attentive but not overbearing, he asked my friend what her tipple of choice was (gin, I mean she's a Brit, it's in our DNA) and with no questions asked he whipped her up her own personalised cocktail. A nice touch, I'm sure you'll agree.

Caramba, much like other hotspots in the Larumba group, is certainly not a case of style over substance. The food was delish. The cocktails a delight. And the service – the jewel in Caramba's crown.

Caramba Madrid

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** C/ Alcalá 19
 - **Metro:** Sevilla
 - **Phone:** 910 88 28 98
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Satisfaction Guaranteed at Santo Pecado

Among my friends it's no secret that in the summer you can't keep me in. I'm more than happy to play the part of being a social butterfly and my flat is rarely where you'll find me between the months of May to September. But as the temps start to drop and the dark nights draw in, it becomes harder and harder to prise me off the sofa and to step away from the cocoon of scented candles, red wine and of course, Netflix.

But you know, a girl's gotta eat. So when I heard about a new burger place that was literally a mere hop, skip and a jump from where I reside, I switched my pyjamas for a playsuit and headed out on the town.



The place in question was [Santo Pecado](#). At first glance it could easily be dismissed as just another place to grab a burger, but appearances can be deceptive and [Santo Pecado](#) is not your average burger joint. First things first, the owners are serious about the good stuff, aka – the meat. The beef hails from a farm in Toledo and there is nothing remotely McDonalds-esque here about what's between the buns.



All organic and responsibly sourced, the taste of the meat (having been cooked over carbon) was most definitely worth leaving the toasty confines of my casa. Next came the burger toppings. If you're indecisive (quite possibly one of my worst afflictions), trying to decide what was going to delicately rest upon my beaut of a burger was not an easy choice. Along with all your standard options, cheese, bacon and the like – there was foie gras on offer – meaning that you could quite literally pimp your dins so to speak.



Aside from the Toledo hailing beef, Santo Pecado boasts having Wagyu beef on the menu – see, I told you this was pretty far removed from Maccies. My friend assured me that the Wagyu option melted in the mouth and was essentially accountable for us not having room for dessert (although that could also be partly due to us indulging in both nachos and chicken fingers to start – both of which were equally delicious).



The restaurant loving folks of Madrid can be a tough crowd. In these post crisis days (of which we're all grateful for), you really need to have something that little bit special to cut it in an increasingly crowded market place. There are literally more restaurants popping up on a weekly basis in Madders, than Elizabeth Taylor had diamonds. So if you don't have that USP nailed – you'll struggle to survive. The fact that Santo Pecado has taken the humble hamburger and elevated it to gourmet status, suggests to me that they have what it takes.

Again, located in the ever increasingly popular barrio of Chamberí, there's no shortage of nearby bars, making it the ideal place to line your tum before a night of drinking, dancing and debauchery. If good meat equals good times in your language, halt that Netflix binge momentarily and binge on a burger instead.

Santo Pecado

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Glorieta de Quevedo, 4
 - **Metro:** Quevedo
 - **Phone:** 91 057 13 66
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That's Amore at Aió

Following numerous debates, with numerous friends, I've come to the conclusion that Tuesdays are officially THE worst day of the week. Mondays, well, I can just about grin and bear them – especially if you're still all warm and fuzzy from weekend based fun.

But by Tuesday, the forthcoming weekend just feels way out of reach and if you're like me, it's the day when you decide to haul yourself back to the gym – usually after a couple of days of complete over indulgence.

In light of this newly held belief, a good friend of mine suggested that we should always have dinner together on a Tuesday; purely to take the sting out of its tail. **So last Tuesday we found ourselves happily ensconced at [Aió](#), my local Italian in Malasaña that could give any spaghetti serving spot in Sardinia a run for its money.**



To kick off proceedings we both opted for a Negroni to transport us to sunnier days spent in Italy, rather than a somewhat chilly and crisp November evening in Madrid. The spritz alone raised a smile and that was before the eating part of the evening had commenced, of which there was a lot.

Where Italian food is concerned, I can exercise next to no self restraint – suffice to say, we feasted. With such a tempting menu on offer, boasting all the well loved (and well known) classics, it would have been hard not to.



Like many other semi foodies, I've found myself arguing with pretty much every Spaniard on Earth regarding the fiercely coveted title of 'the best cuisine in the world' – because of course, it comes as no surprise that Spaniards (in general) feel that they deserve the crown.



But I beg of you (and please don't kill me for saying so) that in my humble opinion, Italian food is where it's at. Nobody does comfort food better and on a Winters evening, a big bowl of pasta feels like being enveloped in a hearty hug; and I'm all for a cuddle when it's cold.



