Bolero Meatballs… You Gotta Try These Balls!

‘Spicy balls?’ ‘Juicy balls?’ ‘I want cheese on my balls.’ Let me explain…

I first stumbled upon **Bolero Meatballs**, a fun new meatball shop in the center of Madrid, while walking around town with James. I saw the red MEATBALLS sign and my heart jumped. See, in New York (where I’m from), a restaurant called “The Meatball Shop” opened up a few years ago and it got so popular that it now has several locations. Whoever came up with this idea is a genius. Who doesn’t like meatballs?

I asked the two young ladies who own and run **Bolero Meatballs** – Nina, from Russia, and May, from Spain – if they had gotten the idea from The Meatball Shop in NYC, but they said they had gotten it from elsewhere, as meatballs were already becoming trendy in Moscow and Paris too. In fact, when I asked Nina if she was nervous about opening up a restaurant dedicated solely to meatballs in Madrid, she said no. She was more afraid that someone else would beat her to it.

Prior to opening **Bolero Meatballs**, both Nina and May had worked a few different jobs (among them, May had been a pastry

chef and Nina, a translator), yet both wanted to do something else. As roommates, they spent a lot of time in the kitchen preparing meals. But it wasn't until Nina returned from a trip to Moscow, where she witnessed the meatball craze, that she returned to Madrid and, coincidentally, May was cooking up a batch of meatballs for dinner. They saw it as their sign. The two foodies immediately began experimenting with meatball recipes in their home and soon started looking for a place to open a shop. And now, thanks to these two brave ladies, we in Madrid can feast on **meatball sandwiches and platters** too!

Opened in April and located on Calle de las Conchas, **Bolero**

Meatballs has a few tables outside and a few stools inside. Their friend from **newmadprojects** did the design, making the place look colorful, inviting and fun. It’s a great place for a quick bite on the go or to get a few balls to take away. All their meatballs and desserts are homemade from original recipes. Apart from their regular menu, they also serve a weekly special, such as **Greek balls with yogurt sauce, mint and Greek herbs.** Last time I went, they had a dessert special too—**red velvet cheesecake**, which was beyond delicious.

At **Bolero Meatballs**, you can choose from **four types of homemade *albondigas* (meatballs)—*La Abuela*** (veal, garlic and parsley, in a roasted vegetable and tomato sauce), ***Oriental*** (pork balls dressed with cilantro and ginger, in a coconut milk and peanut sauce), **Parm & Chick** (chicken parmesan balls in mushroom sauce) and ***Vegana*** (quinoa, tofu, rice, shiitake mushrooms and caramelized onion).

My favorite so far are the ***albondigas orientales***, because the coconut and peanut sauce is heaven, and James' favorite is ***la abuela***, as he thinks his grandmother might have actually made them. I recommend ordering the ***ración*** (platter) of four balls so you can try each one, and it also comes with your choice of potatoes or rice for **6.50€**. You can also get a ***bocata*** (meatball sub) for the same price. Lastly, do not miss out on the homemade desserts here which range in price from 1.20€-4.50€—***Oreo Brownie with Ice Cream, the Cookie, the Cookwich or Banana Bread.***

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Address: Calle de las Conchas, 4

Metro: Callao, Opera, Santo Domingo

Hours: 2pm-4:30pm & 8pm-11:30pm. Closed on Tuesdays.

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