

# El Campo de Cebada, a mix of live music, politics & drinking

I've been in Madrid for 5 months now and I want to share somewhere with you. There's nowhere as special to me as [El Campo de Cebada](#) for a place to relax. It's quite unique in what it has to offer. It's a **free space** where you can lie in the sun, the shade, drink beer and listen to **live music** or play **sports**. It's even a place where green and reform-minded political groups go to spread their word. Oh, and they have a theatre. How awesome is that?

Any lover of sun, sociality and really cheap booze, should come to [El Campo de Cebada](#).



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It's not just some commercialized private space. After the collapse of a sports complex in the same area, an association of neighborhoods bought the plot with a grant from the **City of Madrid**. From here, people in the surrounding area had a stake in how to invest the money.

The idea was to create an inclusive temporary space where the **community** could get involved and where they could create value. Instead of an empty disused space, the creation of **El Campo de Cebada** allows people to do **sport, socialize and pursue other projects**. But, yes you read correctly – temporary. Cebada is there to fill in the vacuum and it will leave when the community gets the funding for a new sports complex.

And this is one more reason for why it's special. It's not going to be there forever.



I promise you're yet to find anything like it. From your first encounter, by **La Latina Metro** you'll probably be surprised to see passers-by cramming around spy-holes in its graffitied walls and people flowing endlessly in and out of its gate. The hum of enjoyment comes from somewhere.

What could be so interesting?

If you go over for a peek...

First you hear the noise. Like a school when it breaks and you



can hear the happy roar of children playing.

You see lots of people. **Football, basketball, socializing, Botellón** (people casually drinking outside) and of course, smoking. There's art all up the walls. There are people sat in wooden stands and others on benches. **All walks of life** can be found, from musicians, entrepreneurs, students, workers, the old and the young; from the sophisticated, to the -let's say-drunk.



I can't help but feel welcome. Everyone is sharing one place. They're all happy. The sun makes everything look good.

Plus, I get the pirate vibe from the makeshift **DIY atmosphere!** And that's hard to find, I assure you.

**My advice:** grab some **beer** or cold **drinks** and a friend. Take a **ball, Frisbee, guitar** or **book** (if your alone!) and go. Go and **relax**. Soak it in.

If there was ever a day made for this, that day is Sunday. Starting early, like 10am, you can walk around El Rastro and see all the goods and wares they have to offer in what is

Madrid's massive open market. I managed to get a guitar for only €50! And then head for **Cebada**.

At around 1pm, **live music** begins. It's often similar faces keeping the spirit alive, with the odd newcomer in between. But it has always been exciting. I've seen an amazing barbershop quartet, a comedian guitarist, a charming folk singing couple, improvisation, blues and some Spanish classics.



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Here until 3am is the perfect place to grab a Mahou and relax in the sun. You're welcome to stay all day and I like to make an afternoon of it.

On some weeks you can also find the same space (with the music!) turned into a **political hive-mind**. People from all parts of the (Leftist) political spectrum set up stalls to give you information. From memory there were anarchist stalls, socialist stalls, ones on green issues, democratic reform and women's rights (hot topic right now). I've even gone there and found a local ecological food market mixed with talks on green consumerism and responsible business models. If politics is your cup of tea – this place is too. You can also sharpen up on your Spanish.

There are always things going on at El Campo de Cebada. Check out their [website](#) from time to time. Up and coming is a festival from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> and a [TEDx Madrid Salon](#) talk on July 14th (here's [TEDxMadrid's official site](#))

You know you've found somewhere special when you stumble across a space for bringing a community together for fun and for raising awareness about important issues affecting everyone. If there is one voice here, for me it says '**we are a community and we can act**'.

**Sports and music, beer and politics, speaking Spanish.** I really can say no more.

So, if you want to be somewhere and not feel like an anonymous person at a bar or club, go there. You want to chat in the sun with friends, beer and music? Go there. I've had some amazing experiences and I think you'd be missing out. **So, go, go, go!**

**El Campo de Cebada**

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**Address:** Plaza de la Cebada, 4