We split a **burrata** and a **carpaccio** because quite frankly, any good Italian joint worth its salt should be able to deliver deliciousness on both. Aió didn't disappoint, both were inhaled without a second thought in all their luscious, lovely glory.



The starters were followed up with a glorious **gorgonzola based pasta dish** that was **peppered with prawns** and a **quattro formaggi pizza** (half of which came home with me in a doggy bag) as my eyes had clearly been bigger than my belly at this point.



Saying that though, is anyone capable of saying no to a cheeky

pudding? I'm evidently not, as we rounded off the previously nicknamed 'Bluesday Tuesday' with a **tiramisu** and a **gin tonic** for the road. We left with vows of friendship having been reaffirmed, appetites having been satiated and the edge having been well and truly taken off a potentially terrible Tuesday.

Aiό's charm is found in the home cooked feel of the food and the fizz in their Aperol spritz.

Info

- [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** [Calle Corredera Baja de San Pablo, 25](#)
- **Phone:** 910 096 469

Also check out a previous [Naked Madrid post on Aiό](#)

Gin and on it at Le Cocó

Sundays (if you let them) can frankly be a little bit rubbish. And in the winter – even worse. Chances are you're nursing a mild to moderate hangover. There's life admin to smash. And then the potential doom that often comes when you spy the return to work on the horizon.

This often means that Sundays don't have that carefree Friday feeling. They're the waiting room for the working week. However, as I discovered last Sunday, it definitely doesn't have to be that way and Sunday Funday most certainly doesn't have to remain as some intangible insta friendly phrase – especially not in this city.



[Le Cocó](#), the cosy little Chueca spot that I [reviewed](#) back in the summer, is now playing host to '**Gin and Cookie**' **afternoons**. You show up, you drink gin, you eat cookies. There's not much not to love. Between 5-8pm on both Saturdays and Sundays, there's a DJ on the decks helping you to keep your party pants on until your alarm pretty much goes off on a Monday morn.



In my [previous Le Cocó post](#) I mentioned just how how lovely the decor is and now that winter is really starting to bite, it's the perfect place to bunker down for an afternoon and enjoy some copas in good company.



It goes without saying that each bite of the cookies was well worth the calories. The red velvet ones in particular deserve a mention as I could've happily munched the lot – but clearly needed to leave some room for the perfectly mixed G&Ts.



Seagram's 7
The American

Isabeli Fontana
con 11.7 millones

NÚÑEZ
MEJOR MOMENTO
DE SU VIDA

ZOLA

ABRIL
ESPERO
ROJO

So if like me, you're keen to eek out the dregs of the weekend until the bitter end, make a date at Le Cocó. Remember, the weekend isn't over until the fat lady sings. Or in this case, you've eaten all the cookies.

Info

- [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) & [Website](#)
 - **Address:** C/ Calle de Barbieri, 15
 - **Metro:** Chueca
 - **Phone:** 915 21 99 55
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Trikki, homemade New Orleans cuisine with family recipes

Trikki restaurant was opened in Chamberí about a year ago by owners Yuliet McQuitty (New Orleans) and Rodolfo Rodriguez (Venezuela), and together they've brought the spirit of New Orleans to the neighborhood. As soon as you walk in, you'll feel a refreshingly down-to-earth ambience and lots of jazz-inspired decor, from drum-shaped lamp shades to drawings of musicians and trumpets on the walls.



Yuliet will graciously greet you and walk you through the whole menu; while each dish will be prepared from scratch by Rodolfo, a.k.a. "the kitchen commander." Everything at Trikki is made from traditional home recipes and select ingredients to bring the authentic flavors of New Orleans to your table.



The menu features all the city's classics: **fried green tomatoes, gumbo, jambalaya, po' boys and the famous bananas foster dessert.** You'll also find a few Venezuelan items sprinkled in there. Since it was our first time trying New Orleans cuisine, Yuliet suggested we order their signature

dishes – all packed with flavor and spices.

Here's how it went down:



We started with a **half-portion of fried green tomatoes**, a delicious introduction to what followed.



Next up was the **gumbo, a hearty New Orleans stew** filled with rice, chicken, sausage, langoustine and so many other delicious ingredients. What stood out to me the most was the okra – I don't think I've ever had okra in Madrid.



Then we had the ultimate **jambalaya**. This rice dish is on the spicy side, so Yuliet recommends people try it on their second visit to Trikki, unless you like a little kick to your meal. It turned out to be James' favorite dish of the night.



Yuliet also said a true New Orleans experience wouldn't be complete without trying one of the Po' boys, which are essentially gigantic sandwiches. We ordered the one with soft-shell crab, lettuce, tomato and a special sauce. So good.



Needless to say, we had a full-on feast! So when we got to the homemade dessert section, we ordered what seemed like the lightest option: *quesillo*, a typical Venezuelan dessert that's similar to flan with a hint of lime.

On our next visit we'll save room for the New Orleans's classic: bananas foster, served on a dish that they flambé right in front of you. We did get the chance to watch the pyrotechnics at the table next to us, however, and it looked amazing!

Here's a pic of the bananas foster from Trikki's [instagram](#) so you get the idea.



So when it comes down to it, Trikki's concept is rather simple: home recipes, traditional ingredients and Southern hospitality, which makes for a great combination. Just make sure to go with a good appetite and friends who like to try new dishes and flavors.

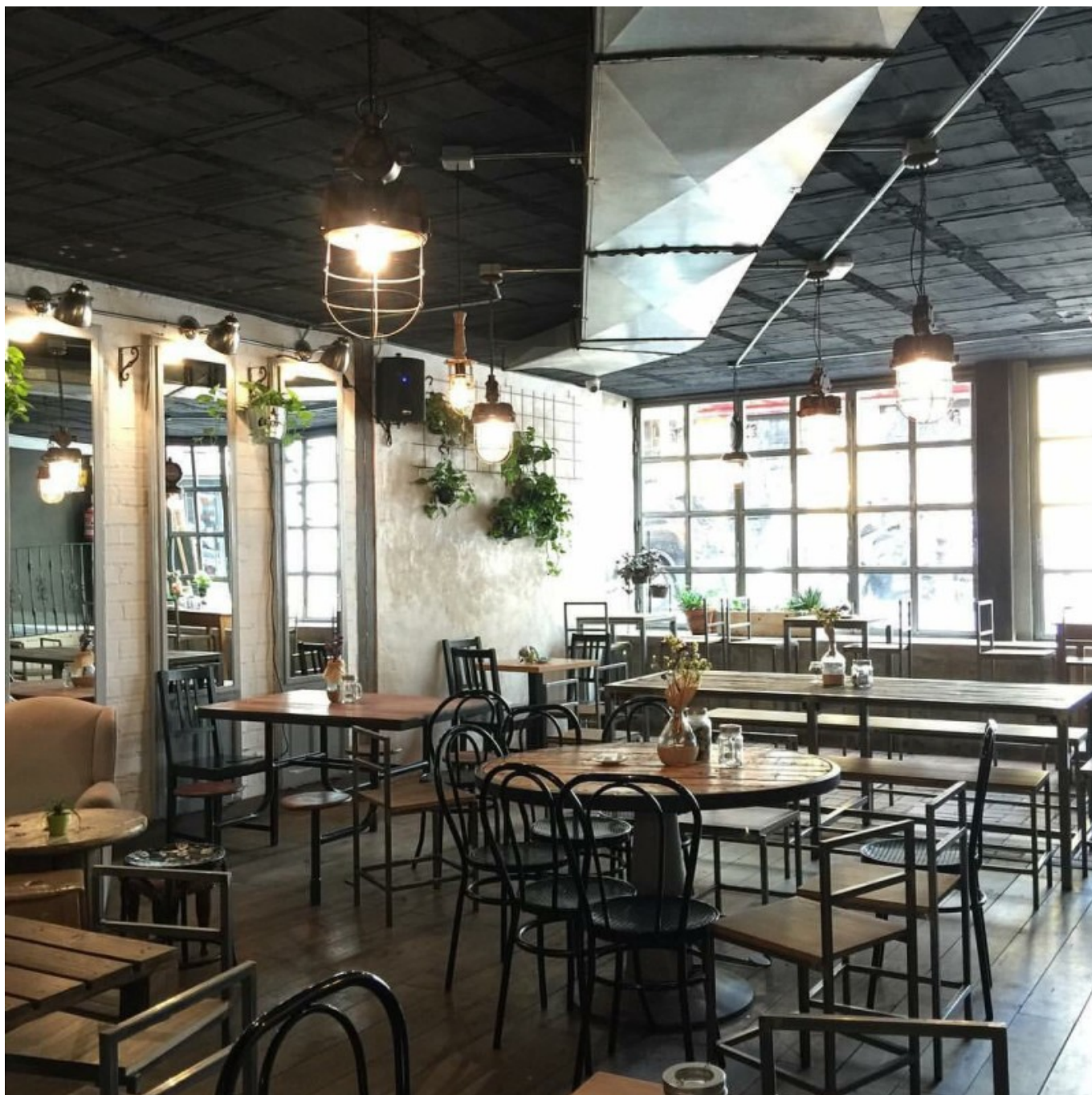
Trikki

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)
- **Address:** Calle Santa Engracia 109
- **Metro:** Alonso Cano

Slow down at Slow Mex Madrid

Julie Andrews once sang about *these are a few of my favorite things* and if I were to pen some similar lyrics they would read along the lines of: *margaritas, tacos and anything with a bit of spice*.

In light of this, a long Saturday lunch spent at [Slow Mex](#) wasn't exactly a hardship. **A low key Mexican joint on Calle San Vicente Ferrer, that does a very nice sideline in craft beers** is the ideal place to bunker down for the afternoon now that coat season is well and truly upon us in Madrid.



Slow Mex has a big open space that feels slightly reminiscent to a pub back in Blighty (again, this could be thanks to the array of beers on tap). It feels like an unpretentious neighbour who invites you over and makes you feel instantly at home.

As it's essentially a mecca for all things Mexican, all the standard offerings are present on the menu. **Tacos, nachos, burritos** – they're all there. However, the homemade grub does offer a couple of **fun twists** on the to-be-expected tortilla based treats.



We tried a fairly unusual starter. It was sort of similar to a kind of chowder but with a kick and studded with spicy prawns; it brought me back to life after a particularly boozy evening the night before. We rounded off the leisurely lunch with a brownie.

Again, it was a slightly pimped up version of an old favorite as this pud offered up sugar and spice – as it had just touch of chilli in it. It was downright delicious and had us reaching for one last margarita for the road.



Special mention has to go to the Maitre D, Mark. He towed the line between clearly knowing his stuff (and wanting to share it with us) and being attentive enough without us feeling like we had a third person dining with us, which can sometimes be the case. He also pointed out that they have a happy hour. Am I the only one who views winter as the perfect excuse for day drinking? Surely not.

Either way, **we left Slow Mex giggling and gloriously full.** Thanks to the crispy duck tacos that I'm still thinking about, the diet can always wait until tomorrow. I'm just thinking of my winter insulation and working on my extra layer in the meantime.

by @littlemissmadrid

Slow Mex Madrid

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle de San Vicente Ferrer 33
 - **Metro:** Tribunal or Noviciado
 - **Phone:** 915 326 791
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Loveliness at Lateral

When I first moved to Madrid I walked that well trodden path like so many ex-pats had done before me; the month long TEFL course. I rocked up with my Spanish phrase book, some SPF 20 and the overwhelming desire to live abroad. With no set plan (well, with no actual plan at all having quit my job in PR back in London) I quickly got into the groove of my new TEFL timetable; which essentially meant a 3pm finish. As soon as my 'working' day was done, I would wile away afternoons in Plaza Santa Ana.



Plaza Santa Ana

Now I don't spend too much time around that neck of the woods these days, but back then I was literally intoxicated by that square. The beautiful balconies, the long sunny days (I arrived in August) and I even found charm in the guys who play the accordion and then hustle for your change. The large majority of those afternoons were spent on the terraza of [restaurante Lateral](#).

Seriously, the limited savings that I arrived with dwindled at lightning speed thanks to my newfound obsession with their ***croquetas de jamón*** and ***tinto de verano***. It became a spot that I still think of fondly, as it kind of represents those heady first months when everything was an adventure and my sole preoccupation was how many hours could I spend tanning that day and where was I going out that night.



So [Lateral](#) and I have enjoyed an enduring partnership and now that I live on the other side of Gran Via I thought I'd mix

things up and visit one of their other outposts on Calle Fuencarral. I'd heard on the grape vine that it had undergone a recent renovation (and I can't just rely on Pinterest for interiors inspo) so it seemed like a win win.



So onto the décor, it is in a nutshell delightful. But obviously we're talking about a restaurant here, so I can't not mention the food. Lateral is all about the tapas – so you can literally try a little bit of everything in perfectly bite sized portions.

In addition, if you have [visiting guests](#) or you're just a first timer to the city, you'll love that Lateral puts a modern spin on Spanish classics. You can find all the well-known favourites such as **tortilla de patata** and **albondigas** (meatballs); alongside more inventive small plates such as delicious **duck ravioli** and a melt-in-the-mouth **carpaccio**.



Food wise [Lateral](#) is what I would describe as a safe bet. Yes it might not be the most inventive cuisine, but what they offer up always hits the spot. It also doesn't hurt that it's super reasonably priced for a city centre find, and **they serve food all day.**

My friend and I were also pleased as punch to discover that they boast a **happy hour on drinks** – ideal if you enjoy a lunch that's more liquid than most and I can attest that the service is always friendly and fast. Whilst the terraza isn't quite as pleasing on the eye as the Plaza Santa Ana locale, the phrase "it's what's on the inside that counts" that rings true here.



Inside it's an oasis within the city, filled with plenty of plants and enough greenery to make you feel like you're embracing nature, in spite of being mere moments from the hustle and bustle of one of Madrid's main shopping streets. If spontaneity is your thing (let's face it, we're not talking about a country when peeps really plan ahead), restaurante Lateral is the kind of place that you can pitch up at, eat well and feel as though you've sampled a little bit of Spain's finest.

Restaurante Lateral:

- [Website](#) & [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#)
 - **Address:** Calle Fuencarral, 43
 - **Phone:** 915316877
-

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.

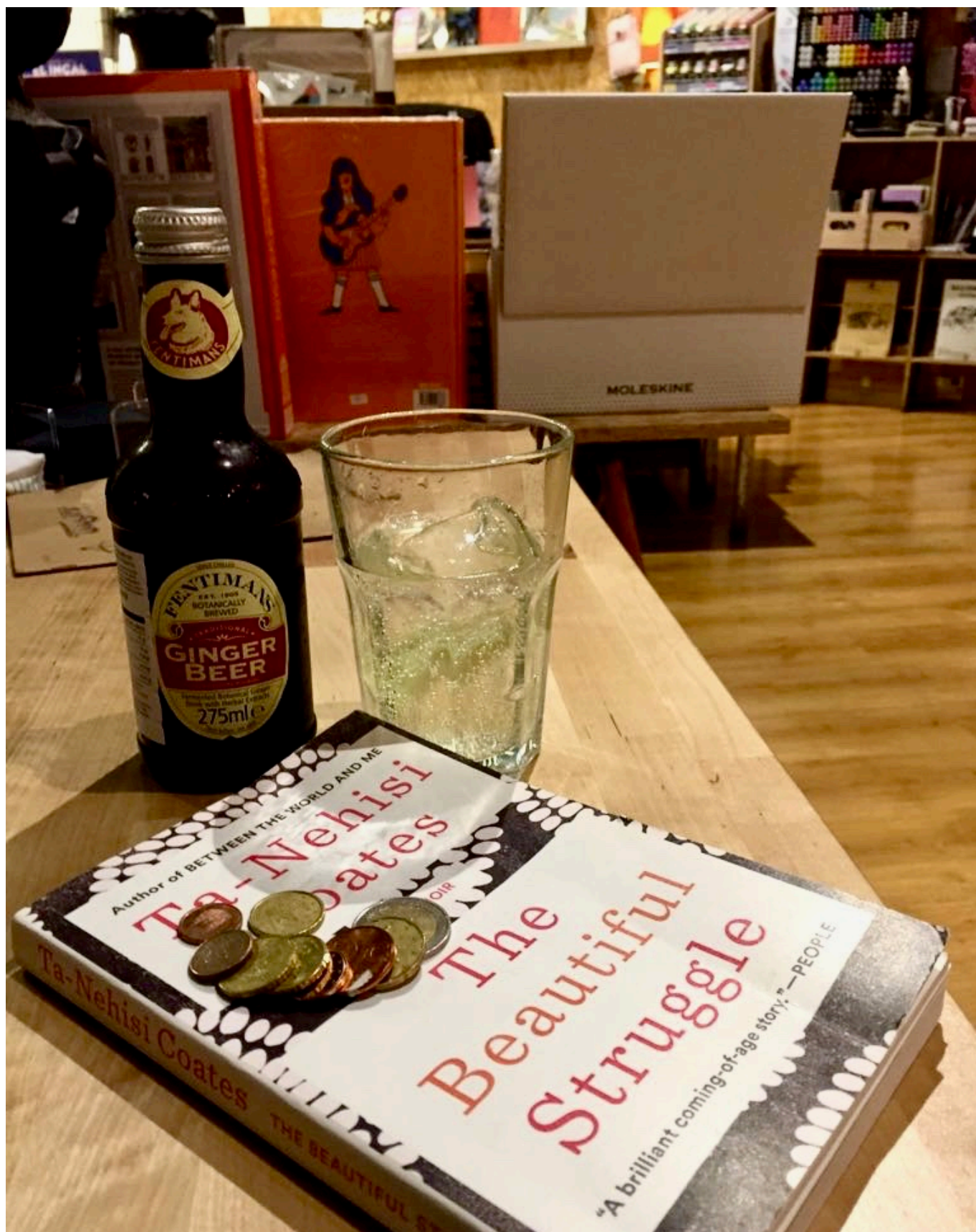
6. Salmon Guru for fun cocktails



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!